

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
CITY OF RAMSEY  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, July 23, 2019, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor John LeTourneau (arrived at 5:45 p.m.)  
Councilmember Nadine Heinrich  
Councilmember Mark Kuzma  
Councilmember Debra Musgrove  
Councilmember Chris Riley

Also Present: Community Development Director Timothy Gladhill  
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer  
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher  
City Engineer Bruce Westby  
City Planner Chloe McGuire Brigl  
Economic Development Manager Sean Sullivan

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Acting Mayor Riley called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:33 p.m.

**2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

**2.01: Receive Update on 15415 St Francis Blvd NW Code Enforcement Case (Case of Ken's Repair and Sales)**

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the staff report.

Councilmember Kuzma referenced the statement that the owner was not willing to allow soil testing and stated that perhaps equipment is required to be removed if soil testing is not allowed. He stated that he would be willing to allow the trailers behind the barn. He asked for input on the camper and whether that would be allowed to stay.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that in order to allow the camper to remain, that would require an ordinance change related to accessory dwelling units.

Councilmember Kuzma asked if a variance could be issued.

Community Development Director Gladhill noted that would not be applicable. He noted that the zoning change could be stringent to only allow on certain size lots.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that she was onsite for the inspection. She referenced the deck platform and asked if the ordinance interpretation would be different if the deck platform is removed.

Community Development Director Gladhill noted that while that could help, the ordinance language applies to the use and therefore removing the deck would not solve the issue.

Dave Niles, 15415 St. Francis Blvd. NW, stated that the deck on the camper is not permanent or attached to the camper. He stated that his brother is not in the camper all the time but uses the camper as a place to relax and smoke as smoking is not allowed in the home. He referenced the vehicles behind the garage, noting that all the vehicles will start and drive. He stated that the vehicles are not leaking fluids and are not different from any other vehicles at any other home in Ramsey.

Mayor LeTourneau arrived.

Councilmember Kuzma asked if the resident would be willing to lay gravel for that parking surface.

Mr. Niles confirmed that he would be open to placing gravel in that area. He noted that he would also be willing to install a fence to help screen that area when the leaves fall. He provided details on the material and equipment stored in the trailers, noting that he could move those behind the barn.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that he would support the gravel for the parking area along with the fence for screening. He stated that he would also not have a problem with the camper. He asked that the trailers be shifted behind the barn.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the camper could be moved into the lawful noncompliance loop.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that if the Council would like to allow the activities, staff can review the mechanics of how to best allow the activity.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she has concern that if a fence is put up and the trailers moved, that could encourage the resident to multiply that activity. She stated that she would also be concerned with possible contamination of soils. She noted that perhaps both short-term and long-term solutions are reviewed. She agreed that perhaps moving the trailers behind the barn, with the specification that additional vehicles are not added, could be a short-term solution.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that she would support moving the trailers as discussed. She stated that if the property owner is willing to install the fence and gravel, she would also support that. She stated that in regards to the camper, she would have a difficult time telling the property owner to remove that item as there are several properties in Ramsey where residents have campers that they hang out in. She stated that perhaps the deck could be removed to minimize the perception that the camper is a permanent structure.

Acting Mayor Riley agreed that removing the deck would lessen the perception that the camper is a livable structure.

Community Development Director Gladhill confirmed the consensus of the Council to clean up the hill area and move the items to the storage area, limit the number of items able to be stored in that area, gravel surfacing and fencing of the inoperable vehicle storage area, and the camper could be allowed with the deck removed. He noted that most of those items could be addressed through a Conditional Use Permit for expansion of the lawful nonconforming use. He noted that one of the conditions could include reinspection.

Mr. Niles stated that he would also like to have something that both parties can agree upon. He stated that he would not be in favor of reinspection timelines.

Councilmember Heinrich recognized that there have been problems with this property in the past. She stated that both parties are working together to resolve the issues and once resolved she would support returning to the complaint-based approach.

Acting Mayor Riley stated that he would support reinspection at least every other year.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that perhaps reinspection occurs after two years and if in compliance that extends to five years.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that the hope would be that in the future there would not be citations. He stated that if there is a complaint, an inspection would occur at that time as well.

Mr. Niles stated that he has made a lot of changes to keep the City happy and will continue to work to keep the property in the improved state.

Councilmember Musgrove agreed with the suggestion by Councilmember Kuzma to inspect after two years and then extend that timeline out if there are no issues.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that his suspicion is that the community will continue to inform staff if there are issues that arise and therefore it would be nice to have a good working relationship between the parties moving forward. He stated that in the likely case that the situation escalates, the complaints will bring staff back for inspection and therefore he was not certain that a reinspection clause is necessary.

Acting Mayor Riley confirmed the consensus of the Council to not require future inspections and leave that on a complaint basis.

Acting Mayor Riley turned control of the meeting over to Mayor LeTourneau.

## **2.02: Discuss Temporary Outdoor Membrane Structures**

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the staff report.

Councilmember Riley commented that these types of structures should not be allowed in the zoning ordinance.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she could support the size of the hoop tent and the size of the lot being linked, using an example of the larger the lot the larger size of hoop tent that could be allowed. She noted that she would not support these on smaller lots but could support them on larger lots.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that she would not support these types of structures on city lots. She stated that she would be willing to be flexible with residents that already have these structures and receive a complaint, which would then start the clock on a set timeline in which the structure must be removed.

Community Development Director Gladhill asked for clarification on the statement stating that his understanding of Councilmember Heinrich's comment would be not to allow new structures but to provide an extended timeline for existing structures to be removed, such as one year. He stated that staff has historical aerial photographs that can be used to verify when the structures were installed.

Mayor LeTourneau confirmed Councilmember Heinrich's comment to be that the ordinance will remain as it stands, there will not be proactive prosecution and staff will remain reactive on a complaint basis but can provide an extended timeline for residents to come into compliance after a complaint is received.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that he could support this type of structure on larger lots but would not support these on smaller lots. He stated that he would be opposed to this type of structure being ripped or in disrepair.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that he would not support this type of structure and would agree with the comments of Councilmembers Riley and Heinrich.

Community Development Director Gladhill confirmed the consensus of the Council to leave the ordinance as written and continue to operate on a complaint basis.

### **2.03: Receive Update on Public Works Water Supply and Manganese Levels**

Public Works Superintendent Riemer reviewed the staff report.

Community Development Director Gladhill noted that at the Public Works Committee meeting there was a comment made to reach out to the schools. He reported that Ramsey Elementary has a filtration system for the cafeteria. He reviewed the filtration systems available at PACT Charter School. He noted that both school sites will be added as testing locations.

Councilmember Heinrich thanked staff for the quick follow-up with the schools. She asked if the drinking fountains have filtration systems.

Community Development Director Gladhill read the response from the School District, which states that they only filter the hot water used by the cafeteria.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that she would support sharing the mapping data with residents as proposed.

Councilmember Riley agreed that it is important to continue to share this data with residents.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that he also supports regular updates to the public. He stated that as a resident he would also be interested in the long-term plans and noted that perhaps a statement could be added to continue to communicate that the City continues to work on this issue.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that there was a great article in the recent newsletter that addressed the issue of manganese and the future planning efforts.

City Engineer Westby stated that the RFP will be presented to the Council on August 12<sup>th</sup> and that will be televised.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that his concern would be whether the water treatment would become more important than the public works facility.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that would be a fair curiosity but would be dependent on cost and funding sources.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she also supports sharing the map and feels that the presentation on August 12 will also be helpful. She asked and received confirmation that the hotline remains open for residents to call with questions as well.

Councilmember Heinrich noted that perhaps there could be a short social media element as well.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that while he supports being concerned about the schools, he would question the authority and responsibility of the City. He noted that it would be the responsibility of the school to ensure their water is safe and it is the job of the City to ensure that the City water is safe. He noted that perhaps additional comment should be made that these statements apply to City water and that private wells should be tested as well.

City Planner McGuire Brigl stated that perhaps it could be helpful to include a statement that the County recommends testing private wells each year, as some people have commented that they believed testing of private wells should occur every five years.

**2.04: Receive Staff Update on Future Anoka County Highway Improvement Projects in the City of Ramsey**

City Engineer Westby reviewed the staff report related to the proposed Alpine and Armstrong intersection improvement.

Councilmember Riley asked why the timeline is delayed, noting the recent accidents at that location.

City Engineer Westby explained that the funding application was for 2022/2023 funds and the application specified 2023 construction. He noted that projects can be advanced and therefore that opportunity may exist and could be pursued through discussions with Anoka County.

Councilmember Riley stated that he would be interested in investigating the option to advance the project.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she travels that intersection daily and it is difficult to come off Alpine onto Armstrong and would agree with attempting to advance the project.

City Engineer Westby continued to review the staff report related to the proposed Bunker Lake Boulevard and Highway 47 intersection.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that these improvements will be very helpful as a lot of traffic moves through that area.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that he is also excited, as this is a needed improvement. He believed that it would make sense to move this forward as described to get ahead of the Highway 10 construction. He noted that could be another reason to move the Alpine/Armstrong project ahead as well.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that the City of Anoka has been working on improvement concepts for the railroad crossing on Ferry Street as well as improvements on Highway 47 to Bunker Lake Boulevard that should be made available for comment in September or October.

Councilmember Riley asked if Ramsey could have input prior to sharing those concepts to the public.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that staff will ask the question again to Anoka but noted that sometimes, other municipalities do not want to share their concepts earlier in the process, as the other municipality may not agree.

### **3. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION**

#### **3.01: Review Future Topics/ Calendar**

Councilmember Riley stated that he would like to have a discussion related to the future construction of apartments and how the Council may want to limit that type of construction.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that she would also support that topic based on resident input she has received.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she is a part of the Happy Days Committee and that organization is looking to gain input on which floats the City Council members may have an interest in riding.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that it is his understanding that in the past an email is sent asking for response.

Councilmember Musgrove noted that the email was already sent out.

**4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT**

None.

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kurtis G. Ulrich  
City Administrator

ATTEST:

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Katie M. Schmidt  
Administrative Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*