NEIGHBORS AGAINST THE ASPHALT PLANT (NAAP)
October 6, 2010, Candidates Forum on Asphalt Plant and Related Issues
Roseville, Minnesota

Responses to NAAP Questions from Council & Mayoral Candidates

1) What is your position on the asphalt plant proposal currently before the City Council?

Tam McGehee (Council Candidate): I do not now nor have I ever supported the proposed asphalt plant. I do not support its attendant “outdoor storage,” nor its grinding and crushing processes. During Public Comment of the September 20 Council meeting, I explained and presented in writing how the Council can deny the permit immediately. If elected, I will do everything I can to see that the permits are denied and a good and appropriate use found for the site.

Bob Venters (Council Candidate): I am against the proposed asphalt plant and the lack of notice that should have been given to residents and businesses.

Bob Willmus (Council Candidate): Strongly opposed. I have been opposed to this proposal since it first surfaced in May of 2009. (Question # 2) is a copy of the email I sent to council members in May of 2009.

Dan Kelzer (Mayor): This is not how a city and its elected officials should conduct themselves. You deserve better, we deserve better.

I am against any commercial development that is disruptive, when the disruption then places unnecessary burdens on the city’s population by compromising quality of life...including but not limited to:

- Noise pollution
- Environmental hazards
- Private property rights
- Private equity

Not all industry is counterproductive, in general it rarely is (...if planned properly); making the exceptions to the rule so easy to spot.

Dan Roe (Mayor): When the storage permit application first came before the Council in spring 2009, I had not yet formed a conclusion about it. I was receptive to the notion of “warm mix” being a better technology than traditional “hot mix” in terms of odors and emissions. However, after visiting plants in the Twin Cities, observing how different people have different sensibilities to the odors of those plants, and learning that warm mix technology would not be used initially, I concluded by late May 2009 that I could not support the project as proposed. My position remains the same today.

2) Why?

- If generally opposed, please indicate why.
- If generally in favor, please indicate why.

McGehee (Council Candidate): I am more than “generally opposed.” I am totally opposed. This plant would cost residents much more than it would generate in taxes. This proposed plant will
1. Create serious health impacts from air pollution,
2. Impact negatively our entire commercial area with noxious, if not toxic, odors,
3. Devalue all of the surrounding properties, commercial and residential,
4. Eliminate 300 existing jobs at Old Dutch,
5. Provide no new jobs,
6. Add to the pollution entering our ponds and storm water system,
7. Impact negatively two golf courses, and possibly three,
8. Result in less tax revenue from surrounding business and residential property,
9. Add little taxable value to the existing site, and
10. Cause damage to our roads; damage Roseville taxpayers will pay to repair.

This plant is a detriment to the health, safety, and welfare (physically and financially) of Roseville.

Bob Venters (Council Candidate): There are three main reasons why I am against the proposed asphalt plant and the proposed activity;

1. Health and safety
   - I understand that there are some residents in the neighboring community that have health issues that could be impacted by the emissions from the proposed asphalt plant.
   - I also think that the entire community does not want the air quality made worse.

2. Zoning code
   - I believe that the performance standards in the current zoning code prohibit this type of activity due to the noxious odors that will go beyond the property.

3. Lower property values
   - Even though the proposed asphalt plant will bring in tax revenue, it is likely that the overall amount of taxes brought in would be lower due to decreased property valuations of the surrounding properties.

Bob Willmus (Council Candidate): E-Mail to Council: Thursday, May 28, 2009
Subject: Asphalt Plant

1 Impact of this facility's contribution to the Roseville's Tax Base....Minimal

2 Negative Impact on surrounding properties tax value... Yes, this is one case where you can safely say surrounding property values will likely decline due to this use. Talk to any certified real estate appraiser...or better yet, read some real estate appraisals for properties that surround other plants. There will be a section of the appraisal pertaining to negative impacts.

3 Impact of this facility on existing infrastructure... Increased degradation of roadways surrounding the plant as well as hwy 36, 35w and 88 will all see an increase of heavy truck traffic.
4 Plant will be "in production" about 6-7 months each year… This means if you’re a neighbor of the facility you will have to “live with” the noise and odors for 6-7 months each year.

5 Once a conditional use permit is issued it becomes a legal use on the property into perpetuity, It "Runs with the Land"… you can’t pull it back if you don’t like the conditions of the property. The owner can sell to another whom would have the same rights to continue the use of the property.

**Dan Kelzer (Mayoral Candidate):** Our city government needs to not only protect your equity, property rights and general quality of life but cultivate and endorse the ability for improvements. We can accomplish this by exercising common sense in our decisions and treating our neighbors with a semblance of respect.

What is most disconcerting about this is discussions progressed beyond the Planning Commission where I feel much could have been done to prevent this from happening in the first place or if nothing else allowed for an easier reversal than presented to the City Council at this date.

It is a slippery slope when a city attempts and may succeed in setting precedent allowing for the negative influence of property values while maintaining a double standard crafting ordinances which do not allow the people to do the same. This is not just a community issue it affects the direction, vision, and scope of city government. I am left questioning… Is my neighborhood next?

**Dan Roe (Mayoral Candidate):** I cannot support the proposed plant due to the potential negative impacts on the quality of life of nearby residents and businesses (and their employees and customers). That includes negative impacts on property values. Based on my own background working with industrial equipment and industrial businesses, I do not currently have confidence that the carbon filter technology (which is untried so far as we know in this industry) will reduce odors enough, or be properly maintained in the long term, or have an adequate back-up system, or handle other aspects of the operation where odors can be emitted, so as not to adversely affect the lives and livelihoods of those in the area. Once a plant is built, our ability to address failures in these areas will be limited. The best way to avoid future enforcement problems is by not allowing the plant to be built in the first place.

**3) If opposed, in the last 16 months since the Plant was first proposed what have you done to prevent it from happening?**

**Tam McGehee (Council):** When this proposal appeared on the Council Agenda as “Conditional Use Permit for Outdoor Storage” with staff recommending approval, passage by a 4 to 1 vote seemed likely. After reviewing the proposal, I wrote a Citizen’s Request for an EAW, circulated the petition, and (together with Friends of Twin Lakes) filed the petition with the EQB. The EQB accepted it and passed it to the MPCA. When the EAW was released and there was no notice from the city, I wrote and printed (and a resident distributed) bright green flyers to alert the neighborhood most affected. I personally took flyers to the golf courses, Coffman Condominiums, Hampden Co-op, and contacted the St.
Anthony Park Bugle editor. I also wrote letters to the MPCA requesting an EIS and denial of the air permit.

Bob Venters (Council): I believe that the proposal is not consistent with the zoning code and that has been where my efforts have been focused. Here is a description of some of my activities;
- I was listed as one of the original editors of SWARM. The oldest email that I could find went back to June 2009. Even though I had a limited role in the writing of the newsletter, this is something that I have been on the record, as being against, from the beginning.
- I have made postings on the Roseville Issues Forum including pictures from the asphalt plant in Minneapolis after I visited it.
- I have also spoken out in front of the City Council. I spoke out to ensure that the performance standards would not get lost in the rewrite of the new zoning code.

Also worried about the future - I hope that the issue with the asphalt plant will be resolved with the plant not moving to Roseville. However, I expect the challenge of balancing the interests of businesses and residents will continue for years to come. With my background in business, including three securities licenses, an MBA, and a J.D. (focused on arbitration), I feel like I would be able to understand the interests of businesses but still be able to put residents first.

Bob Willmus (Council): Educating everyone I have had contact with as to the dangers of this project. The surrounding neighborhoods will be impacted by pollutants, noise, odors, traffic, and declining property values.

I have only encountered a handful of people, who at first thought felt this proposal was something Roseville should pursue. Once I am able to discuss the negative impacts of the proposal they tend to give it a second thought.

Dan Kelzer (Mayor): I have chosen to run for public service, to make sound decisions and make real differences for the betterment of our city.

Dan Roe (Mayor): Over the last 16 months, I have been working with City staff and the City Attorney to understand the most appropriate means to be sure that our will not to have the plant built as proposed comes to fruition. Early on, I asked about whether the performance standards in our Industrial zoning code give us the ability to deny the storage permit on the grounds that the underlying use is not permitted. I have investigated proper findings to be used for a denial of the storage permit. I have investigated whether we can change our zoning code to not permit asphalt plants, and make that apply to this application. It was important to me to undertake these inquiries outside of public meetings in order to avoid telegraphing potential strategies to the applicant. My plan has been to publicly discuss these questions when the council takes up the application again.

{Additional questions will be asked by the moderators and audience members. The Forum’s procedures and rules will also be announced at the Forum’s beginning.]