

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
390 North Robert Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Tuesday, February 19, 2008

Committee Members Present Chair, Natalie Steffen; Richard Aguilar; Sherry Broecker, Georgeanne Hilker; Tony Pistilli

No quorum being present, Committee Chair Steffen asked Phyllis Hanson to present the Diversified Rural Area Study Group update information item.

INFORMATION

Diversified Rural Area Study Group. Phyllis Hanson, manager, local planning assistance, provided a brief status report about the next steps of the Diversified Rural Area Study Group regarding the five specific areas previously discussed at the February 4 CDC meeting. She reported that a thorough study is being conducted on the existing cluster policies in the diversified rural area including where they may or may not impact the land use of that particular community. Hanson also stated that the Long-Term Service Area is being reviewed in cases where there is a cluster ordinance to determine at what point it will preclude future urbanization and how that relates to the three unit per acre policy. She noted that meetings are being scheduled with each specific community to determine how to implement their draft policies and plans. Hanson further explained that the city of Hugo will be invited to present their draft plan at the March 3 CDC meeting prior to their public hearing scheduled on March 6. Staff will also be working closely with environmental services to determine how that relates to their Long-Term Service Area. Hanson reported that transportation staff is in the process of updating their policy plan and explained that she has a copy of the existing language in the transportation policy plan. Discussion followed. Hanson concluded that an update and a policy discussion, as it relates to the Long-Term Service Area, will be presented at the March 3 CDC meeting. Chair Steffen requested Hanson to provide her with a copy of the existing language in the current transportation policy plan.

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Steffen called the regular meeting of the Council's Community Development Committee to order at 4:10 p.m. on Tuesday, February 19, 2008.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Pistilli, seconded by Hilker to approve the agenda. **The motion carried.**

It was moved by Broecker, seconded by Pistilli to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2008 regular meeting of the Community Development Committee. **The motion carried.**

BUSINESS

2008-41 – Amendment to Minnetonka Beach's Park and Open Space Element Adding Regional Trail.

Freya Thamman, senior planner, reported that she was presenting an amendment to the city of Minnetonka Beach's comprehensive plan - Park and Open Space Chapter. The city submitted an amendment that acknowledged the future Dakota Rail Regional Trail, which was previously not referenced in their plan. Thamman stated that the city of Minnetonka Beach is located in Hennepin County and is surrounded by the city of Orono and the waters of Lake Minnetonka. She provided an overview about the background and previous actions that relate to this amendment and explained that the Minnetonka Beach's 2020 comprehensive plan update (CPU) was acted on by the Metropolitan Council in December 2003, and it was *not* in conformance with the Regional Recreation and Open Space Policy Plan because it did not include reference to the proposed regional trail on the Dakota Rail right-of-way. The 2020 CPU did not present a substantial impact or substantial departure to the regional system since it preserved the transportation corridor and did not preclude a future regional trail. Thamman explained that the Council approved the City's 2020 CPU with the condition that if the railroad right-of-way was no longer used for rail purposes, the City would amend its CPU to conform with the metropolitan system plans.

Thamman indicated that the railroad was officially abandoned in 2004 and that the Council had made requests to the City to amend their CPU. She showed a map from the amendment that from the City's amendment that showed the Dakota Rail Regional Trail. Thamman stated the comprehensive plan amendment (CPA) is in conformance with regional system plans, consistent with Council policies and compatible with the plans of adjacent communities/jurisdictions. Thamman concluded her presentation with the proposed recommendation. A brief discussion followed.

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

1. Allow the City of Minnetonka Beach to put the comprehensive plan amendment into effect.
2. Advise the City to:
 - a. Include a description of its I/I program in the 2008 comprehensive plan update.
 - b. Review their local surface water management plan against the policies and required elements of the Council's *Water Resources Management Policy Plan*.

The motion carried.

