

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

On Monday, November 20, 2023, 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 Laura Moore
 Board Member Reid Bernard
 Board Member Melissa Fetterley
 Board Member Thomas Hagerty
 Board Member Mike Heifner
 Board Member Hassan Salami
 Board Member Jessica Vikander

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Senior Planner Chris Anderson

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Moore, Board Members Bernard, Vikander, Fetterley, Hagerty, Heifner, and Salami. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated August 21, 2023

Motion by Board Member Fetterley and seconded by Board Member Vikander to approve the regular meeting minutes dated August 21, 2023.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Moore, Board Members Fetterley, Vikander, Bernard, Hagerty, Heifner, and Salami. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Consider Natural Resource Aspects of Proposed Site Plan and Plat for Storyteller Café (Project No. 23-118); Case of Stories Foundation

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the City has received an application from Stories Foundation for Site Plan and Final Plat consideration for a proposed three-story building located in the southeast corner of Yolite Street and Sunwood Drive. The project was originally reviewed and approved in 2021 (with contingencies, including plan revisions). However, those approvals have since expired.

Board Member Salami asked how tall the rail guard would be on the rooftop level, as customers would be drinking on that level.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that there are specific building regulations that would need to be followed and that would be addressed during the building permit review.

Board Member Heifner commented that he is a fan of maples but noted an invasive bug concern for maples.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that at this time he did not believe the planting of maples should be restricted. He agreed that diversity is important for any plan.

Motion by Board Member Fetterley and seconded by Board Member Salami to recommend approval of the Landscape Plan, contingent upon compliance with staff's review comments.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Moore, Board Members Fetterley, Salami, Bernard, Hagerty, Heifner, and Vikander. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

5.02: Update on Water Efficiency Grant Program

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that in 2022, the City of Ramsey was awarded \$19,800 in grant funding, through the Metropolitan Council, to implement a rebate program for certain water-efficient devices. The program went into effect July 1, 2022, and runs through June 30, 2024 (or until grant funds are exhausted if that is sooner). Eligible replacement devices include WaterSense certified irrigation controllers and toilets, as well as Energy Star certified dishwashers and washing machines. All City of Ramsey water customers that are current on their utility account are eligible to apply for a rebate of up to \$200, per eligible device, with a maximum cap of \$500 per address (rebate cannot exceed the cost of the device). As of November 14, 2023, approximately \$13,000 in rebates have been issued. This opportunity has been promoted through the City's website, social media, *Ramsey Resident*, *Ramsey Recycler*, and on the City's dynamic display sign along Highway 10 and seems to be appreciated by residents. Staff will continue to promote this opportunity throughout the remainder of the grant cycle to ideally fully exhaust the grant funds.

Chairperson Moore asked the percentage of residents in Ramsey on City water versus private wells.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that for a long time they were about 50/50 but believed that has tipped to about 60/40 with more people on City water.

Chairperson Moore commented that she would like to see something to encourage residents on private wells to conserve water as well. She stated that perhaps it could be as easy as sharing educational information.

Board Member Hagerty asked and received confirmation that Energy Star and WaterSense are not brand names but types of equipment. He asked if there is information on the website that would list eligible appliances.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that on the City website there is a link for the program with additional links that provide those specific lists of eligible appliances, toilets, and WaterSense irrigation controllers.

Board Member Fetterley asked if the appliance would need to be an upgrade or simply an Energy Star appliance.

Senior Planner Anderson confirmed that it would be any Energy Star appliance or device and it would not matter if you were replacing an existing Energy Star device or appliance.

5.03: Consider the Environmental Policy Board Meeting Calendar for 2024

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that annually the EPB reviews its meeting schedule and identifies alternate meeting dates when there is a conflict. He presented the 2024 meeting schedule, identifying conflicts in January and February as well as presenting alternate dates for the group to consider.

Motion by Board Member Hagerty and seconded by Board Member Bernard to approve the 2024 meeting calendar with the January meeting to be held on January 22nd and the February meeting to be held on February 12th.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Moore, Board Member Hagerty, Bernard, Fetterley, Heifner, Salami, and Vikander. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

Senior Planner Anderson stated that Anoka County reached out with a desire for Ramsey to host another Fix-It Clinic, on October 5, 2024. He noted the success of the previously hosted event in Ramsey and stated that the event would be held at the public works building. He also welcomed assistance from the Board on drafting articles for the newsletter. He confirmed that the City will be collecting holiday lights for recycling, beginning December 1st. He stated that there will also be dumpsters for cardboard recycling at the public works facility from mid-December through mid-January.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
Senior Planner

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.