

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, November 2, 2017, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:                   Chairperson Randy Bauer  
  Commissioner Bruce Anderson  
  Commissioner Cheri Gengler  
  Commissioner Cindy Nosan  
  Commissioner Patrick Surma  
  Commissioner Gary VanScoy

Members Absent:                   Commissioner Ralph Brauer

Also Present:                       Community Development Director Timothy Gladhill  
  City Planner Chris Anderson

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Bauer 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 Surma, to approve the agenda as amended removing approval of Planning Commission Minutes.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners VanScoy, Surma, Anderson, Gengler, and Nosan. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Brauer.

**4.     APPROVE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

None.

**5.     PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**5.01: Public Hearing: Consider Request for a Variance to Rear Yard Setbacks to Accommodate an Addition to the Rear of the Home at 15395 Armstrong Boulevard NW; Case of Peter and Lynn Medved.**

**Public Hearing**

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

**Presentation**

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report stating the City has received an application from Peter and Lynn Medved (the “Applicant”) to construct an addition to the rear of their home at 15395 Armstrong Boulevard NW (the “Subject Property”) that would encroach into the required rear yard setback. Staff provided further comment on the request and recommended approval of the variance.

**Citizen Input**

Lynn Medved, 15395 Armstrong Boulevard, thanked the Commission for their consideration.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Surma, to close the public hearing.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Surma, Gengler, Nosan, and VanScoy. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Brauer.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 7:07 p.m.

**Commission Business**

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to adopt Resolution #17-11-280 granting a variance for the proposed addition to encroach into the rear yard setback at 15395 Armstrong Blvd NW and approving the favorable Findings of Fact.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners VanScoy, Anderson, Gengler, Nosan, and Surma. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Brauer.

**6. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**6.01: Consider Sketch Plan Review for Rum River Prairie (Project #17-149); Case of Eric Thomsen.**

**Presentation**

City Planner Anderson presented the Staff Report stating the purpose of this case is to review a Sketch Plan for a proposed 24 lot detached single-family subdivision located at the intersection of Armstrong Blvd and Tiger Street (PIDs 07-32-25-14-0001 and 07-32-25-13-0001, together, the “Subject Property”). The Subject Property is zoned R-1 Residential (Rural Developing) and the subject lots would be serviced by private well and septic services. Staff commented further on the proposal and requested feedback on the Sketch Plan.

### **Commission Business**

Chairperson Bauer stated he was open to considering a variance.

Commissioner VanScoy agreed and asked if a portion of the land could be dedicated to Park Dedication fees.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained this was not part of the City’s plan.

Commissioner VanScoy commented he could support the addition of one more lot.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the outlot was large enough to have well and septic.

City Planner Anderson stated the lot was 1.78 acres in size. He explained soil borings would be necessary to ensure the land could support well and septic, but noted the size of the lot was adequate.

Commissioner Anderson indicated he would like to see the developer alter the lots so as to conform with the City’s current zoning and lot size requirements.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated staff could look at the lot width requirements for lots on a cul-de-sac which would assist the developer in not losing a lot on the cul-de-sac.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if staff had considered any other configuration for the cul-de-sac.

City Planner Anderson reported staff had not drafted any alternative plans.

Eric Thomsen, 6210 Green Valley Road, stated he would be willing to increase the frontage along the cul-de-sac and could adjust the lot sizes.

Bob Bentz, 8881 167<sup>th</sup> Lane, stated he lived just south of the proposed development. He explained he has spoken to his neighbors and was surprised that the Commission was discussing this matter as no notification was given to the neighbors. He expressed concern with how this development would impact wildlife. He commented on how this rural development would impact the water table through everyday water usage and lawn irrigation. He feared at some point the City would be pulling out more water than it recharges.

City Planner Anderson stated the City had a better understanding on municipal water use than on private wells and how this was impacting the water table.

Mr. Bentz encouraged the developer to consider planting a grass type other than Kentucky bluegrass as this would require less watering. He also suggested some amount of prairie grass be maintained versus having each five-acre lot becoming turf. In addition, he recommended the storm ponds not be installed as the area was all sand.

Cheri Frame, 8901 167<sup>th</sup> Lane, stated she lived in the Hunter's Ridge development. She indicated she supported the proposed development versus clustered developments. She encouraged the City to consider how the Itasca Trail environmental area and the water table would be impacted by the proposed development. She commented the amount and speed of traffic along Armstrong Boulevard. She encouraged the City to consider a trail connection at Armstrong and Tiger. She suggested the developer consider noise mitigation in order to address the excess noise that would be created by the new homes.

Chairperson Bauer recommended an evergreen barrier be considered by the developer as a buffer for the development.

City Planner Anderson stated the developer would be completing a noise study. He explained that a mix of deciduous and evergreen trees would provide for the best buffer for the development.

