



City Council/Manager

May 12, 2020 – 6:30 pm
Virtual Webex Meeting

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The meeting began at 6:30 pm.

Present: Mayor Harris and Council Members; Rosenquist, Fonnest, Sanberg and Harris.

Staff present: City Manager Cruikshank, City Attorney Cisneros, City Engineer Oliver, Environmental Resources Supervisor Eckman, Planning Manager Zimmerman, City Planner Campbell, Finance Director Virnig, Physical Development Director Nevinski, Assistant City Engineer Kakach.

1. Boards/Commissions 2019 Annual Report and 2020 Work Plan

A. Environmental Commission

B. Planning Commission

C. Board of Zoning Appeals

A. Environmental Commission

Scott Seys, Environmental Commission Chair presented the 2019 Environmental Commission Annual Report and 2020 Work Plan. Mr. Seys discussed the 2019 commission accomplishments: The City of Golden Valley completed step 4 of the GreenStep Cities Program, an assistance and recognition program that helps local cities achieve their sustainability and quality of life goals. The commission has provided the Council with energy use recommendations, for instance participating in Xcel Energy's Partners In Energy community collaboration program. The commission recommended the adoption of a resolution endorsing pollinator protection and promotion of habitat. The commission also focused their 2019 efforts in providing input and feedback on the City's solid waste hauling discussion, natural resources management with a focus on the Bassett Creek Nature Area and making recommendations on zoning code revisions to remove barriers to local food production. In terms of the 2020 Work Plan, Mr. Seys outlined the priorities. These are based on goals in the Resilience & Sustainability, Water Resources, and Parks & Natural Resources chapters of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the GreenStep Cities Program, and the City's participation in Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy Community Collaboration Program. Among them are: Achieve GreenStep Cities step 5 status, host an education workshop on sustainable yards and pollinator habitat utilizing the commission's budget, partner with the Human Rights Commission on a joint project or event.

The Council commended the Environmental Commission on their work and efforts. The Council suggested the commission reached out to district schools and learn more about programs they have put in place to promote more student engagement. The Council encouraged the commission to share more details on the GreenStep Cities Program so that residents could learn and engage more.

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B. Planning Commission

Ronald Blum, Planning Commission Chair presented the 2019 Planning Commission Annual Report and 2020 Work Plan. Mr. Blum provided a highlight of the 2019 activity. Almost all the projects reviewed were Conditional Use Permits (CUPs). The commission saw a reduction in the number of applications it reviewed in 2019, resulting in a five-year low. The Commission considered amending zoning texts: Firearm Sales, Architectural and Material Standards and Mixed Use Zoning District.

The 2020 Proposed Workplan recommends carrying out phase III of the Downtown Study, including the completion of the city's Bicycle and Pedestrian Network, adjusting institutional subdistricts and updating the Medium-Density Residential Zoning District to achieve target densities. It also proposes Zoning Code amendments and updates, such as but not limited to, adopting new restrictions on Tobacco Sales in the Commercial Zoning District and revisiting the zoning districts in which Places of Worship are allowed to be consistent with the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). The Commission will continue to review and make recommendations on land use applications, including subdivision requests, CUP and Planned Unit Developments (PUD). In terms of commissioner training and education, the commission will work to respond to the interests of individual commissioners and will receive training on variances provided by City Attorney Cisneros.

The Council asked about updates on the Xenia project. Staff confirmed that the progress is ongoing and inspections staff believes the building will be completed by the end of 2021 (the development agreement in this project did not include a benchmark or timeline for the completion of the project).

Chair Blum summarized comments and discussion from commissioners. Among them, implementing tracking procedures that include metrics and measurable data on commission progress. The commissioners appreciate the freedom to engage in discussions and celebrating different points of view. There were specific requests to have informal meetings to brainstorm without having to discuss specific agenda items.

The Council thanked the Planning Commission for their continued work and for providing the 2019 and 2020 highlights.

C. Board of Zoning Appeals

Due to some technical difficulties with the meeting connection, Planner Campbell provided an overview of the 2019 Board of Zoning Appeals Annual Report. It includes variance requests and commission consideration including approval, modifications and denials. Planner Campbell explained that many of the requests related to garage or home additions, parking modifications, etc. He gave a run through of the BZA decisions and the type of projects. In terms of the 2015-2019 five year period, the BZA considered 127 variances. The majority of the requests were approved whereas about a fifth of the requests were denied. The most common types of projects were garage, fence or home or building addition—given that the majority of the requests are for property that is located in residential areas. Outgoing BZA Chair Nancy Nelson was able to re join the conversation. She provided Councilmembers an overview of the Board of Zoning Appeals work including the process of rotation of Planning Commission members throughout the calendar year.

