

***ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING – FEBRUARY 28, 2017
MINUTES***

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Julie Trude, February 28, 2017, 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present: Mike Knight, Sheri Bukkila, Valerie Holthus and James Goodrich
Councilmember absent: None
Also present: City Administrator Jim Dickinson
Public Works Director/City Engineer, David Berkowitz
City Planner, Stephanie Hanson
Associate Planner, Dan Krumwiede
Streets Maintenance Supervisor, Mark Becker
Parks Maintenance Supervisor, Jason Grode
Others

Mr. Dickinson introduced to the Council the new Associate Planner, Dan Krumwiede.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE DISCUSSIONS

Ms. Hanson explained the Packer Family has requested a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to split their land. The Planning and Zoning Commission really liked this plan and would like it to move forward. She noted she has been working very closely with the Met Council on this item and they have already reviewed it and are on board with the plan. She stated the Met Council like the way it is proposed because it is very simple.

Ms. Hanson stated what is being proposed is to add to the current Comprehensive Plan an amendment allowing for density of one unit per ten acres in Rural Reserve Residential areas. The Met Council already allows for this in their policies, allowing people to further subdivide their land as long as there is a zoning ordinance with provisions in it providing for future urban development. She stated they would need to approve the Comprehensive Plan amendment and then create a zoning district which will be Rural Reserve Residential (RRR) and have the regulations in there with mechanisms providing for future urban development. She stated she is proposing a five acre lot minimum to keep very minimal impact in that area. Some of the things they will need to look at in the zoning code is requiring applicants to put the building pad in an area that it can be further subdivided in the future, this will require some type of ghost plating so they have a general idea on how the lot can be laid out and would keep in compliance of ordinance provisions.

Mr. Dickinson reviewed with the Council how the new Rural Reserve Residential District would look.

Councilmember Bukkila stated her only concern would be with people coming forward in the future and the Council would not have enough guidance to make an informative decision. Mayor Trude wondered if the Council would want more rules regarding this.

Ms. Hanson drew an example on the white board and stated their provision would allow someone to subdivide to five acres per lot, but would still need to keep the density to four units for forty acres of land. This will still be considered Rural Reserve and will not lose that designation. Mr. Dickinson stated the applicant will still need to ghost plat the parcel to show what it could look like in the future if developed.

Mayor Trude stated the Council liked that the residents can build on their inheritance but wondered if they would want to open this up for selling off the land and chipping the rural reserve down. Mr. Dickinson stated the home would still need to be on road frontage and would still have to maintain the four houses per forty-acre rule.

Mayor Trude wondered if a street came through like Veterans Memorial would they be able to split off more land. Mr. Dickinson stated that would be up to the Council to decide and he did not think this will be a big deal. He thought it would be unfeasible for that type of situation to happen.

Mayor Trude wondered if this could be done on the fringes of the Rural Reserve because she did not want this to include the entire Rural Reserve area. Ms. Hanson stated this would need to be done throughout the entire Rural Reserve area and must be part of the Zoning Code. Mr. Dickinson stated the Comprehensive Plan has to be put in place first and then they will have to go and add language to the Zoning Code.

Councilmember Bukkila asked if there will be language in this stating that there needed to be frontage road in order to split and develop. Ms. Hanson stated they could. Mr. Berkowitz thought that was already in the City Code.

Councilmember Holthus asked if on a forty-acre parcel would there be 350 feet of frontage. Mr. Berkowitz indicated there would be.

Councilmember Holthus asked what the MUSA potential is to expand into the Rural Reserve. Mr. Berkowitz stated they are looking at the new Atlas 14 restrictions and are working with the Coon Creek Watershed District on the potential of what impacts the Atlas 14 will have on the Rural Reserve. He stated the current model shows a huge area within inundated with water. Some culverts throughout the farm ditches could be lowered with the potential of alleviating some of that impact. He stated the biggest challenge will be what will Atlas 14 impacts have on that area and how will it develop.

