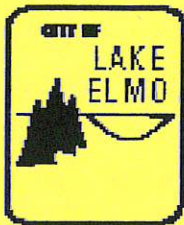


FILE



City of Lake Elmo

3800 Laverne Avenue North
Lake Elmo, Minnesota 55042

(651) 777-5510 Fax: (651) 777-9615
www.LakeElmo.Org

Aug.
11
08

NOTICE OF MEETING

The City of Lake Elmo
Planning Commission will conduct a meeting on
Monday, August 11, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approve Agenda
3. Approve Minutes
 - a. July 14, 2008
4. Public Hearings
 - a. MOVE ACCESSORY BUILDING INTO CITY LIMITS: Consideration of an application to allow the movement of an accessory building from outside the city limits to the property at 4150 Irish Court North; R-1 zoning; PID: 09-029-21-43-0018.
 - b. VARIANCE: Consideration of an application to allow construction of a detached garage 15 feet from the front lot line (30 foot required setback) at 11002 Upper 33rd Street North; R-1 zoning; PID: 13-029-21-32-0054. – *Application to be considered for tabling and renotification*
 - c. ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENT: Consideration of an ordinance to amend Section 150.180 of the Lake Elmo Zoning Ordinance. The proposed ordinance would amend the maximum impervious surface coverage permitted in the OP Open Space Preservation District and would provide additional requirements for use of alternate pervious systems.
5. Informational Item: “A Look at Community Capacity To Conserve Open Space in the Twin Cities Area” – An Embrace Open Space Report
6. City Council Updates
 - a. August 5 –
 - i. Torre Pines Minor Subdivision
 - ii. Lake Shore Drive Road Vacation
7. Adjourn

**City of Lake Elmo
Planning Commission Meeting
Minutes of July 14, 2008**

Chairman Ptacek called to order the meeting of the Lake Elmo Planning Commission at 7:00 p.m. COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Anderson, Fliflet (7:01), Hall, Helwig, Pelletier, Ptacek, McGinnis (7:03), Roth (7:07), and Van Zandt. STAFF PRESENT: Planning Director Klatt and Planner Matzek.

Agenda

M/S/P, VanZandt/Hall, move to approve the agenda .

Planning Director Klatt asked to have the minutes from June 9th pulled from the agenda.

Van Zandt and Hall agreed to the change. Vote: 6:0.

Fliflet arrived at 7:01 p.m.

Minutes -

McGinnis arrived at 7:03 p.m.

May 28, 2008

M/S/P, Helwig/Anderson, to approve the minutes as presented. Vote: 7:0.

Abstained: Van Zandt

June 9, 2008 – pulled from agenda.

Minor Subdivision; Torre Pines

Planning Director Klatt reviewed the staff memorandum with the Planning Commission regarding the proposed minor subdivision in the Torre Pines development to create four additional residential lots. The Meehan Family LLC is applying to plat the remaining large lot in the Torre Pines development which houses the original farmstead site. This site was reviewed with the Torre Pines preliminary plat in 1995, but the final plat was not filed for the four lots and the deadline for action has since expired.

Roth arrived at 7:07 p.m.

Planning Director Klatt said the minor subdivision application closely follows what was approved in the preliminary plat with a minor reconfiguration of one lot line. The outbuilding on the farm is identified in the plan to be removed as it would not be permitted without a primary structure on the lot after the subdivision takes place. Staff is recommending approval with nine conditions outlined in the staff report.

Commissioner Helwig asked if the covenants for Torre Pines would apply to the new lots as well. He asked what would happen if clean well water could not be found at the new sites.

Commissioner Pelletier asked if the development would be subject to adding trails.

Patricia Meehan, applicant

Ms. Meehan stated that her well at the property has been checked over the last three years and is clear. She said she thought there was a line for a trail by the lots in the back of the existing development and a fee was given for the first addition because there was no room at the time for a trail.

Planning Director Klatt stated that he could not find the Torre Pines file to confirm if park dedication funds were received for the four proposed lots. If evidence is provided by the applicant, the city will not require additional funds.

Ms. Meehan stated that the covenants would apply to the new lots as well.

M/S/P, Helwig/Roth, to recommend approval of the minor subdivision with conditions as outlined by staff. Vote: 9:0.

Public Hearing: Accessory Buildings Ordinance Amendments

Planning Director Klatt gave a summary of the commission's past discussions and actions regarding the topic. The intent of the ordinance is to fix inconsistencies between various sections of code, eliminate confusing language, make handouts consistent, and to provide clarification. Accessory structure setbacks, height restrictions, residential garage size restrictions, and removal of minimum lot size in the text were topics included in the ordinance amendments. Staff is recommending approval of the ordinance amendments.

THE CHAIRMAN OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:44 P.M.

No public comments were presented to the Commission.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:44 P.M.

M/S/P, Roth/Van Zandt, move to recommend approval of changes to accessory building regulations with one change as stipulated by staff.

Commissioner Fliflet stated that she will not support the motion because she does not agree with the Residential Estates regulations in the ordinance.

Chairman Ptacek said he is not in favor of regulating the sizes of attached garages.

Vote: 8:1 (Fliflet opposed.)

City Council/Staff Updates

Planning Director Klatt said the City Council approved an extension for the variance at 8961 37th Street North and the sign code was adopted. He said the South Washington Watershed District is looking for volunteers for a citizen advisory committee to deal with

planning issues. Klatt said that the impervious surface issue was placed on the agenda by the chair and that a number of residents have been running into issues with the impervious surface requirement in the Open Space developments.

Chairman Ptacek expressed concern of existing flooding issues in various areas of the city.

Commissioner Roth said that the impervious surface on individual lots is a small part of the entire 40 acre development.

Commissioner Pelletier identified that water quality is important, but the city should be reasonable and fair.

Commissioner Fliflet stated she was in favor of revisiting this ordinance.

Bob Snyder, 4605 Lily Ave

Mr. Snyder said he lives on $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lot, but is unable to build a pool because of this ordinance. He said he is frustrated and thinks some residents may be buying homes without knowing they are unable to build anything else on the lot.

Planning Director Klatt suggested having a stormwater management person come in to talk to the commission.

M/S/P, Fliflet/Pelletier, move to revisit the impervious surface ordinance in Open Space Preservation developments. Vote: 9:0.

Adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelli Matzek
Planner

ITEM: MOVING PERMIT - Consider a request to allow the movement of an 864 square-foot accessory building from outside the city limits to the property at 4150 Irish Court North.

REQUESTED BY: Marvin and Karen Lerol, Applicant

SUBMITTED BY: Kelli Matzek, City Planner

REVIEWED BY: Kyle Klatt, Director of Planning

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:

The planning commission is being asked to consider a request from Marvin and Karen Lerol to permit an existing 864 square-foot accessory building to be moved from a site in Oakdale to their property at 4150 Irish Court North. The accessory building would be located in the rear yard and would meet all applicable city codes with the exception of the building's exterior. The applicant's have agreed to paint the building to match the primary structure's exterior as required by city code. A performance bond will be required to be submitted by the applicant to cover the cost of all the work associated with the project, including the painting of the building. The Acting Building Official has performed a site inspection of the accessory building and found the building complies with today's building code requirements.

Staff is recommending approval of the moving permit for the following reasons:

- 1) The accessory building and the proposed location meets all applicable city code requirements.
- 2) The applicant has agreed to paint the accessory building in order to match the exterior of the primary structure on the property.
- 3) The Acting Building Official performed a site inspection of the accessory building and found the building complies with today's building code requirements.

With the following conditions:

- 1) Prior to the building being moved to the property, a building permit application must be applied for and received from the city.
- 2) Engineering comments must be adhered to at the time of the building permit application.
- 3) A performance bond in an amount set by the City Council based on a recommendation by the City Planner, City Attorney or Acting Building Official must be received by the city prior to the building being moved to the property. The performance bond must be in an amount to cover all necessary work to complete the project, including the repainting of the building to match the exterior of the primary structure on the property.

