



## Planning & Development Committee

Monday, May 10, 2021 @ 3:30 PM

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, Virtual

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER PRESENT:**

Ann Rainey, 8th Ward Alderman, Donald Wilson, 4th Ward Alderman, Eleanor Revelle, 7th Ward Alderman, Judy Fiske, 1st Ward Alderman, Robin Rue Simmons, 5th Ward Alderman, Thomas Suffredin, 6th Ward Alderman, and Melissa Wynne, 3rd Ward Alderman

### **COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:**

### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Johanna Nyden, Director of Community Development, David Stoneback, Public Works Agency Director, Erika Storlie, City Manager, and Alexandra Ruggie, Assistant City Attorney

### **(I) CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

A quorum being present Councilmember Fiske called the meeting to order at 3:37 p.m. Suspension of the Rules Allowing for Remote Participation.

P1. Suspension of the Rules Allowing for Remote Participation

Due to an executive order issued by Governor J.B. Pritzker, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, staff recommends a suspension of the rules regarding in-person attendance requirements for public meetings, allowing for City Council members and City staff to participate in this meeting remotely.

For ActionMoved by Councilmember Donald Wilson

Seconded by Councilmember Eleanor Revelle

**Ayes:** Ann Rainey, Judy Fiske, Eleanor Revelle, Thomas Suffredin, Melissa Wynne

**Carried 7-0 on a recorded vote**

### **(II) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

PM1. Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Planning & Development Committee meeting of April 26, 2021

Staff recommends approval of the Minutes of the Regular Planning & Development Committee meeting of April 26, 2021.

**For Action**

Moved by 3rd Ward Alderman Melissa Wynne  
Seconded by 8th Ward Alderman Ann Rainey

**Ayes:** 8th Ward Alderman Ann Rainey, 3rd Ward Alderman Melissa Wynne, 4th Ward Alderman Donald Wilson, 7th Ward Alderman Eleanor Revelle, 1st Ward Alderman Judy Fiske, 5th Ward Alderman Robin Rue Simmons, and 6th Ward Alderman Thomas Suffredin

**Carried 7-0 on a recorded vote**

**(III) PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mike Vasilko stated that the new council members should have been sworn in and it is an illegitimate last action. The council members that are staying should walkout in protest.

Andrew Berman also provided public comment.

**(IV) ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

P1. **Ordinance 53-O-21, Amending Portions of the City Code to Extend the Expiration Date of Permitted Uses Within the U2 Zoning District**

Staff recommends City Council adoption of Ordinance 53-O-21, amending the City Code to extend the expiration date of permitted uses within the U2 zoning district from December 31, 2021 to December 31, 2022.

**For Introduction**

Councilmember Revelle stated that she has shared before that the proposed amendment is not a good idea. A one-year pilot seems like a good idea but Northwestern could use the precedent for additional and bigger events in the future. She urged the committee to vote no.

Moved by 4th Ward Alderman Donald Wilson  
Seconded by 8th Ward Alderman Ann Rainey

**Ayes:** 8th Ward Alderman Ann Rainey, 4th Ward Alderman Donald Wilson, 1st Ward Alderman Judy Fiske, and 5th Ward Alderman Robin Rue Simmons  
**Nays:** 7th Ward Alderman Eleanor Revelle, 6th Ward Alderman Thomas Suffredin, and 3rd Ward Alderman Melissa Wynne

**Carried 4-3 on a recorded vote**

P2. **Ordinance 54-O-21, Amending Title 7, Chapter 8, Section 8 Tree Preservation**

Staff recommends that City Council consider Ordinance 54-O-21 amending the Tree Preservation Ordinance (7-8-8) to expand protection of trees on private property. There is currently no capacity to implement and administer the revised Tree Preservation Ordinance due to lack of staff resources in the Public Works Agency (PWA) and Community

Development Department. Staff recommends inclusion of an effective date in 2022 that is also contingent on the addition of new staff resources for the 2022 budget to PWA that will support the implementation of this ordinance.

