

ARDEN HILLS

notes

The Official City Newsletter for Arden Hills Residents

December 2013

City considers electricity and gas fees to broaden revenue base

by Kristine Goodrich

The Arden Hills City Council is discussing enacting franchise fees to help fund street, trail, and park improvements. The monthly fees would be charged to all electricity and gas users in the City. For residential users, the fees under consideration would total \$4.75 a month. The cost for non-residential users would vary based on their use classification as determined by Xcel Energy.

Councilmembers have been discussing the benefits and drawbacks of franchise fees over the last several months in workshop meetings. They will hold public hearings about the proposal in February, and they plan to make a decision after considering input from residents. If approved, the fees would commence no earlier than January 2015. Xcel Energy would collect the fees as part of its bills and reimburse the City.

After talking about both the City's long-term capital needs and the impact on community members, the Council is considering the following fee schedule: Residential electricity users each would pay a \$3 per

month fee on their electricity bills and \$1.75 per month on their gas bills. Fees for businesses and other non-residential properties would depend on their size and type of service. Councilmembers have asked an Xcel Energy representative to prepare more detailed information about how the City's non-residential properties will be impacted, especially businesses and organizations.

The proposed fees would generate approximately \$439,000 annually for the City. Residential customers would supply 38 percent of those revenues.

Cities are permitted to use the revenues however they see fit. Councilmembers have established three spending priorities: expanding and maintaining the City trail system, improving and maintaining parks, and improving and maintaining roads.

Currently, property tax collections are not generating enough revenue to accomplish many of the priorities in the City's Capital Improvement Plan.

Many cities have franchise fees, including Shoreview, Mounds View and New Brighton. The objective is to broaden the city's revenue base. The fees are charged to all users, including tax-exempt properties. By broadening the revenue base with franchise fees, the City would not need to rely solely on increased property taxes to generate revenue for City improvements.

Want to comment?

Community members who would like to share comments and/or hear more about the proposed franchise fees are invited to participate in a public hearing. The Council will hold hearings during its meetings on February 10 and February 24.

More information about the franchise fees proposal will be posted on the City website and will be presented at the February public hearings.



Bethel University looks to expand

by Susan Cathey

Bethel University, an Arden Hills institution for 40 years, continues to grow and to look for space for expansion. The university's 2012 Campus Master Plan stretched the limits of on-campus space for undergraduate programs, and many classes in the College of Adult & Professional Studies and Graduate School are currently held in other locations in Arden Hills and elsewhere.

In June of this year, the City approved a zoning code amendment and conditional use permit allowing Bethel to lease up to 26,000 square feet in the 2 Pine Tree Drive building as a replacement and ex-

pansion of its leased Red Fox Road facilities. This proposed use included general and administrative spaces, nine classrooms and specialized teaching facilities for its physician assistant program.

A new opportunity arose for Bethel this past summer when Country Financial approached the University with an offer to sell the property at 2 Pine Tree Drive, currently only 35 percent occupied. The location and the single large building in a setting of woods and wetlands seemed ideal for an "east campus" for Bethel and on July 26, the University and the property owner agreed in principle on the terms



and conditions for a sale, assuming Bethel could obtain the necessary City approvals and financing.

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Arden Hills Service Directory

1245 West Highway 96
Arden Hills, MN 55112-5734
Office Hours
Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m.--4:30 p.m.

651-792-7800
www.cityofardenhills.org

Sheriff and Fire Emergency
911

Sheriff (non-emergency)
651-767-0640

Fire (non-emergency)
651-481-7024

Water and Sewer Problems
(During non-business hours)
651-767-9640

Mayor:

David Grant 651-538-0747

Councilmembers:

Brenda Holden 651-636-2987

Fran Holmes 651-631-1866

Dave McClung 651-332-0352

Ed Werner 651-636-2547

See City website for email addresses

City Administrator:

Patrick Klaers 651-792-7810

Communications Committee

Kristine Goodrich, editor; Susan
Cathey

Council Liaison: Dave McClung

Staff Liaison: Amy Dietl

Desktop Publisher: Mary Nosek

Council meetings are held at City Hall on the second and last Monday of the month at 7 p.m. Meetings are televised live on Cable Channel 16. Meetings of the Planning Commission are televised live at 7 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month. Playbacks of City meetings begin the morning after the meeting and continue every day until the next City meeting. Playbacks are 3 a.m., 11 a.m., and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 7 a.m., 2 p.m., and 10 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. For web casts, visit www.ctv15.org.

Arden Hills Notes is the official newsletter of the City of Arden Hills, an equal-opportunity employer.

News from Around the Town:

The ribbon cutting ceremony at the new Johanna Shores facility (formerly Presbyterian Homes of Arden Hills) took place on Tuesday, November 5. The new facility boasts senior apartments, assisted living apartments, a memory care residence, and a care center.



