City of North Saint Paul
September 21, 2021
Approved Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

North St. Paul City Hall – Council Chambers
2400 Margaret Street

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Member Thorsen
Council Member Petersen
Council Member Cole
Council Member Wong
Mayor Furlong

Staff: City Manager Brian Frandle, City Engineer Morgan Dawley, City Planner Eric Zweber, Finance Director Daniel Winek, Communications Staff Kari Erpenbach, City Attorney Shana Conklin, Deputy Clerk Jennie Kloos.

IV. ADOPT AGENDA

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the agenda as submitted.

V. PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

VI. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Thorsen requested that Item H be pulled from the Consent Agenda, and added to the Regular Agenda as Item I.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to approve the consent agenda, as amended, Resolution No. 2021-085 consisting of:

A. September 7, 2021 workshop minutes
B. September 7, 2021 regular meeting minutes.
C. September 8, 2021 budget workshop minutes.
D. General Claims $701,745.72

E. Resolution Approving Acceptance of Donations Received August 2021 – Resolution No. 2021-086.
F. Monthly Building Permit Report – August 2021
G. Approve Pay Voucher No. 14 for North St. Paul 2020 Street and Utility Improvement Project
H. Development Contract and Planned Unit Development Agreement for 7th Street Townhomes **Moved to City Business Item I**

VII. MEETING OPEN TO PUBLIC

John Schmahl stated he does not know how to deal with the North St. Paul computer system. He added City Staff are very helpful, but he should not have to call City Hall for support when trying to access upcoming meeting packets, and often the agenda titles are not indicative of the agenda item. He noted, in today's packet, there was an agenda item entitled "2022", which he was informed is an issue with the transfer of files into the agenda.

R.T. Luczak, Kokoro Volleyball, stated they had their first competition of the fall league. He expressed concern that the elevator is still not functioning properly, as he notified the City over a month ago. He added customers will be coming in who need to use it, and it must be available for ADA accessibility reasons. He noted he would like an update on the ballasts that are out and the roof that needs to be replaced.

Mr. Luczak stated the Economic Development Authority (EDA) has expressed in its mission document, which uses photos from Kokoro Volleyball Center, that they want to attract new business, but also retain businesses. He added he has never been contacted by the EDA. He noted the Center brings 150,000 people to North St. Paul every year, and recently raised $11,000 for North High School's volleyball program. He asked why, after 8 years in North St. Paul, he has never been contacted by the EDA. He asked whether the City has other locations to retain his business if the City decides to redevelop the land or utilize the facility for some other purpose.

Mr. Luczak stated the City has allocated $650,000 in its upcoming budget for repairs to the building, but his original valuation of $2.4 million is more accurate. He added the City Council is being misled in closed session meetings regarding the costs associated with the building. He noted he sent his valuation to the many times, but the $650,000 valuation was chosen for the budget.

Mr. Luczak stated he would like to insist on having a meeting to negotiate the lease, to determine whether Kokoro is in the City's 5-year plan. He added Council Members Cole and Wong were appointed to do this, and he wants to work together with the City to find a solution and continue to be a part of this community. He noted the Kokoro Volleyball Center adds tremendous value to the community.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no scheduled hearings.

IX. CITY BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Consider Approval of a Resolution Approving a Conditional Use Permit and a Resolution Approving Building Height Variance Requests from ISD #622 for an addition to North High School and Parking Lot Improvements

City Planner Eric Zweber reviewed a request from School District #622 for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and building height variance to construct an 11-classroom addition, as well as modifications to the parking lot and circulation, at North High School (NHS). The CUP request is for a 27,000 square foot, 3-story addition on the west side of the building, and a 1,000 square foot security entrance, as well as several interior and exterior improvements, and a variance for building height.

Mr. Zweber stated the existing façade of NHS has a rhythm of windows, which is not continued onto the proposed addition. He added the School District has indicated that additional windows would be violation of building Code due to weather-related concerns.

Mayor Furlong asked whether there would be an entrance on the west side. Mr. Zweber stated the entrance on the north side leads a sidewalk on the west and a parking lot on the south, but there is no door proposed for the west façade.

Mr. Zweber stated the School District is proposing that student parking be moved to the east, with removal of the driveway connection from 1st Street. Access for buses would be located at 1st and 11th Streets. Students would enter the parking lot at the access closest to the building, with a right-hand turn only at the exit, and a parent drop-off area to the southeast. This improvement in circulation has resulted in a reduction of 102 parking stalls. The School District and City Staff have worked on a traffic study together since April 2021, which has concluded that there is sufficient parking with the St. Mark's parking agreement but recommended a condition for a longer-term parking agreement with St. Mark's. The Fire Chief has indicated he has all the safety access he needs as long as curbs and student parking areas on the east side of the building are surmountable.

Mr. Zweber stated the Planning Commission recommended approval of the requests with 12 conditions, one of which was the completion of a traffic study. The remaining 11 conditions are: a revised set of plans; installation of at least one mitigation feature on north side of proposed addition; revised lighting plan; all applicable permitting; utility permits; stormwater maintenance and easement agreement; implementation of signage and wayfinding plan; continue to work with City Staff on improvements to bicycle and pedestrian access; potential SAC charges; maintain five-year parking agreement with St. Marks; and compliance with conditions and recommendations of the traffic study and City Engineer's Memorandum.

Mr. Zweber stated the second request is for a variance with a condition that the building height shall not exceed three stories and 41 feet.

Mayor Furlong requested consideration of relocation of the MTC bus stop. He asked whether MTC can be contacted regarding this issue.

The applicant stated MTC buses are supposed to be scheduled so that they do not interfere with school drop off and pick up times. He added they can reach out to MTC about this issue.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present Voting Aye (5-0), Motion Carried to Adopt Resolution No. 2021-094 Approving CUP Amendment to Allow Construction of 11 Classroom-Addition at North High School, 2416 11th Avenue E.

On Motion by Council Member Wong, Seconded by Council Member Cole, With All Present Voting Aye (5-0), Motion Carried to Adopt Resolution No. 2021-095 Approving Variance for Building Height to Allow for Construction of 11-Classroom Addition at North High School, 2416 11th Avenue E.

Mayor Furlong requested that Item G be moved to Item B to accommodate many audience members who are in attendance for this agenda item.

B. <u>Ordinance No. 2021-xxx Amending Title XI, Chapter 112, Pertaining to Bingo and Charitable Gambling</u>

City Attorney Shana Conklin reviewed a proposed amendment to the City's gambling Ordinance, which is a result of changes to the City's online application and fees system, OpenGov. She added City Staff noticed that the existing Ordinance required changes to be in compliance with State law, and after discussion during work sessions, options are being provided for City Council review and approval.

Ms. Conklin stated the proposed amended Ordinance is similar to the existing Ordinance with the exception of the optional 10% fund. She added she believes the City has been in compliance with State law, but the Ordinance required an update.

Mayor Furlong asked whether the 50% trade area was noted in the existing Ordinance. Ms. Conklin stated the Ordinance indicates that "use of net profits indicated 50% of net profits from bingo and charitable gambling shall be spent for lawful purposes as defined by State law in the North St. Paul trade area".

Mayor Furlong asked whether the $100 application fee is new. Ms. Conklin agreed to look for it in the City's online fee schedule.

Council Member Thorsen stated the Ordinance should be updated to be in compliance, but the City should not add any new fees or a new percentage that the City would oversee.

Council Member Petersen stated the City is not in the business of gambling. She added she would not be in favor of imposing a fee on service clubs that serve the community,

Council Member Cole thanked Ms. Conklin for compiling all the information. He added there is another group that does charitable gambling that is not listed in the staff report.

Ms. Conklin stated she obtained State records, and it is possible that they are not complete.

