

**WORKSHOP MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS
JULY 20, 2016**

The workshop meeting of the Council of the City of Vadnais Heights was held on the above date and called to order by Acting Mayor Auge at 5:34 p.m.

The following members were present: Councilmembers: Jerry Auge, Terry Nyblom, Craig Johnson, and Bob Fletcher.

The following members were absent: Mayor Marc Johannsen.

Also present were: Administrator Kevin Watson, City Engineer Mark Graham, Fire Chief Ed Leier, Attorney Caroline Bell Beckman, Planning Consultant Mary Matze, and Deputy Clerk Beckie Gumatz.

1. 2017 Budget Goals (CIP Discussion)

- Watson noted this is a repeat item from the previous meeting, since two councilmembers were absent.
- Auge asked about setting more money aside for street maintenance. Watson mentioned weening off of TIF and using more from general fund to pay for street projects.
- Graham mentioned he is looking at different options for an assessment policy. The TIF money will eventually run out.
- Nyblom spoke about the TIF money used for purchasing the Garceau site should come back and will go into TIF Fund.
- Watson stated that is the goal; find a developer to redevelop the property and reimburse the city for those funds.

2. Community Survey Results

- Peter Leatherman from The Morris Leatherman Company gave a presentation detailing the Community Survey results.
- They talked to 400 randomly selected residents at the end of April/early May of this year.
- The margin of error was +/-5%.
- There has been a lot of change in 10 years since last survey. All for the positive.
- There is a much greater connection within the community than there was 10 years ago.
- Communication efforts improved dramatically.
- The overall results of the Community Survey were very positive.
- The 2016 City of Vadnais Heights Quality of Life Survey Presentation slides are attached as 'Exhibit A' to these minutes.

3. Ehlers Economic Development Discussion Review

- Watson noted that he and former Planning and Community Development Director Fuhrman sat down with Ehlers and a group of developers to discuss several pieces of property that could potentially be redeveloped.
- Watson would like to use the information gathered, along with the Community Survey results, to help guide and focus redevelopment efforts and the use of TIF dollars.
- Jason Aarsvold from Ehlers gave a presentation on the results of the developer roundtable discussion.

- Prior to the developer roundtable, Aarsvold sat down with city staff and discussed potential sites and goals of the process. They then have a better understanding of the types of developers to reach out to for feedback.
- The developers used were Dominion, Doran Companies, and United Properties.
- Fletcher asked who picked the properties to be looked at. Watson answered it was a combination of Council and staff recommendations.
- All the information provided is hypothetical. No projects have actually been proposed for any of these sites.
- There were about 10-12 sites discussed.
- Nyblom stated that he had requested two city owned properties to be included in this discussion and that they were not.
- All the developers felt that Vadnais Heights had a good market for development.
- Discussion of land prices that developers would like to pay.
- All the developers felt that there was a demand/need for senior housing in the community.
- Developers want certainty from staff and Council. They would like a clear vision on how the City would like to see sites developed.
- Being willing to provide monetary assistance or grant assistance is also something developers would like.
- Fletcher stated he would like to recess the City Council Workshop meeting and reconvene following the conclusion of the Regular City Council Meeting.

The City Council Workshop recessed at 7:01 pm.

The City Council Workshop reconvened at 8:40 pm.

- Acting Mayor Auge left the meeting.

3. Ehlers Economic Development Discussion Review cont.

- Fletcher asked Watson to outline his recommendation for properties to allocate City funds to.
- Watson stated he would focus on Garceau property first.
- It will probably need to be a new TIF district.
- Johnson has heard from residents on Edgerton Street that a senior housing development is not a popular idea.
- Watson has heard that some residents would be interested in a park for that site.
- It was noted that grant money from MnDEED needs to be used within 18 months.
- Watson believes senior housing project will have highest return on investment.
- Watson explained there are two developers currently interested in a senior housing development on the Garceau site.
- Fletcher would also like to solicit applications for commercial development on the Garceau site.
- Watson's second priority would be the NE quadrant City Center property.
- Watson would like to see multi-family housing to that area.
- Johnson asked if the Garceau site would need to be rezoned in order for senior housing to go there. Watson answered in the affirmative.
- Discussion of keeping some of the Garceau property to build a trail.
- Watson's third priority would be Hwy 61 and I-694.
- Watson believes once Kwik Trip comes in, that area will be ideal for development.
- Fletcher does not want to give any TIF money to the Hwy 61 and I-694 area. He would rather use the TIF dollars for the City Center area.
- Fletcher would like to focus on two sites.

- Nyblom asked about the Staehli property.
- In order to make something work on the Staehli property, it was noted that additional property acquisition would probably be required.
- Johnson’s second priority would be to develop the NE quadrant of the City Center area.
- There was discussion of those City Center properties.

4. Other Staff Items

- Watson stated that at the next meeting, there will be a resident coming to speak about owning backyard chickens.
- Discussion about whether or not to explore a code amendment to allow backyard chickens.
- Watson also noted that the Ramsey County Sheriff is proposing a budget increase of between 3% and 7% for the city.

Adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Prepared for and approved by:

Attest:

Kevin Watson, City Administrator

Jerry Auge, Acting Mayor