

**Red Wing Sustainability Commission  
Workshop  
City Council Chambers  
February 24, 2026**

**Members Present:** Chair Maddie Brown; Commissioners Mark Berman, Hugh Brown; Maddie Brown, Dan Evanson, and Kristen Wert

**Members Absent:** All members were in attendance

**Others Present:** Brandy Howe, Staff Liaison; Shawn Blaney, Public Works Director; Jeff Schneider, Solid Waste Campus Manager; John with 5<sup>th</sup> Street Garden Project; Sara, an interested resident; and two students from the high school.

The meeting began at 5:30 p.m.

**1. Roll Call**

Roll call was conducted. All commissioners were present.

**2. Communication Items**

**A. City Council Liaison Report.**

There was no City Council Liaison report.

**B. City Liaison Report.**

Staff Liaison Howe reported that the City Council discussed discontinuing the presence of Liaisons on boards unless it is legally required by state regulation.

**2. Workshop Items**

**A. Review and Comment on Proposed 5th Street Community Garden.**

Howe explained that Public Works was approached about a potential community garden on 5<sup>th</sup> Street. The Public Works Department is seeking guidance and potential support for from the Commission before the request is brought forward to City Council. The Commission discussed the possible garden at length, including whether or not there should be a fence as well as the type of fence. After much discussion the Commission gave unanimous support for the proposed garden.

**B. Organics Collection.**

Schneider provided a brief overview of the organics collection pilot study. The Commission continued its discussion from previous meetings on the potential location for a free organics drop-off for residents. Multiple locations were proposed including the depot and farmer's market area, Jefferson School, YMCA, former hospital site, and the high school. The Commission agreed that a subcommittee will convene to evaluate locations and finalize details.

### **C. Review and Comment on Urban Landscapes Regulations.**

Director Blaney provided an overview of the challenges with the lawn care ordinance, highlighting a rise in neighbor-to-neighbor complaints over the past five years and the resulting strain on staff. Complaints often stem from differing expectations for traditional versus nontraditional or natural landscapes, making enforcement difficult and confrontational for contractors. The Commission discussed the proposed permitting process and five-foot buffer, expressing concerns about administrative burden, fairness, and whether permits would truly reduce complaints. Several Commissioners suggested alternative wording and phased approaches, but Director Blaney emphasized that a permitting system is likely necessary to manage the issue effectively. The Commission agreed to provide input on buffer language and expressed a desire to remain involved in the process. Director Blaney will incorporate the Commission's feedback, prepare a report stating the Sustainability Commission's position, and bring a draft ordinance change back for review before it goes to the City Council. The discussion also reinforced the Commission's commitment to promoting natural landscapes while supporting practical enforcement.

### **D. Bee City USA.**

Commissioner Wert stated that the Bee City USA report is more intense than expected. Dues are due at the end of the month, and a vote must be held to agree to pay them. This can be voted on in March.

## **4. Announcements.**

It was reported that Resilient Red Wing is seeking new leadership. The group meets every other month, sends out a newsletter, maintains a FB page, and has a few other projects led by volunteers. The shoe company is still supporting the 50-tree giveaway, so it will still happen this year.

Commissioner asked if there was an age requirement to be on the Sustainability Commission. Howe confirmed that student members are permitted to serve a one-year term on the Sustainability Commission.

### **A. Topics for Future Agendas.**

### **B. Next Meeting Date: March 24, 2026.**

## **5. Adjournment.**

The meeting ended at 7:59, with no formal adjournment.