

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 2, 2016

From: Richard J. Schulte, Chairperson, Northfield Planning Commission

To: Scott Tempel, City Planner, City of Northfield

Subject: Item 5, Mining, Extraction & Aggregate Regulations, on the Planning Commission's List of Outstanding LDC Items, last revised 1/22/2016.

Action Requested: Will you please undertake a review of the existing Land Development Code (LDC) to determine if there is any pressing need to supplement the regulations in the Northfield Code to cover a potential, future proposal for installing and operating an asphalt plant in the City's Industrial or Agricultural zones. Please also examine related regulations related to asphalt plants in two or three, nearby cities to inform your review. Thereafter, please make a recommendation to the Planning Commission to (a) revise the LDC; or, (b) remove Item 5 from our List of Outstanding LDC Items.

Background: To my memory, Item 5, Mining, Extraction & Aggregate Regulations, came to be included on the Planning Commission's task list about 3 years back. At that time, another Minneapolis suburb was reported to be struggling with development and use of regulations to allow the proposed installation and operation of a large, asphalt, production plant inside the city limits. The plant was to be located in an industrial or agricultural zone adjacent to a residential or commercial zone. The asphalt was to be used for road improvements in the host suburb and other cities.

The nearby property owners were concerned about spill-over impacts on their neighborhoods due to the following concerns:

- increased truck traffic carrying sand, aggregates, milled asphalt and oil into the site; and, finished, hot, asphalt materials away from the site.

- dust, noise and smoke from operations on the site, including offensive odors from the rotary asphalt kiln, that could waft over the nearby, residential and commercial areas.

A question arose on the Northfield Planning Commission as to whether our LDC had adequate regulations to address these same concerns should an asphalt plant be proposed for an Industrial or Agricultural zone in Northfield.

Potential Recommendations to the Northfield Planning Commission:

My first goal here is to assure that the City has adequate regulations to support the Planning Commission should it need to deliberate on the issuance of a conditional use permit for any proposed asphalt plant. My second goal is to clear Item 5 from our active task list. In this vein, I anticipate that your recommendations will allow the Commission to discuss and (1) propose several minor amendments to the LDC for asphalt plant installations; or, (2) close out Item 5 because the anticipated concerns over the plants can be adequately addressed by the Code that we now have in-place.

Timing

I would like to have your recommendations on this matter presented to and acted on by the Planning Commission before the end of April.

Regards,

Richard J. Schulte