Further discussion ensued regarding the City's notification process for Public Hearings. Staff encouraged the neighbors to sign up for notifications regarding this case on the City's website.

**6.02: Public Hearing: Consider Recommendations related to proposed Villas at North Fork Subdivision; Case of Paxmar, LLC (Project No. 17-145).**

- 1. Comprehensive Plan Amendment from Rural Developing to Medium Density Residential.**
- 2. Zoning Amendment from Planned Unit Development to R-2 Residential.**

**Public Hearing**

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:36 p.m.

**Presentation**

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the Staff Report stating the purpose of this case is to consider a recommendation for a proposed Sketch Plan Review (100 lot subdivision), Comprehensive Plan Amendment (Rural Developing to Medium Density Residential + Urban Service Area Extension), Zoning Amendment (Northfork Planned Unit Development to R-2 Residential). Conditional Zoning Amendments are allowed by City Code Section 117-50 that allow a Zoning Amendment, but require that it follows a specific site plan to avoid the potential for a completely different project to be proposed after said Zoning Amendment.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained this is the first time the Planning Commission has reviewed this project. Please note that Paxmar, LLC has previously proposed a separate project in close proximity to this proposal, known as North Fork Meadows. The current proposal, Villas at North Fork, is a new proposal on a different site proposed by the same developer. The City has significant discretion in review of this project. Since the project requires a Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Zoning Amendment, the City is not obligated to approve said project. It has been the City's policy that the Developer must demonstrate a compelling reason to approve the change. This results in a higher standard of review compared to projects that meet all minimum standards of their respective zoning district.

### **Citizen Input**

Chairperson Bauer requested further information on the density of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Community Development Director Gladhill provided the Commission with further comment on the density and zoning of the surrounding developments.

Kent Roessler, Paxmar, LLC, thanked the Commission for their time and consideration. He explained the 35 acres were originally purchased for a 16 single-family home subdivision. After Capstone received approval of their development, he reconsidered how to develop this site. He commented on the high-quality homes adjacent to the golf course and stated there was a huge need for a 55+ high-end housing communities. It was his hope to develop a 55+ housing development as the Villas at North Fork for empty nesters in the community. He explained the housing community would have a homeowner's association with amenities. It was his hope he would be able to continue working on his vision for a 55+ community with the City.

Chairperson Bauer questioned what the price point would be for the proposed Villas.

Mr. Roessler stated these units would range in price from \$300,000 to \$500,000. He discussed the amenities that would be offered with these units noting all would have a three or four car garage.

Commissioner Gengler asked how many different types of units would be available within the Villas.

Mr. Roessler explained his vision would be to have a custom neighborhood and not to have redundancy. He anticipated his buyer would be snowbirds that have homes in Arizona or Florida but would like to spend six months of the year in Minnesota.

Commissioner Surma inquired if Mr. Roessler would share his pictures for the units with the public.

Mr. Roessler stated he would be more comfortable sharing these photos once a developer is selected. He reported that the photos he had were simply concept plans and were not pictures of the actual units he would be building.

Commissioner Anderson commented the streets within this development have got to be wide and could not be narrow.

Mr. Roessler explained he was proposing to have 32-foot-wide streets. He was uncertain of the streets would be public or private.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported for this development the streets would have to be public.

Commissioner VanScoy requested further information regarding the traffic along Alpine Drive and Armstrong Boulevard.

Community Development Director Gladhill commented on the baseline data the City had for Alpine Drive and Armstrong Boulevard. He understood there were concerns regarding traffic along these roadways and stated the City could request a traffic study from the applicant for this development.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if the applicant had considered any transitioning between the development and Alpine Drive.

Mr. Roessler stated transitioning on this site would be quite difficult. He explained there would be a great deal of screening along Alpine Drive, which would be required in order to sell a high-end unit along this roadway.

Commissioner VanScoy inquired what the compelling reasons were for changing the zoning.

Mr. Roessler believed the City had the opportunity to capitalize on a new high-end development that would accommodate the aging population in the community. He explained this neighborhood was offering something different and was a step-up for Ramsey.

Commissioner Nosan stated she had concerns with traffic in this area of the City. While she liked the proposed concept, she indicated this was supposed to be a rural development. She asked how the concept would be amended if the lots were increased to 80-foot-wide lots.

Mr. Roessler explained his concept would still work, but reported his buyers did not want 80 to 100 foot lots. He reported the 55+ community was looking to downsize their homes and lot size. He indicated the close proximity to the golf course was another draw for this community.

Chairperson Bauer questioned if City water and sewer were key to Paxmar's plans.

Mr. Roessler stated City water and sewer was key to the 55+ villa concept.

Chairperson Bauer requested further information on the City's vision for Alpine Drive.

