

City of East Bethel

City Council Agenda

Joint Meeting with Planning Commission
and Parks Commission – 6:00 PM

Date: March 3, 2010



	Item	
6:00 PM	1.0	Call to Order
6:01 PM	2.0	Adopt Agenda
6:02 PM	3.0	Presentation: Conservation Design (CD) Development
6:45 PM	4.0	Greenway and SNEA Maps and Outline of the Conservation Design Ordinance
7:15 PM	5.0	Set Meeting Date
7:20 PM	6.0	Adjourn



City of East Bethel City Council Agenda Information

Date:

March 3, 2010

Agenda Item Number:

Item 3.0

Agenda Item:

Conservation Design (CD) Development

Requested Action:

Informational Only

Background Information:

Conservation design refers to a subdivision design process and set of principles that preserve the rural landscape and the city’s natural resources. Conservation design requires careful attention to site planning and delineate areas to be protected as open space and areas to be developed as home sites. Ideally, a conservation design will identify unique, scenic or significant natural features of a site to be preserved in large contiguous blocks. Homes and lots are then laid out to maximize visual and physical access to the open space by the residents. Homes are typically clustered together on smaller lots, usually in a few areas of the site, to maximize each resident’s access to the open space.

Conservation design is an ecological way to treat storm water as it utilizes low impact development (LID) techniques. LID mimics pre-settlement hydrology and treats storm water as close to its source as possible by preserving natural drainage systems, soil infiltration capacity, and vegetated open space. LID approaches incorporate small-scale storm water treatment systems that replicate natural processes in detaining and filtering storm water. These design techniques along with reduced impervious surfaces, result in reduced runoff volumes and rates. The more open, rural character of conservation design allows for reduced street widths, no or few curbs, and treatment of most, if not all, storm water on site.

Preserving and restoring the natural world, especially where we live and work, is one of the nation’s most important conservation goals – and providing greenways (ecological corridors) may be one of the most beneficial and effective conservation strategies to accomplish it. We are learning more about the importance of the “linkage” that greenways provide in maintaining and restoring ecological processes. In order for greenways to fulfill their ecological potential and to decrease the impacts of development, there needs to be a connectivity of greenways throughout the landscape.

As part of the creation of a Conservation Design Ordinance, there are other significant documents that play an integral part in the success and the ability to enforce a conservation design ordinance. These documents include an update to the Water Management Plan, create a Storm Water Management Ordinance, refine the future greenway and significant natural

environmental areas (SNEA), update SNEA and PUD sections of the zoning code and create guidance/educational documents for stakeholders, residents, developers, etc.

Staff will be presenting additional CD information in the form of a Power Point presentation.

Fiscal Impact:

To be determined

Recommendation(s):

Informational Only

City Council Action

Motion by:_____

Second by:_____

Vote Yes:_____

Vote No:_____

No Action Required:_____



City of East Bethel City Council Agenda Information

Date:

March 3, 2010

Agenda Item Number:

Item 4.0

Agenda Item:

Discussion of Changes to Greenway and SNEA Maps and Outline of the Conservation Design Ordinance

Requested Action:

Staff seeks direction to correct inconsistencies between existing future greenways and SNEA overlay district, and to continue in the development of a draft of a conservation design ordinance.

Background Information:

The City of East Bethel has taken great strides to ensure the preservation of its' natural resources. At this point, staff sees it as fine tuning the details of what is already in place to ensure East Bethel has supportive methods to conservation development that has a positive impact on its' natural resources.

Preserving and restoring the natural world, especially where we live and work, is one of the nation's most important conservation goals – and providing greenways (ecological corridors) may be one of the most beneficial and effective conservation strategies to accomplish it. We are learning more about the importance of the “linkage” that greenways provide in maintaining and restoring ecological processes. In order for greenways to fulfill their ecological potential and to decrease the impacts of development, there needs to be a connectivity of greenways throughout the landscape. Greenways offer a whole range of benefits such as trails, open space, recreation and ecological needs.

