

Memorandum

DATE: June 25, 2010
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of June 21-25, 2010

Please note the scheduling of the Special Council Meeting on Tuesday June 29, 2010 at 7:30 AM regarding the consideration of the resolution supporting the annexation request in Bridgewater Township for Mayo Clinic. We did receive word this morning that the resolution has been signed by the Bridgewater Township Board of Supervisors and will be available for Tuesday morning's meeting.

Community Development Director Mr. Brian O'Connell has been in contact with the Union of Youth regarding the sale of their property on Water Street. At this time an executive session of the council has been tentatively scheduled for Tuesday July 6, 2010 at 6:30 PM to discuss the offers currently on the table and receive Council direction.

On Monday, the City of Northfield received the Court Order for summary enforcement necessary for the Demolition Order for Removal of the hazardous building located at 421 Lockwood. Work commenced early Monday morning and the structure and foundations have been removed and the site is being leveled as of this time. This is the first such action taken by the City of Northfield to address a neighborhood hazard. Kudos go out to Building Inspector Mr. Jim Kessler and City Prosecutor Elliot Knetsch for keeping after this one, a long but successful outcome.

The Northfield Arts and Culture Commission have partnered up with the Northfield News to initiate the Northfield Living Treasures Award Program. This annual award will be presented by the Northfield Arts and Culture Commission honoring those individuals and/or groups who have over a period of time made significant contributions to Northfield in or on behalf of arts and culture. More information on the program is available at [Northfield Living Treasure](#) (PDF). The nomination period is scheduled to begin next month and be awarded in November of each year.

Work continues on the [Police & Fire Facilities Projects](#). Project Architects, KKE Architects, are in the design development phase of the project. This week the upcoming [Proposed Meeting Schedule](#) for the Steering Committee and Design Team was made available. The schedule also provides a listing of tentative discussion topics for each meeting. Additionally, more information is being developed to assist in finalizing the site selection process of the three potential police facility locations. This information is scheduled to be presented first to the Steering Committee for their recommendation and then for the Council's consideration in mid-July.

Below is information on city activities and information provided by the department directors and managers for the week of June 21-25, 2010:

City Clerk

Submitted by Deb Little, City Clerk

Staff continues to prepare for the elections. Absentee voting begins in Northfield on Monday, June 28. Voters that are unable to get to their polling place on Election Day may vote via absentee. Citizens are allowed to vote absentee for the following reasons:

- Absent from precinct
- Illness or disability
- Serving as an election judge in another precinct
- Religious discipline or religious holiday observance
- Eligible emergency declared by the governor or quarantine declared by the federal or state government

Hours for absentee voting at Northfield City Hall for the Primary election:

June 28 – July 29:

Monday – Thursday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

August 2 – August 9

Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 7 – 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Voters may also vote absentee by mail or in person at the Rice County Government Services Center in Faribault or for Dakota County voters at any of the designated Dakota County facility absentee polling locations in Apple Valley, Hastings, or West St. Paul.

The following Northfield offices/candidates will be on the Primary ballot:

Council Member At-large (all Northfield ballots):

Norman Butler

Steve Engler

Rhonda Pownell

Council Member – Fourth Ward (only Ward 4 ballots):

Jon Denison

Dale B. Gehring

Patrick Ganey

Additional information regarding absentee voting can be found on the Secretary of State's website:

<http://www.sos.state.mn.us/index.aspx?page=211>

Work continues with community events organizers to gather required documents and answer questions related to upcoming events.

Building Inspections

Submitted by Jim Kessler, Building Official

On Monday, we received a Court Order for summary enforcement of the Demolition Order for Removal of the Hazardous Building at 421 Lockwood. Accordingly, the City hired the low-bidder to remove the building and by 9:00 AM that same day, the raccoons and bees and other critters were finding new habitation. The structure and foundations have been removed and the site is being leveled.

