

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, November 12, 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
 Commissioner Cindy Nosan
 Commissioner Gary VanScoy

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Community Development Director Timothy Gladhill
 City Planner Chris Anderson
 Planning Intern Geoff Solomonson

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Levine called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Community Development Director Gladhill requested the Commission add Item 5.05 to the agenda to discuss a potential business incubator.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to approve the agenda as amended adding Item 5.05.

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

4. APPROVE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

4.01: Approve the Following Planning Commission Minutes:

4.01.1: Planning Commission Meeting Minutes Dated October 15, 2015

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Nosan, to approve the following minutes as presented: Planning Commission Meeting Minutes dated October 15, 2015.

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

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Public Hearing: Consider Request for a Variance to the Driveway Setback Requirement on the Property Located at 5581 148th Lane NW

Public Hearing

Chairperson Levine called the public hearing to order at 7:02 p.m.

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report stating through the Code Enforcement Program, the City became aware of an existing driveway extension that encroaches into the required five (5) foot driveway setback on the property located at 5581 148th Lane NW. Upon receiving a Notice of Violation from the City, Douglas and Vicky Foyt submitted an application for a variance from the standard driveway setback. Staff reviewed the request in detail with the Commission and recommended approval of the variance contingent upon the driveway extension surface being upgraded to comply with current City Code standards and upon the applicant entering into an Easement Encroachment Agreement with the City.

Commissioner Maul explained he would be abstaining from action on this item.

Citizen Input

Douglas Foyt, 5581 148th lane NW, explained he stored his boat on the side of his garage during the summer months and on the pad during the winter. However, after he purchased a trailer, the trailer now sits on the pad and the boat was stored indoors. He provided further comment on the grade of the storage pad and noted the surface was St. Cloud granite.

Vicky Foyt, 5581 148th Lane NW, commented they have not had any ponding or drainage issues between her and her neighbors from the storage pad.

Commissioner Bauer asked if the storage pad area were to be paved if the drainage would remain the same.

Mr. Foyt reported this was the case. He questioned if pavers could be used on the storage pad.

Community Development Director Gladhill indicated the City would support this type of material on the storage pad. Further discussion ensued regarding the easement on the property.

Commissioner Brauer discussed the encroachment issue from the October meeting and questioned how the Foyt's request differed.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported the homeowner's making the request from October had a very extensive retaining wall with several tiers along with an accessory structure up against a wetland. He noted a stormwater pond and wetlands were not involved in the Foyt's request.

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

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

Chairperson Levine closed the public hearing closed at 7:18 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to adopt Resolution #15-11-270 approving Findings of Fact #0956.

Further discussion

Commissioner Brauer requested the Commission review the Findings of Fact prior to approval.

The Commission reviewed the favorable Findings of Fact.

Commissioner VanScoy requested a Friendly Amendment adding a Finding of Fact stating there was no significant drainage or wetlands on the property. The Commission supported the addition of this Finding.

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

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend adopt Resolution #15-11-271 granting a variance to the standard driveway setback on the Subject Property.

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

5.02: Public Hearing: Request for a Conditional Use Permit to Exceed Sign Size and Height Restrictions at 8035 Riverdale Drive NW, Case of Ramsey-Arbor Properties, LLC.

Public Hearing

Chairperson Levine called the public hearing to order at 7:23 p.m.

Presentation

Planning Intern Solomonson presented the staff report stating the City has received an application from Ramsey-Arbor Properties, LLC requesting a conditional use permit (CUP) to exceed sign size restrictions for their parcel located at 8035 Riverdale Drive NW. The subject property is located directly adjacent to the Armstrong Boulevard Interchange project. The applicant desires to construct a 225 square foot (450 square foot gross aggregate surface area) sign to a height of seventy-five (75) feet without the required monument style base material. Staff discussed the request in detail with the Commission and recommended approval of the conditional use permit contingent upon incorporating a monument style base finish consistent with the exterior finish of the principal building to a minimum height of six (6) feet.

Citizen Input

Commissioner Bauer questioned why staff was recommending a monument base on the sign.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported this recommendation was being made for ground level aesthetics purposes.

Commissioner Brauer asked what the height of the overpass would be.

Community Development Director Gladhill discussed the height of the overpass in further detail with the Commission.

Steve Young, 8035 Riverdale Drive NW, discussed the sign location further and explained he was proposing to remove the existing 25-foot sign and would be replacing it with a multi-use 75-foot sign with a monument style base.

Commissioner Bauer inquired if City Code had any limits as to how many uses could share the sign.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported the City did not have any specific requirements regarding the number of shared users on a sign.

Mr. Young anticipated that he would have three or four tenants on the sign.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if the applicant had a preference with regard to the sign base.

Mr. Young preferred to not be required to have a monument style base given the high volume of traffic that would not see the sign base. He was not opposed to landscaping around the sign base.

Community Development Director Gladhill was not opposed to this suggestion; however he was following City Ordinance.

Commissioner Bauer inquired how tall the monument style base of the sign had to be.

Planning Intern Solomonson reported City Code required the base of the sign to be six feet in height.

Commissioner VanScoy supported staff's recommendation and suggested the monument style base be required.

Commissioner Nosan did not believe the monument base had to be six feet in height.

Chairperson Levine understood the need for consistency across the City with its signs.

Commissioner Andrusko discussed the amount of concrete that would be needed to anchor the sign. For this reason, he recommended the Planning Commission require a decorative monument style base on the sign.

Further discussion ensued regarding the number of existing signs on the property.

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

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

Chairperson Levine closed the public hearing closed at 7:47 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Maul, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #15-11-272 approving Findings of Fact #0957.

Further discussion

Commissioner Brauer reviewed the Findings of Fact discussing the proper language in order for the Findings to be favorable.

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

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Maul, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #15-11-273 approving Ramsey-Arbor Properties, LLC's request for a conditional use permit to exceed sign size restrictions established by City Code without requiring the monument style base finish.

Further discussion

Commissioner VanScoy supported the monument style base requirement as recommended by staff.

Commissioner Brauer agreed.

Commissioner Bauer did not believe a six-foot concrete wall constituted a "monument style base". He believed this would detract from the sign.

Commissioner Brauer suggested this request be approved as requested and that staff be directed to review City Code regarding sign bases.

Community Development Director Gladhill recommended that the Commission not require the base and that an Ordinance review be completed in the future separate from action on this item.

Commissioner Nosan questioned when the Planning Commission would revisit this issue.

Commissioner Bauer was in favor of the Commission reviewing the City's entire sign code in December.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported he would bring a work plan to the Commission in December.

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

5.03: Receive Update on Public Works Campus Space Needs Analysis and Consider Policy for a Future McKinley Street Connection.

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report and reviewed the campus space needs analysis with the Planning Commission. He requested the Commission consider policy direction on McKinley Street as one of the top concepts for the proposed future public works campus requires the future connection of McKinley Street to be vacated.

Commission Business

Commissioner Bauer questioned how long range the plan was.

Public Works Superintendent Reemer believed the plan was slated for tentative construction in 2018.

Community Development Director Gladhill agreed stating there was three years of planning needed in order to properly complete the project.

Commissioner Bauer inquired when the City's transportation plan would be complete.

Community Development Director Gladhill anticipated that the transportation would be completed late 2016 or early 2017.

Commissioner Bauer was in favor of not making a single sided decision, but rather wanted the Planning Commission to take a look at the overall transportation plan.

Chairperson Levine commented the McKinley issue has been an issue in Ramsey for 30 years. The roadway should have been a through street. He believed this was an important issue for the Commission to address.

Public Works Superintendent Reemer explained there was talk of constructing an underpass under the railroad at Sunfish Lake Boulevard. He indicated this would directly impact and close off McKinley. He did not believe that McKinley would be used enough to push it through.

Further discussion ensued regarding the amount of traffic using McKinley and 143rd.

Commissioner Brauer was in favor of taking McKinley off the table and giving the Public Works Department the green light to proceed with their planning efforts.

Community Development Director Gladhill provided further comment on future rail crossings planned for the City of Ramsey.

Motion by Commissioner Brauer, seconded by Commissioner Maul, to remove future consideration of a connection at McKinley Street.

Commissioner VanScoy requested further information on the proposed frontage road.

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the location of the proposed frontage road and discussed how this roadway would assist with directing traffic along the front side of Highway 10.

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

Chairperson Levine recessed the meeting at 8:32 p.m.

Chairperson Levine reconvened the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

5.04: Receive Presentation on Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

Presentation

Planning Intern Solomonson reviewed the Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan in detail with the Commission.

Commission Business

Chairperson Levine thanked staff for the update.

5.05: Discuss Potential Business Incubator.

Presentation

Commissioner Brauer discussed the importance of encouraging business development in the City of Ramsey. He supported the City pursuing a business incubator that could offer support to local entrepreneurs. He reviewed a series of questions that would need to be addressed by the Commission and staff. He recommended that a pilot program be created along with a planning process to move this program forward.

Commission Business

Community Development Director Gladhill suggested staff create a work plan, conduct initial investigations and proceed in this manner.

Commissioner Andrusko supported the business incubator moving forward.

Motion by Commissioner Andrusko, seconded by Commissioner Maul, to direct staff to move forward with the business incubator initiative and to begin drafting a work plan.

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

6. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

The Staff Update was noted.

6.01: Zoning Bulletins

Zoning Bulletins were noted.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Gladhill
Community Development Director

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Assistant

Drafted by Heidi Guenther
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.

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