

**ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING – SEPTEMBER 24, 2019
MINUTES**

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Julie Trude, September 24, 2019 5:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present: Mike Knight, Sheri Bukkila, Valerie Holthus (arrived at 7:15 p.m.) and Jamie Barthel

Councilmember absent: None

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

COMMUNITY BUS TOUR (5:00 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.)

The City Council toured the City with staff and discussed the following:

- Hanson Boulevard reconstruction review.
- Jay Street/ Martin Street mill and overlay and staff discussed that assessments to businesses at 25% of total project costs.
- Crooked Lake reconstruction project/storm water project. Public hearing will be this fall.
- 2020 Reconstruction/toured the proposed area.
- Fox Meadows Park/soccer fields completed project.
- Preserve at Petersen Farms/discuss street extension and wetland challenges.
- Villas at Crosstown Woods/grading near completion.
- Woodland Estates/mill and overlay project in 2020.
- Public Works cold storage/maintenance building/Veterans Memorial Boulevard.
- Community Center expansion.
- Andover High School tour provided by Principal Brodeur.

The City Council arrived back at City Hall at 7:15 p.m. and convened the Workshop Meeting.

Councilmember Holthus arrived at 7:15 p.m.

Councilmember Bukkila left at 7:15 p.m.

DISCUSS POLICY CHANGE REQUEST/DEAF CHILD AND AUTISTIC CHILD SIGN PLACEMENT

Mayor Trude noted the information was provided in the packet and asked if there were any questions for staff.

Councilmember Barthel asked the cost of a sign.

Mr. Berkowitz replied the cost of a double-sided sign would be \$250, while the cost for two one sided signs would be about \$300 because of the cost for the additional post.

Councilmember Holthus asked if there would be a mowing issue.

Mr. Berkowitz stated in 2007 there was a push for autistic signs, noting that these signs are not required by law and are at the discretion of the City and County. He stated at that time there was in depth discussion regarding the placement of signs and whether they would be allowed. He noted the decision was made to allow up to 12 signs as a trial, and the signs would be on the property of the person requesting the sign. He stated since that time, the City had up to 13 total requested signs, noting that 10 of those signs have been removed as the child ages and/or moves. He noted in some cases people opted not to have the sign because they did not want the sign placed in their front yard. He stated since that time there has been email correspondence related to the concern of having the sign placed right in their yard and the preference to have the sign further out to warn drivers as they approach. He noted he could not individually change that policy as it was based on Council direction.

Mayor Trude stated she was involved in the original discussion and related to deaf children the purpose is to alert drivers that the child will not hear a vehicle horn honking. She stated with an autistic child there was less clarity on what the sign would mean. She was unsure if the signs helped, but the parents wanted the sign to alert drivers that the child may not respond in a typical manner. She stated if signs are placed in a different location, those property owners would most likely complain.

Mr. Berkowitz commented the sign is placed in the right-of-way and not in the private property but is on the applicable property.

Mayor Trude stated the purpose of the sign is to alert drivers passing the neighborhood that a child may not respond in a typical manner. She commented if the sign is moved that may confuse drivers. She noted if a person with an autistic/deaf child does not want the sign on their property, their neighbor most likely would not want the sign on their property either.

Ahavah Cook, 1119 166th Avenue NW, commented they live in a neighborhood that is full of children and therefore everyone would benefit from having a sign encouraging vehicles to slow down. She stated she does not like the double-sided sign as most signs are on the driver's right

side and therefore the driver may not be alerted to the sign. She noted she lives on a bend and therefore drivers are not alerted much in advance. She recognized there is a difference between autistic children and deaf children. She stated while autistic children may need more supervision, deaf children are encouraged to be independent as they will eventually live on their own. She stated her child sometimes plays at neighboring properties and therefore the sign placement would be helpful in different areas. She stated while her child wears cochlear implants, he does not hear sounds in the same manner as others and can confuse a vehicle noise with a lawnmower. She stated she is doing her best to ensure that her child is practicing safety, although he cannot rely on his ability to hear. She stated the sign would not necessarily need to be in place until age 16 but would want to ensure that the sign encourages vehicles to slow down because there is a deaf child in the area. She noted her child is four and they continue to work on practicing safety skills.

Mr. Berkowitz stated on County roads the placement of signs is different because of the higher speed vehicles are traveling at. He stated in residential neighborhoods vehicles are traveling at lower speeds. He noted that signs could be placed two properties before and after the specific property to alert drivers, if that is the direction of the Council.

