

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
390 Robert Street N., St. Paul, MN 55101-1805
MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Monday, December 18, 2006

Committee Members Present: Rick Aguilar, Song Lo Fawcett, Chris Georgacas, Georgeanne Hilker, Brian McDaniel, Annette Meeks, Tony Pistilli, Kris Sanda, Natalie Steffen

CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum present, Chair Georgacas called the regular meeting of the Community Development Committee to order at 4:05 p.m. on December 18, 2006.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES

The agenda was moved by McDaniel and seconded by Hilker. Motion carried. Hilker moved, seconded by McDaniel, the minutes of the December 4, 2006, Community Development Committee. Motion carried.

BUSINESS

Consent List

The consent list items were moved by McDaniel and seconded by Hilker. Motion carried.

2006-331 City of Farmington, Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Land Use Change & 270 Acre MUSA Expansion, Review File 16248-24

Staff recommends that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Allow the city of Farmington to put the proposed amendment into effect with no modifications including the MUSA expansion of 270.22 acres.
2. Inform the city that the CPA will not change the city's forecasts.
3. Advise the city:
 - a) Its local surface water management plan update is due by October 2007; and,
 - b) To continue participating in the Council's annual plat monitoring program.
4. Encourage the city to consider transit service in the site plan.
5. The Council supports the environmentally sensitive land use designation in the North Creek natural area.

2006-368 – Request for Reimbursement Consideration in Future Regional Parks CIP for Design/engineering of Mississippi River Regional Trail Segment in Dakota County and Related Amendment to 2006-07 Regional Parks CIP

That the Metropolitan Council approve the request to consider reimbursing Dakota County up to \$102,000 for design/engineering of the Mississippi River Regional Trail from Spring Lake Park Reserve to the city of Hastings. Eighty thousand dollars of the reimbursement is proposed to be funded by amending the 2006-07 CIP project description for project 06D-23 as follows:

“Partial reimbursement for design and engineering of regional trail from Spring Lake Park Reserve to the west Hastings city limit along CSAH 42, a distance of approximately 3.4 miles.”

The remaining \$22,000 would be considered for reimbursement in a future regional parks capital improvement program. However, the Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that reimbursement will be granted, and expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.

Action Items

2006-322 – Tax Base Revitalization Account Funding Recommendations

Marcus Martin, senior planner, reviewed the Tax Base Revitalization Account funding recommendations.

Discussion included inquiries about the implications of projects using Tax Increment Financing on the evaluation of proposals and about the status of a previous grant award to New Brighton for the same redevelopment area of the city. Staff responded that the evaluation criteria grant more points to projects not involving tax increment finance than those that do. Regarding New Brighton, staff indicated that there had

been a previously awarded TBRA grant to clean up a different site within this redevelopment area, but that the monies had never been used and the award was returned to the Council.

A question was raised regarding the apparently larger increase in net tax capacity for this group of proposals in comparison to previous funding cycles. Staff responded that this increase can be attributed in large part to hotel developments in the proposals recommended for funding in this round.

Because the recommended award for the Blaine proposal is for only a portion of their request and the project was the lowest ranked of those funded, a question was raised about whether it would have received full funding had more dollars been available. Staff indicated that it would have been fully funded if funding were available.

Supporting comments were made about applications from Blaine and New Brighton citing personal observation of the conditions at those two sites.

Chair Georgacas requested a future report to the committee regarding the performance of past TBRA award recipients.

Staff noted a correction to the summary table at the top of page 3 of the review record. The correct total of jobs should be 1,136 under the column heading “Fall 2006 Recommendations” and 25,176 under “Total 1996-2006”.

Sanda moved, seconded by Fawcett, that the Metropolitan Council award 11 Tax Base Revitalization Account (TBRA) grants as follows:

Projects recommended for Fall 2006 TBRA funding	Recommended Amount
Blaine – Medical Center (former Lee’s Wrecking)	\$64,000
Chaska – Block 6 Redevelopment	\$66,400
Columbia Heights Industrial Park - II North Lot	\$19,100
Minneapolis – 1209 Tyler Street NE	\$211,500
Minneapolis – Aloft Hotel	\$44,400
Minneapolis – Crown Iron/Electric Machine	\$690,000
Minneapolis – Pacific Flats	\$415,000
Minneapolis – SoHo 718 Washington Avenue N.	\$47,600
New Brighton – Western Northwest Quadrant	\$700,000
South St. Paul HRA – Bridge Point Business Center	\$88,900
St. Paul – Commerce Building	\$563,100
Total	\$2,910,000

Motion carried.

