

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, a Council Workshop of the North Mankato City Council was held in the Municipal Building Council Chambers on June 4, 2007. Mayor Zellmer called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The following were present for the meeting: Mayor Zellmer, Council Members Steiner, Schindle, Norland and DeWitte, Administrator Sande, Planner Fischer and City Clerk Gehrke.

Report on Recycling Center Operation

Administrator Sande presented a report on Recycling Center Operations in response to the concerns expressed by Mr. Paul Brown of 1104 Quincy Street and Ms. LaVerne Hoffman of 518 Webster Avenue at the May 7, 2007 Council meeting concerning various aspects of the operation of the Recycling Center. The Administrator provided background information noting the area north of Webster Avenue is an industrial zone and has been classified this way since 1963. Residential structures are non-conforming uses in an industrial zone. Prior to 1975, the area off the end of Quincy Street to the north and west served as the City landfill. A portion of the landfill was reclaimed and the public works building constructed in 1975 after the landfill material was removed in the construction area. In 1991 the City acquired the former Kato Diesel building at 1139 Center Street and with the assistance of a state grant converted it into a recycling center which operated in conjunction with Nicollet County until the decision was made to build a new center. The preferred location for the center was immediately north of 1139 Center Street, however, the owners of that property were unwilling to sell. The Recycling Center was constructed at its current location after the public works building, along with two houses which were in poor condition (1103 Quincy Street and 552 Webster Avenue) were removed. This past year a drive-thru was added in front of the facility based on comments received from a number of users. The overnight drop-off is heavily used and adds to the volume processed by the Center.

Administrator Sande addressed the issues raised by Mr. Brown in his letter submitted to the Council on May 7, 2007:

1. Quincy is a street 26 feet in width and capable of two-way traffic. We modified Quincy some years ago by flaring the east curb line to accommodate the semi-trailer truck traffic accessing the truck wash and other businesses in the area.
2. The staff will address the noise of dumping material by closing the east overhead door when the route trucks are unloading. The public works staff is adding some sound deadening material to the drop-off slots which should abate some of the related noise.
3. Garbage odors have not been observed.
4. Recycling Center staff is to clean up the area on a daily basis and the supervisory staff will ensure that the clean-up is carried out. Center staff will extend the area to be picked up to include the Brown and Hoffman properties with their concurrence.
5. We have put up signage indicating pets are not permitted in the Recycling Center. Anyone utilizing the Center should be aware of the possibility of broken glass in the area and should only enter the Center with appropriate footwear.

6. The east/west orientation of the drive-thru area does lend itself to wind currents blowing through. Staff will be instructed to move all paper products from the drive-thru area into the main body of the Center as quickly as possible.
7. The yard waste and brush drop-off area was moved forward last year to provide the best location for resident access while maintaining security in the public works compound. This area is heavily used as a valued service by our residents. We are making every effort to ensure that its use is limited to North Mankato residents only.
8. The traffic at the Center, especially the yard waste and brush drop-off, is especially heavy in the spring and fall and on the weekends. With our residents' work schedules this would continue to be the case. As more and more neighborhoods in the hilltop area mature, the level of yard waste and brush coming to the Center will almost certainly increase. We will ask the Public Works staff to ensure that Quincy Street is swept on a regular basis to minimize dust. We may wish to consider hard surfacing additional portions of the drop-off area as budgets permit. The Public Works staff chips brush at the boulevard during the first week of each month, however, we continue to have significant volumes arriving at the drop-off area. With the assistance of Nicollet County Sentence-to-Serve we are generally able to keep up with the volume by using both of the chippers. The chips are available free-of-charge to anyone who would like some and are also provided to state and county parks, the City of Mankato and others. Here again, we avoid the cost of disposal.

After reviewing the plantable spaces around the east side of the Recycling Center, staff is of the opinion that a number of evergreen trees could be planted to provide partial screening of the Center and the drop-off area. We would propose to use a tree spade contractor to bring in trees in the range of 8-10 feet tall.

Discussion was held regarding the storage at the public works compound, moving the brush pile, locking the brush pile area at night and the amount of space available for planting trees. The Council requested a schematic of the proposed tree planting and cost of trees be provided to the Council. The Council will tour the Public Works compound during a future Council Budget Workshop.

Other Business

The Mayor requested a letter be prepared for his signature calling for the Governor and Legislative leaders to compromise and find common ground to call a special session to pass an Omnibus Tax Bill this year.

Council Member Norland reported many temporary moveable advertising signs were located on Commerce Drive. Planner Fischer reported he recently sent a reminder to the Commerce Drive businesses that prior to obtaining a temporary sign, they need a sign permit from the City. The Council asked the City Planner to contact the City Attorney and ask him to send a letter to the Commerce Drive businesses regarding the sign ordinance as it relates to temporary signs.

There being no further business, the Council Workshop was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk