

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, June 4, 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 7:00 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to approve the agenda as amended placing Item 5.01 after 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 May 7, 2015

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Maul, to approve the following minutes as presented: Planning Commission Meeting Minutes dated May 7, 2015.

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

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.02: Discuss Concept of High Density Residential on Outlot A, Rivenwick Village; Case of Northridge Construction, Inc.

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report the purpose of this case is to provide initial feedback to a potential buyer of Outlot A, Rivenwick Village on the potential for the site to be developed as High Density Residential. This is not an official application but would require a Zoning Amendment and potentially a Comprehensive Plan Amendment. The intent is to receive public comment and provide early feedback before the potential Buyer completes a real estate transaction or develops detailed plans.

Community Development Director Gladhill indicated the site is approximately 9.34 acres in size, is guided for Mixed-Use Planned Unit Development (MU-PUD) in the Comprehensive Plan and located within the Mixed-Use Planned Unit Development (MU-PUD) District. The intent of this district is to provide a mix of uses within a defined geographic area without defining actual land use or zoning district boundaries. In this instance for Rivenwick Village, the MU-PUD specified a mix of residential and commercial-retail. The MU-PUD approval goes on further to specify a maximum number of residential units that can be constructed within the development area, which has already been reached. The remaining portion, per the previous PUD approval, is planned to be commercial-retail.

Community Development Director Gladhill indicated the request would require a Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Zoning Amendment. Based on 9.34 acres with a City Code specified range of seven (7) to fifteen (15) units per acre, the estimated number of units would range from 65 to 140. Staff reviewed the applicants request further with the Commission and comments.

Commission Business

Commissioner Andrusko questioned the zoning of the surrounding properties.

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the zoning of the surrounding parcels with the Commission.

Chairperson Levine understood that access to Riverdale was the only option for this parcel.

Community Development Director Gladhill commented another option would be to provide internal access off 139th.

Commissioner VanScoy thanked staff for holding Open House meetings with the neighboring residents. He asked if the entire PUD would have to be rezoned given the proposal from the developer.

Community Development Director Gladhill did not believe this to be the case. He commented that the City was focusing on the single parcel at this time and not the entire PUD.

Commissioner Nosan believed that the proposed development would serve as a great transitional property.

Commissioner Brauer provided comment on the history of this property. He inquired if the developer was willing to work with the adjacent residents to address their concerns.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated the developer appears to be willing to work through these concerns.

Commissioner Andrusko reported he spoke with neighbors in this area and these individuals were not in favor of four-story high density residential as shown on the plan. The residents would rather see retail or commercial on this property as was the promise when they moved into the area.

Commissioner Brauer noted this was a good point and encouraged the Commission to consider the Comp Plan amendment that would be required in order for this concept to move forward.

Chairperson Levine was not certain that the Commission was ready to make a decision on this plan. He asked if the Commission supported the concept and Comp Plan amendment.

Commissioner Brauer did not believe the proposed development provided a compelling reason to amend the Comp Plan. He also had misgivings about placing high density in this neighborhood.

Commissioner Nosan supported the development.

Commissioner Bauer was in favor of the developer further pursuing the high-density development plans.

Commissioner VanScoy supported further review of the concept plans.

Commissioner Maul supported the plans and encouraged the developer to include mixed use.

Commissioner Andrusko agreed with Commissioner Brauer's statements.

Chairperson Levine was in favor of the concept moving forward.

Community Development Director Gladhill thanked the Commission for their input.

Commissioner Bauer recommended that Item 5.05 be considered next.

5.05: Public Hearing: Consider Ordinance #15-12 Amending City Code Chapter 10 (Animals) and Section 117-111 (R-1 Residential District) Amending Approval Process for Certain Animals.

Public Hearing

Chairperson Levine called the public hearing to order at 7:32 p.m.

