



Council Worksession
April 26, 2022
5:00 pm

Present: Mayor Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas
Councilmember Abdullahi Abdulle (attending the meeting remotely)
Councilmember Graeme Allen
Councilmember Emily Dunsworth
Absent: Councilmember Pam Axberg

Staff in Attendance: Devin Massopust, Craig Schlichting, Jennifer Fink

Guests in Attendance:

Review Site Plan for the City of New Brighton's Renovation of the Public Works/Parks Maintenance Building at 700 5th Street NW

Massopust reported Schlichting and Fink would be presenting this item to the Council.

Schlichting stated Kodet Architecture was hired in December 2021 to create plans and specifications for a Public Works and Park Maintenance facility improvement project. On March 15, 2022 the site plan was presented to the Planning Commission and recommended for approval, noting that it meets all zoning code requirements. Staff discussed the history of the site and then presented the current status of the site plans, noting key design elements, estimated costs and future legislative actions that would be required.

Councilmember Axberg stated she was curious to see the number of offices and asked if this area should be more open/conference room space. Schlichting indicated these individuals need secured offices and could not work from home.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas noted this space would benefit from having a conference room so that staff didn't have to always hold meetings at City Hall. She added that the proposed offices were less flexible or immobile as needs evolve over time. Fink indicated flexibility was discussed and it was noted the storage closet space could be flex space or be used to create additional offices. She noted the lunchroom was always available for meetings.

Councilmember Dunsworth reported the supervisors within this building needed to have offices because they could be having sensitive or confidential conversations in their offices. She indicated she was going to support staff's design plans for this space because they understood how their staff members worked.

Councilmember Abdulle questioned how many people would work from this building. Schlichting stated there would be 35 City employees working from this building. He noted a number of these individuals would be seasonal workers.

Councilmember Abdulle questioned if the office/multi-purpose room could be used for meditation or prayer. Schlichting noted there were two differences spaces that could be purposed for this.

Councilmember Abdulle commended staff for the number of rain gardens that were proposed outside the building. He asked if this building would generate enough solar power to make this facility self-sufficient. Schlichting stated he was uncertain at this time but noted this building did have lower power usage.

Councilmember Allen commented it was difficult to project the City's public works needs 30 to 50 years in the future. He asked if the needs for 10 to 20 years in the future had been considered. Schlichting reported this was the case and discussed how equipment needs for the City had been consolidated over time to create greater efficiencies for the Public Works Department.

Councilmember Allen stated the demographics of the workforce is hard to predict and noted this may change over time. Schlichting stated the site did not have a female locker room at this time. He noted the proposed renovations would create a locker room area for females and for those who were gender neutral.

Councilmember Allen inquired if grant dollars could be applied for to assist with this project. Schlichting explained he was successful in obtaining grant dollars in order to create a larger flood storage basin on the property.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas questioned where the Missouri gravel bed was located on the site. Fink reviewed the location of the Missouri gravel bed on the concept site plan.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas asked if Source Well would be used for this project. Schlichting noted the City would be putting this project out for bid in August and the lowest responsible bidder would be selected. He commented further on the project timeline and noted workers may be displaced for some time while the facility is constructed.

Councilmember Dunsworth inquired if the new Public Works facility would help with retaining employees. Schlichting stated he anticipated the new facility would help with retaining employees. He explained the current employees are excited about the proposed changes.

Councilmember Dunsworth commented the plans for the Public Works facility also shows the City's investment in these two areas.

Further discussion ensued regarding how the Public Works facility improvements project would overlap with the Old Highway 8 improvement project.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas stated she would like to receive a tour of the current facility prior to the work beginning so she can see the before and after of the building. She asked if fencing would be required at the rear of the property. Schlichting reviewed the location of an existing chain link fence and noted the plan would be to square this fence off with the building. He reported the outdoor picnic area would also be screened or fenced.

Councilmember Abdulle requested further information on how water would drain from the site. Schlichting discussed how water would drain from the site and commented on the proposed rain garden.

Councilmember Allen questioned if the Public Works facility would have EV charging stations. Schlichting reported this was one of the 13 sites identified for EV charging stations. He estimated five charging stations would be located on this site.

Councilmember Allen recommended staff look into whatever easements or land swaps may be necessary in order to complete the roadway leading up to the Public Works facility. Schlichting discussed the roadway improvements that would be completed.

Worksession adjourned at 6:02 pm

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Terri Spangrud". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Terri Spangrud
City Clerk