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Ms. Nelson explained how the Commission is very dynamic in their work and function as a good team addressing all sorts of requests while considering multiple criteria for analysis.

Planning Manager Zimmerman addressed the Council and explained that the BZA bylaws and City Code require a Planning commission member be present on BZA meetings for a quorum to exist. Zimmerman noted that the reason for this requirement is to balance the fact that the Planning Commission and the Council are creating the zoning laws, while the BZA is looking for ways to review or vary from them.

The Council, Chair Nelson and staff debated adding a designated rotating commissioner for the calendar year. The Council directed staff to explore this possibility and coordinate with the Planning Commission.

Chair Nelson thanked the Council for their recommendation. The Council thanked outgoing Chair Nelson for her service and thanked the Commission for their continued work and time commitment.

2. Discussion on Membership to Municipal Legislative Commission

City Manager Cruikshank presented the staff report. The City Council has manifested its desire to adjust the fiscal disparities formula to increase the City's financial ability to reinvest dollars in its infrastructure. Mr. Cruikshank reported that the Council has been in consensus around this matter for the past 3 years, this year agreeing in pursuing the position more aggressively. The Council is considering joining the Municipal Legislative Commission (MLC) to increase the potential of a more focused and multi cities effort regarding the fiscal disparities. Mr. Cruikshank explained that the City would not need to pay a membership for the year 2020 if they decided to join the commission. Moving forward, membership would amount to about \$6,000.00 a year and the City would budget for it in the 2021 proposed budget.

The Council discussed that having attended multiple MLC meetings, there is intersection and commonalities among member cities, with a targeted scope on issues that are of interest to cities like Golden Valley. The Council agreed that exploring the idea of creating relationships with member cities would be beneficial. Taking part in MLC could be a strategic long term commitment to the benefit of Golden Valley.

3. Letter of Support for Bassett Creek Regional Trail Alignment

*Per Council determination discussion of item 3. superseded discussion of item 2. **

Physical Development Director Nevinski provided an overview of the staff report. Three Rivers Park District (TRPD) and the City of Golden Valley have been working in collaboration to increase the likelihood of a federal grant award to fund the development of the trail. As a part of the application process, TRPD and the City have developed 60% of the preliminary plans. TRPD lead efforts to host two open houses at locations along the corridor last December and February. Invitations were sent to businesses and residents within 500 feet of the corridor. TRPD made efforts to reach out to underrepresented communities in the area (the City also solicited input through an online survey).

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Matt Swenson, Landscape Architect at Three Rivers Park District and Project Manager presented an overview of the plans and trail segments to the Council. He explained that TRPD and the City were unsuccessful with the grant application in 2018. The plans are now including a multi-use local section of the trail from Regent Avenue west to Douglas Drive to increase the likelihood of success in getting approved this year. Mr. Swenson addressed rights of way in certain parcels, transit disruption impact and the incorporation of crossing options in specific areas of the trail (likely a pedestrian bridge).

The Council discussed lowering residential traffic speed limits along Golden Valley Road and Glenwood Ave and the possibility of improving safety on the Regent and Golden Valley Road intersection. Staff explained that legislation passed this year does not give Hennepin County the ability to lower speed limits. In regards to the intersection, staff explained they are discussing safety measures with the county and exploring different possibilities. The Council also discussed bus stops along the trail and the possibility of including local funding to address costs.

The Council thanked TRPD and City staff for their extensive work throughout this important project.

4. Financial Impact of COVID-19 Revenues and Expenditures

Finance Director Virnig presented the staff report. Mr. Cruikshank and Ms. Virnig explained that the pandemic has had significant impact on the City of Golden Valley's 2020 revenues and this in turn will affect future budgets. The degree to which the budgets will be affected is uncertain at this time but various projects have already been delayed. Staff provided a projected COVID-19 Financial Impacts to Cities template, showing Golden Valley's total estimated impact at 3.23 million dollars. Staff explained that the City should be entitled to justify and get COVID-19 relief expenditure reimbursements, in particular when it relates to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES).

5. Council Review of Future Draft Agendas: City Council May 19, City Council June 2, Housing and Redevelopment Authority Work Session June 9 and Council/Manager June 9, 2020.

No changes were submitted for future draft agendas.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.

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Shepard M. Harris, Mayor

ATTEST:

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