

# City of Lake Elmo

651/777-5510

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## **MAINTENANCE ADVISORY COMMISSION PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA FOR MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2002, 7:00 P.M.**

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1. Agenda
2. Minutes
3. **Maintenance Advisory Commission**
  - a. Community Facilities/Staffing Forecast
  - b. Siren Project
4. Adjourn

*June  
24*

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1. **Planning Commission**
    - a. Council Directives
  2. Other Business
  3. Adjourn

CITY OF LAKE ELMO  
MAINTENANCE ADVISORY SPECIAL PROJECTS  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
JUNE 24, 2002

Planning Commission Chairman Tom Armstrong called the Joint Meeting of the Maintenance Advisory Special Projects Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Armstrong, Deziel, Bunn, Sessing, Berg, Helwig, Ptacek. MAC COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Dege, Talcott, and Stanley. Also present: City Planner, Charles Dillerud, Fire Chief Malmquist, and Administrative Secretary, Kimberly Schaffel.

**AGENDA**

M/S Sessing/Armstrong To accept the Agenda as presented. **VOTE: 11:0 PASSED.**

**MAC MINUTES OF JUNE 3, 2002**

Commissioner Bunn noted that the portion of the line at the top of page 3 that states, "Not to exceed a page in length," were not her words, and she requested deletion.

The Commission agreed to amend Page 3, paragraph 2, to add, "The City Planner advised the Commission to limit those comments to a single page," and delete the portion that Commissioner Bunn referenced.

M/S Helwig/Deziel To accept the Minutes as amended. **VOTE: 11:0 PASSED.**

**PZ MINUTES OF JUNE 10, 2002**

The minutes of the last Planning Commission Meeting were not reviewed.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES/STAFFING FORECAST**

**Staff Report, City Planner, Charles Dillerud**

The City Planner did not think the draft study received early the prior week was complete enough to mail to department heads, and it is too large to study in the short time since its arrival in a more complete form. He recommends setting up a workshop with department heads, council members, and commissioners to discuss the draft.

The two lead consultants are present. The ultimate destination for the Facilities Plan is the City Council for approval. The study would then become part of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Paul Steinman and Dick Thompson, TKDA**

They presented highlights of the draft study as found in Chapter 7 - Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations. The heart of the study was the pre-selection of 8 cities to compare with Lake Elmo.

**Commissioner Bunn**

She asked why they went back to the old approach of using the entire Twin Cities Region. The preliminary forecasts for households and people are very different from Met Council's new 2030 projections. TKDA should incorporate those new figures, at least, for the purpose of discussion.

**Dick Thompson and Paul Steinman**

They used that profile because of growth over the next twenty years. The recommendation is not to cut yourselves short for land or building facilities. You do not have to build that large but allow room for growth and expansion. You may still grow beyond 2020, and a population of 12,500.

**City Planner**

It was coincidental that we met the 2020 population forecast given us by Met Council in preparation of the 2020 Plan.

**Commissioner Deziel**

We hired these consultants, and should use their numbers.

**Paul Steinman and Dick Thompson**

Dick spoke with staff in many of these cities. Two cities just built city halls over 11,000 square feet. Both are young, and will experience considerable growth. They discovered that the younger the building, the larger it was built. Some of the fire hall data will be revised as it is acquired.

Some cities have built far into the future. The addition of employees is timed with the expansion of facilities.

**Commissioner Stanley**

Estimated populations should be indicated as a reminder when you are projecting for future years.

**Commissioner Deziel**

In the year 2015, 10 of those 14 additional staff are police.

**Commissioner Berg**

He asked if we discussed police service with Washington County, and if there are cut-off policies.

**Paul Steinman**

The County is fighting to keep those contracts.

**City Planner**

There may be community interest in local policing in later years.

**Dick Thompson and Paul Steinman**

Lake Elmo does not contract for snow plowing, other cities do. While we may be satisfied with police now, that could change when costs rise.

Per square foot building costs are accurate. Programming and design costs are far less accurate. Most of our facilities are in good shape but they are too small, and are bursting at the seams.

City Hall is most grossly undersized. Temporary facilities should be found while you are searching for land located in the Old Village for a City Hall of at least 11,000 square feet, estimated at \$1.4 million. When the new City Hall is built, convert the old building into a community center.

Fire facilities are neither large enough nor up to date enough. They suggest we hire someone to look at the overall system. TKDA is not qualified to do that. A Fire Hall is very specialized; it includes showers, eyewash stations, and a place for hazardous wastes. They are state of the art; they need more equipment and more space. The old Fire Hall site could be reused for a downtown-type use.

The Parks Facility is most valuable for the land. Most cities include Parks in Maintenance.

**Commissioner Stanley**

The charts in the draft study are difficult to read in black and white.

**Commissioner Deziel**

He appreciates the need for a fire consultant. The study provides a framework to work from. Overall it looks practical.

**Paul Steinman and Dick Thompson**

Operationally, these are the leanest staffing levels to maintain the same level of service now provided.

**Commissioner Bunn**

She would like to see income levels as compared to other cities. Tax rates were not compared.

**Dick Thompson and Paul Steinman**

The City must move forward. Anything is acceptable except inaction. Momentum is growing.

**ADJOURN 8:00 p.m.**

**RECONVENE at 8:05 p.m.**

**MAC: SIREN PROJECT**

**Staff Report, City Planner, Charles Dillerud**

The issue of sirens is discussed every year during Capital Improvement time. Fire Chief Malmquist obtained information from Washington County to learn what siren coverage is available from existing sirens in surrounding communities. Oakdale has almost wall-to-wall coverage, and overlaps slightly into Lake Elmo. Coverage on the south end of Lake Elmo is by Woodbury, Cimarron and the fire station. Oak Park Heights has a bit of overlap too. He displayed the City Land Use Map overlaid with existing siren coverage to present required coverage over the highest population density in the city.

There are two types of popular sirens, 128 db rotating give one-mile radius under certain conditions. Sound reduces with distance, and the distance or edge is where the sound drops to 70 db. That assumes there are no interfering buildings, hills, or large trees.

**Commissioner Dege**

He asked about coverage during wind or storms.

**City Planner**

This plan represents the minimum coverage the City could deal with. Lake Elmo Park Reserve should provide for itself. In the proposed plan, there are very few dead spots; some of them are very small. This afternoon the FEMA schedule came. They use the same radius the Planner used in his presentation. The plan is for six new facilities, and replacement of one of the old sirens. The Old Village Fire Station siren could be relocated to the park area just north of 30<sup>th</sup> Street. After examination, he is unsure the Old Village siren is worth moving.

The primary vendor of sirens had very small price increases since 1999. A large, single, rotating siren is \$16,000 installed with backup battery, pole, etc. Small units with a series of horns are less effective but are closer to \$12,000 installed on the pole.

He reviewed the Capital Schedule through 2006 which includes the Civil Defense Fund. \$7,000 will be added this year, for a total of \$32,000 at end of this year. The Capital Improvement Project is coming up in July. The Commission may wish to get a change in funding. \$40,000 could get it started in some combination in 2003.

If the Commission only wanted to buy two at first, they should be placed in the northwest quarter of the City where population is greater. Most of the new ones would be located in parks. The Jesuit Retreat might be a problem even though it is an ideal location for coverage..

**Commissioners Helwig and Deziel**

They thought the Planner did a good job with research, design, and presentation.

**Commissioner Sessing**

Maybe one siren could be eliminated if we locate them differently – accounting for Oakdale overlap.

**Commissioner Dege**

Maybe a smaller one could be used if we move them a little bit closer together.

**Commissioner Helwig**

He said the sirens blow at noon and 9 p.m. because of tradition.

**Fire Chief Malmquist**

Guys working at the lumberyard use the whistle to respond to fire calls.

**Commissioner Stanley**

What does the plan look like topographically?

**City Planner**

That is the next step. Elevations may make a difference.

**Fire Chief Malmquist**

Does the smaller siren have battery backup? Whenever there is a big storm, we lose power, and there are no sirens.

**City Planner**

The siren at Cimarron is not backed up, and neither is the one at the fire station.

**Fire Chief Malmquist**

They could leave the Old Village siren there until it dies.

**City Planner**

There is the potential for the purchase of three in 2003 but we have to ask the City Council for more money. He is ambivalent about the Old Village siren.

**Commissioner Bunn**

The Old Village siren could still be used for fire calls but not for everything.

**Commissioner Stanley**

Use it just for emergencies.

**Commissioner Deziel**

Do they have to sound the siren at noon and 9?

**City Planner**

He will ask the City Council. Each existing siren costs \$1500 to upgrade to batteries.

**Commissioner Bunn**

She would like to have sirens at Tartan Park. Tornado emergencies are particularly dangerous to people outside. She is concerned about the Cimarron siren not having battery backup.

**City Planner**

Cimarron owns it.

**Fire Chief Malmquist**

He requested we have a plan laid out and sirens in place before the next storm season in order to get the coverage we want. We have experienced some very serious storms the last few years. He would like to see us get Washington County on board, and part of this program.

M/S Dege/Sessing The first two locations should be installed in 2003, based on population. In 2004, we should install the number six siren, hopefully with a slightly larger budget in the CIP by adding about \$9,000 per year. Try to rearrange the plan to eliminate one of the sirens if possible. **VOTE: 11:0 PASSED.**

**City Planner**

He will take it to the Council, and bring it back after the CIP, if they approve and concur.

**Commissioner Bunn**

She liked the idea of coordinating with the County. Depending where they might locate a siren in Lake Elmo Park Reserve, there might be additional overlap.

**Fire Chief Malmquist**

He thought we had \$35,000 in the budget this year. 2003 puts us into another full storm season. Could poles and power be installed with existing money this year, and get the sirens up prior to next year's storm season?

**Commissioner Dege**

He thought that was a good suggestion.

**City Planner**

That is an operational issue that can be looked at.

**MAC: ADJOURN 8:40 p.m.**

**CONVENE AS PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Staff Report, City Planner, Charles Dillerud**

The City Council has asked for thoughts on two issues. One is the OP Concept Plans; the City Council is disappointed with the nature of plans for recent projects. Quantitatively they meet the Code but they are not of the same quality the Council had in mind. They suggested that OP Concept Plans could be submitted to a landscape architect or architect for compliance with the more qualitative aspects of the Ordinance. They are thinking about street widths, landscaping, building exteriors, etc. More ornate structures are what the City Council had in mind.

The applicant would pay the fees, adding perhaps another \$1,000.

**Commissioner Sessing**

He understands but we still have to give an architect qualitative ideas to guide him. If we cannot put it on paper for ourselves, how can we put it on paper for him? If the property owner is paying, they will low-ball the quality and expense.

**Commissioner Deziel**

We ran into problems with the last one. This suggestion will not help. Lot size was one problem. Size and aspect ratio in long strips of about 20 acres made for unattractive plans. If we change the aspect ratio, it would be more attractive. OP Outlots should be required to be part of the HOA responsibility with non-development clauses, and as part of the development, not an adjacent parcel.

**Chairman Armstrong**

3 or 4 others came through that had OP not owned by their HOA's. Originally, OP came about in the 1990's when the smallest lots were zoned RE. Criticism included large lots create more roads, and no space set aside.

When clustering came it was 6 houses for 20 acres. Fears of the "taking" issue created the bonus program up to 9 per 20. Now it is 8 per 20. He recommends we reduce the density, and get back to the original 6 per 20. If we allow 16 houses on 40 acres, we can't expect the developers to change their plans to make the neighbors happy.

He thinks the City Council should change the Code back to what it was originally. This has been the entire problem since the beginning. There has been only one plan where they have not taken every single lot allowed. OP is not mandatory. It can be developed other ways if they do not like OP. Lower the density, and make a more quality development. It would not have to be more expensive. The first OP application was for Homestead, Fields was second with the brand new Ordinance. They did not need six variances for a 100 acre site. There was no hardship or basis for it. Amend the Code. If they need to be emotionally and visually appealing, match it in the Code.

**Commissioner Deziel**

He agrees with Chairman Armstrong's comments.

**Commissioner Sessing**

Are view sheds for existing or new residents?

**City Planner**

Ask the City Council to come in to explain what they mean or nothing will get done.

**Commissioner Bunn**

She supports what Commissioner Sessing said. What environmental aspects are they talking about? An architect we hire but they pay does no good unless we have guidelines to make it what the Council wants.

