

**Dakota County Planning Commission
Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

Date: March 25, 2021

Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Members Present		Staff Present		Others Present
Jerry Rich	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Robert Timmerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Lori Hansen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nate Reitz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Jill Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jim Guttman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Greg Oxley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tony Nelson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Amy Hunting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Donald Post	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Barry Graham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dennis Peine	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ramraj Singh	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

Meeting Called to Order

Time: 7:00 p.m.

By: Chair Oxley

Commissioner Nelson joined the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

Outline of Meeting Format

Chair Oxley stated the need to hold a remote meeting as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Governor Walz declared a peacetime emergency (Emergency Executive Order 20-01) on March 13, 2020, and extending the COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency (Emergency Executive Order 20-75) on June 12, 2020, and extending the COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency Declared in Executive Order 20-01 (Emergency Executive Order 20-78 on July 12, 2020, and Continuing to Safely Reopen Minnesota's Economy and Ensure Safe Non-Work Activities during the COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency (Emergency Executive Order 20-74) on June 5, 2020, which prohibits gatherings of 10 or more people and strongly encourages remote governmental meetings whenever possible. Dakota County Board of Commissioners Chair, Mike Slavik, declared a local state of emergency in Dakota County on March 17, 2020, in response to COVID-19. All County Board Commissioners voted to maintain this order on March 20, 2020.

The Planning Commission met virtually as outlined under Minnesota Statutes section 13D.021.

Approval of agenda

Motion by: Commissioner Hunting

Second by: Commissioner Post

Vote: Unanimously approved.

Approval of minutes (from February 25, 2021 meeting)

Motion by: Commissioner Singh

Second by: Commissioner Rich

Commissioner Reitz abstaining

Vote: Unanimously approved.

Item #1: Comprehensive Plan Amendment (Transportation Chapter)

Action / Information

Comments/Notes: Scott Peters, Senior Planner, and Mary Jackson, Senior Planner, presented this item and responded to questions.

Questions and comments by Commissioners along with responses from staff (italics):

A commissioner stated that the plan seemed detailed, easy to read, and understand.

A commissioner asked whether staff replied to the commenters individually. *Staff responded that the individual comments are included within the packet along with responses. Staff did not send individual replies but did follow up with some of the cities. Staff conducted extensive public engagement during plan development, working with a consultant to hold pop-up events, provide comment opportunities at the Farmington expo at the high school, and set up interactive maps where people could leave comments.*

A discussion was held regarding transit. A suggestion was made that the transit goal be reworded as a goal statement and not as a topic. Dakota County needs to recognize that many people use transit to travel to work. If we don't have a functional transit system, it's going to be a problem. It looks like the county is walking away from transit, despite the transit sales and use taxes that the county collects. The lack of transit service from Hastings is a problem when people are released from jail, and that needs to be considered. A commissioner stated that they planned to vote no on this item and explained that the plan is not ready to submit to the Metropolitan Council. It appears that the county is evading or disregarding transit. *Staff responded that the county's role in transit is evolving. Dakota County is not a transit provider, making it more difficult for the county to influence transit activities.*

A commissioner stated that the responses to the public comments were well reasoned and consistent with the context of the overall plan. *Staff responded that they had appreciated the opportunity to present this information and the Planning Commission's involvement.*

A question was asked regarding residents that commute by bicycle and if this is part of the transit plan. *Staff responded that there is an entire section with several pages, maps, and policies for bicycle pedestrians and trail gaps to make sure there is an overall system.*

It was asked if the greenways were an important part of the plan to address commuter needs. *Staff responded that the greenways are addressed in the Transportation Plan where they cross county roads and stressed the importance of providing safety.*

It was asked if the Transportation Chapter of DC2040 would be extracted and submitted to the Metropolitan Council. *Staff noted that the updated content was mostly in Chapter 3 but also in several appendices and the Executive Summary. The full document will be submitted to the Council if approved by the Board, and amended content has been highlighted for Council staff reviewers. A crosswalk also lists the content changes.*

Motion by: Commissioner Post

Second by: Commissioner Hansen

Vote: Ayes: 11

Nays 1 (Commissioner Rich)

Item #2: Transportation CIP Overview

Action / Information

Comments/Notes: Jeannine Briol, Construction Engineer, presented this item and responded to questions.

Questions and comments by Commissioners along with responses from staff (italics):

A commissioner asked if there is a plan to update and expand County Road 60 in Lakeville? *Staff responded that they would have to look at the CIP to answer this question and follow back up with the Planning Commission.*

A question was raised as to whether the Cliff Road improvement project from Lexington to 52 had been delayed. *Staff commented that this project would probably be bid late in the fall to start right away in the spring of 2022.*

Item #3: Veterans Memorial Greenway Alignment Design Study

Action / Information

Comments/Notes: Matt Parent, Sr. Project Manager, presented this item and responded to questions.

Questions and comments by Commissioners along with responses from staff (italics):

Are the Cliff Road improvements between Lexington and Highway 3 being considered as an alternative greenway route? *Staff responded that the adopted Rich Valley Master Plan does not follow Cliff Road between Lexington and Highway 3, although it had been looked at in the past.*

A commissioner asked why we are not using the original master plan alignment that had beautiful sweeping views as opposed to the proposed 105th street alignment. *Staff responded that the subsequent feasibility study found that this alignment had excessive grading needs in a natural area. The master plan alignment was feasible but too impactful to natural resources.*

There was concern about how to safely cross Highway 52. A commissioner stated that they are concerned that the railroad underpass option is off the table. We need to be cognisant that building a project that is thorough and safe is important. The end of the trail also needs to be considered, so it doesn't just end at the freeway. *Staff responded that as part of this design study, we would evaluate multiple options to address feasibility and cost. Staff is also planning to meet with MNDOT and will discuss the replacement schedule for the existing bridges.*

A comment was made that the apostrophe should be after the "s" in Veterans. *Staff clarified in the meeting chat that the PowerPoint presentation was in error and will be corrected and that the officially adopted name does not include an apostrophe.*

A commissioner asked if there is a way to use the Highway 52 greenway bridge as part of the memorial. Since Highway 52 has high traffic volumes, incorporating memorial elements into the bridge would be a highly visible way to acknowledge veterans. *Staff agreed with the statement and stated that introducing an interpretive element in bridge design is being discussed.*

Planning Manager Update and County Board Actions

Comments/Notes: Mary Jackson, Senior Planner, provided the Planning Commission with an update on the following PDC and County Board Actions:

- Authorized submitting a grant to DNR for ADA accessible trail at Thompson County Park
- Authorized JPA with City of Apple Valley for North Creek Greenway tunnel under CSAH 42
- Authorized JPA with City of West St. Paul for reconstruction of River to River Greenway trail through Garlough and Marthaler Park
- Received a presentation on the School Zone Safety Assessment Report

Upcoming Public Meetings – Community Outreach

Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan	Tuesday, March 23, 6:00-7:00 PM. Join via Zoom https://dakotacountymn.zoom.us/j/96838086579?pwd=MkUxa0dZSnJGdW1kWmIVQVRDWGIFdz09
Open House – using Zoom	Comments accepted through April 4, 2021 https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/parks/About/ParkMasterPlans/Pages/spring-lake-park-master-plan.aspx

Topics for Next Meeting

- Spring Lake Park Reserve Master Plan and Natural Resources Management Plan
- New Commissioner orientation materials and procedures

Planning Commissioner Announcements/Updates:

None

Adjourn: 8:33 p.m.

Motion by: Commissioner Smith

Second: Commissioner Timmerman

Vote: Unanimously approved.

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, April 22, 2021, Virtual Remote Meeting.