

Memorandum

DATE: June 4, 2010
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of May 31 – June 4, 2010

Mayo Clinic Project: Outlined below is the tentative schedule for consideration of the St. Olaf/Mayo Clinic annexation requests, which was recently received by the City of Northfield:

June 09, 2010 - City Staff will attend the Bridgewater Town Board of Supervisors meeting to provide an update on the Mayo annexation request. As requested the Board, the Board also will consider approving the Joint Resolution approving the annexation.

June 17, 2010 – The Planning Commission would hold a public hearing on the annexation request and provide a recommendation to the City Council.

June 29, 2010 – This would be a scheduled Special City Council meeting to consider a decision on the annexation request and approving of the joint resolution. This property falls within the existing Orderly Annexation Agreement developed in 2004 between Bridgewater Township and the City of Northfield. The governmental responsibilities and tax rebates to Bridgewater Township are defined under the existing agreement.

After June 29, 2010 - If approved, the joint resolution would be sent to the Municipal Boundary Adjustments office in St. Paul for approval. Also, if the City Council approves the annexation, the applicant would submit an application to rezone the property, and a site plan application detailing the specifics of the clinic use. Those approvals are expected to occur by September, at which time the applicant would submit their application for building permit.

COPS Grant 2010: The City was notified this week that it can compete for the 2010 COPS Hiring Program (CHP). This program allows for the full funding of licensed police officers for a three year time period. These positions do not need to be new positions; funds can be used to fund current positions that may be considered for layoff. Only those agencies that applied previously and were not funded can apply at this time. The application period is only through June 16, 2010 so work has begun at this time. Council review and approval of the grant application would be on June 15, 2010. Additionally, Deputy Chief Walerius is reviewing the grant application guidelines for COPS Secure Our Schools (SOS) Program. More to come on this item.

Downtown Recycling Cans, Oh! They're so ugly! 20 temporary recycling containers were put in place Friday June 4, 2010 along Division Street. Street Supervisor TJ Heinricy has been working with Waste Management staff to develop a test-recycling program for the downtown area over the past several months. Our interest is in the assessing the recycling waste stream and how much use there is or could be. This information will be used in the cost analysis and consideration of the return on investment for allocating future dollars on more permanent (eye-appealing) recycling containers in the downtown area.

Attached to today's Friday Memo is the May Update from the Boards and Commissions.

Below is information on city activities and information provided by the department directors and managers for the week of May 31 – June 4, 2010:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Building

Submitted by Jim Kessler, Building Official

Inspections for the St Olaf New Main project have intensified this week. They have gotten to a point where the additions are beginning. Reinforcement inspections for footings and walls have been required almost every day and the plumbing inspections have also been a regular requirement.

The Malt-O-Meal project is doing mainly inside floors and selective demolition. The plumbing approval from the State was received this week and the plumbing permit was issued. We understand there will be a lot of smaller plumbing inspections required, as the phasing of the project is difficult due to food safety concerns.

The Phoenix Building is progressing to full occupancy. The bank and salon are anticipated to be completed soon.

We have one new house in the framing stage. We have another house in for plan review and should be issued this week. That is 5 for the year -1 more than last year's pace. The typical residential remodels, basement finishes and decks fill out the inspection schedule.

Total for this week: we have nine building permits plus fourteen mechanical and/or plumbing permits. We have an additional seven building permits in for review or ready to be issued.

Community Development

Submitted by Brian O'Connell, Community Development Director

The Community Development Director has been working with the City Attorney to prepare a purchase agreement for the purchase of property from the Union of Youth. A legal description, abstract and corporate by-laws are being requested from the Union of Youth as a means to begin the due diligence process for the property purchase. Two firms have been contacted and have provided cost estimates related to the task of performing a Phase I environmental analysis on the property.

Negotiations on the supplemental agreement and the revised TIF note related to The Crossing project. Proposed revisions to the TIF note have been reviewed by Piper Jaffry and appear to be acceptable. Highland Bank is still reviewing the Supplemental Agreement and the TIF note and has yet to indicate if the proposed changes are acceptable.

Housing

Submitted by Michele Merxbauer, Housing Manager

STIMULUS FUNDING GRANTS

The Window Project:

Staff has received a few bids for design work for the window project at City Hall. A decision on a firm will hopefully be made within a week or so and work will begin on this project. The brief timeline is hire the design company, and after their work is complete bid the project in July, with a start date hopefully in August and a completion date by October 1, 2010. Since this project is funded with Stimulus dollars, the labor portion of this project will be subject to Davis-Bacon wage requirements and Buy American standards.

The HVAC Project at the Food Shelf:

Labor bids will be going out early next week for this project. For questions or more information, Bernie Shakal at the Street Department will have all the answers. This project is also subject to Davis-Bacon and Buy American standards. A sign will be placed at the site when the project commences stating that it is funded by ARRA funds.

CDBG

Buying and building season is in full swing. First time homebuyer applications continue to fly out the door, and I am pleased to report that Fran and Deb Hahn of Viking Terrace are doing a fantastic job of sending their residents to my office for assistance with manufactured home rehab or acquisition/demolition applications. We have several of each program currently in process! Thank you to the Hahn's for advertising this program and doing such a great job of helping the residents of Viking Terrace! It truly is a service to the whole community! There are funds available in the rental rehab program (\$10,000 rehab grant for landlords!) and the homeowner rehab loan program, which provides up to \$8,000 for rehab on single family homes. All housing program applications can be found at <http://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/housing/rentalhousingprograms>.

HOME MATTERS

The Home Matters project house at 311 Cherry Street continues to draw the crowds for a variety of Healthy Homes Seminars and Public Open houses. We had another very successful Public Open House on Wednesday, May 26th, and the final open house will be on June 5th from 11am to 1pm. If you haven't been there yet, please head up there to check it out! This project is truly innovative and uses a lot of great technology for healthy and sustainable living. The house will be put on the market later this spring/summer. Applications and further information can be found on the website, below.

The next event in the Seminar Series will be on Saturday, June 12 from 10-12. We are so pleased and excited to report that Billy Weber will be there to present! Billy Weber is a University of MN Senior Research Fellow and will present his cutting edge research on sustainability in affordable housing.

All events are located at 311 Cherry Street. For more information, check out the blog at www.home-matters.org

Seminar Series

2. Refreshing Renovation	06/12/2010	10:00 - 12:00 PM
3. Save Energy, Save Money	06/29/2010	5:00 - 6:30 PM

Public Open Houses

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE 3	06/05/2010	11:00 - 1:00 PM
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CONFERENCES

Green by Design:

Staff and an HRA member had the honor of receiving a scholarship from the Greater MN Housing Fund to attend the Greening the Heartland/Green by Design conference in Minneapolis from May 19th-21st and the Convention Center. The conference was excellent and provided several good seminars and breakout sessions dedicated to green and sustainable building, living and planning. Much of the information will be utilized not only in the Home Matters project currently happening, but also will be used in the future development of the Southbridge property. Seminars attended included:

- how to capture the most energy savings earlier;
- translating the "passive house"
- determining how "green" our homes are;
- solar retro-fitting;
- water and energy efficiency in building;
- the dollars and sense of green buildings and business practices;
- funding for private development.

NAHRO:

Staff serves as one of thirteen members of the MN Statewide Board of Directors for NAHRO (National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials). Staff assisted with the development and planning for the Spring Conference, which was held last week. NAHRO partnered with Rural Development this year to expand the conference selection and this paid off in spades: we are happy to report nearly 400 attendees,

and 48 vendors! Many vendors told me personally that have cancelled many of their other conferences because of the economy, but have kept the NAHRO conferences because of the hospitality, the business generated from the other HRA's, and the organization of the Board. Several attendees also stated that even though they are experiencing budget cuts, the NAHRO conference continues to be a priority because of the networking opportunities and quality of sessions designed and developed by the Board. This was excellent news!

This year, we provided sessions not only addressing the shrinking Section 8 and Public Housing budgets, but also from the state funders to address upcoming funding opportunities, foreclosure prevention and rehab, community development and the Rural Development tract.

Planning

Submitted by Dan Olson, City Planner

The Planning Commission met on Wednesday to complete its review of the future residential regulations in the draft Land Development Code (LDC). Those regulations will be presented to the City Council at their Work Session next Tuesday. Next Thursday, the Commission begins to review the draft regulations relating to the commercial zoning districts.

The Development Review Committee (DRC) met this week to review the proposal from Mayo Clinics to annex a smaller property in Bridgewater Township. The property is located just south of the Northfield Hospital. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the proposal on June 17th.