Ms. Cook explained the communication and cognitive abilities for deaf children tend to be about one year behind other children. She commented it will take a lot of time to practice safety skills and would like the vehicles to have additional reminder that there is a possibility that a child playing is deaf and unable to hear the vehicle.

Mayor Trude commented she would not want the parent to have a false sense of security either, that these signs would provide sufficient protection for her child.

Ms. Cook confirmed this would simply be a reminder for drivers as they enter the area. She stated as a parent of a special needs child, she never stops worrying.

Councilmember Holthus asked if this would be a change in the code.

Mr. Berkowitz stated he is simply asking for direction on the current policy related to sign placement.

Mr. Dickinson stated when changes are made to policy and signs are placed, staff generally will receive a call and most likely people will say they do not want the sign in their yard. He explained why staff is looking for Council policy direction that can be relayed to the public.

Mr. Berkowitz confirmed when areas were re-signed, staff would receive three calls on average complaining about the signs. He noted two lot widths would likely provide sufficient setback for drivers to be alerted to slowdown.

Councilmember Barthel asked why signs would not be placed on corners.

Mr. Berkowitz stated there needs to be clear direction rather than attempting to place signs in lower impact locations.

Mr. Dickinson stated in some instances block placement would work but on longer stretches of street that would not work.

Mr. Berkowitz stated it would be nice to have a certain setback related to sign placement that could be communicated to people when they call.

Mayor Trude stated perhaps this is reviewed on a case by case, noting that there are only a few requests for these types of signs.

Councilmember Barthel stated he would support two signs, as most drivers are not looking on the opposite side of the road for signs.

Mayor Trude stated the policy could remain the same and this could be considered as an appeal with findings of fact that support the request.

Mr. Berkowitz stated perhaps the deaf child sign is a different policy than the autistic sign policy.

Mayor Trude agreed that would make sense.

Mr. Berkowitz stated that location would be critical for separate policies, as it would be easier for staff to review the discussion when there are complaints.

Mayor Trude commented this should be considered as an appeal to the policy as it is a unique circumstance in a small neighborhood, on a small block with a curve, therefore staff was directed to place signs at each entrance. She commented these are large homes placed close together and if the sign is placed two or three homes out it would create conflict with the neighbors.

It was the consensus of the Council that the signs should be placed in the right-of-way at the corners of the entrance to this neighborhood.

Mr. Berkowitz identified the current signs existing and the possible location where the signs could be placed to ensure that drivers could be sufficiently alerted. He noted the meeting minutes will be attached to the application explaining the appeal and direction of the Council.

COMMUNITY VISION AND ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS AND VALUES DISTRIBUTION AND DISCUSSION

Mr. Dickinson stated he updated the document following the last review and discussion in June. He noted the information from Councilmember Barthel was also included in the packet. He reviewed the proposed document, noting no significant changes on the first and second pages. He highlighted clarifications that were made to the document following the discussion of the

Council.

Regarding Fiscal Goals (I) - Mayor Trude stated she would not want to bind future Councils and believed that the State has enough restrictions regarding the issuance of debt.

Councilmember Barthel stated that suggestion was based on language he submitted and is not based on limitations but more on discussion of how debt should be issued.

Mayor Trude stated the inclusion of a task force would give the impression that there is a problem. She stated if the City cannot issue debt and does not want to raise taxes, it would seem odd to have a task force related to referendum.

Mr. Dickinson stated the CIP identifies projects and funding sources by department. He explained that part of the CIP planning process includes the Council making a decision on the appropriate funding source for major infrastructure. He noted significant building additions would identify CIP bonds, which have a reverse referendum component, which is what was done for the Public Works facility. He stated the City does that to a certain extent and a public hearing is held on the CIP.

Mayor Trude stated she would be uncomfortable to ask residents how the Council should do its job. She provided examples on how task forces have been used in the past. She noted it can be a good tool in some circumstances but would not want to require that.

Councilmember Barthel commented he is still not discouraged on wanting to add that language.

Councilmember Holthus asked what the task force would do.

Mr. Dickinson stated the group would have discussions on when a project would go to referendum and which projects would require referendum, ultimately the Council would need to accept or reject their finding or recommendations.

Councilmember Holthus stated all of the large projects have already been decided on and therefore asked if the task force would discuss the ability to purchase a snowplow. She commented the decision-making ability is already in place and did not see the benefit of a task force on this topic. She stated each person that makes decisions based on the CIP has been an elected official, which already represents the votes of the citizens.

Mayor Trude noted based on social media comments, some residents believe that all projects exceeding \$3,000,000 should go to referendum which would include some road projects.

Councilmember Holthus noted additional views and input are already provided by the Boards and Commissions that make recommendations to the Council.

Mayor Trude commented it should be the job of the Council to decide what should or should not

go to referendum.

Councilmember Holthus did not believe that to add a task force would be a right goal.

Councilmember Barthel commented that his thoughts were not that this group would develop a guide after two meetings, but more of a longer-term goal perhaps two-year period.

Mayor Trude stated she does not believe there would be staff to support another task force and the related work.

Councilmember Holthus noted the task force would make a recommendation and if the Council disagrees, that would cause conflict. She believed that the City should stay with the current Boards and Commissions to provide input.

Councilmember Knight agreed he is satisfied with the current process.

Mayor Trude noted that suggested language change was denied by the consensus of the Council.

Mr. Dickinson reviewed all of the steps involved in CIP projects that include many opportunities for public input and communication of identified funding.

Mayor Trude noted the community center public involvement process started long before that project moved forward, and most likely prior to the time Councilmember Barthel moved to Andover, which is why he may have felt that issue was rushed. She stated perhaps there is a different way to improve that process moving forward.

Mr. Dickinson stated the City worked with the local associations on the community center process and believed that the information was being relayed to its members. He noted that every association relayed the information to its members, with the exception of one. He explained the City could have drilled down further into the associations to ensure that the information was being communicated to the members.

Councilmember Barthel stated he believes, in his short time on the Council, this is one of the best discussions that has occurred on an item in workshop. He stated this was an actual discussion and he valued the input given by the other members of the Council.

Councilmember Holthus stated she appreciated the honesty and the ideas submitted by Councilmember Barthel.

Mr. Dickinson continued to review the draft document, specific to commercial residential development/redevelopment and highlighted the proposed changes to language.

Councilmember Holthus referenced Item C, noting that there is one zoning area that contains 1.46 acres, labeled as limited business, and asked if that could be changed as the City will never

have more limited business.

Mayor Trude explained why that zoning district was added, noting it is intended to limit development to office development rather than all commercial development.

Councilmember Holthus suggested the parcel be changed to the same zoning as the adjacent business parcel, which is neighborhood business.

Mayor Trude stated there might still be a home on that property. She suggested that this item be bookmarked under Item C.

Mr. Dickinson noted a similar process was followed to reduce the areas of neighborhood business, noting most of those areas have been changed to residential since that time. He stated that item could be placed on a future workshop agenda rather than appearing in the goals section of this document.

Mayor Trude agreed this item could come forward for additional discussion, perhaps at an EDA meeting. She noted a few of these goals would be appropriate for EDA discussion.

Mr. Dickinson stated that Item H is a consolidation of three previous items.

Mayor Trude noted that Item I then seems repetitive.

Mr. Dickinson confirmed he could remove Item I as that intent is covered by Items C and H. He provided an update on recent discussions with the Metropolitan Council and adjustments that may be needed, mostly due to challenges with the Rural Reserve that may impact the population estimates for Andover.

Mayor Trude suggested alternate language for a Commercial/Residential item to read: Review ordinances to support tree preservation, use of solar energy, and a variety of housing types.

Councilmember Holthus asked what other cities are doing for environmental preservation.

Mr. Dickinson provided additional details on GreenStep Cities, which some cities are a part of. He noted the City has had consultants come through, but the answer continues to be that the buildings are too new to make updates cost effective. He reviewed the collaboration goals, highlighting updated language suggestions, and obtaining consensus on the different changes.

Councilmember Holthus commented she would like to have interpretative signage for Kelsey Round Lake Park.

Mr. Dickinson confirmed that was included in the Master Plan for Kelsey Round Lake Park, stating that would be directed to the Park and Recreation Commission. He continued to review the additional goals in the document and highlighting proposed language changes.

Mayor Trude and Councilmember Holthus agreed that “and remove unnecessary barriers” should be removed from a Livability/Image goal.

Councilmember Holthus referenced livability image goals, Item 5B, and noted she attended the last walking tour with the Open Space Advisory Commission. She stated the group believes that meeting in the manner they have been has not been effective and would like to hold regularly scheduled meetings. She noted if there are no discussion items, the meeting could be canceled.

Mr. Dickinson noted staff has already been provided with the direction to make that change.

Councilmember Knight stated it would be helpful to have more public awareness of the open space areas, as people are impressed once they discover the amenities. He noted a lot of residents are not aware of the open space areas or their purpose.

Mr. Dickinson moved to the submission provided by Councilmember Barthel.

Councilmember Barthel stated the current document is six pages long. He stated he attempted to organize the document in a cohesive manner, with the vision leading the organizational value and then to the goals and action items.

