

**City of North Saint Paul**  
**June 15, 2021**  
**Approved City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Furlong called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was conducted at City Hall in the Council Chambers, and also via Zoom.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Council Member Scott Thorsen  
Council Member Candy Petersen  
Council Member Lisa Wong  
Council Member Tim Cole  
Mayor Terry Furlong

Absent: City Manager Duddeck

Staff: City Planner Eric Zweber, City Engineer Morgan Dawley, Accountant Kyle Stasica, Administrative Assistant Lisa Ritchie, Communications Consultant Kari Erpenbach.

**III. ADOPT AGENDA**

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

**IV. TOPIC(S)**

**A. ZTA-21-1 Zoning Code Text Amendments to Implement the 2040 Comprehensive Plan**

City Planner Eric Zweber presented information to the City Council on this topic at the June 1<sup>st</sup> regular City Council meeting. At that meeting Council Member Cole had a question regarding residential parking and length of driveways. Mayor Furlong also stated at the June 1 meeting that he had questions for parking from the curb line on recreation vehicles and how they can be parked.

Mr. Zweber started his presentation with background information on the topic. The City adopted the 2040 Comprehensive Plan in December of 2019. The Zoning Ordinance is required to be amended to comply with the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance process started with the Planning Commission in April of 2020.

Mr. Zweber addressed the parking question that Council Member Cole inquired upon. The current ordinance states: Vehicles parked in a driveway or other area are not allowed to extend or encroach upon the alley or street right-of-way or public sidewalk. Which typically in North St. Paul is about 15 feet from the curb line. The proposed ordinance: Vehicles parked in a driveway must be located at least ten (10) feet from the curb or roadway. Parked vehicles are not allowed to extend or encroach upon the alley or public sidewalk. In most cases residents will actually get another five (5) feet to park within their driveway with the new amendment and will be easier for code enforcement to determine and measure if they are within the ordinance guidelines.

Regarding the recreation vehicle question from Mayor Furlong: Mr. Zweber commented that we basically have recreational vehicles and we have large recreational vehicles. Where recreational vehicles definition is borrowed from the Minnesota Department of Vehicle Services and how they define recreational vehicle. Large recreation vehicle is defined as a recreational vehicle over 36 feet in length OR a boat or unoccupied trailer over 25 feet in length. A recreational vehicle can be parked in the driveway with no limit. For large recreational vehicles which is over 36 feet or larger, they are only allowed to park for a period of no longer than a 72- hour period while actively loaded or unloaded.

Council Member Cole asked about the enforcement process. Mr. Zweber stated that the enforcement will be easier to enforce (measure 10 feet from the curb). This is a proposed ordinance amendment and City Engineer Dawley and Mr. Zweber both agree that ten (10) feet is a reasonable starting point and allows for some ability to clear some of the site lines. If council feels it's too aggressive, they always have the ability to change it.

Council Member Thorsen stated that there are driveways that aren't ten (10) feet in length. Which would mean those residents wouldn't be able to park in their driveway.

Mr. Zweber suggested that the City Council has the authority to determine what the distance should be. We have regulations on where driveways can be located and regulations on the site triangles for those corners and they still apply.

Council Member Cole asked Mr. Zweber to differ between a Cottage Development and a Duplex. Mr. Zweber commented that one of the largest features is that a Cottage Development is almost like a condo, in that you own the building (air space) and the rest is commonly owned. A Cottage Development is meant for multiple units compared to how our Duplex ordinance is written in that it's pretty much written for a larger lot with 2 units on it.

#### B. Utility Rate Study

Accountant Kyle Stasica addressed the City Council to request proposals for a study to be performed on the City's utility rates. Staff is currently in the midst of preparing a 10-year capital improvement plan for Council's review, and a utility rate study would provide a basis for how to achieve this plan. The last studies performed were in 2017 and are based on assumptions and improvement plans that are outdated. Staff will plan to engage multiple qualified vendors to ensure a fair cost is determined along with a review of their experience in long-term utility rate projections. An updated utility rate study will be a tool to utilize in our future strategic planning and budgeting processes. It will allow us to match the City's capital needs with proper rates to continue providing quality services to our community.

City Engineer Morgan Dawley gave an overview and stated that the City Council approves the Capital Improvements (CIP) that go into the front end of doing the analysis with all the enterprise funds which are suppose to fund themselves. Those costs and the plan approved by the Council will provide direction for the financial consultant with recommendations to the City Council. Past rate studies are out of date at this point.

Council Member Thorsen inquired on the useful life of the study? Mr. Dawley stated that on average if everything stays status quo, once every 10 years. Things in North St. Paul have been changing rapidly as a community with a lot of different factors and suggested to think of the study as an investment, providing a clear picture for the next ten years.

## **OPERATIONAL UPDATES**

Communication Consultant Kari Erpenbach updated City Council on the Downtown 7<sup>th</sup> St project stating that construction is going very well. Pedestrian ramps on the corner are not yet completed and the planters in front of the Post Office have been removed along with the seat benches. Hand signs were delivered to all businesses to direct customers to the rear entrances.

Mayor Furlong stated that he's been asked by residents why the planters appear to be tilted? Mr. Dawley commented that the angle of the planters is because not all the roads are symmetrical. He also commented in regards to the "lumpiness look" of the road. The lumpiness is wintertime protection which was planned to be milled out when doing the final layer of asphalt. This has been delayed by the contractor and hoping to have that done as soon as possible.

## **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

*There being no further business, on motion by Council Member Petersen, seconded by Council Member Thorsen, with all present voting aye (5-0), Mayor Furlong adjourned the workshop meeting at 5:47 p.m.*

/s/ Terrence Furlong, Mayor

Attest: /s/ Lisa Ritchie, Administrative Assistant