

**WORKSHOP MINUTES
OAKDALE CITY COUNCIL
OCTOBER 24, 2023**

The City Council held a workshop on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue North, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting began at 5:00 PM.

Present: Mayor Kevin Zabel

Council Members: Noah Her
Jake Ingebrigtsen
Susan Willenbring

Absent: Council Member Andy Morcomb

City Staff Members: Christina Volkers, City Administrator
Sara Ludwig, City Clerk
Jesse Farrell, City Engineer
Andy Gitzlaff, Community Development Director
Luke McClanahan, City Planner
Nick Newton, Police Chief
Lori Pulkrabek, Communications Manager
Jim Romanik, Public Works Manager
Kyle Stasica, Accounting Manager
Julie Williams, Recreation Superintendent
Kevin Wold, Fire Chief
Kevin Zittel, Facilities Manager

Others Present: Ryan Coddington, Project Manager, MnDOT
Adam Josephson, Manager, MnDOT
Dan Regan, Principal, Launch Properties
Mark Rohweder, PMP, KLJ Engineering
Dan Terwilliger, Director of Development, Launch Properties
Jeff Westendorf, Project Manager, Westwood Professional Services
Travis Wieber, Vice President of Transportation, WSB

LES SCHWAB AND POSSIBLE BANK – CONCEPT PLAN

City Planner Luke McClanahan provided a brief introduction about the location of the proposed properties. Launch Properties, the developer, proposes a tire center (Les Schwab) and a bank (name undisclosed) within the Oakdale Marketplace Planned Unit Development (PUD). Mr. McClanahan noted that the developer would need to re-plat the property to create two new lots for the businesses. He noted that staff would like direction from Council on the appropriateness of the concept plan/uses for the subject property within the Oakdale Marketplace PUD.

Additionally, if the City Council feels that the concept plan/uses are not appropriate for the subject property within the Oakdale Marketplace PUD or that more information on the build-out of the rest of the Oakdale Marketplace PUD is needed before Council can give clear direction, additional guidance should be given to staff and the developer to help plan for future development of the area.

Dan Regan, Principal with Launch Properties, provided an introduction about Launch Properties and the compatible use of the project in Oakdale. Mr. Regan noted that staff's recommendations found in the staff report are reasonable and can be accommodated.

Dan Terwilliger, Director of Development with Launch Properties, asked for clarification about shifting the proposed tire center five feet to the left. Mr. McClanahan explained that this recommendation was to provide access on the east side of the lot for emergency service vehicles.

Mr. Regan asked for clarification on staff's request of the applicant to provide an updated framework plan to more accurately reflect the proposed change in uses and to plan for future development in the remaining vacant parcels within the Oakdale Marketplace PUD. He explained that Launch Properties is only responsible for the development on the proposed lot. Community Development Director Andy Gitzlaff stated that staff is trying to get a picture of how each development will fit together long-term within this PUD. Mayor Zabel added that the City has been slowly developing in this PUD over the last two decades and the overall PUD may not be relevant any longer given what has been approved by the City and developed thus far. In reference to the proposed developments, Mayor Zabel was not sure if they fit with the City's vision for this PUD.

Council Member Ingebrigtsen was supportive of the concept plan in that the retail development is placed closest to the main thoroughfare (34th St N) and residential development is tucked in behind it. He shared his opinion that it might be too late to revisit the current PUD.

Council Member Willenbring was interested in reviewing the PUD, and was not opposed to either proposed project, however she would like to review the PUD before making any formal decisions. Council Member Her agreed.

In response to Council Member Her's question about the interest to develop these lots, Mr. Gitzlaff said that the City has no control over who the owner enters into a purchase agreement with for these lots. He added though that interest in this area has increased in the past few years.

City Administrator Chris Volkens stated that Target and the overall developer would be included in any discussions related to reviewing the current PUD.

Mayor Zabel read Council Member Morcomb's written comments that were provided due to his absence. Council Member Morcomb was not opposed to the tire center and bank in general, however it was his opinion that these two developments do not necessarily align with the increase in residential development in this area. He added that a second bank may not be needed at all given the overall climate related to physical bank buildings. Additionally, Council Member Morcomb was in favor of amending the PUD to reflect the amenities that would support new residents' needs.

Mr. Terwilliger stated that the property is heavily restricted by Target's Operation and Easement Agreement (OEA). Ms. Volkens stated that Target is open to discussions about development within this PUD.

In reference to the example building design, Council Member Ingebrigtsen brought up the vacant auto shop at Century Ave N and 10th St N. Mr. Regan noted that the traffic pulled in by Target is a major factor for choosing the location for the proposed tire center and differs from the location brought up by Council Member Ingebrigtsen.

Council Member Her asked if Target has unofficially checked off on this proposed project. Mr. Regan confirmed.

Mayor Zabel stated that there appeared to be Council intent to revisit the PUD prior to moving forward with the proposed projects. Ms. Volkens asked how long a PUD review would take. Mr. Gitzlaff said a couple of months especially as a public hearing is required to amend a PUD. Ms. Volkens stated that staff will engage Target about the Oakdale Marketplace PUD and report back at a future workshop meeting. Mr. McClanahan noted that he would send the Target OEA to Ms. Volkens.

HIGHWAY 120 / CENTURY AVE. STUDY UPDATE

Mr. Gitzlaff noted that the presentation is an update on the Highway 120 / Century Ave. project study.

Ryan Coddington, Project Manager with MnDOT, began by providing the background of the project, which began in 2020. He reviewed the existing conditions of the two-lane roadway, which has consistent postal and garbage service and a lack of bike and pedestrian accommodations. Mr. Coddington shared the stakeholder engagement summary thus far. The key takeaways from Phase 1 of the study include safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, lack of sidewalks and trails, congestion at the Highway 120 / Highway 36 intersection, and pavement conditions, among other things. Based on the feedback, Mr. Coddington stated that the needs of the project were broken up into primary and secondary. The primary needs include vehicle safety, congestion at the Highway 120 / Highway 36 intersection, walking and bicycling, and pavement conditions, with congestion and access at other locations where traffic backs up as a secondary need.

Travis Wieber, Vice President of Transportation with WSB, presented on Phase 2 of the study, which involves a Level 1 and Level 2 Screening. Mr. Wieber mentioned that an alternative prescreening to evaluate the need for a four- or five-lane roadway was completed and

ultimately eliminated as the traffic demand is not projected to increase, and there would have been a significant impact to the right-of-way. The rest of the Level 1 Screening included evaluation of typical sections, signals versus roundabouts, the Highway 36 intersection, and bike and pedestrian options. He noted that the evaluations are based on purpose and need. Mr. Wieber reviewed the Level 1 Screening results. The typical sections include two-lane divided by a median, and three-lane. Both signals and roundabouts would operate acceptably. In looking at the Highway 36 intersection, the project study eliminated an at-grade option and is moving forward with interchanges. Lastly, the roadway is not safe for bikes so there is a need for a shared-use path or off-street bike lanes. Mr. Wieber went over the two main alternatives for the typical section – a three-lane roadway with a center left turn lane or a two-lane roadway with a raised median – in greater detail.

Mayor Zabel asked if the rerouting related to the second alternative would impact the traffic volume. Mr. Wieber indicated this data would be part of the further traffic study that will be completed as part of the Level 2 Screening.

Mr. Wieber moved on to the intersection analysis for the 14 existing signalized intersections, and the Highway 36 interchange evaluation and alternatives. The presentation wrapped up with next steps including the elected officials meeting, a public engagement open house meeting, the Level 2 Screening analysis, documentation of issues, benefits, and impacts, and potentially narrowing down alternatives.

In response to Council Member Ingebrigtsen's question about foreseeing the need for eminent domain, Mr. Coddington stated that as the alternative is selected any changes will go through the standard right-of-way process according to MnDOT's current policy. Mr. Wieber added that the study evaluates and tries to accommodate the needs of the corridor and impacts those needs have on the affected properties.

Ms. Volkens asked about how new development proposals will impact the traffic study. Mr. Wieber asked the City to communicate any new information and possible new developments that might affect the project study as it becomes available. Ms. Volkens said the City will open up that line of communication. Mayor Zabel was pleased that the project study was incorporating resources that the City has previously put together, i.e. the Glenbrook Small Area Plan.

In response to Council Member Ingebrigtson's question about which entity will make the final decision on this project, Mr. Coddington stated that the long-term plan is to turnback Highway 120 to the County. He said currently the goal is to agree on a vision for what the roadway should look like, and as the project develops it will get segmented into smaller projects which will involve finer details and collaboration.

Council Member Willenbring asked how long the Phase 2 Screening is expected to last. Mr. Coddington stated that it will wrap up next summer, and the funding sources meeting with the elected officials will take place after that when the projects get segmented.

ADVISORY BODY GOVERNING DOCUMENT(S) REVIEW

Ms. Volkens stated that there are three main reasons for bringing this item to Council. The first reason is to clean up the bylaws, the related City Codes, and the related City policy so all three are cohesive and complementary. The second reason is to provide direction to the advisory bodies that will enhance their value. The third reason is to determine efficiency which is related to the frequency of meetings and establishment of the current advisory bodies.

In response to Ms. Volkens' second reason, Mayor Zabel stated that in the past the Council has used the guiding documents, i.e., Comprehensive Plan, to direct the advisory bodies' work, but has not provided any extra guidance beyond that. Mayor Zabel continued by saying the Council could start providing clearer tangible direction to each advisory body possibly at the annual appreciation dinner.

