

North Branch City Council

Work Session

Date of Meeting: June 2, 2016

Present: Councilmembers: Theresa Furman, Kathy Blomquist, Joyce Borchardt, Robert Canada, and Kirsten Hagen-Kennedy; and the Water & Light Commissioners Darryl Fisk and Matt Falk

Also Present: City Administrator Konrad, Finance Director Hill, the Community Development Director Vita, Police Chief Meyer, Water and Light General Manager Petsche, City Engineer Gustafson and Public Works Director Williams.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Central MN Housing

Central MN Housing Partnership appeared before the Council and discussed the regional mental health initiative to house mentally ill within the County. They are looking at those with mental health issues who need extra care and monitoring. This is not a licensed facility it is permanent housing. They are housed first and then deal with any underlying issues that may be a barrier to employment, etc. There is a site off of 14th Avenue they are looking at. They would like a tax increment financing district for this project, waive building permit fees, waive SAC, waive WAC fees, and park dedication fees. They are asking for a variance to the required parking and she is also wondering whether one entrance to the site would work or if that is a fire or emergency vehicle issue. Borchardt said she noticed all the units are one bedroom. Central MN Housing partnership indicated that is correct this housing is for single individuals and not families. Canada asked if there would be a need for parking for visitors even if the residents do not have vehicles. Furman asked how residents are vetted when they come in and whether they would be violent or have been violent. Furman asked if some of these residents would be homeless and where are the residents going to be from, the area or anywhere. Central MN Housing indicated that they will be background checked and the serious crimes, including sex offenders, would not be allowed. There will be 20 units and 16 have grouped residential housing and the other four are long term homeless. Furman asked what types of services will be offered to these residents. Central MN Housing indicated that there would be case management. Hagen-Kennedy said that there are basic life skill issues that these folks may not have. Furman asked if the 16 would already have their case managers. Central MN Housing indicated that they can stay with their County case manager or utilize the one provided on site. Furman asked the difference between licensed and not licensed. The difference is no food service and no medication services but they are not licensed to do any of that. Furman asked how they are going to eat if they cannot cook and you don't provide food. Central MN Housing indicated that the County would take care of that. Central MN Housing indicated that anyone coming from other counties would be paid for by that County for as long as they receive services. Hagen-Kennedy asked if it would help their application by showing City support even if fees are not waived but just reduced. Furman asked why the Cambridge location did not work. Central MN Housing indicated that the site in Cambridge was outside of town and this site has services and there are jobs that these folks can transition to. Furman said that TIF lasts for 26 years and she is wondering what happens after 26 years if things change and there is not enough parking for that. Furman indicated that if they have a section 8 voucher they can live there but they should have group residential housing vouchers that pay part of the rent and support services. Consensus to move forward.

III. Joint Discussion – Wellhead Protection Update

Petsche explained wellhead protection requirements. Hagen-Kennedy asked how folks are supposed to know if they have wells other than the one they are using. Water & Light explained that eight of the wells it is unknown whether they are active or not. There will be interviews of folks that have lived here for many years to get information on where wells may be. Hagen-Kennedy asked why this is needed. The issue is that the wells have the potential to be in the City's aquifer. Borchardt said that there is not enough moisture for geothermal and she's wondering about that in this wellhead protection. Water & Light said that those systems are either pump and dump or enclosed loop that take water out of the ground, pump it through your system, and return it. Blomquist asked how this information will get out to the people with wells to update them. Furman noted that since this is two different entities the City does not have to adhere to this or does the City have to comply? Konrad noted that there will be things the City will want to consider. They are not mandatory but they are a good idea.

IV. Joint Discussion – Flink Avenue

The City Engineer Gustafson gave a presentation on the proposal for Flink Avenue utility improvements. Borchardt asked if it would be sensible to wait a couple of years until there is a road project up there. Borchardt indicated that the transportation committee has met to discuss a bypass around the City and maybe this would be better to do at that time. The City Engineer said that much of the construction would be done in the ditches and the plan is to disturb very little pavement with this project. Canada said he would like to go to 35 and stop there and hold off to see what development comes in. Blomquist thanked staff for coming up with this proposal. Water & Light indicated that the system needs to grow to reduce costs to users. Hagen-Kennedy said she would not want to do the whole loop at the same time but she cannot understand eliminating users when there is a finite number of users on the system. Hagen-Kennedy indicated that water can be done for around \$127,682 if it was done for the Beech development. For her it makes no sense to keep 22 homes off which takes away money for the City. Borchardt challenged the numbers quoted by Hagen-Kennedy. There were no expenses taken out of the lost revenue quoted for bringing those folks onto the system. The City Engineer indicated that there is a possibility of a grant to assist with costs for this work. Konrad noted the purpose of the discussion was to ask whether staff should continue working on this project or if it should be put on the shelf for now. Furman suggested the possibility of a lawsuit. Water & Light said that there was a resolution before this meeting occurred and he thought there would be an opportunity to discuss this before a decision was made. The City Planner noted there is a preliminary plat for the southwest corner and the question is about whether there are legal implications of this discussion. Konrad noted that this project has to be completed at some point regardless of the Beech plat. The City Planner indicated that a larger industrial user needs fire suppression in the industrial park when/if they come. There is consensus to bring water under the river to the north portion, not the Beech property. Council agreed to review further numbers. Hagen-Kennedy thanked the Water & Light for coming to the meeting to discuss.

V. Credit Card Processing

Hill provided information on three different credit card processing companies and recommended the Revtrak program for allowing for credit card processing. Borchardt agreed. Furman agreed. Staff will work with Revtrak to begin accepting credit card payments for the City.

VII. Conduit Bonding Opportunity

Konrad noted that the City has been asked to do conduit bonding for a project in Cambridge. Konrad noted that the only thing that could potentially be a bond for the City is the Flink project so it is not likely that the City would be doing any significant bonding. Hill said he thinks the City should do it but it is not up to him. Borchardt said as long as the City does not need to do bonding then go ahead for full fee. Furman agreed to it. Canada agreed. Staff will work with them on the bonding.

VIII. United Properties/Caribou Access

Konrad indicated that United Properties contacted her to discuss the Caribou access onto Highway 95. Konrad suggested a letter of support to Mn/DOT to keeping the access open. Council agreed to the letter of support.

Motion by Canada, seconded by Borchardt to adjourn.

Adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bridgitte Konrad, City Administrator
jrl/TOSS