

**Memorandum**

DATE: July 9, 2010  
TO: Mayor & Council Members  
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator  
RE: Board And Commission Memo June 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 May 2010. Information for the July memo will be due by July 30, 2010 and posted on Friday August 6, 2010. Please note: some submittals are edited.

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

**Environmental Quality Commission**

*Submitted by Daniel Jones, Chair*

The Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) June meeting was cancelled due to the lack of a quorum. The EQC will continue working on a variety of topics, including assisting the City and EDA with public education on the GreenStep Cities Program; a series of actions to improve energy efficiency, including recommending adoption of the 2008 Energy Task Force Report; continuing review of the stormwater ordinance, and contributing to the development and review of a multi-jurisdictional planning policy for stream and other natural resource protection.

**Heritage Preservation Commission**

*Submitted by Commissioner Steve Edwins*

The meeting was chaired by Cliff Clark in the absence of the chair, Bob Will. HPC member attendees included Maggie Lee, Mary Titus, Steve Edwins, Judy Swanson, Susan DeMalignon, and Steve Wilmot. Dan Olson, City Planner, presented the staff reports for sign approvals. The Agenda was approved with the addition of a Streetscape Taskforce report.

The Minutes from the May 20, 2010 meeting were reviewed and amended regarding D. Olson's report that Council decided not to pursue Way Park designation. The line in Part 5. Other, sub-part (b.) that reads "B. Will added they felt the park, . . . ." was revised to read "B. Will added that the City Council felt that the park may have another use in the future and that the only historic feature was the stone wall." Minutes were then approved.

This prompted comment by S. Edwins, that it was a revealing Council response in that the concept was that the entire park was of value as a heritage site, not just stone walls.

No current Projects were reviewed.

For a Streetscape Taskforce report, S. Edwins noted that remaining design issues in the 4th Street project were brought to the Taskforce at the morning meeting, and that the question of how both groups review work project is yet to be resolved.

For Sign Review and approvals, sign-like banners on the front bay of the Arts Guild were approved; Nutting Block signs proposed for above each entry to the vehicle 'pass through' were approved; and two sign proposals for the Tavern and Archer House were discussed. A ground-mounted sign along the pedestrian

'mews' was approved. For a sign for the Tavern proposed for the west porch railing, the applicant was asked to show the signage 'master plan' as required for that side of the Archer House.

The HPC and NHS iPod audio-visual tour project was reported via showing two examples of tours in draft form. The entire group is to be finished in July, such that finished examples can be shown at the July HPC meeting.

Cliff Clark asked that a letter to Carleton College be sent by the HPC to its new president regarding college plans to remove a number of historic houses on the east side near campus. This would ask that a policy be established about the preservation of neighborhood historic homes that it owns. Dan Olson advised that such a letter would have to have the approval of City Council.

### **Human Rights Commission**

*Submitted by Commissioner D. D. Davison*

#### ***NORTHFIELD HOUSING***

As part of exploring BUILDING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES, the commission heard presentations by representatives of three agencies that provide or coordinate housing.

#### ***BLOCKED CURB CUTS***

The commission received a follow-up report about a Northfield police vehicle frequently blocking handicapped curb cut access to the sidewalk.

#### ***REPORT OF MEDIATION***

Several months ago the commission had received a complaint of alleged discrimination in a housing situation. After investigation it was recommended the parties agree to mediation by Rice County Mediation services. All three parties did not agree at first. One or more parties changed their decision several times. The commission and the police liaison encouraged them and all three parties did agree to mediation. That meeting was held and an agreement was reached.

#### ***VACANCIES***

During the roll call, it was noted the Human Rights Commission has three vacant positions. The commission needs three more members.

### **Library Board**

*Submitted by Margit Johnson, Chair*

The Library Board and staff look forward to discussing with you the outcome of the fundraising feasibility study completed by the Library Strategies consultants and presented to the Library Board on June 9<sup>th</sup>.

To summarize *very* briefly, the consultants learned from the 33 potential donors that:

1. "The Library is *not* positioned to embark on a campaign with a fundraising goal of \$4.3M," and
2. "Without a strong sense for the City's plan, it's impossible to have a sense for the Library's plan. The City and Library have to have one voice and a *shared* plan before the campaign launches."

With that in mind, the Library Board and staff were disappointed that the Council voted on June 15<sup>th</sup> to approve a levy referendum not to exceed \$14.4M for the police and fire departments with *no* reference to the future library expansion, which has been identified as a 2014 CIP project. Without adequate funding or planning for the entire 5-year CIP, there is no "shared plan," and therefore there can be no capital campaign at this time.

The Council has established a very tight timetable for siting, designing and budgeting for public safety facilities prior to the general election in November. There is no time for a discussion between the Library Board, which is advisory to the council, and the council itself about alternatives to implementing the entire CIP, including a possible phased approach to the library expansion.

Potential donors correctly identified a lack of commitment on the part of the City Council to ensure that a library expansion is part of an adequately planned for and funded CIP. Library board members and staff will seek direction from the council at the August 24<sup>th</sup> work session to determine next steps.

### **Mayor's Task Force on Youth Alcohol & Drug Use**

*Submitted by Joan Janusz and Susan Sanderson, Co-Chairs*

#### **Highlights of June Activities:**

- Dr. Charles Reznikoff (addiction medicine specialist at Northfield Hospital) presented at the June 7, 2010, Mayor's Task Force meeting. Dr. Reznikoff spoke of his work at the Northfield Hospital's Opiate Agonist Therapy Clinic (OAT Clinic), as well as his perspectives on substances use issues in the community. Dr. Reznikoff shared that primary users of the OAT Clinic include patients who are addicted to prescription medications, in addition to individuals who have been addicted to heroin.
- Representatives from the Mayor's Task Force have attended recent sessions sponsored by the State of Minnesota on social host ordinances. More than 50 communities across Minnesota have now implemented these ordinances. The Mayor's Task Force continues to educate itself about this topic and looks forward to discussing it with the City Council in the future.
- As a part of the group's "Talk, Listen, Connect" (TLC) parent education initiative, the Mayor's Task Force is implementing a series of postcards to parents on important topics related to keeping their children safe and avoiding risk-taking behaviors like alcohol and drug use. The first postcard was sent out to parents of middle school and high school students in June. It highlighted the importance of parents talking with their children about their views on drug and alcohol use. The July postcards focus on tips for summertime parenting and information on curfew in Northfield.
- Year-end evaluations of the MOST campaign at Northfield Middle School indicated strong support from the school teachers and administrators for the campaign and a desire to see the effort continue in the future. Neuger Communications Group donated their time to help design the campaign. Neuger Communications recently learned that the MOST campaign received a "2010 Communicator Award of Excellence" from the International Academy of the Visual Arts for the MOST campaign materials.

As noted in last month's report, the Mayor's Task Force is again partnering with the Northfield High School Activities Office on the Fall Activity Night. This is a mandatory event for all high school students who participate in fall activities (plus their parents). This year, the keynote speakers will be three Northfield community members who received training on the Pure Performance initiative sponsored by the American Athletic Institute. The Fall Activity Night presentation will build off the presentation that Dr. John Underwood from the American Athletic Institute gave in Northfield last fall. Pure Performance stresses the negative impact that substance use can have on athletic and school results. The Mayor's Task Force recognizes the wide and diverse audience that the Fall Activity Night reaches and, thus, is excited about this continued partnership and the sustained interest in these topics.

### **Mayor's Youth Council**

*Submitted by Marti Dompierre & Bette Benson, co-chairs*

In June, the Mayor's Youth Council met for the first time as the 2010-2011 group. Bette Benson and Marti Dompierre were voted to be co-chairs, Soren Carlson-Donohoe was voted to be vice-chair and Marie Colangelo and Brenda Kell will be the co-secretaries. The new members were given an overview of the Mayor's Youth Council's duties. They were then given a list of what needs to be included in the Northfield Civic Engagement Guide and the duties were divided between all the council members. We have set a deadline of having the guide done by September or October.

Also this month, the Mayor's Youth Council also submitted the application to have Northfield named as one of the "100 Best Communities for Young People." This is a competition sponsored by the national America's

Promise organization. More than 350 communities across the country applied. Final decisions are expected in mid-September.

**Planning Commission**

*Submitted by Multiple Commission Members*

The Planning Commission continued to meet weekly in June, and completed their review of regulations for unbuilt residential zones which was presented to the City Council at the June 8 work session.

In conjunction with the Commission's review of regulations for the C1 and C2 commercial zones, which will be discussed at the July 13 City Council work session, Commissioners Davis, Nakasian and Shulte met with representatives of the local development community at a meeting hosted by the Chamber of Commerce. Council Liaison Buckheit and city staff members Olson and O'Connell also attended the meeting.

At the request of Carleton College, Commissioners Davis, Nakasian and Thomas, Council Liaison Betsey Buckheit, and city staff members Olson and O'Connell met with representatives from the College to hear concerns and answer questions regarding the regulations proposed for the College Development zone. A similar meeting with representatives from St. Olaf College will be scheduled in the near future.

At the June 17 Planning Commission meeting, the Commission held a public hearing regarding a request from St. Olaf College for annexation of a portion of their land in Bridgewater Township for the proposed location of a Mayo Clinic Oncology Center. The Commission unanimously recommended that the Council approve the annexation request.

cc: Board & Commission Chairs  
Department Managers