



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

Date: 9/26/2024

Minutes prepared by Liz Hansen

Location: Western Service Center, Room 106

Attendance

Members Present

- Jerry Rich
- Amy Hunting
- Kelly Kausel
- Dennis Peine
- Lori Hansen
- Jill Smith
- Barry Graham
- Mike Cahn
- Steve Shurts
- James Guttman
- Tony Nelson

Member(s) Absent:

- Brady Folkestad

Dakota County staff members attending:

- Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager
- Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator
- Georg Fischer, Physical Development Director
- Niki Geisler, Parks Director
- Nikki Stewart, Environmental Resources Director
- Lil Leatham, Principal Planner
- Renee Burman, Environmental Initiatives Supervisor
- Mary Jackson, Senior Planner
- Beth Landahl, Visitor Services Manager

Other attendees:

- Kate Lamers, Practice Lead, TLÂL-LI Collaborative

Meeting Called to Order

- Time: 7:00 p.m.
- By Chair, Commissioner Amy Hunting
- Commissioner Cahn arrived at 7:05 p.m.
- Commissioner Hansen arrived at 7:09 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.

The Planning Commission advised no changes, additions, or deletions.

MOTION: Commissioner Smith moved, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, approving the agenda. Voice vote: Ayes – 9 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Approval of Minutes (from August 22, 2024)

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

The Planning Commission advised no changes, additions, or deletions.

MOTION: Commissioner Shurts moved, seconded by Commissioner Smith, approving the previous meeting's minutes. Voice vote: Ayes – 9 – Nays – 0 Abstain – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Dakota County Solid Waste Management Plan – Action (final plan)

Renee Burman, Environmental Initiatives Supervisor, Mary Jackson, Senior Planner, and Nikki Stewart, Environmental Resources Director, presented this issue and responded to questions.

The Planning Commission was briefed on the progress of the Solid Waste Management Plan. This included a recap of the project timeline, a review of the plan requirements, a discussion of public comments on the draft plan, and the revisions made based on the feedback received.

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

Could language be added to clearly indicate who will be responsible for activities Dakota County doesn't have authority over? *Staff responded that this could potentially be added to the introduction and appendix.*

Is there a challenge recovering aluminum because the industrial magnets don't retrieve it from unsorted waste? *Staff responded that this was a challenge.*

Inver Grove Heights is home to the Pine Bend Landfill, which is seeking approval for an expansion. The City is uncertain about what next steps to take. *Staff reported that they met with the City officials last fall, met with them again this spring, and had an in-person meeting to engage the City recycling staff. County staff mentioned the importance of the public comment period and emphasized that the cities are critical partners in implementing the Solid Waste Management Plan.*

Planning Commissioners discussed the challenge of managing plastics, and several suggested that the plan could have done more to address the issue of plastics. *Staff shared some positive news that has been passed in the legislature. The new legislation directs more sustainable packaging by 2032, focusing on compostable or recyclable materials. This initiative is a step towards making packaging more environmentally friendly and sustainable.*

Residents struggle with knowing what can and cannot be recycled. Waste haulers should place stickers on waste containers to remind residents what can be recycled. *Staff reported they are collaborating with cities and waste haulers to educate people on what can and can't be recycled. Haulers will be required to provide this information more frequently.*

It is good that the plan places an emphasis on recycling construction debris. It should also be a priority to recycle and reuse appliances, perhaps using an appliance reuse center or through a program or organization that specializes in appliance reuse.

It is going to be a challenge to implement curbside organics collection, especially in townhome communities. Many residents will not have space for a third or fourth waste bin. We should consider continuing to offer organics drop off and offer incentives for organics collection.

A comment was made that if organic waste could be placed in the yard waste bin, it would save on trucks and bins, as it's already being picked up. *Staff responded that there are problems with combining yard waste with organics, and unfortunately, this practice does not work.*

The subject of organized collection was raised by the Planning Commission. *Staff responded that organized collection was not one of the strategies that the County Board was interested in pursuing at this time.*

MOTION: Commissioner Rich moved, seconded by Commissioner Kausel, approving That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners Authorize Submittal of the 2024-2044 Solid Waste Management Plan to the

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for Review and Approval. Voice vote: Ayes – 11 – Nays – 0 Abstain – 0 – Approved

Dakota County 2050 Vision for Parks and Natural Resources – Information (visioning)

Lil Lehtam, Principal Planner, and Kate Lamers, Practice Lead, TLÂL-LI Collaborative, presented this item and responded to questions from the Planning Commissioners.

