

CITY OF BLAINE
ANOKA COUNTY, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
Monday, December 13, 2021

5:00PM
Council Chambers
10801 Town Square Drive

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Sanders at 5:00PM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Tim Sanders, Councilmembers Wes Hovland, Chris Massoglia, Richard Paul, Jess Robertson, and Jason Smith.

ABSENT: Councilmember Julie Jeppson.

Quorum Present.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Michelle Wolfe; Community Development Director Erik Thorvig; Public Works Director Jon Haukaas; Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Brian Podany; Finance Director Joe Huss; City Engineer Dan Schluender; Communications Manager Ben Hayle; City Planner Sheila Sellman; Budget/Fiscal Analyst Ward Brown; Economic Development Specialist Ruth Tucker; Community Development Specialist Elizabeth Showalter; Deputy Finance Director Ali Bong; and City Clerk Catherine Sorensen.

3.1 Council Requested Items for Discussion.

Councilmember Robertson stated she and Councilmember Jeppson received a call from a resident that received a complaint on his fence. She noted this resident received a permit for his fence, but was unaware of the “viewing triangle” requirement. She explained that the shape of this residents’ lot would require the fence to be oddly placed 10 feet from the front door. She reported without requiring this resident to get a variance, the council was being asked to consider changing the “viewing triangle” fencing requirements.

Councilmember Robertson discussed a complaint she received from a resident requesting a school safety zone or a graded roadway surrounding the Jefferson Elementary School.

Council consensus was to include both topics at a future workshop.

3.2 105th Avenue Redevelopment Study Introduction.

Mr. Thorvig stated the 105th Avenue/Radisson Road industrial area has been identified in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan as a priority redevelopment area. It has also been identified as one of the four priority areas by the city council through the visioning process that occurred in early 2021, and is also identified in the "Growth Management" portion of the city's strategic plan. Based on direction from the city council, the city will embark on a visioning/design process for this area to assist in future marketing and development efforts. At the November 15, 2021 workshop, the consultant led a discussion to gather information from the city council about their vision for the area. Staff noted consultants were in attendance to lead several groups of the city council and staff to create draft master plans. The draft plans will be revised after the meeting and the consultant will return on February 14, 2022 to receive feedback before a final product being completed in March.

Jonah Ritter, consultant, explained he would like the council to consider ideas for the 105th Avenue redevelopment area. He reported he had four concepts for the council to consider

Mike Lamb, indicated he would like to facilitate discussion amongst the council and staff and explained they were looking at the big picture for this area and summarized the comments he received from the council in November. He discussed several commercial areas in the Twin Cities and pointed out the experiential benefits of these developments. He described how mall areas were being redeveloped throughout the state. He stated the main goal of this project would be to create synergy between the entire redevelopment area.


Councilmember Robertson discussed how the Wisconsin Dells has become a great sports destination and encouraged the consultants to consider creating a restaurant district that catered to large groups for visiting teams.

Councilmember Hovland questioned if the City should be creating a central downtown area or if a hub should be created within each ward, noting the NSC and the mall could serve as hubs. He inquired what would come first and how the city should approach this project, whether that be through housing, or commercial uses. He stated he wanted to make sure the 105th area was a draw through all four seasons and not just during the summer.

Mr. Lamb reviewed the four concept plans in further detail with the council and council and staff broke into two groups to discuss concept plans for the 105th Avenue redevelopment area, after which comments were summarized from both groups, which included the value of a centralized water feature along with creating a gateway feature along 105th Avenue, the importance of connections to the north, south, east and west in order to draw people to the area, connectivity and greenspace, more restaurants in the area, the possibility of a residential use along Radisson Road, potential partners and stakeholders for this project, and that both groups preferred concepts #2 and #4.


Mr. Thorvig noted the consultants would return to council with more detailed plans for the 105th Avenue area at the February 14, 2022 workshop meeting.

The Workshop was adjourned at 6:50PM.



Tim Sanders, Mayor

ATTEST:



Catherine Sorensen, CMC, City Clerk
Submitted by Minute Maker Secretarial