

**Item 25-0211: Request to approve proposed text amendments to the Municipal Code Chapter 4 Buildings, Section 4-161, as identified in the attached document, and the various permit fee schedules be updated to increase the erosion control permit fee to \$50**

**Item 25-0380: Request to renew lease with Maple Lawn Dairy for crop farming of undeveloped land in Southpoint Commerce Park**

Community Development Committee

Wed, Apr 23, 2025 4:30PM

**Aldersperson Vaya Jones (District 10) 01:52**

Moving on to our action items, number 25-0211, request to approve proposed text amendments to the Municipal Code, Chapter Four, Buildings, section 4-161, as identified in the attached document, and the various permit fee schedules to be updated to increase the erosion control permit fee to \$50. Do I have a motion?

**Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 02:13**

Move to approve.

**Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 02:14**

Second.

**Aldersperson Vaya Jones (District 10) 02:15**

All right, we have our motions, and Supervisor Craanen is going to speak on this. All right. Director...? Got it.

**[Inspections Supervisor Craanen starts speaking off microphone.]**

**Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 02:27**

His mic's not on yet.

**Aldersperson Vaya Jones (District 10) 02:30**

District one not Director one for better.

**Supervisor Kurt Craanen (Inspections) 02:31**

These are the fees for residential properties, typically new houses. We just increasing the fee from \$40 to \$50.

**Aldersperson Vaya Jones (District 10) 02:40**

Any questions on that? Alder Fenton.

**Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 02:43**

Thank you, chair. Is this—did I understand correctly that this was something that we had already approved in the 2025 budget, and we just did not get that in the text amendment?

**Supervisor Kurt Craanen (Inspections) 02:54**

Right. It just wasn't included in the—

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 02:56**

Okay.

**Supervisor Kurt Craanen (Inspections) 02:56**

—in that wave.

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 02:57**

All right, thank you.

**Alderson Vaya Jones (District 10) 03:02**

All right, let's go ahead and take a vote. All those in favor signify by saying aye. Aye. Any opposed? Abstentions? That passes five zero.

**Alderson Vaya Jones (District 10) 03:11**

Next action item, 25-0380, request to renew lease with Maple Lawn Dairy for crop farming of undeveloped land in South Point Commercial—Commerce Park.

**Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 03:25**

Move to approve

**Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 03:27**

Second.

**Alderson Vaya Jones (District 10) 03:27**

We have a motion and a second. Director—oh, Deputy Director Kress.

**Deputy Director David Kress (Community and Economic Development) 03:34**

Thank you, Chair. Pinch hitting for Lily a little bit here. She did a very nice job outlining some of the changes and by and large, mostly carry-over items from the previous lease. But really essential we're looking to do here is renew the lease with Maple Lawn Dairy. We had a five-year lease that had been signed back in 2020. That's set to expire end of this month. Had a good working relationship with them, as they've been farming vacant land within our South Point Commerce Park for several years now.

**Deputy Director David Kress (Community and Economic Development) 04:04**

Obviously, the primary objective itself point is to make available land for business and industrial purposes. But in the meantime, having some of it be actively farmed does reduce the likelihood of wetlands forming. Also reduces the costs associated with cutting weeds and grass and other things growing, and also generates some revenue.

**Deputy Director David Kress (Community and Economic Development) 04:27**

In terms of noteworthy changes, it's a smaller area than what was originally included in the last five-year cycle for the lease. That's due to some of the ongoing construction activities surrounding phase four in particular, which is in between Eisenhower Drive and Coop Road. There are two road extensions and then also a cul de sac road that are being constructed, continue to be constructed this year, and in the interest of allowing that work to happen, we're essentially having the farmer avoid that that space. So that's acknowledged within the lease here. But by and large, the terms remain the same. It is a different individual that's representing the Maple Lawn Dairy now. It's being passed from father to son, and that's being acknowledged in the lease as well. But again,

Lily did nice job aligning it in the memo. Staff is recommending approval, and I'd be happy to entertain any questions.

**Aldersperson Vaya Jones (District 10) 05:21**

So quite a mutually beneficial relationship, then for the city.

**Deputy Director David Kress (Community and Economic Development) 05:24**

I would say so.

**Aldersperson Vaya Jones (District 10) 05:25**

Any questions? Alder Hartzheim. Aldersperson Hartzheim. Oh, you know what? I'm going to turn it on for you.

**Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 05:34**

Thank you, Chair. May I direct to Deputy Director Kress? Deputy Director, what—two things. One, what happens if during the growth of a crop we now are selling a parcel of land? Is there—I mean, I'm not seeing within the term that—I'm seeing in the terms that they can—that we or they can terminate the lease, but mid-crop would kind of be unfortunate. I'm just curious about that situation. And then secondarily, was this offered to other folks who might want to pay more as far as leasing our lands?

**Deputy Director David Kress (Community and Economic Development) 06:12**

Sure, both good questions. So, taking the first one first in terms of what happens if we choose to terminate the lease mid growing season, which could, in theory, happen if we received an offer to purchase. Com Dev Committee and Council approves said offer. We would have the ability to terminate it mid-year and in doing so, essentially would reimburse for a pro-rated portion of the amount paid, and any subsequent payment would also be adjusted based on the loss of acreage.

**Deputy Director David Kress (Community and Economic Development) 06:47**

The way that the lease is structured is that half of the lease amount is paid April 1 and the other half is paid November 1. So, something were to change, say, July, we would prorate based on what had been paid already, based on the loss in acreage, and then obviously their payment come November would also be adjusted accordingly. Second question I'm drawing a blank on. Can you remind me?

**Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 07:12**

Was this offer to other farmers? I mean, obviously we have a good relationship with them, city and farmer, but I'm just wondering if this was like, "Hey, anybody want to give us an offer for leasing some of our farmland?"

**Deputy Director David Kress (Community and Economic Development) 07:26**

Thank you for the refresher on the second question. So short answer to your question is, no, not this time around. We felt that given the strong relationship we've had with them, and the struggles we've had with some other farmers over the years, was a consideration. And then also, just being totally candid here, it's a pretty small amount of land that that's being made available at this point. Back in 2020 when we last went out to RFP to allow any and all farmers to submit a proposal, we had around 115 or 120 acres available for farming purposes. Now we're down to just over 46 acres, and of those 46 acres, they're scattered into four different fragments. So, our thought was, it's not broke; don't fix it. There probably isn't a ton of interest, just given the kind of developing nature in this southeast side of the Fox Cities area. So probably a small pool to begin with, and most would probably just decline, given the fact that there are some challenges with picking and choosing these smaller fragments to farm.

**Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13)** 08:31

Excellent. Thank you.

**Aldersperson Vaya Jones (District 10)** 08:34

Any other questions or comments? All right, let's go ahead and vote. All those in favor, signify by saying, aye.  
Any opposed or abstentions? That passes five zero.