
Planning commission

Members present: Jim Beneke, Matt Eckholm, Sylvie Hyman, Katie Merten, Jan Youngquist
(arrived 6:05 p.m.)

Members absent: Mia Divecha, Tom Weber

Staff present: Sean Walther and Katelyn Champoux

Guests: None

1. **Call to order – roll call.**
2. **Approval of minutes – May 1, 2024 and May 22, 2024**

Vice Chair Eckholm noted on page 6, it should not include the words specifically “...15-18 story building...”

It was moved by Commissioner Merten, seconded by Commissioner Beneke, to approve the May 1 and May 22, 2024 minutes with corrections as noted. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Hearings.**
- 3a. **Tree preservation ordinance**
Applicant: City of St. Louis Park
Case No: 24-15-ZA

Ms. Champoux presented the report. She noted the first reading will go to council on Monday, Aug. 19 and second reading on Monday, Sept. 9, 2024.

Commissioner Merten asked about tree preservation credits and if the tree needs to be in good shape and if they would also look at the lifespan of the tree as well.

Ms. Champoux stated the city forester does look at trees to make sure they are healthy, but she is not sure about the lifespan question.

Commissioner Merten asked about the tree preservation, and if that is for existing homeowners. Ms. Champoux stated the policy applies to commercial and residential properties, which is a broad definition. She noted if a single-family parcel subdivides, it would apply.

Commissioner Beneke asked about trees fitting on properties. Ms. Champoux stated if someone could not meet the tree replacement requirements, then the fee would be applied or the option to plant off-site in a public space with city permission.

Commissioner Beneke asked about replacing trees. Ms. Champoux stated it would depend on how many must be preserved, and depending on how many were removed. Mr. Walther added tools will be provided for folks to clarify the formulas within the code on tree replacement.

Commissioner Merten asked when the replacement of heritage trees is required, does it need to be a similar tree. Ms. Champoux stated there is direction within the code on type and size required. She stated there is a minimum size requirement of 2.5 caliper inches for new trees and requirements to diversify the types of trees on the site. Mr. Walther added it would need to be a tree "in-kind" and not a dissimilar tree.

Commissioner Youngquist asked about the difference between caliper inches and diameter inches noted in the report. Ms. Champoux stated diameter inches are used for mature trees while caliper inches are used for nursery stock trees. Diameter inches are measured at 4.5 feet in height and caliper inches are measured closer to the ground.

Commissioner Hyman asked how this policy is enforced. Ms. Champoux stated the tree preservation plans are part of landscape plans and are reviewed as part of the planning application process. Landscape inspections are then completed.

Mr. Walther stated this relates to new construction or a land disturbance program, importing or exporting soils.

Commissioner Hyman asked if there is monetary value or incentives to the preservation credits. Ms. Champoux stated property owners do not receive money for preserving more than they remove. The preservation credit reduces the total replacement requirement up to 50%. If no trees are removed, there is no replacement required and no incentive.

Commissioner Hyman asked if there are incentives to locate trees in areas where they are more likely to live rather than in areas that may limit their lifespan such as near sidewalks or close to buildings. Ms. Champoux stated the city's natural resources department reviews the landscape plans for the proposed location of trees and will recommend the applicant plant a tree in a different location if the originally proposed location is not suitable for healthy tree growth.

Commissioner Hyman asked about trees under power lines and how can the city prevent trees being planted there. Ms. Champoux stated if it is on a development and there are comments on a proposal the city would recommend that trees are not planted that would grow into utility lines. Mr. Walther added the city provides advisory on this and also educational handouts related to this as well.

Vice Chair Eckholm opened the public hearing.

There were no comments from the public.

Vice Chair Eckholm closed the public hearing.

Vice Chair Eckholm thanked staff for this report and stated preserving the tree canopy in St. Louis Park is very important, adding he will support this.

It was moved by Commissioner Merten, seconded by Commissioner Youngquist, to approve the tree preservation policy amendments as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Other Business – none.

5. Communications.

Mr. Walther noted the next two meetings are Aug 21 with a BOZA meeting as well as a study session. There will also be a planning commission meeting on Sept. 9.

6. Adjournment – 6:30 p.m.



Sean Walther, liaison



Mia Divecha, chair member

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data.

In the second section, the author outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze the data. This includes both primary and secondary data collection techniques. The primary data was gathered through direct observation and interviews with key stakeholders. Secondary data was obtained from existing reports and databases.

The analysis phase involved using statistical software to identify trends and correlations within the data. The results show a clear upward trend in certain areas, while others remain relatively stable. These findings are crucial for understanding the overall performance and identifying areas for improvement.

Finally, the document concludes with a series of recommendations based on the findings. It suggests implementing new procedures to streamline operations and improve efficiency. Additionally, it recommends regular communication and reporting to keep all parties informed of the progress and any challenges that arise.