ENGINEERING

4th Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

Work continued on Phase I of the project on Fourth Street between Division Street and Washington Street. Crews finished with all main line sanitary sewer and watermain and all private services to individual properties this week. Bedrock encountered during excavations has slowed the work considerably.

Next week crews anticipate installing the main line storm sewer pipe and structures on Fourth Street between Division Street and Washington Street. Also, BCM will have their pavement milling sub-contractor on-site Monday morning to mill the existing street surface off of the remaining portion of Phase I, which is Fourth Street from Washington Street to Union Street and Union Street from Fourth Street to Fifth Street. The intersection of Washington Street and Fourth Street will be closed for the majority of Monday to complete this work. Motorists should expect intermittent closures of this intersection for the next few weeks as all utility connections are made, and the road base and sub-base are constructed. Crews will also be setting up a temporary water system late next week for the remaining portion of Phase I.

Riverside Trail Extension

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

Crews finished the gravel base installation on the trail, and put the final touches on the planting areas and limestone walls this week. Work remaining on the job is to pave the trail itself, and surrounding parking lot, and install the landscaping items. Paving is expected to occur mid to late next week depending on the weather.

First Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

Crews spent the week raising manholes and gate valves for paving, and other punch list items that needed attention. BCM has indicated that they have their paving contractor scheduled for late next week to install the Wear Course paving. As soon as City Staff receive the final word on the paving schedule, signs will be posted throughout the project corridor.

Stormwater Ordinance Development: Technical Steering Committee

Submitted by Katy Gehler, City Engineer

The technical steering committee met on Friday to complete the iterative process of reviewing and revising the draft stormwater ordinance and Rice Creek policy document in preparation for the input meetings next week.

Wed. June 9, 2010
Advisory Group: 4:00 - 6:00 PM
Community Meeting: 6:30 – 8:00 PM
Conference Room (Lower Level), Community Resource Bank
1605 Heritage Dr.

The purpose of the meetings will be to present a summary of the draft ordinance and policy document and to pose several policy questions for attendees to weigh in on. Feedback will help shape the documents before they are presented to City Council for the first time later in June. Further policy changes and refinements will take place based on direction given at that Council meeting. We expect to post the draft ordinance, policy document and policy questions on the project website for review early next week prior to the input meetings. Please see the project website for more information on these meetings and the project process as a whole.

FINANCE

Submitted by Kathleen McBride, Finance Director

At next week’s work session, we will be reviewing a projection of the property tax levy. As major facilities are financed through bonded debt, the levy increases significantly. The report also includes the impact on the seven different properties used in past tax-related presentations. Northfield has not had a lot of bonded debt levies whereas other cities have already addressed their facilities needs. As you review the work session report, keep this comparison close by. It is a “what-if” these properties were located in different cities – and compares that city’s tax bill to ours.

No.	Property Type	2010 MV	2010 City Tax Bill Comparison				
			Northfield	Dundas	Faribault	Hastings	Farmington
1	Homestead Residential	230,000	\$ 963	\$ 1,394	\$ 867	\$ 1,212	\$ 1,133
2	Homestead Residential	345,000	\$ 1,445	\$ 2,091	\$ 1,301	\$ 1,817	\$ 1,700
3	Commercial / Industrial	230,900	\$ 1,596	\$ 2,344	\$ 1,458	\$ 2,038	\$ 1,906
4	Commercial / Industrial	459,100	\$ 3,473	\$ 5,109	\$ 3,179	\$ 4,442	\$ 4,155
5	Split - 50% C/I, 50% non-homestead residential	726,000	\$ 4,569	\$ 6,694	\$ 4,165	\$ 5,819	\$ 5,444
6	Commercial / Industrial	1,616,000	\$ 12,988	\$ 19,130	\$ 11,901	\$ 16,630	\$ 15,556
7	Commercial / Industrial	7,928,100	\$ 64,902	\$ 95,626	\$ 59,490	\$ 83,131	\$ 77,760

LIBRARY

Submitted by Leesa Wisdorf, Adult and Youth Services Manager

Summer appears to have begun, if the crowds at the library are any indication. Over 4,500 items were checked out with another 5,000 items checked back in during the first 3 open days in June.

The Library's 2009 Annual Report was published last Friday. Copies are available at the library and will be posted on the library web page. 2009 was a record setting year with 403,578 items checked out - and 210,884 people visited the library - an average of 600 or more per day. Sunday hours were eliminated due to budget constraints. A new business and employment resource area was created with funds from the Friends of the Library to meet the needs of those adversely affected by the economy. We have a lot of customers using the computers to search for jobs, apply for jobs and file for unemployment.

The Friends of the Library pay for busing Northfield 1st graders to the library for tours of the facility and to promote summer reading. Kathy Ness and Leesa Wisdorf led tours for Sibley, Bridgewater, Greenvale and St. Dominic's students during the past 2 weeks.

Library open hours were reduced beginning June 1. The library is closing an hour earlier, at 8pm, Mon-Thursday.

PUBLIC WORKS

Facilities

Submitted by Bernie Shakal, Facilities Supervisor

Johnson Controls is doing some rework on the solar heating system at the outdoor pool this week, primarily to provide a more finished look to the site area.

Staff will be reviewing proposals received for engineering and design costs for the City Hall window replacement project, Professional Design Group and I&S Group have submitted proposals. The window replacement project is being funded through a \$75,000 grant through the MN Department of Commerce Stimulus Grants Energy Projects. Additional funding for the project comes through savings in the Johnson Energy Improvement Projects where this project was originally identified.

Recreation

Submitted by Jason Eisold, Recreation Manager

The pool was filled on Tuesday. Staff has been working on getting the water chemically balanced and circulation system up and running. The thermal pool blankets will be installed for the first time next week. The final pre-season pass sale is this Saturday, June 5 from 9:30am-1:00pm at the pool. The pool is scheduled to open next Saturday, June 12. Johnson Controls is landscaping the inside areas of the solar fields to address the grass/weed problems. They are installing crushed rock and additional weed barriers.

Streets and Parks

Submitted by TJ Heinrich, Streets and Parks Supervisor

Staff mowed the majority of city parks and ROW's this week and park chores were completed. Staff repaired vandalism damage at the Spring Creek Park shelter. Several stone seating areas were repaired in the River Commons area. A storm drain repair was made in the River Commons area.

Staff attended a crosswalk seminar this week. The seminar was a demonstration of a new thermoplastic product used on pavement surfaces. Staff assisted with yearly filling of the pool and placed decorative gravel at the pool solar field area. Road maintenance was performed, gravel added to Garrett Ave this week and pothole repairs continued.

The downtown area curb and crosswalk painting has been completed. Jefferson Road was also striped. There are still various crosswalks to be painted and will be painted at a date closer to the start of the upcoming school year and as funds allow. Flags were taken down in the downtown area after observance of

Memorial Day and bleachers were removed at Riverside Park Veterans Memorial after Monday's Memorial service. There were 3,565 visits to the compost facility during the month of May.

Wastewater

Submitted by Glenn Lindroos, Wastewater Superintendent

Our two seasonal employees have started, and the additional staffing is primarily used to support wastewater collection system maintenance operations. About 200,000 ft of the collection system are cleaned and/or televised annually. Some areas of town that have known problems like roots growing through joints etc. are cleaned annually, but most of the system is on a three year cleaning schedule. This year's focus will be on the north side of town.

Water

Submitted by Doug Lein, Water Superintendent

Water Superintendent Doug Lien, Water Technician Jay Hall and City Engineer Katy Gehler met with Engineers from Bolton & Menk and State officials from the Minnesota Department of Health to discuss the updating of the 2002 wellhead protection plan. The State requires that the City Update the plan every 10 years and starts the Plan two full years before the required completion date of September 1, 2012. The next meeting will be held on 7/21/2010. This meeting will include an inspection of the 4 active well sites to determine if there were any changes that may affect ground water quality from the last inspection that took place in 2002. This inspection will be a 200' radius of the well head for each specific well.

Wellhead protection plans describes steps taken to prevent contaminants from entering public water wells. The term "wellhead" is not specific to any given well, but it encompasses the surface and subsurface areas surrounding the well field including the wellhead protection area, the drinking water supply management area, and vulnerability assessments for the City wells and aquifer within that area.

The Wellhead Protection Plan includes management of the wellhead protection area and a focus on all potential contaminant sources including non-municipal wells, chemical storage, and other potentially problematic sites.

cc: Depart Managers