

Topic: **Sustainable Design**

Date Introduced: **January 13, 2010**

Why on the list: This issue has been brought up by the Planning Commission, the Energy and Environment Commission, and residents during this process.

History: Over the past few years the Planning Commission has discussed ways to require sustainable design within development proposals. Many developers promise that certain sustainable design principles will be incorporated into their projects. These promises are often made conditions of approval.

Decision Points: 1. Can the City require sustainable building design beyond what is required the Uniform Building Code (UBC) within standard zoning districts?
2. Is a PUD the appropriate section of the Zoning Ordinance for requiring sustainable design principles?
3. What types of sustainable design regulations should the City focus on?

Options: 1. Recommend proceeding with the preparation of sustainable design requirements within the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Rely on modifications to the UBC for regulation on sustainable or "green" buildings. Continue the current practice of requiring certain sustainable design principles as part of rezoning approvals, where the City has leverage to require additional performance standards.

B. Sustainable Design

Date Introduced: January 13, 2010

Planner Teague reminded the Committee the topic of sustainable design has been brought up by the Planning Commission, EEC and residents during the updating process.

Planner Teague explained that over the past few years the Planning Commission has discussed a number of ways to require sustainable design in development proposals. Planner Teague pointed out with past projects developers have promised that they would incorporate certain sustainable design items into their proposal and the PC has often made them a condition of approval; however, most are policy guidelines and are not in the ordinance. Continuing, Planner Teague questioned if the City can require sustainable building designs beyond what is found in the Uniform Building Code (UBC); or would adding requirements for sustainable design be more appropriate in the PUD portion of the ordinance. Concluding, Planner Teague stated he believes the Committee has two options when considering sustainable design requirements:

1. Recommend proceeding with the preparation of sustainable design requirements within the zoning ordinance.
2. Rely on modifications to the Uniform Building Code (UBC).

Committee Comments/Questions

- Develop incentives for developers to incorporate sustainable design. Members acknowledged it will take time for the UBC to “catch up” with what’s happening in the market.
- Members acknowledged that the attractiveness of “sustainable design” is exploding across the development community. Find an uncomplicated way to “get there”. Instead of focusing on requirements, develop goals. Ordinance vs. policy – policies are more flexible and easier to adjust; ordinance change isn’t.
- A question that communities need to be aware of - if cities mandate, what are the terms? How is it measured? How is it followed-up? Do communities have the right to continue to require that buildings remain sustainable long after construction when standards are continually changing? (How does the City know if the building remains “certified” 10, 20 years later?).
- What’s the basis for sustainable design requirements; the legal “hook”? Edina benefits from good development practices. Most developers would agree to implement sustainable design principles because the majority of clients want a sustainable building; it’s less expensive to operate.
- Look at what other cities are doing with sustainable design.

- Does the City want to create ordinances ahead of changes to the building code?
- The City Council needs to take a policy stand on sustainable design.

Chair Fischer noted as was previously mentioned that there are a number of issues to consider with sustainable design, adding the public works site may be a good place to start. Continuing, Chair Fischer said what he believes the Committee needs to do at this time is to continue the discussion and have staff "find out" what other cities are doing with regard to sustainable design, what terms to mandate and how it's measured. Concluding, Chair Fischer said he knows someone (Rick Carter) who has worked with Minneapolis, St. Paul, St. Louis Park, and many other communities on this issue. Rick would be willing to meet with the Committee and answer any questions the Committee may have.

Action

Chair Fischer will invite a colleague to speak to the Committee on sustainable design. We will invite the EEC to participate in that discussion. Staff would solicit other cities to find out how they address sustainable design.

Continued Discussion: February 10, 2010

C. Planned Unit Development (PUD) Date Introduced: January 13, 2010

Planner Teague addressed the Committee and informed them Edina is one of the few communities without a PUD. Continuing, Planner Teague reminded the Committee this topic has been brought up a number of times by the Planning Commission during review of development proposals.

Planner Teague said the following needs to be considered in the decision making process:

1. Should the City adopt a PUD Ordinance?
2. If so, should additional conditions/standards be required?
3. What conditions/standards should be required?
4. Is a PUD the appropriate section of the Zoning Ordinance to require sustainable design principles?
5. Should there be a minimum lot area for a PUD?
6. When would a PUD be justified?
7. Would a PUD allow Edina greater development control?