



Minutes
CHASKA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
ZOOM
Thursday, June 24, 2021
6:30 PM

1. Roll Call

Present: Carlson, Welvaert, Castillo, Haga, Sandison, S. White, Hughes, Hubbard
Absent: Spreadury, L. White

2. Adopt Agenda

Motion: Haga

Second: Welvaert

Kabat Roll Call Vote: Carlson, Welvaert, Castillo, Haga, Sandison, S. White, Hughes, Hubbard

Motion Carried

3. Open Forum/Guest Presentation

3A Visitor Presentation – Nate Kabat - City Square West Update

Kabat updated the commission on the City Square West project with a PowerPoint presentation including the following:

- Downtown Master Plan
- City Square West Task Force – Project Goals and Concept
- Council Approval/Process to Date
- Next Steps

Explained the location of the project along with a map that displayed the project in detail. City Square West redevelopment is designed to be welcoming to all.

Commissioner Carlson inquired about enough parking? Kabat explained it would be underground parking, enough for residential and commercial along with street parking.

Kabat discussed the new library location, across the street from the current library. City Council approved the purchase of 401 Pine Street.

Kabat shared what they have been doing and what they currently are working on. COVID did affect the project including the supply chain and cost. Kabat showed examples of other city's developments.

Kabat discussed the relocation process, the city seeks to retain businesses as much as possible. The city would love to see all the businesses that will be affected to stay in Chaska.

Commissioner Welvaert inquired if a laundry mat and grocery store would be able to fit into that location? Kabat explained it could be possible but it would be up to the business owner where they want to relocate.

Commissioner Castillo asked how the current tenants are reacting to the new project? Kabat shared they enjoy doing business at the present location, they have a loyal customer base, perception has been good but also challenging. When is this project going to happen? The city is not at a point to make a final decision on the project.

Commissioner Welvaert inquired what's the difference for relocation assistance between households and businesses? Kabat shared the differences between households versus businesses. Estimating 18 months to build the project which makes it a difficult decision for businesses.

Commissioner Sandison acknowledged the strip mall is heavily run by the Latino community, they will be directly impacted. Kabat shared it's going to be a privately owned facility, not city-owned. They will work with the developer to connect with the Hispanic community.

Commissioner Carlson, expressed the Old National bank is in the process of being acquired by another banking institution. Does this affect the timing of the project? Kabat expressed he does not know if they will be closing the facility but knows they are evaluating plans for the facility. Kabat does not know the timing of what they are going to do. Kabat expressed it's not all about the timing but more the financial aspect of the project itself.

Commissioner Castillo asked how the property would be acquired? Kabat explained the city can play the role of negotiator, purchaser, and then seller. Kabat explained different scenarios of how to acquire the property.

Commissioner Welvaert inquired the planning committee, other commissions, and other community members were represented in the process. Going forward inquiring if someone from the HRC can be represented? Kabat agreed the HRC should be represented and will look into.

Commissioner Castillo inquired what power the tenants have in this process? Right now the space has four Latino businesses. His concern is in 2 years the possibility of no Latino businesses in that area. Commissioner Castillo would like to challenge the city to not only do the bare minimum that the law enforces but to go above and beyond to push the developer to do something to rehabilitate the cultural significance in the city. Commissioner Castillo and other Commission members thanked Kabat for the helpful presentation.

4. Approve Minutes

4A – Approve May 27th Meeting Minutes

Motion: Welvaert

Second: Castillo

Kabat Roll Call Vote: Carlson, Welvaert, Castillo, Haga, Sandison, S. White, Hughes, Hubbard

Motion Carried

5. Treasurer's Report

5A. Treasurer's Report 2021

No new expenses for June. The Commission voted in May to allocate up to \$500.00 to the Chaska Pride Picnic scheduled for June 27th. Invoices are expected to be paid after this event. Balance of \$1,883.00.

6. Committee Updates

6A. Calendar Committee

6Ai June Pride Celebration

Kabat reported at the May 27th meeting, the Commission agreed with the Calendar Committee's recommendation to hold a Pride Picnic on June 17th, 2021 at City Square Park. In the final planning stages, a flier has been distributed via Facebook and the City's other social media channels. Kabat shared the final plans of the event to include, ice cream, a Community Art project, decorations, yard games, a tie-dye station, food trucks, and a live DJ. A volunteer registration was shared, all slots have been filled however if more HRC members are interested in helping notify Kabat. Kabat is requesting the commission to come up with ideas for what the DJ can share with the crowd, or if any of the commission members would like to speak at the event? Commissioner Haga will reach out to a few CHS students if they would like to speak? Commissioner Haga will share a brief message at the event. Tessa Syverson from Parks and Recreation is the staff contact person with any questions regarding the event. Commissioner Carlson shared she has heard some feedback, why does the city

think this is an important event to host and why is the city spending money for the event? Commissioner Carlson inquired if any other commission members have heard any negative feedback? Commissioner Carlson shared the importance to focus on is our welcoming community. Commissioner Welvaert expressed every single person in the community is invited to the event. It's for the city, the funds are coming out of the Human Rights budget which was voted on.

