

**AGENDA  
CITY OF MAPLEWOOD  
ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

**Tuesday, January 25, 2022  
7:00 p.m.**

**Held Remotely Via Conference Call  
Dial 1-888-788-0099  
Meeting ID: 856 2387 4822  
Passcode: 456029**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes:
  - a. December 20, 2021
5. New Business
  - a. Election of Chair and Vice Chair
  - b. 2022 Work Plan and Environmental Priorities
6. Unfinished Business
7. Visitor Presentations
8. Commissioner Presentations
9. Staff Presentations (oral reports)
  - a. State of Maplewood Address – February 15, 2022, at 10 a.m.
  - b. February Meeting Date - Rescheduled to Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 7 p.m.
10. Adjourn

**MINUTES  
CITY OF MAPLEWOOD  
ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION  
1830 COUNTY ROAD B EAST, MAPLEWOOD, MINNESOTA  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2021  
7:00 P.M.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Palzer called a meeting of the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission to order at 7 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Emma Broadnax, Commissioner	Present
Rebecca Bryan, Commissioner	Present
Kayla Dosser, Vice Chairperson	Present
Benjamin Guell, Commissioner	Present
Mollie Miller, Commissioner	Absent
Ann Palzer, Chairperson	Present
Ted Redmond, Commissioner	Present

**Staff Present**

Shann Finwall, Environmental Planner

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Redmond moved to approve the agenda.

Seconded by Commissioner Broadnax                      Ayes – All

The motion passed.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Bryan moved to approve the October 18, 2021, ENR Commission meeting minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner Dosser                      Ayes – Commissioners Bryan, Dosser, Palzer, Redmond

Abstain – Commissioners Broadnax and Guell

The motion passed.

Commissioner Redmond moved to approve the November 15, 2021, ENR Commission meeting minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner Bryan

Ayes – Commissioners Broadnax,  
Bryan, Guell, Redmond

Abstain – Commissioners Dosser and  
Palzer

The motion passed.

## 5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### a. Renewable Energy Ordinance and Sol Smart Certification

#### 1) Presentation by Cameron Bailey, Metropolitan Council Sol Smart Advisor

Cameron Bailey presented the Sol Smart program and updates. He stated that Maplewood is a Silver Level Sol Smart city. In order to obtain the Gold Level, Maplewood needs to set up a process to issue residential solar permits within three business days. He stated that when cities ask for example solar ordinances, Maplewood is one of the ordinances he refers them to. It is a comprehensive ordinance, and the amendments proposed will remove solar installation barriers. He also went into detail on some innovative solar projects taking place throughout the Twin Cities area.

#### 2) Renewable Energy Ordinance Amendments

Environmental Planner Finwall introduced the renewable energy ordinance amendments and answered questions of the ENR Commission.

The ENR Commission discussed the following amendments proposed by the Sol Smart advisors:

- Add placement and design standards for solar canopies and ground mounted community solar gardens.
- Require ground-mounted community solar gardens one acre in size or larger to install native plantings that meet the Board of Soil and Water beneficial habitat standards.

Commissioner Broadnax made a motion to recommend approval of the Renewable Energy Ordinance amendments.

Seconded by Commissioner Bryan

Ayes – All

The motion passed.

Environmental Planner Finwall stated the Renewable Energy Ordinance would go to the City Council for final review in early 2022.

**6. New Business**

a. Climate Emergency Resolution

Environmental Planner Finwall introduced the Climate Emergency Resolution and answered questions of the ENR Commission.

Commissioner Redmond made a motion to recommend approval of the Climate Emergency Resolution.

Seconded by Commissioner Dosser                      Ayes – All

The motion passed.

**7. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS**

None.

**8. COMMISSIONER PRESENTATIONS**

None.

**9. STAFF PRESENTATIONS**

a. January and February Meeting Dates - Reschedule to Tuesday, January 25, 2022, and Tuesday, February 22, 2022

Environmental Planner Finwall explained that the January and February 2022 ENR Commission meeting dates have been rescheduled due to holidays.

b. Elections of Officers to be held in January

Environmental Planner Finwall announced that the annual election of officers would be held during the January meeting. The current chair and vice-chair are Commissioners Palzer and Dosser, respectively.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Bryan made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Commissioner Redmond.                      Ayes – All

The motion passed.

