

April 3, 2012

The Scandia Planning Commission held their regular monthly meeting on the above date. Commission Chair Maefsky called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The following were in attendance: Commission Chair Christine Maefsky, Commissioners Jan Hogle, Tom Krinke, Steve Philippi and Peter Schwarz. Staff present: City Administrator Anne Hurlburt, City Attorney Tom Miller, City Planner Sherri Buss and Deputy Clerk Brenda Eklund.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA, MINUTES

Schwarz, seconded by Krinke, moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 5-0.

Schwarz, seconded by Krinke, moved to approve the March 6, 2012 minutes as presented. The motion carried 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARING: PUBLIC MEETING ON DEIS (DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT), ZAVORAL MINING AND RECLAMATION PROJECT

The City Council approved release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Zavoral Mining and Reclamation Project on February 28, 2012 for a public review and comment period. The 60-day comment period began on March 19, 2012.

Commission Chair Maefsky explained the purpose of the evening's public hearing, which is to present an overview of the project and to accept all public questions and comments. A court reporter was present to record a transcript of all verbal comments.

Trudy Richter, of Richardson, Richter & Associates, was introduced as the facilitator of the public meeting. Ms. Richter asked Leslie Knapp, AECOM Project Manager, to offer an overview of the project. Ms. Knapp described the project and the contents of the study.

The meeting was then opened for public comments. Ms. Richter asked the speakers to limit their comments to five minutes in length.

Scott Alexander, Groundwater Hydrologist, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Minnesota.

Mr. Alexander stated that he was representing TA-COS, (public interest group Take Action, Conserve Our Scandia). Mr. Alexander spoke on the issues of groundwater and identified three streams which are considered sensitive to surface impacts.

Kim Chapman, Applied Environmental Services, Minneapolis, MN.

Mr. Chapman stated that he was representing TA-COS. Mr. Chapman addressed the environmental issues of the DEIS and felt the analysis was incomplete, particularly the removal of the forested buffer and the impacts due to the loss of the forest edge.

Vernon Swing, Principal Traffic Engineer with RLK, Inc., Minnetonka, MN.

Mr. Swing stated that he was representing TA-COS. Mr. Swing noted deficiencies in the traffic study portion of the DEIS. Mr. Swing referred to Question 21 of the scoping decision and said the EIS contained unsubstantiated conclusions.

Lisa Philippi, 21813 Quarry Avenue, P.O. Box 305, Scandia

Ms. Philippi addressed the market analysis study on property values, provided by BRKW. Ms. Philippi stated that based on her experience in the mortgage lending industry, the study did not adequately present enough data to determine the true effect on property value losses.

Randy Ferrin, 23290 Quentin Avenue, Scandia

Mr. Ferrin stated that he has 33 years of experience as a natural resource specialist with the Forest Service and National Park Service. Mr. Ferrin stated his agreement with the previous speakers in that the traffic impact and the property value analyses are flawed and should be redone.

Kristin Tuenge, 20595 Quinnell Avenue, Scandia

Ms. Tuenge stated that she is a member of TA-COS, which has the vision to conserve Scandia's natural resources and to follow the current Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Tuenge noted that the proposed mining project does not fit the land use plan for this site. She stated that there are many hazards to the groundwater and streams by the use of chlorides for dust control. Ms. Tuenge also requested that the use of herbicides be removed from the proposal.

Gregory Page, 17001 220th Street, Scandia

Mr. Page noted the harmful effects that could be done to the groundwater and streams by mining a 50-foot deep hole into the ground. Mr. Page felt that the TA-COS advisors did a good job of addressing inadequacies of the study.

Bill Clapp, 19955 Quinnell Avenue, Scandia

Mr. Clapp stated that he was representing the St. Croix River Association and would also be submitting more extensive written comments. Mr. Clapp questioned why the study does not show an immediate need for a gravel resource, nor does the reclamation plan address the final depth of the site. Mr. Clapp stated that the situation at the end of the project will leave the site in a worse situation than exists now. He concluded that it should be emphasized that the site abuts the St. Croix Scenic Riverway, a National Park.

Lisa Schlingerman, 20661 Quint Avenue, Scandia

Ms. Schlingerman provided a history of the mining site which had record of a severe washout of Middle Creek into the St. Croix River in 1971. Ms. Schlingerman referenced documents which provided information that reclamation standards of the previous gravel operator were not met. A letter from Dennis O'Donnell dated 1998 noted that it would be best not to disturb the established vegetation as it could lead to increased erosion of the site.

Greg Korstad, legal representative to Tiller Corporation

Mr. Korstad stated that Tiller Corporation will continue to be responsive to all comments and questions which are raised during the 60-day comment period.

Janet Anderson, 20453 Quinnell Avenue, Scandia

Ms. Anderson is greatly concerned about the effects of dust and silica particles and would like this issue more adequately addressed.

James Wilcox Dimmers, P.O. Box 366, Osceola, WI 54020-0366

Mr. Dimmers had ecology concerns on the effects to the river. Mr. Dimmers suggested that Tiller provide a simulated picture of the final reclaimed site, to give a better idea of what a deep pit would look like.

Pam Smith, 20919 Quint Avenue, Scandia

Ms. Smith had concerns about the noise issues and recommended that high berms along Highway 95 be required as mitigation measures.

Jean Houlding, 21922 Pomroy Avenue, Scandia

Ms. Houlding asked for a definition of a major storm event and what would the anticipated effect be.

Pam Arnold, 16560 220th Street, Scandia

Ms. Arnold noted a comment made at a PAC meeting from a Met Council representative who stated that due to the soil porosity on the final site, it would not be good for agricultural use or as a residential development. Ms. Arnold would like a better determination of what use would be appropriate when mining at the site is complete.

Ms. Richter called for any additional public comments, and none were given.

Ms. Richter explained that it would now be appropriate to have the Planning Commission ask speakers for clarification on the topics which they addressed.

Mr. Scott Alexander was asked to summarize the points he made concerning groundwater issues. Mr. Alexander stated that there would be measurable groundwater impacts due to changes in the land surface during the mining operation. Commissioner Krinke questioned if they would be negative impacts. Mr. Alexander stated the final outcome would depend on the remedial measures. Commissioner Philippi asked how a temperature increase of 0.5° F could affect the streams. Mr. Alexander stated that a temperature swing could be even higher due to a significantly shortened flow path and a reduced soil thickness buffer. This may detrimentally affect the ecology of the streams at the time of mining.

Chair Maefsky asked Mr. Chapman for more information on the 1997 Met Council study which he referenced. Mr. Chapman explained that he is not aware of a more recent analysis of gravel deposits in the metro area. City Planner Buss affirmed that this is the most current information. It would take additional research to update the data.

This concluded the comment portion of the meeting.

Commissioner Krinke asked if a transcript of the meeting will be available. City Administrator Hurlburt answered that as soon as it is available, the transcript will be posted on the website and copies made available upon request.

Commissioner Hogle asked if the speakers could provide their power point slide presentations, as it was difficult to see the screen from the Commissioners' seated positions. Pam Arnold, TA-COS member, stated that the material on the slides would not be public information, but written comments incorporating the data will be forthcoming.

Leslie Knapp explained that all comments and concerns submitted through the end of the comment period (May 18, 2012) will be responded to. A final EIS will then be presented for a 10-day comment period, followed by the council's determination on the adequacy of the study. Commissioner Hogle asked what occurs if the council determines that the study is inadequate. Ms. Knapp responded that Tiller will have the opportunity to address any further concerns.

ADJOURNMENT

Hogle, seconded by Krinke, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Eklund
Deputy Clerk