We have been extremely busy this week, with plan reviews and inspections. We issued the permit for the Carleton Arts Union Foundation along with two new houses and ten other building projects. We have also issued 13 mechanical and/or plumbing permits.

Inspections for the Malt-O-Meal and St Olaf New Main projects have been ongoing. The smaller building remodels and additions have also been very busy. We have one house being framed and another is in the sheetrock stage.

The Phoenix Building is now fully occupied. We understand the bank plans to open on Saturday.

We received the plans and specifications, along with the application for the full permit, for the Carleton Arts Union. The plans for the project have over 300 sheets of information and the specifications have over 400 pages of information on the project. Staff is now in process of plan review. We anticipate completing the plan review in concert with the contractor's schedule.

Economic Development

Submitted by Jody T. Gunderson, Economic Development Director

The Economic Development Director attended a developer round table at the offices Hoisington Koepler Group on Wednesday. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the EDA and the City. The purpose of the meeting was to elicit comments about the business park concept plans from real estate developers that possess the knowledge, experience, and capital necessary to develop large business tracts. Representing the development community was Mr. Eric Anderson, Director of Development for Ryan Company; Mr. Gary Dreher, Managing Principal for Told Company; Mr. Mark Fabel, Lead Project Manager for McGough Properties; Mr. Ross Fefercorn, President of RMF Group; and Mr. Derick Dahlen, President and CEO of Avant Energy.

These representatives believe that when the economy turns around real estate development will be conducted in a manner that will require partnerships with other firms/individuals and collaboration with the City governments. They commended the City for planning in preparation for the eventual rebounding economy. The Business Park Master Plan Steering Committee will address comments provided by the development community in their entirety at the July Steering Committee meeting.

The Economic Development Authority Board held its regular meeting on Thursday. The Board had recently received a letter from the Northfield Roundtable requesting the EDA commit \$9,000.00 of the \$15,000.00 necessary to secure the professional services of Mr. Bill Johnson, a Landscape Architect and Community Planner. Mr. Johnson and a team of individuals intimately involved in the redevelopment of Holland, Michigan were presenters at a forum sponsored by the EDA in May of 2009. The EDA would like Mr. Johnson to consult on planning initiatives in the downtown business district and portions of Highway 3. The EDA approved the funding request contingent upon the Northfield Roundtable raising the remaining \$6,000.00 from outside sources in order to fulfill the contract for professional services.

Housing

Submitted by Michele Merxbauer, Housing Manager

STIMULUS FUNDING GRANTS

The Window Project:

Staff spent the majority of the week working on the grant for the windows and traffic signals. As these projects are utilizing stimulus dollars, certain requirements must be met, including Davis Bacon wage specifications, Buy American standards, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. Staff spent the week learning about these different protocols and working with the State to ensure that all paperwork and verifications were in place to begin work.

The design firm, I&S Group, out of Faribault, has been selected to do the engineering and design work for the replacement windows and entryways maintenance project at City Hall. Once their work is complete, the project will go out for bid for labor.

HOME MATTERS

The final event in the Seminar Series is Tuesday, June 29 from 5pm – 6:30pm. We are so pleased to announce that representatives from Xcel Energy will be on hand to talk about ways to reduce energy consumption in your home. This would be an excellent event for all residents who are interested in lowering their energy consumption!

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

Seminar Series

3. Save Energy, Save Money

06/29/2010 5:00 - 6:30 PM

Planning

Submitted by Dan Olson, City Planner

The Planning Commission met on Thursday, and completed its review of the regulations for the downtown commercial district in the draft Land Development Code (LDC). This portion of the LDC will be presented at the City Council Work Session on July 13th. The Commission will begin reviewing the regulations for the Highway #3 commercial area next Thursday. Next Tuesday, the Council is being asked to approve an annexation request in Bridgewater Township for the proposed radiation oncology facility on North Avenue.

