



MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

DATE: 04/16/2013
REGULAR
ITEM #: 17
MOTION

AGENDA ITEM: Authorization to Distribute an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the Lennar Residential Development (Savona)

SUBMITTED BY: Nick Johnson, City Planner

THROUGH: Dean A. Zuleger, City Administrator

REVIEWED BY: Kyle Klatt, Planning Director

SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- Introduction of Item.....Staff
- Report/PresentationStaff
- Questions from Council to Staff..... Mayor Facilitates
- Public Input, if Appropriate..... Mayor Facilitates
- Call for Motion..... Mayor & City Council
- Discussion Mayor & City Council
- Action on Motion Mayor Facilitates

PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENT

The City Council must decide whether or not to authorize a mandatory Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for distribution and publication in the EQB Monitor

FISCAL IMPACT: None – Westwood Engineering, working under the direction of Lennar Corporation, is preparing the EAW. Staff has been involved in reviewing the work of the developer’s consultant.

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:

The City Council is being asked to authorize distribution of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) that has been prepared for the proposed Lennar Corporation residential subdivision (Savona) located within the I-94 Corridor planning area and immediately west of Keats Avenue. The City Council has previously determined that an EAW is required for the proposed Lennar residential subdivision and that this document should be prepared under the direction of the City of Lake Elmo acting as the RGU (Responsible Governing Unit).

Staff recommends the City Council authorize distribution of the mandatory EAW starting the 30-day EAW public comment period and take the following action / with the following motion:

“Motion to authorize distribution of the mandatory EAW for the Savona residential subdivision starting the 30-day EAW public comment period.”

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Lennar's project engineer, Westwood Engineering, has prepared the attached EAW and related traffic study in accordance with the guidelines of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board, which is the organization that oversees the State's environmental review program. Staff has reviewed the document and any requested modifications to the draft document have been incorporated into the attached EAW materials.

Under State rules, an EAW must be published in the EQB Monitor as part of the review process. The EQB Monitor is a biweekly publication that announces environmental review documents, public comment periods, and other actions of the Environmental Quality Board. Once published in the EQB Monitor, there is a 30 day comment period during which public agencies and members of the public may comment on the proposed project. The City must further distribute the EAW to a mailing list containing all responsible parties required to receive a copy of an EAW or EIS.

At the end of the 30-day comment period, the City must adopt a resolution that finds an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is or is not required for the project. If an EIS is not found to be necessary, the environmental review process is complete and the developer can proceed with platting and development within the project area.

In this case, Lennar has already submitted a preliminary plat application for the Savona Subdivision and recognizes that the City will not be able to take formal action on the plat application until the environmental review is complete. The preliminary plat application may proceed simultaneously with the EAW review.

STAFF REPORT:

Staff has reviewed the EAW document and has worked with the developer's consultant to incorporate all requested changes into the attached worksheet. During the course of the review, it was determined that a traffic impact study would be required, and this study has also been prepared and is attached for consideration by the City Council. Staff has found that the EAW is complete and addresses the minimum requirements for submission to the EQB.

Should the City Council take action to authorize the distribution of the EAW, the document could be published in the April 29th edition of the EQB Monitor, with the 30-day comment period ending on May 30, 2013.

STAFF RECCOMENDATION:

Based upon the above background information and Staff report it is recommended that the City Council authorize distribution of the mandatory EAW starting the 30-day EAW public comment period with the following motion:

“Motion to authorize distribution of the mandatory EAW for the Savona residential subdivision starting the 30-day EAW public comment period.”

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Environmental Assessment Worksheet – Savona EAW
2. Traffic Impact Study – Savona EAW