

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

On Monday, April 15, 2019, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) met in the Council Chambers at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W., Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Michael Valentine
 Board Member Reid Bernard
 Board Member Melissa Fetterley
 Board Member Michael Hiatt
 Board Member Laura Moore

Members Absent: Board Member Jane Covart
 Board Member Michael Madison

Also Present: City Planner Chris Anderson
 City Councilmember Melody Shryock

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Valentine called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Bernard to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Hiatt, Bernard, Fetterley, Hiatt, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart and Madison.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated March 18, 2019

Motion by Board Member Fetterley and seconded by Board Member Bernard to approve the regular meeting minutes dated March 18, 2019.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Fetterley, Bernard, Hiatt, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart and Madison.

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Appoint Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report.

Board Member Hiatt nominated Michael Valentine as Chairperson.

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Bernard to appoint Michael Valentine as Chairperson of the Environmental Policy Board through March 2020.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Hiatt, Bernard, Fetterley, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart and Madison.

Chairperson Valentine nominated Michael Hiatt as Vice Chairperson.

Motion by Chairperson Valentine and seconded by Board Member Fetterley to appoint Michael Hiatt as Vice Chairperson of the Environmental Policy Board through March 2020.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Fetterley, Bernard, Hiatt, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart and Madison.

5.02: Consider Request for a Variance to Building Setbacks to the Ordinary High Watermark at 15637 Juniper Ridge Drive (Project No. 19-114); Case of Andy Gilbertson

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the City has received an application from Andy Gilbertson for a variance to building setbacks to the ordinary high watermark (OHW) on the property located at 15637 Juniper Ridge Drive. The applicant is proposing to construct a 24 foot by 28-foot detached accessory building within the required setback from the OHW of the Rum River.

Board Member Fetterley commented that the pictures helped to justify the request. She stated that this seems to be the logical placement for the building with minimal disruption to the landscaping. She suggested requesting a tree to be replanted in place of the tree that would be removed.

Board Member Moore stated that she would recommend a few more trees on the bluff area to ensure that area is shielded.

Chairperson Valentine stated that he agrees with the comments from Board Members Fetterley and Moore. He asked for the input of staff on the additional tree cover that would be recommended.

City Planner Anderson stated that he does not have a specific recommendation on a number of trees and would support working with the applicant with the goal of planting a few additional native trees. He explained that this proposed location attempts to consider the available screening of the building, noting that this proposed location would be the most screened area on the lot.

Chairperson Valentine asked if there are thoughts or expectations on input that will be provided from the DNR.

City Planner Anderson stated that he did not think any absolute concerns would be identified by the DNR related to this request. He stated that perhaps a comment would be made to offset the building with additional plantings, which is already recommended by staff. He noted that the City has not yet received input from the DNR but is basing his comments on past experience from the DNR with similar requests.

Councilmember Shryock asked if there should be a consideration of requesting an evergreen planting between the new building and the neighboring property.

Board Member Moore stated that she would be concerned with adding additional plantings in the bluff area, because of the existing tree locations. She stated that perhaps the applicant could work with a Master Gardener from Anoka County to determine if additional plantings would be appropriate or harmful to the river. She stated that she does support the request for an additional evergreen planting between the building and neighboring property.

Chairperson Valentine stated that perhaps there should be a more professional input regarding the request for additional plantings.

City Planner Anderson stated that personally he does not see a concern with space between the building and the existing tree line, however, the recommendation could be to fill in more of the gap along the shoreline to provide additional screening of structures in general. He believed that in-house there are resources and capabilities to visit the site and determine if there is sufficient space for trees to survive. He stated that if there is not sufficient space for a tree to survive, he would then not support adding trees in that location.

Motion by Board Member Fetterley and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to recommend the Planning Commission approve the requested variance contingent upon the applicant planting additional native trees between the accessory building and the river if there is space as determined by a site visit by Staff.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Fetterley, Hiatt, Bernard, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart and Madison.

5.03: Review Preliminary Plat for Property at 6080 Highway 10 NW (Project No. 18-163); Case of Village Bank

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the purpose of this case is to review a Preliminary Plat for a subdivision of the property located at 6080 Highway 10 NW. The subject property is currently zoned both R-1 Residential and E-1 Employment. The Preliminary Plat shows 14 detached villa lots plus three outlots that will contain the storm water pond, infiltration basin, and trail (part of the Mississippi River Trail). A Comprehensive Plan amendment and zoning amendment will be required based on the proposed use, lot dimensions and density.

Councilmember Shryock stated that the Council is of the same mind as the Planning Commission and EPB. She stated that there was some discussion on the number of lots, but the Council supported moving ahead with this number of lots to gather additional public input. She noted that

the Council did support the additional density transitioning. She stated that the Council also discussed the pathway between the cul-de-sac and Highway 10 but believed that there is adequate space for that to provide additional emergency only access. She stated that the Council supports this project moving forward and felt comfortable with the comments recommended in the staff review letter.