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the City's vision for this corridor per the Highway 10 Access Plan. He commented on the findings within the traffic study and explained the City would have to advocate for State dollars in order to complete improvements.

Chairperson Bauer questioned the timeframe to complete North Fork Villas and North Fork Meadows.

Mr. Roessler anticipated it would take four years to complete the projects with roughly 25 units constructed each year. He commented further on how lots were downsizing throughout the metro area.

Commissioner Anderson stated he was confused on the Comprehensive Plan Amendment request.

Mr. Roessler explained the parcel was currently zoned PUD for large lots. He would like to see the PUD remain in place, but allow for a reduced lot size along with extension of the MUSA line.

Further discussion ensued regarding the public benefit of the proposed development.

Mr. Roessler believed the public benefit would be to create additional rooftops to support the City's commercial and retail nodes, while also offering the City \$300,000 in park dedication fees.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the proposed lot widths complied with the City's residential zoning standards.

Community Development Director Gladhill indicated the proposed lot widths complied with the R-2 (Medium Density) zoning districts standards.

Chairperson Bauer called for comments from the public. There were no additional comments at this time.

Chairperson Bauer requested the comments and concerns addressed at the worksession meeting be made a part of the record.

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners VanScoy, Anderson, Gengler, Nosan, and Surma. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Brauer.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 8:34 p.m.

### **Commission Business**

Commissioner Surma stated he did not object to Paxmar or the proposed adjustment. He asked why the Commission was considering this request when the first development had yet to be approved by the City Council.

Community Development Director Gladhill commented North Fork Meadows was a separate project and was referred back to the Planning Commission by the City Council for further consideration. He explained North Fork Villas was not tied to North Fork Meadows.

Commissioner Anderson requested further information on the City Attorney's concerns with this request.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated the City Attorney had concerns with contract rezoning. He reported conditional rezoning would be allowed by the City.

Commissioner Nosan indicated she was struggling with the Comprehensive Plan Amendment as the Planning Commission was being asked to change this parcel from rural to R-2 Medium Density.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported this was the request before the Commission. He explained if the Commission was not comfortable making a recommendation this evening, action could be postponed to the December meeting.

Commissioner Nosan stated she had a problem with the fact residents voiced concerns with the proposed development at the worksession but did not stay for this meeting. She did not believe this meant they were not offering their support. For this reason, she was not comfortable moving this item forward.

Chairperson Bauer requested staff summarize the comments and concerns that were expressed during the worksession meeting.

Community Development Director Gladhill summarized the comments and concerns raised by the 10 residents that attended the worksession meeting. He explained there was opposition to increasing the density noting this would also increase traffic. He reported there were concerns on how property values would be impacted. In addition, there were comments made on if this development met the City's vision for transitional housing.

Mr. Roessler stated he had four residents in Ramsey already on a waiting list hoping to purchase a unit within the 55+ community.

Commissioner VanScoy understood the residents were concerned with traffic and the proposed density within the North Fork Villas. He believed the proposed development was unique and would be successful in Ramsey.

Community Development Director Gladhill appreciated the feedback being provided by the Commission but understood further information was needed on a traffic study, architectural

renderings, a response from MnDOT regarding the node at Alpine Drive and Highway 10; and a response from Anoka County regarding the node at Alpine Drive and Armstrong Boulevard, along with a Plan B for the sewer and water plan.

Commissioner Anderson stated he had mixed feelings on this development and anticipated it would take three to four years to get sewer and water to this area. He explained he wanted to know how the City would install infrastructure and what the timeline would be.

Community Development Director Gladhill commented on the timeline for the infrastructure.

Commissioner VanScoy questioned what would happen if the Commission were to table action on this item to allow staff to gather additional information. He stated he would still like to hear more from the neighboring residents.

Community Development Director Gladhill anticipated the development could still be in the ground by August of 2018 if the item were tabled to December for further information.

Commissioner Anderson stated he did not want this project to fall apart. For that reason, he supported action on this item being tabled to December to allow staff time to gather additional information on the proposed project.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Surma, to table action on this item to the December 7, 2017 Planning Commission meeting to allow staff to gather further information on a traffic study, architectural renderings, additional input from neighboring residents, City Attorney input on the conditional rezoning agreement, a response from MnDOT regarding the node at Alpine Drive and Highway 10; and a response from Anoka County regarding the node at Alpine Drive and Armstrong Boulevard, along with a Plan B for the sewer and water plan.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Surma, Gengler, Nosan, and VanScoy. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Brauer.

**6.03: Preliminary Approvals related to proposed North Fork Meadows Subdivision; Case of Paxmar, LLC (Project No. 17-126).**

- 1. Introduce Ordinance #17-16, Approving a Conditional Zoning Amendment to Planned Unit Development.**
- 2. Adopt Resolution #17-10-276, Authorizing Conditional Rezoning Agreement.**

**Presentation**

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the Staff Report stating the City Council tabled action on this case for additional information. The City Council requested a better delineation of the Lake Itasca Greenway boundary as well as a Park Dedication/Trail Development Fee and Open Space Pro-Forma comparison. Staff is currently working on this request along with

the Developer. Staff provided further comment on the request and recommended the Commission approve the PUD approach.

### **Commission Business**

Chairperson Bauer commented on the public benefit of this project, which was necessary for a PUD.

Commissioner Surma asked what it would take to fast track this item for the applicant.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated to move this item forward to the City Council staff was looking for a recommendation on the additional information presented this evening.

Commissioner VanScoy requested further information on the plans for the Greenway.

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the location of the existing Greenway with the Commission and noted the areas that would be added through the proposed development. He commented on how closing instructions would be provided to the developer for the Greenway corridor.

Commissioner Anderson supported the plans for the Greenway and believed this amenity was a huge public benefit.

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Nosan, to recommend to the City Council that the additional information supports a sufficient public benefit for the North Fork Meadows Planned Unit Development.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners VanScoy, Nosan, Anderson, Gengler, and Surma. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Brauer.

### **6.04: Review Concept Plan for Affinity at Ramsey; Case of Inland Group.**

#### **Presentation**

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the Staff Report stating the purpose of this case is to review a concept plan prior to an official land use application for a proposed 175-unit apartment building known as Affinity at Ramsey. The Inland Group presented the idea of the project at a recent Planning Commission Meeting. Staff updated the Commission on this topic Please note that the concept prepared by Loucks was a concept ordered by the City to frame a conversation and provide overall context. Staff provided further comment on the concept plan and requested feedback from the Commission.

### **Commission Business**

Commissioner VanScoy asked if the proposed development was consistent with the districts zoning.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported this was the case.

Commissioner Anderson commented this development would be highly visible in downtown and for this reason, had to be visible pleasing as it would be a focal point in the City. He asked if the City had any plans for the proposed park. He indicated he would like to have this park completed along the same timeline as this development.

Ryan Dupuis, Inland Group architect, understood the concerns and importance of this project. He agreed this development would be a focal point and a high-quality building was being proposed. He stated he would be bringing elevations for the Commission to review in December. He agreed the public park space adjacent to this development would be valuable to the new residents.

Community Development Director Gladhill reported he would forward this park space onto the Park Commission for consideration in December.

Commissioner Nosan asked if these units would be rental.

Mr. Dupuis indicated this was the case.

Commissioner Nosan questioned how many floors of apartments were being proposed.

Mr. Dupuis reported there would be four floors of apartments and one floor (slightly underground) would be used for parking.

Commissioner Nosan inquired if this building would be taller than the other buildings within The COR.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained this building would be slightly taller because the parking could not be located fully underground due to water table concerns. He indicated staff would have further information about the building elevations in the coming weeks.

Commissioner Anderson asked where the parking garage would be entered.

Mr. Dupuis reported reviewed the concept plan with the Commission and noted the location of the entrance to the below grade parking.

Commissioner VanScoy inquired if parking ramps were still being considered for The COR.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained the need for parking ramps have evolved over time. Rather underground and surface lots were being proposed for this development. He explained if a community center were considered additional parking would be needed in The COR.

Commissioner Surma asked if the developer was proposing enough parking spaces underground for each of the apartments.

Mr. Dupuis stated 172 parking stalls were being proposed below grade. It was noted the site would also have surface stalls.

Commissioner Surma questioned where the pool would be located.

Mr. Dupuis discussed the location of the lobby, pool and other amenities within the development. It was noted the pool will be a separate building and would have an exterior roof.

## **7. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE ITEMS**

Community Development Director Gladhill provided the Commission with an update on the Comprehensive Plan and noted staff would continue taking input from the public through the end of the year.

## **8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT**

### **8.01: Receive Staff Update**

The Staff Update was noted.

### **8.02: Zoning Bulletins**

Zoning Bulletins were noted.

Chairperson Bauer encouraged residents to participate in the City's organics composting program. Further information and compost kits for this program are available at City Hall.

Commissioner Surma commented on a story that ran on FOX News at 9:00 p.m. on Monday, October 30<sup>th</sup> regarding Solar Gardens. He requested staff find a link to this story and forward it to each of the Commissioners and City Councilmembers. He encouraged all City representatives and residents to view this story.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Surma, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Surma, Gengler, Nosan, and VanScoy. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Brauer.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 9:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Tim Gladhill  
Community Development Director

ATTEST:

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JoAnn Shaw  
Planning Division Secretary

Drafted by Heidi Guenther  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*

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