

Mayor Ryan recommended the restoration work not disturb the site too much as he valued the wildlife living in the area.

Councilmember Swanson asked if a concept plan would be brought to the Council prior to staff speaking with the neighbors. Ms. Haug stated this would be done.

Councilmember Paul questioned if there was a sense of urgency to complete this project. Ms. Haug commented the City was simply finishing a project that was started and noted there was no sense of urgency.

Councilmember Hovland inquired what the long-range goal was for this site. Ms. Haug reported the subcommittee has discussed that rather than constructing an interpretive center the subcommittee would like to see a park pavilion with storage at some point in the future. She explained this type of space could still be used as a classroom.

Councilmember Swanson asked if an outdoor pavilion could be used in the winter months for teaching. Ms. Haug stated this would be the case. She explained it would be quite expensive to build a facility with sewer and water given the fact those services were not readily available.

Councilmember Robertson thanked staff for seeking grants to assist with the expense of this project then requested further information on where the trail would be located. Ms. Haug reviewed the proposed trail location with the Council and noted some neighbors were excited about having access to the preserve.

Councilmember Hovland stated access to the preserve without having to drive through the neighborhood would be important. Ms. Haug commented on the location of the proposed parking lot.

Mayor Ryan expressed concern with the amount of water that was running through the City's splash pad.

**Council consensus was to direct staff to proceed with the Southern Blaine Wetland Sanctuary Restoration project.**

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### **STORMWATER ENCROACHMENT**

Attachments:    Photos

Ms. Haug stated the Clean Water Act was passed by the federal government in 1972 to clean and protect the nation's lakes, streams, and rivers and was amended in 1987 because regulators and environmentalists realized that even every day activities of all residents had some impact on water quality. The amendment

required the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to delegate permitting authority of the national stormwater program to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). The national program is called the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program.

Ms. Haug explained the stormwater program was developed to reduce the pollution and damage caused by runoff from construction sites, industrial facilities and urbanized areas Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s). In Minnesota, where water contributes to a high quality of life, extra attention has been directed toward cleaner water and ways to reduce pollution from entering the storm sewer system and degrading water quality in Blaine and the cities and waters downstream. Preventative methods include controlling erosion on construction sites, regular maintenance of storm sewer systems, using phosphorus free fertilizers and keeping grass clippings and leaves out of the streets as well as addressing stormwater encroachments. Staff requested guidance from Council on how to enforce City Code regarding stormwater encroachments such as docks, swings and other items.

Councilmember Robertson requested further information regarding docks that have been placed in stormwater ponds. Ms. Haug explained the City currently had over 50 docks on stormwater ponds. She reviewed the location of these docks with the Council.

Councilmember Hovland commented on how bridges were built along Rice Creek and how this led to basements backing up with water. He explained residents can impact water levels and for this reason the City had to take action to address this concern. He supported the City educating the public on City Code requirements and having the docks removed if not removed by the resident in a timely manner.

Councilmember Paul requested further information on how stormwater ponds worked. Ms. Haug described how stormwater ponds worked to clean and filter stormwater after large rain events.

Councilmember Swanson stated he wanted to see the City strongly educate the public prior to enforcing City Code. He recommended this education occur over the fall and winter with enforcement occurring in the spring. Ms. Haug reported the watershed district was working on educational videos for public viewing and education.

Councilmember Jeppson suggested the City work to educate the public over the next year with enforcement beginning in 2021.

Councilmember Paul supported the City making contact with the homeowners at fault because he anticipated these homeowners may not read a letter from the City.



Council consensus was to direct staff to educate the public on City Code and to begin enforcing City Code in 2021.

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## COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

Attachments:     Strategic Communications Guide V2

Communications Coordinator Hayle stated at the direction of the Blaine City Council, staff has worked to develop a guide to direct communication and community engagement. The guide outlines roles and responsibilities for communications staff and gives direction for how to communicate with the community in different situations. The communications department strives to provide Blaine residents, visitors, and businesses with effective communication at all times and works with all City departments to achieve this goal. This guide includes best practices and yearly checkpoints that are designed to keep all City departments connected to the community in an effective way. He commented further on the communication guide with the Council and requested feedback.

Councilmember Hovland stated with outgoing information, it becomes important for the City to carefully manage sensitive information, especially coming from the Police and Fire Departments. He explained social media was allowing information to get to the public quicker than in the past. He asked who was filtering and reviewing this information on behalf of the City. Mr. Hayle stated for more sensitive information, he would be working closely with the Police Captain Boerboom or other Public Information Officer. Police Chief/Safety Services Manager Podany commented further on how the Police Department manages its communication.

Councilmember Hovland encouraged City staff to be very careful when addressing sensitive situations.

Mayor Ryan discussed how media has changed over the past 30 years with technology.

Councilmember Garvais stated information was key and did not support limiting the information the City was presenting to the public. He recommended all department heads be properly trained to speak in front of a camera and suggested the City work to improve its media relations.

Councilmember Hovland indicated the importance of crafting an official statement from the City Council prior to individual Councilmembers responding to the media or public.

Councilmember Robertson recommended there be a single point of contact and