

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a special meeting on Monday, April 20, 2015, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Gary Levine
 Commissioner Andrew Andrusko
 Commissioner Randy Bauer
 Commissioner Ralph Brauer
 Commissioner Matthew Maul

Members Absent: Commissioner Cindy Nosan
 Commissioner Gary VanScoy

Also Present: Community Development Director Timothy Gladhill
 City Planner Chris Anderson
 City Council Liaison John LeTourneau

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Levine called the regular meeting to order at 8:25 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

None.

4. COMMISSION BUSINESS

4.01: Review and Recommend a Response to the Metropolitan Council Regional Housing Policy Plan 2015 Amendment

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill explained that the Planning Commission was discussing an amendment to the Metropolitan Council Housing Plan that has been released for public comment. Housing is one of four Metropolitan Council plans (Water Resources,

Transportation, Parking and Housing) that influence the City's Comprehensive Plan. He stated that the Housing Plan was different in that it was not necessarily infrastructure improvements but it does guide some of the investments the Metropolitan Council makes, especially grants that the City works to access through the Livable Communities Program. He stated that the City does participate in the voluntary Livable Communities Program with the Metropolitan Council. With this program, housing performance scores are utilized to help gauge our grant applications in a competitive scoring process against other participating communities. He stated that the City has received several grants through this process and that this is an important document as it relates to regional investments within the City of Ramsey. He stated that the City is not opposed to the amendment as long as these are not required mandates but are voluntary goals that the community aspires to. There would be no penalty for not meeting the affordable housing thresholds published in the document but it gives the City something to strive for. He stated that this has been a controversial document for many of the suburbs in the area. He stated that the City did respond to the preliminary document based on the standards being voluntary and the plan not requiring amendments to the City's current Future Land Use Plan or its Housing Assistance Policy, or the housing chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that the Council did make minor adjustments to the language as it relates to the land use plan and not wanting to restrict the City from expanding the MUSA or urban service area in the future. He highlighted things that were incorporated from the City's previous comments including trying to normalize the City's housing performance score across years.

Commissioner Bauer spoke about issues not becoming mandates. It is important to have guidelines that the City tries to follow.

Commissioner Andrusko stated it is his understanding that the Metropolitan Council doesn't have the necessary staff to review, in depth, every land use plan submitted to them. So along with that line, these should be guidelines until the Metropolitan Council can fully say, with every page and every policy that each individual municipality recommends. He felt it needs to come full circle before it does become a requirement.

Commissioner Brauer stated he sent an e-mail to Community Development Director Gladhill outlining his issues with the Metropolitan Council document and the City's response omissions. He stated that out of 53 members, there was only one from Anoka County and the document favors rich gated communities over communities like Ramsey because of the criteria it uses.

Chairperson Levine asked if the communities are privately owned property.

Commissioner Andrusko stated that there are community-associated properties but they still have to provide the legal amount for the federal government.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that the Metropolitan Council's role is to look at how much is necessary and then looks at the various local land use plans. Looking at what the plan could sustain with regard to density was important. He noted that the City's allocation was less than it was in the past.

Commissioner Brauer stated that the criteria they use doesn't take into account the individuality of the communities. Just to use income and population takes out geography and environmental considerations.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that wetlands and developmental areas are excluded from the calculation. He stated other socio economic factors are involved.

Commissioner Brauer stated that if their figures on the population increase are correct, every city is going to reach a stage where there is no room and the criteria doesn't make allowance for that. He talked about Ramsey Three being implemented as a result of a Metropolitan Council report that thought the City could continue to grow at the rate it had been in the past.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that that is why the City included the comment that it generally supports the document as long as it is not a required allocation that the City needs to meet and the City doesn't need to change their current/future land use map/vision.

Commissioner Brauer talked about the aging population trend and stated he doesn't see the Metropolitan Council doing anything about it. He talked about Aitkin County's dilemma with their large snowbird population.

Chairperson Levine asked if the scenario is going to play out the same everywhere.

Commissioner Bauer asked about age in Ramsey County.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that he did not know that information, but that the community will experience the baby boomer bubble and that is seen in the need for senior independent housing. He asked for consensus on including Commissioner Brauer's headers in the document response.

Chairperson Levine stated he is struggling with Commissioner Brauer's point about the gated communities because the property is privately owned.

Commissioner Brauer stated he would not have a problem leaving that header out and that it may not be appropriate in a document like this.

Chairperson Levine could have consensus on the rest of headers.

Commissioner Andrusko stated that he doesn't agree with putting in the 1 out of 53 members were from Anoka County header. He would rephrase it as there should be more representation from Anoka County.

Commissioner Brauer stated that Staff could reword the headers.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that the headers will be reworded before they go to the City Council. He confirmed that there was consensus to include the headers, to take out the section about the gated communities, to reword the header regarding Anoka County representation and to give latitude to Staff to reword the headers as needed.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Brauer, seconded by Commissioner Maul, to recommend that City Council approve the draft response to the Metropolitan Council's Housing Policy Plan with the changes noted.

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

5. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

None.

6. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Gladhill
Community Development Director

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Assistant

Drafted by Denise Berndt
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.