

Memorandum

DATE: February 5, 2010
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator
RE: Board And Commission Memo January 2010

Thank you to the Board and Commissions that have submitted information as a follow-up to their Board and Commission actions and meetings in January 2010. Information for the February memo will be due by March 1, 2010 and posted on Friday March 5, 2010. Please note: some submittals are edited.

Below is information from Board and Commission Chairs on Northfield board and commission items of interest:

Arts & Culture Commission

Submitted by Philip Spensley, Chair

Finding outside funding for local arts and cultural initiatives will be a major focus of the Commission this next year. A newly formed commission task force is pursuing the possibility of funding from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as from the State Legacy Fund with the aim of furthering the identity of Northfield as a known arts destination in support of local artists and to enhance economic development for the city. The Commission will seek collaboration with local community groups to determine specific initiatives and to coordinate efforts to achieve success.

Another Commission task force is defining criteria for the establishment of a Living Treasures award honoring exceptional contributors to Northfield through the arts. Meanwhile the commission continues to pursue the installation of public art such as sidewalk poetry and sculpture.

A number of commission members will be attending Arts Advocacy Day activities at the State Capitol on March 2nd where attendees can receive arts advocacy training and meet with state legislators. In order to strengthen communication with our local area state legislators, following the current legislative session the commission will follow up with invitations to discuss issues specific to Northfield and area artists' needs.

Re-elected as officers of the commission for 2010 are Philip Spensley, chair; Dixon Bond, vice-chair, and Richard Collman, secretary. Newly named, as liaison from the Planning Commission is Alice Thomas. The Commission also decided to change the monthly meeting day to the 2nd Monday of each month. This will begin Monday March 8, 2010; the meeting time is 4:30 – 6:00 PM at City Hall.

Environmental Quality Commission

Submitted by Daniel Jones, Chair

At the January 2010 meeting of the Environmental Quality Commission (EQC), officers were elected and goals were relayed to the Council via our liaison Erica Zweifel. Daniel Jones was re-elected chair for 2010, and Susannah Shmurak was elected vice-chair. Goals for 2010 agreed upon by the EQC included advising the Council on strategies for residential waste reduction, assistance on public education regarding stormwater issues, development of a tree policy, review of transit options, and support for the Council to develop a sustainability plan. All of these projects will help the City advance toward achieving goals approved in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The EQC role in helping the City pursue these goals will include

public education, technical advice and policy review. The EQC will also continue its work in preparing environmentally themed articles for the local newspaper and monthly City Commons.

Heritage Preservation Commission

Submitted by Commissioner Susan de Magilhon

The Commission re-elected Bob Will as Chair and Cliff Clark as Vice-Chair.

Hayes Scriven from the Northfield Historical Society gave an update on the iPOD tour project. Commission members will help edit and verify the work of St. Olaf and Carleton student researchers. The first tours of historical Northfield buildings will be ready mid-summer.

An update was heard regarding the demolitions reconstruction to be done at 25 Bridge Square. A 180 day "sunset" date for the termination of previous approvals was agreed upon if the development group does not pursue the project and/or plans are not submitted for review. The HPC will have at least 30 days to complete a final review before any permits will be issued.

David Sudermann presented each member with a copy of the application for Local Historic Site designation for Way Park. This will be presented to the Park and Recreation Advisory Board and then to the City Council.

The next HPC meeting will be designated a work session to look at issues of mass and scale of new construction in relation to previous and existing structures.

Human Rights Commission

Submitted by Commissioner Judy Dirks

The meeting was held on January 14, 2010 at City Hall, 2nd Floor Training Room.