2008-37 – Request for Acquisition Opportunity Grant to Partially Finance the Acquisition of 350 Water Street in Harriet Island-Lilydale Regional Park, City of St. Paul. Arne Stefferud, planning analyst, reported that the City of St. Paul has requested \$122,726 to partially finance the acquisition of a three-quarter acre parcel at 350 Water Street which is within the boundary of Harriet Island-Lilydale Regional Park. He pointed out the location of this parcel on a map. Stefferud then explained the breakdown of costs used to acquire the park and walked the committee through Option 2. He noted that the city has no CIP acquisition grants to help finance this property and explained that under Option 2, the city could not request additional funds to reimburse its local match for this grant in a future regional parks CIP if the request for \$122,726 is approved. Stefferud concluded by reporting that the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission recommended that the Metropolitan Council authorize a grant of \$122,726 from the Land Acquisition Opportunity Fund to the city of St. Paul to acquire the 350 Water Street parcel. The committee had no questions.

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

Authorize a grant of \$122,726 comprised of Metropolitan Council bonds in the Land Acquisition Opportunity Account portion of the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to the City of St. Paul. The grant will partially finance the land and structure associated with the 350 Water Street Parcel in Harriet Island-Lilydale Regional Park as shown on Attachment 2.

The motion carried.

2007-352 – Request for Acquisition Opportunity Grant to Partially Finance Acquisition of Lakeside Ballroom as Part of Lake Waconia Regional Park and Request for Reimbursement Consideration in Future Regional Parks CIP for Local Match, Carver County. Arne Stefferud, planning analyst, reported that Carver County has negotiated the purchase of a 2.94-acre parcel within the boundary of Lake Waconia Regional Park--Lakeside Ballroom property at a cost of \$2,530,000 including the appraisal and other items. The County has requested an Acquisition Opportunity Grant to finance \$1,000,000 of the acquisition cost and to have the County's share of financing the rest of the costs up to \$1,530,000 be considered for reimbursement in a future regional parks capital improvement program. Stefferud noted that Carver County has no CIP acquisition grants to help finance this acquisition and that this request is based on "Option 1: Existing Rules" for distributing grants from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund adopted on January 9, 2008. Stefferud stated that approval of this reimbursement does not commit the Metropolitan Council to finance the requested reimbursement in a future regional parks CIP—that would be subject to future Council action. Discussion followed.

The Committee asked if the ballroom building would be used after the private lease expired. Staff replied that Carver County is going to conduct a re-use study on various use options for the building. It may be used as a park visitor center and like other centers space can be used for group activities such as family reunions and wedding receptions for a fee. The Committee directed staff to add a third step to the recommendation requiring Carver County to report to the Council the lease revenue it receives from the Lakeside Ballroom building. This would verify the net costs incurred by the County in acquiring the parcel and subsequently the amount the Metropolitan Council may consider reimbursing the County through future regional park capital improvement programs. The Committee also asked if this acquisition was comparable to the proposed acquisition at Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Park Reserve, which the Council did not approve.

Staff replied that the proposal for Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Park Reserve was to add land to the park as well as to help purchase it. In this case, past Metropolitan Councils had considered the Lakeside Ballroom acquisition as necessary for Lake Waconia Regional Park and included it in the park's master planned boundary.

Broecker moved, with the addition of Step 3, seconded by Hilker, that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Authorize a grant of \$1,000,000 to Carver County comprised of \$600,000 from the 2007 State Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund appropriation and \$400,000 of Metropolitan Council bonds in the State Acquisition Grant Account of the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund. The grant will partially finance the lakeshore land associated with the Lakeside Ballroom Parcel in Lake Waconia Regional Park as shown on Attachment 2.
2. Allow up to \$1,530,000 of costs incurred and financed by Carver County for acquiring the Lakeside Ballroom Parcel minus the lease revenue the County receives from the seller to be eligible for reimbursement consideration in a future regional park CIP. 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.
3. Request that Carver County submit a copy of the lease agreement on the Lakeside Ballroom and report the lease revenue referenced in Recommendation 2 to the Metropolitan Council.

The motion carried.

