

***ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING – FEBRUARY 27, 2018
MINUTES***

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Julie Trude, February 27, 2018, 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present: Sheri Bukkila, Valerie Holthus, Mike Knight and James Goodrich
Councilmember absent: None
Also present: City Administrator, Jim Dickinson
Public Works Director/City Engineer, David Berkowitz
Natural Resources Technician, Kameron Kytonen
Others

UPDATE ON HANSON BOULEVARD NW RECONSTRUCTION

Mr. Berkowitz explained the design work for the 2019 Hanson Boulevard Reconstruction Project, which is 70-80% complete. The Anoka County Highway Department would like to update the City Council before the scheduled March 21, 2018, open house. The two main update items to be discussed are the noise wall conclusion and proposed slip lane (right turn lane) from Hanson Boulevard, northbound, to eastbound on Crosstown Boulevard.

Nick Dobda, Anoka County Highway Department, described the next steps in the project in more detail. There was also discussion about plans for the trail. Feasibility and reasonableness are the main criteria when considering noise walls. Construction, in the area of powerlines, has numerous requirements. There are also easements to consider and how much of a residents' property would be taken. It was concluded the noise walls are not feasible or reasonable.

Mayor Trude asked about a partial wall. Jason Orcutt, Anoka County Highway Department responded most of the houses currently have 6-foot fences. MNDOT fences are 8 feet or "nothing." He also described that noise is not "linear" [and is therefore able to go over a fence]. If a noise wall could be placed right next to the curb, then it could prevent sound from going over a fence. It was noted the utility easement says that nothing is to be in the right-of-way, also if, something is installed the power companies have the right to clear anything out of the easement area.

Councilmember Knight asked about the possibility of using thick foliage. The response was that it would take 300 feet of dense forest to reduce the noise. It was noted fences on berms are actually 8 feet tall.

Councilmember Holthus noted public utilities will not allow trees on their property, and on another project, the trees needed to be under 20 feet.

Mr. Orcutt noted there is no difference between 10,000 – 20,000 decibels, just like 3 kids are not louder than 2 kids, etc. MNDOT makes every attempt to put in noise walls on every project as they are required to do so, but none of the areas along Hanson Boulevard qualified. In the past one house along Bunker Lake Boulevard was allowed a variance for a 10-foot fence at the end of a noise wall.

Mr. Berkowitz stated residents were split on whether or not they wanted the noise wall. It was never put on a map for the community to see [what the ramifications would be]. Mr. Orcutt confirmed they welcome calls by the community.

Mayor Trude noted most of the resident's fences are in the public utility easements. She expressed there are a lot of practical people in the City that want a practical solution. Technically, people would need to move their decks, sheds, pools, etc., if a noise wall were to be put in outside the public utility easement.

Councilmember Goodrich acknowledged there are a lot of regulations to work with related to the public easement.

Mr. Orcutt stated they even looked into the possibility of the power company shutting down the lines, and it could not be done [for short periods of time].

Mr. Dobda referred to the right turn lane at Crosstown Boulevard is a challenge, as it is not possible to shift the road west or east, and they cannot shift the power pole north or south, without moving three large power poles.

Mr. Orcutt offered the change would get kids into a refuge island and then they would cross the street again. A tunnel is not possible at this location.

Mayor Trude asked if it was possible to force a double cross walk. Mr. Orcutt responded if a pedestrian is in the crosswalk, the vehicle must yield [creating a similar situation].

Councilmember Bukkila noted the way it is now, the kids have to cross Crosstown Boulevard to get to the trail system. She felt that parents have to teach them how to be safe and if they do not trust them, do not leave them unattended.

Mayor Trude stated her main concern is the location is across from the elementary school. She noted the City spent a lot of money to keep kids safe at Bunker Lake Boulevard. Not having a signal light crossing for pedestrians is her biggest concern.

Councilmember Holthus commented if the utility poles were moved, it could then be a controlled intersection. Mr. Orcutt responded if the crossing is "shortened up" [using a refuge island] then

the leg that people have to cross is shortened and it creates a safer situation than what exists today.

Councilmember Knight asked about traffic counts.

Mr. Orcutt noted a lot may need to be purchased if power poles are moved.

Mr. Orcutt confirmed dollars saved on another project cannot be used to put toward this safety issue. A Joint Powers Agreement is one of the next steps.

Mr. Berkowitz confirmed there are plans to bring something forward in March/April. There would be a temporary arrangement during construction.

