

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

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, November 20, 2012, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Bob Ramsey
Councilmember Randy Backous
Councilmember David Elvig
Councilmember Colin McGlone
Councilmember Sarah Strommen
Councilmember Jason Tossey (arrived at 6:50 p.m.)
Councilmember Jeffrey Wise

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
Development Services Manager Timothy Gladhill
Development Manager Darren Lazan
Interim Engineer Ron Wagner
Interim Engineer Shane Nelson
Councilmember-Elect Mark Kuzma
Councilmember-Elect Chris Riley

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ramsey called the City Council Work Session to order at 6:37 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Review Request for Alternative Mechanical Screening at 7333 Drive NW; Case of NAU Country Insurance Company

Development Services Manager Gladhill reviewed the staff report and recommendation for a combination of fencing and architectural wall as a solution to the mechanical equipment needs of NAU Country Insurance and the screening requirements of City Code.

Councilmember McGlone stated he preferred the second rendering that provides a screening wall and better screening.

Development Services Manager Gladhill explained the Code talks about using material that matches the building but it was intended for the framework to be flexible. He indicated that NAU Country Insurance is willing to include fabric mesh in the fencing and plant landscaping to address the concern with screening.

Councilmember McGlone noted the cost for a chain link fence with mesh and a few trees is cheaper than installing a footing and brick wall. He stated since this location is downtown and a data center, it needs to be something more appropriate that is similar in building material, such as the brick.

Mayor Ramsey stated he preferred the brick wall in the front but could support metal screening in the back. He indicated he likes the treatment Allina used to include a bench or a planter.

Councilmember Strommen agreed that softened the aesthetic.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated staff did point out the Allina and Midwest Medical Examiner buildings as examples. He asked if the wall height could be reduced from the diagram showing a wall that is close to six feet tall.

Councilmember Elvig stated the appearance and need to abate noise are his concerns. He noted there is no residential programmed near this location but if the use runs a generator ten hours every week as a test run, he would prefer it exhausts up to the roof so it does not blow diesel exhaust into that area.

Mayor Ramsey stated he did not support a full chain link fence.

Councilmember Wise stated he finds the flat wall is not attractive and agrees that a chain link fence is definitely not acceptable in this location.

Councilmember Elvig noted a chain link fence also does not address sound mitigation.

City Administrator Ulrich offered the alternative of using wrought iron fence, which is more decorative than chain link and not that much more expensive.

Mayor Ramsey stated he would not support chain link on the street side and felt some landscaping was also needed.

Councilmember Strommen pointed out that when driving down Sunwood, the first side you will see is the chain link. She stated architectural standards are in place, the building looks great, and chain link is not the aesthetic desired.

Councilmember McGlone noted the Code says “like building materials” and since this is a data center, there is a security element as well. He asked why they would not want a wall with a door that locks. Councilmember McGlone asked which angle is to be screened according to the Code.

Development Services Manager Gladhill answered screening is about the view from the street and sidewalk with the intent to screen it from public view. He stated staff did suggest the screening wall turn the corner.

Councilmember Strommen pointed out that the proposed one-sided wall would not comply.

Councilmember Elvig suggested the City Council consider whether to require rooftop screening. He indicated the data center in Anoka added to its building and constructed a 20-foot screening wall to address sound control and security. Councilmember Elvig stated he is not suggesting that in this location but agrees that a six-foot wall is not asking too much.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated there was some analysis about use of the rooftop, but the business wanted to keep it operational with existing equipment.

Councilmember Tossey arrived at 6:50 p.m.

The consensus of the Council was to support the use of a brick or block (matching the building) and to construct a screening wall on the building front and side with vegetative screening along Sunwood Drive.

3. FUTURE TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

3.01: Review Future Work Session Topics / Calendar

City Administrator Ulrich asked if the Council would like to schedule a Legislative Meet and Greet event on December 11, 2012.

The Council indicated it would be interested since a Work Session, Regular Meeting and HRA are scheduled for that same night.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

None

5. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Wise, seconded by Councilmember Backous, to adjourn the Work Session meeting.

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Jo Ann M. Thieling
City Clerk

Drafted by Carla Wirth
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.