

**CITY OF NEW HOPE  
4401 XYLON AVENUE NORTH  
HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA 55428**

Citizen Advisory Commission  
Regular Meeting

November 9, 2010  
New Hope City Hall, 7 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Pronovici called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Kilsdonk, London, Nolte (arrived 7:01),  
Pronovici, Riley, Sievert, Skalland, Terres, Wills

Absent: None

Staff Present: Shari French, Staff Liaison

Also Present: Shawn Markham, City Forester

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Sievert made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2010 meeting as amended. Commissioner Nolte seconded the motion. All present voted in favor. Motion carried.

**UPDATE ON EMERALD  
ASH BORER PROGRAM**

Shawn Markham, City Forester, handed out an update he had prepared and briefly reviewed it with the commissioners. He stated that there had been no new reports of infected trees beyond the areas that were originally identified. He informed the commissioners that the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul were taking an integrated approach to treatment by removing the core area where the insects had been found and treating the perimeter around it.

Mr. Markham reminded the commissioners that the city had received a grant from the Department of Agriculture, and briefly reviewed the primary goals that were established as a requirement of that grant:

1. Increase funding for the removal of boulevard ash trees and the city's tree replacement program.
2. Adopt an Emerald Ash Borer management plan. It was noted that the plan had been approved by Council on 7/26/10.
3. Update ordinances to include trees infested with Emerald Ash Borer. It was noted that this update should be completed by the end of the year and would be reviewed by Council in early 2011.
4. Update existing boulevard tree inventory and include inventory of trees on public lands. It was reported that this was accomplished by an intern who had provided information on species, tree diameter, condition rating, and GIS location.
5. Educate residents about Emerald Ash Borer and the city's program through mailings, website and public meetings.

Mr. Markham informed the commissioners that 6893 trees were documented in New Hope, with 2995 of those being ash trees. He also noted that the city's boulevard tree inventory from 2004 had indicated that 62% of boulevard trees were ash trees.

Mr. Markham reported that 201 ash trees had been removed to date, most of which were hazardous or in poor condition. He added that approximately 103 replacement trees had been planted along the city's boulevards. Mr. Markham explained that the boulevard tree replacement program required residents to complete an application in which they select a tree species and its location. He added that the trees would then be ordered, which could take three to four weeks to receive.

Commissioner Nolte asked if the new trees would be warranted.

Mr. Markham stated that all new trees included a one year warranty.

Mr. Markham commented that due to limited funding for future tree replacements, he would recommend reverting to the city's pre-2010 replacement policy. He explained that this policy stated that the city would contribute 50% toward the cost of a replacement tree, up to \$200.

Commissioner London asked Mr. Markham to review the proposed ordinance changes, and wondered if residents would be required to remove infested trees on private property.

Mr. Markham stated that the city would like to include language to address trees infested with Emerald Ash Borer, similar to that of Oak Wilt and Dutch Elm disease. He noted that this update would allow the city to condemn infested trees on private property.

Commissioner London commented that the spread of Emerald Ash Borer appeared to be progressing slower than anticipated, and wondered if Mr. Markham was comfortable with the removal of approximately 100 trees per year.

Mr. Markham felt that the program was on track. He stated that while \$100,000 was currently budgeted for tree removal, he was unsure whether that amount would be available in the future. He commented that the cost of removals would continue to go up and felt it was important to remove a portion and replant with other types of trees.

Commissioner Nolte wondered if it was possible for some of the ash trees to survive.

Mr. Markham stated that while insecticide solutions were available, they had not been proven 100% effective. He noted that treated trees were more likely to survive, although there could probably still be some infestation over time.

Commissioner London wondered whether continuous treatment of a tree by drilling into the roots would eventually kill the tree.

Mr. Markham stated that insecticide injection at the roots of the tree by conducting a root collar excavation was considered to be the most effective treatment at this time. He explained that this method included removing the sod from the base of the tree and drilling into the main roots. He commented that this treatment would need to be conducted annually, and noted that over time, the cells which transport nutrients could become disrupted.

Commissioner Riley wondered how staff determined which trees to remove initially.

Mr. Markham replied that it was on a voluntary basis.

Commissioner Riley asked Mr. Markham to discuss the diversity of the replacement trees that had been planted.

Mr. Markham reported that residents were able to select from a list of 12 or 14 acceptable trees. He noted that approximately 30-40% of the selections were maple, while the remaining 60-70% were comprised of all others on the list.

Commissioner Riley noted that there was an Ash Borer trap on one of the trees at Fred Sims park.

Mr. Markham reported that traps had been placed on weakened trees at Fred Sims and Begin parks, but noted that no signs of infestation had been found.

The commissioners completed their discussion of the Emerald Ash Borer program.

Commissioner London mentioned that he had made several calls last summer to report overgrown grass and weeds, and wondered if Mr. Markham was able to address those concerns.

Mr. Markham commented that it had been difficult to keep up, and noted that the city had mowed approximately 30 to 40 properties, most of which were abandoned or in foreclosure.

Chair Pronovici wondered if there was a better way to address those violations.

Mr. Markham stated that once a property owner received a notice of violation, it would be followed by a ten-day waiting period. He felt the waiting period was too long, especially in the case of abandoned properties, and commented that he would like to see it shortened.

Commissioner Nolte wondered what other cities were doing in the case of abandoned properties.

Mr. Markham stated that some cities had shorter waiting periods, but thought New Hope's ordinance was similar to Golden Valley's and Crystal's.

Commissioner Terres wondered who mowed properties that were in violation of the city's weed ordinance.

Mr. Markham replied that the city utilized a mowing contractor, who was typically given the opportunity to mow those properties and bill the city separately for that service. He stated that after administrative fees were added onto the bill, the average charge was approximately \$200 per property.

