

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING
Inver Grove Heights City Hall - Council Chambers
Thursday, April 26, 2007

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM by Chair Lesney.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Chair Alice Lesney, Eldon Marier, Bob Pohlman, Ted Trenzeluk, Greg Groenjes, Peter Hall, and James Huffman

Staff Present:

Jennifer Emmerich, Assistant Planner
Allan Hunting, City Planner

3. Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Hall moved to approve the agenda and Mr. Marier seconded the motion.
Motion to approve carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Hall moved to approve the minutes and Mr. Marier seconded the motion.
Motion to approve carried unanimously.

5. Old Business

6. New Business

A. SKB Environmental – Discussion of horizontal expansion of th 117th Street demolition landfill.

Chair Lesney stated that SKB was coming in for a horizontal expansion onto their existing operation.

Allan Hunting stated that the purpose of the meeting was to give a background of SKB and their upcoming request. SKB is requesting a conditional use permit for the expansion of the landfill. He further stated that the Commissioners had seen some of the request when they saw the ordinance amendment in 2006.

Chair Lesney stated that the ordinance being referenced has been approved by City Council.

Mr. Hunting indicated the location of the current landfill boundary and the area of expansion on a map. The expansion area is approximately seven acres, but the footprint is approximately 13 acres. The landfill will increase in capacity by two million cubic feet.

Mr. Hunting stated that the first conditional use permit for the land fill was granted in 1988. A few years later City Council was concerned of proliferation of landfills so the adopted an ordinance that placed restrictions on the landfills. Then in 1995, City Council adopted more regulations via the Integrated Resource Management Overlay Area, where landfills are allowed. It excludes MSW landfills, but includes demolition landfills which is the type of landfill the applicant has. Mr. Hunting further stated that SKB has expanded two times since then. The first was an expansion into Rosemount which didn't change anything for Inver Grove Heights. Then, in 1998, SKB obtained approval for a vertical expansion which increased capacity by 1.6 million cubic yards. The current request of a horizontal expansion is allowed by conditional use permit.

Chair Lesney asked if the zoning ordinance was approved.

Mr. Hunting confirmed that the zoning ordinance amendment was approved in 2007 to allow for the horizontal expansion provided they receive all of the other necessary approvals. The necessary approvals include the other amendments in the conditional use permit, the nonconforming use certificate and the host community agreement. The City Council has approved and accepted a dollar amount for the host community agreement and will then formally approve document which will established a fee if this conditional use permit is approved.

Chair Lesney asked if the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) permit depends upon that? Or is that the very last thing?

Mr. Hunting referred the question to Mr. Jeff Ubl of Barr Engineering.

Mr. Ubl of Barr Engineering stated that the MPCA will issue modified permit to SKB. It will be ready to go on public notice for 30 days. Following that it will get issued.

Chair Lesney asked if the City's conditional use permit or the MPCA permit came first.

Mr. Ubl stated the generally the MPCA permit would go before the City's permit.

Chair Lesney asked if anyone had any questions for Mr. Hunting.

Mr. Rick O'Gara introduced himself as president of SKB Environmental. He pointed out the location of the landfill on the map. Mr. O'Gara then stated the

that facility has been there since 1989 and it accepts demolition waste from building projects, not MSW.

Chair Lesney pointed out that MSW stands for municipal solid waste.

Mr. O’Gara stated that they do not accept MSW, but generally take in the debris from roll-off boxes which generally contain old 2x4’s, insulation, sheet rock, carpeting, remodeling waste, etc. They do not accept hazardous waste and have been operating in Inver Grove Heights since 1989 without any City or State violations. SKB prides themselves on being a good community business as they help the community by providing clean up services for city and they are very environmentally sound.

Mr. O’Gara continued that they have an odd shaped piece of property that they own and they want to be able to do something with it. He then explains the uses around the piece of property and that expanding the landfill is the best use for that piece of property. He further stated that though the City Council had adopted an ordinance to prohibit the expansion of landfills, they amended the ordinance to allow for this property to be used as a landfill. The current plan submitted by SKB is within the zoning ordinance requirements and they will not have to apply for any variances. Additionally the State is in agreement with the permit and will be opening it up for public comment shortly.

Mr. O’Gara then stated that he would be willing to answer any questions or provide tours for the Commissioners and he stated one last time that the conditional use permit is for a horizontal, not vertical, expansion and they will not be changing the type of debris they will be taking in.

Mr. Trenzeluk asked if anything has changed since August.

Mr. O’Gara stated that nothing changed since then.

Mr. Trenzeluk then stated that the environmental commission unanimously approved the plan then.