City Clerk Sara Ludwig reviewed the proposed changes to City Policy MIS-013: Boards and Commissions Appointment and Reappointment Process. Ms. Ludwig stated that Mayor Zabel proposed a change to Section 1.6, line two, striking out the language referring to a Council liaison as a non-voting member as that language is duplicative due to the inherent definition of staff liaison...which means they are not a voting member.

In relation to Section 4.2, Ms. Volkens asked the Council if they would like the advisory body compensation amounts in the City policy as opposed to the City Code. The Council was supportive of the proposed 'Compensation' addition of Section 4.0.

Ms. Ludwig continued with the proposed changes in Sections 5, 7, and 9. She noted that Sections 11 and 12 were taken mostly from the bylaws and related City Codes to consolidate repetitive information into one singular document.

Relating to Section 12.7, Ms. Ludwig asked the Council to weigh in on the Order of Business for the advisory bodies. Ms. Volkens specifically asked for feedback on the proposed 'Open Forum' agenda item. The Council was not opposed to the addition as long as each advisory body follows the same rules as the City Council which are outlined in City Policy MIS-014: Public Comments and Rules of Conduct. Ms. Volkens indicated that City staff will provide training to the board members and commissioners.

Council Member Willenbring asked if this information can be added to the City policy. Ms. Ludwig confirmed. Mayor Zabel pointed out that the advisory bodies typically do not have 'Consensus Motions' items. Ms. Ludwig indicated she will revise and remove this language accordingly.

Mayor Zabel proposed that Section 13.0, Recognition of Service, which outlines internal operations for an annual appreciation dinner and presentation of certificate by the City Council to retiring or resigning board members and commissioners, be removed in its entirety. The Council was supportive of this suggestion.

Ms. Ludwig concluded with the proposed removal of Section 11.0 noting that the 'Open Meeting Law' will be covered in the training provided to board members and commissioners. Ms. Volkens added that City staff is working on an onboarding package that will include overall training, Robert's Rules of Order and the Opening Meeting Law, among many other things.

Ms. Volkens noted that in the motion for formal approval of these proposed changes, there will be language to repeal the current City advisory board and commission bylaws. Additionally, the ordinances will be updated along with the City policy.

Ms. Volkens asked the Council if they would like to change the frequency of meetings for any of the advisory bodies. Mayor Zabel was supportive of lessening the frequency of the Environmental Management Commission (EMC) meetings, and proposed using the Economic Development Commission's (EDC) frequency, which is eight meetings per year. The Council was supportive of this suggestion. The Council was supportive of leaving the Tree Board (TB) frequency as is at four meetings per year. Ms. Volkens suggested that the Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) lessen their frequency from ten meetings per year to eight meetings per year.

In reference to the annual appreciation dinner, the Council was comfortable with scheduling them at the first meeting of the year for each advisory board and commission.

Mayor Zabel was opposed to combining the EMC and TB. Council Members Her and Willenbring were open to combining these two advisory bodies. Mayor Zabel noted that due to limited seats some members would not be able to continue serving if these two advisory bodies were combined. Council Member Ingebrigtson was opposed to combining the EMC and TB as well. Ms. Volkens stated the advisory bodies will remain as is for now.

Mayor Zabel suggested adding time to a future workshop meeting, ten minutes per advisory body, to discuss what each should be focusing on for the next year. He added, once Council determines these items then they can discuss it with each of them. Council Member Willenbring pointed out that information does not always flow freely from the advisory bodies to the Council and vice versa. She stated that the role of the City Council, staff, and board/commission needs to be defined.

Ms. Volkens stated that time will be set aside on the November 28, 2023 workshop meeting to discuss how the Council can provide more detailed, tangible direction to the advisory bodies. Mayor Zabel suggested that each Council Member think on this prior to the meeting. Council Member Her noted that he will likely discuss this topic with the EDC commissioners to get their feedback.

MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION – RECREATION SUPERINTENDENT

Recreation Superintendent Julie Williams began by explaining that the memo includes summer highlights, fall and winter programming, new activities and projects, and the current 2023 facility rental report to date.

Mayor Zabel asked about the registration and attendance for summer programming. Ms. Williams stated that the numbers were similar to last year, with no significant downturn. Council Member Willenbring followed up asking about a comparison to pre-Covid numbers. Ms. Williams indicated the summer's attendance was a little less than pre-Covid.

Ms. Williams noted that the City's programming is affordable especially compared to surrounding cities. In response to Mayor Zabel's question about developing a new process to identify low-income families who qualify for the City's scholarship program, Ms. Williams confirmed that she and Administrative Assistant Laura Linzmeyer are working to revamp that program this fall. She added that there have not been any requests in 2023, and very few post-Covid. Mayor Zabel suggested proactively promoting the City's scholarship program.

Mayor Zabel asked about the attendance at the City's free events like the Pop Up Splash Pad, Touch A Truck, and Ladders and Squads. Ms. Williams said these events are well-attended.

Council Member Her asked about the popularity of the ITS truck. Ms. Williams noted that the ITS truck was brought to the Pop Up Park events to expand its use. She added that the schedule for the ITS truck is evaluated every year and is based on attendance.

Mayor Zabel asked about the possibility of expanding the free events by offering them more often. Ms. Williams was supportive of doing so, and mentioned an additional Pop Up Splash Pad is on the schedule for next summer, but cautioned there is an associated cost with increasing free events. Mayor Zabel was in favor of offering the Pop Up Splash Pad more frequently especially due to the community turnout and interaction with the Fire Department. It was determined that three Pop Up Splash Pad events could be accommodated in June, July, and August.

In response to Council Member Her's question about finding ice rink attendants for this season, Ms. Williams stated that four new applications have been received, but the City would like to hire about ten for the season. Council Member Willenbring asked about the job description of an ice rink attendant.

Ms. Williams said they are responsible for unlocking and locking the warming houses. In response to Council Member Her's question about the utilization of the City's ice rinks, Ms. Williams stated that last season's weather was unfavorable for ice and skating conditions, but typically the rinks do well. There has been a downturn in attendance at Northdale Park likely due to the condition of the warming house. Mayor Zabel said he would send Council Member Her the City's attendance records for the ice rinks last season.

Ms. Volkens asked if the City's pay for ice rink attendants is related to the lack of applications. Ms. Williams noted that the City is in line with other surrounding cities' pay.

Council Member Willenbring suggested setting aside a portion of the General Fund net revenue at the end of the year for special parks and recreation projects that are not already budgeted.

Ms. Williams concluded that the Discovery Center display room is getting a "makeover" this fall. Staff is currently looking at new ideas to update and refresh the space with a variety of different hands-on experiences.

Mayor Zabel thanked the Recreation staff for all that they do.

ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Ms. Volkens reported that she will be testifying on behalf of the City alongside former City Engineer Brian Bachmeier, in the White Bear Lake water lawsuit related to the irrigation ban.

Ms. Volkens asked which Council Members auto-forward their City emails to their home email address. Only Council Member Ingebrigtsen indicated he does. Ms. Volkens explained that Metro-INET is proposing a new policy prohibiting the auto-forwarding of City emails due to cybersecurity risks.

Ms. Volkens stated that there is a possibility that the affected property owners will attend the public assessment hearings on the City Council agenda this evening.

Lastly, Ms. Volkens would like to start the process of her performance review. It was determined that the closed session would occur immediately after the January 23, 2024 City Council meeting.

COUNCIL TOPICS

Council Member Ingebrigtsen suggested that the City provide laptops to elected officials for use during their time on the City Council. Mayor Zabel would like to have a City policy in place first if it is the Council's intent to move forward with this suggestion. Council Member Her did not see the need for a City-provided laptop.

Ms. Volkens asked to get Council Member Morcomb's input at the November 14, 2023 workshop meeting before proceeding with a decision.

Council Member Her asked about the City's bond sale. Ms. Volkens reported that the bond sale went really well which will lower the tax capacity rate.

Council Member Willenbring thanked Facilities Manager Kevin Zittel for fixing the heat in Hadley Room.

Mayor Zabel read a comment from Council Member Morcomb about when the Council and staff will settle on final 2024 budget details. Ms. Volkens said it should be reviewed at the November 28, 2023 workshop meeting.

Mayor Zabel expressed his desire to revisit the 2024 Parks Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to adjust a few spending objectives after the Tanners Lake Park tour. If there is Council intent, he would like to bring this item to a future workshop for discussion. Additionally, he requested that staff provide a list of upcoming or tentative projects, including budgeted funds, within the Public Works Operating budget so Council has a frame of reference when residents ask them questions or make maintenance requests. Ms. Volkens stated that a maintenance list is something that she and Public Works Manager Jim Romanik are working on for next year. She added that Mr. Gitzlaff is working on a Parks Master Plan for long-term City parks planning.

Mayor Zabel asked for Council's intent on revisiting the 2024 Parks CIP as he would like to move the Tanners Lake Park playground replacement to an earlier date. Council Member Her offered that it might make sense to have a cohesive plan for Tanners Lake Park before revisiting the 2024 Parks CIP. Council Member Willenbring suggested that the Council decide on a unified vision for Tanners Lake Park before determining how to move forward with the 2024 Parks CIP. Mr. Gitzlaff indicated that as part of the Parks Master Plan, Council will be given alternatives for playground retrofits versus replacements, and at that time they would be able to formally decide how to move forward with the Tanners Lake Park improvements.

ADJOURNMENT

The workshop was adjourned at 6:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Ludwig, City Clerk