After an analysis of the existing SNEA overlay district, future greenway corridor (figure 6 in the Comprehensive Trails and Open Space Concept Plan) and the East Bethel Natural Resources High Quality Habitat Patches map produced by Anoka Conservation District, staff recognizes that it may be beneficial to expand the open space/greenways throughout the city to minimize the indirect impact of development on natural spaces, known as fragmentation.

Currently, the GIS Rangers (city GIS consultants) are in the process of developing a map with the above mentioned layers. The map will give Council and staff a better understanding of areas that may need to be expanded for sustainable open space conservation. Maps will be available for review at the work session.

Conservation design refers to a subdivision design process and set of principles that preserves the rural landscape and the city's natural resources. Staff has collaborated with other governmental entities with broad experiences in conservation design. These agencies, Embrace Open Space,

DNR, NPS, City of Hanover, Metropolitan Council, and Anoka Conservation District, have assisted staff in the draft a conservation design ordinance to be reviewed.

Components of a Conservation Design Ordinance include the following:

1. Purpose and Intent: establishes the purpose for the regulations
2. Applicability: further defines the conservation design overlay district
3. General Design Standards: details on land ownership, density calculations, allowed uses, dimensional standards, open space requirements, open space design standards, landscape design standards, and low impact design standards

Staff has completed a draft of the majority of the elements; however, elements such as density and calculations of allowed dwelling units need to be discussed. It is important to note that according to the Metropolitan Council (MC), the RR district is classified as Diversified Rural. This classification requires a minimum gross density of 1 unit per 10 acres. Staff is currently working with MC staff as to the best approach (and MC approval) in determining the maximum number of density units allowed per acre. In the RR district, MC will play a role in density calculations.

Attachment(s):

1. Outline of Conservation Design Ordinance

Fiscal Impact:

To be determined

Recommendations:

Staff seeks direction to correct inconsistencies between existing future greenways and SNEA overlay district, and to continue in the development of a draft of a conservation design ordinance.

City Council Action

Motion by: _____

Second by: _____

Vote Yes: _____

Vote No: _____

No Action Required: _____

SECTION XX. CONSERVATION DESIGN OVERLAY (CD) DISTRICT

1. Purpose and intent.

A. The Conservation Design Overlay (CD) District is established for the purposes of regulating development consistent with the city Comprehensive Plan and Surface Water Management Plan. The CD District is intended to:

1) maintain the City's rural character by protecting and enhancing important landscape elements, including woodlands, hedgerows, drainage corridors, wetlands, floodplains, shorelands, meadows, pastures, and viewsheds as described in the city's conservation design guidance document (*Comment: This is a document staff has begun to put together and will be ready for review at the next scheduled work session.*);

2) conserve land for the purpose of creating ecological corridors (contiguous managed landscapes) to protect existing wildlife habitat and to connect patches of wildlife habitat to support greater biodiversity and maintain ecosystem processes;

3) create a system of interconnected ecological and trail corridors throughout the community for the benefit of current and future residents;

4) allow for the continuation of agricultural uses in those areas best suited for such activities and when such activities are compatible with adjoining residential uses;

5) conserve existing landscape character by minimizing views of new development from existing roads and development, thereby reducing perceived density;

6) provide development flexibility for landowners to reflect their varying circumstances and individual characteristics of their properties;

7) provide greater efficiency in the siting of services and infrastructure, including the opportunity to reduce road length and width, utility runs, and the impervious cover required for residential development;

8) provide for a diversity of lot sizes, building densities, and housing choices to accommodate a variety of age and income groups, and residential preferences;

9) protect water quality and reduce erosion and sedimentation by retaining existing vegetation;

10) reduce traffic speeds and pedestrian safety;

11) cluster houses and roads in less environmentally sensitive areas; and

12) incorporate stormwater management practices that reduce runoff and treat runoff through disperse treatment facilities located close to the source of runoff.

B. All development with the Conservation Design Overlay District shall be by planned unit development according to the:

1) platting procedures as established in the Subdivision Ordinance;

2) planned unit development procedures established in **Section 56** of this chapter; and

3) provisions found in this article.