Councilmember Knight asked what the Met Council's goal was in setting the rules in the area. Mr. Dickinson stated right now the City rules are stricter than the Met Council rules and the City is trying to be compatible with Met Council rules to allow one in ten in the Rural Reserve.

Councilmember Goodrich stated he wanted to let people do as much as they can without getting jammed up. He wondered if there were any thoughts on one per eight or having five acres across. Ms. Hanson stated the one unit per ten acres is Met Council policy.

Mayor Trude wondered if the City can push the Met Council on this. Ms. Hanson stated they would likely not be successful pushing the Met Council on their policy as it is consistently applied.

Ms. Hanson stated the next step will be a public hearing in March and then off to Met Council if the Council approves moving this forward. The City Council unanimously agreed to have staff move this item forward.

Ms. Hanson and Mr. Krumwiede left the meeting.

COMMUNITY SURVEY DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Dickinson explained during the City of Andover 2017 Budget and 2017-2021 CIP development discussions, there was a desire to pursue a community survey to determine resident support for current city services, programs and potential capital projects. At the January workshop, the City Council instructed Administration to proceed forward with a 2017 community survey.

Mr. Dickinson reviewed changes he has made to the survey questions for 2017. He noted Councilmember Holthus asked to remove "issues facing" from the beginning paragraph in the survey.

Councilmember Holthus indicated she would like to change question 4 from "issue" to something else, like "challenge". The Council thought "challenge" was a better word than "issue".

Mayor Trude thought they could replace item 13, "One level housing for seniors maintained by an association" with the new item below 7 "Association Maintained Housing". Councilmember Bukkila wondered if the question is too long and as she looks at the question she wonders what the purpose of the question is. Mr. Dickinson stated the question asks if the City has too much, too little or enough of a particular type of housing. Councilmember Bukkila thought the question ends up being too vague and thought this should be two different questions.

Councilmember Bukkila stated she did not understand what "move up" housing meant. Mr. Dickinson stated this would be mid-range housing.

The Council thought the survey wording for item 9 should be changed from “move up” housing to “mid-range housing”. Mr. Dickinson stated they have “Starter homes for young families”, maybe they could change the item to “Move up housing for growing families”. Mayor Trude asked what the goal for this was. Was it a guide to help the City Council guide their decisions or for staff working with people on land development. She wondered if this was like a market study. Councilmember Holthus thought this would be helpful for developers in trying to figure out what types of homes are needed in the City.

Councilmember Knight stated there is not any category for multiple housing. Mr. Dickinson stated apartments and townhomes are listed. Mr. Dickinson stated they could ask Mr. Leatherman what he thought when he arrived.

Mr. Dickinson stated questions 44 through 50 should be removed because he did not think commuting and the Bunker overpass was relevant at this time.

Mr. Dickinson stated he added a question for dangerous dogs/cats and removed upkeep of boulevards. He also added a question for tall grass, if there was too much, not enough or too little. Councilmember Holthus stated she would like to add a question of weeds because she was not concerned about tall grass but more about weeds.

Mr. Dickinson stated he would like to remove questions 61-62 because they are not relevant.

The Council and staff reviewed questions 63 through 65.

Mr. Dickinson stated question 64, list the four open spaces and ask if the resident has visited any of the four. Councilmember Bukkila thought this question has a language issue in terms of open space. Either the question is asking about open space or about parks. Mr. Dickinson stated it is related to open space and the park names listed will be replaced with open space names.

Mayor Trude thought they should remove question 65. Mr. Dickinson stated the Park and Recreation Commission wants this left in but he could take it out if the Council wants it removed. Mayor Trude stated she did not think this would help them make decisions.

Mr. Dickinson stated they should remove questions 66 because they are not purchasing anymore open space in the City.

Mr. Dickinson stated he added a question between 68 and 69 “What could the City do to enhance your use of the city trails”. He also added a question after 69, a money question on trails. The City Council indicated they would like that. Mr. Dickinson noted that no more than three money questions should be asked within a survey.

