



Meeting Minutes: Dakota County Planning Commission Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes-Final

Date: 12/19/2024

Minutes prepared by Liz Hansen

Location: Western Service Center, Room L139

Attendance

Members Present

- Jerry Rich
- Amy Hunting
- Lori Hansen
- Barry Graham
- Steve Shurts
- James Guttman
- Tony Nelson
- Abdinasir Ibrahim
- Jill Smith

Member(s) Absent:

- Kelly Kausel
- Dennis Peine
- Mike Cahn

Dakota County staff members attending:

- Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager
- Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator
- Georg Fischer, Physical Development Director
- Niki Geisler, Parks Director
- Lil Leatham, Principal Planner

Other attendees:

Meeting Called to Order

- Time: 7:02 p.m.
- By Chair, Commissioner Amy Hunting
- Commissioner Smith arrived at 7:12 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

- The Planning Commission opened the meeting by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

- Comments/Notes: No audience member wished to address an item not on the agenda.

Approval of Agenda

Chair Hunting asked if there were any changes to the agenda.

Commissioner Guttman proposed revising the agenda by adding a new item titled “Welcome New Planning Commissioner—Abdinasir Ibrihim, District 5.” This item was inadvertently missed during the preparation of the initial agenda and seeks to introduce Commissioner Ibrihim formally. He will serve as the representative for District 5 in all upcoming Planning Commission meetings.

MOTION: Commissioner Rich moved, seconded by Commissioner Hansen, approving the agenda. Voice vote: Ayes – 8 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Welcome New Planning Commissioner – Abdinasir Ibrihim, District 5

Planning Commission Vice Chair Jim Guttman introduced new Planning Commission member Abdinasir Ibrihim, representing District 5. Commissioner Guttman stated Abdinasir was born and raised in Burnsville and is pursuing a degree in Civil Engineering at the University of St. Thomas. Nasir is known for being a people person, thrives in social settings, and is committed to community engagement and outreach initiatives. He also aspires to further his involvement in local governance and planning by joining the Planning Commission, where he can contribute his insights and unique perspective to help shape the future of the community.

Approval of Minutes (from September 26, 2024)

Chair Hunting asked if there were any changes to the previous meeting’s minutes.

The Planning Commission advised one addition to the meeting minutes as described below.

A Planning Commissioner noted that the issue of organized solid waste collection was discussed at the previous meeting and asked that the discussion be included in the minutes. *Staff reported that the discussion of organized collection can be added to the minutes. Staff also reported that organized collection was not one of the strategies that the County Board was interested in at this time.*

MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved, seconded by Commissioner Graham, approving the previous meeting’s minutes with a reference to the Planning Commission’s discussion on organized collection. Voice vote: Ayes – 8 – Nays – 0 Abstain – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Dakota County 2050 Vision for Parks and Natural Resources – Information (goals - units) (Lil Leatham – Planning Office)

Lil Leatham, Principal Planner, and Niki Geisler, Parks Director, presented this topic and responded to questions.

The Planning Commission received a briefing on the 2050 Vision Framework, which included an overview of the vision, core values, and new goals.

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

In response to whether all residents are being served by the park system (Goal 2), Commissioners questioned whether all Dakota County residents are interested in visiting parks and participating in outdoor recreation. Commissioners also discussed whether the County is missing things that people want. It is important to have good public input before the County considers making changes to its offerings. *Staff responded that there has been a significant public engagement effort as part of this planning process. Staff have gathered comments, held focus groups, and received feedback from the general public and specific groups about what is needed in the park system. The results of this public engagement effort were used to help prepare the draft goals.*

Planning Commission members discussed the specifics of the draft language in many of the goals. One concern that was expressed was not to use polarizing language.

Another issue that was raised was about the wording of the goal to locate parks and greenways where people live. A suggestion was made to revise the goal language to be more clear that no single park or greenway is able to do this but that, as a system, it can be an attainable goal.

