



TO: City Council

FROM: Michelle Hayes, Finance Director
Angie Comstock, Deputy City Clerk

SUBJECT: Building Permits Issued by the City of Stacy

DATE: May 9, 2023

Background:

In January 2023, Chisago County was contracted to do the permitting for the City of Stacy. Per the agreement, the City is still responsible for issuing sign and fence permits. The clerk's department is experiencing difficulties regarding process for issuing these permits due to a lack of guidance, training and enforcement.

Driveways have also come up recently and the county does not require permits for these. As our code does not fully address this issue clearly, this will go to the Planning Commission for review. If the Planning Commission and Council decide that we need to require a permit for driveways, and outlines standards, these permits will fall to the city as well. Since the agreement with the county is still fairly new, other issues like this may come up and we will need to have a way to address it.

Action Requested:

The clerk's department requests that the Council provide guidance on the permit process that should be followed, based on the options/suggestions below, or another option that the council deems sufficient. The clerk's department recommends option 2 unless the council has a better alternative.

1. Since Chisago County does not require permits for these items, one option would be to repeal the code requiring permits for signs and fences, therefore removing the need for a permit process.
2. Clerk's department can work with the planner/engineer to develop a "checklist" with conditions to be met for the types of permits the clerk's department would be responsible for issuing. There is already a fee schedule created to address engineer input with these (\$175 from the standard \$50), but there is no guideline as to what requires the input and it does not cover inspection once completed. Another "checklist" would be created with the assistance of the engineer/planner that would enable city staff to do a visual inspection when the work is complete to verify code is followed. Note: This means staff who is not trained in building/zoning enforcement would observe the checklist items, does this pose any legal risk?
3. City planner and engineer would be responsible for reviewing and issuing permits, as well as doing the inspection when the work is complete. As an estimate, the engineer/planner hourly rate is \$185-\$220. We would be charged the hourly rate, travel time and mileage to do the inspections. This realistically adds at least \$200-\$300 per instance to have the engineer inspect. This would make the fence permit for the engineer/planner to do completely around \$400-\$500 which would be passed to the resident.