



City Council Meeting

February 12, 2024

7:00 PM

Fridley City Hall, 7071 University Avenue NE

Minutes

Call to Order

Mayor Lund called the City Council Meeting of February 12, 2024, to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present

Mayor Scott Lund
Councilmember Dave Ostwald
Councilmember Tom Tillberry
Councilmember Ryan Evanson

Absent

Councilmember Ann Bolkcom

Others Present

Walter Wysopal, City Manager
Scott Hickok, Community Development Director
Sarah Sonsalla, City Attorney
Mike Maher, Parks and Recreation Director

Pledge Of Allegiance

Proclamations/Presentations

Approval of Proposed Consent Agenda

Harland Prine referenced the item related to building inspections and expressed concern with the sweeping inspections that are done in apartments, and said it was a violation for the residents living in apartments. He asked the number of arrests or warrants that are issued based on the things seen by apartment inspections. He stated that a person should be able to opt out of the inspection.

Mayor Lund requested that Item 4 be removed from the Consent Agenda for further discussion and consideration. It was noted that it will become Item 12 on the Regular Agenda.

Scott Hickock, Community Development Director, explained that item is strictly related to the electrical fees within the electrical code inspection for electrical inspections, not rental inspections.

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to adopt the proposed Consent Agenda, as amended.
Seconded by Councilmember Ostwald.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Approval/Receipt of Minutes

1. Approve the Minutes from the City Council Meeting of January 22, 2024.
2. Receive the Minutes from the City Council Conference Meeting of January 22, 2024.
3. Receive the Minutes from the Housing and Redevelopment Authority Meeting of December 7, 2023.

New Business

4. Ordinance No. 1418, Amending the Fridley City Code Chapter 209, Fees, to Update Building and Inspection Fees.
5. Resolution No. 2024-16, Scheduling a Public Hearing on February 26, 2024 to Consider Ordinance No. 1419, Creating Title No. 5 (Lands and Buildings) of the Fridley City Code and the Chapters Contained Therein.
6. Resolution No. 2024-17, Approving an Agreement Between the City of Fridley and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety – Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) for Participation in the Violent Crimes Reduction Unit (VCRU).
7. Resolution No. 2024-18, Approving Change Order No. 2 for 53rd Avenue Trail and Walk Improvements Project No. ST2023-21.
8. Resolution No. 2024-21, Approving an Exemption to Terms of the Temporary Intoxicating Liquor Permit for the Fridley Fire Division for an Event to be Held on March 16, 2024 at the Springbrook Nature Center.

Claims

9. Resolution No. 2024-22 Approving Claims for the Period Ending February 7, 2024.

Adoption of Regular Agenda

Item No. 4 was removed from the consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda as Item No. 12.

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to adopt the regular agenda with the addition of Item 12 as discussed. Seconded by Councilmember Evanson.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Open Forum, Visitors: (Consideration of Items not on Agenda – 15 minutes.)

Jake Karnopp stated that originally, they planned to be in attendance at the Parks and Recreation meeting last week but there was an error in the date. He stated that he is a Fridley resident, School Board member, and member of the Fridley Youth Sports Association Board. He provided data on participation numbers for youth sports in Fridley. He also spoke about the partnership the association has with the City. He commented on the value that the association provides to the City of Fridley and its youth, regardless of the school they attend, their home address, or the money they can contribute. He provided details on the scholarship program that the association offers, noting that a child has never been turned away for inability to pay. He also noted funds that are solicited from organizations and businesses to assist in providing equipment and uniforms. He stated that they are present tonight to express concern with the current park plan. He explained that the current plan would eliminate one of the two main fields at Commons Park. He commented that they would like those two fields to remain, although they could use some updating. He noted that there are no plans to update the football field, although that could use updating as well. He stated that soccer currently uses Community Park and if a baseball field is removed from Commons, baseball will need to move to Community Park which will then impact soccer. He asked that the association be kept in the loop and be provided the opportunity to continue to provide input before an updated concept is developed, and also asked that the School District be kept in the loop as well.

Mayor Lund commented that he looked at the fields earlier this summer and also at the concept, noting that he already expressed concern with the fields, as he is aware of the demand for more fields. He agreed that the School District should be a part of this process as there is also underutilized land on the school property.

Mr. Karnopp said he believes that there is a way for everyone to get what they want from the concept.

Mayor Lund commented that a consultant has been hired to redesign the concept plan for the park.

Mike Maher, Parks and Recreation Director, commented that staff has had a series of meetings with the consultant and expect to have a number of options to consider which will be reviewed with the stakeholders from the association and School District at the meeting on February 26.

Mayor Lund commented on the extensive outreach that was done during the Parks master planning process. He stated that they are working with the consultant to update that concept in order to meet the needs of the community and provide a more diverse set of offerings within the parks. He noted that there are community fields that can also be used, although they may not be as desirable.

Mr. Karnopp commented on the loss of participation in the baseball program if those community fields have to be used, as many children come from the school after school is over and will not have transportation.

Councilmember Tillberry commented that he coached for FSYA in the past and recognized the demand for space at that time. He stated that they would like to have a plan that works for everyone which is why they are going back to the drawing board to find a concept that works, while addressing the responsibility for all taxpayers.

Nikki Auna, Fridley Heights Soccer, stated that her family has been a part of the association since 2014, and she has served on the Board since 2017. She provided information on the Fridley-Heights Soccer Club and how it has grown over the years to the point of having a wait list. She stated that if field two is eliminated for baseball at Commons Park, the soccer program would need to be cut in half because of the impacts of baseball having to move to Community Park. She reiterated that a hockey rink is not needed for this community, noting the short season compared to the longer season and more use that other space could provide.