A Planning Commissioner noted that the goals need to be looked at as a group, because looked at individually they appear to lack the balance that is needed in the park system. *Staff agreed with the statement that the goals need to be looked at together.*

A Commissioner noted that it would be difficult to achieve the goal of being an accessible system and that ADA accessibility has a different meaning than general locational accessibility. Planning Commissioners discussed the importance of accessibility according to both definitions.

A comment was made that larger parks, while they may be further away from where people live, may be worth the drive because they can provide a better visitor experience. If the County decides to locate smaller parks closer to where people live, it will be important to differentiate these smaller parks from the active-use parks that cities provide.

There were several questions about the wording and intent of Goal 13, and the relationship between County Parks and workforce development. The goal would be more clear if the term “Parks” were used with the term “Workforce”. *Staff clarified that the intent of Goal 13 was for a park service delivery model that employs the members of the community that is being served.*

A supportive comment was made about the goal that includes historic preservation, and that the County may have opportunities along the Mississippi River Greenway to help protect the history of the South St. Paul Stockyards.

Does Goal #12 include partnerships with nonprofit opportunities? *Staff responded that it does include non-profits and that an example of a partnership with a non-profit organization would be a coordinated grant-writing effort.*

A comment was made that it is important that the County balance accessibility needs with natural resource protection, and that individual locations should be evaluated to determine whether they are especially sensitive, and whether they are suitable for accessible facilities.

A comment was made that the County's greenway system is particularly well suited to serve communities that are not served well by the County park system because they can be located after the community has developed. Greenway loops can improve accessibility to the surrounding communities.

A comment was made that the Lake Marion mountain bike trail system, when combined with the large adjacent city parks and boat launch, has the makings of a county park or county park partnership. *Staff agreed with the comment and that the Lake Marion/Casperson Park location is suitable to be a regional park search area.*

Several other specific comments were made about improving the language in the draft goal statements. *Staff recorded the comments and reported that it is likely that a number of revisions will be made based on the comments from the Planning Commission and the upcoming meeting with the Physical Development Committee of the County Board.*

Planning Commission members expressed general support for the three strategies that are under consideration for improving the overall park, greenway, and natural area system: 1) community loops, 2) enhancement of greenways, and 3) new park and greenway units).

Planning Manager Update and County Board Actions

Comments/Notes: Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager, provided the Planning Commission with an update on the following County Board Actions:

- Authorized submitting County Solid Waste Management Plan to MPCA
- Reviewed and discussed the draft 2050 Park Vision Statement
- Authorized natural resource restoration at Spring Lake Park Reserve
- Approved the 2025 Planning Commission Work Plan

The Planning Manager provided updates on several significant land development proposals in Dakota County, including a new proposed mining operation in the Mississippi River near Spring Lake Park Reserve and a mining alternative located along CSAH 46 near Coates. Staff discussed the implications of these mining activities on County parks. In addition, Kurt mentioned that there are several large environmental reviews currently underway for data centers that are proposed around Dakota County. And finally, staff reported that the County Board recently approved the County's Capital Improvement Program.

Upcoming Public Meetings – Community Outreach

Comments/Notes: Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager, provided the Planning Commission with an update on the following upcoming public meetings and community outreach:

Staff noted one address correction below.

County 50/County 5 Designs Open House	December 19, 2025, 4 p.m.-6 p.m. Lakeville Water Treatment Facility 18400 Ipava Ave., Lakeville
Crisis and Recover Center Ribbon Cutting	February 3, 2025, 9:00am Dakota County Northern Service Center
Miesville Ravine Park Reserve Improvements Open House	February 6, 2025, 4:30am-6:30am <u>Cannon River Lutheran Church</u> <u>24036 County 7 Blvd, Welch</u>

Topics for next meeting (Thursday, January 23, 2025)

Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager, provided an overview of next month's meeting topics:

- 2025 Planning Commission Work Plan

Planning Commissioner Announcements/Updates:

No updates or announcements were given.

Adjournment

Chair Hunting asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Commissioner Shurts moved, seconded by Commissioner Hansen, to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 p.m. Voice Vote: Ayes – 9 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved.

**Next Meeting: Thursday, January 23, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.
Dakota County Western Service Center, Apple Valley**

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator