



MAYOR & COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

DATE: June 2, 2015
REGULAR \$\$
ITEM # 5

AGENDA ITEM: Homestead HOA Bee Pollinator Project

SUBMITTED BY: Homestead Homeowners Association

THROUGH: Dean A. Zuleger, City Administrator

REVIEWED BY: Lake Elmo Park Commission

SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- Introduction of Item City Administrator
- Report/Presentation.....City Administrator
- 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

POLICY RECCOMENDER: Lake Elmo Park Commission

FISCAL IMPACT: \$25,915 (One Time) from Parkland Dedication Funds with future maintenance to be the responsibility of the Homestead Homeowners Association.

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED: The City of Lake Elmo, via its Parkland Dedication Funds, is being asked to provide \$25,915 to create a Bee Pollinator Preserve on Outlot B of the Homestead Development which has been designated as City of Lake Elmo Parkland. The recommended motion for this action is as follows:

“Move to recommend \$25,915 (option B) be expended to the Homestead HOA for the installation of a pollinator area on city property (Outlot B) and that the HOA understands that the property be subject to future public use/benefit.”

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY: In the Spring of 2015, the City of Lake Elmo adopted a “Bee Friendly / Pollinator Friendly” Resolution with a purpose of creating a proper environment for the preservation of critical pollinator species by the creation of proper habitat and the reduction in use of certain pest treatments (neonicotinoids) that are harmful to pollinating insects.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: In 1997, Homestead Subdivision, an early open space concept, was developed with the dedication of 2.72 acres of land to the City of Lake Elmo for parkland dedication / open space and placed in the MN Land Trust. This land dedication accounted for 7% of the open space which fulfilled the development parkland dedication requirements. Since 1997, the land has sat relatively fallow and has been maintained by the Homestead HOA.

In 2011, the Homestead HOA Forestry Committee began a landscaping improvement project that included improvement to the open space areas of the development. With this effort, came a commitment to manage the northern part of Outlot B that has included buckthorn removal, management of invasive species, tree trimming, tree and bush planting, pollinator friendly seeding, and irrigation work totaling approximately \$30,000. Plans were presented to the MN Land Trust for the management of (3) Outlots A-C that were approved. The details of this management strategy can be found in the supplemental materials attached to this memo.

In April of 2015, members of the Homestead HOA Forestry Committee came before the Lake Elmo Park Commission and presented a management plan for Outlot B that would create a Pollinator Preserve consistent with the City's newly adopted Pollinator Friendly Resolution. The Homestead HOA made a presentation (see attached power point presentation). The heart of the presentation and surrounding Park Commission discussion centered on the previous / ongoing maintenance provided to Outlot B by the HOA and the ability for the public to gain access to the site per MN Land Trust provisions for limited signage and passive activity (see attached April Park Commission minutes). The Park Commission would like to see this site be available for public use and viewing.

In addition, the Park Commission expressed concerns about setting a precedent for other HOAs that have parkland dedicated but are primarily used for open space at this time. The Park Commission noted that this requests of this type would be handled on a case by case review and this action would not be considered precedential.

The HOA has originally intended to apply for a USDA grant that would supplement the cost of the project, but has since dropped the request due to tax considerations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (SWOT):

Strengths: Provides a practical use of dedicated open space that is in concert with the City's new "Bee Friendly" resolution.

Weakness: MN Land Trust restrictions limit public access to public parkland although the site will be available for roadside viewing.

Opportunities: Promote the City's Bee Friendly resolution with a demonstration project.

Threats: Other HOAs with undeveloped parkland could request similar funds that could reduce the Parkland Fund for typical infrastructure improvements.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Park Commission recommends:

“Move to recommend \$25,915 (option B) be expended to the Homestead HOA for the installation of a pollinator area on city property (Outlot B) and that the HOA understands that the property be subject to future public use/benefit.”