

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND POLICY COMMITTEE

March 17th, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

Manager Miller called the Committee to order at 6:50 p.m. at the District Offices,

15320 Minnetonka Blvd

Minnetonka, MN 55345

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Manager Miller and Manager Shekleton.

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Manager White, Manager Olson, and Manager Becker.

OTHERS PRESENT

Cob Burandt, resident; Peter Rechelbacher, CAC Representative; Brian Girard, CAC Representative; Lars Erdahl, District Administrator; James Wisker, Director of Planning & Projects; Becky Christopher, Lead Planner; Anna Brown, Planner & Project Manager; Tiffany Schaufler, Project & Land Program Manager; Laura Domyancich, Project & Land Technician; Katherine Sylvia, Permitting Program Lead; and Matthew Cook, Planning Assistant.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Wisker asked to add an update on the District's partnership with Park Nicollet Hospital as a discussion item (5.6). The agenda amendment was approved.

COMMITTEE MEETING

SWLRT Permitting Timeline Update

Ms. Sylvia reminded the Committee that the Southwest Project Office (SPO) has been coordinating with the District for three years on project design and permit structure for the Southwest Light Rail Transit project. Ms. Sylvia identified the coming milestones of the permitting process for the project.

She stated that the SPO's goal was to receive approval from the District Board in August of 2016. To achieve this, Ms. Sylvia explained, the SPO would be submitting a pre-application to the District by March 28th. She noted that the SPO hoped to incorporate District input on the pre-application into a formal application, which would be submitted at the end of April. Ms. Sylvia

47 stated that the District and the SPO would co-develop an alternative public notice format for the
48 project to be sent out in May in preparation for a public hearing in August. Ms. Sylvia also noted
49 that the SPO will be anticipating to receive a Record of Decision (ROD) regarding their
50 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The District will want to ensure that SPO has received
51 this ROD prior to issuing our permit.

52
53 Ms. Sylvia noted that District staff intended to issue a 60-day extension to SPO to allow enough
54 time for the ROD to be issued. She stated that staff hoped to be done with the review and ready
55 to seek Board approval in late August. Ms. Sylvia added that the Board may wish to consider
56 hosting the August Board meeting off-site, or hosting a separate meeting on another date to
57 accommodate the likely-high level of public interest and attendance.

58
59 Manager Miller asked if the Permitting staff were coordinating with their counterparts at Bassett
60 Creek and Nine Mile Creek Watershed Districts. Mr. Wisker explained that through a series of
61 SPO hosted LGU meetings, MCWD, Bassett Creek, and Nine Mile Creek have been in
62 coordination as the project has progressed and that we will continue to coordinate with them as
63 the permitting project progresses.

64
65 Manager Shekleton asked if staff anticipated issues with the permit application. Ms. Sylvia stated
66 that staff expected that the permit review would take a long time due to the sheer volume of
67 items to be reviewed, not because of any anticipated issues.

68
69 Manager Olson asked staff how the SPO intended to maneuver equipment in order to access the
70 construction areas given the size of the current rail line ROW. Mr. Wisker stated that SPO has
71 planned for accessing the project area through existing ROW and a series of acquisitions,
72 however, the staging locations were not yet finalized. He noted that they were considering using
73 the District's property at the Cold Storage site and could compensate the District accordingly.
74 Manager Miller stated that he was not in favor of charging the SPO as the SPO and the District
75 are both government agencies. Managers Olson and Miller concurred that the SPO would be
76 responsible for restoring areas damaged by staging activities.

77
78 Hennepin County Easement for Weather Stations

79 Ms. Schaufler reminded the Committee that during the flooding in 2014 Hennepin County
80 Emergency Management (HCEM) was a valuable resource to the District. She explained that
81 since the 2014 flooding, the District and HCEM have continued to coordinate and discuss
82 opportunities to improve flood preparedness and resiliency across the District. Ms. Schaufler
83 stated that recently HCEM approached the District to discuss the possibility of installing weather
84 stations on District-owned properties. She stated that Hennepin County hoped to place weather
85 instruments at two District-owned locations; one along Painter Creek, the other along Six Mile
86 Creek. She explained that the weather stations would be part of the Hennepin West Mesonet
87 network, which is the most sophisticated in the nation, and would be near existing District stream
88 monitoring sites, which would allow the District to match measured flow with precipitation data
89 to predict flooding from future rainfalls. Ms. Schaufler added that these prediction capabilities
90 would also benefit the District's recent coordination with the National Weather Service and
91 would help inform the District's dam operations. She also noted that the weather stations would