Mayor Furlong stated the charitable gambling organizations in North St. Paul are the VFW, American Legion, Bleacher's, Sidewinders, Roddy's, Polar and Neumann's.

Council Member Cole stated Merrick, Inc. is Bleacher's, Sidewinder's and Roddy's. He added all the other organizations are here. He noted it would be interesting to find out what Merrick organizations are doing with their funds.

Ms. Conklin stated these organizations are very highly regulated by the State of Minnesota and have specific requirements for spending their net profits pursuant to State law.

Council Member Cole stated 50% is a State statute and not a City Ordinance. He stressed the importance of ensuring that they are being held to the same guidelines and rules as the other organizations in North St. Paul.

Ms. Conklin agreed to confirm with the State Gambling Board whether the Merrick organizations are being treated similarly to other local organizations.

Pete, representing the VFW, reviewed funding of $16,532 spent in District 622, as opposed to $650 spent outside the school district, with federal taxes of $54,000 and combined receipts tax of $74,000. He added funding would have been higher in the school district if there had been youth athletics. He noted local requests for funding receive more priority.

Pete stated the City should not be involved in this. He added the VFW investigates solicitations and tries to provide funding that will benefit the most citizens. He noted people will complain if the City takes 10%.

Council Member Cole stated he mentioned the possibility of the 10% for the City because he heard that there are 131 cities that do it, and he was curious about it.

Mayor Furlong stated the City Council does not question who the VFW gives its money to, and how they make their decisions. He added the City has no control over taxes.

Ms. Conklin stated she has reviewed the online fee schedule. She added the current Ordinance gives the City Council authority to set fees, and there is an investigation fee, but it does not specify the amounts of these fees.

Jim, representing the Knights of Columbus, stated he has applied for bingo permits for the past several years, and he has never paid a fee. He added they are only allowed to have 3 bingo games per year. He noted the new $100 fee caught his eye. He added the Knights of Columbus donates generously to local organizations, and he asked that the $100 fee be removed.

Eric Alness, Gambling Manager at American Legion Post 39, Afghan combat vet, stated it is extremely hard to raise taxes in the wake of Covid, which has severely impacted their business. He added other costs continue to go up, including pull tab prices which will increase by 8% next month. He noted the 10% increase would cut down on their charitable donations by $35,000 per year.

Mr. Alness stated the American Legion supports local veterans, youth and the community. He added there is no need to further regulate their efforts if they continue to follow their charitable mission. He noted 95% of all their donations last year were made within the community.

Mayor Furlong stated the City Council's consensus at their recent work session was to keep things the same, with regard to the 10% increase, and to remove the $100 fee. He added he believes the background check was already in the fee schedule.

Ms. Conklin stated the $100 local permit fee can be excluded, and a formal background check is not required. She added this industry is highly regulated by the State.

Council Member Thorsen stated he would prefer to table this issue, revise the language to omit mention of 10% or contribution to City funds, and omit the $100 fee. He added this item could be added to an upcoming City Council Consent Agenda.

Ms. Conklin stated she has created a version that reflects those changes. She added, however, the City Council can table the Ordinance and add it to the Consent Agenda.

Ms. Conklin stated the previous Ordinance indicated an annual accounting report due on or before February 1 to be submitted to City Staff. She added a requirement could be added that these documents could be required upon request.

Mayor Furlong stated he would support tabling the issue and adding "upon request" for the 12-monthly report.

Pete asked a question from the audience.

Mayor Furlong stated it was brought down to 50%, knowing that service organizations donate outside the local trade area, and the ISD #622 component was removed. He added 50% of donations must stay within the City.

Pete stated the Ordinance does not say that.

Ms. Conklin stated the language can be amended to read "at least 50%". She added she will work with City Staff and the local charitable organizations to provide new copies of the amended Ordinance in advance. She noted, pursuant to Minnesota law, the Ordinance must be posted 10 days prior to adoption.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to table an Ordinance amendment Pertaining to Bingo and Charitable Gambling, to be Revised and Added to an Upcoming City Council Consent Agenda.

