

**ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING – JUNE 23, 2020  
MINUTES**

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Julie Trude, June 23, 2020 at 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present: Sheri Bukkila, Valerie Holthus, Jamie Barthel, and Ted Butler

Councilmember absent: None

Also present: City Administrator, Jim Dickinson  
Director of Public Works/City Engineer, David Berkowitz  
Community Development Director, Joe Janish  
Recreational Facilities Manager, Erick Sutherland  
Others

***COON CREEK PARK STREAM RESTORATION/20-28***

Mr. Berkowitz introduced Jon Janke with the Coon Creek Watershed District (CCWD) to present the workshop topic. Mr. Janke gave background information on CCWD and the Coon Creek. He explained the CCWD inspected Coon Creek and found significant areas of bank erosion which has washed into the creek and affected its functionality. He stated the CCWD has come up with a plan to address the erosion and sediment in the ditch. The CCWD received a \$400,000 grant from the State of Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to fix the ditch and improve the habitat. Mr. Janke explained CCWD also found cases of flooding in adjacent properties and has investigated options for mitigating the flooding issue. Mr. Janke detailed the public input process and explained the options for improving the creek and habitat. He stated once the CCWD has received public input, they will put a plan together and return to the City for a Joint Powers Agreement. He explained the CCWD is taking the lead on the project for design, cost, construction, and liability. He stated he needs approval from the City for the project and to access to the Coon Creek Park property.

Councilmember Holthus asked what types of stabilization techniques the CCWD would use. Mr. Janke stated they would add material to the bank, add rock, and revegetate it. He stated the intent is to have the creek look like it was never touched. He said a second way of stabilizing the bank is to use logs or roots from the removed trees which also adds habitat.

Mayor Trude asked if the CCWD has done any survey work to ensure they are doing the work within the park property. Mr. Janke replied some of the impacted property is in private property

and they are working with the owners. Mr. Janke stated the rest of the work will be far away from homes and occur in the park. Mayor Trude stated the CCWD would be placing debris from the ditch onto the banks. She asked Mr. Janke to explain the process so that when the Council gets phone calls, they can respond. Mr. Janke stated the CCWD would access the ditch by the railroad tracks and will not disturb private property much. They will also access via Coon Creek Park and will strive to minimize impact to the park.

Councilmember Bukkila asked if the CCWD is going to only excavate the ditch on private property and not restore the bank. Mr. Janke replied they will repair the erosion throughout the entire creek but contain excavation to the area in the park.

Councilmember Butler asked how long the project will take. Mr. Janke stated much of the project will occur in the Winter months and length depends on the extent of the project. It could take a few weeks to a few months.

Mayor Trude stated it is fortunate the CCWD obtained a grant to offset the cost, so it doesn't overburden the property owners. Mayor Trude asked if there were virtual options for residents to attend the public meeting. Mr. Janke stated there will be opportunities for residents to view the presentation live or recorded.

### ***DISCUSS RAILROAD PEDESTRIAN UNDERPASS EVALUATION/20-26***

Mr. Berkowitz stated Council charged staff with investigating the feasibility of a pedestrian underpass under the railroad tracks. He explained the City worked with a consultant and found the underpass of an 8 x 10 box culvert would be about 18 inches below the water table. Mr. Berkowitz stated the solution is to lower the water table after meeting the minimum cover of 3.5 feet below the railroad tracks. He explained the cost of determining if it is feasible to lower the water table is around \$100,000. He recommended bringing all the players together: the railroad, developer, CCWD, and staff to tackle the challenge. Mr. Berkowitz stated the underpass has an estimated total project cost of \$780,000. He explained the City has a residential lot where the underpass can go and if the City does not construct the underpass, the City would sell that lot back to Lennar.

Mayor Trude gave the background that led to the investigation of creating a pedestrian underpass. She stated the purpose is to connect the neighborhoods on each side of the railroad track and gain access to existing City parks instead of constructing additional parks.

Councilmember Holthus asked if a bridge over the tracks would be less expensive. Mr. Berkowitz stated a bridge over would cost about double.