Councilmember Goodrich stated he would like to give residents the thought that nothing is for free and if they want added amenities in the City they will need to pay for them.

Councilmember Bukkila noted her son is still complaining two years later about the wood chips in the park and will not use the park anymore. She wondered if a question could be directed to something like if the use of a park has changed because of something that has changed in the park.

The Council and staff discussed safety changes in the parks.

Mr. Dickinson stated they could add a question at the beginning of the park and recreation section “Do you use City parks, if not, why not, what would you improve in the parks” then transition into the park and recreation questions.

Mr. Peter Leatherman from Morris/Leatherman arrived at the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

The Council updated Mr. Leatherman on the progress of the items they are discussing.

Mr. Leatherman thought on question 70, if the person being asked the question indicated the parks as being good, fair or poor then find out what needs to be improved which would then tap into further questions. The Council thought that was a good change.

Mr. Dickinson stated he added the new question “How safe do you feel when visiting your neighborhood park?” Councilmember Bukkila thought the question should be changed to how safe do you feel your neighborhood park is after hours and also ask the input of the residents around the park rather than users of the parks. Mr. Leatherman stated this is a good question but if there is a concern about safety there needs to be a follow-up question, why are the parks not safe.

Mr. Dickinson stated the next changes he made are to the questions in regard to the meeting he had with the Community Center Advisory Commission and the Park and Recreation Commission.

Councilmember Bukkila stated she did not like these questions because they are so vague in terms of indoor/outdoor activity and some people might only think of the YMCA amenities rather than what is needed at the Community Center. Mayor Trude thought they wanted to know if all the activities are being met. Councilmember Bukkila thought this question is not isolated to the city campus, it says the city as a whole.

Mr. Leatherman stated he was at the Park and Recreation Commission meeting and as this question is set up now, it is a fishing expedition and will likely not be fruitful. If they have specific amenities that the Council would like to see if there is support for in the Community then it should be asked in a specific context. He thought there was a hesitancy of the Park and Recreation Commission that if they asked a specific question they would get a no answer.

Mr. Leatherman stated at the end of the day it has to be grounded in what the community would support that requires additional taxes. He stated he would phrase it in a manner of “would you

support an increase in your property taxes or the use of City funding to do x, y, z”, whatever those specific things are and if they support any of those things then he would ask “how much would you be willing to see your property taxes increase for that purpose”. He stated this will give the Council an indication of what the residents want and how much they would be willing to pay for additional amenities.

Mayor Trude stated that is a good question but they do not have an equation of if they want to do A, B or C, they are talking about if they do a second sheet of ice it wouldn't be just a second sheet of ice, it would be a multi-use indoor facility. She wondered how they would gauge what the uses are that the community would want to see in there. Mr. Leatherman asked what things the Council was thinking about.

Mr. Dickinson stated there is the expansion of the Community Center itself for field house use or dry floor activities, storage (they would not ask about the storage part). It is also ice, an additional court for basketball. Councilmember Knight stated it could also be additional space for more activities. Councilmember Bukkila stated she liked the Teen Center question because it was very specific. She stated she did not like the comparison to other cities because those with amenities have twice the population and tax revenues. She felt the question was a set up for failure and felt when asking for comparisons it sets them up for failure and did not think the question had any value.

Mayor Trude thought one of the issues they run into is they have kids going to different schools with different amenities and the kids going to other schools besides Andover are being taken care of by the other cities also so she did not want to pit the kids going to Andover or the other schools with a survey question that would not apply.

Mr. Leatherman stated he cannot think of a community that would support an additional sheet of ice in the way it is phrased because hockey parents are a tiny piece of the population as a whole. They either ask the question specifically and gauge it or it is something they need to do and don't ask the question because if asked he thought the question would be answered in a way that would box the Council into a position of not being able to do it at all.

Councilmember Holthus did not think they should have a hockey related question. Mayor Trude stated they have not asked a specific question before about other sports and did not think they should have a hockey specific question either.