OPTIONS

The Planning Commission has the following options:

- A) Recommend Council approve the requested moving permit to allow an 864 square-foot accessory building to be moved to 4150 Irish Court North.

B) Recommend Council deny the requested moving permit based on the findings identified by the commission as staff was unable to identify reasons to deny the application.

Suggested motion for consideration:

Move to recommend approval of the moving permit to move an accessory building to the property at 4150 Irish Court North based on the findings listed in the staff report, subject to the conditions recommended by staff.

SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| • Introduction | Planning Commission Chair |
| • Report | Kelli Matzek, City Planner |
| • Questions to staff | Chair facilitates |
| • Comments from property owner | Marvin and Karen Lerol, Applicant |
| • Questions/comments from the public, if any (up to 3 minutes) | Chair facilitates |
| • Discussion | Chair facilitates |
| • Consider Motion | Commission |

ATTACHMENTS: Comprehensive Staff report
Site map
Applicant's Submittals

City of Lake Elmo Planning Department
Moving an Accessory Building into the City - Review

To: Planning Commission

From: Kelli Matzek, Planner

Meeting Date: 8/11/08

Applicant: Marvin and Karen Lerol

Owner: Marvin and Karen Lerol

Location: 4150 Irish Court North

Zoning: R1 – Single Family Residential

Introductory Information

Request Marvin and Karen Lerol, 4150 Irish Court North, are requesting that the City consider their application to permit an accessory building to be moved from Oakdale to their property on Irish Court North.

Site Data:	<i>Property Identification No.</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Use</i>
	09-029-21-43-0018	1.07 Acres	Residential Dwelling

Moving an Accessory Building into the City - Review

Background Information: The City of Lake Elmo requires a moving permit to be obtained from the city prior to moving a building or structure into or within the city.

The property at 4150 Irish Court has an existing home and a tool shed on the property. The accessory building proposed to be moved to the site would function as a storage shed on the property and is proposed to be located in the northwest corner of the lot in the rear yard.

Applicable Codes: *151.019 Moving Buildings Into the City*
 This section of code identifies what is needed for an application as well as the process for reviewing an application to move a building into or within the city.

154.041 R-1 One-Family Residential
 (C) *Minimum District Requirements*

This section of code identifies the building setbacks for buildings in the R-1 zoning district. A maximum height of 20 feet is also identified for an accessory building.

154.092 Accessory Buildings and Structures

(3) "DETACHED RURAL STORAGE BUILDING. A 1-story accessory building used or intended for the storage of hobby tools, garden equipment, workshop equipment and the like. Exterior materials shall match the principal structure in exterior color or be of an earthen tone."

154.093 Number/Size of Accessory Buildings

This section of code specifies the number and size of accessory buildings allowed in various zoning districts on different sized properties. A one-to-two acre parcel in the R-1 zoning district is permitted "One 1,200-square foot detached residential, garage or building, in addition to an attached garage."

Review Comments:

Planning Issues:

As mentioned previously, the city requires a permit to move a building into or within the city limits. The applicants are proposing to bring an existing 864 square-foot accessory building to their property from a site in the city of Oakdale. The applicants have hired a professional moving company to move the building to the site.

Detached Accessory Building

Staff determined that the accessory building proposed to be brought to this property best fit the definition of a detached rural storage building as the proposed site location in the rear yard and the physical properties of the building lend it to that description instead of a detached residential garage.

Size

The city code permits a property with an R-1 zoning classification and between one and two acres in size one 1,200 square foot detached residential, garage or building, in addition to an attached garage on this property. The property currently has one tool shed and an attached garage, neither of which according to code count towards the 1,200 square foot allotment. Therefore, the proposed 864 square-foot building would meet this requirement. The applicant would not be allowed any additional accessory buildings on this site.

Height

The building is 20 feet high, which meets the height requirements of city code.

Exterior Material

The city code (Sec. 154.092 A3) specifies that a detached rural storage building shall have exterior materials that match the principal structure in exterior color or be of an earthen tone. The accessory building is currently covered with blue steel siding, which does not match the primary structure's exterior. As this does not meet the requirements, the applicant has stated their intention to paint the building to match the color of the house. This will be covered by the required performance bond to ensure compliance.

Location

The site plan provided by the applicant identifies the accessory building will be located in the northwest corner of the property, which is the rear yard for the property. The proposed location will meet setback requirements for the R-1 zoning district.

Building Official

The Acting Building Official has completed a site inspection of the building in its current location and found that it complies with the building code requirements.

Performance Bond

The city code requires a performance bond be collected from the applicant to ensure all necessary work is completed. This is identified as a condition of approval in this report.

Moving Permit Conclusion: Based on the findings cited above and with conditions outlined below, staff would recommend approval of the moving permit request for the 864 square-foot accessory building to be relocated from a site in Oakdale to the property at 4150 Irish Court North.

Conclusion:

The applicant is seeking approval of a moving permit to allow the movement of an accessory building to the property at 4150 Irish Court North.

Commission Options:

The Planning Commission may consider the following options:

- A) Approve the moving permit based on the findings drafted by Staff or other additional information that is presented at the public hearing;
- B) Deny the request based on findings provided by the Planning Commission.

Staff Rec: Staff recommends approval of the moving permit request based on the following:

- 1) The accessory building and the proposed location meets all applicable city code requirements.
- 2) The applicant has agreed to paint the accessory building in order to match the exterior of the primary structure on the property.
- 3) The Acting Building Official performed a site inspection of the accessory building and found the building complies with today's building code requirements.

Provided the following conditions are met

- 1) Prior to the building being moved to the property, a building permit application must be applied for and received from the city.
- 2) Engineering comments must be adhered to at the time of the building permit application.
- 3) A performance bond in an amount set by the City Council based on a recommendation by the City Planner, City Attorney or Acting Building Official must be received by the city prior to the building being moved to the property. The performance bond must be in an amount to cover all necessary work to complete the project, including the repainting of the building to match the exterior of the primary structure on the property.

Approval Motion Template: To approve the request, the Planning Commission is asked to use the following motion as a guide:

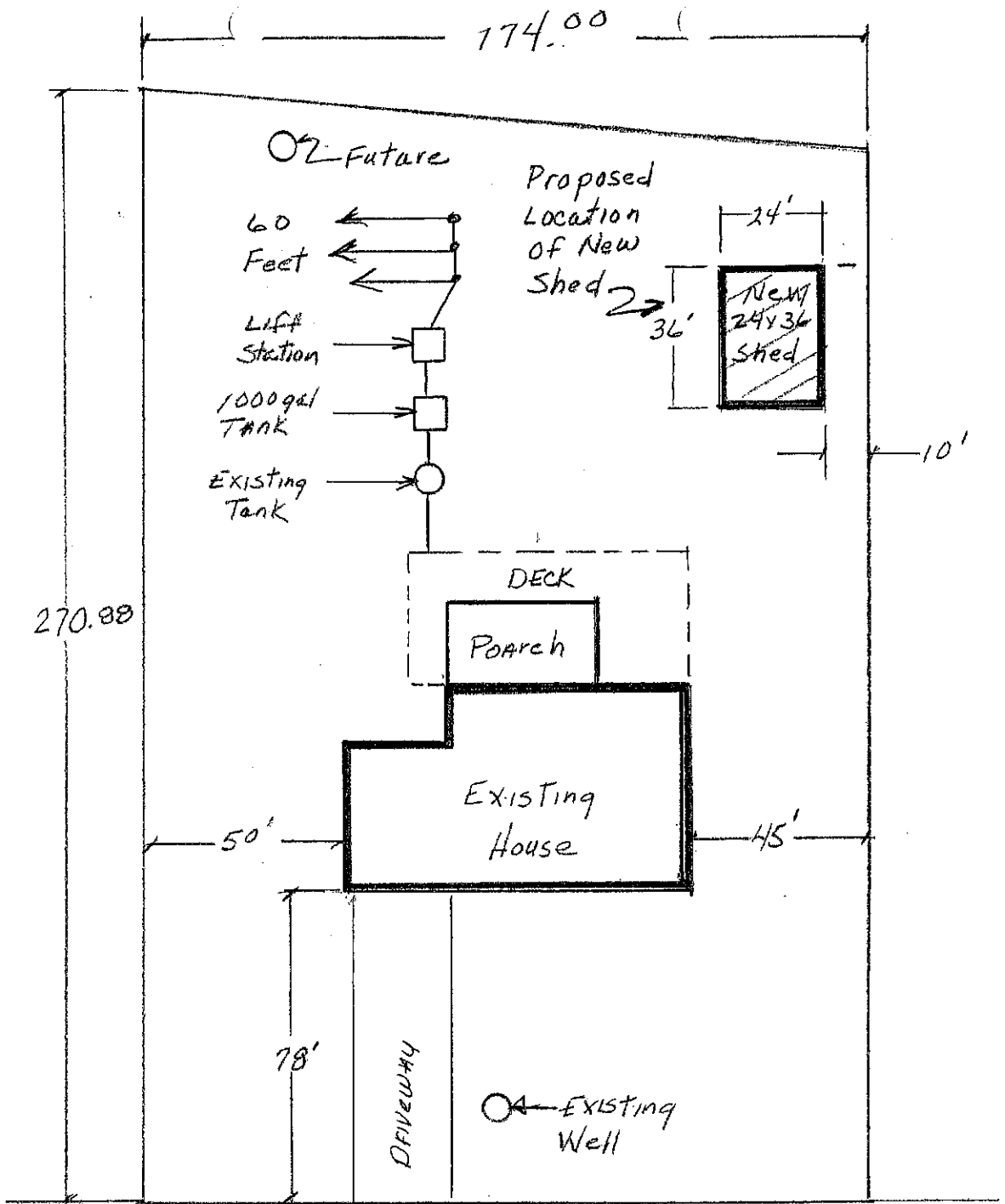
I move to recommend approval of the moving permit to move an accessory building to the property at 4150 Irish Court North ...*(use staff's findings provided above or cite your own)*

...with the following conditions:

- 1) Prior to the building being moved to the property, a building permit application must be applied for and received from the city.
- 2) Engineering comments must be adhered to at the time of the building permit application.
- 3) A performance bond in an amount set by the City Council based on a recommendation by the City Planner, City Attorney or Acting Building Official must be received by the city prior to the building being moved to the

property. The performance bond must be in an amount to cover all necessary work to complete the project, including the repainting of the building to match the exterior of the primary structure on the property.

cc: Marvin and Karen Lerol, 4150 Irish Ct N



4150

Irish st No.

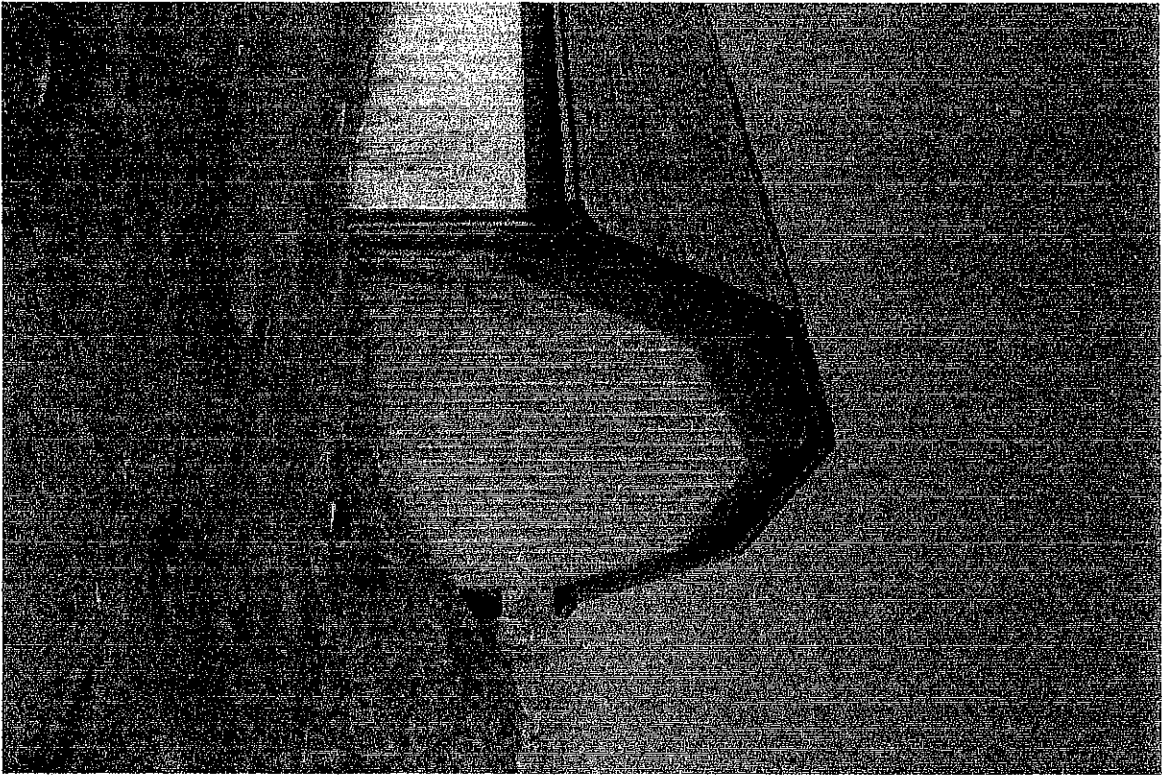
Description of Building

The shed is 24' wide by 36' long.
It is 20' high.

The outside structure is blue steel siding with a barn shaped roof.

The building is in excellent condition.
It is 7 or 8 years old.

This building is intended to be moved by the end of August, and painted to match the color of our house within a year.



July 29, 2008

Re: Moving a detached rural storage building into the city of Lake Elmo, at the address of 4150 Irish Ct. N. Marvin and Karen Lerol.

Kyle,

Upon my site inspection of the storage building I found that it does comply with today's building code requirements. A building permit will be required (If Approved), for the concrete slab for which the building will be placed.

Karl Horning
Building Official
City of Lake Elmo

TKDA

ENGINEERS • ARCHITECTS • PLANNERS

444 Cedar Street, Suite 1500
Saint Paul, MN 55101-2140

(651) 292-4400
(651) 292-0083 Fax
www.tkda.com

MEMORANDUM

To:	<u>Kelli Matzek, Planning Department</u>	Reference:	<u>4150 Irish Court North</u>
Copies To:	<u>Kyle Klatt, Planning Director</u> <u>Karl Horning, City Building Official</u>		<u>Building Permit Application</u> <u>City of Lake Elmo, Minnesota</u>
From:	<u>Ryan W. Stempski, P.E.</u>	Proj. No.:	<u>14078.001</u>
Date:	<u>August 6, 2008</u>	Routing:	<u></u>

Karl,

We have reviewed the permit application and application materials for shed relocation to this address, dated June 29, 2008, and have the following comments:

1. Proposed and existing contours must be provided if any grading is proposed at 4150 Irish Court North for this building relocation.
2. Erosion control must be provided during moving and construction work, until vegetation is fully established on all disturbed areas.
3. Proposed work shall not adversely impact drainage of adjacent properties.
4. The active and back-up drainfield boundaries must be shown to scale on the plan. The proposed building shall not be located in drainfield or back-up drainfield areas. Coordinate all drainfield setback requirements with the City Building Official.
5. Any proposed tree removal must be shown on the plan.
6. Applicant should describe how site will be accessed.
7. All easements and property lines must be identified and shown to scale on the plan.