92 allow the District to calibrate the upper watershed XP-SWMM model and help provide real-time
93 weather data in areas where the District is actively planning and implementing projects.
94

95 Ms. Schaufler noted that the weather stations would be regularly mowed by Hennepin County
96 personnel and enclosed by a fence. She stated that District staff had already requested that the
97 fence be no taller than five feet, so that it may be visually shrouded by surrounding prairie
98 vegetation. Ms. Schaufler also noted that the District would have an option to terminate the
99 easements, with notice to Hennepin County, if the District's plans for the land changes.
100

101 Ms. Schaufler noted that staff would be seeking the approval of the Board at the upcoming Board
102 Meeting to pursue granting Hennepin County easements for the installation of the weather
103 stations. ***It was moved by Manager Miller, seconded by Manager Shekleton to recommend to***
104 ***the Board of Managers that Hennepin County's request for weather stations be approved.***
105 ***Upon vote, the motion passed 2-0.***
106

107 Deerhill Preserve Conservation Easement Update

108 Ms. Domyancich summarized the District's ongoing involvement with the Deerhill Preserve
109 development in Medina. She noted that the District is slotted to hold a 90-acre conservation
110 easement within the 170-acre property. Ms. Domyancich explained that the land held under
111 easement will be held in fee by the developer, for the first three years while the vegetation
112 restoration establishes and the first phase of lots are developed. The Homeowners Association,
113 she continued, will then hold the land in fee. She stated that she would be bringing the easement
114 to the Board for execution the following Thursday.
115

116 Manager Shekleton expressed his concern that the conserved land would be treated as a
117 commons and suffer misuse. Ms. Domyancich noted that the District would monitor the
118 conservation easement and report any damages to the City and either the developer or the
119 Homeowners Association. The party holding the land in fee – either the developer or the HOA –
120 would be responsible for funding any repairs and ongoing maintenance. Mr. Wisker added that
121 Medina's conservation easement ordinance requires a third party to hold the easement and police
122 the site.
123

124 Mr. Rechelbacher asked what would happen to the conservation land if the HOA dissolves. Ms.
125 Domyancich stated that she would clarify that with the City and the developer.
126

127 Six Mile Planning Update

128 Ms. Brown provided an update on the Six Mile planning process and scope. Staff and Managers
129 White and Olson have met with policy makers and agency staff located in the subwatershed and
130 have invited these stakeholders to participate in a series of committee meetings beginning in
131 April. These committee meetings will be used to solicit feedback on work product and plan
132 direction. In order to use these committee meetings to their full potential, staff recommends
133 contracting with a consultant team to augment staff capacity in planning, landscape architecture,
134 and plan a graphic development. Ms. Brown also noted that she would be seeking Board
135 authorization to issue a request for qualifications (RFQ) at the March 24, 2016 Board Meeting.
136

137 Ms. Brown then provided an overview of the role the consultant team would play in the Six Mile
138 process, and distributed an accompanying diagram illustrating the scope. The Six Mile work
139 flow will be divided into three phases that will integrate with the committee meeting structure.
140

141 First, District staff will gather information from agencies in the geography and identify major
142 plans, priorities and initiatives for each. District staff will then work with the consultant to
143 develop a plan introduction that synthesizes that information and outlines the plan vision, scope
144 and objectives.
145

146 Second, District staff and the consultant will engage agency staff in a collaborative mapping
147 exercise to develop graphics that show how different work such as CIPs, comprehensive plans,
148 infrastructure investments, park and recreation plans, etc. interrelate. The subwatershed will be
149 divided into planning units based on natural resources, hydrology, governance, and existing
150 project plans and draft visions will be developed for each unit that will be reviewed by staff and
151 policy makers.
152

153 Finally, the District and consultant develop an investment and implementation plan. The
154 investment plan will be developed with assistance from partner agency staff assembled into an
155 investment committee and will be led by the District.
156

157 Manager Shekleton asked what caliber of planning consultant staff had in mind. Mr. Wisker
158 replied that staff was not certain, but that the District's needs would be telegraphed in the request
159 for qualifications in such a way that consultants with the appropriate services respond. Manager
160 Shekleton inquired as to staff's thoughts on hiring a person full-time to cover the work that the
161 consultant would do. Mr. Wisker responded that the level and volume of work required would be
162 more than a Planning Assistant position could provide.
163