Mr. Orcutt committed to meeting with the public first and then dependent upon the reaction from residents, next steps would be determined. The planned open house is in a month. Residents will be notified if they reside within ½ mile of the project.

They anticipate completing the plan before fall and then doing tree clearing over the winter, next year. Then construction work will start when the snow melts next year. The bulk of the work will be done in the summer of next year. The fall of 2019 most of the work should be done. Sod, etc. would be done in the spring of 2020. Next steps are the Joint Powers Agreement and discussing the right-of-way with residents.

DISCUSS STREET LIGHTING / HANSON BOULEVARD NW RECONSTRUCTION / 15-16

Mr. Berkowitz explained the City Council would review the information provided by Connexus Energy regarding street lighting as part of the 2019 Hanson Boulevard Reconstruction Project. He noted Connexus Energy has researched and provided a lighting layout and cost estimates to place street lights along Hanson Boulevard from Jay Street to Crosstown Boulevard. With the Xcel Energy overhead power on the west side of Hanson Boulevard and Great River Energy on the east side, there are limitations on the locations in which light poles can be placed. Mr. Berkowitz referenced a drawing and e-mail that identified potential lighting locations on the east side, estimated construction cost, and monthly fees. He noted the west side lighting was reviewed with Xcel Energy and there are only limited and inconsistent possibilities for lighting.

Mr. Berkowitz stated the street lighting construction cost will be funded by Municipal State Aid (MSA) funds and power and maintenance costs will be funded through the General Fund from the City's street lighting budget.

Mr. Berkowitz asked if the Council wanted to consider street lights. They would be box lights with LED bulbs. The spacing would not have consistency like on Bunker Lake Boulevard. \$128,000 would cover the costs for lighting strictly on the east side. Some lights could be placed on the west side, but not evenly spaced.

Mayor Trude asked Councilmembers to consider lights by Andover Elementary because it is dark there for evening activities.

Mr. Berkowitz noted there would be lights on the signals.

Councilmembers Goodrich and Bukkila spoke up for support for lighting around the entrances to the elementary school at the intersections, due to safety concerns, as well as lighting the trail area.

Mr. Berkowitz recommended doing the lighting as proposed on the east side, and on the west side by the school property.

The Councilmembers had consensus around this plan as expressed by Mr. Berkowitz.

RECESS AND RECONVENE

Mayor Trude declared a five-minute recess.

DISCUSS HONEY BEE ORDINANCE

Mr. Kytonen stated the City Council is requested to discuss the components of the Bee Keeping Ordinance to consider amending it to allow beekeeping on lots smaller than two acres. He explained with the recent concern and emphasis on protecting pollinators, more people are taking an interest in doing things to help make a difference. An Andover resident has an interest in beekeeping on his property, which is 1/2 acre in size. The City's current ordinance prohibits this activity on any lot less than two acres.

Mr. Kytonen asked whether the City Council would consider revising the ordinance to allow for beekeeping on 1/2 acre lots if certain training or licensing are obtained and/or an application process is formed, noting Andover is a pollinator friendly City.

Mark Maloney, 14208 Quince Drive NW was in attendance, along with Jim Meyers, beekeeper and honey producer, and Kevin Hardenette, Andover resident with a 2.5-acre lot.

Mr. Maloney thanked the Council for taking time to consider the issue. He mentioned he works for a City where they recently changed their ordinance. He noted there is a wide variation in how cities are addressing this topic. He acknowledged there is more to consider when the location is more residential vs. rural. He expressed there are a number of people who have an interest. The request is to amend the Code or direct staff to do research with other cities and their ordinances.

Jim Meyers has 4 acres on the west side of Round Lake. He stated bees are pollinators for gardens and provide honey. Mr. Maloney would like to have 1 or 2 bee hives. He explained

they have not talked to neighbors yet because current code would not allow them to have bees.

Councilmember Goodrich recommended that staff research other city ordinances.

Mr. Kytonen stated there are a lot of differences between the ordinances in cities. Ramsey, for instance, has no limits. There are a lot of beekeepers in St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Mr. Meyers explained bees go to the best pollen and nectar for that day. They leave the lot and then communicate to each other about where the best place is to go next. He stated swarms can be scary, but bees are gentle. In fact, you can put your hand in a swarm and if things go wrong with bees, it is generally the beekeeper's fault. Beekeepers keep the balance.

Councilmember Bukkila expressed concerns regarding those who are allergic to bees. Mr. Meyers stated that 1 in 20,000 people have anaphylactic shock. She expressed concern that smaller acreage would make her more reluctant due to potential emergencies.

Mr. Meyers expressed the importance of education in the community around beekeeping such as when is the hive full, and the dying out of hives in the winter.

Mayor Trude stated beekeeping is easy to exit, because if you do not do anything, the bees die in the winter.

Councilmember Knight suggested arriving at a safe distance [for hives from the neighbor's property].

Councilmember Bukkila stated her preference for beekeeping on lots of higher acreage as there would be less probability of an incident with neighbors. Mr. Meyers clarified that bees only sting to protect themselves and their colony and they do not sting when they are collecting nectar.

Councilmember Goodrich agreed that more information is needed about smaller spaces before he would be comfortable [with changing the City Code].

There was discussion about next steps including a possible licensing requirement and the importance of an educational component.

Mayor Trude recommended nothing would go to Planning & Zoning Commission at this time, and that Mr. Kytonen should work with staff on researching the issue and come back to the Council at a future workshop with sample ordinances.

Mr. Hardenette explained he just moved to the community in June and is on a big wooded lot, with 2.5 acres. He described the ordinance portion requiring fencing as "an annoyance," with 10-foot clearance all around a bee hive.

Mayor Trude expressed a desire to specify a certain amount of space on the property.

Mr. Meyers felt a person should have to have taken an in-person beekeeping course with an emphasis on cold weather climates. He volunteered to do such a course.

Councilmember Holthus confirmed she did not have an issue with acreage and that neighbors need to be educated and the concern is more about space rather than lot size.

Mayor Trude agreed an ordinance should probably state how many feet from house a hive could be located.

Mr. Berkowitz suggested a possible trial with one location. Mr. Kytonen could work with the neighborhood, and there could be a neighborhood meeting and see how it goes.

Councilmember Holthus suggested reviewing the Shoreview Code and to consider the number of “hives per lot size to scale it.”

Mayor Trude asked about a pilot. Councilmember Bukkila declined interest, asking to start with the information about licensing and training.

DISCUSS CITY CODE AMENDMENT / RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Mr. Dickinson explained current Code language limits religious institutions to the Residential, Limited Business, and Shopping Center Districts. During the January 23, 2018 Work Session, the City Council discussed and supported making changes to the Code to allow religious institutions within the Shopping Center and General Business Districts. Staff modified the land use table to reflect the desired changes and also researched surrounding community’s definition of ‘religious institutions.’ Staff found that Blaine, Coon Rapids, Maple Grove, and Brooklyn Center have the same definition as Andover. However, Brooklyn Park expands its definition to include: ‘Assembly, Banquets, Convention Halls or Conference Center, Club, Social; and Religious Institution.’ He asked whether the City Council wanted to consider adding similar definitions to the Code.

Mayor Trude stated the change was essentially to replace “church” with “religious institutions.” Mr. Dickinson confirmed was the case.

Consensus was the Code change would move forward to the Planning & Zoning Commission. This came about because the Courtyards of Andover is being sold to Passion Church, yet the primary use will be for banquet facilities.

DECEMBER 2017 GENERAL FUND BUDGET PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Dickinson presented the December 2017 General Fund budget progress report, noting it contains total revenue of \$10,825,139 and total expenditures, amended to include carryforwards

and approved transfers, of \$11,735,219.

JANUARY 2018 GENERAL FUND BUDGET PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Dickinson presented the January 2018 General Fund budget progress report, noting it contains total revenues of \$11,085,23 and total expenditures of \$11,265,315.

JANUARY 2018 CITY INVESTMENT REPORT

Mr. Dickinson presented the January 2018 investment reports. Liquid cash is at the lowest point the City would want it to be.

Mayor Trude asked about the Prairie Knoll parking lot, noting cash flow would be needed for upcoming parks and trails.

Mayor Trude asked if cash would be paid for architect fees. Mr. Dickinson stated last year this was able to occur and it was anticipated the same would be true for this year.

Mr. Dickinson reported that daycare plans would be in for review, as well as a strip mall by Christian Brothers Automotive. There will be an emphasis on residential development. The market on homes, in the \$400,000-500,000 range, is down and homes, in the \$300,000-350,000 range, is up.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Trude discussed the Maddie Rooney Day celebration being planned. It may need to be after spring break. It will be important to think about parking. She could also be the Grand Marshall of the Fun Fest parade.

There was discussion regarding a fire in Oak Grove that was mostly attended by the Andover Fire Department. There may need to be some conversations with neighboring cities.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Bukkila, Seconded by Holthus, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene White, Recording Secretary