

7.01: Consider Request for an Amended Conditional Use Permit to Expand Existing Natural Gas Substation at 7607 173rd Ave NW (Project No. 22-119); Case of CenterPoint Energy

Planning Manager Larson reviewed the staff report and recommendation to approve the amended Conditional Use Permit to expand the existing natural gas substation. He stated a representative of CenterPoint Energy was in attendance.

Councilmember Musgrove asked Planning Manager Larson to point out where the existing tank is located and where the new one would be located.

Planning Manager Larson replied there is no tank there today; however, there are brackets or concrete forms in place in the ground. He stated the tank would sit where the forms are today.

Councilmember Musgrove replied when she listened to the Planning Commission meeting, she thought there would be an additional tank. She asked if they are asking to add one above ground tank.

Planning Manager Larson confirmed this.

Mayor Pro Tem Riley invited the representative of CenterPoint Energy to speak on how this benefits the residents of Ramsey, if there are safety concerns.

A representative of CenterPoint Energy commented this is a part of an essential service. It is a safety product that is injected into the natural gas stream to give it an odor recognizable as natural gas. He stated that is important in the event there is a leak so they are able to smell it, which is the best indication that repairs are needed. He stated the property is owned by the company and has a prior use; today Northern Natural operates a delivery point delivering natural gas to CenterPoint Energy at that location. The old foundations part of the old system will be removed and a new tank will be installed. He stated the reason for that is to upgrade the existing systems to bring them up to today's standards.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the area will be fenced.

The representative of CenterPoint Energy confirmed this. He referenced a map and added there is an existing fence that has not been maintained well and will be removed. New fencing will be installed including a sign that says CenterPoint Energy in case of emergency or if access is needed call the number listed.

Councilmember Musgrove asked how high the fence will be.

The representative of CenterPoint Energy replied he didn't know but if it is part of the building code they need to apply for a building permit so it would meet the code.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if Planning Manager Larson knew if there would be a code standard.

Planning Manager Larson replied he wasn't sure how tall the fence was but if there was a particular height, that could be added to the conditional use permit. He stated any fence taller than seven and half feet needs a building permit to ensure structural soundness.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if Council had recommendations on height of the fence. She also asked if there would be tips at the top.

Planning Manager Larson replied it would have fencing typically used for farming but not barbed wire.

Councilmember Musgrove commented she thought for this type of gas, it was important to have that as a part of the fence to deter activity.

Motion by Councilmember Howell, seconded by Councilmember Specht, to Adopt Resolution #22-093 granting an Amended Conditional Use Permit to expand the substation with an odorant storage tank and associated equipment.

Further Discussion:

Councilmember Musgrove asked if a friendly amendment could be entertained for the fencing height as recommended by code. Councilmember Woestehoff replied the fence would have to comply with code anyway when it is built. If it designed to be over seven and a half feet it will have to have its own building permit. He stated he understands the concern and acknowledged that the zoning is for R-1 which would be the standard followed which are designed for residential fences instead of commercial. He agreed that the fence should deter public access, which he felt CenterPoint Energy would agree is in their interest as well. He stated he didn't know if it would need to be included in the CUP because he thought CenterPoint Energy would ensure this.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Musgrove	nay
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Howell	aye
Councilmember Woestehoff	aye
Councilmember Heineman	aye
Mayor Pro Tem Riley	aye
Mayor Kuzma	aye

Motion carried.