Commissioner Hubbard inquired if there would be any police presence and if people from the city, police, firefighters, etc. will be attending? Kabat shared staff from the Parks and Recreation along with a few city council members will be attending and helping. Police and Fire Department are aware of the event if time permits them to attend.

Commissioner Sandison inquired if we have any best practices in place in case of a negative conversation? Commissioner Welvaert shared to listen to the concerns, give them the HRC e-mail address for later discussion. Kabat acknowledges this is not just the Human Rights priority decision, the city council also shares this priority. Kabat expressed if questions regarding negative feedback can also be directed to him.

6B. Program Committee

6Bi Green Card Voices

Kabat explained the Green Card Voices is something that the Human Rights Commission had originally connected with back in 2019 with the intent to host their traveling exhibit in 2020. The pandemic, unfortunately, prevented the exhibit from being able to host. Over the past few months, city staff has reconnected with Green Card Voices staff at the direction of the Program Committee to explore hosting their traveling exhibit in 2022 at the gallery space of the Chaska Community Center in August.

Commissioner Sandison inquired if possibly co-sponsorships and cost to people who look at the exhibits to help with the cost? Kabat agrees to look into co-sponsorship but not necessarily a charge for the event.

After further discussion, it was agreed that August is too soon. Discussed other locations for the program besides the CCC. Decided to bring the idea back to the program committee for further discussion.

6C. Webpage Committee

Commissioner Carlson shared the committee has not met but working to set a meeting with Kevin Wright.

6D. MLK Celebration

Commissioner Welvaert expressed the committee invited Robin Gordan to join the committee. She is from the Chaska school district and will share a lot of different ideas. The last meeting discussion was what groups are a possibility for speakers? The committee is sending top choices to Kevin Wright. Will extend invitation after discussion/approval with HRC for a keynote speaker.

6E. River City Days Committee

6Ei River City Days Update

Kabat shared River City Day's will be held July 23, 24, and 25th at City Square Park. Reminder to the commission the sign-up form to volunteer at the booth. At the last meeting, staff was asked to take a look at the HRC brochure. Kabat and Wright updated the brochure for Commission approval. Commissioner Carlson commented overall a great improvement to what we had. City Staff will take care of the printing. Commissioner Welvaert expressed multiple languages to include Spanish and semolina so it's easy to connect with HRC.

Commissioner Sanderson inquired if the Committee has other handouts? The committee does have some handouts, candy, fans, and other supplies for the booth. Commissioner Hubbard shared other ideas/suggestions for the booth. Kabat will e-mail the River City Day's committee members to organize the next meeting.

6F. Empathetic Response Committee

Commissioner Castillo had nothing to report.

7. Old Business:

7A. Bicycle Plan Update

Commissioner Carlson shared over 900 responses were received for the bicycle survey. Recommendations/results are being put together for scheduled opportunities to have community meetings. Kabat shared results will be put on the website for the project which is Bike/Walk Chaska. There was a good proportion of people who use the trail approximately 50% mostly used for exercise purposes. Hope is that upcoming summer events will help to utilize the trails.

8. New Business

8A. Noche Latina

Kabat shared this is an event actively being planned by the Parks and Recreation Department. It is part of a summer concert series that is going on now. On July 16th, Noche Latina is hosting, music by Salsa del Soul from 7 to 8:30 pm at the Firemans Park. There will also be a warm-up Zumba class from 5:45 to 6:45 along with food and drink available for purchase with a focus on Hispanic beverages. Kabat noted some of the Hispanic community shared the event was not promoted enough in English, mostly in Hispanic. Commissioner Welvaert inquired if any of the members need to notify you if they plan to attend the event? Kabat expressed better safe than sorry so yes, let him know in case of a possible quorum.

Kabat shared a screenshot of the new cricket pitch that the Public Works Department completed at McKnight Park. The City was approached by a local cricket club, members are primarily East Indian population who were seeking a place to play cricket. Only a couple of places to play in the state with this location being one of the best. Cricket will add one more opportunity to expand the city offering a broader audience.

9. Next Meeting Date – July 22 at Chaska City Hall Council Chambers.
This meeting will be in person.

10. Adjourn

Motion: Sandison

Second: Castillo