C. Proposed 2022 City General Fund, EDA and HRA Budgets & Property Tax Levies

Finance Director Dan Winek reviewed the proposed 2022 General Fund, EDA, HRA and property tax levies, as reviewed and recommended by the City Council. The City levy is proposed to be set at 5.99%, which is a reduction from 6.7% as discussed by the City Council, due to reallocation of a Community Development staff position.

Mr. Winek stated the levy is within the ratio of what other Ramsey County municipalities are seeing, including Oakdale, at 6.99%. He added the overall budget is proposed to be $7.9 million for the General Fund including debt service, and a tax levy of $5.8 million.

Mr. Winek stated City Staff proposes refunding bonds and saving tax dollars over the life of the bonds. He added this will reduce the levy in 2022 by $55,000.

Mr. Winek stated City Staff recommends adopting the 2022-2031 Capital Improvement Plan, and authorization of street and utility projects included in the CIP budget to be funded by a bond that will go out in early 2022. He added debt service is included in this budget.

Mr. Winek stated both HRA and EDA levies are proposed to be certified at the maximum allowed under State statute, or 8.78% each. He added this will be recommended for City Council approval at the December 21, 2021 regular meeting.

Mr. Winek stated City Staff recommends that the City Council set the 2022 Truth in Taxation meeting for December 7, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. during the regular City Council meeting. He added the budgets and levies will be recommended for approval at the December 21, 2021 meeting.

On Motion by Council Member Petersen, Seconded by Council Member Cole, with Mayor Furlong and Councilmembers Cole, Petersen and Wong Voting Aye, and Council Member Thorsen Voting Nay (4-1), Motion Carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-087 Adopting Preliminary 2022 General Fund Budget and Setting Preliminary 2022 General Fund Tax Levy And Debt Service Levy.

<u>Discussion during the motion:</u> Council Member Thorsen stated there are some things in the general budget that he does not support. He added he will be voting nay, although he does not want to diminish the work that City Staff has done. He noted he does not support are an increase in City Council pay; the allocation of funds to the community center facility, which he believes should be sold in the best interests of the public; public safety funds that are not being utilized appropriately, including first responder program funds and weekend shift, as well as the need for additional police officers to respond to medical calls; and the increase in the HRA and EDA budgets and requests to get into business subsidy programs and hire more staff.

On Motion by Council Member Cole, Seconded by Council Member Wong, with Mayor Furlong and Councilmembers Cole, Petersen and Wong Voting Aye, and Council Member Thorsen Voting Nay (4-1), Motion Carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-088 Adopting Preliminary 2022 Tax Levy for North St. Paul Economic Development Authority.

On motion by Council Member Wong, seconded by Council Member Cole, with Mayor Furlong and Councilmembers Cole, Petersen and Wong Voting Aye, and Council Member Thorsen Voting Nay (4-1), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-089 Adopting Preliminary 2022 Tax Levy for North St Paul Housing And Redevelopment Authority.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to Set the Date for the Truth in Taxation Meeting for December 7, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

D. <u>Set Sale Date for 2021 Refunding Bonds</u>

Mr. Winek reviewed a request for City Council approval of a proposed sale date for refunding of bonds, as interest rates are very low, and Baker Tilly has provided an opportunity to save $148,000 and reduce the debt and levy in 2022.

Terry Heaton, Baker Tilly, stated the proposed refunding is for 2014 A bonds with three components: improvement bond, utility revenue portion, and equipment certificates. She added all components would be refunded for a savings of $273,000 through 2030, based on present value of $141,000. She noted the bonds would be sold on October 19, 2021 at 10:00 a.m., and City Staff and consultants would recommend approval for the low bid at the City Council's regular meeting that night.

Ms. Heaton stated the City will be seeking a rating for the bonds from Standard & Poor. She added the City's current rating is AA+, and that is not expected to change.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present Voting Aye (5-0), Motion Carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-090 Providing for Competitive Negotiated Sale of $2,525,000 General Obligation Refunding Bonds.

