



Approved: March 23, 2020

**CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MARCH 16, 2020
5:00 P.M. - ARDEN HILLS CITY HALL**

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Mayor Grant called to order the City Council Work Session meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor David Grant, Councilmember Steve Scott
Councilmembers Brenda Holden, Fran Holmes, and Dave McClung via telephone

Absent: None

Also present: City Administrator Dave Perrault, Public Works Director/City Engineer Todd Blomstrom, Senior Engineering Technician David Swearingen, Associate Planner Joe Hartmann, Communications Coordinator Dawn Skelly, Public Works Superintendent Jeff Frid, Deputy Clerk Jolene Trauba, Community Development Manager/City Planner Mike Mroska via telephone, and Scannel Properties Representative Dan Salzer and Ben Johnson from Kimley-Horn

1. AGENDA ITEMS

A. 2020 State of the City Update

After brief discussion it was determined to postpone the event until later in the year, or cancel it for 2020.

B. Gateway Blvd Concept Plan Review

Associate Planner Hartmann introduced Dan Salzer and Ben Johnson from Scannell Properties.

Mr. Salzer gave background information on Scannell Properties. He noted they are under contract to purchase property at the intersection of I35W and I694 on Gateway Boulevard. The concept plan is for a multi-tenant building with office, manufacturing, and warehouse. He said the preliminary building materials would include painted precast, metal panels with concealed fasteners, and thin brick veneer.

Mr. Salzer explained they would be requesting variances on building height, use restrictions, design standards, surface parking setback and minimum lot size and went into further detail about each topic.

Mayor Grant asked for thoughts on each of the proposed variance requests:

Maximum building height – **Mayor Grant, Councilmembers Scott, Holden and Holmes** had no issues with a 40-foot building with 32 feet clear internal height. **Councilmember McClung** wanted to stay with the current maximum height of 35 feet.

Use restrictions – **Mayor Grant, Councilmembers Scott and Holmes** agreed to 85% warehouse, **Councilmember Holden** preferred 80% warehouse and **Councilmember McClung** preferred 75% warehouse.

Design standards – no issues were indicated with the proposed materials.

Surface parking setbacks - **Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom** expressed the setback should be at least 30 feet on public roads for snow storage.

Minimum lot size – **Councilmember Holden** questioned if the remaining land would be developable. **Mr. Salzer** explained the lot won't be any more developable with more than three acres.

Councilmember Holden requested an easement be put on the property for a future City of Arden Hills sign. She also asked if Round Lake Road could handle the traffic of the 32 proposed docks.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said staff had directed Scannell Properties to conduct a traffic impact study.

C. MVHS Traffic Study Update

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom reported that a traffic and pedestrian study was recently completed. The study was reviewed by City and School District staff for necessary improvements along Lake Valentine Road. There is an estimated pedestrian count exceeding 250 pedestrians per hour during arrival or dismissal time, and traffic operation concerns with traffic flow formed the basis for the traffic study. There are twelve recommendations based on the report that are summarized in the memo.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom gave further explanation for each of the recommendations. He asked if the Council concurred with the twelve recommendations and if so, should staff prepare an amendment to the Planned Unit Development Agreement to memorialize the requirements with the School District?

Mayor Grant asked if the School District was OK with the recommendations and what the cost would be to the City.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said the School District had reviewed the recommendations and were agreeable to them, and under the PUD the School District would be responsible for all of the costs.

After discussion, Staff was directed to work with the School District to move forward with the PUD Agreement.

D. COVID -19 (Coronavirus) Planning

Mayor Grant explained that several people had discussions with the City Administrator and felt they shouldn't encourage people to visit City Hall because there are other options to conducting business.

City Administrator Perrault stated that critical services and key personnel have been determined. Staff believes business can be carried out electronically, by phone, mail and fax. The exception would be City Council meetings. Staff contact would be limited for building inspections by conducting drive by inspections when able.

Council agreed they were comfortable with closing City Hall to the public.

Mayor Grant directed staff to put the communications plan in place.

Councilmember Holden asked what was being done for Public Works employees. She also wondered if all PTRC activities would be cancelled.

Mayor Grant said Parks and Rec activities would be looked at and cancelled. The Planning Commission would need to meet but no other Committees would need to meet.