Courtesy Presbyterian Homes and Services; Elizabeth Day, photographer

In the front row are Wendy Kingbay, Campus Administrator; Johanna Shores; Dan Lindh, President, Presbyterian Homes & Services; Fran Holmes, Arden Hills Major Pro Tem; Pamela Belz, Developer Senior Housing Partners; Pastor Brenda Alexander, Chaplain, Presbyterian Homes & Services.

Council initiates TCAAP review

by Dave McClung

At its October 14 meeting, the City Council initiated an Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) for the TCAAP development area. Minnesota law requires a Responsible Governmental Unit (RGU) to consider issues that may arise as property is developed so the RGU can plan for mitigation when actual development plans are presented. There are no actual plans being considered at this point. The scenarios that will be explored will illustrate likely conditions if TCAAP is developed.

The Council authorized two scenarios for exploration. The first scenario is based generally on the existing comprehensive plan and zoning code currently in place for this property. The second scenario looks at development at a much greater density, based on the capacity of the anticipated transportation network in place when the development begins — this is considered the maximum build scenario.

The AUAR will look at the environmental and other impacts on the entire 427 acres owned by Ramsey County and the surrounding areas. Scenario one anticipates up to 1,500 residential units while scenario two anticipates up to 2,500 residential units. Both scenarios also include commercial, retail, office, light industrial, and park uses—with the level of these anticipated developments being lower in scenario one.

The City Council as the RGU is required to initiate the AUAR process and set the scenarios. Council Members hope that studying these two scenarios will not only satisfy statutory requirements but will provide valuable information to inform the City's decision-making as development actually occurs.

Bethel University expansion plans, continued from page 1

In October, the Arden Hills Planning Commission considered Bethel's request for a new conditional use permit to allow a higher education use in the entire 189,904 square foot building, to be phased in over a period of several years, as current leases expire. According to the information provided by Bethel, the property would have a diverse mixture of normal daytime office uses along with both daytime and evening classes.

The University is planning for a mix of transportation modes to be used between the two campuses, including shuttle service, carpooling and personal vehicles.

A pedestrian and bicycle trail connecting the two campuses is also a desire of the University leaders in order to provide safe routes for their entire student body, and they have agreed to contribute up to \$800,000 toward the cost of a City-constructed trail.

Planning Case 13-013 went to the City Council for discussion at its October 28 meeting, with the recommendation of the Planning Commission for passage. There are two possible scenarios being considered. The proposed plan for scenario 1, considered "likely use", is laid out in three phases. (See chart next page)



Benchmarks: a review of recent City Council action

October 14, 2013

- Approved a joint powers agreement with Ramsey County for new voting system acquisition and operation (5-0)
- Approved Ordinance 2013-009 amending Section 335 of the City Code regulating residential rental properties (5-0) (the proposed ordinance amendment clarifies the occupancy limit within the rental regulations section of the City Code and allows the City to issue citations for violations of the limit)
- Approved Resolution 2013-039 ordering an Alternative Urban Areawide Review for the TCAAP redevelopment site (5-0)
- Approved the Zoning Scenario and Maximum Development Scenario for the TCAAP redevelopment site Alternative Urban Areawide Review as defined in the Kimley-Horn memo dated October 10, 2013 (3-2; Holden, Holmes)
- Approved construction of a gateway sign on the south side of County Road E and Cleveland Avenue in an amount not to exceed \$17,000 (4-1 McClung)

October 28, 2013

- Adopted changes to the Arden Hills Personnel Policy (5-0)

- Approved the Cable Services Agreement between the City and North Suburban Access Commission (5-0)
- Approved an agreement with SEH for \$5,000 for technical review and inspection services for an AT&T antenna upgrade project at the Cummings Park water tower (5-0)
- Approved final payment No. 1 to Pearson Brothers, Inc., for the 2013 Seal Coat Improvement in the amount of \$96,434 (5-0)
- Approved payment No. 2 to SAK Construction, LLC, for the 2013 Sanitary Sewer Lining Improvement in the Amount of \$311,869 (5-0)
- Approved final payment No. 1 to Ace Blacktop for the North Snelling mill and overlay improvement in the amount of \$104,291 (5-0)
- Approved Planning Case #13-016 for two variances to allow the proposed construction project located at 1226 Ingerson Road (3-2; Holden, Holmes) (the first variance would exceed the floor area ratio by 313 square feet and the second variance would allow flexibility in the setback regulations to expand the existing deck, construct a front entrance overhang, and add sunshades to the south facing elevations of the home)

- Tabled approval of Ordinance 2013-009 for amendments to Section 1305.04 and Section 1320 of the Zoning Code and Ordinance 2013-010 for amendments to Section 1320 of the Zoning Code related to the proposed Conservation District (5-0) (tabled to a work session for discussion)
- Tabled consideration of Planning Case 13-013 for a conditional use permit at 2 Pine Tree Drive to allow a higher education use in the existing office building (5-0) (City Council was not able to complete consideration due to lateness of evening.)

