

**PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, July 18, 2013, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Gary Levine
 Commissioner Randy Bauer
 Commissioner Ralph Brauer
 Commissioner Cindy Nosan
 Commissioner Gary VanScoy

Members Absent: Commissioner Joseph Field
 Commissioner Matthew Maul

Also Present: Development Services Manager Timothy Gladhill
 Assistant Planner/Environmental Coordinator Chris Anderson

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Levine called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Van Scoy, seconded by Commissioner Nosan, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners Bauer, Nosan, Brauer, and VanScoy. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Field and Maul.

4. APPROVE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

4.01: Approve the Following Planning Commission Minutes:

4.01.1: Planning Commission Meeting Minutes Dated June 6, 2013

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Nosan, to approve the following minutes as presented: Planning Commission Meeting Minutes dated June 6, 2013.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners Bauer, VanScoy, Brauer, and Nosan. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Field and Maul.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Receive Presentation of City's Strategic Plan

Presentation

Mayor Sarah Strommen thanked the Planning Commission for their time this evening. She then reviewed the City of Ramsey's strategic planning process in detail. It was noted the purpose for the strategic plan was to provide the City with a common foundation that was driven by the community that would bring the Council together. She thanked all City staff and Commission members for participating in this process.

City Administrator Ulrich reviewed the strategic plan further with the Commission noting the projected outcomes and accomplishments over the next three to five years. He explained the strategic action plan would assist in accomplishing the Council's goals. The roles and responsibilities for boards and commissions were then discussed.

Mayor Strommen provided comment on the success factors noting it would be key to align resources with the City's goals. She indicated the Council would continue to work to build trust with staff and the public, while increasing communication. She was pleased to see the positive direction the City was heading.

Commissioner Bauer was pleased to see that the Council was working to restore trust for the betterment of the community.

Commissioner VanScoy appreciated that consensus was reached by the Council on the strategic plan.

Mayor Strommen agreed stating the entire process brought the Council together even when there were differing opinions.

Commissioner Brauer was pleased with the plan the Council has created. He cautioned the Council from treating the residents as customers. He thought instead the residents should be viewed as employers that can assist in setting the direction the City should head. He encouraged the Mayor and entire Council to continue working to bring the community together.

Mayor Strommen appreciated Commissioner Brauer's concerns. She explained the Council was working to engage the public more in reaching the City's mission and vision. She wanted to see the Council held accountable if the new goals and objectives were not being achieved.

Commissioner Nosan stated she was thrilled after reading the strategic plan and thanked the Mayor for her attendance this evening.

Chairperson Levine encouraged the Council and entire City staff to continue working to improve the Ramsey. He was pleased that the strategic plan had the City moving in the right direction.

Mayor Strommen encouraged the Commissioners to contact her at any time with additional feedback.

5.02: Consider Site Plan for Building Expansion at 14350 Azurite Street NW; Case of Diamond Graphics, Inc.

Presentation

Development Services Manager Gladhill presented the staff report stating Diamond Graphics located at 14350 Azurite Street NW was requesting Site Plan Approval for a 28,034 square foot building addition to expand their manufacturing facility. A site plan review and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council was required for commercial and industrial developments and expansions. Staff reviewed the site plan in detail with the Commission and recommended approval.

Commission Business

Don Patterson, Diamond Graphics, provided a history of his business stating the growth in his business was requiring him to further expand his facility. He explained Diamond Graphics was thriving in the City of Ramsey. He thanked staff for providing a thorough report this evening and requested the Commission approve the proposed site plan for a building expansion.

Commissioner Bauer requested further information on the proposed parking and asked if the additional asphalt surfaces were necessary.

Mr. Patterson stated he currently has 105 full time employees working over three shifts. He noted the additional parking would greatly assist his employees during shift changes. He anticipated that another 20 employees would be hired after the expansion was completed. Mr. Patterson explained temporary staffing was brought in during November and December, which also required additional parking. He then discussed an additional expansion (Phase III) planned for the facility in five years.

Jeff Benedict, Vanguard Construction, stated the future expansion at Diamond Graphics could be a separate building. This was an unknown and time would tell how the needs of the company would evolve.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Nosan, to recommend that City Council approve the Site Plan submittal contingent upon compliance with the City Staff Review Letter dated July 12, 2013, directing Staff to work with the applicant on tree placement.

Further discussion

Commissioner VanScoy commented if Phase III was not completed, the facility may not have adequate landscaping.

Commissioner Brauer indicated if the motion would require the applicant to work with Staff on the tree placement to assure all planting requirements were met.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners Bauer, Nosan, Brauer, and VanScoy. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Field and Maul.

5.03: Consider Sketch Plan Review of Oakwood Acres Located Along 167th Avenue, West of Nowthen Boulevard; Case of Oakwood Land Development

Presentation

Development Services Manager Gladhill presented the staff report asking the Commission to review a sketch plan of Oakwood Acres located along 167th Avenue west of Nowthen Boulevard for Oakwood Land Development. He explained the submitted subdivision proposed to plat approximately 1.1 acres to create three (3) buildable single-family lots. He requested the Commission review the plans and provide Staff comment on how to proceed.

Commission Business

Commissioner Bauer requested further information on the 167th Avenue road realignment.

Development Services Manager Gladhill explained the realignment was done to create more cohesion in the community while strengthening the east-west road connections after the Brookfield neighborhood was completed.

Commissioner Nosan asked how the lots sizes compared to the neighborhood.

Development Services Manager Gladhill indicated the proposed lots were slightly smaller than the neighboring lots on 167th Avenue.

John Peterson, Oakwood Land Development, commented the proposed lots met all minimum City requirements and currently had water and sewer services in place. He explained a home could be built on the proposed lots that was consistent with the homes in the area.

The Commission was in favor of the proposed plan moving forward.

5.04: Public Hearing: Consider Ordinance #13-15 to Establish Armstrong Boulevard Interchange Overlay District

Public Hearing

Chairperson Levine called the public hearing to order at 8:06 p.m.

Presentation

Development Services Manager Gladhill presented the staff report stating the City has been actively pursuing the construction of an interchange at Armstrong Boulevard and US Highway 10. The City has been successful in securing a portion of the funding required for this project. He noted the Anoka County Highway Department has completed the necessary environmental review to proceed with final design of the interchange. As part of the public comment period during the environmental review portion of the project, several commercial property owners expressed concern with loss of visibility due to the vertical nature of the proposed structure.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated the City has borrowed a model ordinance used in the Central Avenue (TH 65) improvement project at Main Street (CSAH 14) in Blaine. A similar situation existed during the conversion of an at-grade intersection to a grade-separated interchange. The proposed overlay district would allow for additional sign height and size. Staff was recommending the signs be no more than 50 feet in height. He requested the Commission hold a public hearing and adopt an Ordinance establishing the Armstrong Boulevard Interchange Overlay District.

Citizen Input

Development Services Manager Gladhill noted one business owner had requested a 300 square foot sign at 75 feet.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Brauer, to close the public hearing.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners Bauer, Brauer, Nosan, and VanScoy. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Field and Maul.

Chairperson Levine closed the public hearing closed at 8:14 p.m.

Commission Business

Chairperson Levine understood that both the City and business owners were pleased with the overpass in Blaine. He was encouraged that Staff was using the Blaine Ordinance as its model.

Commissioner Brauer stated the height of the overpass bridge in Blaine was taken into consideration when setting the proposed sign height in their overlay district.

Commissioner Bauer approved of the 50 foot sign height for the businesses within the overlay district.

Development Services Manager Gladhill reviewed the properties that would be affected by the overlay district.

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Nosan, to recommend that City Council adopt Ordinance #13-15 establishing the Armstrong Boulevard Sign Overlay District.

Further discussion

Commissioner Bauer asked if a business owner could request a variance to the proposed sign height.

Development Services Manager Gladhill stated this could be done but a sign structure higher than 50 feet would require a great deal of footings. He noted a conditional use permit would have to be applied for.

Amendment

Motion by Commissioner Bauer to require the sign height to be tapered from the bridge height on down. The amendment failed for lack of a second.

Commissioner VanScoy recommended the Ordinance proceed as written by Staff.

Chairperson Levine agreed.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners VanScoy, Nosan, Bauer, and Brauer. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Field and Maul.

5.05: Zoning Bulletins

Zoning Bulletins were noted.

5.05: For Update Only: Report on Monthly Activities

Staff provided a report on monthly activities.

6. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

None.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners Bauer, VanScoy, Brauer, and Nosan. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Field and Maul.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Gladhill
Development Services Manager

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Planning Division Secretary

Drafted by Heidi Guenther
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.