ITEM: VARIANCE - Consider tabling the application to republish the request to allow construction of a detached garage on the property at 11002 Upper 33rd Street North.

REQUESTED BY: Jill Martin, Applicant

SUBMITTED BY: Kelli Matzek, City Planner

REVIEWED BY: Kyle Klatt, Director of Planning

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:

The planning commission is being asked to open and close a public hearing and to table the application to allow for the republication of the variance application. A discrepancy has arisen as to the proposed setback for the detached garage from the front and side lot lines. Updated information has been requested from the applicant to clarify this information. A new public hearing notice will likely be required to reflect the actual distance and variance being requested. Therefore, staff is requesting the public hearing be held and then for the application to be tabled for further review at the September 8th Planning Commission meeting to allow for the correct notice to be published.

Suggested motion for consideration:

Move to recommend tabling the variance application to allow for republication of the request at 11002 Upper 33rd Street North until September 8th.

SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| • Introduction | Planning Commission Chair |
| • Report | Kelli Matzek, City Planner |
| • Questions to staff | Chair facilitates |
| • Comments from property owner | Jill Martin, Applicant |
| • Questions/comments from the public, if any (up to 3 minutes) | Chair facilitates |
| • Discussion | Chair facilitates |
| • Consider Motion | Commission |

Planning Commission
Date: 8/11/08
Public Hearing
Item: 4c

ITEM: OP District Impervious Coverage Ordinance Amendments

SUBMITTED BY: Kyle Klatt, Planning Director

REVIEWED BY: Kelli Matzek, City Planner

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:

The Planning Commission is being asked to review proposed changes to the impervious coverage requirements within the City's OP Open Space Preservation Districts and to conduct a public hearing on the proposed changes at its August 11, 2008 meeting. Staff is specifically recommending that the Zoning Ordinance be amended in the following manner:

- 1) That the OP District Standards table found at Section 150.180 (B, 2, h) be amended as follows:

Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage:	
Gross Lot Area	20%. This percentage may be increased to 25% provided a pervious paver or comparable system is installed consistent with the City of Lake Elmo Engineering Standards Manual or storm water mitigation measures are installed to mitigate the runoff created by the additional coverage above the base district amount. All mitigation measures must be approved by the City Engineer.

- 2) That Section 11.01 of the City Code (Definitions) be amended to review the definition for Impervious Surface in the following manner:

IMPERVIOUS SURFACE. Any structure or surface which interferes to any degree with the direct absorption of water into the ground, including but not limited to building footprints, sidewalks, paved or gravel driveways and parking areas, patios, sport courts, swimming pools, or any other similar surface. Decks, pervious landscaping fabric, , and retaining walls shall not be included as impervious surface.

The intent of the proposed changes is to bring the current ordinance more in line with the actual development that is occurring within the City's OP districts. This Ordinance has also been drafted with a general acknowledgement that by their nature, the overall impervious coverage in an OP development will be substantially less than other districts with lots of comparable or smaller size.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Given the complexity of the tables included with this report, Staff will be reviewing the important findings included in these reports with the Planning Commission at the public hearing. This presentation will also include additional visuals depicting some of the developments that were studied.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the amendments to the OP District impervious coverage provisions of the Zoning Ordinance as documented in the Staff report.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. OP Development Impervious Surface Analysis
2. Tana Ridge Surface Coverage Review

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- IntroductionKyle Klatt, Planning Director
- Report by staff.....Kyle Klatt, Planning Director
- Presentation from Washington Conservation District Angie Hong, WCD Education
- Questions from the Commission.....Chair & Commission Members
- Open the Public Hearing Chair
- Close the Public Hearing Chair
- Call for a motion..... Chair Facilitates
- Discussion of Commission on the motion..... Chair Facilitates
- Action by the Planning CommissionChair & Commission Members

City of Lake Elmo Planning Department
OP District Impervious Coverage Ordinance Amendment

To: Planning Commission

From: Kyle Klatt, Planning Director

Meeting Date: 8-11-08

Introductory Information

Objective: The Planning Commission has previously agreed to reconsider the City's current regulations concerning impervious coverage limits within the OP Open Space Preservation District. This action will help address numerous concerns that have been expressed by property owners and home builders within the community concerning the current requirements that limit impervious coverage to no more than 17% of lots that are zoned as OP. Staff is recommending approval of amendments to the code that will increase the allowed coverage within OP development and that add additional clarification concerning the use of pervious paver systems or alternative storm water management techniques on these residential lots.

Background: When the City adopted the original OP Open Space Preservation Ordinance several years ago, it included a provision that no more than 10% of a lot within such a development could be covered by an impervious surface. Due to previous interpretation and application of this ordinance, many of the lots that have been developed in OP Developments have exceeded this coverage requirement, and in some cases, by a substantial margin. Recognizing this issue last fall, the Planning Department proposed an amendment to the code in order to address this situation. In December of 2007 the City Council adopted amendments to the Zoning Ordinance that provided a new definition for impervious surfaces, increased the overall coverage permitted on a lot to 17% (15% for the building and driveway with an additional 2% for sidewalks and other structures), and clarified the area of each lot that was to be used in this calculation.

Since this amendment was approved by the City, the Planning Department has been requiring that each building permit depict the amount of impervious coverage proposed for a lot, and then reviewing each proposal for consistency with the appropriate district standards. In conducting these reviews, Staff has observed the following trends:

(cont.)

- Most of the permits that have been reviewed for lots within OP developments are either very close to the coverage limits or would result in the site exceeding these requirements.
- It is very difficult to meet the coverage standards and also have a pool, sidewalk system, sport court, or detached accessory building in OP developments.
- The open space development requirements specify that at least half of the buildable area within an OP development be set aside as open space; therefore, the maximum overall impervious coverage within these types of development will always be at least half of the allowed coverage in other developments.
- Building permits cannot be issued for an expansion of coverage on any lot that currently exceeds the impervious coverage requirements. Based on Staff's current and past analysis, it is estimated that at least half of OP development lots are either very close to or over the maximum coverage allowed. This limit has already affected several homeowners within the City that have been planning on porch additions, swimming pools, and other improvements.

Even though the Planning Commission reviewed this Ordinance as recently as 8 months ago, Staff believes it will be beneficial to revisit this issue to address the concerns expressed above. To help expedite the review process, Staff has published a public hearing notice for the Commission's August 11th meeting with the specific indication that the Commission will be considering an increase in the amount of impervious coverage allowed within the OP District.

Staff Review and Analysis

History

In preparation for the Planning Commission hearing on the OP District impervious coverage requirements, Staff has completed the following tasks:

- Reviewed the previous Planning Commission and Council action on the OP district lot coverage requirements.
- Reviewed the impervious coverage requirements from other communities.
- Conducted an analysis of five OP developments, specifically looking at the overall impacts of various coverage limits.
- Examined the actual built coverage within one of the City's smaller OP developments.

The Water Resource Education Specialist for the Washington Conservation District will be attending the Planning Commission's meeting and is planning to conduct a brief presentation focusing on storm water issues on an individual lot basis. In addition, a representative of the NEMO program (Nonpoint source pollution Education for Municipal Officials) will also be attending the meeting along with the Valley Branch Watershed District Engineer. The purpose for this presentation will be

to provide additional information to the Planning Commission concerning the relationship between storm water runoff and impervious coverage, and how these issues are addressed on a subdivision-wide and lot-by-lot basis.