**For Introduction**

Councilmember Fiske asked Johanna Nyden, Community Development Director, what staff requirements are necessary and why it would require a full-time staff member to oversee this. Ms. Nyden stated that a tree survey would be needed for a project of a certain size and that process itself would require another staff member.

Councilmember Fiske then asked why it couldn't be simplified that when a property owner submits their plans they include the placement and caliber of trees on their property that they could measure themselves.

Ms. Nyden responded that it is never quite that simple when looking at the measurements and tree species. Staff already get many questions from the basic application that they need to respond to.

Dave Stoneback, Director of the Public Works Agency, indicated that we are concerned with the number of potential permits that could come in and someone would have to administer. It could be over 400 and they would need to respond to residents as to why not a permit is issued. The staff is currently backlogged on tree requests and has already received 360 311 requests this year. The additional work can not be absorbed by our current staff.

Councilmember Fiske asked Erika Storlie, City Manager, what the likelihood that we will have funding in the upcoming budget to hire a staff person.

Ms. Storlie responded that it is not something we are able to determine at this time with the new city council coming on, they would need to determine if this is something they would want or not.

Councilmember Fiske asked to hear from other council members as it is an important part of our climate resiliency plan.

Councilmember Wilson stated that it is important to the community and that they should move it forward for introduction so the subsequent council can take action on it.

Councilmember Rainey agreed with Councilmember Wilson's comments.

Councilmember Wynne is a very strong supporter of trees but believes that we need to apply an equity lens to this to make sure that it isn't just someone that can buy their way out of keeping a tree. When this was drafted, that wasn't applied to it and we need to look at that from that standpoint. She would like to introduce it but then hold it in committee to ask staff to do more work on it in terms of what the right staffing would be and applying the equity lens.

Councilmember Simmons thanked Councilmember Wynne for bringing that point up and stated she agreed that equity should be centered around this discussion with more work by staff. She indicated that another resource that will be available soon is an environmental asset map that is being prepared by Environmental Justice Evanston along with the possible staff.

Councilmember Rainey thinks that as we look at this with an equity lens that there should be a fund to support those cases where a person cannot afford to deal with trees.

Councilmember Revelle agreed with a lot of what has been said and asked where the best place for this to be held, in the Planning and Development Committee to get these details worked out.

Alexandria Ruggie, City Attorney, stated it would be best to hold it in committee and perhaps to a date certain so staff can come back with further recommendations.

Councilmember Wynne requested that the date certain be six months from now.

Councilmember Revelle stated she thought that was too long and that September would be a better timeline.

Councilmember Fiske said that this is not just a staff hiring issue and it underscores the importance. It should be moved along to send a message to the community that this is important to protect these trees. She also stated that she is concerned about section 6 where it includes the \$100 permit fee and any consultant review fees incurred by the City. That statement is so vague and would be troubling to anyone. The permit fee should be the end of it. She acknowledged Natural Habitat Evanston created a fund to inoculate all of the elms last season.

Councilmember Wynne moved that this item be held in committee until September 27 and staff come back in the second meeting in July with a progress report.

Councilmember Simmons seconded that motion.

Moved by 8th Ward Alderman Ann Rainey

Seconded by 5th Ward Alderman Robin Rue Simmons

**Ayes:** 8th Ward Alderman Ann Rainey, 5th Ward Alderman Robin Rue Simmons, 4th Ward Alderman Donald Wilson, 7th Ward Alderman Eleanor Revelle, 6th Ward Alderman Thomas Suffredin, and 3rd Ward Alderman Melissa Wynne

**Nays:** 1st Ward Alderman Judy Fiske

**Carried 6-1 on a recorded vote**

**(V) ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**(VI) ITEMS FOR COMMUNICATION**

**(VII) ADJOURNMENT**

Councilmember Fiske moved adjournment of the meeting, seconded by Alderman Revelle. The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.