



Dakota County

Physical Development Committee of the Whole

Minutes

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

9:00 AM

Conference Room 3A, Administration
Center, Hastings

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Present

- Commissioner Mike Slavik
- Commissioner Joe Atkins
- Commissioner Laurie Halverson
- Commissioner William Droste
- Commissioner Liz Workman
- Chairperson Mary Liz Holberg
- Commissioner Mary Hamann-Roland

Also in attendance were Heidi Welsch, County Manager; Tom Donely, First Assistant County Attorney; Georg Fischer, Physical Development Division Director; Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator.

Commissioner Atkins was present via Teams.

Commissioner Halverson joined the meeting at 9:06 a.m.

The audio recording of this meeting is available upon request.

2. Audience

Commissioner Holberg asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to address the Physical Development Committee of the Whole on an item not on the agenda or an item on the consent agenda. No one came forward and no comments were submitted to CountyAdmin@co.dakota.mn.us.

3. Approval of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)

3.1 Approval of Agenda (Additions/Corrections/Deletions)

Motion: Mary Hamann-Roland

Second: William Droste

Ayes: 6

Commissioner Slavik, Commissioner Atkins, Commissioner Droste, Commissioner Workman, Chairperson Holberg, and Commissioner Hamann-Roland

Excused: 1

Commissioner Halverson

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Approval Of Minutes Of Meeting Held On September 16, 2025

Motion: Mike Slavik

Second: Mary Hamann-Roland

Ayes: 6

Commissioner Slavik, Commissioner Atkins, Commissioner Droste, Commissioner Workman, Chairperson Holberg, and Commissioner Hamann-Roland

Excused: 1

Commissioner Halverson

5. Regular Agenda

5.1 Adoption Of Mississippi River Greenway Natural Resource Management Plan

Motion: Mike Slavik

Second: Laurie Halverson

Tom Lewanski, Parks Natural Resources Manager, presented this item and answered questions related to it. The discussion centered on the natural resource management plan for the Mississippi River Greenway and its funding strategies. One commissioner emphasized the importance of starting with existing funds before pursuing state and federal grants, as well as private contributions. They inquired about the possibility of obtaining simultaneous funding from multiple sources. Staff confirmed that the plan includes utilizing current state and federal grants, with projects being overseen by staff. Additional funding will be sought once the initial funds are depleted.

Staff were directed to make full use of the current state and federal grant funds allocated for existing projects and seek additional funding opportunities for the next phases of these projects.

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 17-274 (May 23, 2019), the County Board adopted the Dakota County Natural Resources Management System Plan, which demonstrates a need to develop Natural Resource Management Plans (NRMP) for all County Parks, Greenways, and Conservation Easements; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 20-568 (November 17, 2020), the County Board adopted the Land Conservation Plan, which aims to improve County coordination and collaboration with other agencies and organizations regarding land protection and long-term natural resource management; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 99-526 (September 21, 1999), the County Board adopted the Mississippi River Greenway master plan, which established a 28-mile preferred alignment from St. Paul to downtown Hastings; and

WHEREAS, a consultant was hired to develop the first NRMP for the Mississippi River Greenway; and

WHEREAS, there are plans to potentially extend the greenway southeast along County Road 54 to the Goodhue County border, which would add approximately 9.5 miles of trail; and

WHEREAS, the public lands along the greenway are owned by Dakota County, the Cities of South St. Paul, Inver Grove Heights, and Hastings; and

WHEREAS, a stakeholder meeting was held on October 16, 2024, to solicit input on the NRMP. Participants included staff from the cities of South St. Paul, Inver Grove Heights, and Hastings, as well as staff from Mississippi Park Connection and the National Park Service; and

WHEREAS, the NRMP addresses the natural resource inventory, future vegetative cover goals, and recommended projects developed in cooperation with landowner partners; and

WHEREAS, Ecologists conducted field work and identified 22 natural area nodes; and