**Commissioner Ptacek**

He agrees about density. There are problems with aspect ratios. Qualitative things are subjective. We cannot dive into aesthetic concerns, whose view is better, or side versus front siting garages on the lots. The City Council must give us some technical concerns we can fix.

**Commissioner Sessing**

He would like to see the entire City Council here for a workshop with the Commission.

M/S Sessing/Helwig To schedule a workshop with the City Council to discuss OP Development concerns.

**VOTE: 8:0 PASSED.**

**Staff Report, City Planner, Charles Dillerud**

The second directive from the Council is a concern that it has been since the 1979 Ordinance was created. The City Council would like the Commission to look at GB as they did with LB. If you read the Comprehensive Plan, the Old Village is our retailing area; we are deducting from the Old Village when we have similar uses elsewhere in the city.

**Chairman Armstrong**

None of the uses on the GB List seem objectionable. He thinks zoning might be the response, not uses. Whenever a list was developed, it was an agonizing process.

**Commissioner Bunn**

All business zones except the MUSA area soon will become LB and non-business with the Comprehensive Plan. This would be a non-issue.

**City Planner**

All these uses are fine for Old Village commercial. Do we want neighborhood mini shopping centers?

**Commissioner Sessing**

That cannot happen unless it is zoned for it.

**Chairman Armstrong**

Uses along I-94 may be the only area where there might be a problem.

M/S Armstrong/Helwig If the City Council wants to discuss uses in the General Business Zone, it should be done in the same workshop as the OP. **VOTE: 8:0 PASSED.**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**Commissioner Bunn**

She is very excited about the Old Village Neighborhood Design Study, and thinks there should be Old Village and public involvement. At the time consultants gave bids, the time frame was different. We asked for innovative

ideas for public involvement, and I did not get them. It was her conclusion that this consultant would hire another person to give us that public input structure. The schedule submitted has regular Planning Commission Meeting dates. She assumed they would be separate meetings. Trying to get public input on Monday nights in summer seems ineffective. The whole process is overlapping with City Council and staff being distracted by matters having to do with the Met Council. July 8 is a scheduled meeting for Staff and the Planning Commission. The City Council should be involved in the beginning.

**City Planner**

He remembers it that way too.

**Commissioner Berg**

He shares Commissioner Bunn's frustration. In his experience, it does not matter when you hold a meeting. When people get angry they show up. He would love to get the public involved. The time of year will not matter.

**Commissioner Ptacek**

The most important thing is that the Old Village Special Projects Commissioners are part of this. He assumes there is an excuse why the letter was dated June and not January or February.

**City Planner**

Community Facilities were delayed, the consultants were in Italy, and we were working on data collection. The County took a while to get the digitized data to him. The rezoning ordinance will be coming up pretty soon. He will get this going as early as possible.

**Commissioner Bunn**

She would like Old Village Special Projects work phone numbers. She would like to hold the public forums at any time but a Monday night, and not simultaneous with Planning Commission Agendas. July 22 is a key meeting.

**City Planner**

July 8 is the scheduled kick off.

**Commissioner Bunn**

The discussion should be about public input.

**Commissioner Deziel**

There was a big response to a good mailing of 300 to Old Village residents. Residents expect us to do much of this for them. They are not going to schedule a conflict that is vague or uncertain. Don't assume residents are not concerned.

**Commissioner Bunn**

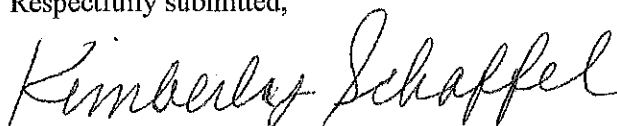
The MAC made suggestions about Facilities Planning. For discussions, we should be sure Thorbeck is aware of the study.

M/S Bunn/Deziel To commit to the initial meeting of July 8 but to include the Old Village Special Projects Commission, and to direct staff to get the consultant to understand our need to know how community involvement will happen, and to get the Old Village Special Projects Planning Commission's response to that.

**VOTE: 8:0 PASSED.**

**ADJOURN at 9:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
Kimberly Schaffel, Administrative Secretary