

Natural Resources Commission

Meeting Minutes October 6, 2021 (Virtual Meeting)

Attendance: Commissioners: Mike Schrage, Brandon Krumwiede, Mike Pennington, Judy Gibbs, Brian Fredrickson, John Lindgren, Tiffany Sprague, Nancy Schuldt, Allison Ray.

City Staff: Diane Desotelle, Natural Resources Coordinator; Clark Christenson, City Forester; Jim Filby Williams, Director of Property, Parks & Libraries; Jennifer Ondrik, Administrative Specialist.

Call to Order:

The meeting started at 6:02 p.m.

Old Business

Strategic Public Lands Re-alignment Project

Diane shared the draft memo she had prepared with the assistance of the Property Services staff that outlined the purpose and process for protecting state tax forfeit lands acquired by the City for open space and/or public use.

Commissioner Krumwiede suggested that a map be created showing a visual representation of the four major categories of parcels and how they are distributed throughout the City; Future Parkland, Trails, Stormwater Protection, & Natural Resources.

Commissioner Schultz suggested that this memo, once finalized, and associated guidance policies be drafted in a matter that clearly explains the *intent* of these parcel designations and proposed that this memo be attached to each deed so that future leaders and citizens can better understand the reasoning behind each parcels' designation.

Commissioner Fredrickson recommended that the City consider asking the Attorney's office to draft and sponsor this memo as a legal document. Commissioner Krumwiede suggested the selection criteria memo approved by the NRC and adopted by City council be added as an addendum to this memo.

Director Filby Williams agreed to look into these possibilities. The group agreed to continue this discussion at the December Commission meeting to give staff the time needed to address these issues with property services and the attorney's office.

New Business

Viewshed Discussion

Clark Christenson outlined a view shed tree removal request that he received from neighbors around the 1300 block of Skyline Parkway. According to City Ordinance the removal of more than 5 trees must be brought to this Commission. He explained that the intent was to remove vegetation (small aspen and boxelder) blocking views. The group discussed the pros and cons of the request and difficulties managing the entire Skyline Parkway in accordance with the management plan.

The Commission voted to have the City Forester meet with all residents within 200 feet of the proposed vegetation removal and report back findings from the on-site visit before any further action is taken. **VOTE: Yes – 7, No – 0**

Natural Resources Coordinators Report

Diane updated the Commission on her work over the past month. She indicated that a majority of her time was spent focused on the details of the land swap and associated draft memo. She reported that the NRMPP work is moving along well and thanked those Commissioners who sat in on the EPA decision support tool sessions. She informed the Commission of upcoming opportunities for further information including a public information meeting being planned for November 8th and more on the decision support tool November 17 and 18th. She informed the Commission that it was budget season right now and it appears the Natural Resources budget will be smaller in 2022, however, external partners are moving forward on many projects. The beach nourishment work with the Army Corps went very well this season and we are coordinating a presentation at the November Park Point Community Club meeting.

Forester's Report

Clark updated the Commission on his recent field work, mainly ash removals and plantings. He indicated that the agreement with the Ikes has been completed and is expected to be finalized in the next few days. He and his crew have been out marking trees for sales to be cut around the Zoo. Clark indicated that the MN DNR did a lot of LIDAR (aerial GIS) work this land year and landowners have been requesting data. The City will be completing some vegetative plots to assist in ground-truthing the aerial work. Commissioner Krumwiede explained that this field work helps provide vertical accuracy.

Director's Report (Jim Filby Williams – Director of Property, Parks, & Libraries)

Director Filby Williams did not have any additional updates for the Commissioners but spent time answering a few questions on budgets, CIP planning, and state bonding requests.

Public Comment

Betty Greene spoke in support of documenting stormwater parcel preservation for future reference.

Adjournment

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:38, M/S/C