- Two guests were present: Dottie Hammer (interested in applying to Commission) and Brenda Kell, member of the Mayor's Youth Council.
- Concern was expressed about downtown sidewalks having ice and along the curbs. Discussion was held and the issue was tabled until another meeting.
- Reported on the leadership meeting with Mayor Rossing on Dec. 28: (a) The Mayor asked that the HRC refine its goals and help recruit people to achieve these. We have been asked to concentrate on local issues in order to better focus on our mission of securing equal rights for the citizens of Northfield. (b) In light of limited resources of funding as well as our time, the Mayor suggested that we research the numerous other community celebrations already taking place for MLK and look into possible opportunities for collaboration in the future. (c) The question was raised by the Mayor as to the protocol of the Charter Commission request going directly to the HRC to take on ethics issues, as this should be a decision of the City Council on how to address the concern. A decision will be made later regarding the Charter Commission's request to the HRC to handle the ethics matters.
- The issue of dispute between Viking Terrace renters and the management was discussed. Our suggestion for mediation doesn't appear to be taking place; the management does not believe there is a problem. HRC will encourage the towing company and some residents to meet for discussion.
- Nancy Madson's matter of perceived unfairness in the CAC's vehicle donation program appears to be resolved. The CAC told the HRC they would like Madson to submit a letter from her doctor regarding her disability which may help her qualify for a 2nd (replacement) car from the CAC. This request was

passed on to Madson.

- MLK event in 4 days, on January 18: everything is ready.
- Census Marketing Calendar Workgroup Report: Various meetings are arranged. Carleton College is doing posters in several other languages.

Library Board

Submitted by Margit Johnson, Chair

1. **Centennial:** You will have heard about the rousing attendance at the January 30th Carnegie Centennial Concert featuring the Carleton Chinese Music Ensemble and the Chinese School's chorus as a bonus performance! We learned a lot about how to set up and serve for the next concert.
2. **PR:** KYMN radio is conducting monthly interviews about the library, its centennial and services. Mary Rossing and I appeared in January. Leesa Wisdorf will talk about children's services, programs and resources on Feb. 11 at 8:40 AM. Again, I will be approaching board and FOL members and representative folk from the community to fill the monthly slots on designated topics.
3. **Fundraising:** Lynn Giovanelli of Library Strategies is working on a case statement that the study group will review for content and impact at their March meeting. They intend to interview in May and report their findings to the library board by our June 9 meeting, which we will, in turn, report to the City Council.
4. **Outreach:** Hannah Puczko of Community Services continues to explore the feasibility of the public schools, Community Services and the public library collaborating more actively throughout the year on events and activities that could benefit residents of all ages.

Mayor's Task Force on Youth Alcohol & Drug Use

Submitted by Joan Janusz and Susan Sanderson, Co-Chairs

Updates on January Activities:

- The "Take It to the Box" medication disposal program that the Mayor's Task Force has helped launch was the top story on WCCO News' 10:00 p.m. broadcast on Monday, January 25, 2010. The feature interviewed Northfield Police Chief Mark Taylor, who has been a leader for this countywide initiative. The story can be found at this link: <http://wcco.com/crime/drop.off.drug.2.1447554.html>

Following the broadcast, there have been numerous requests from across the state for information on the program, with great interest in replication of it. At their request, Mary Nelson & Joan Janusz (Mayor's Task Force members) will present on the program to the State of Minnesota's Chemical Health Division on Friday, January 29.

- The Mayor's Task Force held its annual full-day retreat this month. In addition to reviewing the group's work over the past year, Mayor's Task Force members spent time discussing and prioritizing plans for 2010. The chief initiatives that the Mayor's Task Force plans to undertake this year include:

⇒ Continue to coordinate the "Take It to The Box" medication disposal program, in collaboration with the Northfield Police Department and other partners

- ⇒ Continue ongoing communication with the community (via monthly newspaper articles, monthly radio shows, etc.) about the Mayor's Task Force, youth substance use, prevention efforts, and available resources
 - ⇒ Enhanced parent education efforts around substance use, including possible expansion of efforts to parents of younger children
 - ⇒ Continued support for Pure Performance and Fall Activity Night, in collaboration with the Northfield High School
 - ⇒ Support efforts to continually enhance local school curriculum around youth substance use, in collaboration with the local schools
 - ⇒ Continuation of Mayor's Task Force website (www.mayorstaskforcenorthfield.org)
 - ⇒ Continuation of the court monitoring program of individuals in Rice County charged with providing alcohol to minors and/or supplying drugs to others
 - ⇒ Continuation of the Positive Community Norms ("MOST Northfield students") campaign at the Northfield Middle School through the end of 2009-10 school year; this research-based campaign is designed to reinforce the healthy, positive choices that most local young people make
 - ⇒ Continued support of the Opiate Agonist Therapy Clinic at Northfield Hospital and local administration of Buprenorphine
 - ⇒ Encouragement of efforts to open a halfway house in Northfield
 - ⇒ Examination of local data and evaluation efforts around substance use (what is tracked, how it is tracked, and how the community is informed of the results)
- Because of the shift in the days of the City Council meetings in 2010, the Mayor's Task Force moved its meetings to the first Monday of the month. The group will meet from 7:00-9:00 p.m. in room HS222 of the Northfield Community Resource Center. When the first Monday falls on a City holiday, the meeting will be moved to the second Monday.

Mayor's Youth Council

Submitted by Katherine Peterson, Chair

This month in the MYC we only met once due to conflicts presented by finals week. A small group of us met with the Mayor and the City Administrator to discuss what type of disclaimer must be included on our website, which is being devised by the City Attorney. We teamed up with the Northfield High School Guidance staff in planning/recruiting volunteers for the second annual NHS Career Fair for sophomores. We also wrote out the clear, measurable goals that will be presented on the Mayor's Action Challenge application, which we plan to show to Mary Rossing for comments at our February 3rd meeting.

Park & Recreation Advisory Board

Submitted by Rick Vanasek, Chair

Due to the lack of a quorum, the Park and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) did not have an official meeting in January. The PRAB did have been having preliminary discussions with a group of citizens who are interested in forming a " Friends of Old Memorial Park" organization. They are on the agenda for the next

park board meeting. Additionally, the Neighborhood Community Garden Protocol will be forwarded to the City Council for review in March 2010.

Planning Commission

Submitted by Traci Davis, Chair

The Planning Commission met weekly in January, and welcomed its newest member, Richard Schulte. Actions taken include: A 5-1 to recommendation that the City Council approve the Prawer-Gill annexation request in Bridgewater Township (details on the vote, and a written summary of the discussion, will be published in the staff report to City Council); election of officers for 2010 (Chair: Tracy Davis; Vice Chair: Alice Thomas); new liaison assignments; annual review of Planning Commission by-laws, adopting a couple of minor updates; and recommending an ordinance change to the Council to reflect new meeting dates for 2010, and allowing such changes to be made in the Commission bylaws rather than by ordinance in the future.

The Planning Commission received brief liaison reports from members attending Rice County Board of Commissioners (Thomas) and the EDA (Rhol); Carleton's Dr. Aaron Swoboda brought a class to observe Commission's work, in hopes of seeing how principles inform local policy-making.

Chair Davis met briefly with Tim Freeland of KYMN Radio about making meeting recordings available on the internet. (KYMN is doing this for City Council meetings, and Davis wanted to know whether KYMN was willing to do the same for other bodies that meet in the Council Chambers.) Freeland said that KYMN is willing to provide the service and there are no technological obstacles, but indicated that there may be some bureaucratic ones on the City side. (EDIT: Funding has not been identified).

Work on the draft Land Development Code (LDC) proceeded in three work sessions in January. There was a shift in the review per direction given by City Council at its 1/12 work session. The shift involves more closely articulating the connection between the ordinances to the relevant objectives and strategies in the Comprehensive Plan, and proceeding with the review by zoning types (e.g. residential) so that the Council can receive the draft in discrete sections rather than in the article sequence of the draft.

The Commission will continue to meet weekly in February.

cc: Board & Commission Chairs
Department Managers