E. Adopt the 2022-2031 Capital Improvement Plan

Mr. Winek reviewed a request for City Council adoption of the 2022-2031 Capital Improvement Plan, as presented in budget discussions. He added this is the first time the City has had a truly comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan, which provides a road map for long-term planning for infrastructure replacement, vehicle and equipment replacement.

Mayor Furlong asked whether the Planning Commission has reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan before the City Council adopts it. He asked whether they would be able to review it and still make changes.

Mr. Dawley stated City Staff have prepared a very comprehensive review, and planned to provide the Planning Commission with an overview of the areas that are of the most interest to them - land use and planning and zoning issues, as well as other planning documents. He added the Plan would be reviewed at the Planning Commission's next meeting, using past performance as an indicator. He noted the Planning Commission can provide recommendations for City Staff regarding particular aspects of the Plan, but the City Council can adopt the Plan and any input can be made to City Staff following adoption.

Ms. Conklin agreed that the City Council could move forward with adoption but consult with the Planning Commission on planning issues.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Petersen, with no votes, motion failed to adopt Resolution No. 2021-xxx adopting 2022-2031 Capital Improvement Plan. After discussion, on motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Wong to table the item until after the Planning Commission is able to review the Capital Improvement Plan.

Discussion during the motion: Council Member Thorsen stated he would prefer to have the Plan reviewed by the Planning Commission before it is adopted. He added other Council Members may be comfortable with tabling it, but the other option would be for him to vote no and the City Council could potentially move it forward, but he believes the City Council should follow established procedures and have the Planning Commission review it first.

Council Member Wong agreed that this item should be tabled. She added the Planning Commissioners contribute a lot of time and energy to the process, and it would be fair to allow them the opportunity to view the plan before final decisions are made.

Mayor Furlong agreed.

Mr. Dawley stated this item could be reviewed by the Planning Commission at their October 7, 2021 meeting, and brought back to the City Council at their October 19, 2021 meeting.

Mr. Winek stated City Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the Street and Utility Project so work can commence to identify the scope of the projects, get them into a biddable document to be able to bond in January or February 2022. He added the Planning Commission can review the CIP for recommendation to the City Council for adoption of a revised 2022-2031 CIP Plan.

Ms. Conklin stated, based on legal requirements related to capital improvements, it would be prudent to hold off on adopting the CIP until the Planning Commission is able to review it. She added this would be in line with the City's current processes.

Mr. Dawley stated the next item for consideration assumes an adopted CIP, which the City Council could decide to table. He added work may be hindered by weather conditions in late fall if this issue is postponed. He requested that the City Council consider giving partial authorization by removing the 2nd "whereas" statement so City Staff can move forward with preliminary work and capture the bond market as soon as possible.

Mr. Dawley stated he would suggest revising the resolution to include a "whereas" statement that references the CIP to be adopted at the 2nd meeting in October.

Ms. Conklin reviewed a provision in State statute that a 2/3 vote of the City Council is required to approve capital improvements without first having a review by the Planning Commission. She added there appears to be a need to address more urgent projects before winter, and to the extent that the City Council would want to approve individual capital improvements, that can be done by a 2/3 vote.

Mr. Dawley stated that which Ms. Conklin is referencing is the next Agenda Item.

Mayor Furlong stated we are on Agenda Item 9E.

Ms. Conklin stated the Capital Improvement Plan was tabled.

Mayor Furlong stated the Resolution for Item 9E should specify the projects in the motion.

Mr. Dawley stated that is the next agenda item, which he has not yet presented.

Ms. Conklin agreed, if the Capital Improvement Plan was officially tabled.

Mayor Furlong stated we tabled the Capital Improvement Plan.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Wong to table the item until after the Planning Commission is able to review the Capital Improvement Plan. Motion carries.

F. Authorize 2022 Street and Utility Improvement Projects

Mr. Dawley requested City Council consideration of authorization to move forward with preliminary investigation and study on some project areas in the 2022-2031 Capital Improvement Program, not yet adopted. He added this item is scheduled for review by the Planning Commission at their next meeting. He noted City Staff proposes consideration of a Resolution without approval of the CIP, and City Staff would provide another Resolution at an upcoming meeting that references the adopted plan, and approving projects in four areas: 7th Avenue between Helen Street and 1st Street and a portion of Helen Street including alley work; public parking lot surfacing on 7th Street; joint improvements with the City of Maplewood on Ariel Street and associated roadways; and previously identified water main improvements.

Mr. Dawley stated the City Council could give authorization for work to start. He added City Staff have been preparing and are ready to start and waiting another month would be problematic.

Mayor Furlong requested a motion to adopt a Resolution authorizing preparation of preliminary study plans and specifications for the 2022 Street and Utility Improvement Project, with removal of the first "Whereas" regarding the Capital Improvement Plan.

Ms. Conklin stated the City Council would be making a determination that the CIP has no relationship to the comprehensive municipal plan.

The motion failed due to lack of a first and second.

Ms. Conklin stated the City Council could table or deny the motion, but some action is preferable.

Council Member Cole suggested the Planning Commission could hold a special meeting next week to review this issue, to be presented to the City Council for recommendation in two weeks.

Mr. Zweber stated he is unsure whether there would be a quorum, or if there is a meeting notice issue. He agreed to do his best to set it up.

Council Member Cole stated he is supportive of removing the "whereas" clause related to the CIP, so one portion of it can be moved forward. Mayor Furlong agreed.

Council Member Wong stated she is open to moving this portion along and giving the Planning Commission the opportunity to review the remainder of the CIP.

On motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Wong, with Mayor Furlong and Council Members Cole, Petersen and Wong voting aye, and Councilmember Thorsen voting nay (4-1), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-091 Authorizing Preparation of Preliminary Study Plans and Specification for 2022 Street and Utility Improvement Project, Removing the First "Whereas", related to Capital Improvement Plan.

Council Member Cole thanked everyone for working together on this, with everything that has happened over the past year.

G. Consider Approval of a Resolution approving a Conditional Use Permit for Additional Accessory Outdoor Storage for Century Avenue Collision Center

Mr. Zweber reviewed a request from Century Avenue Collision for outdoor storage at their location at 2501 Division Street N. The applicant currently has 4,800 square feet of outdoor storage, and they are having issues with theft and damage. They are requesting an increase to 9,600 square feet. The property is located within the MU-3 zoning district, and the request would not alter the existing uses of the property. The new outdoor storage area would be paved and fenced with chain link fence with vinyl slatting. The fence would be located directly east of the senior housing development, and the fence's use and appearance are compatible with adjacent property.

Mr. Zweber stated no changes to parking, landscaping or access are proposed, and no major changes to drainage or natural resources. He added the Planning Commission has recommended the applicant obtain approval from appropriate agencies as required. He noted the Planning Commission recommended approval of the application with two conditions: all appropriate permits must be applied for; and the fence shall be a 6-foot chain link fence with vinyl slats to be inspected annually and any damage repaired within 30 days.

Council member Thorsen stated this seems like a lot of red tape to put in a little extra fencing. He thanked the applicant for staying for the entire meeting.

Mr. Zweber stated a provision could be added to city Code that would add a threshold for administrative approval for these types of projects. He added, however, the applicant is expanding their accessory use by 100%.

On motion by Council Member Wong, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-092 Approving Conditional Use Permit to Allow up to 9600 Square Feet of Outdoor Storage at Century Collision Center Located at 2501 Division Street.

H. Authorize the Purchase of Police Squad Computers and Police Handheld Radios

Mr. Winek reviewed a request from the Police Department for squad computers and handheld radios, which was discussed by the City Council at their last work session. He added City Staff identified funding sources, and the Police Chief has provided quotes for the requested equipment: $43,084 for squad computers, and $22,951 for 20 handheld radios.