2006-341 – Spring Lake Regional Park Development Master Plan, Scott County, Review File 19844-1
Arne Stefferud, planning analyst, reviewed the Spring Lake Regional Park development master plan. There was no discussion.

Sanda moved, seconded by Pistilli, that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Spring Lake Regional Park development master plan (Review File 19844-1).
2. Request Scott County to submit to the Metropolitan Council estimated annual costs to operate and maintain Spring Lake Regional Park and projected revenue sources to cover those costs when it submits capital improvement grant requests for the park.

Motion carried.

2006-388 – Request for Reimbursement Consideration in a Future Regional Parks CIP for Dakota Rail Regional Trail Design/construction Plans, Three Rivers Park District

Arne Stefferud, planning analyst, provided background information and reviewed the request for reimbursement and responded to questions.

Meeks asked if any of the design money for the trail will be used for the eventual construction to Hutchinson. Stefferud responded that it was for the suburban Hennepin County portion. There will be another master plan for the area in Carver County and then out in McLeod County, which is out of the Council's jurisdiction, so the Council won't be involved.

Georgacas asked what options the parks district has after the 20-year lease is up. Boe Carlson, Three Rivers Park District, said the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority has recognized that this particular corridor is not in any immediate plans for a transportation system or a transit corridor and at the end of 20 years they would be looking at some renegotiation of that lease.

Meeks moved, seconded by Hilker, that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the request to consider reimbursing Three Rivers Park District up to \$648,644 for final design development and construction plans for the Dakota Rail Regional Trail in a future regional parks capital improvement program. However, the Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that reimbursement will be granted, and expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement.
2. Request Three Rivers Park District to submit construction plans detailing the exact location of the trail and any other pertinent information to Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) to ensure that the proposed construction will not interfere with the operation of any MCES sewer interceptors.

Motion carried.

2006-342 – Elm Creek Park Reserve Development Master Plan, Three Rivers Park District

Jan Youngquist, senior planner, reviewed the Elm Creek Park Reserve development master plan.

Meeks raised a concern with regard to the development of "camper" cabins in regional parks. A question of whether other regional parks have cabins was posed. Staff indicated that state parks have cabins and that the master plan for Lebanon Hills Regional Park in Dakota County has plans for yurts, which are tent-like structures.

Meeks voiced concern regarding the policy implications of the Council providing funding for cabins in regional parks. Staff indicated that the issue currently before the Community Development Committee was for approval of the master plan—specific funding of master plan elements would be determined during the regional parks capital improvement program process. Staff offered to initiate discussions of policy issues regarding cabins and project eligibility for capital funding with the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission.

A question was raised regarding the process for acquisition and the determination of price of the in-holding parcels. Staff indicated that acquisition costs shown in the master plan were the 2006 tax assessed values of the properties. Three Rivers Park District would enter into negotiations with the property owners on a willing seller basis, and would pay fair market value for the land. A follow-up question was asked regarding the anticipated price per acre of the in-holding properties. Staff explained that the price would vary by parcel and that some of the parcels had houses or other improvements on them that would affect the purchase price.

Georgacas commented that he wanted to make sure that staff gives the committee the benefit of their wisdom with respect to either an ad hoc determination or some broader policy. Stefferud commented that staff can bring the issue back to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission for discussion and a recommendation to the Community Development Committee regarding how to handle the issue either as a

policy amendment to the policy plan on what is eligible for capital improvement funding regarding this or some other approach.

Sanda noted that Glendalough State Park in Otter Tail County has basic rental cabins. Sanda noted the need for metro cabins in light of gas prices, but questioned that it was the role of the Metropolitan Council to provide cabins.

Meeks withdrew her objection as long as the subject is revisited prior to any funding requests. Georgacas requested that the minutes reflect the concern raised by the committee and Stefferud's intention to bring this issue to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission for further consideration.

Sanda moved, seconded by Fawcett, that the Metropolitan Council approve the Elm Creek Park Reserve Development Master Plan (Review File 19864-1).

Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

No items.

INFORMATION

Chair Georgacas reminded committee members that the next scheduled Community Development Committee meeting is a special meeting on January 16.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, McDaniel moved, seconded by Pistilli, to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Patraw
Administrative Technician