

**WORKSHOP MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS
FEBRUARY 2, 2021**

The workshop meeting of the Council of the City of Vadnais Heights was held on the above date and called to order by Mayor Gunderson at 5:30 p.m.

The following members were present: Mayor Heidi Gunderson, Council Members: Greg Urban, Patricia Youker, Steve Rogers and Erik Goebel. The following member was absent: None.

Also present were: City Administrator Kevin Watson; Assistant City Administrator Tim Sandvik; Planning/Community Development Director Nolan Wall; Public Works Director Jesse Farrell; Fire Chief Chris Hearden; Parks and Rec Supervisor, Katie Everett; and Deputy Clerk, Peggy Aho.

1. Saturdays Property Presentation

Mark Lavertz, Saturday Properties, and David Sell, Cunningham Group, introduced the project they have been working on for the City Center's Northeast Quadrant and said that they will be looking for feedback from the Council on the concept. Lavertz said that they would be looking to the City for TIF funding and would also apply for grants to help fund the project.

Lavertz gave a bio of their company, Saturday Properties, Development and Property Management Company. David Snell, with Cunningham Group Architects, reviewed projects they have worked on and said they are excited to look at this site and get Council input.

They reviewed two options for building on the site located in the City Center's Northeast Quadrant: 5 over 1 or 4 over 1. They asked the Council for any thoughts or feedback on the plan.

Council Member Goebel asked if it would be possible to put the parking closer to the interstate as opposed to where they have it currently laid out. They responded that they could but there is an aspect with the water table and visibility of the location would draw attention to it from the freeway. Goebel asked if there would be any potential for it to be a mixed use project. They said they have been talking to others, and they feel that additional retail space is not needed at this time.

Council Member Rogers said on page 5 they have the wetlands toward the freeway, does that mean they will be building on a wetland or would that be were water would pool. They replied that that is currently where the wetlands are.

Council Member Urban said he thinks it would make sense to make improvements for trails and sidewalks for pedestrian access that would go towards the downtown area. Urban asked if they have a figure that they would have to get to and what the breakdown might be. They said two different TIF districts, housing or redevelopment, would be needed. There would be some work that would have to be done by City staff and they would be offsetting the cost of that. They would be looking for an estimated \$5.4 million in TIF. The TIF money would be going towards the site work.

Mayor Gunderson said her preference for the size of building at this site would be a 4 over 1. She asked if Council might be able to tour some of their other buildings. They replied yes. Council Member Goebel said that he thinks this project would be a great asset to the community.

Wall said this property has two different zoning districts. He said that the north half of the property is zoned industrial which means we have to take it through a Comprehensive Plan amendment process and then rezone it.

2. Water Tower Discussion

City Engineer/Public Works Director Farrell introduced the item before the Council which is a result of direction from the Council at a previous meeting. Katie Everett, Parks and Rec Supervisor, reviewed draft designs and the Council discussed them. Council asked if there would be enough time to include the community in the design decision. Farrell said if it's the will of the Council we could do something like that and put it out for a vote, but it could evolve into something bigger. Farrell said that the painting of the tower will be advertised and the design of the logo would be part of the bid documents but plans can change and there is a moment to do it if it's the will of the Council.

Mayor Gunderson asked if there is a significant cost difference with the different designs, particularly the green versus grey or cream color. Farrell said that the darker colors require a higher level of UV protection against fading but they've been told that bolder colors last longer than used to. Farrell said generally speaking that the biggest expense on a project like this is the cost of labor.

Council Member Urban asked if putting a graphic around the whole tower would be more expensive than just single or two sides. Farrell replied yes, but he doesn't know how much. He said that he can ask for some feedback from the consultant.

Council Member Youker said that she likes the 5th Option, but would recommend looking at an updated font and perhaps a bigger logo. Mayor Gunderson said that she likes having the City's name on the water tower especially since it's located on Hwy 96

because it's good marketing. Council Member Goebel said he agrees that a water tower is a great piece of marketing. He also said that the font on the tower should be consistent with the font we use in other places such as gateway signs.

Gunderson said that she also likes option 5 and that she would like to know the cost of having the logo on both sides of the tower. Farrell said after the feedback at this meeting from the Council, they can run option 5 by the consultant and get different arrangements and sizes, etc. and then bring back a final at the next Council workshop.

3. Other Staff Issues

4. Future Council Requests:

Council Member Rogers said that he would like the Council to have a workshop to revisit Green Step Cities' initiative. He noted that he has asked Assistant City Administrator Sandvik what we do currently and how we match up and see if there is an advantage to doing it. He thinks it's worth revisiting because of the resources it could provide.

Council Member Goebel said he would also be interested in discussing this. Mayor Gunderson said this will be brought to a future Workshop.

Council Member Youker said that she thinks it would be a great idea to fund food for our first responders that are staffing the fire house on Holidays (Meals during the holidays). Fire Chief Hearden will work with Youker on what holidays, what the staffing level is and get a cost analysis.

Council Member Youker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Watson, City Administrator