

Memorandum

DATE: August 27, 2010
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of August 23-27, 2010

This is the last Friday Memo under my watch, Mr. Tim Madigan, Interim City Administrator will have the car keys next week. Tim brings with him the varied experience and depth of a successful 20 plus years City Administrator's career on how best to provide communication to the Council and community at large. It will be his choice on whether this is the best use of resources and the best vehicle to provide that communication piece to the Council, residents and staff members.

Since this is my final Friday Memo, I would like to thank those individuals involved with the City, the Mayor and City Council, past and present, for providing me with the opportunities afforded, the City staff members for their support and dedication to the City of Northfield, and the kind words and support offered by many City residents and business owners over the past five and a half years during my employment with the City of Northfield. Thank you all very much, much success to the City and the community in the years to come – J. Walinski

Safety Center Facility Planning Update:

The City was informed this week, Ms. Nelrae Succio, MnDOT District 6 Engineer, that one issue slowing the process for the environmental assessment work for the proposed truck station site in Dundas was identifying funding for the study within their operating budget. They recently identified the funding source for the environmental assessment work and have alerted the Contract Officer to move forward with assigning the contract. Ms. Succio was hesitant to say how long before the consultant is on board, but when that occurs, she could then provide the City with a much better time line for when information regarding the Woodley site decision would be available.

Some of you may also have read the press release recently that KKE Architects has merged with DLR Group. Although the merger will enhance each firm's competitive position in their existing markets, the merger is also seen as a move to expand the geographic reach of both firms. The design team working with the City of Northfield remains constant: Mr. Mike Clark, Mr. Cliff Buikema, and Mr. Mohammed Lawal. In September, the Council will be asked to reassign the current City contract with KKE to the new group: DLR Group/KKE. The City Attorney is currently reviewing the assignment documents prior to the Council review and consideration of approval. The current City contract with KKE is on hold until more information becomes available on the Woodley Truck Station site.

KKE also provided us with information this week regarding the current competitive bidding climate. The City of Woodbury and KKE reviewed bids this week on the Woodbury Public Safety Building Expansion Project. The construction budget for the project was \$5,865,500 **without** Alternates. The submitted bids came in at \$4,836,742, **which included all** Alternates. That equates to more than 18% savings over engineer's estimates. They, KKE, believe this to mostly due to the current competitive bidding climate. I do have additional details and the bid tally documents for those of you wanting more information on the Woodbury project.

Below is information on city activities and information provided by the department directors and managers for the week of August 23-27, 2010:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Submitted by Brian O'Connell, Community Development Director

The City Administrator and the Community Development Director met with the Board of the Union of Youth on Wednesday to explain the recent decision by City Council to not purchase the property owned by the Union of Youth at 303 Water Street. Several members from the Board inquired about the willingness of the City to sell the city owned property next door at 305 South Water Street. The premise of the inquiry is that the Union of Youth is of the belief that they are most able to sell the property they currently own if it is combined with the city owned property. Staff will be researching the sale value of the property owned by the City and the sale value of both properties through a joint broker agent. This will be completed as a means to assist the Union of Youth and anyone else who may be interested in purchasing the city property and or Key owned property.

Staff has been working on the task of determining the costs and potential revenues associated with the phasing strategy for the future business and industrial park. This information will be shared with the Steering Committee for the upcoming meeting of the Steering Committee on September 16, 2010 prior to the Open House on the Master Plan that is scheduled for September 23.

Economic Development

Submitted by Jody T. Gunderson, Economic Development Director

The City Administrator and Economic Development Director attended a meeting of the Minneapolis-Northfield & Southern Transit Authority. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss various means of public transportation and how they may collaborate to create a more efficient and meaningful transportation network that benefits a larger geographic area. The individuals attending the meeting were representing the interests of their respective City, County, and transit authority. Minnesota State Representative Bly was also in attendance to provide the legislative positions on the topics discussed.

The Economic Development Director has also had conversations and provided advice to an individual that has expressed a desire to redevelop property on Northfield's downtown riverfront.

Housing

Submitted by Michele Merxbauer, Housing Manager

Home Matters

This week, the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation came to Northfield for their quarterly Board Meeting and toured the 8th street houses. We received grant support from the Foundation to create a healthy breathing environment in both homes, which was accomplished with a radon system, low/no VOC* paints and finishes, and utilizing hard surfaces rather than carpeting throughout most of the homes. The Board was very pleased with our homes and repeatedly stated how nice it was to see the result of how their grant dollars are used. The premise behind creating healthy homes is the research that shows how the homes we live in affect our health in negative ways, such as allergies and asthma. The goal is to reduce illness by creating a healthy breathing atmosphere. We will continue to work with the Foundation on future projects to create healthy living environments, both in rehab homes and new construction.

