



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes - Final

10801 Town Square Drive
Blaine MN 55449

City Council Workshop

**While this is a public meeting where interested persons are welcome to attend, it is a work session for Council and staff to discuss issues before them. It is not for the purpose of receiving public input.*

Thursday, October 1, 2015

6:30 PM

Cloverleaf Farm Room A

NOTICE OF WORKSHOP MEETING

1 **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ryan at 6:30 p.m.

2 **Roll Call**

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Clark Arneson; City Attorney Patrick Sweeney; Planning and Community Development Director Bryan Schafer; Public Services Manager Bob Therres; Finance Director Joe Huss; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Chris Olson; City Engineer Jean Keely; Project Coordinator Tom Scott; Communications Technician Roark Haver; Senior Engineering Technician Al Thorp; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

Present: 7 - Mayor Ryan, Councilmember Hovland, Councilmember Swanson, Councilmember Clark, Councilmember Bourke, Councilmember Herbst, and Councilmember King

3 **New Business**

3-1 **[WS 15-48](#)**

MNDOT DISCUSSION ON I35W PRELIMINARY DESIGN

City Manager Arneson introduced Jerome Adams, MNDOT Project Manager and Mark Lindeberg, MNDOT Area Engineer.

Mr. Adams gave an update on the preliminary engineering and environmental assessment process required to reconstruct I35W from Highway 36 to Lexington Avenue. He stated the NEPA process has been started to select the preferred alternative and the engineering work was completed in July 2015, which indicated that MnPASS is the best alternative. He stated the project consists of adding one MnPASS lane in each direction with construction to start in 2019. He commented MNDOT determined that adding the two lanes is relatively easy to do without buying properties. He noted that if two general purpose lanes were added the congestion problem would reoccur by

2040. He gave an overview of MnPASS advantages, which included moving 10% more people during peak periods, increased reliability, reduced travel times, and enhanced transit advantages. He stated the MnPass program includes a debit account that coincides with the purchase of a transponder for \$15.00 or the use of a window tag/sticker for free.

Councilmember Herbst asked about the cost of the toll to use the MnPASS lane. Mr. Adams replied tolls can range from \$.25 cents to \$8.00 dollars per trip as stated in State Statute. He noted the average cost is \$1.65 to \$4.00 per trip. He stated fees would be charged during peak hours in the morning from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and evening from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. He noted that the MnPASS lane can be used by vehicles that have two or more people in the vehicle. He commented the MnPASS lanes are open and free for all motorists during non-peak drive times.

Councilmember Herbst asked if the camera can pick up an infant in the back seat. Mr. Adams replied enforcement is done by one State Patrol Officer during peak hours. He stated the officer is parked on the shoulder and the patrol car has a device in their car that goes off when the driver's transponder is turned on and if their device does not go off, the officer pulls over the vehicle for a visual inspection. He noted that in Minnesota violations are done by the eyes of the officer and that camera violations cannot be done.

Councilmember Bourke confirmed that one State Patrol Officer patrols the MnPass lane during peak hours and is parked in the median's shoulder. He asked if there is more than one access point into the MnPASS lane. Mr. Adams replied entrance can be made where there are slotted lines and not made when there are double white lines. He noted that MNDOT is evaluating the exit and entrance ramps for the proposed MnPass lane access.

Councilmember Herbst asked where the funds from the tolls are used. Mr. Adams replied MNDOT does not profit from the tolls. He stated the tolls pay for equipment, staff and State Patrol.

Councilmember Swanson stated \$100,000,000 dollars in funding has been collected from State and Federal funds and the project is approximately 50% funded. He asked for a status on County Road J improvements. Mr. Lindeberg replied that MNDOT, Ramsey County and Anoka County met to discuss County Road J and the I35W corridor and further discussions are needed on the appropriate locations for improvements.

Mr. Adams stated the project is underfunded currently; although the MnPASS lane was determined to be the best alternative for I35W. He stated the geometric enhancements still need to be determined along with costs.

Councilmember Swanson stated that County Road J was not supposed to be

left as it is when I35W was worked on and that it would be redesigned into a full interchange. Mr. Adams said they would follow up on the status of County Road J.

Discussed

3-2 [WS 15-49](#)

FEMA FLOOD PLAIN ORDINANCE REVISIONS

Public Services Manager Therres stated the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has new Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) for Blaine and the new maps are revised to reflect new streets, elevations data and air photos, which will be incorporated into Blaine's GIS system.

Project Coordinator Tom Scott stated FEMA added four to five new locations that are classified as flood plain to Blaine. He stated one location is at 121st and Aberdeen; although that does not affect residential. He stated if a property owner gets a call from their mortgage company the home owner can call to get their property revised. Project Coordinator Scott stated another new flood area is where the mini storage facility is located.

Councilmember Herbst asked if a revision is requested is it ever denied. Project Coordinator Scott replied no revisions have been denied.

Councilmember Clark asked if these areas have any history of flooding. Project Coordinator Scott replied no.

Councilmember Clark asked if the property owners can be notified by the City to get their applications in to FEMA. Public Services Manager Therres replied yes and also the City could apply on behalf of the home owners.

Councilmember Hovland asked if the City removes the properties from the flood plain, can the City be held liable. City Attorney Sweeney replied it is possible the City could be named as a party if the resident sues FEMA as well. Project Coordinator Scott stated the maps are a guide, but the map is not elevation based.

Discussed

3-3 [WS 15-50](#)

BREWER TAPROOM DISCUSSION

City Clerk Sorensen stated staff is requesting direction on the elements to bring forward the necessary code amendments to allow a brewer taproom. She stated direction is needed regarding requiring food on-site, allowing Sunday on-sale, allowing off-sale, and setback requirements from a church or school. She noted the City's liquor licenses currently require full food table service.

Mayor Ryan stated he is in favor of the taproom but requiring license holders

to serve some level of food.

After Council discussion, consensus was to require food on-site consistent with a small establishment as defined by State Statute, allow for Sunday on-sale liquor, allow for off-sale liquor in growlers including on Sundays, and requiring a 250-foot setback from a church or school with regard to taprooms only.

Discussed

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

The Workshop adjourned at 7:28 p.m.