



# City of Northfield

City Hall  
801 Washington Street  
Northfield, MN 55057  
northfieldmn.gov

## Meeting Minutes - Final Environmental Quality Commission

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Wednesday, May 17, 2023

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

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### 6:00 PM - REGULAR AGENDA CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Petri called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

#### Rollcall

**Present:** 8 - Commissioner Michael Provancha, Commissioner Bruce Anderson, Commissioner Daniel Jones, Commissioner Janet Petri, Commissioner Lucy Menssen, Commissioner Martha Larson, Commissioner George Kinney and Commissioner Evan Pak

*Also present: Risi Karim, Assistant to the City Administrator/Staff Liaison; Gabby Gingras, Ecolibrium3 AmeriCorps VISTA -Sustainability Associate; Matt Bailey, Meeting Associate; Luke Pegram, Youth Representative (Non-Voting)*

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*The agenda was amended to include a presentation on direct energy systems by Michael Ahern of Ever-Green Energy before moving on to the items on the regular agenda.*

**A motion was made by Commissioner Pak, seconded by Commissioner Provancha, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 8 - Commissioner Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Menssen, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Kinney and Commissioner Pak

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. [23-1156](#) April 19th, 2023 EQC Meeting Minutes.

**Attachments:** [1 - 04-19-2023 EQC Minutes Draft](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Provancha, to approve the Minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 8 - Commissioner Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Menssen, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Kinney and Commissioner Pak

**OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT**

*There were no public comments.*

[23-1181](#)

**PRESENTATION: District Energy System**

*Michael Ahern of Ever-Green Energy delivered a presentation on opportunities for a District Energy System for the City of Northfield, similar to the centralized system installed at Carleton College, including possible future geothermal and solar integration as well as energy capture from wastewater treatment. Ahern responded to comments and questions from the Commissioners.*

**A motion was made by Commissioner Larson, seconded by Commissioner Kinney, to approve supporting City staff moving forward with a high-level study regarding a District Energy System. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 8 - Commissioner Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Menssen, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Kinney and Commissioner Pak

**REGULAR AGENDA**

2. [23-1157](#)

**Draft Revision of Sustainable Building Policy**

**Attachments:** [1 - Sustainable Building Policy -REV 2023](#)  
[2 - Northfield EQC - SBP Recommended Updates](#)  
[3 - Sustainable Building Policy - Final 2022](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Pak, seconded by Commissioner Jones, to approve the draft of the Sustainable Building Policy. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 8 - Commissioner Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Menssen, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Kinney and Commissioner Pak

3. [23-1158](#)

**Annual Report of Carbon Reduction Fund (2021-2022).**

**Attachments:** [1 - Carbon Reduction Fund Policy - highlight annual report](#)

*Risi Karim, Assitant to the City Administrator/Staff Liaison, delivered a presentation on the Annual Report of the Carbon Reduction Fund (2021-2022) and responded to questions and comments from the Commissioners.*

4. [23-1159](#) 2023 Work Plan Update

**Attachments:** [1 - 2023 Work Plan EQC](#)  
[2 - QR Version Green Booklet Version. Final](#)

*Commissioners provided updates on the 2023 Annual Work Plan.*

*Risi Karim, Assistant to the City Administrator/Staff Liaison told the Commission that the intern helping with the Reduction of Single Use Plastic in the City of Northfield will start soon.*

*Chair Petri and Commissioner Anderson met recently with Karim to discuss an October 2023 or November 2023 public forum on household energy improvement opportunities, including the installation of home heat pumps, made available by the Inflation Reduction Act.*

*Commissioners Jones and Kinney provided an update on their continued meetings regarding the Urban Forestry Management project. Jones and Kinney will have a meeting with City staff regarding tree planning in the City.*

*Commissioners Anderson and Larson provided an update on the Climate Action Plan Tracking and proposed adding more information about the plan onto the City website. Karim proposed staff assistance with doing this.*

*A draft of the Green Book for inclusion in the Green Welcome Packet was presented to the Commission by Gabby Gingrichs, Ecolibrium3 AmeriCorps VISTA - Sustainability Associate, and students from St. Olaf College for review and comments. A motion was made to approve the Green Book.*

*Commissioners Larson and Provancha, as well as Karim, provided an update on current Energy Action Items.*

**A motion was made by Commissioner Petri, seconded by Commissioner Pak, to approve the draft of the Green Book for inclusion in the Green Welcome Packet. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 8 - Commissioner Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Menssen, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Kinney and Commissioner Pak

5. [23-1160](#) Northfield News Monthly Series Opinion Piece.

**Attachments:** [1 - May Northfield News Opinion Piece](#)  
[2 - Climate Change Newspaper Series Outline](#)

*The Commission commended Youth Representative Pegram on his Northfield News Monthly Series Opinion Piece and voted to approve it.*

*Commissioner Larson will write the next piece on native plantings and other yard and garden options. Chair Petri will provide additional information to Larson.*

**A motion was made by Commissioner Jones, seconded by Commissioner Provancha, to approve Youth Representative Pegram's draft of his Northfield News Monthly Series Opinion Piece. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 8 - Commissioner Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Menssen, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Kinney and Commissioner Pak

## STAFF UPDATES

6. [23-1161](#) Staff Update

*Risi Karim, Assistant to the City Administrator/Staff Liaison, provided updates on the recent paper shredding event. She also provided an update on meeting with Xcel Energy about the MLU and about future meetings regarding Partners in Energy 2 (to be conducted with the Commissioners).*

*City Consultant Bruce Jacobson provided an update on recent events soliciting public comment about the Riverfront Enhancement Action Plan, Climate Action Plan, and other major City plans. The comments centered primarily on the topics of ecology and restoration of the Cannon River, transportation and parking, urban forestry management, district energy systems, sustainable building design, and policy and procedures. Jacobson proposed continuing discussions with the public and the Commission as these plans move forward into action. Jacobson responded to questions and comments from the Commission.*

## BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

*Chair Petri mentioned that Dr. Heidi Roop, Director of the University of Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership and author of "The Climate Action Handbook," will be speaking at Content Bookstore on Thursday, May 18, 2023 and that an Environmental Commission Conference will be happening at the University of Minnesota this weekend. Commissioner Provancha will be attending this event.*

*Youth Representative Lucy Menssen announced that this was to be her final EQC meeting. She will be attending college this fall.*

## ADJOURNMENT

**A motion was made by Commissioner Provancha, seconded by Commissioner Kinney, to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Yes:** 8 - Commissioner Provancha, Commissioner Anderson, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Petri, Commissioner Menssen, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Kinney and Commissioner Pak