

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

**Monday, April 17, 2023
7:00 p.m.
Maplewood City Council Chambers
1803 County Road B East**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes:
 - a. March 29, 2023
5. New Business
 - a. Election of Chair and Vice Chair
 - b. 2023 Work Plan and Environmental Priorities
6. Unfinished Business
7. Visitor Presentations
8. Commissioner Presentations
9. Staff Presentations (oral reports)
 - a. April 22, 2023 - Spring Clean Up at Aldrich Arena from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 - b. May 20, 2023 – Arbor Day Event from 9:30 a.m. to noon
 - c. June 3, 2023 – Waterfest at Phalen Regional Park from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
10. Adjourn

**MINUTES
CITY OF MAPLEWOOD
ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 2023
7:00 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chairperson Bryan called a meeting of the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Emma Broadnax, Commissioner	Absent
Rebecca Bryan, Acting Chairperson	Present
Nancy Edwards, Commissioner	Present
Benjamin Guell, Commissioner	Present
David Lates, Commissioner	Present
Mollie Miller, Commissioner	Present
Ted Redmond, Commissioner	Absent

Staff Present

Shann Finwall, Environmental Planner

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Staff requested the addition of item 3.a. – Oath of Office

Commissioner Guell moved to approve the amended March 29, 2023, Environmental and Natural Resources Commission agenda.

Seconded by Commissioner Redmond Ayes – All

The motion passed.

3.a. OATH OF OFFICE

Nancy Edwards and David Lates were sworn into the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission with the Oath of Office.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. November 30, 2022

Commissioner Redmond moved to approve the November 30, 2022, Environmental and Natural Resources Commission agenda.

Seconded by Commissioner Guell Ayes – All

The motion passed.

b. January 25, 2023

Commissioner Guell moved to approve the January 25, 2023, Environmental and Natural Resources Commission agenda.

Seconded by Acting Chair Bryan

Ayes – Bryan, Edwards, Guell, and Lates

Abstain – Redmond

The motion passed.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Tennis Sanitation Recycling Collection Annual Review

- 1) 2022 Recycling Collection Year End Report
- 2) 2023 Recycling Collection Work Plan

Environmental Planner Finwall presented the report.

Willie Tennis and Alexia Hieserich Freund of Tennis Sanitation answered questions of the ENR Commission.

The ENR Commission had the following feedback on the Recycling Collection Annual Review:

- Does Tennis Sanitation recycle electronics as part of the City's recycling service? No, the collection of electronics is part of the City's trash service and the contract with Republic Services.
- Can Tennis Sanitation begin recycling Styrofoam? No, the recycling companies require at least a 40,000-pound load of recyclables. Styrofoam is very lightweight and breaks up easily.
- How are the recycling markets doing? Tennis Sanitation has success in recycling their materials because they work with all local recycling companies in Minnesota and the Midwest.

b. Republic Services Trash and Yard Waste Collection Annual Review

- 1) 2022 Trash and Yard Waste Collection Year End Report
- 2) 2023 Trash and Yard Waste Collection Work Plan

Environmental Planner Finwall Presented the report.

Beverly Mathiasen and Samahra Hallada of Republic Services answered questions of the ENR Commission.

The ENR Commission had the following feedback on the Trash and Yard Waste Collection Annual Review:

- How will Republic Services report the amount of food scraps collected in the new curbside food scraps collection program? The City will want that information for its annual greenhouse gas assessment. Those details are

still being worked out through the pilot program. However, once the procedures for weighing that material is determined, Republic Services can include that information on the monthly and yearly reports.

- Residents with the smallest size trash carts that currently take their food scraps to the drop off site may have challenges fitting the durable compostable food scraps bag in the cart. The County's food scraps drop off sites will remain open. It is estimated that 20 percent of most resident's trash is made up of food scraps.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS

None

8. COMMISSIONER PRESENTATIONS

None

9. STAFF PRESENTATIONS

Environmental Planner Finwall updated the ENR Commission on the following:

- a. March 13, 2023, City Council Meeting Update – Renewable Energy Ordinance and Wetland Buffer Variance for 1910 County Road C (Carretta Senior Housing Development)
- b. April 17, 2023 - ENR Meeting Updates
- c. April 22, 2023 - Spring Clean Up at Aldrich Arena from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- d. No Mow May Update
- e. June 3, 2023 – Waterfest at Phalen Regional Park from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- f. Earth Week Planking Challenge

10. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Redmond made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Commissioner Edwards

Ayes – All

The motion passed.

Acting Chair Bryan adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION STAFF REPORT
Meeting Date April 17, 2023

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:

Nominate a Chair and Vice-Chair. 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
 Financing source(s): Adopted Budget Budget Modification New Revenue Source
 Use of Reserves Other: n/a

Strategic Plan Relevance:

Community Inclusiveness Financial & Asset Mgmt Environmental Stewardship
 Integrated Communication Operational Effectiveness Targeted Redevelopment

The Environmental and Natural Resources Commission was formed to establish environmental priorities and to propose changes necessary to existing environmental ordinances, which ensure that the city's environmental assets are protected, preserved, and enhanced. 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 2022, the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission elected Commissioner Dosser to act as Chair and Commissioner Bryan to act as Vice-Chair. Commissioner Dosser resigned from the Commission on May 5, 2022. Commissioner Bryan has been serving as the Acting Chair since that time. The Commission should nominate a Chair and Vice-Chair for 2023, and make a motion to approve those elected positions.

ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION STAFF REPORT
Meeting Date April 17, 2023

REPORT TO: Environmental and Natural Resources Commission
REPORT FROM: Shann Finwall, AICP, Environmental Planner
PRESENTER: Shann Finwall, AICP, Environmental Planner
AGENDA ITEM: 2023 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 (ENR) 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 2023 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:

Community Inclusiveness Financial & Asset Mgmt Environmental Stewardship
 Integrated Communication Operational Effectiveness Targeted Redevelopment

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 2022 Work Plan and Environmental Priorities

1. Trash and Recycling 2022 Annual Review.

Status: Complete March 2023

2. Zoning Updates:

- a. Shoreland Ordinance: In 2017 the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources drafted innovative shoreland standards for local governments that exceed Minnesota Rules. The ENR Commission should review those standards for possible updates to the City's Shoreland Ordinance.

Status: In 2007 to 2010 the Minnesota Legislature directed the DNR to commence rulemaking to update Shoreland Rules. The DNR conducted an extensive public participation process. Draft rules were complete in 2010, however, Governor Pawlenty returned the rules to DNR and the DNR's rulemaking authority lapsed and the rules were not adopted. As such, Cities are not required to update their Shoreland Ordinances to meet the draft ordinance at this time. City staff did review the 2017 standards and the DNR's new 2022 draft Shoreland Ordinance. Maplewood's shoreland (areas of land within 1,000 feet of a public water) are fully developed. Much of the new draft DNR Shoreland Ordinance focuses on development of lands near public waters. It does not appear that the proposed ordinance language is necessary to implement in Maplewood at this time. It is also prudent to wait until the City is required to modify the ordinance based on updated rules due to the extensive process for amending the ordinance.

- b. Other ordinance updates based on 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Status: The ENR Commission finished its review and amendments to the Renewable Energy Ordinance. Many amendments proposed in the amended ordinance assist the City in meeting energy and climate goals outlined in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

3. Wetland Ordinance: Update to public infrastructure exemptions and the wetland map.

Status: City staff is working with the watershed district and a consultant to update wetland maps based on new wetland delineations and incidental wetland determinations.

4. Climate Mitigation Plan

Status: For the second year, the City's MPCA Planning Resilience Grant request was not awarded. The City of Maplewood will continue to look for funding sources for the mitigation planning efforts.

5. [Nature Center Task Force Recommendations](#)

Status: The City of Maplewood continues to look for opportunities to implement strategies outlined in the Nature Center Task Force Recommendations. To date the City has reopened the Nature Center building; continues to maintain the nature yard and nature trails; partnered with the school district, 4H Club, and others on Nature Center programming; and is re-implementing a volunteer program.

2023 Work Plan

Following are items that will, or may come before the Commission in 2023:

1. Trash and Recycling 2023 Annual Review – Required by the City’s trash and recycling haulers yearly (Complete March 2023).
2. Trash and Recycling Contract Request for Proposals – Republic Services’ and Tennis Sanitations’ contracts end June 30, 2025. The City should begin to coordinate solid waste management goals and objectives for the pending request for proposals, which should be released in 2024.

2023 Environmental Priorities

To help guide environmental priorities for 2023, the Commission should review the Strategic Priorities, ENR Commission duties and responsibilities, 2040 Comprehensive Plan (Natural Resources and Sustainability Chapters), Climate Adaptation Plan, and Green Step Cities and Gold Leaf programs.

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.

1. Community Inclusiveness: Create a city where everyone is valued and respected, and celebrate our strengths as a diverse multi-cultural, multi-lingual community. We recognize that our different perspectives and experiences bind us together to make us stronger.
2. Financial and Asset Management: Maintain fiscal sustainability while building, and managing assets to preserve long-term investment and ensure uninterrupted quality services.
3. Environmental Stewardship: Lead in the protection and enhancement of our natural resources and assets through stewardship, education, and proactive policy. Preserve and advocate for a healthy and sustainable environment.
4. 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 [ENR 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 ENR 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 ENR 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](#).

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 ENR 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 that 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 ENR 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 Program

[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 ENR 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.

Gold Leaf Program

The Gold Leaf is the next step in the Green Step Cities program. It is a new program that will focus on pathways for communities to take local climate actions. In 2023, Maplewood is participating in the pilot program along with ten other communities. Participants of the pilot Gold Leaf program will be recognized as they achieve 'gold leaves' for completing any new action from:

- [44 high-priority, high-impact climate actions](#) (page 17) under the categories of:
 - Climate mitigation
 - Climate planning
 - Climate adaptation
 - Community connectedness for Minnesota's changing climate