WHEREAS, these nodes were selected because they contain existing natural areas or parks where opportunities exist to increase habitat; and

WHEREAS, trail corridors between these nodes were also surveyed; and

WHEREAS, an estimate of \$2,389,000 in projects were identified; and

WHEREAS, \$589,000 has been secured, to date, from an Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund Grant and a Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant to begin implementing the recommendations in the plan; and

WHEREAS, external grant funding will be used to fund additional restoration projects, and grant match and cost share fiscal impacts will be established and individually brought to the County Board for review in the form of future joint powers agreements between partners prior to project implementation; and

WHEREAS, the draft NRMP was presented to the Dakota County Planning Commission on June 26, 2025, at which time it voted to recommend to the Dakota County Board of Commissioners to release the draft plan for public review; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 25-360 (July 29, 2025), the County Board authorized the Mississippi River Greenway NRMP be released for a 30-day community review period, which occurred from July 29 through August 29, 2025; and

WHEREAS, no comments were received from the public during the comment

period; and

WHEREAS, during this time, County staff gave presentations about the NRMP to the Park and Recreation Advisory Commission of Inver Grove Heights (August 13) and to the Rosemount Parks and Natural Resources Commission (August 18).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the Mississippi River Greenway Natural Resource Management Plan.

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 10/21/2025.

Ayes: 7

5.2 Approval Of Unified Schematic Design And Authorization To Amend Professional Services Contract With ALLiiANCE For Empire Maintenance Facility Redevelopment Project

Motion: Laurie Halverson

Second: Mary Hamann-Roland

Jerome Biedny, from Capital Projects Management, and Michael Wiese, Senior Project Manager at CPM, presented on the topic and addressed questions.

Staff and commissioners discussed the schematic design and schedule for phase one of the Empire Maintenance Facility project, which includes a \$20.6 million heated storage facility and a \$1 million amendment for Alliance Architects. This phase would allow the closure of the existing Hastings Transportation Shop and fuel island. Additional discussion centered around the recommended sequencing of the phases (phase 2 includes cold storage sufficient to close the current Farmington Transportation Shop). One commissioner questioned the necessity of the heated storage facility amid the urgency to close the Hastings campus. Staff stressed that the heated storage in phase one is essential to meet future needs and control costs.

Commissioners encouraged staff to look for ways to expedite the closure of the Hasting's Transportation Shop and to provide the board with a future update on the status and plans for the Hampton property that was originally purchased to serve as a transportation shop.

WHEREAS, Improvements were completed at the Empire Maintenance Facility in 2020, including only part of the proposed South Building due to budget constraints; and

WHEREAS, with unmet needs identified, an addition to the South Building was included in the 2024-2028 Facilities Capital Improvement Program Adopted Budget and partially funded in 2024; and

WHEREAS, a previously proposed project to develop a new maintenance facility

in Hampton was not approved to proceed; and

WHEREAS, the County Board instead directed staff to develop and present an alternate to the Hampton facility that would meet its objectives of closing the existing Hastings and Farmington Shops through a phased approach; and

WHEREAS, ALLiiANCE was selected as the consultant firm to provide early phase design services for this project by Resolution No. 24-147 (March 26, 2024); and

WHEREAS, ALLiiANCE and staff were authorized to develop a unified design for phased equipment storage and an office addition for Transportation Department staff by Resolution No. 24-564 (December 3, 2024); and

WHEREAS, the unified design for phased equipment storage would construct an approximate 53,400 square foot storage addition to the South Building by mid-2029 (Phase 1) to allow for future closure and sale of the Hastings Highway Shop site; and

WHEREAS, the unified design would also construct an approximate 22,200 square foot new Pre-Fabricated Cold Storage Building in 2032 (Phase 2) to allow for the closure and sale of the Farmington Highway Shop site; and

WHEREAS, additional efforts to complete the design through construction are necessary; and

