

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, February 5, 2015, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Gary Levine
 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

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 VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Brauer, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Levine, Commissioners VanScoy, Brauer, Bauer, 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 January 8, 2015

Motion by Commissioner Brauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to approve the following minutes as presented: Planning Commission Meeting Minutes dated January 8, 2015.

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

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Public Hearing: Consider Request for a Variance to the Minimum Front Yard Setback Requirement on the Property Located at 16877 Feldspar Street NW; Case of 21st Century Bank

Public Hearing

Chairperson Levine called the public hearing to order at 7:01 p.m.

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report stating the City has received an application from 21st Century Bank requesting a variance to the minimum front yard setback on the property located at 16877 Feldspar Street NW. As the Commission will recall, a public hearing was recently held to consider a Preliminary Plat for Brookfield 5th Addition to convert the subject property from an outlot to a buildable lot. On January 27, 2015, the applicant received Council approval of both the Preliminary Plat and Final Plat for Brookfield 5th Addition. This variance request is an attempt to mitigate a concern raised at the previous public hearing regarding the position of a new home on the subject property in relation to the existing home on the lot to the north. Staff reviewed the request in further detail and recommended approval.

Citizen Input

None.

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

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

Chairperson Levine closed the public hearing closed at 7:04 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #15-02-031 adopting Findings of Fact #0940.

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

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Maul, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #15-02-32 granting a variance to the front yard setback requirement.

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

**5.02: Review Sketch Plan of Harvest Estates Located at 15153 Nowthen Boulevard NW;
Case of N.I.K. Management, Inc.**

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report stating the purpose of this case is to review the Sketch Plan for Harvest Estates, a proposed 45-lot detached, single-family subdivision on the former municipal center campus located at 15153 Nowthen Boulevard NW. Sketch Plan Review is a process outlined in City Code that provides an opportunity for the Planning Commission to review compliance with the Comprehensive Plan as well as Zoning and Subdivision Codes before an applicant spends resources on detailed civil engineering drawings. This step is not required by Minnesota Statute Chapter 462; however, it provides for a more proactive and collaborative design approach in an effort to avoid issues at a later date. He discussed the access issues to the site and explained that staff was recommending that the Nowthen Boulevard drive access point be closed and that focus be placed on Helium and Alpine. Lot sizes and the concept plan for the proposed development was discussed. Staff reviewed a letter from the developer, along with the Sketch Plan further with the Commission and requested feedback.

Commission Business

Commissioner Brauer thanked staff for their efforts in addressing the traffic concerns for the proposed development.

Chairperson Levine requested the public come forward at this time with comments.

Al Kempf, 15220 St. Francis Boulevard NW, explained he was a 42 year resident of Ramsey. He encouraged the Commission to consider how the proposed development would impact the neighborhood to the east and the increased traffic levels that would be created on 152nd. He expressed concern with the narrow width of the frontage road.

Commissioner Bauer stated he served with Mr. Kempf on a subcommittee when the data center was being considered. He commented that the proposed access point for the data center would have been Nowthen Boulevard. It was noted that the new plan was to alter the access points, which would impact the surrounding neighborhoods, as traffic would be forced to the east. He proposed a right in/right out access onto Highway 47. He had real concern with the proposed Sketch Plan and suggested Harvest Estates have access to Nowthen Boulevard.

Commissioner VanScoy questioned if access at 149th could be closed and then opened at 152nd. He inquired if this would be a viable, less costly option for the development.

Community Development Director Gladhill discussed the proposed access points for TH 47 and commented staff could explore this option further.

Chairperson Levine did not want to see TH 47 overburdened with traffic and encouraged staff to keep this in mind while routing traffic to this new development. He feared that there would be a choke point on TH 47 with the current design. He suggested that traffic be routed to Nowthen Boulevard.

Commissioner Bauer agreed with this recommendation and stated he would not support the Sketch Plan without access to Nowthen Boulevard.

Commissioner Nosan did not understand why staff was recommending the access point on Nowthen Boulevard be eliminated. She commented that she avoids TH 47 at all cost.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained the proposed land use differed from the current land use and had different traffic patterns and numbers. In addition, the current driveway does not line up with a public street.

Commissioner Brauer indicated he was majorly delayed in getting to the meeting due to an accident along TH 47. He further discussed how traffic on Waco Street was increasing in speed due to the fact it was a through street.

Ron Christensen, 5782 152nd Way, he recommended that the Nowthen Boulevard access be closed. He did not want traffic from the new development impacting the neighboring school. He then discussed his slow commute to work each day along TH 47 to Bunker Lake Boulevard.

Community Development Director Gladhill requested the Commission make a motion on how to handle the access point on Nowthen Boulevard.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Brauer, to recommend that staff work with the applicant to redesign Harvest Estates to provide a full access point onto Nowthen Boulevard.

Further discussion

Commissioner VanScoy believed that when he first looked at the sketch plan he thought access onto Nowthen Boulevard was necessary. However, after reviewing the comments from the County, he did not believe this to be true. He believed there were traffic issues on both 5 and TH 47 that needed to be addressed. He was concerned with traffic getting in and out of the new development without a signalized intersection on Nowthen Boulevard.

Commissioner Nosan was against putting more traffic onto TH 47.

Commissioner Brauer expressed concern with how the elementary school would be impacted by the proposed development. He believed that the County should reconsider the safety and access concerns to the elementary school.

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

Community Development Director Gladhill requested the Commission now discuss the buffer issues and direct staff on how to proceed.

Mr. Christensen discussed the promises that were made to him when he purchased his lot and expressed concern how the development of the lots behind his home would impact the adjacent wetland. He requested the Commission reconsider the placement of the lots. He recommended that a buffer area be considered.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained he received an email from Steve and Leah Swenson, 5734 152nd Way, stating the same concerns and requested a buffer area be placed between the new development and the existing homes. He discussed an option to redesign the development eliminating the cul-de-sac, creating a larger buffer zone and noted this would reduce the revenue for the developer but this was an alternative for the Commission to consider.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Maul, to recommend that staff work with the Harvest Estates developer to redesign the plat with the portion south of the blue line and north of the orange line be retained by the City as an outlot for utility easement.

Further discussion

Commissioner VanScoy requested further information on the size of the holding pond. He asked if a small park could be located near the pond.

Community Development Director Gladhill discussed the location and size of the holding pond. He indicated the park would be landlocked, but this possibility could be further considered by staff.

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

5.03: Consider Forwarding New Policy for the Sale of City Owned Land to the City Council

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report stating with the recent dissolution of the Ramsey HRA, it was being recommended by the Council that the City consider

a new policy for selling City-owned land. This policy outlines the Ramsey EDA's role in the sale of City-owned land. Staff reviewed the policy further with the Commission and requested comments or questions.

Commission Business

Commissioner Brauer believed this process was valuable.

Commissioner VanScoy agreed.

Chairperson Levine explained the consensus of the Commission was to recommend staff proceed.

5.04: 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update: Consider Preliminary Framework for Citizen Engagement and Formation of Steering Committee

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report stating the purpose of this case is to consider a Preliminary Framework for Citizen Engagement for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update. Staff reviewed the proposed framework in detail, requested feedback from the Commission and recommended approval.

Commission Business

Commissioner Brauer understood it would be difficult to change the composition of the steering committee. However, he suggested one or two more citizens be added to the committee to balance out the group.

Commissioner Bauer agreed stating there should be an equal number of citizens to Commission members.

Chairperson Levine feared that too many people on the steering committee could make it difficult for the group to make decisions.

Community Development Director Gladhill did not object to adding several more residents to the steering committee. He commented that at least one community wide workshop would also be held to gain feedback from the residents. He stated that he could seek interested from the public prior to making any determination as to the size of the steering committee. The Commission supported this recommendation.

Motion by Commissioner Brauer, seconded by Commissioner Bauer, to recommend that City Council adopt the Preliminary Framework for Citizen Engagement for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update adding two residents to the steering committee.

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

6. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

6.01: Staff Update

The Staff Update was noted.

Commissioner VanScoy suggested the Commission hold a worksession meeting to discuss the vision for the COR.

6.02: Zoning Bulletins

Zoning Bulletins were noted.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Gladhill
Community Development Director

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Assistant

Drafted by Heidi Guenther
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.