Mr. Winek stated the squad computers would be funded through the Forfeiture Fund, and the handheld radios through the Equipment Fund.

On motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021-093 Authorizing Purchase of Police Squad Computers and Police Handheld Radios.

I. Development Contract and Planned Unit Development Agreement for 7th Street Townhomes

Council Member Thorsen stated this is a big project, and a lot of work went into it by the Planning Commission. He asked why something like this was overlooked, and how to assure that it does not happen again.

Mr. Frandle stated he is not sure of the specifics as that was before his time, but City Staff have worked to gather all the appropriate signatures and fees and develop an escrow account with the developer for moving forward.

Councilmember Thorsen asked when funds will come in since work has already begun.

Morgan Dawley stated original intent is that the agreement, drafted by the City attorney, should be signed and on file before the first building permit is issued, and that did not happen. The agreement remains unchanged, but a signed copy did not exist. Planning Staff has worked hard to go back and collect signatures as originally approved.

On motion by Council Member Thorsen, seconded by Council Member Wong, with all present voting aye (5-0), motion carried to recommend that the City Manager and Mayor finalize the Development Contract and Planned Unit Development Agreement for 7th Street Townhomes.

X. REPORTS OF CITY MANAGER AND DEPARTMENTS

Mr. Frandle stated a few resident complaints have been received regarding contractors who have been starting work before 7:00 a.m. He added City Staff have reached out to the contractors to remind them of the 7:00 a.m. start time for construction.

Mr. Frandle stated the last of the three M/I buildings has been constructed, and all except one building has been energized.

XI. REPORTS OF COUNCIL, COMMISSIONS & COMMITTEES

Council Member Cole stated the Parks & Recreation Commission will meet tomorrow night at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall, to discuss parks rental fees and deposits. He added an Eagle Scout presentation regarding wood duck houses is also planned.

Council Member Wong stated the Planning Commission's recent meeting included a review of the Capital Improvement Plan, and two Commissioners were selected to participate in the Redevelopment Master Plan Task Force: Co-Chair Monge and Commissioner Gelbmann. She added Tom Sonnek joined the meeting to give an update on the Arts & Culture Commission, with the intent of fostering collaboration between the two Commissions, especially in light of the upcoming Sign Ordinance review. She noted the Commission hopes to begin with a few high impact visual arts projects, and their next meeting is scheduled for October 6, 2021.

Council Member Petersen stated she attended the League of Minnesota Cities' policy meeting, at which the issues of disparities, housing and racial equity were discussed. She added she is looking forward to the League's annual retreat to be held in Winona.

Mayor Furlong stated the EDA met recently and discussed the parking lot behind E&J and electric car chargers, as well as the old Nic Nac building, which has reverted to the original owner.

XII. GENERAL BUSINESS

Council Member Cole stated he is looking forward to the Fall Round-Up Parade. He thanked City Staff for doing a phenomenal job on planning the parade.

Council Member Petersen stated St. Mark's Church is open in the evenings for Police Officers who want to stop by for food and beverages. She added it is a nice place to take a break.

Council Member Petersen extended a thanks to everyone at the American Legion, Veteran's Park and VFW, for putting on a successful Veteran's Day parade, which is always moving. She added they do a nice job, and the park is beautiful.

Mayor Furlong stated the last car show will be held this Friday, September 24, 2021. He added St. Pete's Fall Festival will be held outside this weekend on Sunday, September 25, 2021 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Mayor Furlong stated the City Council should plan on bringing candy to give out at the Round-Up Parade on Thursday.

Mayor Furlong thanked Communications Staff Kari Erpenbach for her hard work on organizing the parade, which has over 100 units.

XIII. CLOSED SESSION

There was no closed session.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Petersen, Seconded by Council Member Cole, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

Attest:
/s/ Brian Frandle, Interim City Manager / Clerk