WHEREAS, ALLiiANCE has provided a proposal to provide design through construction closeout for an approximate 53,400 square foot storage addition to the South Building; and

WHEREAS, there are sufficient Sales and Use Tax (SUT) funds within the project budget to cover this contract increase.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the schematic design of the Phase 1 South Building storage addition as presented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the schematic design of the Phase 2 Pre-Fabricated Cold Storage Building as presented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes amending the professional services contract with ALLiiANCE, 400 Clifton Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55403 to increase professional design fees for the Empire Maintenance Facility Redevelopment project Phase 1, in an amount not to exceed \$1,050,000, for an amended contract total of \$1,430,267, subject to approval by the County Attorney's Office as to form.

This item was approved and recommended for action by the Board of Commissioners on 10/21/2025.

Ayes: 6

Commissioner Atkins, Commissioner Halverson, Commissioner Droste, Commissioner Workman, Chairperson Holberg, and Commissioner Hamann-Roland

Nay: 1

Commissioner Slavik

5.3 Update On Right Of Way Acquisition And Direction On Alignment For Veterans Memorial Greenway

Eddie Buell, Real Estate Supervisor, and Tony Wotzka, County Greenways Manager, presented this item and responded to questions.

Staff and Commissioners discussed three alternatives for the Veterans Memorial Greenway project for the three remaining parcels in Phase II of the project, each with different impacts and costs. All three alternatives would reroute the greenway through Eagan's Lakeside Park to Atlantic Hills Drive. Alternative 1 includes a 10-foot trail and a 5-foot turf boulevard along Atlantic Hills Drive in Eagan, with significant utility and vegetation impacts. Alternative 2 is a 12-foot path at the back of the curb and also runs along Atlantic Hills Drive. This option also has considerable utility and vegetation impacts. Alternative 3 places the greenway on Atlantic Hills Drive, raising concerns about shared use and risk. Staff compared these options, as well as a "no build option", to the adopted plan alignment that runs along an existing transmission line easement behind the three homes. Information related to user experience, public safety, and private property impacts was presented for each of the options.

Commissioners directed staff to:

1. Engage with the three remaining homeowners about alternatives 1 and 2 and further attempt to negotiate on the rear easement or fee title acquisition.
2. Explore whether the City of Eagan would waive fees for the trail project.
3. Present updated information from homeowner discussions and the City of Eagan to the board at a future committee meeting.

Information only; no action requested.

6. Physical Development Director's Report

Georg Fischer, Physical Development Director, provided the Committee with a written Division update.

Mr. Fischer addressed the presence of zebra mussels in Lake Byllesby and the ongoing efforts to monitor the situation. He also provided an update to the committee regarding the MMB proposals for three projects, highlighting changes in funding requests. The request for County Road 46 has increased from \$17.5 million to \$22.5 million due to an adjustment in the

match percentage. The funding for the County Road 50 project has been reduced to \$12.6 million. Meanwhile, the funding for the Lebanon Hills and Lake Byllesby Beach House project remains at \$22 million.

7. Future Agenda Items

The commissioners discussed a resolution to ensure the MVTA's funding and existence. One commissioner called for a broader discussion in light of upcoming legislative developments and a report due February 1. Concerns were expressed about potential legislative actions to eliminate 1984 opt-out provisions. The board acknowledged the urgency with a November 1 deadline but chose to postpone the decision for further committee discussions to avoid disrupting other legislative goals.

Commissioners directed staff to the following:

1. Schedule a discussion on this topic at the Physical Development Committee at a future date.

The discussion ended with a commissioner assuring to inform Chair Keeley of the board's decision not to take action on the resolution next week.

8. Adjournment

8.1 Adjournment

Motion: Mike Slavik

Second: Mary Hamann-Roland

On a motion by Commissioner Mike Slavik, seconded by Commissioner Mary Hamann-Roland, the meeting was adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

Ayes: 7

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Hansen
Administrative Coordinator