

The Planning Commission Meeting was called to order by Chair Bill Campbell at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Meeting Room, 100 Village Center Drive Suite 150, City of North Oaks. Also present were Commissioners Dick Hara, Bob Wilson, Joyce Yoshimura-Rank and City Council Liaisons Gregg Nelson and Katy Ross. Commissioner Nancy Reid was absent. City Administrator Mike Robertson, Administrative Assistant Linda Hanson, City Forester Mark Rehder and Videographer Kevin Scattum were also present.

Approval of Agenda

City Council Liaison Nelson moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ross and passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Wilson moved to approve the Minutes from the April 24, 2014 Planning Commission meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Yoshimura-Rank and passed unanimously.

New Business

1. Proposed Ordinance for Tree Preservation submitted by the Natural Resource Commission.

Administrator Robertson introduced the proposed Tree Preservation Ordinance that the Natural Resource Commission (NRC) has been working on. The ordinance was modeled after the current tree ordinance used in Stillwater. Present at the meeting to discuss the ordinance were Chair of the NRC, Bob Larson, NRC Commissioner David White, NRC Commissioner and NOHOA Vice President John Murphy and City Forester Mark Rehder.

Mike Robertson reviewed the two comments he had received to date. A discussion took place on some of the concerns of the Commissioners. These included the following comments:

- The ordinance appears to have more authority than some members felt was necessary to preserve the City's forest.
- North Oaks does not appear to have a problem with clear cutting so perhaps a tree ordinance is not necessary.
- This ordinance could be difficult to enforce and could cost a lot of money for the City, homeowners and/or NOHOA.
- The City Forester would have to put in many more hours to monitor the program.
- They were uncomfortable with the amount of discretion left to the City Forester.
- A property can at times have too many trees and reducing the number is actually healthier for the forest.
- Some current trees are undesirable. The ordinance should include a list of those that could be removed without requiring replacements.
- The size of the trees that would trigger replacement should be revisited.
- Perhaps education is needed more than an ordinance.

After expressing their concerns, the Planning Commission did agree that it is important to preserve the City's forests and that some type of an ordinance may be a good idea. Bob Larson, the Chair of the NRC, stated that the trees in the City are under stress due to diseases and

invasive species. Having a healthy forest is important and does increase property values. Both David White and John Murphy stated that the real concern is for preservation of the larger Heritage trees.

Chair Campbell stated that at this time the consensus of the Planning Commission would be to not recommend this ordinance to the City Council. He recommended that the Heritage trees in the ordinance be re-defined and a list of trees that could be cut down without a permit be listed. He would like to see the ordinance be less restrictive with a reconsideration of the ratio of trees needed to be planted in relationship to those removed. Also he would like to see a cost estimate for enforcing this ordinance.

Once the Planning Commission reviews the revised ordinance, there would need to be a Public Hearing. The NRC will revisit the ordinance and come back at a later date for Planning Commission review.

Next Meeting

The next Planning Commission Meeting is June 26th, 2014 at 7 p.m. at the Community Meeting Room, 100 Village Center Drive. Administrator Robertson stated that at the next meeting the zoning ordinance update is the only item.

Adjournment

On motion made by Commissioner Hara, seconded by Commissioner Yoshimura-Rank and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Attest:

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Bill Campbell

Linda Hanson
Recording Secretary