ENGINEERING

4th Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

Crews continued with utility installations on Fourth Street between Washington Street and Union Street. Both watermain and sanitary sewer were installed on Fourth Street between Washington Street and Union Street. Crews also completed the storm sewer in the intersection of Washington Street and Fourth Street late in the week, which completes all utility installations for the intersection. Grading crews were on-site this week to work on sidewalk removals on Fourth Street between Division Street and Washington Street. This work was very tedious, and all concrete was removed with a jackhammer to minimize any damage to the existing building fronts. Crews put temporary gravel down after the sidewalks were removed to aid in access to all buildings. Crews also started sub-cutting the existing roadbed late in the week to allow for the placement of salvaged bituminous millings and class V road base materials. The new road "section" will include 10" of salvaged bituminous millings, 10" of class V gravel and 4" of new bituminous pavement.

Next week, crews will continue with utility installations on Union Street between Fourth Street and Fifth Street. Grading crews will concentrate on sub-cutting existing roadbed materials on Fourth Street between Division Street and Washington Street including the Washington Street intersection, and placing salvage millings, bituminous and class V gravel. Paving crews are scheduled late next week to pave the Washington Street intersection in preparation for the Fourth of July bike race which utilizes the Washington Street intersection.

Riverside Trail Extension

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

Crews were on-site to put the finishing touches on the project. Mulligan's landscaping was on-site Monday and installed all the landscaping elements. Pine Bend paving was on-site Tuesday to complete the wear course paving of the entire trail. Crews installed all signs and cleaned up the additional construction materials that were left on-site. Crews from Century Fence were on-site late in the week to stripe the new handicap stall and buffer strip between the new trail and existing parking lots.

First Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

Paving crews were on-site this week to place the wear course pavement on the entire project corridor. There are still a few "punchlist" items to complete, which should happen in the next few weeks.

Stormwater Ordinance Development: Technical Steering Committee

Submitted by Brian Welch, GIS Technician

The draft documents were presented to the City Council at the June 22, 2010 work session and several policy questions were asked of the council. Council provided guidance on these issues and the Technical Steering Committee will make adjustments to the text as required. Council also asked that Staff begin to formalize collaboration between the City of Northfield, the City of Dundas, and Bridgewater Township to work out a plan to improve water quality in Rice Creek (Spring Brook). A final draft of the ordinance and policy document will be prepared for the next round of Advisory Group and community meetings on July 12. The final documents will then be presented to the City Council at the July 20 work session prior to initiating the formal adoption procedures for the ordinance. Please see the project website for more information on these meetings and the project process as a whole.

Stormwater Pond Rehabilitation Assessment

Submitted by Brian Welch, GIS Technician

The City has contracted with Barr Engineering to help the city develop a prioritization of stormwater ponds in need to dredging and other rehabilitation work to improve management of surface runoff. Six ponds have been designated as the initial priority based on the presence of significant sediment plumes, vegetation growth, or deteriorating storm pipes: John North Park, Grant Park, Hidden Valley Park, Sibley View ponds (north of Jefferson Pkwy to the east and west of Washington St S), and the small pond to the west of Heywood Rd. between Sunset and Creek Lane. The week of June 28 survey crews from Barr will be mapping the bathymetry of the ponds and determining the elevation of inlets and outlets to the ponds. State regulations require testing of sediment samples from the pond in order to determine whether special treatment is required of dredged materials. Barr Engineering will conduct the core sampling and testing in coming weeks. Once the pond assessments are complete a rehabilitation plan and schedule will be developed for each pond.

Funding for the pond assessments and rehabilitation comes from the city's stormwater utility fund. The city will continually work through the inventory of stormwater ponds to ensure proper functionality of the ponds as part of the citywide stormwater infrastructure. It should be noted that treatment of stormwater is the priority function of these ponds.