Chairperson Palzer adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

## ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date January 25, 2022

**REPORT TO:** Environmental and Natural Resources Commission

**REPORT FROM:** Shann Finwall, AICP, Environmental Planner

**PRESENTER:** Shann Finwall, AICP, Environmental Planner

**AGENDA ITEM:** Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

---

**Action Requested:** ☒ Motion ☐ Discussion ☐ Public Hearing

**Form of Action:** ☐ Resolution ☐ Ordinance ☐ Contract/Agreement ☐ Proclamation

---

### **Policy Issue:**

The Environmental and Natural Resources Commission ordinance requires that the Commission elect a Chair and Vice-Chair to run the meetings each year.

### **Recommended Action:**

Motion to nominate a Chair and Vice-Chair for 2022. Motion to approve the Chair and Vice-Chair nominations.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

Is There a Fiscal Impact? ☒ No ☐ Yes, the true or estimated cost is \$0.00

Financing source(s): ☐ Adopted Budget ☐ Budget Modification ☐ New Revenue Source  
☐ Use of Reserves ☒ Other: n/a

### **Strategic Plan Relevance:**

☐ Financial Sustainability ☐ Integrated Communication ☐ Targeted Redevelopment  
☒ Operational Effectiveness ☐ Community Inclusiveness ☐ Infrastructure & Asset Mgmt.

The Environmental and Natural Resources Commission ordinance outlines the duties of the Chair and Vice-Chair as follows: The Chair is responsible for calling and presiding at meetings and shall have an equal vote with other members of the Commission. If the Chairperson is not at the meeting, the Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair for that meeting.

### **Background**

In 2020 the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission elected Commissioner Palzer to act as Chair and Commissioner Dosser to act as Vice-Chair. The 2022 elections were announced at the December 2021 Commission meeting. There was no discussion by the Commission. During the January 2021 meeting, the Commission should nominate a Chair and Vice-Chair to serve throughout the year, and make a motion to approve those elected positions.

### **Attachments**

None

## ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date January 25, 2022

**REPORT TO:** Environmental and Natural Resources Commission

**REPORT FROM:** Shann Finwall, AICP, Environmental Planner

**PRESENTER:** Shann Finwall, AICP, Environmental Planner

**AGENDA ITEM:** 2022 Work Plan and Environmental Priorities

---

**Action Requested:** ☐ Motion ☒ Discussion ☐ Public Hearing

**Form of Action:** ☐ Resolution ☐ Ordinance ☐ Contract/Agreement ☐ Proclamation

---

### **Policy Issue:**

The Environmental and Natural Resources Commission ordinance outlines the Commission's duties and responsibilities to include: The Commission shall establish environmental priorities for the city in partnership with the City Council and recommend changes or new policies that control, protect, preserve, and enhance the City's environmental assets.

### **Recommended Action:**

Review and offer comment and feedback on the 2022 work plan and environmental priorities.

### **Fiscal Impact:**

Is There a Fiscal Impact? ☒ No ☐ Yes, the true or estimated cost is \$0

Financing source(s): ☐ Adopted Budget ☐ Budget Modification ☐ New Revenue Source  
☐ Use of Reserves ☒ Other: n/a

### **Strategic Plan Relevance:**

☐ Financial Sustainability ☐ Integrated Communication ☐ Targeted Redevelopment  
☒ Operational Effectiveness ☐ Community Inclusiveness ☐ Infrastructure & Asset Mgmt.

Outlining a work plan and environmental priorities will allow the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission to operate effectively by setting an agenda and schedule for the year, and assisting the City in meeting its environmental and sustainability goals.

### **Background**

The work plan includes items the Commission should review during the year. Environmental priorities are changes or new policies recommended by the Commission that protect, preserve, or enhance the City's environmental assets.

## **Update on 2021 Work Plan and Environmental Priorities**

### **2021 Work Plan**

1. Mississippi River Critical Area and Slope Ordinance – COMPLETE. Adopted by the City Council in October 2021. Approved by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in the fall of 2022.
2. Trash and Recycling Annual Review – COMPLETE. The Trash and Recycling Annual Review was held in April 2021.
3. Renewable Energy Ordinance – COMPLETE. Amendments were made to the Renewable Energy Ordinance based on the Sol Smart technical advisor review. The ordinance is scheduled to go before the City Council in the Spring of 2022.
4. Zoning Updates – Based on 2040 Comprehensive Plan. NOT COMPLETE. Carry over to 2022.
5. Wetland Ordinance – Update to Public Infrastructure Exemptions. NOT COMPLETE. Carry over to 2022. In addition to updates to public infrastructure exemptions, the Commission should update the wetland maps based on the new Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District changes.
6. Nature Center Task Force Recommendations – Implementation Strategies. PARTIALLY COMPLETE. Carry over to 2022 with updates on the City's new Parks and Natural Resources Department and how the City can bring back Nature Center programming and education to the Nature Center.

### **2021 Environmental Priority**

The Climate Adaptation Plan was approved by the City Council in May 2021. City staff is in the beginning phase of implementation of the plan. Next steps in the Climate goals outlined in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is a Climate Mitigation Plan. Maplewood has applied for a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Climate Resiliency grant to fund the Climate Mitigation Plan. Grant funds are scheduled to be awarded in March 2022.

## **2022 Work Plan**

Following are items that will, or may, come before the Commission in 2022:

1. Trash and Recycling 2022 Annual Review.
2. Zoning Updates –
  - a. Shoreland Ordinance – The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources drafted a model Shoreland Ordinance in 2019. The Commission should review that ordinance for possible amendments to the City's Shoreland Ordinance.
  - b. Other ordinance updates based on 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
3. Wetland Ordinance – Update to public infrastructure exemptions and updates to the wetland map.
4. Climate Mitigation Plan – Pending MPCA Planning Resilience Grant Award.
5. Nature Center Task Force Recommendations – Implementation Strategies.

## **2022 Environmental Priorities**

To help guide environmental priorities for 2022, the Commission should review the Strategic Priorities, Environmental and Natural Resources Commission duties and responsibilities, 2040

Comprehensive Plan (Natural Resources and Sustainability Chapters), Climate Adaptation Plan, and Green Step Cities best practices.

### Strategic Priorities

The [Maplewood Strategic Plan](#) serves as the community's roadmap and is used to prioritize initiatives, resources, goals, and department operations and projects. The strategic plan is a big-picture document directing efforts and resources toward a clearly defined vision. The City Council is holding a retreat in February 2022 to review the City's Strategic Priorities. The current priorities may be modified to include environmental priorities as well.

1. **Community Inclusiveness:** Strive to create a community that is engaged, tolerant, and compassionate about everyone. To further build a community that embraces and respects diversity and that uses different perspectives and experiences to build an inclusive and equitable city for all.
2. **Financial Stability:** Maintain a positive financial position by balancing revenues and expenditures for operations, debt management, and capital investments. Provide quality city services at a level that reflects community values and that are supported by available resources.
3. **Infrastructure and Asset Management:** Provide safe, efficient, sustainable, cost-effective, and well-maintained roads and transportation systems. Build, maintain, and manage capital assets to preserve long-term investment and ensure uninterrupted support services.
4. **Integrated Communication:** Create a long-term vision that reflects our community identity and effectively communicates a consistent, broad-based message and brand through a variety of mediums.
5. **Operational Effectiveness:** Create a culture that is built on trust, conveys clearly identified goals and expectations, and is focused on the city's long-range mission and vision. Value organizational efficiencies that are based on performance measurement, accountability, and best practices.
6. **Targeted Redevelopment:** Guide residential development by leveraging resources to expand the tax base but also create housing options that meet the diversity of the community. Promote commercial development through the green building code and innovation that supports business growth.

### Environmental and Natural Resources Commission Duties and Responsibilities

The [Environmental and Natural Resources Commission ordinance](#) outlines the Commission's roles. In order to protect, preserve and enhance the environment of the City of Maplewood, the Commission will:

1. Establish environmental priorities for the city in partnership with the City Council.
2. Recommend to the Community Design Review Board, Planning Commission and City Council changes necessary to existing policies, operating procedures and ordinances that control, protect, preserve and enhance the city's environmental assets.



