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LOCAL NEWS

EDA considers multimodal district plans

Utility installation, shovel-ready designation discussed

BY LAUREL BEAGER  
Editor

The potential developer of the International Falls multimodal district has met with the developers of the proposed Renewable Energy Clean Air Project to discuss a partnership in locating in the district, members of the city's Economic Development Authority Commission heard Monday.

EDA President Gail Rognerud told the commission that the developers are anxious for the city to annex the district into its boundary. She has asked that annexation of the district be considered at the Aug. 5 Falls council meeting and the Aug. 13 meeting of the Koochiching County Board. The EDA Commission is made up of city councilors.

Rognerud said the next step in the process is to resume installing utilities to the district when city Public Works Director Gary Skallman is comfortable with the placement when he learns of the site plans of the potential developers.

She said the EDA Advisory Committee has recommended the utility installation process move forward.

"It was a long and intense conversation with RECAP," she said. "It will be great if both projects start in the spring."

City Attorney Steve Sherman, also a member of the EDA Advisory Committee, said the utility process may move forward using a \$657,000 state grant awarded to the city last year. He said email discussions with Jeremy LaCroix, state program administrative coordinator with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, indicated that the grant may be used now and he said a motion by the International Falls City Council in May authorized seeking bids.

He later said that bids can be sought without committing the city to accept them.

A discussion about whether the EDA should apply for the district to become a DEED certified shovel-ready site at a cost of \$2,950 prompted Commissioner Bob Anderson, also the city's mayor, to question the timing of installation of utilities. Anderson said DEED staff have told him that DEED shovel-ready certification does not require utilities to be installed, but

instead that city officials be ready to seek bids "if we have a client — we have no client."

But Rognerud pointed to the potential developer, who city officials have not discussed publicly. And she said that the certification would allow DEED to promote the site for development.

"We have one who wants to start in the spring," she said. "The utilities are not for the shovel-ready program, but for the developer's plan. Without the utilities out there, we don't have a site that too many people will want to move to."

Shawn Mason, city director of economic and community development, said the state has allowed the city to retain the grant despite changes in the plans since the grant was awarded. The state has allowed the city to retain the grant, she said, because of the potential developer's plans and the layoffs at the Boise Inc. paper mill. Mason said a letter sent by the developer to DEED indicates that while Phase 1 of his plan will not now move forward, Phase II will move forward and that calls for a warehouse that would create an estimated six jobs in 18 months. The letter indicates that Phase

I, another warehouse that would create six to eight jobs, may move forward at a later date.

She urged the commission to move forward with seeking shovel-ready designation, which she said would allow the state to market the district.

But Anderson said the key word about the developers is "potential." developers. "We've had them before and both fell through," he said, adding that a ground breaking for the district that drew Gov. Mark Dayton and other state officials last year was conducted because of the potential clients.

He said use of the state grant for infrastructure requires \$300,000 of local money to also be spent. "I am hesitant to spend taxpayer money until we have someone signed on the dotted line," he said.

But other members disagreed, saying that installing the utilities and seeking the shovel-ready designation would help draw developers to the district, as well as encourage the state to market it to developers.

Commissioner Cynthia Jaksa said the cost for the designation is low considering the impact it could have in marketing efforts.

No action was taken on the designation.

Trying out Twitter

BY SPENSER BICKETT  
AND ERIC MATHEWS  
Staff Writers

The social media site Twitter became part of the news recently with the birth of Prince William and Kate Middleton's first son,

George Alexander Louis, as many people around the world first heard the news on the site.

Since its launch in July 2006, Twitter has expanded dramatically, both in the amount of users and the way that the site is used.

Journal's staff spoke with Borderland residents recently about their impressions of the site.

Lona Bloomquist, a retired teacher, said she didn't understand why people felt the need to use Twitter.

"I hear people talk about it, but I don't know much about it," she said. "I'm totally confused about it."

Sue Worthman, also a retired teacher, said she thought it was like using Facebook, but you could use it on your smartphone.