Presentation

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the staff report stating the purpose of this case is to hold a Public Hearing and provide a recommendation to the City Council for Ordinance #15-12. The intent of this Ordinance was to revise the approval process for the following requests:

1. Four (4) of more dogs
2. Horses on 1.5 to 2.99 acres
3. Beekeeping
4. Non-Traditional Domestic or Exotic Animals
5. Wild Animals

Community Development Director Gladhill commented each of these types of requests currently requires the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Based on a number of recent reviews with the Planning Commission and feedback from potential applicants, the following Ordinance was developed to consider reducing the timeframe and costs to processing the requests above. With the exception of the wild animal category, the Ordinance would either streamline or eliminate the process for approval. Please note that the draft Ordinance would remove the Planning Commission from the review process for the above requests, with the exception of wild animals. Staff discussed the proposed Ordinance in further detail and suggested the Commission recommend approval.

Citizen Input

Julie Schutz, 7652 158th Avenue NW, requested the Commission consider the proposed Ordinance to eliminate the Conditional Use Permit process for residents requesting horses on 1.5 to 2.99 acres.

Julia Randall, 7960 171st Lane NW, explained that the conditional use permitting process was quite expensive. She stated that her family could not continue to pay \$400 a month to board her

horses. She discussed the numerous health benefits that horses have offered her. She encouraged the Commission to allow homeowners to have two horses on 1.5 to 2.99 acre lots.

Anna Schutz, 7652 158th Avenue NW, commented that the \$1,000 conditional use permit fee would be much better spent going towards hay and feed for horses. She discussed the benefits of being able to tend to her horse on her own land, versus the expense of boarding. She expressed frustration that some homeowners in Ramsey already had horses on lots less than 2 acres.

Ms. Schutz explained that horses were very important to both of these girls. She indicated she had the support of her neighbors and requested the Commission allow horses on her land.

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

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

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

Commission Business

Commissioner Bauer supported the comments made by the girls.

Commissioner Brauer understood the girls' frustration and it did appear that the rules were being applied unfairly with regard to horses.

Commissioner Bauer questioned how wild animals was defined within City Code.

Community Development Director Gladhill discussed how City Code defined wild and domestic animals.

Commissioner Brauer asked if spider and fish families should be written into City Code as wild animals.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated this determination would have to be made by the Commission.

Commissioner VanScoy inquired if land acreage was based on a gross or net calculation.

Community Development Director Gladhill commented that this would be a gross calculation.

Commissioner VanScoy supported staff's recommendation and the proposed Ordinance amendments. He questioned how staff would license non-traditional wild animals and asked if conditions could be placed on these permits.

Community Development Director Gladhill indicated a license was similar to a conditional use permit. He reported that an annual renewal would not be required by the City Council.

Commissioner VanScoy understood that the City would allow a residential lot to have up to six hives. He asked if the City would be setting any requirements on the lot sizes to support these six hives.

City Planner Anderson stated property size does not come into play for bee keeping. He noted that staff has worked closely with the Minnesota Bee Keeping Association and the requirements within City Code were recommendations from this association.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend that City Council approval of Ordinance #15-12 Amending City Code Chapter 10 (Animals) and Section 117-111 (R-1 Residential District) Amending Approval Process for Certain Animals with the following revisions:

1. The definition of wild animal is revised to replace “a mammal, large or poisonous reptile and bird” with “a large or dangerous species”.
2. Any animal meeting the definition of horse in Article II shall be deleted from the text in Article I.
3. Correct a typographical error in Section 10-1 (f).

Further discussion

Commissioner Andrusko asked if the license would be tied to the land or the property owner.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained that the current Ordinance structure would run with the property owner and would not expire on a yearly basis.

Commissioner Nosan requested staff provide further information on the approval process for this Ordinance.

Community Development Director Gladhill discussed the approval timeline and noted when the Ordinance would be published. He anticipated that the Ordinance would be effective on August 17th.

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

5.03: Review Self-Storage and Retail Concept Plan for NE Quadrant of Ramsey Boulevard and Bunker Lake; Case of N.I.K. Management, Inc.