November 12, 2013 (Werner excused)

- Continued consideration of Planning Case #13-013 to the November 25, 2013, City Council meeting for a Conditional Use Permit at 2 Pine Tree Drive (4-0) (Bethel CUP request continued to allow the full council to be available for consideration of this item)
- Tabled approval of the 2014 tree removal services contract for discussion at a work session (4-0)
- Accepted the Third Quarter Financial Reports (4-0)



Scenario 2 uses the same time frame but shows slightly higher overall numbers. Bethel has submitted a letter indicating it has no plans for any additional building on the site.

The City Council spent over an hour at the meeting gathering information from City staff, and representatives of Bethel, Coun-

try Financial, and SRF Consulting—the company which conducted a traffic study for this project. Some specific concerns included evening traffic and parking, lighting, and public use of the walking trails currently on the property. These trails are in a buffer zone established between the business area of the property and adjacent residential neighborhoods. Bethel has stated

in writing its intent to continue to welcome use of this area by the public. The evening included a public hearing, with several people addressing the Council.

Because it was growing late and the Council had several additional points to discuss, it was decided to table the proposal until a future meeting.

Bethel University Expansion Plan Time Frame

Time Frame	Staff/Faculty	Classrooms	Classroom Seats	Description
Phase 1: 2013-2014	35	9	300	Original 26,000 sq. ft. Conditional Use Permit
Phase 2: 2015-2018	110	6	260	Available spaces on levels 2, 3, and 5
Phase 3: 2018-2025	35	3	110	Available spaces on levels 1 and 4



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City weighs utility fees

Bethel proposes expansion

TCAAP environmental review begins

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Notes from the City Council

Road Construction Season Ends!

There is a saying in Minnesota that there are only two seasons, winter and road construction. Personally, I am glad to be moving into the winter season since it will finally be the end of road construction. For Arden Hills it has been like the perfect storm for road construction with highways 10 and 96 closed, I-694 with delays and a short bit of construction along Lexington Avenue near Target. This letter will reach you in early December and by that time Highways 10 and 96 should be open and the I-694 repairs will have been completed. Having Highways 10 and 96 open to both I-35W and I-694 means several things:

First, eastbound and westbound traffic in northern Arden Hills will be available on Highway 96, with quicker access to I-35W, one of our primary north/south routes. It also means easier access to Mounds View High School for people living in northern Arden Hills. For residents living west of Snelling Avenue, it means being able to get on Highway 96 without having to take County Road E and go north on Hamline or Lexington avenues. Having Highway 10 open should, to some degree, reduce traffic congestion on I-694. At least that is what MnDOT is planning for. Having these roads open again could make for an interesting few months as drivers readjust their driving patterns. Hopefully the long wait has been worth it.

Another interesting aspect of having Highway 10 open is that drivers will be able to see the cleanup that has been going on at TCAAP. As cleanup started early this year, Highway 10 had only limited access at the northern area of TCAAP near I-35W. So far all but one building has been removed, building number 502 which is located along Highway 96. Asbestos will be removed during the winter months and the building will be taken down next spring.

The work on TCAAP this year has removed what some called an eyesore. While there may be some construction debris visible, it is certainly not as unsightly as the old buildings were. Other work this year included a median cut to TCAAP on Highway 96. It was done in large part because it makes sense to do it while High-

way 96 was being redone and because it limits any future need to close Highway 96 to add a turnoff.

Other road improvements in Arden Hills are scheduled for future years, but nothing as extensive as I-694 and Highways 10 and 96. One of the planned improvements is the reconstruction of the County Road E Bridge over Snelling Avenue. The plan will include a long needed and often requested safe pedestrian walkway.

The holiday season is upon us and that means a lot of travel for some families. Our major roads are done and in good shape. I want to wish you and your family safe travels on whatever road you choose.

David Grant
David Grant, Mayor

Let's go skating!

Arden Hills skating rinks will be open from December 9 to February 17—if weather conditions permit. They are located at:

- Cummings Park—1220 Wyncrest Court (Pleasure rink only)
- Freeway Park—1370 West County Road E
- Hazelnut Park—3301 New Brighton Road
- Perry Park—3700 New Brighton Road (Hockey rink only)



Warming House Hours

Monday-Friday, 4:30-8:30 p.m.
Saturday, 10 a.m.-8:30 p.m.
Sunday, 1-7 p.m.

Holiday hours

Dec. 23, 26, 27, 30—10 a.m.-8:30 p.m.
Christmas Eve—10 a.m.-5 p.m.
New Year's Eve—10 a.m.-5 p.m.
New Year's Day—10 a.m.-8:30 p.m.
Martin Luther King Day, January 10—
10 a.m.-8:30 p.m.
Presidents Day, February 17—
10 a.m.-8:30 p.m.