3. Actively participate in and support the mission and goals of the Maplewood Nature Center and Neighborhood Preserves by promoting environmental awareness through educational programs, communications and co-sponsored activities.
4. Proactively promote greater use and appreciation of the city's environmental assets.
5. Review the role of other city groups and how they might assist, support and advise the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission.
6. Sponsor environmental projects to enhance, repair, replace or restore neglected or deteriorating environmental assets of the city.
7. Develop educational programs and materials that foster the mission of the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission.
8. Develop and promote the use of "sustainable practices" for city policies and procedures.

#### 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Following are the environmental goals and action items adopted in the [2040 Comprehensive Plan](#). The action items highlighted in yellow have been complete.

#### *Natural Resources*

1. Develop and implement a Maplewood Tree Plan to cover boulevard trees, park trees, woodlots, and forests.

#### *Energy Goals*

1. The City will follow the state energy goal guidelines of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 20 percent of the City's 2015 baseline levels by 2050 (an 80 percent reduction).
2. The City will establish interim goals every 5 to 10 years to assure City emission reductions track against the primary goal outlined above, and to adjust policies and strategies as needed. Future interim goals will be established by the City at the completion of the first interim timeframe.
3. The City will encourage and support renewable energy.
  - a. The City will obtain a minimum of 50 percent of all electric energy from renewable sources by 2040. This includes having a minimum of 20 percent in on-site solar photovoltaic generation within the City, with the balance being met through Xcel Energy's 31.5 percent renewable portfolio requirement.
  - b. City facilities will be powered by 100% renewables by 2040.

#### *Energy Actions*

1. Set interim goals as follows:
  - a. Greenhouse Gas Reduction Interim Goal: Reduce City-Wide greenhouse gas emissions to 80% of 2015 Baseline levels by 2025 (a 20 percent reduction).

- b. On-Site Solar Interim Goals:
  - 1) Achieve 5.5 percent on-site solar photovoltaic by 2022.
  - 2) Achieve 15 percent on-site solar photovoltaic by 2030.
- c. Modify the City's operating procedures and annual budgets to implement the Climate Action and Adaption goals.
- d. Conduct a site-specific solar energy capacity study to identify the 20 most beneficial sites for solar PV development. Use the site-specific study as the basis of outreach to the owners of the top 20 sites, educating them on the opportunities and benefits of installing solar PV within the existing timeframe of the Federal Tax Incentive. Study should occur by mid-2018 to support leverage of tax incentive potential.
- e. Coordinate with Ramsey County and Minnesota PACE to develop a communications plan to review the financing opportunities and financial advantages available to utilizing PACE financing for solar PV, especially while the Federal Tax Incentive remains in effect through 2021.
- f. Develop and distribute an informational brochure outlining the current incentives available to Maplewood residents and businesses as well as the potential short and long-term benefits of installing solar PV. Work with City businesses and community groups to assure broad distribution.
- g. Coordinate with Ramsey County to explore the development of new incentive programs, particularly those aimed at low and moderate income residents. Program opportunities may include development of Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) based funding sources.
- h. Conduct a Green Economy Business and Economic Development Potentials study to identify strategies in leveraging economic opportunities in the Green Economy and emerging renewable energy field. Study should focus not only on national, state, and metro area trends, but should identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats unique to Maplewood. The goal of establishing a robust business atmosphere capable not only of serving Maplewood renewable energy and green economy needs but fulfilling a unique economic niche within the Metropolitan area.
- i. Adopt a Climate Action and **Adaptation Plan** that includes strategies for dealing with the effects of climate change. Strategies to be considered should strive to:
  - 1) Decrease City-wide GHG emissions to meet the City's long-range emissions goals.
  - 2) Increase renewable energy to meet the City's long-range renewable energy goals.
  - 3) Conduct a climate vulnerabilities study.
  - 4) Decrease the urban heat island effect, especially in areas with populations most vulnerable to heat.
  - 5) Minimize health issues caused by extreme heat days, especially for populations most vulnerable to heat.
  - 6) Increase the resilience of Maplewood's water supply in drier summers.
  - 7) Increase food security for Maplewood residents, especially those most vulnerable.
  - 8) Increase the resilience of natural and built systems to adapt to increased timeframes between precipitation and increased drought conditions.