Presentation

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report stating the purpose of this case is to review an updated concept plan provided by N.I.K. Management for the NE intersection of Ramsey Boulevard and Bunker Lake Boulevard. As the Planning Commission may recall, a similar concept had been discussed at the January meeting; however, at that time, the concept focused entirely on indoor self-storage. The potential buyer of this property has revised their concept plan to include a mix of indoor self-storage units and convenience retail.

City Planner Anderson commented as a reminder, in 2004 and 2007, the City did review a similar request on this site. In January of this year, the Planning Commission's direction to staff was to carry forward the assumptions from this previous review. Staff wanted to provide the Planning Commission an opportunity to review the revised concept plan and provide any additional feedback to the interested party.

City Planner Anderson indicated the City did host a workshop prior to the meeting this evening to gather public input/feedback on the concept plan. Staff reviewed the comments gathered from the public and requested the Commission provide staff with feedback on how to proceed.

Commission Business

Commissioner Brauer asked if the County has provided any comments on the concept plan.

City Planner Anderson stated in 2004 and 2007 the County was open to one access to the site. The developer has shifted the access to the north away from the intersection based on the County's input.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if the temporary cul-de-sac would become permanent.

City Planner Anderson commented the intent would be to make the cul-de-sac permanent. He noted a variance would be required.

Commissioner Bauer was in favor of the developer continuing to work on his plans taking into consideration the comments and concerns raised by the neighborhood.

Commissioner Brauer believed it made sense to put in a convenience store on the corner lot.

Further discussion ensued regarding access to the property and its surrounding vegetation.

Chairperson Levine questioned what the main concerns of the adjacent residents were at this time.

City Planner Anderson reviewed the concerns of the residents noting property values were the main concern.

Commissioner Nosan expressed concern with the single access point to the site.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported that if the City was supportive of the plan, staff could reach out to the County to discuss access points further. He thanked the Commission for their input and noted he would speak with the County regarding access to and from this site.

5.04: Review Concept Plan for Townhome Units at NE Quadrant of Sunfish Lake Boulevard and Riverdale Drive; Case of Bulow, Inc.

Presentation

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report stating the purpose of this case is to provide feedback to the owner of the parcel located at the NE corner of Sunfish Lake Boulevard and Riverdale Drive regarding a concept plan that has been submitted. The concept plan proposes to develop the half-acre parcel with eight (8) townhome units. Please note that at this time, there is no official application submitted; the property owner wanted to get some initial feedback on the proposal prior to expending funds on plan development. Staff noted that a public workshop was held prior to the meeting to gather comments/feedback from the public regarding this concept plan. He requested comment from the Commission on how to proceed.

Commission Business

Commissioner Nosan asked if the townhomes would be rental or owner occupied.

City Planner Anderson commented that the City did not have this information.

Chairperson Levine questioned what the feedback from the neighborhood has been regarding the townhome concept plan.

City Planner Anderson reported that the number of access points were a concern, along with the density, amount of available parking and stormwater runoff.

Planning Intern Salmonson added that the developer was willing to pursue other driveway options. He discussed the courtyard greenspace that was being proposed between the buildings.

Commissioner Bauer believed that the concerns raised by the neighbors would be raised with whatever type of development were to locate on this parcel.

Chairperson Levine did not support the proposed townhome development for the parcel.

Commissioner Andrusko asked if the proposed three-story building fit with the style and character of the neighborhood.

City Planner Anderson commented the building did appear rather tall.

Commissioner Brauer did not believe there was a reason to amend the Comp Plan for the proposed townhome development. He feared if the Comp Plan were amended for this request, the City would be setting a precedent.

Commissioner VanScoy understood that this property has been for sale for roughly nine years and the property owner has had no offers.

Commissioner Brauer stated an economic hardship was not grounds for approval of a Comp Plan amendment.

Commissioner Bauer did not believe this small parcel could support the proposed amount of residential. He recommended that the request be reconsidered.

