

**City of Falcon Heights  
Environment Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
April 9, 2012**

Present: Diane Ross, Brian Goodspeed, Rebecca Montgomery, Nina Semmelroth, Mayor Peter Lindstrom, Deb Jones (Staff).

Absent: Ethan Wagner, Stan Sveen

1. The meeting was called to order by the Chairs a few minutes after 6:30 p.m. The February and March minutes were approved with corrections.
2. **Prairie Gardens.** Provided with several sample ordinances and supporting literature, Commissioners engaged in a lengthy discussion of multiple aspects of allowing and regulating natural landscaping features, such as prairie gardens. During the discussion the following items of consensus emerged:
  - Commissioners did not favor the approach of requiring permits in advance for prairie gardens.
  - Commissioners did not favor requiring setbacks that would limit the ability of owners of small lots to have a prairie garden
  - Commissioners favored allowing prairie gardens to extend even into the right-of-way boulevards, provided clear visibility was maintained for vehicles and pedestrians. They favored a setback from the curb of ten feet.
  - Commissioners did favor measures that would require property owners to provide signage while establishing a prairie garden and detailed plans if maintenance issues arise (i.e. as part of code enforcement measures)

Commissioners settled on the Minnetonka landscaping ordinance as best representing their thoughts on a model to recommend to the City Council. Commissioners went through the text of the Minnetonka ordinance making a number of changes to adapt the language to Falcon Heights.

Commissioners voted to recommend that the City Council adopt the Minnetonka version with their modifications.

3. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

