

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING

Thursday, September 27, 2018
7:00 p.m.

Inver Grove Heights City Hall, Council Chambers

A G E N D A

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
- 4. APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES FOR MAY 24, 2018**
- 5. APPLICANT REQUESTS**
- 6. OTHER BUSINESS**
 - a) **MINNESOTA GREENSTEP CITIES**
Program Status Update
 - b) **DAKOTA COUNTY COMMUNITY FUNDING**
Program Update
- 7. ADJOURN**

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Chair Trenzeluk

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Chair Ted Trenzeluk, Sarah Brass, Ken Johnson, Lauren DeGidio

Commissioners Absent: Joan Gabriel, Robert Heidenreich, Patricia Todd (excused), Nichole Boehmke (excused) and Jesse Fillmore (excused)

Staff Present: Heather Botten, Associate Planner

4. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from April 26, 2018 are not approved as a quorum is not present.

5. Applicant Requests

Chair Trenzeluk stated a quorum was not present by the Environmental Commission; the Commission will still hold a meeting to discuss the item in front of them, but there would not be an official recommendation.

a) **CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS: Consider a wetland replacement plan for future 65th Street.**

Ms. Botten presented the request stating the City will be constructing a new segment of 65th Street between Hwy 3 and Argenta Trail. A wetland inventory was conducted for the project area, it was determined one wetland would be impacted. The new segment is needed to accommodate traffic needs as the Northwest Area develops. The Hwy 3 intersection improvements will occur this construction season and 65th Street is to be constructed in 2019.

Based on the design of the roadway project, one wetland will be impacted and therefore a wetland replacement plan must be approved by the City for the project to move forward. There would be a total of 0.15 acres (6,735 square feet) of permanent wetland impacts with this construction. Wetland impacts would be mitigated at a 2:1 ratio through purchase of wetland credits. City Council approved payment for wetland bank credits for this project.

City Staff, as part of the WCA Technical Evaluation Panel, recommends approval of the wetland replacement plan.

Ms. Botten stated that Dustin Simonson from WSB was in attendance to answer any technical questions about the project.

Chair Trenzeluk stated that the item in front of the Commission was only the wetland replacement plan, nothing that deals with the actual construction improvements or road alignments. Ms. Botten replied in the affirmative.

Commissioner Johnson stated that .15 acres of wetland would be impacted, will this wetland be replaced with a new wetland or one that is existing. Ms. Botten replied that credits would be purchased for a wetland off site.

Commissioner Johnson commented that if we keep buying wetlands that are existing instead of creating new, all the wetlands will eventually be gone.

Chair Trenzeluk commented that a lot of time the wetland credits are used to purchase credits that are outside Dakota County.

Dustin Simonson, WSB, stated the wetland plan follows the guidelines in the wetland conservation act, which is enforced by the State of MN. This wetland is proposed to be replaced with credits for a wetland in Freeborn County. The process requires the applicant to first look for credits in the same watershed as the wetland being impacted, from there the County the wetland is located and then the banking service area.

Chair Trenzeluk asked if the County was in favor of the wetland plan. Ms. Botten replied in the affirmative.

Commission DeGidio asked if the wetland was actually located in Freeborn County or was just the wetland bank located there. Mr. Simonson replied the credits are in Freeborn County, located in the banking service area, but the impacted wetland is outside of Freeborn County.

Commissioner Johnson asked if a picture could be sent to the Commission on what the new wetland looks like.

Mr. Simonson replied he could contact the wetland bank manager for a picture. He continued stating that nothing new was being created, the wetland is already in existence. The bank owner created the wetland, and then there is five (5) years of monitoring to prove vegetation standards, hydrology, and changes to the soils to show they either created or enhanced a wetland before they are qualified to own banking credits.

Commissioner Brass asked if the wetland was created in the hopes it would then sell. Mr. Simonson replied in the affirmative.

Chair Trenzeluk asked if any neighbors contacted the City with concerns or complaints. Ms. Botten that she was not aware of any neighbor comments.

Joe Klutsky, St. Louis Park, stated he was a student in environmental management. He asked if a wetland bank was a financial institution. Mr. Simonson replied a wetland bank was not a financial institution; a lot of times a group is formed that creates wetland credits to sell that is privately owned.

Mr. Klutsky asked if any revenue was generated throughout this process or if it was strictly preservation. Mr. Simonson replied that wetland banking is with private owners and they do make a profit.