2. Applicability.

A. The CD District, further defined herein, is hereby established as a part of this chapter. The CD District shall be an overlay district such that any parcel lying in the overlay district shall also lie within one or more of the underlying zoning districts. Regulations and procedures set forth in underlying zoning districts shall apply unless specifically addressed in **Section 56** (PUD) of the chapter, or this article, or if determined by the city council to be inconsistent with the purpose and intent outline in **Section 56** of this article, approved by the city council as part of the final planned unit development plans.

B. For purposes of determining the application of this article, the boundaries of the CD District shall be established and shown on the official zoning map of the city, on file in the office of the city clerk and zoning administrator.

C. Structures existing on or before the effective date hereof shall be exempt from the standards set forth with the CD District until such time as the parcel is subdivided.

D. Parcels lying in the CD District may be developed according to the regulations of the underlying or base zoning district or according to the regulations of this article.

3. General Design Standards.

A. All development under this section shall be pursuant to an approved Planned Unit Development (PUD) plan. The procedures and regulations set forth in **Section 56**. Planned Unit Development shall apply unless specifically addressed in this section. If a final PUD plan is approved by the city council, the underlying zoning for the subject property shall be rezoned to the PUD zoning district though the overlay district shall remain the conservation design overlay district. The permitted uses and all other regulations governing uses on the subject land shall then be those found in the PUD zoning district and documented by the PUD plans and agreement. The following subsections are requirements for all PUDs in the CD District unless exceptions, as part of a PUD, are otherwise approved by the city council. The city council must determine that the exceptions are consistent with the goals, policies, and plans of the Comprehensive Plan and the Surface Water Management Plan; the exceptions are generally compatible and would not be materially injurious to existing or future uses of surrounding properties; and the exceptions do not have an undue adverse impact on existing or planned city facilities and services, including streets, utilities, parks, police and fire, and the reasonable ability of the city to provide such service in an orderly and timely manner.

B. Minimum area: The minimum total area required for a PUD is 20 acres. All land in the PUD must be contiguous unless specifically approved otherwise by the city council based on the criteria in this section.

Comment: Not sure if having a minimum size is necessary.

C. Ownership: the tract of land may be held in single and separate ownership or in multiple ownerships. However, when a tract is held in multiple ownerships, it shall be planned as a single entity with common authority and common responsibility as demonstrated through all property owners being signatories on the PUD application.

D. Density and calculation of allowed dwelling units.

1) The maximum net density is XX dwelling units per acre.

Comment: According to Metropolitan Council (MC), the RR district is classified as Diversified Rural. This classification requires a minimum gross density of 1 unit per 10 acres. Staff is currently working with MC staff as to the best approach (and MC approved) in determining the maximum number of density units allowed per acre.

2) The number of dwelling units permitted on a site shall be based on net buildable area (NBA) using the following method:

From the gross acreage of the site, subtract the unbuildable areas:

Gross Acreage of Site	_____	acres
Unbuildable area	_____	acres
Land within existing road right-of-way	_____	acres
Land within existing utility and railroad right-of-way	_____	acres
Land within the 100-year floodplain	_____	acres
Land within wetlands, ponds, and lakes	_____	acres
Total unbuildable area	_____	acres
Net buildable area (NBA)	_____	acres

Where two or more categories overlap, the overlapping area shall be counted only once.

Comment: These characteristics of land are widely accepted to be unbuildable and are not suitable for development. It is important to have a common and consistent benchmark on how density is actually applied.

To determine the number of dwelling units permitted, the net buildable area shall be multiplied by the maximum net density, rounding to the nearest whole number.

_____ Acres NBA multiplied by _____ (max. net density) = _____ permitted dwelling units

E. Allowed uses: PUD developments in the CD District are allowed to have a mixture of housing types, provided that the provisions of this article are met. The total number and location of housing units and housing types for each PUD shall be established by the city council at the time of final PUD plan approval for the specific property.

Comment: Could add more information on the specific housing types allowed or state what is prohibited. Does the city want to allow a mixture of housing types?

F. Dimensional standards. There are no minimum standards for:

- 1) Lot size
- 2) Lot width
- 3) Lot frontage
- 4) Lot depth
- 5) Structure size (square feet)
- 6) Structure width
- 7) Structure setbacks

G. In no instance may a building (principal or accessory) lie within an area of the lot encumbered by an easement.

H. Separation distances.

The property lines of all lots shall conform to the following setbacks in order to allow for buffer screening or to minimize conflicts:

- 1) Existing or proposed arterial street rights-of-way: 25 feet
- 2) Subdivision perimeter boundaries: 25 feet
- 3) Cropland or pasture land: 50 feet
- 4) Buildings or barnyards housing livestock: 100 feet
- 5) Wetlands: 30 feet from the ordinary high water mark (if public wetland) or delineated wetland edge.

Comment: These separation distances (setbacks) are intended to minimize conflicts between existing homes and continued agriculture uses (smells, chemicals, wind blown dust, etc.), and to provide space for buffer plantings (e.g. along arterial roads). Since there are no minimum structure setbacks proposed in this draft, separation distances are from individual lot property lines.

I. Open Space

- 1) Required open space. Up to 50 percent of the total area of each PUD shall be designated as open space. The required amount of open space is in addition to any land that would be used to satisfy the public park dedication requirements found in the subdivision chapter.
- 2) Open space priorities. Open space shall generally be located and designed to incorporate the following areas listed in order of priority:
 - a) Existing ecological resources identified as high and medium quality on the city's ecological resources map.
 - b) Land within ecological corridors identified in the comprehensive plan. Corridors shall be designed according to the standards in **Chapter XX**.
 - c) Lands, particularly those adjoining rivers, streams, wetlands, and drainage areas, due to the potential for soil disturbance leading to erosion that is detrimental to water quality.
 - d) Natural drainageways.
 - e) Other healthy woodlands, particularly those performing important ecological functions such as soil stabilization and protection of streams, wetlands, and wildlife habitats.
 - f) Areas where precipitation and stormwater treatment are most likely to recharge local groundwater resources because of topographic and soil conditions affording high rates of infiltration and percolation.
 - g) Hedgerows, groups of trees, specimen trees, and other unique or significant vegetation features.
 - h) Historic or culturally important structures and sites.
 - i) Visually prominent topographic features such as knolls, hilltops and ridges, and scenic views as seen from public roads.
- 3) Open space design standards. The following open space design standards shall also be considered in designing the PUD:
 - a) Open space should be interconnected wherever possible to provide a continuous network of open space land within the PUD and throughout the city. It should coordinate and maximize boundaries with open space on adjacent tracts.

- b) The four-step design process described in the comprehensive plan shall be used to designate and lay out the open space area.
 - c) Incorporate public trails and/or public open space designated in the Comprehensive Plan and the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Comprehensive Plan..
 - d) Designated public access trails shall be protected by an access easement owned by the city.
 - e) Open space uses may include: natural/passive and active recreation areas, agriculture, stormwater management facilities, neighborhood greens, trail links, and boulevards.
 - f) Open space should be distributed throughout the development to serve and enhance as many dwelling units as possible. At least 75 percent of the lots shall directly abut or face open space land across a street. Non-adjoining lots shall be provided with convenient access to the open space through access strips at least 30 feet wide. Access to open space used for agriculture may be restricted or prohibited for public safety and to prevent interference with agricultural operations.
 - g) Views of new dwellings from exterior roads and abutting properties should be minimized by the use of changes in topography, existing vegetation, or additional landscaping. Ridge and hilltops should be contained within open space areas wherever possible. Trees should not be removed from ridge and hilltops.
 - h) The entire area set aside as open space shall be maintained in perpetuity. This restriction shall run with the land and be binding on successors and assigns of the landowner.
 - i) The boundaries of designated open space areas shall be clearly delineated and labeled on PUD plans. These areas shall be delineated in the field with signage or other measures approved by the city.
 - j) Agricultural open space uses should use conservation practices consistent with those described in the “National Handbook of Conservation Practices,” published by the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.
4. Landscape design standards.
- a) Street trees may be planted, but are not required, along internal streets passing through common open space.
 - b) Informal arrangements are encouraged for street trees, to avoid the urban appearance that regular spacing may invoke.
 - c) The species of street trees shall be consistent with species found in the oak-savanna forest.
 - d) A planted buffer area at least 25 feet in width shall be established within all separation areas between exterior arterial or major collector roads and property lines.
 - e) Planted buffers between clusters of residential lots are encouraged to enhance privacy and a rural appearance between lots.
 - f) Buffers consisting of an informal arrangement of native plant species found in oak-savanna forests combined with infrequent mowing are strongly encouraged, to create a low-maintenance, natural landscape.
 - g) Planted buffers are also encouraged along natural drainage areas to minimize erosion.

