

**West St. Paul Environmental Committee**  
**August 5, 2020**  
**West St. Paul Municipal Center-Administrative Conference Room**

**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Committee members in attendance: Jade Pennig, Tara Wright, Jonathan Wagner, Rebecca McCarty, Polly Saatzer, Kristy Otte, Laura Zanmiller

Non-voting members present: Dave Schletty, Samantha Green, Lisa Eng-Sarne, Bob Gausman

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Minutes** -A correction was made to the March 4, 2020 minutes. Laura Zanmiller was in attendance at the last meeting. The minutes of the March 4, 2020 were approved by the committee.

**b. Site Plan Review, Town Center One** – Schletty reviewed site plan memo for the redevelopment of Town Center I. The memo asks recommendations from the Committee for the Planning Commission and Council regarding the new five-story, 187 unit apartment building. The building will hold 5,000 square feet of retail. The site previously had multiple buildings on it: Maaco, Aamco, Block Buster, etc. The Granny Donuts building will remain unchanged. There are very few trees on the site. Five of the eleven trees will be retained. Code requires that 30 percent of the trees that are removed must be replaced. The applicant will exceed code and plant 46 deciduous trees, 20 evergreens and 5 ornamental trees. The applicant will also plant landscaping to provide a natural buffer throughout the property. To meet code requirements, one tree must be planted per 40 feet of property line. The plan exceeds this requirement. The applicant has also proposed an underground water storage and filtration system to manage the stormwater onsite. Schletty related the applicant will also build a public dog park with a dedicated parking lot.

Schletty was asked to comment on the tree species (Dwarf Korean Lilac and the Nova Japanese) that were being proposed. Schletty said that he felt it was a good mix of trees; the number of flowering trees was not overdone. It will look very nice onsite. The trees selected are good quality trees; the ones being planted in the parking lots are hardy and will not have a lot of issues. Gausman asked about the County trail and where it will go through the site. Schletty said that the trail is on the very north end of the property.

Member Otte commented: It is an aesthetic improvement for the area. She asked if there was any feedback from the neighboring residents. Schletty said this meeting was the first time the site plan has been reviewed. There have been no public hearings for this plan. He has not heard any input from any business owners. Wagner said that the committee has been looking at this site for a number of years. It is an exciting [plan.] It's great to have this parkway/bikeway put in. Member Pennig commented that does not seem like any of the shrubs are Minnesota native pollinators. It would be great to have the native plants represented on the plan list. Schletty said that this could definitely be done.

Member Wright asked who would maintain the dog park. Schletty said that it would be maintained by the property owner, not by the City. It would be a permanent dog park. Schletty said that he

thinks the stormwater/filtration system will be located under the parking lot. It would capture the run off from the parking lot.

**A motion was made by Wright to approve the plan with the recommendation that Roers [the applicant] use all neonicotinoid-free plants and wherever possible, Minnesota native species. Pennig seconded the motion. The motion carried. All Ayes.**

#### **4. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. 1010 Dodd Update-** Schletty said that the Committee started the plans for the site in the beginning of the year. Pennig came up with some really nice plans; McCarty worked on it as well. Council liked the plan. The pandemic halted the plans. Council suggested putting picnic tables at the site. Some of the businesses and restaurants nearby would have extra seating. The City has placed some picnic tables there. Eng-Sarne commented the City already owned the tables placed in the site and nothing has been spent for this project. The City is balancing COVID-19 concerns, budgeting and future plans for the realignment. Schletty said the park project, however, is not “dead in the water.” It will be revisited in the future. McCarty asked about the plaque to memorialize the police officer. Schletty said that the plans for the plaque had been discussed by Council. The decision was not to go forward with the plaque. It had been discussed by West St. Paul and Mendota Heights. Wagner said that the park [and plaque] would be temporary; it may be “wiped-out” in ten years because of the future realignment.
- b. Arbor Day Planning-** Schletty reported that the Arbor Day Celebration was cancelled along with everything else. In order to maintain our Tree City USA status, an exemption was granted this year. Otte suggested planting two trees for 2021.

#### **5. UPDATES**

- a. Green Steps** –Schletty said that they City program was put on hold as well. There were a few things inventoried. It was not enough to reach step three. The state put a moratorium on the program as well. Hopefully things will ramp up again towards the end of the year.
- b. Council-**Eng-Sarne said she appreciates the feedback from the Committee. The Committee plays an important role and it influences every single City project and policy.
- c. Staff-**There were no specific staff updates. City Hall is open for business. There were no layoffs. Some staff has been reassigned; the Recreation Coordinator has been reassigned to Building Permits Clerk. Some staff are telecommuting to work. It may cause some lag times in response to calls.
- d. Parks and Recreation Committee-** Gausman reported that the Art Park is going forward. There used to be an odd looking building at the corner of Butler and Dodd. Council brought the site to the Park and Recreation Committee and asked them to do something with it. The Committee suggested public art. West St. Paul does not have a lot of art. The City was built during the post-war housing boom, [and there was no effort for public art.] The City did some grading work on the site and made it ADA compliant. The City asked for suggestions from the art community for the park. They were not compelling enough for Council. The park sat vacant for a couple years. The arts community got together some grants for a project there. It is coming together. It is a developing story.
- e. Planning Commission-** Green said she is glad that the Environmental Committee meeting will be broadcast. The Committee does a lot of work and she is glad the public will be able to see it now. The Planning Commission will be working on a pollinator naturalist planting ordinance. The Planning

Commission gets a lot of the same requests from the Environmental Committee; she would like to solidify the recommendation in ordinance.

- f. **Chicken Ordinance-** Eng-Sarne said the Chicken Ordinance will get its final reading at the next Council meeting. Residents will be able to have more chickens in less space now.

**6. OTHER**

**7. ADJOURN**

With no other business before the Committee and with no objections, the Environmental Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon G. Hatfield