Mayor Trude asked how they can gauge general support of activities in the City. Mr. Leatherman stated this needs definition to have a meaningful support. Mayor Trude asked if the question “would you support additional facilities for organized activities for youth, seniors or adults?”. Could that question work. Mr. Leatherman indicated that was helpful in order to put it into context. He stated he did not want to give the Council a response that is vague. It is a waste of a question and they needed to create a context of what the Council wants an answer to.

Councilmember Bukkila asked if there should be a question in regard to each of the activities and

a yes or no answer for each of them. Mr. Dickinson thought they should talk about an expansion of the city facilities to provide for additional activities.

Councilmember Holthus thought the question needed to have an introductory educational question such as “As you know the Community Center has xyz and the YMCA has xyz, do you support an expansion of either the YMCA or the Community Center.” They should start off with a statement describing what each of the entities are and provide.

Mr. Dickinson reviewed the introduction they have in the survey regarding the YMCA and Community Center.

Mr. Leatherman stated he has tried to think of a way to get them data that is useful and not box them in. He suggested after the Community Center use, they go through a specific list in the community: Do you think there is: adequate field house space, adequate amount of ice, athletic fields, meeting room space or is there too much, too little, etc. and then ask the question “would you support additional City funding or additional facilities in the City.” “How much would you be willing to support” and if they support additional funding, ask them what specific amenities would they support additional funding for, after they have already grounded it with the specific facilities they are talking about.

The Council thought that was great but Mayor Trude thought it was so specific. Mr. Leatherman stated he was not going to ask them to spend money, he was asking if they felt the City had enough or not enough or too much. It will be a scale on that. Councilmember Goodrich thought that would give them a good indication of what the residents want.

The Council requested they remove indoor/outdoor activity sections and leave in YMCA/Community Center questions.

After question 81, add the question “The City of Andover is considering taking on a role of facilitating the coordination of community volunteers. Should the City have a role in coordinating community volunteers?”

Mayor Trude thought a question to ask is how do they let people give back to their community if they want to and should they do that. Councilmember Bukkila stated that is typically a volunteer coordinator position in Government services. She wondered what would be the point of having a volunteer and do they want to pay an employee to coordinate them. She stated there is a cost factor to volunteerism. Mr. Leatherman stated they could ask a question like “do you feel there is enough volunteer opportunities in the community”. The follow up could be “would the City have a role”, or something like that. He stated he would work through questions for this and the Council can review them in the draft.

Mr. Dickinson stated he removed questions 82 and 83 from the survey.

Mayor Trude thought the question after 87 should be reworded to find out what is more useful in the newsletter and if they want more information in each newsletter or more frequent

publication.

Mr. Leatherman stated 70 to 80 percent of people will say it is fine the way it is. If there is something missing they will tell the surveyors. He thought they could ask people to rate the format, appearance and the content of the newsletter. If content is rated good, fair or poor, then they could ask another question such as “what would you want to see improved or added to the content of the newsletter”.

Mr. Dickinson stated he added a new question “Would you support a local government news program”. Councilmember Bukkila did not think this said anything to her, she wondered if it could be changed to something else. Mr. Leatherman suggested “How likely would you watch an Andover government news program on cable tv.”

Mr. Dickinson stated questions 97, and 98 are not relevant and should be removed.

Mr. Dickinson stated going back to questions 6-19, “move up” housing is middle of the road housing and the Council thought this could be changed to mid-range housing. Mr. Leatherman stated people do know what “move up” housing means but it can be changed if the Council likes. He stated there is language they use to explain this to people who do not know what it means.

The Council requested changing higher cost housing to “executive housing”.

Mr. Dickinson stated in regard to question 64, he thought it might help to have an opening paragraph telling people what open space is. He stated after indicating the four open spaces the City has to ask the person if they have visited any of them and if yes, which have they visited. He thought they should list the four open spaces leading to the awareness of this.

Mr. Dickinson stated after the next Council meeting he thought the Council could have a short workshop meeting to discuss changes to the survey questions.