2008-6 – Rush Creek Regional Trail Master Plan, Three Rivers Park District. Jan Youngquist, senior planner, reported that the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan* identifies a regional trail search corridor to connect Elm Creek Park Reserve and Crow Hassan Park Reserve in the northern portion of Hennepin County. Three Rivers Park District has completed the master planning process for the trail corridor which also incorporates the existing Elm Creek Regional Trail and provides a connection to Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park. Youngquist noted that the current Elm Creek Regional Trail will be renamed the Rush Creek Regional Trail and further noted that, when completed, will extend for over 18 miles and provide a connection between the Mississippi and the Crow Rivers. The entire trail corridor will traverse the communities of Brooklyn Park, Maple Grove, Dayton and Hassan Township and will provide linkages to several regional parks and trails. She provided an explanation of estimated costs in 2007 dollars, provided an overview of the recommendations, and stated that plan approval does not commit the Council to funding. Funding will be determined through regional park CIP process. Youngquist noted that Jonathan Vlaming, planning manager, Three Rivers Park District, was in the audience. Chair Steffen invited Mr. Vlaming to the table, and he provided a brief explanation about the acquisition approach options that Three Rivers Park is exploring. A brief discussion followed.

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

1. Approve the Rush Creek Regional Trail Master Plan (Referral No. 20144-1).
2. Require that prior to development of new trail segments, final plans be sent to Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review and comment to ensure the integrity of the interceptor system.

The motion carried.

2008-1 – Central Anoka County Regional Trail-East Alignment Master Plan and Request for Reimbursement Consideration in 2008-09 CIP. Jan Youngquist, senior planner, reported that the Central Anoka County Regional Trail will begin at the planned Mississippi West Regional Park in Ramsey, continue east to Bunker Hills Regional Park and the Rice Creek Chain of Lakes Park Reserve, and then continue on to the Washington County border on the east end of the trail corridor. The trail corridor will traverse the communities of Ramsey, Anoka, Andover, Ham Lake, Blaine, Lino Lakes and Centerville. Youngquist noted that once developed, the total length of the trail will be approximately 18 miles. Currently, there are three miles of existing paved off-street trail within the cities of Ramsey and Andover. This master plan is for the east alignment of the trail and addresses the nine miles of the trail from Lexington Avenue (CSAH 17) east to the Washington County border, in the cities of Blaine, Lino Lakes and Centerville. The remainder of the trail corridor was the subject of previous master plans.

Youngquist provided a funding overview and indicated that the estimated cost of development outlined in the master plan is \$1,600,000 in 2007 dollars. The trail will be built on right-of-way owned by Anoka County; therefore, there is no acquisition costs associated with the master plan. Approval of this master plan does not commit the Council to any funding at this time. Future development funding based on this master plan would be done through the Regional Parks

Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Council action is required to approve the CIP and to approve specific grants to Anoka County. She explained that Anoka County plans to construct a two mile segment of this trail through the City of Centerville in 2008 with an estimated development cost of \$250,000. The City of Centerville has committed to provide a local match of \$125,000. Anoka County is requesting that the \$125,000 that the County contributes to the project be considered for reimbursement in the 2008-09 regional parks capital improvement program. Youngquist noted that Karen Blaska, park planner, Anoka County, was in the audience.

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

1. Approve the Central Anoka County Regional Trail—East Alignment Master Plan (Referral No. 20140-1).
2. Approve the request to consider reimbursing Anoka County up to \$125,000 in the 2008-09 regional parks capital improvement program for the construction of a portion of the Central Anoka County Regional Trail-East Alignment. 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.

The motion carried.

2008-39 – 2008 Operating Budget Carry Forward Amendment. Guy Peterson, community development director, provided an overview regarding the community development 2008 operating budget. He reported that community development ended 2007 over \$600,000 under budget. He noted that the two parks-related carry forward items are necessary to allow expenditures for which carry forward in 2008 was anticipated and planned for last year. Peterson explained that the significant dollars sought for carry forward in 2008 for comprehensive plan review related work may be necessary to provide assistance for this top priority—approximately 170 comprehensive review plans are anticipated for review in 2008, but most of these during the second half of the year. Peterson also noted the carry forward of \$35,000 for the Metro Atlas project that is a joint effort of the Community Development’s research staff and the IS Department’s GIS staff. He also explained the shift of a staff person from the research unit in Community Development to the Metropolitan Transportation Services staff and the resulting change in revenues and expenditures. Peterson indicated that he is seeking approval from the committee, and noted that this amendment will be presented at the next Management Committee meeting and then to the Metropolitan Council in March. Discussion followed. The committee questioned whether an early hire would be of assistance during the transition in anticipation of the upcoming comprehensive plan reviews. Peterson responded and explained the hiring process (FTE vs. contracted assistance). The state hiring freeze that was implemented by Governor Pawlenty today was also noted by the committee, and Peterson responded to a question by confirming that the Council also falls under the umbrella of these hiring restrictions.

Hilker moved, seconded by Pistilli, that the Metropolitan Council amend the 2008 Unified Operating Budget as indicated:

1. Carry forward of \$325,000 is requested to provide budget authority from 2007 as follows:
 - \$50,000 – This money has been contracted to outside counsel to prepare the articles of incorporation, by-laws and internal policies for the Regional Parks Foundation of the Twin Cities. The contract was not completed in 2007.
 - \$50,000 – This money will partially fund the 2008 Parks Visitor Origin Survey. The entire study will cost approximately \$180,000. An outside consultant will be hired to determine the origin of park visitors (“local” as opposed to “regional”). This study will update findings of the 1998 Park Visitor Origins study. The resulting percentage will inform the formula used to determine the park capital improvements program.
 - \$190,000 – The funds may be necessary for contracted assistance, including possible legal expertise, in the review of over 170 comprehensive plan updates that will be submitted before the end of 2008. It will also assist with costs associated with the expansion of the ECMS pilot project to include more elements of the comprehensive plans, i.e., surface water management, transportation, waste supply and watershed plans.
 - \$35,000 – This money will be used to assist with the “Metro Atlas” project – online maps, tables and charts for the Council’s redesigned website. This project was identified as a top priority of the Regional Administrator in 2007 and is a joint effort of Community Development’s Research staff and the IS Department’s GIS staff.
2. Change in Revenues of (\$91,178) and Expenditures of (\$3,097)

- Reduction of \$91,178 in Salary Expense, offset by a reduction of Planning Chargeback Revenue of \$91,178, and reduction of one full-time equivalent, to recognize the transfer of staff from Community Development to Metropolitan Transportation Services.
 - Increase of \$88,081 in Salary Expense and one full-time equivalent to recognize the net effect of staff transfers between Community Development and Regional Administration.
3. This request will be presented to the Management Committee on February 27th, and the Council on March 12th, as part of a consolidated request.

The motion carried.

2008-43 – 2008 Community Development Committee Work Plan Update. Guy Peterson, community development director, provided an overview about the revisions that were incorporated into the CDC 2008 work plan since the February 4 CDC meeting. He revisited several topics in the plan and outlined activities for the committee including: regular business, other potential work items and outreach to constituents. Revisions to the policy decisions category and the additions to DRAG as previously explained by Hanson were addressed. A brief discussion followed.

Hilker moved, seconded by Broecker, that the Community Development Committee approve the Community Development Committee Work Plan as a work in progress.

The motion carried.

INFORMATION

TBRA Criteria & Selection Process Update. Marcus Martin, senior planner, provided an overview about three issues that have surfaced including: 1) Being undersubscribed for the first time; fewer applications submitted; and individual requests from the applicants were smaller; 2) some applicants were unclear about the demonstrated need criteria--but-for criteria; and 3) some applicants expressed confusion over costs incurred prior to the application date. Martin explained three proposed changes for the upcoming TBRA funding cycle as follows:

- Establish a minimum score for funding.
- Clarify the demonstrated need criteria.
- Clarify eligible costs incurred prior to applying for TBRA funding.

Discussion followed. Chair Steffen questioned whether this would be presented to the committee as an action item since these proposed changes include the assigning of points which is something new and different to applicants. Martin stated that these proposed changes are being presented as an information item. However, the material, if acceptable, would be presented as an action item in mid-March as part of the distribution plan that includes the LHIA, LCDA and TBRA accounts. Peterson noted that a point system is currently in place and clarified that this proposal is to establish a minimum amount of points that need to be secured by an applicant to be considered for funding. Chair Steffen suggested that staff move a clarified criteria regarding the eligibility of seeking reimbursement for already completed activities to the top of list on the TBRA funding application instructions. She expressed that she believed this would help applicants determine whether or not to apply for the TBRA funds if they have expended dollars for items other than investigation.

ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting of the Community Development Committee is Monday, March 3, 2008 at 4:00 p.m. in Chambers.

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Jadwinski
Recording Secretary