When the Planning Commission last reviewed this Ordinance, Staff conducted a random survey of 12 lots within OP developments and found that all of these lots exceeded the 10% coverage requirement that was in place at this time. Staff presented three options for amending Ordinance, and the option chosen was essentially the middle ground between the higher and lower figures. Since December of 2007, the City's requirements have stated the following for OP Districts:

Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage: Gross Lot Area - No more than 15% for the primary structure and driveway; but up to 17% total when including all other impervious surfaces.

**Ordinance
Review:**

As part of its analysis of other Cities, Staff has reviewed Ordinances from the Cities of Burnsville, Cologne, Dayton, Woodbury, Bayport, Stillwater, Faribault, North Branch, Wyoming, and Oakdale, Minnesota, recognizing that none of these cities are a perfect match for the development patterns within Lake Elmo's open space districts. Rather than summarizing our findings for each individual City, it is worth noting the trends that can be observed from this study:

- Those cities with rural or agricultural districts typically do not regulate impervious coverage in these districts or it is set below 20% (with 10% coverage being a common figure)
- Most cities that are more urban in nature set an impervious coverage limit within single family districts at around 25%.
- Denser residential districts and commercial/industrial developments are generally allowed to exceed 25%, with many Ordinances allowing overages greater than 50%.
- One of key differences between Lake Elmo's Ordinance and the other cities is that many of them specify building or structure coverage, rather than impervious coverage. Those elements of a plan that would not require a building permit, including driveways and sidewalks, are not regulated for coverage in some of the cities surveyed.

**OP District
Review:**

In order to provide additional clarification concerning the impact of impervious coverage requirements in the OP District, Staff has completed a more thorough review of 5 specific OP developments within the City of Lake Elmo. This review summarizes data on the total land within an open space development, number of residential lots platted, the average lot size in each development, and the overall impacts of various coverage requirements in these developments. It ultimately attempts to quantify the total percentage of a development that could be covered with impervious surfaces at various lot coverage limits within an OP development. Based

on this analysis, the total theoretical coverage within each OP project, including roads, would be the following using a coverage limit of 25%:

Fields of St. Croix 2nd Addition	17.6%
St. Croix's Sanctuary	11.3%
Tapestry at Charlotte's Grove	14.2%
The Farms of Lake Elmo	12.2%
Tana Ridge	14.1%

The attached table contains the complete analysis and all other options that were studied. Staff will be reviewing the information in the table at the meeting, and at that time, will more thoroughly explain the methodology and results of this review.

Another analysis performed by Staff included a review focusing on the built conditions of one specific OP development, Tana Ridge (chosen because of the manageable number of lots within this subdivision). The second table attached to this report summarizes the total area of each lot by address in the development and provides a rough estimate of the lot coverage as determined by an examination of aerial imagery. Although Staff had to make some assumptions about which portion of a lot was indeed impervious, the end result should be fairly close to the actual conditions as they existed in the spring of 2005 (when the City's imagery was acquired). Any additions to the impervious coverage on individual lots since 2005 would not have been counted in this analysis.

In summary, Staff found that of the 20 lots within Tana Ridge, over half currently exceed the City's OP coverage limit, another quarter of the lots are within 1 percentage of the maximum, and all exceed 13% impervious surface coverage. The average through the development is 17.3%, not taking into account any improvements made in the past 3 years. These findings are consistent with the previous research performed by Staff and generally indicate that the lots currently developed within OP districts fall within a range of 14 to 20% impervious coverage.

In addition to providing a more throughout review of the attached tables at the meeting, staff will also present some example site plans and imagery for the developments used as an example.

**Engineering
Review:**

One of the provisions in the current Ordinance allows for the use of pervious materials in place of other "natural" ground cover. The City Engineer has expressed concern that the Ordinance does not provide any clarification concerning when these systems may be used, and that as a general rule, it would be in the City's best interested to set a limit on the amount of alternative coverage allowed in each development. The primary reason to setting a limit is that the City does not have a mechanism in place to require ongoing maintenance of a pervious system once it is installed.

In order to still provide some flexibility and encourage environmentally sensitive storm water management techniques, Staff is recommending that the definition for

“Impervious Surface” in the code eliminate any references to pervious surfaces, but that the OP district provisions allow for an additional 5% of the lot to be covered as long as appropriate mitigation measures are used and subject to review in accordance with accepted Engineering Standards.

On a development-wide basis, the storm water management system within each subdivision is reviewed as part the overall plans for a particular development. Part of this review includes as estimate of total lot coverage, which is used to help ensure that any ponds, infiltration basins, and other storm water management measures are sized appropriately. Additionally, each development must meet standards adopted by the governing watershed district, and again, compliance with these rules will be determined by a review of the overall storm water system that is proposed. Staff has received no indication that the preciously approved OP developments were sized incorrectly or that the overall lot coverage in these developments has created problems.

Conclusion:

Based on the analysis of current OP developments and the overall anticipated coverage within OP districts, Staff is recommending the following:

- 1) That the maximum allowed impervious coverage within OP Districts be increased to 20%.
- 2) That this ordinance no longer regulate the house and driveway separate from other improvements on each lot.
- 3) That provisions be added to the Ordinance that allow the OP District coverage requirements to be increased to 25% if a pervious paver or comparable system is used or if the additional surface water runoff generated by the increased coverage is mitigated in a manner approved by the City Engineer.

Commission Options:

The Planning Commission has the following options:

- A) Recommend approval of the proposed ordinances to amend the impervious coverage requirements in the City’s OP Districts;
- B) Recommend staff make changes to the proposed ordinances, or add additional changes;
- C) Table the item for further study.

As this is a city driven process, there is no 60-day deadline.

Tana Ridge Surface Coverage Review				
Address	Imp Cov (sf)	Total Area (sf)	Percent	
4938	6392	33,333	19.2%	
4964	6401	38,363	16.7%	
4967	6544	33,110	19.8%	
4937	5909	32,690	18.1%	
4905	6013	32,781	18.3%	
4884	4622	33,424	13.8%	
4875	4947	32,817	15.1%	
4847	6590	33,078	19.9%	
4819	5480	32,857	16.7%	
4791	5446	33,582	16.2%	
4759	5657	32,852	17.2%	
4731	5856	32,653	17.9%	
4703	5065	32,709	15.5%	
4677	5895	32,646	18.1%	
4651	5908	33,015	17.9%	
4629	4818	33,797	14.3%	
4605	6052	31,961	18.9%	
4577	5519	32,997	16.7%	
4758	5960	35,985	16.6%	
4830	6678	33,727	19.8%	
Totals	115,752	668,377	17.3%	

Planning Commission
Date: 8/11/08
Item: 5
Informational Item

ITEM: "A Look at Community Capacity To Conserve Open Space in the Twin Cities Area" – An Embrace Open Space Report

SUBMITTED BY: Kelli Matzek, City Planner

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:

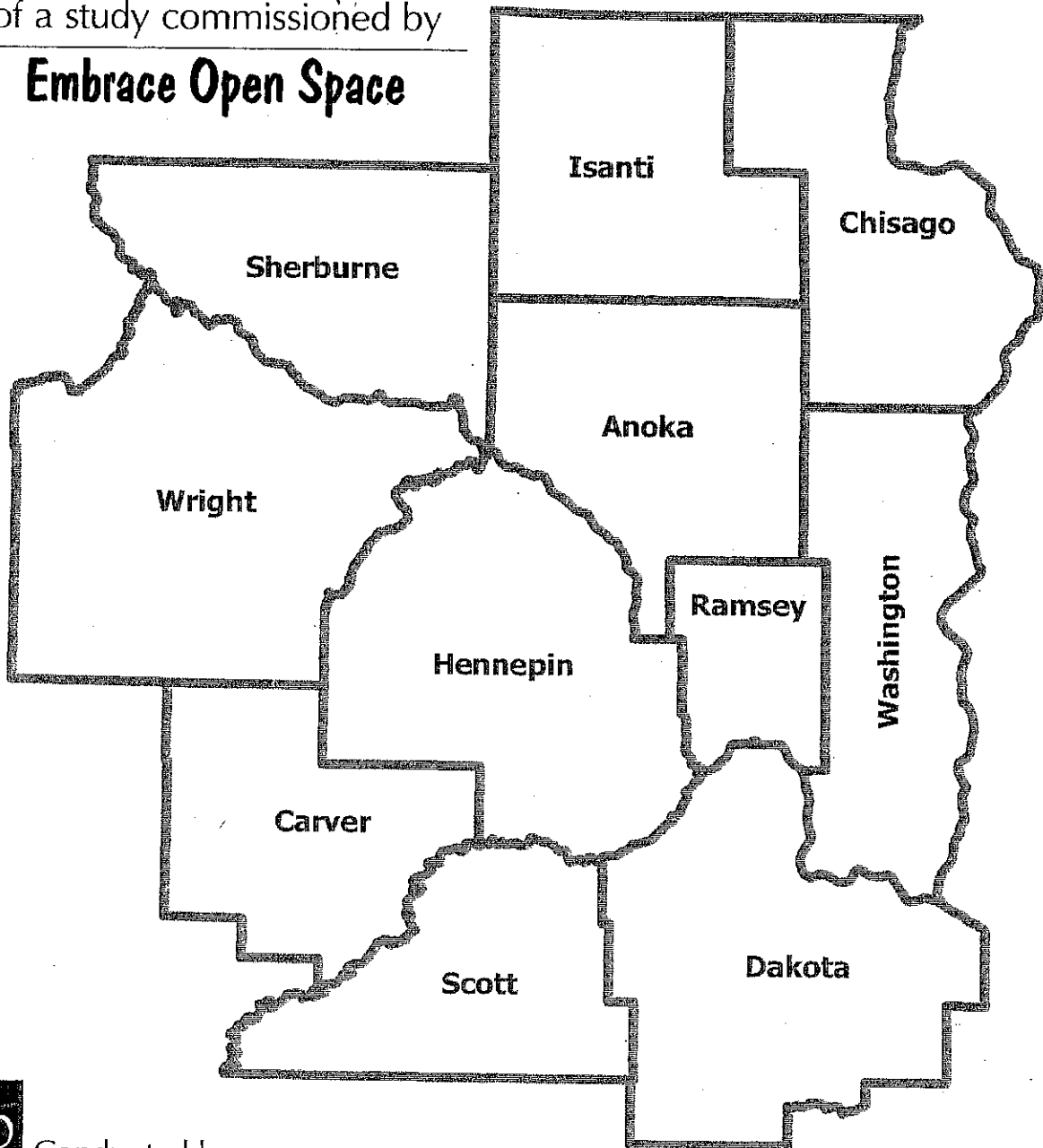
The attached document is an executive summary for a 2008 report that examined local government capacity to conserve parks and natural areas in the 11-county Twin Cities metro area. The entire document is available to be checked out from the planning department at city hall for those interested in reading the document. This item is for informational purposes.

No action is needed at this time.

A Look at Community Capacity To Conserve Open Space in the Twin Cities Area

A report on the results
of a study commissioned by

Embrace Open Space



Conducted by
1000 Friends of Minnesota



An Embrace Open Space Report

May 2008

PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES

County respondents

Anoka County
Carver County
Chisago County
Dakota County
Hennepin County
Isanti County
Ramsey County
Scott County
Sherburne County
Washington County
Wright County

City respondents

City of Afton
City of Andover
City of Annandale
City of Anoka
City of Apple Valley
City of Arden Hills
City of Bayport
City of Becker
City of Belle Plaine
City of Bethel
City of Big Lake
City of Blaine
City of Bloomington
City of Braham
City of Brooklyn Park
City of Buffalo
City of Burnsville
City of Cambridge
City of Center City
City of Centerville
City of Champlin
City of Chanhassen
City of Chaska
City of Chisago City
City of Clearwater
City of Cokato
City of Columbia Heights
City of Coon Rapids
City of Corcoran
City of Cottage Grove
City of Crystal
City of Dayton
City of Deephaven
City of Delano
City of Eagan

City of East Bethel
City of Eden Prairie
City of Edina
City of Elko New Market
City of Elk River
City of Excelsior
City of Falcon Heights
City of Farmington
City of Forest Lake
City of Fridley
City of Gem Lake
City of Golden Valley
City of Grant
City of Hamburg
City of Ham Lake
City of Hampton
City of Hanover
City of Harris City
City of Hastings
City of Hilltop
City of Hopkins
City of Howard Lake
City of Independence
City of Isanti City
City of Jordan
City of Lake Elmo
City of Lakeland
City of Lakeland Shores
City of Lake St. Croix Beach
City of Lauderdale
City of Lexington
City of Lilydale
City of Lino Lakes
City of Little Canada
City of Long Lake
City of Mahtomedi
City of Maple Grove
City of Maplewood
City of Marine on St. Croix
City of Mayer
City of Medicine Lake
City of Medina
City of Mendota Heights
City of Minneapolis
City of Minnetonka
City of Minnetonka Beach
City of Minnetrista
City of Montrose
City of Mounds View
City of New Brighton
City of New Hope

City of Newport
City of New Prague
City of New Scandia
City of North Branch
City of Northfield
City of North Oaks
City of North St. Paul
City of Norwood Young America
City of Oakdale
City of Oak Grove
City of Orono
City of Osseo
City of Otsego
City of Plymouth
City of Princeton
City of Prior Lake
City of Ramsey
City of Richfield
City of Robbinsdale
City of Rockford
City of Rosemount
City of Roseville
City of Rush City
City of Savage
City of Shafer
City of Shakopee
City of Shoreview
City of Shorewood
City of South Haven
City of South St. Paul
City of Spring Park
City of St. Anthony
City of St. Francis
City of Stacy
City of Stillwater
City of St. Louis Park
City of St. Michael
City of St. Paul
City of Sunfish Lake
City of Vadnais Heights
City of Victoria
City of Waconia
City of Watertown
City of Waverly
City of Wayzata
City of West St. Paul
City of White Bear Lake
City of Willernie
City of Woodbury
City of Wyoming
City of Zimmerman

Township respondents

Albion Township
Baytown Township
Belle Plaine Township
Burns Township
Camden Township
Chatham Township
Chisago Lake Township
Denmark Township
Empire Township
Eureka Township
Fish Lake Township
Grey Cloud Island Township
Hampton Township
Hassan Township
Haven Township
Helena Township
Hollywood Township
Laketown Township
Lent Township
Linwood Township
Livonia Township
Louisville Township
Maple Lake Township
Marysville Township
May Township
Nessel Township
Orrock Township
Oxford Township
Palmer Township
Rockford Township
San Francisco Township
Sand Creek Township
Shafer Township
Silver Creek Township
Spencer Brook Township
Spring Lake Township
Springvale Township
St. Lawrence Township
Stanchfield Township
Stillwater Township
Sunrise Township
Vermillion Township
Watertown Township
West Lakeland Township
White Bear Township
Wyoming Township

An Embrace Open Space Report

**A Look at Community Capacity
To Conserve Open Space
in the Twin Cities Area**

May 2008

A report on the results of a study
commissioned by
Embrace Open Space

Conducted by
1000 Friends of Minnesota

Report published by
Embrace Open Space
St. Paul, Minnesota

*Embrace Open Space is a collaborative serving as a catalyst
for greater citizen and elected leadership to conserve and steward natural areas
and parks, lakes and rivers in the eleven-county Twin Cities area.*

This questionnaire was commissioned by Embrace Open Space, a collaborative serving as a catalyst for greater citizen and elected leadership to conserve and steward natural areas and parks, lakes and rivers in the eleven-county Twin Cities area.