h) Mass grading for open space and other common landscaped areas and stormwater management areas shall be avoided to reduce compaction and impacting water infiltration rates.

J. Low impact design standards

a) Low impact development (LID) site design and stormwater management techniques shall be incorporated into all proposed developments. The primary goal of LID is to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff and to mimic the pre-settlement site hydrology through storage, infiltration, evaporation, and maintenance of natural drainage patterns.

1) Site planning and design methods include:

- a. Disconnecting impervious surfaces
- b. Treatment of water close to the source
- c. Avoiding mass grading and soil compaction
- d. Reducing road widths
- e. Use of joint/shared parking facilities/driveways
- f. Reducing the length and width of driveways
- g. Preserving areas with highly permeable soils for infiltration
- h. Reduced parking spaces
- i. Use alternatives to the traditional cul de sac as appropriate depending on site conditions and public safety needs.

2) Stormwater management techniques include:

- a. Reduce volume through use of infiltration practices such as bio-infiltration (rain gardens), vegetated swales, permeable pavement, infiltration basins and trenches.
- b. Reduce volume through on-site storage for reuse (irrigation, gray water)
- c. Make stormwater treatment facilities visible and attractive site amenities
- d. Use flat or slotted curbing to convey water into the stormwater system

3) Better site design/low impact development practices as identified in the MN Stormwater Manual published by the MN Pollution Control Agency and the Alternative Stormwater Best Management Practices Guidebook published by the Valley Branch Watershed District shall be used to design sites and meet the performance standards.



City of East Bethel City Council Agenda Information

Date:

March 3, 2010

Agenda Item Number:

Item 5.0

Agenda Item:

Conservation Design (CD) Development – Set Joint Meeting Date

Requested Action:

Set Joint Meeting Date for April 7, 2010 to Review Conservation Design Ordinance, and, Changes to Future Greenways and SNEA District

Background Information:

City Staff envisions the development and implementation of the Conservation Design Development project as a collaborative process between City Council, Planning Commission, Parks Commission and City staff. The purpose of a joint work session is to ensure staff has the ability to facilitate discussions among individual stakeholders that are consistent and timely; to ensure there is agreement on all aspects of the project; and, to minimize the changes that would require additional time spent on the project. With all stakeholders at the meeting, it will serve to minimize communication breakdowns between individuals and should reduce the amount of time spent completing the project.

As part of the creation of a Conservation Design Ordinance and proposed changes to the Future Greenways and SNEA District, staff will be coordinating with other professionals in the field to assist in these tasks.

One month should be sufficient time to complete the tasks and recommends a joint work session to be scheduled prior to the City Council meeting on April 7, 2010 at which time the changes to the Future Greenways, the SNEA overlay and the conservation design ordinance will be reviewed.

Fiscal Impact:

To be determined

Recommendation:

Staff recommends a joint work for 6:00 P.M on Wednesday, April 7, 2010 to review changes to the Future Greenways, the SNEA overlay and the conservation design ordinance.

City Council Action

Motion by:_____

Second by:_____

Vote Yes: _____

Vote No: _____

No Action Required: _____