Mayor Trude commented he did a good job of making things more concise.

Councilmember Barthel noted there is nothing that was discussed tonight that was not included in this version. He noted it condenses the six pages into three in a more cohesive manner, similar to how a business would. He acknowledged the action items could contain more detail if desired. He noted there is a level of vagueness to some of the items.

Councilmember Holthus commented that vagueness would provide additional flexibility.

Mr. Dickinson noted that vagueness could be a double-edged sword. He noted he prefers some level of specificity and a longer list as it is a great defense when challenged and he defends on behalf of the Council.

Councilmember Barthel stated in a compromising manner he would suggest that the goals be left as is but would like the first 1.5 pages to be replaced with the first page that he drafted.

Mayor Trude stated she did have some problem with sentence structure, as the original document is written in the style that cities use relating to organizational values.

Councilmember Barthel noted he would be fine changing to that structure for sentences if that is preferred. He stated he would want someone to review for grammatical changes. He stated his focus was more to make the document more cohesive and concise.

Mr. Dickinson stated the original format was drafted to identify the City's long-term organizational values, both how the City is going to operate as an organization and how it is going to relate to its customers/residents.

Councilmember Barthel commented that an organization cannot have two different values, either something is valued or not valued. He noted while that may have been the intention, it is not how it reads.

Mayor Trude stated she understands the first part to be what the City believes, and the second part is how that could be communicated.

Mr. Dickinson stated he can work to attempt to meld the versions together, noting that one could be an external version while the other could be more detailed for staff level.

Mr. Dickinson provided an update on the Community Center process.

Mayor Trude stated the City needs to do a better job on communication. She noted many residents have pulled back from Facebook in order to avoid conflict.

Councilmember Holthus noted there will always be people that just do not care about, or pay attention to, anything going on in the city.

Mr. Dickinson noted the next Council meeting will be a very short meeting and therefore an additional workshop could be held after that meeting to cover CIP and budgeting items.

2020-2024 "DRAFT" CIP DISTRIBUTION/DISCUSSION

Mr. Dickinson stated there needs to be a decision on when to hold the public hearing for the CIP, whether that is October 15, 2019 or November 6, 2019.

It was the consensus of the Council to hold the public hearing on October 15, 2019.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Dickinson commented the YMCA is moving forward on their expansion plans and is requesting the City lend its name to conduit bonds. He noted this would not place the City at risk to pay the debt or impact the debt that the City can otherwise issue. He stated the legal counsels would like to call for the public hearing on October 15, 2019 and hold the public hearing on November 6, 2019. He provided additional information on the presentation that would be provided by the City's bond consultant. He noted the expansion would have a cost of about \$7,000,000 and the banks are accepting the revenue generated by the Andover YMCA facility as the only payment of the debt. He noted the banks understand that a mortgage or liens can not be placed on the property. He explained this is an asset that would be City owned but funded by the YMCA.

Mayor Trude noted the Community Center group met in August and usually comes in during budget discussions.

Mr. Dickinson noted there would be an attempt in October but acknowledged that is a busy month to assemble both groups.

Mayor Trude noted there are operational improvements that will move along with the Community Center expansion projects because it makes fiscal sense to complete the updates in conjunction.

Mr. Dickinson stated that money has been placed aside from community center operations to complete the necessary improvements for the facility.

2020 SPECIAL REVENUE, DEBT SERVICE, CAPITAL PROJECTS, ENTERPRISE, AND INTERNAL SERVICE FUNDS BUDGET DISTRIBUTION AND DISCUSSION

Mr. Dickinson offered to respond to any questions. He provided an update on the current status, noting a substantial number of assessments were identified for payment in September if the developer did not want for that amount to be certified to tax rolls. He advised that some developers chose to make those payments then in September, which was not expected. He noted some identified projects could then move forward ahead of schedule. He provided an update on the health insurance quote that was received from HealthPartners, noting the City has actively been marketing to all health insurance groups.

Mayor Trude stated at the last meeting of North Metro Mayors there was discussion on the cost of building permits and the items that are funded through that revenue, noting that there is a lot of overhead.

Mr. Dickinson stated the Presidential Primary election will be a huge cost. He noted he has submitted a question to determine if the same number of precincts are required for the Presidential Primary and highlighted some challenges as three precincts now present logistic problems.

2019 BUDGET PROGRESS REPORT (THROUGH AUGUST 2019)

Informational/no additional report.

2019 CITY INVESTMENTS REVIEW (AUGUST 2019)

Informational/no additional report.

ADJOURNMENT

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Motion by Holthus, Seconded by Barthel, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Staple, Recording Secretary