



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota Minutes - Final

10801 Town Square Drive
Blaine MN 55449

Nat'l Resources Conservation Board

The Natural Resource Conservation Board is an advisory body to the City Council. The Board is charged with recommending acquisition of lands for open space and developing a Natural Resource Plan which includes environmental policy and guidelines for the maintenance and preservation of Blaine's existing and future opens spaces and trail corridors. One of the Board's functions is to hold public meetings and make recommendations to the City Council. For each item, the Board will receive reports prepared by City staff, provide the opportunity for public response, conduct Board discussions and make recommendations. The City Council, however, makes all final decisions on these matters.

Tuesday, August 18, 2015

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. Call To Order

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Others Present: Recording Secretary, Debbie Wolfe, Staff Liaison Jim Hafner

Present: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Ruth, Perkins, Truchon, Castillo, and Comissioner Anderson

Absent: 1 - Gunter

3. Approval of Minutes

MOVED by Boardmember Truchon, seconded by Boardmember Perkins to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2015 Board Meeting as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Ruth, Perkins, Truchon, Castillo, and Comissioner Anderson

4. Approval of Agenda

Chair McKinley added a discussion on a Regional Trail and an announcement to the agenda under other business

MOVED by Boardmember Rafferty, seconded by Boardmember Truchon, to approve the August 18, 2015 Board Agenda as revised.

Motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Ruth, Perkins, Truchon, Castillo, and
Comissioner Anderson

5. Open Forum for Citizen Input

There was none.

6. New Business

6.a Board Discussion of August 11 Wetland Tour

Chair McKinley handed out some drawings of the Wetland Sanctuary. She stated it was a wonderful tour and she was happy to see some Park Boardmembers attend. Jason has determined the FQI Value Per Plot to be submitted for government funding.

Boardmember Truchon stated the trail going from West to East would not need to be paved in order to retain the value of the wetland. She stated that was very encouraging. When the northern portion is restored it will be very valuable.

Boardmember Villella stated per acre it will cost \$18,000 to restore it according to Jason. Funding may pay for a portion of this.

Boardmember Truchon stated she was glad to see Jason's explanation of the boundaries of the wetland. She noted she learns something new every time she speaks with Jason. The Northern Bank will be designated ENRV (Exceptional Natural Resource Value).

Boardmember Anderson noted the motorized vehicles are not allowed to drive on the trails. The clean up the area will need to be done when it is frozen.

Boardmember Rafferty stated the soft wood trees will be removed and the hard wood trees will remain. Some trees will remain as a natural buffer.

Boardmember Ruth asked if historically residents have reacted to having trees removed and burning done. Chair McKinley stated when the other area was done 3 years ago no input was received that she is aware of. City Staff may have received calls. Boardmember Ruth suggested some signage and posting on the website might be helpful.

Discussed.

6.b Review Concept Materials for Proposed Nature Center

The next meeting of the MSR/Stantec group will be September 2, 2015 2:00 p.m. Let Mr. Hafner know if Boardmembers are able to attend. Boardmember Perkins stated they were trying to get input and the public meeting comments were provided for Board review.

Photographs of other projects done by Stantec were provided. Boardmember Perkins stated at the second meeting Stantec described the different features that could be put into the Wetland Sanctuary proposed nature center.

Boardmember Truchon stated a suggestion was made for snowshoeing during the winter and noted a drain in the floor would be needed. She noted at Eastman Nature Center there is a door that is always open that has a drinking fountain and restrooms. They also offer some beverages and food for sale.

Boardmember Perkins referred the Board to the Draft list of Principles (Living List).

Boardmember Truchon noted the Wetland Sanctuary will be a place unlike anywhere in the region.

Boardmember Perkins stated it will be a calming sanctuary and that should be added to the list of principles. He noted the Itasca Biological Station is net neutral.

Boardmember Ruth stated the scraping of the area will be done in the winter to expose the seed bank in the Fen.

Boardmember Truchon stated Stantec is asking the Board to help them envision the concept for the nature center and what is being shown in the nature center will be a guide to how the 500 acres are cared for.

Boardmember Anderson stated another item that came up is whether there would be shelters or picnic areas for possible weddings.

Boardmember Truchon noted there will be entrances to the Wetland Sanctuary. There will be a parking lot at the 109th entrance. Chair McKinley does not want there to be a lot of human activities.

Boardmember Truchon asked if indoor or outdoor space would be needed it should be brought up in the concept discussion. Everything can't be done in one place and it needs to be decided what will fit into

the Blaine Wetland Sanctuary.

It was mentioned what assurance does the NRCB have that any funds received will be used for the Wetland Sanctuary and dedicated to that. Chair McKinley will ask Mr. Hafner for clarification on that point. The credits should be received in the next few years and that funding will be used to maintain the site along with future development.

Boardmember Truchon stated it might be good to use the Oakdale Plan as a basis for Blaine's Nature Center. Staffing also needs to be addressed. The Wetland Sanctuary will be used by biologists and students. She suggested there be a Science Room where people could learn how a wetland actually works.

Boardmember Perkins stated additional funding might be available for such a Science Room.

Chair McKinley suggested a tour of the Oakdale Center on a weekend. It is open on Saturdays from 12-4pm. Boardmembers are requested to consider and it can be discussed at the next meeting.

Discussed.

6.c Discussion on Proposing Names for City Trails

Chair McKinley will send Jim Hafner an email about the Heritage Trail. The Flora and Fauna trail through Kane Meadows is the other trail that was discussed. Boardmember Truchon asked what it's currently called. Chair McKinley stated it is a highly used trail by the neighborhood as there is no parking lot. Chair McKinley will try to contact a neighborhood resident for his suggestion for a trail name.

Discussed.

7. Other Business

7.1 Regional Trail

There has been discussions about a Regional Trail (County) combining the East to West trail in the wetland with the Regional Trail. Chair McKinley asked if the County representative should come to the NRCB to give a presentation on the Regional Trail Plan. If a trail were to be attached to the Wetland Sanctuary trail and it would be asphalt, funding would be lost. The consensus was not to have the County representative give a presentation.

7.2 Announcement

Chair McKinley stated the Lexington Athletic Complex Open House will take place on August 25, 2015.

Mr. Hafner arrived at the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Chair McKinley asked if there is any assurance that the monies from the sale of the Wetland Sanctuary credits will go back into the Wetland Sanctuary and Open Space Fund. Mr. Hafner stated it is the understanding of the Council that those funds would stay with the Open Space Fund. This money will offset any need to draw from the General Fund. It could be as long as 5-6 years before any credits are ready for sale.

Mr. Hafner noted the County regional trail will go from the Lakes across to Lexington Ave. when the city street is extended in that corridor. The regional trail will not pass through the Wetland Sanctuary. There will be a semifore just north on Lexington Ave. from the Lexington Athletic Complex where pedestrians will cross Lexington Avenue.

The process with the Army Corps of Engineers is still going on and should be completed hopefully in January 2016. There are two approvals needed State Approval and Corps Approval and both offer credits.

8. Adjournment

MOVED by Boardmember Perkins seconded by Boardmember Villella, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Aye: 8 - Chair McKinley, Villella, Rafferty, Ruth, Perkins, Truchon, Castillo, and Comissioner Anderson