

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Wednesday, February 2, 2022

Committee Members Present:

Barber, Chamblis, Fredson, Gonzalez, Johnson, Lee, Lilligren, Lindstrom, Muse, Sterner, Vento, Wulff, Zeran, Zelle

Committee Members Absent:

Cummings

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Chair Zelle called the regular meeting of the Council's Committee of the Whole to order at 4:02 p.m. on Wednesday, February 2, 2022 on the following roll call vote:

Aye: 14 Barber, Chamblis, Fredson, Gonzalez, Johnson, Lee, Lilligren, Lindstrom, Muse, Sterner, Vento, Wulff, Zeran, Zelle

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Cummings

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Wulff, seconded by Sterner to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2022 regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole. **Motion carried** on the following roll call vote:

Aye: 14 Barber, Chamblis, Fredson, Gonzalez, Johnson, Lee, Lilligren, Lindstrom, Muse, Sterner, Vento, Wulff, Zeran, Zelle

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Cummings

INFORMATION

1. Comp Plan Composite: Housing Tools and Locally Identified Housing

Lisa Barajas, Director, Community Development, began the presentation with an overview of regional planning. Barajas then introduced Hilary Lovelace, Senior Planner, Community Development, to discuss housing tools and locally identified housing. Council staff have been working with the region's local governments to review 2040 comprehensive plans since the Council issued System Statements in September 2015. Council staff provided planning resources, administered planning grant assistance funds, facilitated requests for deadline extensions, provided preliminary review of plans, and to date have facilitated review for 164 of 168 expected plans and authorized 150 plans. Lovelace provided a comparison of housing requirements between the 2030 plans with the 2040 plans, and asked Council members to consider how the lessons learned may impact regional housing policy development over the next few years. Lovelace also shared information about the trends in housing plans, tLand Guided for

Affordable Housing, and the local housing planning toolbox. Nearly 30 programs, policies, and partnerships are available as housing tools, including local sources of funding, federal and regional sources of funding, local policies and strategies, and preservation strategies and partnerships.

Council Members had questions and comments about where this information is shared and highlighted, the toolbox and the length of the process with regard to the tools, effectiveness of the housing tools, local housing trust funds, affordable housing, and how affordable housing growth is calculated for the region.

2. Growing Shade – Tree Canopy Planning in the Region

Ellen Esch, Senior Data Scientist, and Eric Wojchik, Planning Analyst, Community Development, gave an update on “Growing Shade,” a new tree planting, canopy enhancement and preservation tool. Regional tree canopy work was part of the Local Planning assistance work plan as early as 2015, shortly after the adoption of Thrive MSP 2040. Growing Shade is an interactive resource to inform tree canopy enhancement and preservation for the Twin Cities region. The tool is a collaboration between the Met Council, the MN Nature Conservancy and the non-profit organization Tree Trust. Four key issues intersect with the tree canopy: environmental justice, climate change, conservation of natural resources, and public health. Trees are not distributed evenly around the region and certain groups disproportionately face negative consequences of land use decisions. Esch shared history behind the past racist policies and other issues that influence today’s environmental conditions. Current data shows disparities in tree canopy cover with income and race. Tree canopy decreases as the share of residents identifying as a person of color gets higher. Wojchik shared information about the development of the tool, which included outreach to foresters and tree advocates, a stakeholder survey, and an advisory group consisting of participants from academic institutions, state agencies, city and county forestry, neighborhood advocates and non-profit groups. The two key components of Growing Shade are stories and educations about the considerations related to growing shade and a customizable mapping tool with prioritization and reporting functions.

Council Members had questions and comments about the preservation of trees and the Lower Phalen Creek Project, the effect of emerald ash borer and insecticide on the tree canopy, natural resource stewardship, the future of the tree canopy based on newly planted trees, and the effect of the North Minneapolis tornado on the tree canopy.

Comments from Chat:

from Wojchik, Eric to everyone: <https://www.metrocouncil.org/growingshade>

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Bridget Toskey
Recording Secretary