



Title:	Appointment of Manager Hejmadi to the 325 Blake Road Developer Engagement Process Review Committee
Resolution number:	21-010
Prepared by:	Name: Michael Hayman Phone: (952) 471-8226 mhayman@minnehahacreek.org
Recommended action:	The recommended action designates Manager Hejmadi to serve as liaison to the 325 Blake Road developer engagement process as a member of the Review Committee, along with the previously appointed development liaisons of President White and Manager Maxwell.
Schedule:	January-March 2021: Letters of Interest and Roundtable Discussions with Potential Development Partners March-June 2021: Proposals, Interviews and Development Partner Selection
Past Board action:	Res # 20-066 Authorization to Execute a Cooperative Agreement with the City of Hopkins for Coordinated Planning, Improvements and Development for 325 Blake Road Res # 20-080 Appointing Board Liaisons to Public Improvement Project at 325 Blake Road Res # 20-098 Positive Determination of the Feasibility Milestone and Authorization to Solicit Interest in Potential Redevelopment of the 325 Blake Road Site

Summary:

In 2011, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) made a strategic acquisition of land at 325 Blake Road, Hopkins as part of a regional scale effort to establish the Minnehaha Creek Greenway. This effort identified opportunities for area wide stormwater improvement, ecological restoration of the Minnehaha Creek riparian zone and corridor linkage with upstream/downstream restoration projects. It is envisioned that, through strategic partnership with the City of Hopkins (City), a development partner will be selected to deliver an integrated project on the portion of the site not utilized for watershed restoration.

In August 2020, the MCWD and City approved a cooperative agreement to guide the coordinated planning, improvements and redevelopment of the site, and establish a clear partnership framework to successfully deliver on the partners' shared vision for the site. A key element of the cooperative agreement is the continued involvement of policy makers as liaisons to the process. This Joint Liaison Group, which is comprised of two MCWD Board Managers and two City Council Members, reviews process documents, staff generated recommendations and development considerations, and prepares recommendations to the Board of Managers and to the City Manager and City Council.

The cooperative agreement also identifies a series of steps that the partners will take to advance the process towards developer engagement and the potential selection of a development partner. As such, in December 2020 the Board of Managers found a positive determination of the feasibility milestone and authorized the Staff Coordination Team (comprised of MCWD and City project staff), in coordination with its key development and design advisors, to solicit interest in redevelopment of the 325 Blake Road site.

As the developer engagement process proceeds, the cooperative agreement provides that review of the final proposals will be guided by a designated Review Committee comprised of the Joint Liaison Group (four liaisons) and one additional Board Manager. Although the Review Committee will not fully participate until the proposal review process is underway, the Joint Liaison Group is scheduled to meet intermittently during the process, providing an opportunity for the third Board Manager liaison to plug in with the Liaison Group early to build a rapport with the team.

In addition to the Joint Liaison Group, the Board of Managers also appointed Managers Olson, Rogness and Loftus to serve as design liaisons to the 325 Blake Road Regional Stormwater and Greenway Project and Cottageville Park Phase II Riparian Restoration Project. These three managers are available to meet with staff during key phases of the capital project design effort and report to the Board of Managers with recommendations on critical milestones or policy questions that arise. The use of dual liaison groups – for development partnership and design – ensures that the two parallel aspects of the project are effectively integrated during project planning, design, and implementation, and keeps managers informed on all aspects of the potential redevelopment and restoration, from visioning through completion.

The Board of Managers previously discussed Manager Hejmadi as the likely delegate to serve as liaison to the 325 Blake Road Regional developer engagement process as a member of the Review Committee, joining the previously appointed development liaisons of President White and Manager Maxwell. Resolution # 21-010 designates Manager Hejmadi to serve as the third MCWD Review Committee member.



RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) acquired 325 Blake Road in 2011 as a key piece of the Minnehaha Creek Greenway, which will provide approximately 109 acres of a connected corridor of restored creek and habitat through St. Louis Park and Hopkins; the MCWD and other public partners have made substantial investments in the preparation and planning of the site to date; the driving vision of the project is to create a uniquely water-centric redevelopment of a formerly industrialized segment of the Minnehaha Creek corridor; the project will provide layered ecological and societal benefits and will serve as a centerpiece of the larger Minnehaha Creek Greenway restoration;

WHEREAS the MCWD and City of Hopkins (City) have entered into a cooperative agreement to guide the coordinated planning, improvements and redevelopment of the site, focusing on approximately 11-13 acres for transformation into a transit-oriented neighborhood; the MCWD will retain ownership of approximately four – six acres to treat polluted stormwater that flows into the creek from approximately 270 acres of surrounding area and to restore more than 1,000 feet of creek frontage;

WHEREAS the Board of Managers has appointed President White and Manager Maxwell to serve as members of the Joint Liaison Group to the City to promote strong alignment of purpose and coordination with the City in the potential redevelopment of the 11-13 acre portion of the site designated for redevelopment;

WHEREAS the Board of Managers has appointed Managers Olson, Rogness and Loftus to serve as liaisons to the 325 Blake Road Regional Stormwater and Greenway Project and Cottageville Park Phase II Riparian Restoration Project; these three managers are available to meet with staff on key phases of the project and report to the Board of Managers with recommendations on critical milestones or policy questions that arise in project planning, design, or implementation on aspects of the capital improvement project;

WHEREAS the cooperative agreement identifies steps in the developer engagement process, including the review of the final proposals being guided by a designated Review Committee comprised of the Joint Liaison Group and one additional Board Manager; the Review Committee will review final proposals, conduct preliminary interviews with development firms and make a recommendation of a finalist list of developers for tours and final interviews with the Joint City Council and Board of Managers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Board of Managers hereby designates Manager Hejmadi to serve as the third Board liaison to the Review Committee for the 325 Blake Road developer engagement process.

Resolution Number 21-010 was moved by Manager _____, seconded by Manager _____. Motion to adopt the resolution ___ ayes, ___ nays, ___ abstentions. Date: 1/28/2021

 Secretary Date: January 28, 2021