164 ***It was motioned by Manager Miller, seconded by Manager Shekleton that the Committee***
165 ***recommend that the Board authorize staff to develop a request for qualifications in pursuit of***
166 ***hiring a planning consultant for the Six Mile planning process. Upon vote, the motion carried***
167 ***2-0.***
168

169 Mr. Burandt stated that his interest in the area is that the District not interfere with navigational
170 rights along Six Mile Creek between the Highway 7 Bridge and Halsted Bay. Mr. Burandt also
171 stated that the internal loading of Halsted Bay must be the focus of water quality improvement
172 efforts in the area. Mr. Wisker requested Mr. Burandt's contact information and stated that staff
173 would schedule a time to meet with him to discuss the District's plans in more detail and address
174 his concerns.
175

176 Comprehensive Plan Update

177 Ms. Christopher reviewed a diagram illustrating the draft structure of the 2017 Comprehensive
178 Plan. She stated the plan would be comprised of three volumes:
179

- 180 1. Executive Summary
- 181 2. Data and Inventory

182 3. Implementation Framework (including 11 subwatershed plans)

183
184 She briefly outlined the content of each of the three volumes. The committee had no comments.
185

186 Ms. Christopher then presented a draft diagram describing the Two-Track Approach.
187

188 Manager Olson asked which track the District's work at the Meadowbrook Golf Course fit. Mr.
189 Wisker suggested that the work fit under the focus track in that, while it was opportunity-driven,
190 the organizing framework and relationships were already in place through the District's ongoing
191 work in the area.
192

193 Manager Shekleton stated that the titles of each track – Focus and Responsive - do not clearly
194 convey their meaning. He suggested that staff explore terms that are readily understood, such as
195 “geographic focus” and “opportunity.”
196

197 Manager White noted that the titles have been used for long enough that it may be too late to
198 rebrand the approach. She explained that the Advisory Committees for the Comprehensive Plan
199 have already become familiar with the terms. Mr. Erdahl noted that the focus track was not
200 merely focused on a particular geography but was also focused over time.
201

202 Mr. Wisker noted that it was crucial for the District to develop effective messaging for the
203 responsive track that conveys the District's services available to partners. He stated that the
204 Comprehensive Plan brochure that is in development would incorporate testimonials from past
205 project partners to better explain the versatility and viability of the District's responsive track.
206

207 Manager Becker noted that the diagram includes “what,” “where,” “why,” and “how” sections,
208 but not “who”. He suggested that including a “who” section might bring further clarity to the
209 diagram and help District partners understand their role. Manager Olson noted that a “when”
210 section could also be added. Ms. Christopher agreed that both could be useful additions.
211

212 Ms. Christopher mentioned that, with regard to “when”, the Technical Advisory Committee had
213 asked about the timing of when the District would move on to a new focal geography. She stated
214 that, while a specific timeline is unknown, she believes it will happen when the needs and
215 opportunities in a new geography begin to outweigh those in the current geography. She added
216 that one factor in this decision would be the cost-effectiveness of remaining opportunities.
217

218 Mr. Wisker noted that not every community is interested in utilizing the District's services. He
219 cited the desire for autonomy expressed by a few Technical Advisory Committee members at the
220 last meeting. He stated that the Two-Track model allows cities to access District resources as
221 they choose.
222

223 Manager Miller, noting the presence of two Citizen Advisory Committee members, stated that
224 the CAC ought to receive the minutes of the PPC meeting.
225

226 Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital Flood Wall Update

227 Mr. Wisker reminded the Committee that Park Nicollet Health Services (PNHS) is seeking to
228 build a flood wall to protect the hospital from future flooding and avoid sandbagging and
229 pumping expenses. He stated that if PNHS was to build the flood wall, they would need to create
230 compensatory storage elsewhere on their property. Mr. Wisker stated that PNHS' consultant,
231 with whom the District has worked before, hoped to build the wall in 2016 from July to October.
232

233 Mr. Wisker explained that staff would like to work with PNHS to take a more comprehensive
234 look at its properties in the area and explore options that could provide the necessary flood
235 storage as well as meet additional goals for the District, PNHS, and City. He described a
236 cooperative agreement with PNHS and the City of St. Louis Park that would be brought for
237 Board consideration at the March 24 Board Meeting.
238

239 ***It was motioned by Manager Shekleton, seconded by Manager Miller to recommend that the***
240 ***Board execute the cooperative agreement between St. Louis Park, the District, and PNHS.***
241 ***Upon vote, the motion passed 2-0.***
242

243 The Committee meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.
244

245 Respectfully submitted,
246

247 Matthew Cook
248 Planning Assistant