The Planning Commission received an update on the Interim Report on engagement efforts, a Presentation of the 2050 Vision Framework, and a discussion of the Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Goals (future discussion).

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

The Planning Commission discussed the draft vision and many members expressed support for the draft vision. They liked that it was concise and memorable.

When reviewing the draft values, several members discussed the term “heal” and commented that it may be too negative and that there may be another term that could be used.

The Planning Commission discussed the County Board’s interest in promoting economic development. Public-private partnerships such as Sea Salt are part of Minneapolis parks and could be considered for the Dakota County park system. *Staff responded that economic development has been discussed as part of the public engagement process. Another example of economic development may be the increased value of homes and businesses next to greenways.*

The Planning Commission discussed the recent public/private partnership at Antlers Park in Lakeville. While several members appreciated the benefits of the partnership, there were a number of comments that Antlers Park has too much development and not enough natural land to be a good example of a regional park that provides nature based recreation.

A Planning Commissioner suggested that the County acknowledge the importance and value of building a volunteer program to support and improve the park system. The County’s volunteer program has grown dramatically over the last few years, and thousands of hours of volunteer time have been used to restore natural areas and improve park programs. This approach should be reflected somewhere in the values.

The Planning Commission discussed how the park system needs to adapt to changing demographics. There are several important trends, such as diversity and the aging of Dakota County’s population. It is important to understand how parks are important to each of these groups. In addition, some groups of people have different needs for parks, such as Alzheimer’s support organizations, or adult foster families. Many of these groups need accessibility, but they also benefit from relaxation and well-being from a peaceful and soothing environment.

The Three Rivers Park District offers more programs than Dakota County and aggressively advertises what programs are available. Dakota County has some excellent facilities, such as the archery range at Spring Lake

Park Reserve, but doesn't advertise to the same extent as Three Rivers Park District. *Staff responded that Dakota County does advertise programs and facilities but not as much as Three Rivers Park District. Dakota County does have a marketing plan. How much to advertise County facilities and programs is a topic that may need further discussion.*

A suggestion was made that staff should intercept people using existing parks to learn about what the needs and wants of visitors are at each park. One Planning Commissioner spoke with visitors using Miesville Ravine Park Reserve and heard feedback that a bathroom is needed at the main trailhead. The input that is gathered by staff should be summarized as part of this 2050 Parks Vision process.

Planning Commissioners discussed the challenge of providing facilities for popular large events, without overdeveloping parking areas for all the other days of the year when events are not held. *Staff responded that this can be a challenge and that the County uses a variety of strategies, such as allowing parking along the entrance drive at Whitetail Woods for large events, partnerships with churches to use their parking lots if they are nearby, and overflow parking in mowed grass fields in some instances.*

Staff concluded the 2050 Park Vision discussion with the Planning Commission by providing an update on the next steps in the planning process.

Planning Manager Update and County Board Actions

Kurt Chatfield informed the Planning Commission that it is the recommendation of the County Manager to distribute the Planning Commission's minutes to the County Board via the Physical Development Director's update to the Physical Development Committee. This is an administrative change that will streamline the process of updating the County Board on the Planning Commission's meetings and recommendations.

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

- Approved schematic design for Spring Lake Park Reserve Trailhead at Fischer Avenue
- Provided comments on Metropolitan Council's draft Imagine 2050 Plan
- Recommended renaming of the Lebanon-Mendota Greenway
- Discussed the role of transit in Dakota County

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:

2050 Parks Vision Plan Pop up	September 22, Noon-4:00pm Lebanon Hills Regional Park Visitor Center
Veterans Memorial Greenway Pop up at Farmers Market	September 29, 10:00am-noon Veterans Memorial Community Center, Inver Grove Heights
County Highway 73 (Babcock Trail) Open House	October 1, 4:30pm-6:30pm Veterans Memorial Community Center, Inver Grove Heights
County Highway 26 (70 th Street)	October 8, 4:30pm-6:00pm and 6:00pm-7:30pm

Open House	Veterans Memorial Community Center, Inver Grove Heights
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Topics for next meeting (Thursday, October 24, 2024)

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

- None at this time. The October meeting is likely to be canceled.

Planning Commissioner Announcements/Updates:

No updates or announcements were given.

Adjournment

Chair Hunting asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Commissioner Graham moved, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m. Voice Vote: Ayes – 11 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved.

**Next Meeting: Thursday, October 24, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. (if necessary),
Dakota County Western Service Center, Apple Valley**

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator