

City of North Saint Paul
October 4, 2022
Approved City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

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

III. ADOPT AGENDA

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

IV. TOPICS

A. Housing Study Presented by Mary Bujold, Maxfield Research

City Manager Brian Frandle introduced Mary Bujold from Maxfield Research who presented a high-level summary of the housing needs assessment especially in the downtown district. The purpose of this assessment is to identify current and future housing needs for the City of North St. Paul and identify housing gaps. Data was collected during 2nd quarter of 2022 and the final report was out in September. Much of the study's data and statistics derived from the American Survey. The report outlined ages of property owners, rental housing numbers, increased need for affordable and senior housing, and vacancy rates for senior housing and single-story homes. Ms. Bujold also noted although new housing is needed, it may be hampered by labor shortages and high interest rates.

Council Member Petersen questioned how this housing assessment compares to other municipalities in the Metro. Ms. Bujold stated North St. Paul is positioned quite well and commented on the increase in younger families moving in and the livelihood of the downtown area.

Council Member Thorsen inquired if neighboring property costs are increasing also. Ms. Bujold noted new housing prices are increasing in other areas around North St. Paul and North St. Paul is seeing a bigger increase in the need for affordable housing for young families.

Council Member Wong inquired about multi-generational housing. Ms. Bujold stated it is difficult to find private developers that want to do that.

B. Wold Architects & Engineers – Community Center Presentation/Discussion

Dr. Waldron provided a summary to date and introduced Jonathan Loose and his team to further explain meeting details and proposals and noted the contract is up for approval under the regular City Council meeting agenda.

Mr. Loose discussed the planning process and noted the needs of the community center and ways to work together to make it a viable project. The plan is to collect data from residents and community members, look through options and finalize recommendations and bring it back to City Council for final design approval.

Mr. Dunning stressed the collaborative effort between all parties involved and laid out the process for the core planning and stakeholder groups. Mayor Furlong suggested City Council members be a part of the core planning group and noted the potential change in Council members should not hamper or delay this project.

Mr. Loose defined the next steps as: programming/ needs analysis, facility assessment, agreement on need, options for development/site selection, community meeting, budget agreement and City Council approval.

Mayor Furlong inquired about the company's experience with core groups and the engagement process. Mr. Loose noted they start with the internal workings of City staff and then move outwards toward members of the community. Mr. Loose clarified the roles of the core planning and stakeholder groups.

Council Member Cole noted the potential financial responsibility put on the taxpayers for upkeep and maintenance if the current resident leaves or is forced out. Mr. Loose stated a separation of concepts may need to occur to prioritize issues so the building is compliant in order to have residents live there and create revenue.

Mr. Loose thanked the City Council for their ability to work together, their continued support, and allowing them to share their presentation. Mr. Loose shared the proposed draft schedule and timeline with City Council and noted things can be condensed or changed on an as-needed basis.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Cole, seconded by Council Member Petersen, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the workshop meeting at 6:13 p.m.

/s/ Terrence J. Furlong, Mayor

Attest:

/s/ Brian Frandle, City Manager / Clerk