



Council Worksession  
October 10, 2023  
5:00 pm

Present: Mayor Kari Niedfeldt-Thomas  
Councilmember Abdullahi Abdulle  
Councilmember Graeme Allen  
Councilmember Pam Axberg  
Councilmember Emily Dunsworth

Absent:

Staff in Attendance: Devin Massopust, Craig Schlichting, Terri Spangrud (attending remotely), Joseph Sathe (attending remotely)

Guests in Attendance:

Commercial Tobacco Licenses

Massopust explained staff would be discussing the topic of commercial tobacco licenses at this meeting. He provided historical information on this topic, affirmed goals for an updated commercial tobacco licensing ordinance, reviewed a summary of licensing policy tools and impacts, and recapped information known to date. He commented on the number of standalone shops in neighboring communities. He discussed four questions with the Council and asked for Council feedback. Staff reviewed the draft ordinance in further detail with the Council and requested direction on how to proceed.

Joseph Sathe spoke to how State regulations addressed hemp products and he recommended this language be incorporated into this ordinance. He commented further on the buffer zones that would be required for cannabis businesses.

Councilmember Axberg asked what staff knew about the administration of cannabis. Massopust reported the licenses for tobacco and cannabis were to remain separate.

Councilmember Dunsworth stated she was curious to know how well the tobacco shops were doing, given the fact there were six in the community.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas asked if cannabis could be sold at liquor stores in the future. Joseph Sathe explained this would not be allowed. He stated liquor stores could sell THC beverages and low potency gummies.

Massopust noted staff proposed having six be the maximum number of standalone shops in the City. He questioned if the City would like to consider some sort of attrition model.

Councilmember Dunsworth supported the City reducing the number to four or five through attrition.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas supported the City reducing this number to four.

Councilmember Dunsworth stated she could support four standalone shops.

Councilmember Abdulle indicated he could support four or five shops.

Councilmember Allen supported the City reducing this number to four.

Councilmember Axberg commented she could support a maximum of six. She stated she wanted the City to remain business friendly.

Councilmember Dunsworth believed the City would remain business friendly.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas questioned if the Council wanted to set a limit as to the amount of time a license holder had to open up shop.

Councilmember Axberg recommended this time be six months.

Councilmember Allen stated it may take new developers longer than six months to construct a new building in order to be operational.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas asked if licensees had to have an address before applying for a tobacco permit. Spangrud explained tobacco permit holders were responsible for self-reporting their address.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas questioned how the Council wanted to address the 1,000 foot buffer around youth oriented facilities. She noted she supported this restriction.

Councilmember Allen indicated he did not support this restriction. He stated he was more concerned with how many gas stations were located to in close proximity to schools or daycares.

Councilmember Dunsworth inquired if the existing locations were grandfathered in. Massopust reported this was the case.

Councilmember Dunsworth was of the opinion that capping the number of standalone tobacco shops would be more effective than setting additional buffer restrictions.

The Council proposed having a future conversation regarding retail and flavored tobacco at a future worksession meeting.

#### Draft Living Streets Plan

Schlichting introduced the draft living streets plan to the Council. He explained this plan would be presented to PREC and the Public Safety Commission to gain their feedback. He reviewed a picture of the City's comprehensive streets plan. He explained the City works to reconstruct streets every 25 to 30 years and completes approximately two miles of street per year. He reviewed the five strategic priorities that were established by the City Council in 2023 and noted a Living Streets Plan met a few of these priorities. He commented further on the Living Streets Plan, noting Living Streets were both Complete Streets and Green Streets. He provided further definitions for Complete and Green Streets, noting the vision for the City was to improve the quality of life in New Brighton through infrastructure improvements that designed streets to include safe and comfortable routes for pedestrians that also moves vehicles slowly but efficiently, creating a sense of place that celebrates the feeling of community, while also protecting and enhancing the urban forest and environment.

Councilmember Axberg asked if lowering the residential speed limit to 25 miles per hour was impacting driver behavior. Schlichting stated speed limits were set based on what drivers were already doing.

Schlichting commented on how the City would like to improve bike/pedestrian connections and mobility throughout the community. He noted the City would like to continue to find ways to calm traffic. One of the ways in which the City addressed this matter was when the City lowered the residential speed limit to 25 miles per hour in September of 2022. He indicated the City also wanted to mitigate climate impacts while improving water quality. The design guidelines for local, MSA and minor collector streets were further discussed. He then reviewed recommendations for each street classification. The Living Streets Action Plan was detailed with the Council.

Councilmember Axberg questioned what the City's policy was for sidewalk maintenance. Schlichting stated all City sidewalks were cleared by City staff.

Further discussion ensued regarding how adding more sidewalk would increase future maintenance costs for the City.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas asked staff what their thoughts were on buried power lines. Schlichting explained lines were buried in the Exchange area when it was developed. He commented on the cost to bury power lines within already developed areas.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas supported the City completing the painting work for trails, if this was all they needed, prior to 2048. Schlichting stated this would be an option.

Mayor Niedfeldt-Thomas requested staff take another look at the complete street needs for the new mixed use nodes.

The Council thanked staff for all of their efforts on the Living Streets Plan.

Worksession adjourned at 6:20 pm

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Terri Spangrud".

Terri Spangrud  
City Clerk