Chairperson Valentine commented that this is a complex and challenging site that will bring in additional regulatory programs.

City Planner Anderson agreed that there are multiple complex sets of rules for this development request that must be considered.

Board Member Hiatt asked if there was discussion on reexamining the shoreland rules to bring those into compliance with the State or DNR.

Councilmember Shryock stated that at the time the Council reviewed the request that information was not yet available. She noted that staff is reviewing the information. She stated that the applicant has been working to apply for grant funds to remove the debris and clean-up the site. She stated that in the end, this development would be a benefit to the neighborhood once all the work onsite is completed.

City Planner Anderson stated typically a sketch plan review provides general information, but this applicant had provided additional information in attempt to get ahead of some of the issues on the site. He stated that the tree preservation and landscaping plans were not included and the shoreland regulations were also not taken into account during the sketch plan review and just came to light within the past few days while preparing the case for tonight's meeting. He stated that a review letter was included in the Board packet that addressed the concerns identified by staff.

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Bernard to recommend approval contingent upon compliance with the staff review letter.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Hiatt, Bernard, Fetterley, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Covart and Madison.

5.04: Review Current EPB Work Plan

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. The EPB has a City Council approved Work Plan for 2017-2019. As the City Council is beginning to wrap up their strategic planning for 2019, staff thought it would be a good time to briefly review the current plan and begin brainstorming topics for future consideration. The intention is not to develop a new work plan this evening, but rather to initiate some discussion on possible topics of interest or importance to the EPB.

Chairperson Valentine welcomed some brainstorming ideas to consider further. He stated that he is satisfied with the level of effort that the Board has received from City Planner Anderson. He acknowledged the high amount of work that is placed on staff for some of the Board projects and actions.

Board Member Moore provided an update on a recent conference that she attended. She referenced a discussion regarding organics that occurred, noting that the organics recycling program in Ramsey seems to be very progressive compared to other communities in the metro. She stated that engaging youth in the community was a large focus of discussion as well. She explained that in some communities there are active youth groups completing projects and attempting to bring about new policies, while other communities were having difficulty engaging the youth population. She stated that perhaps that could be an item to add to the work plan as that group seems to be instrumental in bringing about changes and implementing new projects. She noted that in some communities there are Master Gardeners that review landscaping plans to provide an additional element of input on tree types and vegetation.

Councilmember Shryock stated that it is exciting to be involved with different Boards and see how things begin to come together. She referenced the discussion about education and encouraging residents. She noted that there has been discussion about smart sprinkler technology and there will be an attempt to bring forward resources to help residents take advantage of those. She referenced the Resilient Communities Program with the University of Minnesota that was completed and noted that perhaps that would be a group to consult on how to engage the youth population. She stated that there are a number of Master Gardeners in Ramsey and that would be a good resource that may be willing to provide assistance. She stated that community engagement is an element that the City Council would like to focus on, and these ideas are a great way to continue that effort. She encouraged the group to think about what they can do and mesh that together with the amount of time that staff has to assist in accomplishing those items. She noted that prioritization is also important, as items can be placed on a waiting list for future years.

Board Member Hiatt stated that there is a new elementary school coming online within the year, which is a good opportunity to create a connection for engagement. He stated that the younger you start engaging youth with environmental issues, the more successful that endeavor will be as the information shared will continue to grow as those students continue on in their learning experience.

Councilmember Shryock agreed that getting the youth involved helps to increase participation throughout the City, as those students will bring that information home to parents and grandparents. She stated that as the work plan is developed that will help the Board create the focus and plan to engage the students.

Board Member Fetterley agreed that opportunity with a new school is great. She suggested perhaps investigating green architecture initiatives. She stated that as the community continues to grow, it would be nice to see some businesses engaging in green architecture initiatives. She agreed that when developing the work plan it will be helpful to find items of focus and then better define actions that will help to accomplish the goals.

Board Member Hiatt stated that it was helpful that this was placed on the agenda now, which provides additional time for thought and planning.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

- **Arbor Day Event**

City Planner Anderson stated that the City is moving forward with the Arbor Day planting event with Ramsey Elementary students on April 26th from 9:30 to 3:00 p.m. He stated that the seedlings and tools will be provided by the DNR, the City will provide water, and Mayor LeTourneau and the School District Superintendent will attend. He encouraged any EPB members that are available to participate. He stated that if there is inclement weather, a makeup date is May 3rd.

- **Spring Recycling Event**

City Planner Anderson noted that the spring recycling event is scheduled for Saturday May 4th. He noted that a new vendor will be joining the event.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Chairperson Valentine to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
City Planner

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.