Chair Lesney clarified that the recommendation that night was for the zoning ordinance amendment and the current request is for a conditional use permit.

Mr. O’Gara said they were there in August to determine if the City was going to allow for a horizontal expansion of the landfill.

Chair Lesney asked if the height is going to be the same as it is now.

Mr. O’Gara said that it will expand to the current height, but not more.

Mr. Huffman asked how many acres the landfill covers.

Mr. O’Gara stated that it is approximately 43 acres.

Mr. Huffman then asked when they expected to meet capacity?

Mr. O’Gara stated that they are close to capacity, as they have 150,000 cubic yards of capacity left. They have decreased the amount coming to the landfill in anticipation of this expansion. The expansion will allow for an additional 2 million cubic yards which will allow for 5-7 years more of capacity.

Mr. Huffman asked what happens once the landfill is full?

Mr. O’Gara stated that the landfill is encapsulated which means that the entire landfill is lined to capture leachates and once it is full, it will be covered with layers of soil and liners. Once the landfill is capped, it will be seeded and eventually will look like a grass hill. He further stated that SKB will monitor and maintain the landfill for the next 30 years.

Mr. Marier asked if SKB takes asbestos in their landfill.

Mr. O’Gara stated that they do not. However, they are permitted to take asbestos. They did take some in for a couple of days in the early 1990s but it became such an ordeal that they stopped taking it in. They would like to keep in on the permit, so if some of the demolition materials contain some asbestos, they can still take it in. However, they will not take in bagged asbestos.

Chair Lesney asked why the property in question was not part of the original request.

Mr. O’Gara said that there was originally an easement and railroad going through the property and it separated the triangle. Now the easement and railroad have been moved and therefore they no longer divide the property.

Chair Lesney asked if the easement goes down to BFI?

Mr. O’Gara confirmed that the power line follows the railroad right now. However, if their plans are approved, they will be moving them to the corner and down into Koch Refinery.

Chair Lesney asked if there were any special provisions for removal of the gas line.

Mr. O’Gara said that the removal is not complicated.

Mr. Huffman asked if the gas line will it be removed prior to opening the expansion?

Mr. O’Gara confirmed that the gas line would be removed prior to opening. He then stated that SKB constructed the first landfill with leachate collection in 1989. Therefore no leachate is going into the Inver Grove Heights groundwater.

Chair Lesney asked if Mr. O’Gara was with the company since it started.

Mr. O’Gara confirmed that he is the owner.

Mr. Pohlman asked if there were other permits that they have to obtain for the expansion.

Mr. O’Gara said that they have to get the MPCA permit and approval from Inver Grove Heights. Additionally they have to get a lisenca from the environmental department at Dakota County.

Mr. Pohlman asked if they had to get a permit from Met Council.

Mr. O’Gara said that they did.

Mr. Groenjes asked where the waste will go in five years, once the expansion is filled.

Mr. O’Gara said the waste has quite a few recyclables and they shouldn’t be buried. He then mentioned that SKB went to the State to change legislation to require recycling. SKB has another large facility in Rosemount where they are trying to obtain a permit for a demolition landfill processing facility to sort out recyclables.

Chair Lesney asked if SKB recycles some of the demolition waste now.

Mr. O’Gara said that they did and further explained that when they tear down a building, they check for and remove any hazardous materials first. Then they get the demolition permit and pull out all recyclables, which includes all of the steel, concrete and wood.

Chair Lesney mentioned that the commission should schedule a tour on a Saturday in May.

Mr. O’Gara told her to let him know when and he would accommodate.

Chair Lesney set a tentative tour for May 12, 2007 and thanked Mr. O’Gara for coming in.

Mr. Hunting asked if the commission had any questions for the engineer. He further stated that they will review the MPCA permit and the Inver Grove Heights application at which time they will address any major environmental issues.

Chair Lesney said that they'll see them in a month.

B. Minnesota Environmental Partnership Update

Chair Lesney then moved onto the next item of business which is the Minnesota Environmental Partnership update.

Ms. Emmerich informed the committee that the mayor is involved in the Minnesota Environmental Partnership, which is an organization that brings together other environmental organizations.

Chair Lesney mentioned that she knew about the group of mayors that get together for this.

Ms. Emmerich confirmed that the Dakota County mayors are a group that is part of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership. She then went through the handout for the commissioners.

Chair Lesney thanked Ms. Emmerich for the information.

7. Citizen Comments

8. Reports and Updates

Mr. Marier informed the group that this was his last meeting and he thanked everyone for the opportunity.

Chair Lesney thanked him for his work.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Huffman moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Mr. Marier seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously (6-0).