

INVER GROVE HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MONDAY, March 3, 2025 - 6:00 P.M. - 8150 Barbara Ave

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The City Council of Inver Grove Heights met in regular session on Monday, March 3, 2025. Mayor Dietrich called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present In-Person: Council Members: Acting Mayor Murphy, Gliva, and Scales; City Clerk Rebecca Kiernan, City Attorney Nason, Community Development Director Jason Ziemer, Fire Chief Judy Thill, Fire Marshall Scott Oswald, and Planning Consultant Kevin Shay

Absent: Mayor Dietrich

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion to approve the agenda by Scales, second by Gliva.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Options for a New City Seal

Presented by City Clerk Rebecca Kiernan

History was presented. In 1965, when Inver Grove Heights became a City, an official seal was needed to prove a document was official. The City followed the Great State seal of Minnesota which used to be an image of a farmer, trees, a horse and rider, and a sun with rays along with the French words "L'Etoile Du Nord" (Star of the North)

Minnesota State Seal. On May 11, 2024, the new Great Seal of the State of Minnesota and State Flag approved by the State Emblems Redesign Commission in 2023 became the office state emblems. The Great Seal of the State of Minnesota features a lake, a loon, and the North Star and "Mni Sota Makoce" (Land of the sky tinted water)

A City seal is a symbol that identifies a city and verifies official documents (also known as a corporate seal). When applied to paper documents, the seal is raised, conveying that the document in hand is both official and an original. The Seal is used for authenticating documents: certify official records, such as ordinances, resolutions, and certificates. The seal is also used on City issued licenses and proclamations.

Five new designs for the seal were presented.

Questions for Council:

1. Should the word "Seal" or "Official Seal of " be included?

2. Should the seal include Minnesota, MN or neither?
3. Should the seal include Dakota?
4. Outer or inner borders - is there a preference?

A new seal would align with the Bridge Builder award design and with the change of the State's seal. The Police Department is changing their badge emblem to reflect the Swing Bridge also.

Most councilmembers agreed Minnesota should be on the seal somehow. "Dakota" was agreed on that it did not need to be on there. "Established" could be abbreviated. It was agreed that "Official Seal" should be included. The Communications Department will make the edits and bring back for Council decision.

B. Potential Amendment(s) to Zoning Code Requirements Regarding Hoop Structures

Presented by Community Development Director Jason Ziemer and Planning Consultant Kevin Shay

Background

- Variance request for an existing hoop structure denied (August 2024)
 - Property zoned on I-1
 - Voted to deny variance request
 - Directed staff to research hoop structures & bring back to Council for discussion
- Hoop Structure Conflicts
 - Do not conform to commercial & Industrial exterior building material standards

Current City Code

- Prohibits permanent & temporary hoop structures in R, P, & I zoning districts
- Allowed in A, E-1, & E-2 districts on lots less than 2.5 acres
 - 500 square feet
 - 50-foot setbacks
- Allowed exemption for commercial greenhouses

Building Code

- Temporary Structures
 - Allowed for 180 days or less
 - No structural engineering
- Permanent Hoop Structures
 - Structural engineering required

Staff Evaluation & Comments

- Input from Planning, Building Inspections, Code Enforcement, & Fire
- Residential Districts
 - No changes; keep current prohibition in all R districts

- Keep current permissions & language for A, E-1, & E-2 districts
- Business Districts
 - Typically allowed in association with commercial greenhouses
 - Not expand for other uses in business districts
- Industrial Districts
 - Consider allowing permanent hoop structures
 - Limit based on use of outdoor supplies
- Public District
 - Should include allowance for public works operations

Discussion Points

- Council Question
 - Should permanent hoop structures be allowed in Industrial districts?
 - If yes, under what permissions & standards:
 - Specific/limited uses, size, location & setbacks, etc.
- Positives & Negatives of Changing Code
 - Possible positives if membrane structures
 - Customizable based on need/use
 - Cost-effective for business & quick to build; easier maintenance
 - Possible negatives of membrane structures
 - Greater vulnerability to weather extremes & show age faster; require frequent cover replacement
 - Flexibility of use depending on use or customization of structure
 - Lesser lifespan & lower taxable value to City

Councilmembers agreed that permanent structures should be mandatory for industrial areas. They agreed that hoop structures should be allowed on lots greater than 1.75 acres in the E-1, E-2, and A zoning districts. Temporary structures would be held to the same standards as permanent structures in terms of maintenance and would not be able to be left dilapidated or unmaintained. There will be clarifying language in the code for the requirements of commercial greenhouses. Criteria for accessory units would still need to be met to have multiple hoop structures.

Ryan Stanton, 7280 Dickman Trail commented that there is a lot of good use for the hoop structures on industrial properties. He would like to extend zoning of these hoop structures for the industrial areas as they are used for many different uses and think that there would be more issues in estate districts with maintenance. When used for industrial areas, they are made tougher depending on their use and set back from areas where they could be an eyesore and are often used for coverage and protection of smaller equipment and materials.

C. Potential Amendment(s) to Zoning Code Regarding Above Ground Storage Tanks

Presented by Planning Consultant Kevin Shay

As background, a variance request approved regarding Aboveground Storage Tanks (ASTs) in July 2024. Council directed staff to research AST regulations & consider possible amendments.

City Code sections with standards related to ASTs are the Fire Prevention Code & Zoning Code.

- Fire Prevention code standards:
 - I-2 allowed with no limitations
 - A,B,P, & I-1 districts have limits to 500-gallon tank or 1,000-gallon dual tank
 - Sand & gravel overlay allows as a CUP when associated with asphalt plant
- Zoning Code
 - Fuel storage & dispensing: Permitted principal uses in B-1, I-1 & I-2
 - Fuel storage for crude oil, gas, natural gas & propane: CUP in I-2

Staff Evaluation & Comments

- Input from Planning, Building Inspections, Code Enforcement & Fire
- Move from Fire Prevention Code to Zoning Code allows for alignment of districts
 - Allowed zoning districts after move from fire prevention code is A, B, P, I-1 & I-2
- Change from Permitted or Conditional Principal Use to Permitted Accessory Use
 - Principal Use means use can exist on the property by itself & no other uses
 - Accessory Use means can exist but only when secondary to primary use of the property
- Require a fire permit from the Fire Marshal prior to use; site plan required with permit

Should the City simply defer to Fire Code or keep size restrictions? State Fire Code regulates the size based on use & liquid being stored. Current City Code (500 or 1,000 gallons) is far more restrictive than fire code.

Should I-1 & I-2 continue to allow ASTs as a principal use vs accessory uses? Define under what circumstances an AST would be a sole, principal use.

Ryan Stanton, 7280 Dickman Trail commented that 500-gallon tanks are too small for many commercial and industrial uses. Typically, suppliers provide the tanks and service them.

Fire code covers a lot more factors of safety than what the zoning code covers. Tanks are relatively safe and not only the tank itself has safety precautions and requirements depend on the category of the contents inside. The tanks at the Wescott Plant are considered essential services and would not be impacted by this specific code.

Council members agree to go forward with the code amendment of making ASTs accessory use and matching the State Fire Code for flammable and combustible liquids in above-ground storage tanks.

ADJOURN:

Motion to Adjourn at 6:51 p.m. by Scales, second by Gliva.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0 Motion carried.