The Council thanked Mr. Leatherman for attending their workshop meeting.

RECESS AND RECONVENE

The City Council recessed at 7:47 p.m.

The City Council reconvened at 7:55 p.m.

DISCUSS CITY TREE PRUNING AND REMOVAL PROCESS

Mr. Berkowitz explained the City Council is requested to discuss with Public Works staff tree pruning and tree removal practices within the City right-of-way, City owned property and City parks.

Mr. Berkowitz reviewed the staff report with the Council.

Councilmember Goodrich stated he is in support of the policy they have. He stated he likes the fact that they do not allow new trees and shrubs so close to the road. If there is a risk of safety and vehicles then the trees need to be removed.

Mr. Grode made a tree presentation to the City Council.

Mr. Becker made a public works, street department tree removal presentation to the City Council.

Mayor Trude stated the Council appreciated what staff does.

CITY COMMUNICATIONS DISCUSSION

Mr. Dickinson explained communication in government serves to communicate and deliver messages directly to citizens and encourage citizen involvement; and to provide a mechanism for interaction and feedback from citizens.

Mr. Dickinson stated currently the City of Andover has many different ways in which we communicate with the residents including: the City Website, email, Facebook, Twitter, City Newsletter, electronic message boards, QCTV and print materials. The City Council is requested to discuss current City communications.

Mayor Trude stated two people, Anna Dirkswager from Open Space Commission and Angela Marinello from the Park and Recreation Commission are interested in providing some input about communication. She stated Councilmember Knight has suggested making the newsletter with more content and a nicer looking one. She asked if there was someone on staff who could put information out continually to the public to keep them updated on what is happening in the City. Mr. Dickinson stated he was cautious about what goes out to the public because anytime they put information out there is a cause and effect involved and he needs to make sure they are ready to deal with the responses. Mayor Trude stated people are big on information and want to know what is going on.

Mr. Dickinson stated in regard to County roadwork they are pushing the questions out to the County website where they have the resources and people who can handle it. He noted there are very few followers on Twitter and they do have a Facebook page where they post information. The newsletter goes out six times a year.

Mayor Trude stated in regard to the newsletter they may want to look at producing eight issues. People want to know more about open space and they do not really talk about what is going on at the Community Center. Mr. Dickinson stated whatever is submitted regarding the Community Center they include in the newsletter.

Councilmember Knight suggested they put in a middle page to the newsletter and include more content. Mr. Dickinson stated they can increase the size of the newsletter but they need to find

out what kind of things people are looking for to add to the newsletter and thought that is where the community survey will come into play and become helpful.

Councilmember Holthus stated when she looks at other city newsletters she notices the color and that there are photos and the City newsletter is not the same quality look. Mr. Dickinson stated they could change the newsletter if that is the Council's desire. Mayor Trude stated they did try to do a sample newsletter a few years ago, that had glossy black and white with pictures and there was not any feedback regarding it.

Mayor Trude stated they can change items but they need to find someone who is willing to work on the newsletter to make it better with more content. She thought it would be fun to tag some of the children's activities in the City. Mr. Dickinson stated they can look at this further but currently they are budgeted for publishing the newsletter six times a year.

Mayor Trude stated she did not like the formatting and layout that has been done on the newsletter and thought this could be improved. Councilmember Bukkila did not think subjects were grouped appropriately together. Mr. Dickinson stated they can have this published elsewhere, they are using ECM primarily for the mailing component, the bulk rate ship. He stated they could have the newsletter farmed out and formatted. He stated he would have someone seek out proposals for this, if that is the direction.

Mr. Dickinson stated the message boards try to focus on City, City Partner or City sponsored events.

DECEMBER 2016 BUDGET PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Dickinson reviewed the December 2016 Budget with the Council.

JANUARY 2017 CITY INVESTMENTS REVIEW

Mr. Dickinson reviewed the January 2017 City Investments with the Council.

OTHER TOPICS

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Bukkila, Seconded by Knight, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sue Osbeck, Recording Secretary
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.