Mr. Klutsky asked if the new location of the wetland is equivalent to the existing one, like having similar wildlife and habitat. Mr. Simonson replied the intent of WCA (wetland conservation act) is to replace in a similar habitat; they may not have the exact same but replacing at a ratio of 2:1 helps with the mitigation.

Mr. Simonson stated the wetland being impacted is a degraded wetland and determined to be isolated and not connected to any other water sources, there is currently limited value and habitat. Chair Trenzeluk stated that generally, if the wetland is pristine the wetland would not be impacted.

Mr. Klutsky commented that real estate development would be more valuable, if they were building around wetlands. Chair Trenzeluk offered the opinion that, in this case, the wetland of .15 acres is not of value to save and build around.

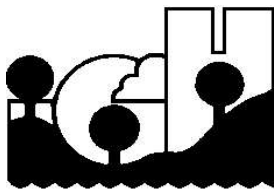
Chair Trenzeluk commented he would make a recommendation to approve the wetland plan based on the City and County recommendation, Commission DeGidio seconded the motion. Commission Trenzeluk asked how the Commission felt about the request. Generally, the Commission was in support, Commission Johnson had some reservations regarding the replacement plan.

Ms. Botten stated she has worked with the City for 16 years and this was the first time she has run into not having a quorum when an action item was on the agenda. She continued stating she would have to look into if the discussion recommendation was sufficient or if the item would have to be brought back to the Commission for an official recommendation. Chair Trenzeluk stated in the 15 years he has been on the Commission this was the first time he has come across the no quorum issue as well.

6. Other Business

7. Adjourn

Commissioner Degidio moved to adjourn at 7:22 pm. Commissioner Brass seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.



TO: Environmental Commission

FROM: Ally Hillstrom, Environmental Specialist

SUBJECT: GreenStep Cities Progress Report

DATE: September 27, 2018

BACKGROUND

Minnesota GreenStep Cities is a voluntary assistance, recognition, and challenge program designed to help cities achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals. GreenStep Cities is a free, continuous improvement program, managed by a public-private partnership. The program is based upon 29 Best Practices (which includes 175 possible opportunities to meet those Best Practices) centered on five categories: Buildings and Lighting, Land Use, Transportation, Environmental Management, and Economic and Community Development.

The program addresses, social, environmental and financial matters – all things that residents care about. Having a safe place to live with opportunities for engagement in community events, shopping, dining out, good schools, clean water and air, and an equitable rate of taxation are all examples of how residents measure the services provided by the City. The Best Practices are designed to help cities like ours to provide services in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

STATUS

In 2016, the City of Inver Grove Heights was the 100th city to join the GreenStep Cities program, which has since expanded to 122 cities. This program encourages participating cities to share their success stories with one another by showcasing them at monthly workshops and publicly documenting their completed actions. Once a city completes required Best Practices, they are rewarded and recognized for reaching the next step of the five-step program. In June 2018, the City of Inver Grove Heights was recognized at the League of Minnesota Cities Annual Conference for reaching Step 2 of the program by completing 12 of the 29 Best Practices.

At this time, the City has documented 40 completed actions. These actions were completed prior to joining the GreenStep Cities program due to the work of City Staff and Council. The implementation of these did not require additional staff time – they were simply part of the day-to-day operations that are considered part of providing high quality services for residents.

MOVING FORWARD

With collaboration from the Council, Staff, and the Environmental Commission, we plan to reach Step 3 by May 2019 to be recognized at the 2019 League of Minnesota Cities Annual Conference. To meet Step 3 and other sustainability goals, staff will focus on completing the following Best Practices by targeting their required actions listed below:

Best Practice #13: Efficient City Fleets (*Actions 13.2 & 13.3 Required*)

2. Right-size/down-size the city fleet with the most fuel-efficient vehicles that are of an optimal size and capacity for their intended functions.
3. Phase-in no-idling practices, operational and fuel changes, and equipment changes including electric vehicles, for city or local transit fleets.

Best Practices #15: Sustainable Purchasing (*Action 13.1 Required*)

1. Adopt a sustainable purchasing policy or administrative guidelines/practices directing that the city purchase at least:
 - a. EnergyStar certified equipment and appliances and
 - b. Paper containing at least 30% post-consumer recycled content.