**VOC=volatile organic compounds. VOC's are found in paints, glues, adhesives and carpets, among many other places, and give off a gas that can negatively harm people's breathing. To learn more, go to Home-Matters.org for ways to reduce the VOC's in your home*

Community Development Block Grants

Staff approved another Manufactured Home Acquisition Grant for a family in Viking Terrace. This is now two that will be completed this summer. Thanks again to Deb and Fran Haan for all the hard work and dedication they put into keeping the residents and the park safe and secure!

Stimulus Grants

Staff attended a webinar this week on Davis-Bacon wage requirements for the stimulus projects. Both the City Hall Maintenance Project and the Food Shelf HVAC project are mandated to adhere to Davis-Bacon wage rates, which were clearly advertised in both bids. One requirement of this mandate is weekly payroll, with certified payroll submitted each week to the State. The grants are both heavy on administrative mandates, but the knowledge gained of how this mandate works is helpful and will be utilized in the future.

Planning

Submitted by Dan Olson, City Planner

The Planning Commission met on Thursday to discuss the direction given on Tuesday from the City Council on the draft Land Development Code (LDC). Revisions to the two commercial district regulations will be made to provide base standards (building location, etc.), and then a process to provide flexibility to an applicant if they desire to request an alternative site design. The Commission also completed its review relating to the requirements for minimum and maximum numbers of required parking spaces, and also discussed how practically they will finish their review of the LDC so that the ordinance can be adopted by the end of this year. There was consensus that some ordinance language in the LDC could simply incorporate comments from the Boards and Commission review, and not be reviewed in detail by the Planning Commission. This will be helpful in speeding up the LDC review process.

LIBRARY

Submitted by Lynne Young, Director

Booker visited several Northfield schools during the last couple of weeks for the Bridges to Kindergarten program. Thanks to Diana Tallent for taking time from her regular job to connect children with the library.

Leesa Wisdorf visited with home school parents at an open house on August 19 at the library. She demonstrated a number of the electronic resources that are available to all area residents and concentrated on those especially useful to students such as *Novelist K-8*, *Learning Express* (practice tests such as the ACT and SAT), *New Book of Knowledge*, *Lands and Peoples*, the student edition of *Infotrac* (a database of magazine and newspaper articles), and *the New Book of Popular Science*. Northfield area residents have access to a great collection of electronic resources through the library's web site at www.ci.northfield.mn.us/library (click on electronic resources).

ENGINEERING

4TH STREET RECONSTRUCTION

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech Coordinator

It was another busy week on the Fourth Street Reconstruction Project. Crews are working on many facets of the project at once, so it has kept staff very busy on the project site. We are working towards our goal of having both Phases I and Phase II complete by DJJD. Weather has been ideal for construction so much progress was made this week. BCM has had numerous crews and subcontractors on-site all week working long hours to accomplish our goal.

PHASE I – FOURTH STREET FROM DIVISION STREET TO WASHINGTON STREET

Crews worked pouring the footings for the tree grates this week. All footings were poured, and the sidewalk areas were finished up late Friday, so the only work left on this portion of the project is the installation of the streetlights, pavers and the trees. The remainder of the work will be finished next week, except the

trees. Trees are expected to be planted sometime mid to late September. Paver crews will be on-site next week both Monday and Tuesday to install the pavers in the trees planter areas. We will again be closing off the parking on one side of the street each day to do this work.

PHASE I – FOURTH STREET FROM WASHINGTON STREET TO UNION STREET & UNION STREET FROM FOURTH STREET TO FIFTH STREET

Crews finished up the remainder of the concrete work including sidewalks curbs and gutters, and driveways this week on this portion of Phase I. Crews anticipate paving Union Street from Fifth Street to Fourth Street starting next Wednesday, and black dirt and sod will be placed shortly thereafter.

PHASE II – FOURTH STREET FROM UNION STREET TO NEVADA STREET

Crews finished the remainder of the concrete work on this portion this week, and also installed the bituminous base course pavement. Crew also began working on boulevard grading and installing black dirt in preparation of sod. Sod crews will be in at the beginning of next week to begin installing sod on Fourth Street starting at Nevada Street working towards Union Street.

PHASE II – UNION STREET FROM FOURTH STREET TO SECOND STREET

Crews finished up the remainder of the concrete work including sidewalks, curbs and gutters, and driveways on this portion of Phase II. Crews also worked on the pervious paver parking area that is being installed on the Union Street side of the new Carleton Arts Union. Crews will be on-site next week to pave this portion of Phase II and install the pavers in the new parking area for the Arts Union. Boulevard grading and sod work will follow at the end of next week.

PHASE III – COLLEGE STREET, WINONA STREET AND NEVADA STREET FROM FOURTH STREET TO FIFTH STREET, AND UNION STREET FROM SIXTH STREET TO SEVENTH STREET

Crews anticipate having the pavement milling subcontractor on-site next Wednesday to mill the existing pavement off of Phase III. Crews will be concentrating on Nevada Street first, followed by Union Street. Xcel Energy will also be on Union Street late next week to begin gas main replacement. That work is expected to last a week.

BABCOCK PARK SANITARY SEWER INTERCEPTOR

Submitted by Brian Welch, GIS Technician

Barr Engineering is nearing completion of the wetland delineation study required before construction can begin on the sanitary sewer interceptor between the pump station near the hockey arena and the siphon next to the Hwy 3 bridge. A Technical Evaluation Panel consisting of city staff, Barr Engineering and representatives from FEMA, State Wetland Conservation, and Rice Co. Soil & Water, met this week to discuss the delineation and to review the conditions of the wetlands themselves. Barr and city staff will review the comments from the panel and continue to move forward with the permitting process necessary to begin construction.

Bolton & Menk continued design work on the sanitary interceptor and is working with the TEP panel to finalize the sewer alignment to minimize impacts on the wetlands.

PUBLIC WORKS

Facilities

Submitted by Bernie Shakal, Maintenance Facilities Supervisor

Facility staff spent the majority of the week working on the annual pool maintenance project at the Senior Center. Some items completed include rebuilding the spa pumps and completely re-grouting the deck and pool area. This process required a large amount of clean up. A water heater was also installed in the pool mechanical room. This new heater will provide hot water in both shower rooms. Both shower rooms were also repainted.

I&S Engineering has forwarded a scope of work to three asbestos abatement contractors requesting cost estimates for the removal of the windows at City Hall. Quotes are expected back early next week. At that

time staff will review the quotes with I&S Engineering to finalize the costs. The contract for the maintenance project is planned to be on the September 7, 2010 Council Agenda.

Pool

Submitted by Jason Eisold, Recreation Manager

This is the final weekend of the pool. This season's attendance will be the second largest in the four year history of the pool (2008 was biggest year). A special thank you to the over 36,000 patrons that visited the pool this summer.

The annual dog swim will take place on Thursday, September 2 from 3:30-6:00; visit our web site for more information on this event. <http://www.ci.northfield.mn.us/assets/8/8-X-11-dog-swim-flyer-2010.pdf>

Streets and Parks

Submitted by TJ Heinrich, Streets and Parks Supervisor

The Street and Park Division had a variety of tasks this week. All city parks were cleaned. Mowing was done at some City parks and right of ways. Potholes were also filled around the City. Staff assisted the Rice County STS crew with weed removal at Heritage and Jefferson park playgrounds. The River Commons area was washed and downtown banners were changed this week in observance of the upcoming Defeat of Jesse James festival. Dirt was placed and grass was seeded along the newly installed trails at Old Memorial park. Staff assisted the Facility Division with pool repairs at the NCRC building.

Several access issues were completed this week. The west Sechler Park gate was moved per a request from the local railroad and the Spring Creek water tower security gate was moved to aid with entry into the newly installed archery range. Also, the Peggy Prowe pedestrian bridge had gates installed to assist in preventing unwanted winter traffic across the bridge. Staff worked with the welding contractor in accomplishing these projects.

Water

Submitted by Doug Lien, Water Supervisor

The Water Division staff flushed the new watermain on Union Street between East 4th and East 2nd Street. Bacteria samples were taken and tested by UC Laboratory in Janesville. UC Laboratory notified the Water Division that the samples came back negative and the Water Division staff put the new watermain back in service.

The Water Division staff was able to salvage a fairly new Kennedy fire hydrant from the 4th Street infrastructure project. The fire hydrant was placed at the City Maintenance Facility, where other hydrants are stored for future use or for spare parts.

Wastewater

Submitted by Glenn Lindroos, Wastewater Superintendent

The Wastewater Division's seasonal employees, Justin Wagner and Collin Miller, are done for the summer and have returned to school. Their duties focused mainly on collection system maintenance, and their efforts contributed significantly to the 120,000 feet of collection system jet cleaning and 80,000 feet of collection system televising that has been accomplished so far this year