

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, July 26, 2011, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Bob Ramsey
Councilmember Randy Backous (arrived 5:34 pm)
Councilmember Colin McGlone
Councilmember Jason Tossey
Councilmember Jeffrey Wise

Absent: Councilmember David Elvig

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Deputy City Administrator Heidi Nelson
Finance Officer Diana Lund
Fire Chief Dean Kapler
Economic Development/Marketing Manager Backman
Parks Supervisor Mark Riverblood
City Engineer Tim Himmer
City Attorney Bill Goodrich
Street Supervisor Grant Reimer
Development Director Daren Lazan
Senior Planner Tim Gladhill

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ramsey called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:34 p.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted.

COUNCIL TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1) Review Duties Assigned to Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment

Senior Planner Gladhill reviewed the staff report. He suggested if staff is interested, this can be brought forward at the next Planning Commission/Board of Adjustment meeting.

Mayor Ramsey and Councilmember Wise stated they approved of preparing a discussion.

Senior Planner Gladhill pointed out this arrangement may reduce workload.

Mayor Ramsey questioned whether Council can override the Planning Commission.

Senior Planner Gladhill responded it could. He added the Council disagreed with the Planning Commission very few times, and it was never a disagreement with a project in total; only an item or two within the project.

Councilmember Wise asked how much time would be saved.

Senior Planner Gladhill replied it would save a couple of hours. It takes time to edit and distribute the minutes, approve the agenda, and to elect new officers as needed.

Consensus was reached to approve a discussion be prepared to assign tasks of the Board of Adjustment and Appeals to the Planning Commission.

2) Review Park Dedication Proposal for future Northfork Plat

Parks Supervisor Riverblood reviewed the staff report.

Mr. Dennis Peck of Northfork Inc. clarified that at this point, he is exploring what can and cannot be done with that property. He said they are not proposing immediate development; his company is interested in determining what the City's plans are with that property and the property that was previously dedicated. These discussions have been going on since 1989. Under the requirements of the park dedication requirements for the 30-acre parcel with less than one lot per acre, he noted they would be dedicating 3 acres. He said they have questions about the overage of about two acres. He noted they do have an interested buyer, and this prompted them to look at alternative uses. He indicated he has to report back to a Board, and reiterated this is exploratory at this point.

Parks Supervisor Riverblood stated in addition to having this set aside for developing at some point, a park should be easily accessed. This does have a large power line along Alpine. There will be a 50-foot encumbrance. This may not be the best use for residential.

Mayor Ramsey stated he is not interested in a large park on this plot.

Councilmember McGlone commented he prefers to have better parks; not more parks. The City would not want to lose the trail that follows the lake.

Mr. Peck responded that trail is deeded and will remain.

Senior Planner Gladhill noted the parcel is currently zoned as park. Any other uses have to go through Planning and Zoning, and the Comp Plan.

Councilmember Wise inquired if the City can obtain the parcel, and not use it as dedicated parkland. He asked if there is a County assessment of what it is worth.

Mr. Peck replied the parcel can be acquired, and not used as dedicated parkland. He explained it is assessed at \$330,000 a year. He said his company is paying \$6,000 per year.

Councilmember Tossey stated he has no issues with moving forward. He stated he does not want to see a full park program in there before the City explores using some of the lots for building.

Mr. Peck stated Northfork does not have an interest in deeding the property to the City, and then having the City develop it for something other than parkland. He noted Northfork has a long-standing commitment that this will be park.

City Administrator Ulrich stated the most valuable part of the parcel is the trail and the City prefers to retain the access rights to it and the shores of Lake Itasca. He added the City should discuss whether the parcel should be used for ball fields, or whether a cash donation is appropriate to use to build up other parks.

Consensus was reached to allow staff to continue discussions with Northfork Inc.

3) Consider Lease Terms for Dennis Sharp for Properties at 6701 and 6745 Hwy 10

Finance Officer Lund reviewed the staff report. She stated Mr. Sharp agreed to the rental terms of a total annual rent of \$44,004. He made a request to install a fence at the City's expense. He will address this issue separately.

City Administrator Ulrich indicated staff did not recommend installing a fence.

Mr. Dennis Sharp, tenant at 6704 and 6745 Hwy 10, stated he was seeking permission to erect a fence. He noted the neighbor, at times, stores items that are in the way of getting vehicles out from the back. The fence would help deter that.

Fire Chief Kapler stated Mr. Sharp's operation is a high fuel load, and there are no sprinkled buildings. He explained access is critical for fire crews to get there. A fence would be a detriment. He noted it is becoming congested now to get emergency vehicles through.

Mayor Ramsey suggested staff work with Mr. Sharp to draft an agreement of where tenants' property can be stored.

Mr. Sharp stated he did not realize the fence would impede emergency vehicles. He said he could work within any restrictions for putting up a fence.

Councilmember McGlone expressed concern with one-year termination clause in the lease.

City Administrator Ulrich explained that is favorable for the City.

City Attorney Goodrich noted the tenant requested that clause be added.

Councilmember McGlone explained since Mr. Sharp is a seasonal renter; it seems this clause specifying a year's notice is a long time. He questioned whether a six-month lease may be more appropriate.

City Administrator Ulrich stated one of the issues is that the lease expires in July, and this is a six-month operation. The lease dates could be changed to accommodate the seasonal schedule so the lease is not terminated in the middle of the season.

Mr. Sharp requested if the City is going to cancel the lease that they could notify him in early spring so his clients are aware early enough to not return that fall.

Mayor Ramsey suggested the lease dates run from January 1 to December 31.

City Administrator Ulrich stated if there is agreement on the lease amount, the item can move forward to the Council meeting. It is on the consent agenda at the meeting and it can be approved there, dependant on Mr. Sharp's approval and the City Attorney's approval.

4) Discuss Potential Lot Split at 14760 Bowers Dr NW

Senior Planner Gladhill reviewed the staff report.

Councilmember McGlone stated the split lot seems to fit into the neighborhood. He said he does not see a reason to disapprove

Councilmember Wise clarified the owner's house is on one side of the property.

Sandra Porter, 14760 Bowers Dr. NW, replied her house is one side.

Mayor Ramsey questioned if that house would be demolished.

Ms. Porter answered in the affirmative.

Senior Planner Gladhill noted there have been discussions regarding the DNR's role. They do not have the final ability to act on this. They can discuss and offer an opinion.

Consensus was reached to direct the tenant to further explore this item. Direction was made to the applicant to seek an opinion on demolishing the house.

5) Consider Acquisition of Drainage and Utility Easement at 16259 Coquina Street NW (portions of this discussion may be closed to the public.)

City Engineer Himmer stated he would review a potential offer in the closed meeting.

Motion by Councilmember Backous, seconded by Councilmember Wise, to move to closed session.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Ramsey, Councilmembers Backous, Wise, McGlone, and Tossey. Voting No: None. Absent: Councilmember Elvig.

The Special Council meeting moved into a closed session at 6:25 p.m.

The closed session ended at 6:40 p.m. The meeting was opened back up to the public at that time.

6) Consider Closed-Circuit Programming for Lobby of Municipal Center

Deputy City Administrator Nelson reviewed the staff report.

Mayor Ramsey stated he sits on the Board of the Ramsey Foundation. He stated the direction was to provide programming on the existing screen, and possibly add another in the hall where clients wait for the service center.

Councilmember Tossey commented some of the proceeds could be used for the dais. He also mentioned the price of the screens in the staff report seems high.

Deputy City Administrator Nelson explained it is a State bid contract, and the bids were from the company that installed them in other rooms in City Hall.

Mayor Ramsey and Councilmember Backous stated they agreed with this proposal.

City Administrator Ulrich pointed out more advertising funding can be generated if there are screens in the two highest traffic areas.

The consensus was to install a screen in the lobby for close circuit programming. The possibility of installing a screen in the hallway would need more discussion.

7) Briefing on Rail Station Funding

City Administrator Ulrich updated the Council on the funding by the County for the Rail Station. Projects will start being brought forth for approvals. The funds are budgeted out of TIF funds. He stated the City is hoping to get \$4 million from the Met Council and other sources. He said the project is planned to move forward, at this point.

Councilmember Tossey asked if there was a possibility that the Met Council may choose not to give all the money they proposed.

City Administrator Ulrich confirmed it is a possibility.

Mayor Ramsey noted when the resolution was passed it was a general understanding that the skyway was included in that amount, but it was not.

City Administrator Ulrich indicated the County needs reassurance that the City is still committed to the project.

Consensus was reached that the City is committed.

FUTURE TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION

1) Review Future Topics/Calendar

City Administrator Ulrich noted there is a meeting with Mr. Deal tomorrow, and three Councilmembers are required to attend.

MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF INPUT

None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Tossey, seconded by Councilmember Wise, to close the work session

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Ramsey, Councilmembers Tossey, Wise, Backous, and McGlone. Voting No: None. Absent: Councilmember Elvig.

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Jo Ann M. Thieling
City Clerk

Drafted by Chris Moksnes
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.