Councilmember Butler stated he is underwhelmed about the project due to the cost and that it will benefit just a small portion of the City. He feels the money would be better used in creating additional trail connections benefiting the wider community. He stated he supports meetings to further investigate the option, however, does not support funding at this time.

Councilmember Bukkila stated the City has passed on many railroad pedestrian crossings due to cost and feels the funds would be better used at a busier pedestrian access.

Council reached consensus to no longer pursue the option of an underpass, unless they find the costs have changed significantly.

### ***COMMUNITY CENTER USER FEE DISCUSSION***

Mr. Sutherland explained he met twice with the Community Center Advisory Committee and presented research and ideas to address the Council's desire to have resident and non-resident fees for the walking track and Community Center. Mr. Sutherland presented the Advisory Committee's proposals:

1. Andover Resident Package: receive 15 admissions per household and free track package
2. Walking Track Package: Andover residents will receive for free; non-residents would pay \$2 per day or \$99 per year. Hours would be Monday - Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
3. Field House and Ice Arena Package: residents receive a discount.
4. Andover Resident Free Activity Days/Community Free Activity Days: periodically have days where residents can get a free admission to the activity of their choice. Dates would be advertised.
5. Preferred meeting room rental rates for Andover residents and businesses

Mr. Sutherland felt any of these options are feasible and manageable from a staffing standpoint. He also stated the software package the Community Center uses can accommodate these changes.

Councilmember Bukkila asked if the meeting rooms were already free. Mr. Sutherland stated meeting rooms are free for local non-profit groups, but private groups had to pay. Councilmember Bukkila stated her concern that meeting room prices are too high and informal community groups cannot afford it.

Councilmember Bukkila asked if there could be a 6-month package for the walking track and thought the \$99 annual track fee was too low.

Councilmember Barthel thanked Mr. Sutherland for bringing forth options. Councilmember Barthel stated he liked the 15 free passes for Andover residents and would like to see it offered every year. He thought the fee for an annual walking pass for non-residents was too low. He said he agrees with fees for using the meeting rooms and would like to see it lower for residents. He likes the idea of discounted fees for the field house and ice arena and would like to see it lower for residents.

Councilmember Holthus asked who is monitoring the gyms during the afterschool program. Mr. Sutherland stated the YMCA is continuing to monitor all the gym space during that time. Councilmember Holthus stated she originally thought there should be no one on the walking track during a hockey game and has since changed her mind. She said some games are so crowded that there is nowhere else to stand except on the track.

Councilmember Butler thanked the staff for coming up with options to address Council's concerns. He stated he supports the 15 free passes for residents in the first year and make changes as needed after that. He explained the Community Center Advisory Commission recommended all of the options as one package and were not asking Council to choose one over another.

Mayor Trude commented that there is a balance between the business operation of the Community Center and free activities. She asked staff to give feedback if the Council is going too far with free options.

Mr. Dickinson stated staff feels comfortable with the proposal and is keeping fees for ice and floor rentals at a market price.

***DISCUSS USES IN NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS ZONING DISTRICT***

Mr. Janish stated a local contractor shop owner is looking to purchase a property zoned Neighborhood Business. Mr. Janish explained the Council could allow this business at the proposed property by 1) modifying the uses in the Neighborhood Business District 2) insert language to allow this purpose within the Neighborhood Business District, 3) approving a Conditional Use Permit. Mr. Janish stated if the Council is interested in moving forward, staff can present code amendments to make it possible.

Mayor Trude stated she would like to see changes made to accommodate the business in the non-MUSA area and amending the Comprehensive Plan to reflect the change. Mr. Dickinson stated if the category was added as a sub-category, the Comprehensive Plan would not need to be amended.

Councilmember Holthus asked if the EDA had discussed this. Mr. Janish stated the EDA ran out of time to look at it so he brought it to Council for feedback. Councilmember Holthus stated she would like to see this use only outside the MUSA District and to move it to the Planning and Zoning Commission for discussion.

