

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

On Monday, March 16, 2020, 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 Jane Covart

Members Attending
Remotely: Board Member Melissa Fetterley
 Board Member Laura Moore

Members Absent: Board Member Michael Hiatt

Also Present: Deputy City Administrator Tim Gladhill

Also Present
Remotely: City Planner Chris Anderson

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Chairperson Valentine noted that this is the first attempt to allow some members to attend remotely.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill noted that the City is currently holding public meetings as scheduled, using technology for remote attendance as needed. He stated that currently City Hall is open to the public and the City will continue to monitor the situation and make evaluations. He stated that larger events, such as the Business Expo, are being postponed. He noted that City Planner Anderson is attending the meeting remotely as well.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

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

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated February 10, 2020

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Bernard to approve the regular meeting minutes dated February 10, 2020.

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

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Review Natural Resources Aspects of The Preserve at Northfork Preliminary Plat (Project No. 19-147); Case of BK Properties

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill presented the staff report. He stated that the City has received an application for a Preliminary Plat for The Preserve at Northfork, a new residential subdivision proposed south of Alpine Drive, west of Puma Street and the Riverstone subdivision. The Preserve at Northfork proposes a combination of more traditional suburban lots (80 feet wide and 10,800 square feet in size) as well as villa style lots, similar to the products being offered in Riverstone, directly east of the subject property.

Chairperson Valentine stated that the decision was previously made favoring the quality of trees over quantity.

Board Member Covart stated that she believed that there was supposed to be a buffer between the existing homes and new construction and asked for additional information.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the Riverstone neighborhood to the east is of similar density. He explained that these developments moved forward at the same time and are of similar density and therefore density transitioning was not required.

Board Member Fetterley agreed that quality is preferred over quantity, noting that there is not enough space to fit all the required landscaping and she would not want to see issues result from over planting. She believed that staff could continue to work with the applicant to find the best solution for the property.

Board Member Moore commented that she agrees with the idea of quality over quantity for this project. She commented that it is important for the Board and staff to continue to review these applications on a case by case basis as there are different circumstances for each parcel with lot size, topography, and type of development (residential or commercial).

Chairperson Valentine commented that there seems to be consensus for staff to continue to work with the applicant to find the best landscaping plan, focusing on quality rather than quantity.

5.02: Curbside Recycling Contract Status Update

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill presented the staff report. He stated that the City is currently in the final year of a three-year contract with ACE Solid Waste for curbside collection of recyclable materials. The current contract will expire on December 31, 2020. Please note that this case and discussion focuses on the City's current organized curbside recycling contract. The current discussion does not contemplate extending the organized collection into solid waste disposal. The purpose of this case is to begin discussions on policy direction before the current contract expires. There are essentially three options that could be considered by the City:

1. Enter into negotiations with the current service provider to extend or renew the contract.
2. Prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) for competitive bids for curbside collection for recyclables.
3. Migrate to an open hauling system that would not include management and oversight by the City, but would still involve licensing of haulers, reporting to Anoka County and education efforts.

Chairperson Valentine asked what happens with the materials that are picked up.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that the material is brought to the appropriate sorting facility and goes through the sorting process, then being exported to the appropriate site.

Chairperson Valentine commented that the recycling market is in a time of change and a lot of the material ends up being combined with solid waste and ending in landfills. He stated that he would like additional information from staff in the future.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed that City Planner Anderson would have that additional information and could bring back those answers as recycling continues to be discussed in the future.

Board Member Covart commented that she has experienced sorted recycling and single-sort and found that she recycled much more under the single-sort system.

City Planner Anderson provided additional details on the current curbside hauling process for recycling noting that statute prohibits haulers from picking up recyclable materials and then landfilling them. He also noted that it is different if there is such significant contamination in a load of recyclables that it is rejected by a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). That is essentially deemed as garbage.

Board Member Fetterley stated that she would not favor open hauling as that would increase the number of trucks on the street and could decrease participation. She stated that she would like to see the City negotiate the best rate, whether that be with ACE or another hauler. She commented that the current program is working well, and the City should attempt to keep that consistent.

Board Member Moore echoed the comments of Board Member Fetterley.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed the consensus of the Board to continue to negotiate with ACE for organized curbside and/or also review rates from other vendors for similar service.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

City Planner Anderson stated that as of right now the spring recycling event is still scheduled and planned for May 2nd, but the City will continue to assess that with the COVID-19 situation. He stated that if the event is canceled, the City will ensure to provide that announcement to the community.

Chairperson Valentine noted that the group in charge of the environmental conference is monitoring the COVID-19 situation as well and determining how that may change the setup of that event. He stated that they are exploring the option of holding a virtual conference.

Board Member Moore confirmed that the group is reviewing different options: continue as planned, keeping attendees six feet apart; postponing the event; or canceling the event. She stated that another option would be to hold the conference virtually, which would have challenges, but commented that she believed that would be the best option. She welcomed any input the Board may have.

Board Member Covart commented that she believed the conference would have more participation if it was held virtually this year.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Bernard to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
City Planner

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.