The questionnaire was conducted by the Growing by Design Technical Resource Center at 1000 Friends of Minnesota. The Technical Resource Center offers community-based technical assistance, including geographic mapping, visualization, data collection and analysis.

Funding for this project
provided by the McKnight Foundation

Special thanks to:

- **Advisors, reviewers and testers for this work**, including Ann Beckman, Lisa Bigaouette, Larry Blackstad, Gina Bonsignore, Jean Coleman, Will Craig, Debra Detrick, Sandi Dingle, David Fulton, Amy Geisler, Jane Harper, Dan Marckel, Danny Nadeau, Gregory Page, Cordelia Pierson, Sharon Pfeifer, Michael Pressman, Shelley Shreffler, Jim Solem, Erin Stwora, Ben Welle and Josh Williams.
- **The Land Use Advisory Committee of the Metropolitan Council**, whose members affirmed that this information will be of significant value to participating communities as an opportunity to compare themselves to other communities throughout the metropolitan area.
- **The individuals representing the 194 communities** (cities, townships and counties) who committed their valuable time to completing this questionnaire. Thanks to their thoughtful responses, insights and perspectives, this first-time look at "community capacity" to conserve parks and natural areas will provide valuable information for the communities themselves, as well as for Embrace Open Space and other entities desiring to support the efforts of these communities in the future. (For a complete listing of participating communities, see inside front cover.)
- **Sally Wakefield**, 1000 Friends of Minnesota, for coordinating and analyzing the questionnaire results, and for creating all tables and graphs.
- **Communities and organizations** that submitted photographs for this report.

For additional information or copies of the complete report, contact:

Jenna Fletcher, *Program Coordinator*
Embrace Open Space
The Trust for Public Land
2610 University Avenue, Suite 300
St. Paul, Minnesota 55114
651-999-5306
jenna.fletcher@tpl.org

The complete 80-page report includes additional information about the methodology of the study, graphs of key findings, comparisons of metro county and collar county results, and comparisons of results by community classification types. The full report also includes an appendix of easy-to-read tabulated results for each of the 62 questions, as well as all individual comments from respondents. Along with total responses, tabulations illustrate results by city/township/county respondents and by metro/collar county respondents.

Copyright © 2008 by The Trust for Public Land

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why this study?

Embrace Open Space (EOS) is a collaborative that works to catalyze citizen and elected leadership to conserve and steward natural areas and parks, lakes and rivers in the 11-county Twin Cities area. Formed in 2001, EOS provides a framework for its partner organizations to work together on issues related to preserving open space in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area.

This report is based on results of a questionnaire that examined local government capacity ("community capacity") to conserve parks and natural areas in the 11-county Twin Cities metro area. Community capacity is defined as the resources, regulations, relationships and operations that enable a community to conserve open space. Sponsored by Embrace Open Space and conducted by 1000 Friends of Minnesota, the study reflects Embrace Open Space's goal of seeking a deeper understanding of the multiple factors in place within local communities that could influence their ability and capacity to balance development and conservation.

Understanding these factors can shape assistance for longer-range local planning and policies. Periodic replication of this questionnaire over time can reveal trends that may help identify which activities act as critical precursors to park and natural area protection and restoration efforts. This study will also provide valuable information to inform the efforts of Embrace Open Space and others to help communities establish parks and open space.

Administering the questionnaire

The geographic scope of the questionnaire included what is known as the "greater Twin Cities metropolitan area." This 4,700-square-mile area includes seven Twin Cities "metropolitan" counties (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington), as well as four surrounding northern "collar" counties (Chisago, Isanti, Sherburne and Wright).

1000 Friends of Minnesota, with guidance from Embrace Open Space, The Trust for Public Land, and an advisory committee, developed a questionnaire to be completed by local government staff. 1000 Friends of Minnesota made direct telephone contact with 279 government agencies, inviting local government staff to complete an online questionnaire.

A total of 211 communities responded to the initial contacts made to 279 local units of government, representing an initial response rate of 76%. Of the 211 initial respondents, 194 completed the questionnaire, for a final response rate of 70%.

KEY FINDINGS

Key findings from the results of the questionnaire focus on seven identified areas of community capacity to conserve parks and natural areas in the 11-county Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area.

Planning and zoning

- A wide variety of ordinances are used to protect open space and natural areas. The majority of responding communities have ordinances related to park dedication (80%), planned unit development (71%) and stormwater management (62%).
- For protection of specific natural resources, a majority of responding communities have ordinances related to floodplains (69%), shoreland protection (67%) and wetland buffer zones (53%).
- Of those responding communities with planned unit development (PUD) ordinances, 68% report that PUDs are actively used to protect natural resources and features.
- A large percentage of responding communities (63%) do not rely on or partner with another governmental unit for planning and zoning functions.

Parks and open space planning

- 73% of responding communities have an adopted park and/or open space plan. 97% of these plans include parks, 84% include trails, 58% include open space conservation and 50% include natural area conservation.
- 62% of these approved plans include proposed acquisition of parks, open space and/or natural areas.

Implementation of plans

- In implementing the plans, purchase of land is cited more often (43% report it as a tool) than conservation easements (36% report it as a tool).
- 86% of responding communities say that total staff time spent on natural resource planning is less than one full-time-equivalent (FTE) position.
- 68% of responding communities report that **development** topics appear on council or board meeting agendas *often or regularly*, while 38% report that **open space or natural area protection** topics are on their agendas *often or regularly*.

Conservation funding

- In reporting the tools used to implement parks/open space plans, park dedication is the most widely used tool (used by 84% of responding communities), followed by park fees (63%) and annual budget allocations (51%).
- 16% of responding communities have held a voter referendum to fund park, open space and/or natural area conservation. At the same time, 23% of those who haven't held a referendum report that it is *possible to very likely* that they would consider one in the future.

Citizen interest and urgency

- Responding communities see higher citizen **interest** in protecting open space and natural areas (81% report *moderate interest, increasing interest or lots of interest*), but lower citizen **urgency** (58% report *moderate urgency, increasing urgency or lots of urgency*).

- 49% of responding communities report that citizens attend development-related hearings *frequently*, and 20% report *increasing* attendance over the past two years.
- 33% of responding communities report that they have an active citizen group (or groups) focused on community growth, natural area and park protection, or other land use-related topics; 30% report that they have an active nonprofit organization working on land conservation and/or water quality issues.
- 75% of responding communities report that local newspapers provide *full coverage* or *moderate coverage* of issues related to **development** topics in their communities, compared to 44% providing *full coverage* or *moderate coverage* of **land protection** topics. 52% of responding communities report that local newspapers provide *little coverage* (*rarely, if ever*) of integrating land protection into the community as it grows.

Natural resource information for decision-making

- Maps are available to local policymakers in multiple ways: hard-copy maps at government center (64%), electronic maps in PDF format (43%) and online interactive-mapping (17%).
- 56% of responding communities indicate that natural resource information is *regularly taken into consideration* by policymakers when making development decisions. 34% indicate that natural resource information is *sometimes* taken into consideration.
- 48% of responding communities have used natural resource inventory information or other methods to prioritize **natural resource** protection efforts. 46% have used natural resource inventory information or other methods to prioritize **water quality** protection efforts.

Local staff expertise and experience

- 49% of respondents have worked for their communities for 5 years or less; 20% have worked for their communities for 5-10 years; and 31% have worked for their communities for more than 10 years.
- 22% of respondents have worked in the planning field for 5 years or less; 15% have worked in the planning field for 5-10 years; and 31% have worked in the planning field for more than 10 years. (The remaining 32% of respondents are not planners.)
- More than half of responding communities report having at least one full-time-equivalent (FTE) planner, either in-house or through contracted services. The remaining 48% indicate having less than 1 FTE, having no dedicated planning staff, or *not applicable*.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Areas of assistance

- *Education for elected officials* is the area of assistance requested the most by responding communities (74%), followed by *workshops* (55%) and *increasing awareness through local media* (40%).