City Administrator Perrault asked how long they would like to close City Hall to the public.

After discussion it was decided to close City Hall to the public for 8 weeks. The time may be shortened or extended, pending future guidance.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said the Public Works room is being rearranged to have greater distance between employees and allow for each to have their own table. Breaks may be encouraged to be taken in the field. They may also have variable schedules to move some work to the weekends.

Councilmember McClung stated that other cities have declared peacetime states of emergency to allow for more rapid movements.

Mayor Grant said there may be times when decisions may have to be made without input from the Council. He will discuss the idea of a declaration with the City Administrator.

E. EDC Workplan Discussion

Mayor Grant dispensed with the item due to the previous decision to close City Hall to the public and not hold meetings other than City Council and Planning Commission.

F. Green Corps Member Discussion

Mayor Grant noted the staff recommendation was to wait one year.

Council was in agreement.

G. Comprehensive Plan Amendment Discussion

Councilmember Holden asked to clarify the wording that density may be increased by 100%.

Community Development Manager/City Planner Mrosła said the maximum density would be 24 units per acre. The wording meets the Met Council standards.

Council agreed the wording was acceptable.

H. Ramsey County Cooperative Agreement and Right-of-Way Agreement

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom noted there are two agreements to consider. The first is for Lexington Avenue right of way acquisition associated with the Lexington Avenue improvement project. There are an estimated 30,284 square feet of temporary and permanent easements. The agreement applies Ramsey County's cost sharing policy of 50% city funding. The County previously estimated the City's right of way cost at \$66,000. The proposed agreement shows the City's right of way cost share would be \$228,000.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom stated that in 2018 the City and County entered into a cooperative agreement to conduct an intersection control evaluation for County Road E and Snelling Avenue North. The intersection does not meet traffic signal warrants, the report recommended a single lane roundabout. The cooperative agreement would be for design costs only, not for construction. The current cost estimate is \$1.8 million which includes the roadway improvements, water and sanitary sewer replacements, with approximately \$1.2 million being County costs. There would time for more public engagement during the design process.

Councilmember Holmes asked if the traffic study was good.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Blomstrom said he thought it was good, well prepared and thorough.

After further discussion, it was decided to move forward with the Lexington Avenue right of way acquisition agreement, but have more discussion in the future regarding County Road E and Snelling Avenue North.

I. Senior Engineering Technician Position Discussion

City Administrator Perrault reported that the Personnel Committee was recommending the Council consider upgrading the Senior Engineer Technician position to Assistant City Engineer.

Mayor Grant indicated that the step to start the position at should be discussed.

City Administrator Perrault clarified that Senior Engineer Technician Swearingen is currently an hourly employee and had approximately 145 hours of overtime which equated to an additional \$9000 in pay. The current job description required a PE, that could be removed or left as a future requirement. Mr. Swearingen is testing for the PE in the fall, so step increases could be tied to him passing the test.

After discussion, Council agreed to promote Mr. Swearingen from Senior Engineer Technician to Assistant City Engineer, and to offer the position at Grade 17, Step 2 with a yearly step increase, and to place the item on the consent agenda.

J. Roseville IT/Meter I-Net JPA Update

Mayor Grant stated the City needed to opt in or out.

All Councilmembers agreed to opt in.

K. Council Tracker

No additions or deletions.

2. COUNCIL COMMENTS AND STAFF UPDATES

Councilmember Holden said she had concerns for voting at Precinct 2. She felt there wasn't enough parking, and the distance from the parking lot was too far.

Councilmember Holmes suggested an article in the newsletter emphasizing other ways to vote that aren't in person. She didn't like the idea of changing the polling place location again.

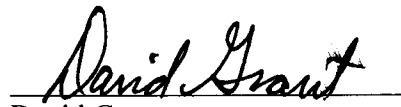
Councilmember Holden expressed concern about the length of the agenda and asked if when there was a shorter regular Council meeting if they could stay longer to discuss a few work session items.

Mayor Grant noted that during a state of emergency Council members can call in to the meeting and vote. One person is required to be at a meeting, technically that could be the City Administrator with the all Council on the phone. He will work with staff on agendas.

ADJOURN

Mayor Grant adjourned the City Council Work Session meeting at 6:50 p.m.


Jolene Trauba
City Clerk


David Grant
Mayor