

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
390 Robert Street N., St. Paul, MN 55101-1805
MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Monday, March 19, 2007

Committee Members Present: Rick Aguilar, Chris Georgacas, Georgeanne Hilker, Annette Meeks,
Tony Pistilli, Natalie Steffen

CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum present, Chair Georgacas called the meeting of the Community Development Committee to order at 4:08 p.m. on March 19, 2007.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES

The agenda was moved by Pistilli and seconded by Hilker. Motion carried. Hilker moved, seconded by Pistilli, the minutes of the March 5, 2007, Community Development Committee. Motion carried.

BUSINESS

Consent List

The consent list item was moved by Hilker and seconded by Pistilli. Motion carried.

2007-96 – Request for Reimbursement Consideration in a Future Regional Parks CIP for the Removal of Structures and Site Restoration at Lake Waconia Regional Park, Carver County

That the Metropolitan Council approve the request to consider reimbursing Carver County up to \$200,000 for the removal of structures, which may include two homes, a pole barn, and other related farm buildings, and site restoration at Lake Waconia Regional Park 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

2007-54 – Baytown Township Comprehensive Plan Amendment, GV Properties, Review file 16335-7

Bob Mazanec, planning analyst, presented an overview of Baytown Township's request proposing a plan amendment for a 7.42 acre property to allow conventional subdivision of the property for three rural residential dwellings instead of the currently permitted one. The proposal would change the land use from rural-residential (5-acre minimum lot size) to single-family residential (2.5 acre minimum lot size). Mazanec indicated that the recommended action would set a precedent for handling rural residential land use plans that are inconsistent with *2030 Development Framework* density standards when lands are outside of long-term regional wastewater sewer service areas.

Council Member Steffen asked how the precedent would apply to communities in her district with similar situations. Mazanec said the precedent is making a distinction between properties or amendments outside a service area and those that are potentially within. Phyllis Hanson, local planning assistance manager, further responded that the distinction being proposed between Baytown and Steffen's communities is that in Baytown Township the potential service area is clearly defined with definite boundaries. In other communities where it hasn't been that clearly defined, such as where the entire community is identified as having long-range urban development and service area potential, this situation is different. Those are going to continue to be presented as more likely than not to be a substantial departure and impact until such time as there is a more clearly defined, and likely smaller, boundary of the location for future services.

Steffen also pointed out that in the past that definition has generally been related to the big pipe. Hanson said that was correct. Steffen added that the Council has recently changed policy in that for the first time it is building something outside of the area of the big pipe to service a sub-region. Hanson indicated the concern is a valid one which should be further explored as a rural issues work group discusses the diversified rural area more fully. The only distinction staff is making at this point is in those areas like Baytown Township where the Council has clearly identified long-term regional service areas. Staff is not making a distinction between service through a big pipe or another system. It will continue to be our effort through planning that areas within any potential regional service area will be more stringently protected for future urbanization

versus areas that are not within a potential service area. Policy applications beyond such basic distinctions will have to be addressed through rural issues work group follow up, particularly examples in Anoka County communities.

Meeks moved, seconded by Steffen, that the Metropolitan Council allow the Baytown Township GV Properties Comprehensive Plan Amendment to be placed into effect with no required plan modifications. Motion carried.

2007-82 – Annual Livable Communities Fund Distribution Plan

The Community Development Committee considered the elements of the *2007 Livable Communities Fund Distribution Plan* for the Tax Base Revitalization Account (TBRA), the Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA), and the Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) during a presentation by Jan Gustafson, manager, livable communities.

Staff noted that the outcome of two Council LCA legislative initiatives could result in amendments to the amount of funding available for LCDA and TBRA grants and to the calendars and selection processes for those two accounts. The \$8 million LCDA funding amount included in the plan assumes passage of a legislative initiative to provide a one-time allocation of up to \$1 million from LCDA funds to the Council's planning assistance fund. If this legislation is not enacted, the plan notes that the amount of LCDA funding available for 2007 would increase by \$1 million.

The second initiative that might require more significant changes to the plan's funding amounts, calendars and selection processes is a proposal to provide the Council with the option to transfer up to \$3 million annually from the Livable Communities Demonstration Account to the Tax Base Revitalization Account. During a hearing in the House Local Government and Metro Affairs Committee, the bill was amended by the author to allow the funds to be moved in either direction between the two accounts if either account receives an insufficient number of applications meeting funding criteria and program guidelines. If that initiative passes, it will be necessary to revise the plan to include additional procedures and calendar changes to implement the law.

Staff also provided the committee with an update on Chair Bell's plans to conduct a comprehensive examination of the LCDA program during 2007 with the intent to have the Council consider a retooling of the program for the 2008 grant cycle. The Council will likely involve a Council work group and is a topic that will be discussed in more detail during future Community Development Committee and Committee of the Whole meetings.

The annual fund distribution plan for 2007 is presently estimated to include:

- \$6.66 million in the Tax Base Revitalization Account (**TBRA**),
- \$8.0 million in the Livable Communities Demonstration Account (**LCDA**), and
- \$1.89 million in the Local Housing Incentives Account (**LHIA**)

Committee members asked several clarifying questions about the legislative initiatives, the possible effect they might have on the timing and evaluation of grant awards, and the goals of the LCDA work group to which staff responded. Other discussion included: examination of criteria related to projects that relinquished funds; the effective date of the legislation; the proposed planning assistance grant program; and trends related to participating communities.

Chair Georgacas asked for additional detail on the relinquished amounts. Gustafson responded that the amounts were as follows: TBRA funds \$1.15 million, LCDA funds \$1.4 million and LHIA funds \$257,000, and that these amounts were incorporated into the 2007 amounts.

Meeks moved, seconded by Hilker, that the Metropolitan Council approve the *2007 Annual Livable Communities Fund Distribution Plan*. Motion carried.

INFORMATION

MetroGIS 2006 Annual Report & Strategic Directions Workshop

Mark Vander Schaaf, director, planning and growth management, reviewed the *MetroGIS 2006 Annual Report* and the MetroGIS Strategic Directions Workshop. Vander Schaaf provided background on MetroGIS, referring to the annual report the committee received.

Vander Schaaf indicated that the Feb. 8 workshop was the first comprehensive strategic planning workshop for MetroGIS and was intended to generate consensus for a new MetroGIS business plan for the next 3-5 years. The workshop involved approximately 35 people, principally members of the MetroGIS Policy Board, including Council Member Pistilli, members of the coordinating committee (Rick Gelbmann, Mark Vander Schaaf) and selected other GIS experts throughout the region.

Vander Schaaf reported that there was a sense in the community that much of the original vision of MetroGIS had been accomplished, but that the world of information has changed considerably since 1995, raising the question of the role of MetroGIS in the age of the internet. The work that was done at the workshop is being processed and will be brought to the MetroGIS Coordinating Committee and to the policy board and at times to the Metropolitan Council and Community Development Committee as the business plan develops.

Vander Schaaf discussed emerging themes from workshop:

- The notion that MetroGIS and the world of geographic information is no longer just about data. When you are dealing with the internet you are dealing with the world of applications.
- Attention to areas beyond seven counties
- Collaboration with nonprofit and private sectors where there is mutual benefit
- New focus on benefit to end users
- Need for revised mission statement

Council Member Pistilli commented that MetroGIS defined a common language so all of the data could be brought together over county boundaries and be useful to the Council as a planning organization.

Committee & Liaison Reports

Chair Georgacas reported that the April 2 meeting may be canceled.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, Hilker moved, seconded by Meeks, to adjourn the meeting at 5:12 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Patraw
Recording Secretary