

Resolution No.

**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
ISANTI COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

**NEGATIVE DECLARATION ON THE NEED FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
STATEMENT (EIS) FOR THE CAMBRIDGE NE INDUSTRIAL PARK**

WHEREAS, the City of Cambridge is the Responsible Government Unit (RGU) in the processing of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the proposed Cambridge NE Industrial Park;

WHEREAS, the City has submitted a copy to all public agencies on the EAW distribution list, provided a press release to the local paper, and published a notice of the EAW in the EQB Monitor, all of which were done in accordance with Minnesota Rules, Ch. 4410;

WHEREAS, the thirty (30) day comment period ended September 5, 2001 with individual parties and public agencies commenting;

WHEREAS, the City of Cambridge acknowledges the responses from the Minnesota Historical Society, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and the United States Department of Agriculture;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Cambridge that a negative declaration is made on the need for an EIS for the proposed Cambridge NE Industrial Park;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Cambridge that a findings of fact has been prepared on behalf of the City to address the specific comments and concerns of the responding agencies and that findings is attached to this resolution;

**Findings of Fact
Cambridge NE Industrial Park
Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW)**

Cambridge NE Industrial Park EAW Notice of Decision: It is the finding of the City of Cambridge (RGU) that potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed NE Industrial Park shall be mitigated in an acceptable manner and therefore an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not necessary. Mitigation of potential environmental impacts shall be achieved by the following means:

- **Permit conditions or other actions of various public regulatory authorities including, but not limited to the City of Cambridge, Isanti County SWCD, Minnesota DNR, and the MPCA.**

The City of Cambridge further recognizes the following findings of fact in conjunction with a negative declaration on the need for an EIS for the proposed NE Industrial Park:

1. Comparing environmental impacts that may be reasonably expected to occur from the proposed project with the criteria contained in Minnesota Rules 4410.1700, subpart 7, the Council finds that the proposed project does not have the potential for significant environmental effects.
2. The type, extent and reversibility of environmental effects have been considered and they do not contain the potential for significant environmental effects.
3. The cumulative potential of environmental effects of related or anticipated future projects will not create the potential for significant environmental effects.
4. The extent to which the environmental effects are subject to mitigation by ongoing public regulatory authority indicates that this proposed project does not have the potential for significant environmental effects.
5. The extent to which environmental effects can be anticipated and controlled as a result of other environmental studies undertaken by public agencies and the project proposer has been considered and it indicates that this project does not have the potential for significant environmental effects.

The balance of this “findings of fact” provides background information regarding the NE Industrial Park EAW and responses to agency comments received following distribution of the EAW.

Description: This is a 183-acre industrial park development on the northeast limits of the City of Cambridge. It is anticipated that the majority of the uses of the park will be industrial uses, however, the potential exists for limited general commercial or retail uses as well.

EAW Comments: The NE Industrial Park EAW was distributed as required for a 30-day comment period (ended September 5, 2001). Written comments were received from the following agencies:

- United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Minnesota Historical Society
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The comments of each agency have been summarized below. Following each summary is a description of how the comments and concerns of each agency have or will be addressed in the development approval process.

Minnesota Historical Society Comments:

In a letter dated August 21, 2001 it was noted by Britta L. Bloomberg, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer; that the NE Industrial Park had been reviewed pursuant to responsibilities given to the Minnesota Historical Society by the Minnesota Historic Sites Act and the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act and through the process outlined in Minnesota Rules 4410.1600.

The letter noted there are no properties listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places, and no known or suspected archaeological properties in the area that will be affected by this project.

Response to Minnesota Historical Society Comments:

None.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Comments:

In a letter dated August 31, 2001 written by Thomas W. Balcom, he offered comments on behalf of the MnDNR.

It was noted that there is a DNR protected wetland, a Type 4 wetland, on the southwest corner of the property (DNR Protected Wetland #30-160) which has already been impacted by the T.H. 65 bypass project. The DNR recommends the City of Cambridge look for opportunities to enhance or restore this wetland. They also recommend the city establish a wide buffer area around the wetland, no less than 150 feet and avoid direct discharge of storm water to the wetland. All storm water should be pretreated with constructed wetlands and vegetated filter strips prior to discharging to this wetland.

In another letter dated October 17, 2000 written by the Minnesota DNR, the Minnesota Natural Heritage database was reviewed to determine if there are any rare plant or animal species or other significant natural features that are known to occur within an approximate one-mile radius of the area. Based on this review there are 5 known occurrences of rare species or natural communities in the area searched.

- Blanding's turtles (*Emydoidea blandingii*)
- Ram's Head Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium Arietinum*)
- American Water-Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle Americana*)

- Bog Bluegrass (*Poa Paludigena*)
- Tamarack Swamp Minerotrophic Subtype

Response to Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Comments:

The City of Cambridge will look into enhancing and/or restoring the wetland referenced above when reviewing the requirements of federal and state wetland permits. The City of Cambridge will also look into buffers for the wetlands mentioned above when researching Best Management Practices (BMP's) for this project. Storm water management will also be an issue when deciding on BMP's for the project.

SEH Scientist Brad Kovach completed a thorough investigation of the site on May 29, 2001. After thorough site investigation it was concluded that suitable Blanding's turtle habitat is entirely absent within the project area. Almost all of the upland acreage is actively tilled and planted for agriculture. None of the upland had any sizeable amount of natural vegetative cover. A small woodlot with wetland characteristics abuts the northeast corner of the site, but is not within the project boundary. This woodlot is entirely surrounded by road and railroad rights-of-way. Suitable conditions for Blanding's turtles may exist within any of the four wetland basins identified on the site, but certain features have diminished the quality to a level that is considered poor for this species. Two of the wetland basins are farmed wetlands with ephemeral hydrology that are currently planted with crops. The remaining two basins are poor habitat because they are surrounded with tilled uplands on the east side, and have transportation corridors bordering the remaining three sides and appear to have water quality impacts and sedimentation problems from road storm water runoff, and they lack any hydrological connections to neighboring wetlands that could provide a movement vector for turtles from surrounding areas. In summary, it appears that Blanding's turtle habitat is absent within and immediately adjacent to the project area.

All other species listed on the Minnesota Natural Heritage database found within approximately one-mile radius of the site are not found specifically on the proposed site.

Minnesota Department of Agriculture Comments:

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture offered no comments in a letter dated July, 27 2001.

Response to Minnesota Department of Agriculture Comments:

None.

United States Department of Agriculture Comments:

In a letter dated August 3, 2001 Mary Ann Erickson, Business Program Specialist, noted that the EAW has been reviewed thoroughly by the USDA, the following comments were offered.

There were two specific comments that need to be addressed. The first comment by the USDA suggested a review of all wetlands areas including the man-made wetland should be completed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MnDNR, and the Soil and Water Conservation District to determine what actions are needed (e.g. mitigation, compensation).

The second comment by the USDA suggested that prior to final design of roads and lots, wetlands would need to be delineated to ensure avoidance of those areas and to ensure avoidance of those areas and to ensure that all sites are buildable sites.

Response to United States Department of Agriculture Comments:

The wetland areas will be reviewed by the Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) for compliance to the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act, as well as federal permit requirements. Persons representing the Local Government Unit (LGU), the State of Minnesota, and the federal will be in attendance at this on-site meeting. SEH Scientist, Brad Kovach will discuss wetland issues and wetland delineation at this meeting.

The wetlands are also going to be delineated by an SEH scientist in September, 2001.