Comparing metro county and northern collar county results

Questionnaire results were analyzed to identify any significant differences between communities in the seven Twin Cities metropolitan counties (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington) and communities in the four northern “collar” counties (Chisago, Isanti, Sherburne and Wright). The results gathered from responding communities did demonstrate differences in a few areas. The findings themselves were not surprising, but differences in the indicated areas were less than might have been expected.

Comparing results by community classification types

Results of the questionnaire were also analyzed based on different types of communities. Questionnaire results were separated and reviewed to assess whether any differences can be observed between **developing** communities (both *developing job centers* and *developing bedroom communities*) and **developed** communities (*central cities and stressed municipalities*, *developed job centers* and *affluent residential areas*).

Based on a hypothesis that developing communities face greater challenges related to development and conservation, it was expected that a comparison of **developing** communities and **developed** communities would demonstrate differences in results. The comparative analysis, however, did not reflect any notable differences as measured by the results of this questionnaire, suggesting that many communities representing different classification types experience similar challenges related to development and conservation.

INITIAL CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

- This initial look at current conditions in Twin Cities metropolitan area communities provides an understanding—based on the perspectives of the communities themselves—of the multiple factors that can influence a community’s capacity to balance development and conservation. The results also suggest that, at least to some degree, all communities face challenges related to a community’s capacity to balance development and conservation.
- A clear understanding of the factors that can affect open space conservation performance may provide important insights of value to the communities themselves, as well as to Embrace Open Space and others seeking to provide support to these communities.
- Embrace Open Space recommends repeating this questionnaire over time to reveal trends that may help identify which activities are critical precursors to natural area conservation and protection.
- As a follow-up to this report, Embrace Open Space expects to publish a guide for local governments. The guide will be based on a more comprehensive analysis of these questionnaire results, as well as perspectives on what the results mean for communities seeking to assess and enhance their community capacity to conserve and protect parks and natural areas into the future.

Questions Asked of Community Respondents

The 62 questions that were asked of respondents are listed below and on page 6. Tabulated results for each question are included in the full 80-page report of the results of this study. For more information about the full report, or to obtain copies, see "For additional information" box on page ii.

Introduction and Definitions

1. Embrace Open Space is interested in learning more about how local communities define these terms as well. Please feel free to use the white space below to tell us how YOU define open space and/or natural areas.

Community Identification

2. Which type of community are you completing this survey for?

3. Please add the name of the community you are completing this survey for.

Planning and Zoning

4. Please indicate ordinances your community utilizes to protect open spaces and/or natural areas.

5. Please indicate ordinances in place in your community that are more restrictive than what is required by federal, state or local standards.

6. Please explain in what way they (ordinances) are more restrictive.

7. If you have a PUD ordinance (planned unit development), is it actively used to protect natural resources or features?

8. Does your community rely on, or partner with, another governmental unit for any part of your planning or zoning functions?

9. If yes, please describe.

10. Does your community have an adopted park and/or open space plan?

Parks and Open Space Planning

11. When was your parks and/or open space plan approved? If unsure, just enter "unsure." If more than one plan, please enter the date for each plan, if known; if not, simply enter "more than one plan—dates unknown."

12. Which of the following are included in your plan?

13. Does the plan include proposed acquisition of parks, open space and/or natural areas?

14. What implementation tools are included in the plan?

15. Which departments are involved in implementing the plan(s) in your community?

Local Government Activities

16. What percentage of total staff time within your organization (FTE) is spent on natural resource planning?

17. In your estimation, how often is the topic of *development* included on the agenda of city council or town/county board meetings?

18. In your estimation, how often in the past year has the city council or town/county board addressed the topic of *open space and/or natural area protection*?

19. Has your city council or town/county board directed an official group to address issues related to planning for and protecting open space/natural areas?

Land Protection Funding

20. Has your community held any voter referendums to fund park, open space and/or natural area conservation?

21. If yes, have you had a successful referendum to fund park, open space and/or natural area conservation?

22. If your community has not held a referendum or previous efforts have been unsuccessful, what is the likelihood that your community might consider a referendum to fund park, open space and/or natural area conservation?

23. Have funds been budgeted for any of the following activities related specifically to land protection efforts?

24. Are funds for open space and/or natural area protection planning included in your community's current budget?

25. If yes, what activities are these funds intended to support?

26. Approximately what percentage of the budget does this represent?

Citizen Interest and Urgency

27. How often has your community surveyed its residents in the past 5 years?

28. Please tell us if any of the following topics were included on a recent (past couple of years) survey.

29. What is your estimate of the sense of *interest* in your community to protect open space/natural areas?

30. How do you gauge that level of interest?

31. What is your estimate of the sense of *urgency* in your community to protect open space/natural areas?

32. How do you gauge that level of urgency?

Questions Asked (continued)

33. Please describe attendance at development-related hearings over the past two years. How often do citizens attend?

34. Has citizen attendance changed over the past two years?

Media/Public Interest

35. Are you aware of any active citizen group(s) in your community that focus locally on community growth, natural area and park protection, or other land use-related topics?

36. If possible, please provide the name of any active group(s).

37. Are you aware of any nonprofit organization(s) working on land conservation and/or water quality issues that are active in your community?

38. If possible, please name any nonprofit organization(s) working on land conservation and/or water quality issues that are active in your community.

39. Have local newspaper(s) included articles about open space or natural area protection in your community in the past two years?

40. In your estimation, how thoroughly have local newspaper(s) covered issues related to *development* in your community in the past two years?

41. In your estimation, how thoroughly have local newspaper(s) covered *integrating land protection* into the community as it grows in the past two years?

Natural Areas Assessment

42. Do staff have access to *maps* of land cover and/or natural areas for your community?

43. Do staff have access to *digital data* for land cover and/or natural areas in your community?

44. If yes, is your community able to analyze digital data either with in-house staff or through outside contracted services?

45. If you are in the 7-county metro, your community should have received a mapping and data tool called *The Natural Resource Digital Atlas* from the Metropolitan Council. Do staff currently use or intend to use this tool to support land use decisions?

46. If NOT, is there a particular reason?

47. Which of the following methods are used to provide local policy makers access to information about land cover and/or natural areas in your community?

48. Is natural resource information regularly taken into consideration by policy makers as part of development decision-making?

49. Which of the following methods are used to provide local citizens access to information about land cover and/or natural areas in your community?

50. What 1-3 key maps or data layers related to natural resource planning would you find useful that you do not currently have?

51. Has your community conducted a natural resources inventory (NRI)?

52. Is your community using a natural resources inventory (NRI) compiled by another agency, like a watershed organization or soil and water conservation district?

53. Has your community used an NRI developed in-house or by another agency to prioritize *natural resource* protection efforts?

54. Has your community used an NRI developed in-house or by another agency to prioritize *water quality* protection efforts?

Embrace Open Space Assistance

55. Subject to certain criteria, Embrace Open Space (EOS) may provide communities with technical, communications or other targeted assistance. Of the activities below, please indicate which might be of greatest interest or assistance to your community. Please select any of the following types of *communications* assistance that would be helpful to your natural resource planning efforts.

56. Please describe below any *technical* assistance EOS could provide that would be helpful to your natural resource planning efforts (such as visualization of growth options, data development or mapping).

Community Information

57. What is your title?

58. How long have you worked for this community?

59. How long have you worked in the planning field?

60. What percentage of your job is devoted to planning for this community?

61. How many staff does your community's planning department have, either in-house or contracted services (in FTE hours)?

62. How many staff does your parks department have, either in-house or contracted services (in FTE hours)?