Children from Fridley Heights Soccer Club spoke about their positive experiences playing soccer.

Mr. Karnopp invited members of the Council to come and check out the use of the fields during this upcoming season.

The Council recognized and thanked everyone who came to the meeting, and commented that they do want to find a concept that works for the most people.

Another resident spoke about his experience with his kids playing hockey for a few years, noting that it was through a larger organization with multiple communities. He said that organization had disbanded because there was not enough participation and therefore his kids play in Mounds View.

Wally Wysopal, City Manager, commented that staff will continue to communicate with Mr. Karnopp for this stakeholder group.

Regular Agenda

Public Hearing(s)

10. Public Hearing and Adoption of Resolution No. 2024-20, Approving an Alley and Easement Vacation Request, SAV #23-04 for the City's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), Generally Located on the Southeast Corner of Mississippi Street and Central Avenue N.E. (Ward 2)

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilmember Ostwald.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Hickok presented a request relating to the space located at the southeast corner of Mississippi Street and Central Avenue N.E. which is part of the larger area that has been acquired by the HRA for redevelopment. He stated that in order for the parcels to be joined for future development, there would need to be vacation of a small alley area that runs north/south. He asked Council to consider the vacation of that area noting that staff supports the request as presented.

Councilmember Ostwald asked if the alley extends to 64th Avenue.

Mr. Hickok replied that it does not and explained that the alley stops midblock. He explained that the gaps in the survey will be corrected as part of the larger plat that will follow.

Glen Weiner commented that he lives on the north side of Mississippi and stated that his concern is with a potential project that could be developed on the property in the future. He commented on the water issues that exist in that area, noting that he and a neighbor have both had feet of water in their basement at different times. He asked how the drainage could be managed.

Mayor Lund explained that when a development occurs, they must engineer stormwater management, noting that the same requirements did not exist decades ago when some of these properties were developed.

Jim Steigauf, 1361 Mississippi Street N.E., commented that he spoke with Mr. Kosluchar about the issues and was made aware of a drainage problem that developed when the school property was converted to residential. He commented on the conditions that they experience on their properties in that area.

Mayor Lund said the vacation would remove the alley on the plat, explaining that there is not an actual alley in that place. He explained there are no development plans before the Council for this site. He explained that any potential development would go through the typical planning process which would allow for public comment.

Mr. Hickok provided additional details on the future process that will occur relating to platting of the land, confirming that notice would be provided to residents within 350 feet as well as published in the typical manners. He stated that because the property is owned by the HRA, the City would have control in reviewing the potential proposals that could come forward in the future.

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to close the public hearing, Seconded by Councilmember Ostwald.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Councilmember Evanson to adopt Resolution No. 2024-20, Approving an Alley and Easement Vacation Request, SAV #23-04, for the City's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), generally located on the southeast corner of Mississippi Street and Central Avenue N.E. (Ward 2). Seconded by Councilmember Ostwald.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

New Business

11. Resolution No. 2024-19, Authorizing Staff to Resubmit a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to the Metropolitan Council to Change the Future Land Use Designation from C – Commercial to P – Parks and Recreation, for the Land Generally Located at 6101 University Avenue N.E.

Mr. Hickok presented a request for staff to resubmit a Comprehensive Plan amendment to the Metropolitan Council. He explained that this would change the underlying land designation for the property located at 6101 University Avenue N.E.

Mayor Lund commented that the change would make sense.

Motion made by Councilmember Tillberry to adopt Resolution No. 2024-19, Authorizing Staff to Resubmit a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to the Metropolitan Council to Change the Future Land Use Designation from C – Commercial to P – Parks and Recreation for the Land Generally Located at 6101 University Avenue N.E. Seconded by Councilmember Evanson.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously.

12. Ordinance No. 1418, Amending the Fridley City Code Chapter 209, Fees, to Update Building and Inspection Fees.

Mr. Wysopal asked that staff review the proposed changes to fees to ensure that the comments received are related to the specific changes.

Mr. Hickok stated that this is the second reading of an Ordinance amendment that would adjust the electrical inspection fee charge. He stated that the plumbing and construction inspections are completed by City staff while the electrical inspections are completed by a contracted inspector. He explained the proposed changes to the fees related to the electrical inspections.

Harland Prine commented on the fee for items under 50 volts. He also asked when the issue of rental inspections could be further discussed. Mayor Lund suggested that the resident make an appointment with staff to further discuss the topic.

Councilmember Ostwald acknowledged that rental inspections are completed every three years and that is the item the resident has concern with. He also suggested that the resident follow up with staff.

Motion made by Councilmember Ostwald to adopt Ordinance No. 1418, Amending the Fridley City Code Chapter 209, Fees, to Update Building and Inspection Fees. Seconded by Councilmember Evanson.

Informal Status Reports

Councilmember Evanson commented that he has lived near Moore Lake Park for eight years and has never seen more kids at the playground than he has the past two Sundays. He stated that it is a success that the City and staff should be proud of.

Councilmember Tillberry commented that it was great to see the kids in attendance tonight, especially those who spoke to provide input to the Council.

Adjourn

Motion made by Councilmember Ostwald to adjourn. Seconded by Councilmember Evanson.

Upon a voice vote, all voting aye, Mayor Lund declared the motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Moore
City Clerk

David Ostwald
Mayor Pro Tem