Best Practices #24: Benchmarks & Community Engagement (*Actions 24.1 & 24.2 Required*)

1. Use a committee to lead, coordinate and report to community members on implementation of GreenStep best practices.
2. Organize goals/outcome measures from all city plans and report to community members data that show progress toward meeting these goals.

Best Practices #25: Green Business Development (*Any Two Actions Required*)

1. Grow new/emerging green businesses and green jobs through targeted assistance and new workforce development.
2. Create or participate in a marketing/outreach program to connect businesses with assistance providers, including utilities, who provide personalized energy, waste or sustainability audits and assistance.
3. Promote sustainable tourism in your city, and green tourism resources to tourism and hospitality businesses in/around the city.
4. Strengthen value-added businesses utilizing local "waste" products and renting products/services.
5. Lower the environmental and health risk footprint of a brownfield remediation/redevelopment project.
6. Promote green businesses that are recognized under a local, regional or national program.
7. Conduct or participate in a buy local campaign for community members and local businesses.

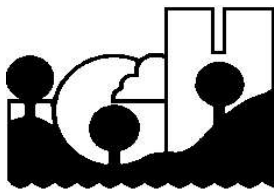
Best Practice: Building and Lighting category (*One Best Practice Required*)

- BP #2: Efficient Existing Private Buildings
- BP #3: New Green Buildings
- BP #4: Outdoor Lighting and Signals
- BP #5: Building Reuse

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

The status of each Best Practices is identified in the GreenStep Cities Progress Report table below.

Inver Grove Heights: GreenStep Cities Progress Report (Sept 2018)									
Best Practices #1 - #5: Buildings and Lighting	Best Practices #15 - #23: Environmental Management								
1. Efficient Existing Public Buildings ✓ 2. Efficient Existing Public Buildings 3. New Green Buildings 4. Outdoor Lighting and Signals * 5. Building Reuse 	15. Sustainable Purchasing 16. Urban Forests ✓ 17. Stormwater Management ✓ 18. Parks & Trails ✓ 19. Surface Water Quality * 20. Efficient Waste and Wastewater Facilities * 21. Septic Systems * 22. Solid Waste Reduction 23. Local Air Quality * 								
Best Practices #6 - #10: Land Use	Best Practices #24 - #29: Economic & Community Dev.								
6. Comprehensive Plan ✓ 7. Efficient City Growth ✓ 8. Mixed Uses ✓ 9. Efficient Highway-Oriented Development ✓ 10. Conservation Design ✓ 	24. Benchmarks & Community Engagement 25. Green Business Development 26. Renewable Energy * 27. Local Food ✓ 28. Business Synergies 29. Climate Adaptation/Community Resilience ✓ 								
Best Practices #11 - #14: Transportation	Table Key								
11. Living Streets ✓ 12. Mobility Options ✓ 13. Efficient City Fleets 14. Demand Side Travel Planning * 	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>✓</td><td>= Completed Action</td></tr> <tr> <td>*</td><td>= Under Status Review</td></tr> <tr> <td>Bolded</td><td>= Required for Step 3</td></tr> <tr> <td>(No symbol)</td><td>= Not yet completed</td></tr> </table>	✓	= Completed Action	*	= Under Status Review	Bolded	= Required for Step 3	(No symbol)	= Not yet completed
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TO: Environmental Commission

FROM: Ally Hillstrom, Environmental Specialist

SUBJECT: 2018 & 2019 Community Funding Update

DATE: September 27, 2018

BACKGROUND

Funding from Dakota County is provided on an annual basis to assist recycling efforts within City limits, at public buildings and public gathering spaces. This aid is provided to City's within the County to improve recycling efforts County wide and to educate residents and businesses on recycling. A study conducted in 2013 showed that 75% landfilled material is recyclable content. In response to this study, the Minnesota State Legislature has increased recycling requirements, with a goal being set by the State for Dakota County, to reach a 75% recycling target by the year 2030.

Dakota County has once again set aside funding to assist local communities in their efforts to participate and to educate residents. This includes new requirements such as:

- Implementing organics recycling collection at City Hall
- Implementing recycling best management practices in all public facilities
- Planning and preparing for future city policies pertaining to recycling at events/festivals
- Providing an additional paper shredding opportunity for residents
- Educating multi-unit property managers and residents on recycling topics
- Supporting Dakota County's Solid Waste Master Plan through city ordinance changes, waste-abatement activities, and outreach

The approved 2019 Community Funding Application and JPA is expected to be received from Dakota County in November 2018.