



**PLANNING COMMISSION
WORK SESSION
ANOKA CITY HALL COMMITTEE ROOM
Tuesday, March 15, 2016
6:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Work Session of the Anoka Planning Commission was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners present: Chair Don Kjonaas, Borgie Bonthuis, Karna Brewer, Manley Brahs, Sandy Herrala, Peter Rech and James Cook.

Commissioners absent: None.

Staff present: Chuck Darnell, Associate Planner.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Update: River Walk and South Ferry Riverfront District

Associate Planner Darnell introduced the topic, reviewing a study that was completed in 2012 on the South Ferry Street Corridor, the River Walk concept plan, and the City's plans in implementing the recommendations from the South Ferry Street Corridor study.

The Commissioners reviewed a sketch that was recently created showing the proposed improvements in the South Ferry Street Corridor. The proposed improvements and concept plan for the study area are being referred to as the River Walk plans. The plans include increased pedestrian and trail amenities, consistent with the recommendations from the South Ferry Street Corridor study.

Commissioner Brewer asked about the connection over the Rum River near the south side of the park. Staff stated that an additional crossing was identified in the plans, but would likely be a longer term improvement. The focus for the City immediately will be the trail on the west side of the river.

Commissioner Herrala asked about the parking at the old Carpenter's Hall, and whether it will be continued to be used in that way. Staff stated that the Carpenter's Hall was

demolished and the parking lot will remain to serve the existing park and future park improvements.

Chair Kjonaas stated that the sidewalk along Ferry Street should also be addressed during this project, and that the existing conditions are unsafe and not pedestrian friendly.

Commissioner Herrala asked if individual bollards could be added along the edge of the sidewalk to create separation between vehicles and pedestrians. Commissioner Rech stated that a jersey barrier could be another type of barrier to increase safety.

Staff stated that the plans currently show the addition of boulevard space and tree plantings in areas along Ferry Street between the roadway and the sidewalk. This would increase space between the street and the sidewalk and potentially slow traffic.

Commissioner Cook and Commissioner Brewer mentioned that there had been pedestrian fatalities in this area, so pedestrian safety should be a focus of any improvements in the area.

Commissioner Herrala asked where the existing buildings and use would be relocated to. Staff stated that the City was working with the current owner on relocating to a site on Highway 10.

Chair Kjonaas stated that a riverboat based out of the Peninsula Point Park would draw more traffic and potentially increase pedestrian activity in the area. The commissioners discussed some of the details of how a riverboat type use could be accommodated in the area.

Commissioner Herrala asked whether there was any ability for vendors to operate in the future park areas. Staff stated that the use would have to be included in the South Ferry Riverfront District zoning regulations, and that the Planning Commission could consider whether that use would be allowed in the area in the future.

2. Update: City Development Opportunity Booklet

Associate Planner Darnell provided an overview of a marketing booklet that included information on all of the city-owned properties, as well as a few privately owned properties that are guided for redevelopment. Staff has been working on updating this booklet, and will be bringing forward all of the development sites that will be included in the booklet to the City Council on March 21st for their input and guidance on how the sites should be marketed. After the March 21st meeting, staff will begin to actively market sites that are immediately available for redevelopment.

Associate Planner Darnell stated that the Planning Commission should review the sites that are included in the booklet, and be aware of the redevelopment that could occur in the future

as any new development would come through the Planning Commission for approval.

Chair Kjonaas stated that the City owns a number of properties in the vicinity of the Anoka Northstar station, and that the City should preserve this land for development that will be of high quality and valuable. Commissioner Cook agreed and stated that the City should hold the land for desired development.

Commissioner Herrala asked whether the City would consider low-income housing in the areas around the transit station. Staff stated that they had received some interest in low-income housing, and that they would be bringing that information forward to the City Council for guidance.

Commissioner Rech and Commissioner Brewer described how affordable housing units are defined, and how they can be distributed differently throughout individual development sites.

Commissioner Brahs asked how the City was planning to market the development sites. Staff stated that they would likely identify brokers that would list the properties and market the sites for the City. The exact process will be finalized after the March 21st City Council meeting.

3. Other Staff Updates

Associate Planner Darnell reminded the Planning Commission of upcoming meetings.

4. Attend Park & Recreation Board Meeting for Update on Preliminary Anoka Station Park Plans

The Planning Commission was invited to attend the beginning of the Park and Recreation Board meeting to receive an update on the preliminary plans that City staff have been developing for the Anoka Station Park. Chair Kjonaas thanked the Park and Recreation Board for inviting the Planning Commission to the meeting, and informed the Park and Recreation Board members that the Planning Commission was interested in the proposed park plans because the park will serve future redevelopment in the area.

Lisa LaCasse, Recreation Supervisor, presented on the preliminary concept plans and provided an update on the potential park improvements that will be located in this area.

Time of adjournment 7: 25 p.m.

Submitted by: Chuck Darnell, Associate Planner