LIBRARY

Submitted by Lynne Young, Northfield Library Director

The Summer Reading Program is well underway. Special events this week included Books & Stars at Way Park with Mu Daiko – a Japanese drumming group. About 250 people attended this event. All 2010 Books & Stars programs are a collaboration between the Northfield Public Library and the Northfield Public Schools Community Services Division and are funded through a grant from the Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council. A special thanks go to the City of Northfield Streets and Parks Division for providing the Showmobile and for their help with Booker. Also, it's wonderful to have Diana Tallent back driving Booker for these special programs.

The other special summer reading event was "Library Splash" at the Northfield Pool, featuring goofy water games. All children who used the pool on Thursday evening had a great time. Thanks to Jason Eisold for his assistance with this event!

The next Books & Stars program will be a very special one. Justin Roberts, four-time Parents' Choice Gold Award winner and extremely popular and hip children's musician, will appear at Ames Park. (Early publicity indicated Central Park but that venue is currently unavailable.) Visit Booker at 6:30 and hear Justin at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 30.

More than 400 children have already signed up and are participating as independent readers in summer reading program. Another 200 or more children are participating in the "read to me part of the program. They all seem to be having a great time.

PUBLIC WORKS

Recreation

Submitted by Jason Eisold, Recreation Manager

The pool has been an extremely busy place this past week. Weather has been great and attendance has been excellent.

Staff launched a Twitter page <https://twitter.com/nfldrec> this week for the pool and arena. This page will be used to give updates on special events, activities and closings due to weather. Become a follower for all the latest information!

Starting Saturday, July 10, we will begin offering a Deep Water Aerobics Class on Saturday mornings from 9:00-9:40am. For more information click on this link <http://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/assets/w/Water-Aerobics-Class1.pdf> or call the pool at 507-645-1837.

Streets and Parks

Submitted by TJ Heinrich, Streets and Parks Supervisor

This week was busy for the Street and Park department:

- Downtown banners were changed this week.
- Several of the watering systems on the downtown flower baskets were repaired.
- Fourteen weed complaints were investigated.
- A few small boulevard trees were removed.
- Staff assisted with the showmobile at the Books and Stars show at Way Park this week.
- Potholes were repaired around the City.
- Mowing of the playing field turf at Sechler and Babcock parks was completed. Some fields still have to be swept because of the grass height.
- City parks were cleaned and mowed this week.
- City right-of-way areas were mowed.
- Bi-annual rough mowing of certain areas has been started.
- Garrett Avenue was graded this week.
- Signs were installed at the new bike trail along Fifth Street.
- The compost rows at Compost Site were turned in order to aid in the composting process.

Wastewater

Submitted by Glenn Lindroos, Wastewater Superintendent

Staff drained and cleaned the backwash storage tank this week. The backwash storage tank is a 350,000 gallon structure located on top of the 10 biological treatment cells. It holds treated wastewater that is used to back-flush and strip excess growth off the media (50,000 cubic ft of polystyrene beads) in the cells. This is usually a very labor intensive project to remove the growth from the floor and walls of the storage tank, but this year there was only about 5% of the build up that has been encountered in the past. Staff made some process changes last year and this may be an unexpected benefit of those changes. The unit was given a quick wash down and put back in service.

Water

Submitted by Doug Lien, Water Superintendent

Jerry Bauer from Automatic Systems Co. was contacted to look into a couple of alarm problems that the Water Division has had at #3 & #4 well sites. Jerry worked on the well controls at the two wells that were sending out power and phase fail alarms as well as pump failure. Jerry checked out the fail delay time's at all four well sites and found that they were set at 300 seconds. Jerry set all four well sites to the 600 seconds time delay so it would give the wells enough time to reach the 200 GPM flow set point before an alarm would go off. This should correct the alarm problems that we have been experiencing at these two sites.

Water Operator Scott Murphy assisted the contractor who was removing the house at 421 Lockwood Drive in shutting off the water service to the property. Scott went to the house to shut off the curb stop and found that the curb box was bent over and could not get a curb stop wrench on the valve. The contractor had to dig the curb box up and replace the standpipe leading to the valve before water service could be shut down.

CC: Department Heads and Managers