- 9) Increase the resilience of the natural and built environment to more intense rain event and associated flooding.
- 10) Manage the increased risk of disease due to changes in vector populations.
- 11) Strengthen emergency management capacity to respond to weather-related emergencies.
- 12) Institutionalize climate change preparation planning and best practices.
- 13) Improve the capacity of the community, especially populations most vulnerable to climate change risks, to understand, prepare for and respond to climate impacts. The development of a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan will support the communities' guiding principles of resilience, health, equity.

### *Local Food Access Goals*

1. Create a healthy, walkable community by providing healthy food options and accessibility for all people, regardless of income.
2. Support development patterns that decrease the distance between households and healthy retail food options.
3. Encourage healthy retail food options such as food stores and farmers markets that are located in places easily reached by bus, bike or foot.
4. Support the establishment and maintenance of community gardens throughout the community to provide residents with easy access to healthy food.
5. Support the establishment of urban farms in appropriate areas.
6. Encourage edible and pollinator-friendly landscapes on all properties.
7. Support the keeping of bees, chickens, goats and other animals appropriate for the size and location of the property.
8. Support food-related business and initiatives that advance the development of local and regional economies.
9. Support innovative practices such as mobile food markets and mobile food pantries/shelves to bring food closer to under-resourced consumers.
10. Support the efforts of small food stores to sell more healthy and fresh foods.

### *Local Food Access Actions*

1. Conduct a community food security assessment to identify barriers and gaps in healthy food access and community assets.
2. Complete an urban agriculture zoning review to remove barriers and promote local food access in all zoning districts.
3. Allow and encourage single-family subdivisions and multi-family developments to incorporate community gardens.
4. Integrate community gardens into public housing developments and create incentives for community gardens in affordable housing developments that receive public assistance.
5. Encourage townhome and other types of housing associations to allow gardening as part of allowable activities.
6. Analyze and address sidewalk and trail gaps near food stores, hunger relief programs, farmers markets, community gardens, and other healthy food sources.
7. Require new developments that will have food options to provide safe, internal circulation for pedestrians and cyclists and bike racks.
8. Explore partnership opportunities to provide education and skill development for families around healthy food selection and preparation.
9. Collaborate on equipment-lending libraries and seed and seedling programs to support garden efforts of families.

10. Identify and educate on options for testing of soil of contaminants to ensure new gardens are safe.
11. Review and modify as needed healthy food options available at city facilities.
12. Explore how to add community supported agriculture delivery sites to serve multi-family developments.
13. **Modify** land use policies **to support pollinators through city ordinance** and city operations/maintenance.
14. Partner with the business and school communities to promote health and well-being within worksites.
15. Review management of locally owned public land, and take steps to increase its contribution to pollinator health.
16. Partner with local food retailers to market a buy local food campaign.

### Climate Adaptation Plan

The May 2021 Climate Adaptation Plan establishes the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission as the main citizen-body to support the implementation of the Climate Adaptation Plan. The adaptation portion of the plan outlines two areas of study which could be undertaken by the Commission:

1. Develop and incorporate equity metrics in the evaluation of climate adaptation plan activities. This evaluation will be used as a criterion for the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission, budget team, others, during review of implementation.
2. Generate local revenue programs for climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. Ideas include tiered stormwater fees, resilience penny property tax, capturing energy savings from existing renewable energy projects, utility franchise fees.

### Green Step Cities Best Practices

[Minnesota GreenStep Cities](#) is a voluntary challenge, assistance and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals. Maplewood is a Step 5 Green Step City, the highest award category. To maintain this status the City must measure its sustainability best practices and make improvements on those metrics. The Environmental and Natural Resources Commission serves as the oversight committee for the City's sustainability best practices, with the Green Team serving as the steering committee.

There are 29 [best practices](#) outlined in the program in the areas of buildings and lighting, land use, transportation, environmental management, and resilient economic and community development. One of the Resilient Economic and Community Development best practices outlines a strategy to assist the City with its climate adaptation plan as follows:

Inclusive and Coordinated Decision-Making: Use a city commission or committee to lead, coordinate, report to and engage community members on the identification and equitable implementation of sustainability best practices.

### Attachments

None