Councilmember Bukkila stated she did not feel it was appropriate within the MUSA as well. She is concerned that certain businesses may be a nuisance in a rural area if they produce too much noise. She stated if staff can write in which businesses were allowed, then she may support it. Mr. Janish stated by using a Conditional Use Permit, the City can put restrictions on the business for hours of operations, lighting, and storage.

Mayor Trude recommended including language stating limiting this type of business outside of MUSA and requiring a Conditional Use Permit.

Councilmember Barthel stated he supports a subcategory outside the MUSA and using a CUP.

Councilmember Butler stated he is open to a CUP and would like the input of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

***DISCUSS FENCING IN INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICT***

Mr. Janish explained staff was approached by a business owner working through their Commercial Site Plan (CSP) about utilizing a taller fence (six feet) in the front yard of Industrial Zoned Property. Staff is asking Council if they support a 6-foot fence in industrial front yards with landscaping. The business owner felt a 6-foot fence would achieve the desire to screen the business better than landscaping. The owner would use some landscaping to soften the fence line. Council has the option to amend the code to accommodate 6-foot fencing. Mr. Janish stated this could be exclusive to the Hughes Industrial area.

Council reached consensus to support 6-foot fencing in the Hughes Industrial Area and to seek Planning and Zoning Commission input.

***COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATED DISCUSSION***

Mr. Janish stated staff is ready to move forward with the Comprehensive Plan and has scheduled a public comment open house on July 13, 2020. The Comprehensive Plan will then be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission and return to Council for approval. Mr. Janish presented background on the purpose and process of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Janish reviewed the dilemma the Council and staff faced regarding the Met Council's required density for potential affordable housing and how they solved the issue. Mr. Janish explained that staff had to update many sections of the Comprehensive Plan due to the change in density. Mr. Janish presented a matrix showing each section of the Comprehensive Plan and the changes made to it. Mr. Janish announced the open house is on July 13<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. respecting social distancing, comments allowed on the City's website, the document posted on the website, and staff available by email and phone to answer questions. He stated the Comprehensive Plan could go to the Planning and Zoning Commission on July 14<sup>th</sup> and the Council in late July or early August.

Councilmember Bukkila stated she would like to revisit the density issue to bring Councilmember Butler and Barthel up to date on a particular section of the City which is proposed at 12-20 units per acre, the redevelopment area along Buner Lake Boulevard. She stated she felt this density was too high and wants it reduced to 8-12 units per acre. Mr. Janish explained if this area was lowered to 8-12 units per acre, the City would have to rerun the calculations to ensure it meets the 3 units per acre across the MUSA to meet minimum Met Council requirements.

Mayor Trude stated it is difficult to find a developer to build units at that lower density.

Councilmember Bukkila stated the density lost in this area could be made up in smaller pockets throughout the City where density can be slightly increased.

Mayor Trude stated the Council will have control over what goes in the area through the PUD process and adding pockets of higher density is not ideal in Andover and could change the character of our neighborhoods.

Councilmember Bukkila stated that adding townhomes throughout the City does not change Andover. She indicated that building an apartment building in one area to meet density requirements changes the character of the City more.

Councilmember Holthus asked what the odds of an apartment building being built in the redevelopment area. Mr. Janish replied the developer must go through the PUD process which gives the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City the opportunity to review and give feedback on the project, but he would expect an apartment type building could be proposed.

Councilmember Bukkila stated the City can give architectural feedback but not density changes.

Mayor Trude replied the EDA owns the land and has control over who it is sold to. Mr. Janish stated it is up to the developer to show they are using the land in an effective and efficient manner. Mr. Janish stated the developer must go through a detailed process and thorough review.

Councilmember Holthus stated the goal is to find a land use plan that is acceptable to the Met Council. Mr. Janish added that Council should be comfortable with the plan as well.

Councilmember Bukkila stated she sees reducing that area to 8-12 units per acre is a compromise. Mayor Trude replied that if the area is reduced to 8-12 units per acre, staff must go back and find more density in other areas.

Councilmember Barthel stated he does not like high density at all and finds it hard to support 12-20 units per acre. He said he does not like higher density near the high schools either and is favorable for density at the Andover Station North (ASN) ballfields.

Mayor Trude asked Mr. Janish to show the Council the areas in the City where high density is planned. Mr. Janish pointed to the areas in the City that are designated at each density and described what it would look like: single-family, townhomes, quad homes, or apartment buildings. Mr. Janish stated the 12-20 units per acre would likely be a smaller apartment building.

Councilmember Butler stated he is not a fan of high density. He stated some of the existing higher density areas are not in good shape and the City has little control over them. He stated the City has some control in the onset of a development on the areas the City owns. He stated he does not support Andover having multiple apartment buildings but can stomach it in one area to meet the density requirement.

Councilmember Bukkila stated she is not motivated to exceed the Met Council's expectations by going above 8 units per acre. She stated if the decision is to put pockets of medium density instead of high density, she would rather see pockets of townhomes versus apartment buildings.

Mayor Trude stated she would like to see an option for residents who can no longer manage a single-family home, cannot afford a townhome, and would like to transition to an apartment and still stay in Andover.

Councilmember Barthel stated he supports using the ASN ballfields for future higher density. Mayor Trude asked Mr. Janish to explain the ballfield proposal to Councilmember Butler. Mr. Janish explained the EDA owns a section of land at ASN and can zone it high density. The density issue the City is facing with the Met Council the property is an outlot.

Councilmember Holthus stated the Council is going to submit this plan to the Met Council and it is going to change because the City does not own all property and cannot control every development.

Mr. Dickinson stated the number of amenities in an apartment building determines if the building is market rate. He explained in order to get a market rate apartment building, the developer generally needs more units. Mr. Dickinson stated he has been a part of other Andover comprehensive plans where the can has been kicked down the road. He explained that is no longer feasible for Andover and the Met Council is going to hold Andover to their minimum requirements.

Councilmember Butler stated the choices are have a single higher density area, spread density out in smaller pockets, or use the ballfields for future higher density. Councilmember Barthel said by using the ballfields for high density, it buys the City time to determine how the Rural Reserve will be developed and allows a future Council to determine how the City will develop in 8-10 years.

Mayor Trude stated Council is not going to resolve this tonight but had good discussion. Mr. Janish asked if staff should move forward with the public open house. Mayor Trude stated he should.

Mr. Dickinson stated staff moved forward with adjusting the entire Comprehensive Plan because staff believed Council agreed on the land use plan. If Council changes direction now, the other sections of the Comprehensive Plan will be impacted and will need to be updated. Mr. Dickinson stated the public input session may need to be cancelled if Council does not agree on the proposed plan and should seek a super majority support before moving forward.

Mayor Trude called a workshop meeting on Tuesday, June 30 at 7:00 p.m. to continue the discussion on the Comprehensive Plan.

### ***DISCUSS 2021 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT***

Mr. Dickinson stated the deadline for department staff to submit budget items is July 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Dickinson reviewed budget guidelines with the Council and how the City is doing in achieving those goals. Mr. Dickinson stated he is currently using a 4.5% increase in tax capacity as that was identified in the Board of Review materials. Mr. Dickinson presented personnel related implications with impending retirements, COLA increases, and Union contract negotiations. He explained there will be a slight increase in cost for the services the City contracts: City Attorney and police services. Mr. Dickinson outlined Council memberships and donations/contributions. He explained charitable gambling is significantly down due to COVID-19. Mr. Dickinson stated he will be proposing increases for road and bridges and pedestrian trail maintenance. He indicated there will be an increase in the park dedication fund due to increased development. Mr. Dickinson briefly reviewed equipment, capital equipment, and facility maintenance. Mr. Dickinson stated he

is developing a plan for disaster recovery. He stated the expectation is to be up and moving within a day instead of weeks. Mr. Dickinson expressed the primary election will be simple, but the general election will be a challenge due to COVID-19 and social distancing requirements.

***OTHER BUSINESS***

There was none.

***ADJOURNMENT***

***Motion*** by Bukkila, Seconded by Barthel, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shari Kunza, Recording Secretary