Carmen Killbride said that she's heard of Twitter before, but has never used the site because none of her friends were on it.

Ellen Urquhart has been using Twitter for a couple of months, and she said she's only be getting her feet wet and only using it a little so far.

"I started using it because all my friends were on it and it was easier to talk to them, because Facebook is becoming more difficult for that," she said.

While some users follow celebrities or other national names or companies on Twitter, Urquhart said she just sticks to following her friends and people she knows.

How to use Twitter

Twitter is centered around people 'tweeting' or posting a short thought about different things such as personal sayings, current events, and more. These tweets have a 140 character limit. You can also upload pictures by tweeting them along with the 140 characters.

While writing a tweet, click the camera button on your phone to upload a photo or video into that tweet.

To see someone's tweets, you have to follow them. You need to search for the person's user name, also known as a handle, and click the follow button next to their name and picture. This will allow you to see all of their tweets.

There are not only people on Twitter; there are businesses, news sources, and organizations. To receive tweets from these sources, follow them like with other people.

Twitter can also help with communication. If you want to tweet something and have a specific person read it, you put the username at the beginning of the tweet. They will then receive a notification of that tweet for them to read.

If you want to send a more private message, however, you can send someone a direct message, to which only they can read and respond back.

Something that has become specific to Twitter is the use of #, called hashtags. These hashtags are to connect a tweet with a certain event or phrase when they are searched for by someone else.

Twitter is also a great way to receive news. For example, if you wanted to know the royal baby's name or gender, you could search Kate Middleton or royal baby, and Twitter would connect you to tweets people have been posting about that event all over the world.

Twitter is being used for a larger variety of things. America's Got Talent now allows you to vote for contestants using Twitter. Viewers can tweet #voteAGT followed by the act's name to submit a vote. Other shows like American Idol and The X Factor may soon follow this example.

Members of the Young and the Breastless, a breast cancer support group, said that they hadn't used the social network too much, but that they did know a little about it. They said that they preferred other social networks like Facebook and Pinterest, over Twitter.

Jeff Tripodi said he doesn't have much need for social networking; he tried Facebook but he doesn't care for it. He said he sees Twitter as a way for people to chat and share their ideas and opinions.

"I might try it, just to give it a shot one of these days," he said.

TRAINING TECHNIQUES



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Birchdale Fire Department volunteers Wednesday learned how to use the jaws-of-life tool, which allows for the extrication of victims from a vehicle involved in an accident. An instructor from the Fosston Fire Department brought up the tools to help the department learn rescue techniques.

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**FOOD BOOTHS DOWNTOWN:**  
Tacos in a Bag by Borderland Alano Club  
Cotton Candy by the Chamber  
Dani Davenport Bakery  
Ice Cream by Tara's Wharf Ice Cream  
Burgers & Brats by the Moose Club  
Root Beer Floats by Int'l Falls Figure Skating Club  
Snow Cones by Knights of Columbus

**MAIN STREET ACTIVITIES:**  
7-8:30 a.m. Accordion Music by Don Hughes  
8:40-10:40 a.m. Sloughgrass Family Band  
10:45-11:45 a.m. Gary Hooker Vocals & Guitar  
Noon-2 p.m. Icebox 4 Band Blues/ Rock Gospel  
2:15-4:15 p.m. Ron Cash Performing Johnny Cash & Other Legends  
Anderson Treasures  
Artist Cherie Serrano  
Moose Women's Rummage Sale  
Bargains at Shops Up & Down Main Street  
Face, Nail & Hair Painting by Salvation Army  
Kissing Booth by Borderland Humane Society  
Kids Bounce Gym by White's Rental  
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The Chocolate Moose  
City Drug  
Coffee Landing Café  
Dairy Queen Grill & Chill  
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Family Dollar  
First Lutheran Church  
Frostbite Fuel  
Fun Food Factory  
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Good Sam Home Health Care  
Hardee's  
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