

Maple Grove City Council work session

meeting minutes

April 4, 2022

Call to order

Pursuant to call and notice thereof, a City Council work session was held at 6:15 p.m. on Monday, April 4, 2022 at the Maple Grove Government Center/Public Safety Facility, Hennepin County, Minnesota. Present was Mayor Steffenson and Councilmembers Karen Jaeger, Phil Leith, Judy Hanson, and Kristy Barnett. Absent was none. Present also was City Administrator Heidi Nelson, Director of Public Works/City Engineer Ken Ashfeld, Transportation Operations Engineer John Hagen, Transit Administrator Mike Opatz, and Rapp Strategies consultant Todd Stone.

Mayor Steffenson called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

TH610-Rush Creek Boulevard noise analysis

Director of Public Works/City Engineer Ashfeld provided the City Council with information regarding the topic of mitigating noise impacts from the TH 610 project. He spoke to the 17 areas, by federal definition, that have receptor impacts that need to be evaluated. He talked briefly about the 17 areas, noting that 14 of the areas have noise impacts to trails only; and no impacts or benefits to properties or residents. He described the voting process for advancing noise walls to the design development phase.

Director of Public Works/City Engineer Ashfeld discussed the remaining three areas where a noise wall would have a benefit to homes, and as such, those homes and or HOA property would get to vote on advancing noise walls to the design development phase. He noted the most westerly wall, which is depicted as A1-2 in the agenda packet attachments, has impacts to homes and it would be advisable to construct the wall at an 11' height and be located on the house side of the trail. He stated that with no benefit to the trail, the city gets no votes and nothing more is needed for council consideration with this particular wall.

Director of Public Works/City Engineer Ashfeld then discussed the remaining two areas – walls E2 and F, which are in the vicinity of the Northglen Carriage Homes HOA. He explained that there are no noise impacts to residents, but since the residents would benefit by less noise, they and the HOA would get votes on the process. He further explained that in this location, Hennepin County is the owner of the right of way and the city is the operator of the trail; and as such, the city would have 12 votes on wall E2 and 30 votes on wall F; whereas residents would have 42 votes on wall E2 and 86 votes on wall F.

Transportation Operations Engineer Hagen spoke to the council in more detail regarding the mitigation of noise impacts from the TH 610 project. He discussed further the 17 areas that need to be evaluated, the voting process, the public safety issues for trail users and clear zone issues if walls are constructed, and costs involved. He also discussed the various noise barrier voting scenarios. He

suggested that the 14 walls that have no impacts or benefits to properties or residents be handled by a negative vote from the council with no further consideration given.

Councilmember Hanson questioned where the money for the noise walls will come from. Transportation Operation Engineer Hagen noted that the cost of the noise walls is built into the project costs and that the funding source would need to be found, but that funds would likely come from the city.

Councilmember Jaeger stated the last time noise walls were discussed, she had concern for pedestrian safety and for that reason, did not vote in favor of noise walls.

Consensus of the council with regard to the 14 walls having no impact or benefit to properties or residents was to vote no to advancing those walls to the design development phase.

Councilmember Hanson asked if the A1-2 wall is something impacted home owners wanted, would that be a city cost, and if so, how much is the cost. Transportation Operations Engineer Hagen explained that it would be a city expense and that the cost would be approximately \$150,000. He did note, however that the cost of the walls cannot be a factor in the decision-making process.

Councilmember Barnett asked if the homeowners could be assessed for the costs. Transportation Operations Engineer Hagen indicated that impacted residents could not be assessed for the cost to construct noise barriers.

Transportation Operations Engineer Hagen discussed the need to relocate the existing trail for wall E2 (Figure 3 in the packet) and wall F (Figure 4 in the packet). He explained that the city has right of way to shift the trail, but it will result in the removal of trees. Councilmember Hanson asked what the cost would be to relocate the trail. Transportation Operations Engineer Hagen anticipated the cost to shift the trail for wall E2 would be \$150,000 and wall F would cost \$400,000.

Councilmember Leith commented on how close the townhouses are in that area and questioned if the pine trees would need to come down in order to allow room to shift the trail. Transportation Operations Engineer Hagen commented that staff would be sure residents and the HOA have a good idea of what trees would be impacted if the project were to move forward.

Director of Public Works/City Engineer Ashfeld noted that rather than walls being constructed for benefitting trails and only a few users, those areas might be better served by putting in additional buffering with added trees and landscape instead. He questioned if residents would rather look at a wall or have additional landscape and wanted to be sure residents knew what they were voting for.

Councilmember Hanson noted that residents might not vote and questioned at what point the city would vote. Councilmember Leith added that a split vote could be very possible. Further discussion ensued and Transportation Operations Engineer Hagen provided further detail regarding the timing and next steps of the noise analysis process.

**Other items as
deemed necessary**

City Administrator Nelson stated that follow-up was needed regarding the community survey questions. She wanted to be sure the council's requested amendments were captured accurately prior to the survey being sent out.

Transit Administrator Opatz indicated that the council approved the community survey questions, with amendments, at the last regular meeting of March 21, 2022. He summarized the updated survey questions and noted that Question #2 was edited by adding an "importance" component to the response options. It was felt that the "don't know" option was needed for questions in which people do not have experience of the topic. Offering a "don't know" option would prevent the person without experience from simply choosing responses at random if they do not feel informed enough to rate each question. He noted that the final report would remove the "don't know" responses and results would be reflective of those who had an opinion on any given item. Transit Administrator Opatz also noted that Question #18 had the order of the response items listed to reflect a more logical flow to that question and response categories were changed from "support/oppose" options to "importance" options.

Transit Administrator Opatz also reported that the council had asked for input from Rapp Strategies about whether it would be beneficial to add more information to the questions about the Community Center project. Rapp Strategies representative Todd Stone stated that he felt the community survey was at a length and density that it should be and that anything more would likely have an adverse impact on the response rate. He felt the survey contained a nice range of questions, and allowed for responses that would gauge people's values as well as their preferences regarding Community Center funding.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Steffenson at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Nelson
City Administrator