Chairperson Andrusko did not oppose residential, but believed the proposed request was too intense for the small lot size. He suggested that additional parcels be added or considered and that the density be reduced.

Chairperson Levine agreed with these concerns.

Commissioner VanScoy was not comfortable with the request as presented.

Commissioner Maul agreed that the lot was too small for the proposed density.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported that staff understood the concerns of the Commission and noted that staff would consider another use for this site.

5.01: Public Hearing: Request for a Conditional Use Permit to Exceed Sign Size Restrictions on the Property Generally Located North of 161st Avenue NW and west of Variolite Street NW; Case of the Church of St. Katherine Drexel.

Public Hearing

Chairperson Levine called the public hearing to order at 8:56 p.m.

Commissioner Bauer explained he was a deacon at St. Katharine Drexel and he submitted the Conditional Use Permit request.

Commissioner VanScoy reported he was a parishioner at St. Katharine Drexel.

Presentation

Planning Intern Solomonson presented the staff report stating the City has received an application from the Church of St. Katharine Drexel requesting a conditional use permit (CUP) to exceed sign size restrictions for their parcel located north of 161st Avenue NW and west of Variolite Street NW. The subject property is the site of the planned future campus for St.

Katharine Drexel, not their current location of operation. Since this is not a traditional real estate sign in the sense that it is marketed for sale, nor an institutional sign identifying such a use currently occurring on the subject property, staff finds that processing a CUP ensures equitable enforcement of sign regulations for parcels located in the R-1 Residential District and removes any uncertainty on how this sign should be classified. Costs to process this application are very minimal, so a majority of the submitted escrow is anticipated to be refunded. Staff reviewed the request in further detail and recommended approval of the request for a CUP to exceed the square footage limitation for a real estate sign in a residential district.

Citizen Input

Commissioner Andrusko questioned how the City would categorize the proposed sign.

Planning Intern Solomonson reported that the sign would be viewed as a real estate sign.

City Planner Anderson discussed the sign standards in further detail for the residential zoning district. He explained that staff was supported of the proposed sign size request.

Billy Sibilski, Boy Scout Troop #90, commented that he was doing his Eagle Scout project with St. Katharine Drexel. He believed that the property currently had two 48 square foot signs and he was proposing to build one slightly larger (6' x 9') sign that could be read from all directions. He discussed his further plans for his Eagle Scout project.

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

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

Chairperson Levine closed the public hearing closed at 9:04 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner Andrusko asked if the City had permanent sign requirements.

City Planner Anderson reported that future proposed signage would be reviewed by staff under the B-1 zoning district standards, and the signage would be limited to 100 square feet.

Commissioner Brauer questioned how many small signs the property could have.

City Planner Anderson indicated the site could have two 32 square foot signs.

Commissioner Brauer was in favor of clarifying the City Code with regard to the number and square footage of signs. He inquired why the City was classifying this sign as a real estate sign.

City Planner Anderson clarified that the sign was announcing the future real estate use for the site and was therefore considered a real estate sign.

Community Development Director Gladhill further discussed the differences between real estate, permanent and temporary signs in the City of Ramsey.

Chairperson Levine commented he did not believe the sign should be considered a real estate sign, but rather should be viewed as a permanent sign.

Motion by Commissioner Andrusko, seconded by Commissioner Maul, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #15-06-142 approving Findings of Fact #0946.

Further discussion

Commissioner Brauer recommended that the findings include a language that discusses the amount of square footage of signage that would be allowed, along with the number of signs.

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

Motion by Commissioner Andrusko, seconded by Commissioner Maul, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #15-06-143 relating to the Church of St. Katharine Drexel's request for a conditional use permit to exceed sign size restrictions established by City Code in the R-1 Residential Zoning District.

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

6. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

6.01: Staff Update

A Staff Update was provided.

6.02: Zoning Bulletins

Zoning Bulletins were noted.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Gladhill
Community Development Director

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Assistant

Drafted by Heidi Guenther
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.