Commissioner Nolte mentioned that the city of St. Louis Park had employed a student to take pictures of properties that appeared to be in violation of the city's weed ordinance. She wondered if New Hope would be interested a similar program.

Mr. Markham stated that he was unsure, but noted that he typically takes photos when following up on a complaint.

Chair Pronovici suggested adding continued discussion to a future agenda.

The commissioners thanked Mr. Markham for his presentation. He excused himself from the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

**DISCUSS BEAUTIFICATION  
AND ENGAGING LOCAL  
LANDSCAPING SCHOOLS**

Commissioner Riley reported that he had contacted approximately six community colleges offering horticultural and/or landscaping courses. He stated that he spoke with Mr. Jay Siedschlaw, an instructor of landscape design and construction at Hennepin Technical College. It was mentioned that second-semester students might be good candidates for a cooperative program with the city, and noted that students had created designs for public and private ventures in the past.

Commissioner Riley felt that the Citizen Advisory Commission would need to define areas for students to base designs on. He mentioned that some of the commissioners had previously shared concerns over the condition of some of the city's boulevards. He also commented on the varying condition of New Hope's park signs and suggested asking students to design a low-maintenance perennial garden below each sign.

Commissioner Nolte informed the commissioners that she had recently attended the first meeting of the community garden planning committee, and wondered if that group would want to become involved.

Chair Pronovici stated that he was unsure, and felt that the commissioners should first identify a list of potential projects.

Commissioner Riley felt it might be helpful to invite Mr. Siedschlaw to a future meeting of the Citizen Advisory Commission.

Following a brief discussion, the commissioners opted to invite Mr. Siedschlaw to their December meeting. They also agreed to postpone the following agenda items:

- Discuss changing the status of Lions dog park from temporary to permanent
- Discuss offering a trial period for an off-leash dog park at Liberty park in spring/summer, 2011
- Discuss impact of trucks on city streets with Guy Johnson, Director of Public Works

Chair Pronovici noted that the December agenda would also include a "Complete Streets" discussion with Eric Weiss, Community Development Assistant.

Commissioner Riley wondered about designs for the front of city hall or the outdoor theatre.

Ms. French reported that there had previously been money in the budget to redesign the front entrance at city hall, but it had been cut. She noted that the east side of the front entrance had been designed by a landscape architect but the west side had not.

Commissioner Terres wondered if there was anyone at the city who might have additional ideas for the commissioners.

Ms. French felt that Shawn Markham would be a good resource.

There was some interest in redesigning the boulevard along 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Boone and Winnetka avenues, but it was noted that it was private property.

Chair Pronovici commented that the Citizen Advisory Commission could perhaps make a proposal to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Terres commented that although Guy Johnson would not be attending the December meeting, he would still like to receive information regarding road wear and tear for the commissioners to review.

**CONTINUE DISCUSSION  
OF ORGANIZED TRASH  
COLLECTION AND  
ORGANIC WASTE  
RECYCLING**

Chair Pronovici stated that he had emailed a list of questions to Dan Ruiz following the last meeting, but did not receive a reply. He added that he would contact him again and noted that he would still like to invite him to the January meeting.

Commissioner Wills wondered whether the current garbage haulers must meet certain requirements.

Ms. French noted that they must be licensed.

Commissioner Wills wondered if it would be possible to set parameters for garbage haulers based on the Citizen Advisory Commission's expectations.

Chair Pronovici felt that might be a question for the city attorney. He stated that he would like the commissioners to create a list of priorities for waste collection for the next 20 years and research the most appropriate ways to reach those goals.

Commissioner Riley asked whether the Citizen Advisory Commission had received adequate information regarding possible wear and tear of the city's roadways.

Chair Pronovici replied that he had hoped to discuss that with Guy Johnson, Director of Public Works, at a future meeting.

Commissioner Nolte wondered whether Good Pointe Technologies could be contacted to further discuss the possible effect of garbage trucks on the city's streets.

Ms. French informed the commissioners that Good Pointe Technologies was the consultant for the street infrastructure program, but noted that Guy Johnson would be able to provide that information.

Commissioner Wills reported that an environmental consultant had informed him that residents of Maple Grove could receive points for recycling based on weight. He added that points could be accumulated and then exchanged for coupons.

**BEAUTIFICATION CHECK-  
IN**

Commissioner Kilsdonk stated that she was disappointed to learn that city ordinance permitted satellite dishes in the front yard of one's property.

Commissioner London felt residents might need an update on the ordinance regarding proper storage of trash cans.

Ms. French suggested that both commissioners contact community development/inspections with their concerns.

**PARK REPORTS**

The commissioners were reminded to submit park reports as long as the weather permitted.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Chair Pronovici wondered whether the newly-formed redevelopment committee had met.

Commissioner Skalland responded no.

Chair Pronovici stated that he would contact Planning Commission Chair Jeff Houle to find out when that committee planned to meet.

Commissioner Skalland mentioned that a Wal Mart store had been proposed for Brookdale Center. He also noted that a Wal Mart store was being considered at the location of the Four Seasons mall in Plymouth, and expressed concern that it could hurt New Hope's chances of acquiring a grocery store.

Commissioner London had read that council members or city staff had contacted some of the businesses located at Four Seasons mall, and wondered whether more information was available.

Ms. French was not sure. She mentioned that she had contacted a business owner that she knew, who noted that they had not heard from the owner of the shopping center.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion was made by Commissioner Nolte, seconded by Commissioner Skalland, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Citizen Advisory Commission. All present voted in favor. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Penny Spitzer".

Penny Spitzer  
Recording Secretary