

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

On Monday, February 25, 2019, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) met in the Council Chambers at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W., Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Michael Valentine
 Board Member Reid Bernard
 Board Member Jane Covart
 Board Member Melissa Fetterley
 Board Member Laura Moore

Members Absent: Board Member Michael Hiatt
 Board Member Michael Madison

Also Present: City Planner Chris Anderson
 City Council Liaison Melody Shryock

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Valentine called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Fetterley to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Covart, Fetterley, Bernard, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Hiatt and Madison.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated January 14, 2019

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Fetterley to approve the regular meeting minutes dated January 14, 2019.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Covart, Fetterley, Bernard and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Hiatt and Madison.

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Review Sketch Plan for Property at 6080 Highway 10 NW (Project No. 18-163)

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the purpose of the case is to review a Sketch Plan for a subdivision of the property located at 6080 Highway 10 NW. The subject property is currently zoned both R-1 Residential (MUSA) and E-1 Employment. The Sketch Plan shows 14 detached villa lots plus three outlots that will contain the storm water pond, infiltration basin and trail (part of the Mississippi River Trail). Based on the proposed Sketch Plan, which is most closely associated with the R-2 Residential (Medium Density) District, a Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Zoning Amendment will be required. The review is being based on R-2 Residential District standards. It should be noted that in 2014-2015, the subject property did receive Final Plat approval for a seven-lot single family residential subdivision. At that time, work began in terms of tree removal and grading, however, additional soil borings were completed that identified buried debris about 15 feet below the surface. Due to the costs associated with removing the buried debris, the project was never completed and the applicant, Village Bank, is now seeking grant funds to assist with the debris removal.

Board Member Bernard asked if there is any tree replacement required from the previous tree removal that was done.

City Planner Anderson replied that the previous tree removal was in compliance. He stated that this would be a separate development than the previous submission and therefore a new tree preservation plan should be submitted.

Board Member Covart referenced the debris that had been found on the site and asked for details.

City Planner Anderson stated that the property owner is seeking grant funds to unearth the construction debris that had been found on the site and remove it from the site.

Councilmember Shryock asked if there would be an HOA to manage the public dock and outlot areas.

City Planner Anderson stated that presumably there would be an HOA but noted that that specific information has not yet been provided by the developer. He referenced the potential for landscaping on the northern boundary that would abut industrial properties and asked the Board for input. He stated that staff is also researching if the stormwater pond and infiltration basin would be allowed within the flood fringe.

Chairperson Valentine stated that he would support landscaping along the northern boundary to buffer between the adjacent industrial properties and confirmed the consensus of the Board.

Councilmember Shryock asked if there would be enough space along the western boundary for the buffering.

City Planner Anderson explained that it does not appear that there would be but noted that it is unclear as to whether this application will come in under an R-2 rezoning request or whether a PUD would also be asked for which could allow flexibility on some standards.

Councilmember Shryock noted that there is an adjacent property owner that has been vocal about their desire for density transitioning on the west side of this property. She stated that it would be important to have the transitioning along the western boundary for the adjacent homeowners and would also agree to the landscaping along the northern boundary as that would only increase the values of the newly constructed homes in the proposed development.

Chairperson Valentine stated that the stormwater pond may be a tricky element because of the proposed location.

City Planner Anderson stated that City planning staff has made a suggestion to eliminate lot four, block one, which would provide an opportunity to slide things to the east and account for density transitioning or possibly move the stormwater pond to lot four.

Chairperson Valentine agreed that the applicant should look into that option.

Board Member Fetterley asked if perhaps the area of debris is in the proposed stormwater pond location.

City Planner Anderson stated that he was unsure that the location corresponds with the proposed stormwater pond. He noted that one reason for the location could be to create more open space near the river.

Councilmember Shryock stated that the bulk of the digging thus far has occurred north of the infiltration area up through the cul-de-sac area.

5.02: Review Sketch Plan for Proposed Commercial and Residential Development (Project No. 19-102)

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that Paxmar has submitted an application for Sketch Plan review for a proposed development project on Outlot A, Rivenwick Village, which is generally located south of Highway 10 and east of Ramsey Boulevard. The subject property is just over nine acres in size and is zoned MU-PUD (Mixed Use Planned Unit Development). The Sketch Plan indicates that there would be one commercial lot, a senior living facility (32 units), and 30 single family residential lots.

Board Member Bernard stated that he would recommend requiring buffering regardless of the order.

Board Member Fetterley agreed that there should be a recommendation for buffering regardless of the order the development occurs.

Councilmember Shryock asked if the required buffering would be required on both sides of the senior housing facility.

Board Member Bernard stated that he would recommend both sides.

Councilmember Shryock agreed.

City Planner Anderson clarified that the buffering is not specific to the senior housing parcel, but there is a desire for buffering between the different density products as well as the commercial lot.

Councilmember Shryock stated that she would want to ensure that the developer keeps in mind some greenspace that can be used for recreation for the senior housing product. She stated that the City Council recently looked at some proposals for an interchange at Highway 10 and Ramsey Boulevard, noting that some of the scenarios would impede on this site. She noted that the Council did not necessarily support the options that impeded onto this site and therefore she did not see an issue approving a full plan for this property.

5.03: Review Updated Environmental Review (AUAR) for The COR (Project No. 18-112)

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He noted that in 2003, the City Council adopted Resolution #03-01-012 ordering an Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) for The COR (formerly known as Ramsey Town Center). An AUAR is an environmental review process that can be used in lieu of more traditional environmental reviews, such as Environmental Assessment Worksheets (EAW) and Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), as long as the geographic area is covered by an acceptable Comprehensive Plan. When considering The COR as a whole, it is likely that a series of individual projects in short sequence could trigger the need for an EAW. For example, the recent project known as Affinity at Ramsey likely would have triggered the need for an EAW based on the number of projects approved in the past several years.

City Planner Anderson stated that the benefit of an AUAR is that it looks at the cumulative impacts of planned or anticipated development within a specific geographic area, whereas an EAW or EIS are project specific and typically can add significant time and cost to a proposed development. The AUAR can assist with reviewing cumulative potential effects to the environment, which may result from multiple developments within the specified geographic area and can be done in advance of those developments to eliminate potential project delays. However, as AUAR does need to be updated every five years until the geographic area is fully developed. In 2013, the City ordered an updated AUAR, which expired in 2018. In April of 2018, the City Council authorized engaging in the services of WSB to complete an update to The COR AUAR. Since this is an update to an existing AUAR, it focused on what has been developed since the last update, whether there have been any significant changes to the envisioned development plan and looks at whether there have been any new findings related to threatened or endangered species.

City Planner Anderson stated that WSB has completed a draft update of The COR AUAR and there have been no new findings or threatened or endangered species (based on the Natural Heritage Information System). There have been no significant deviations or changes to the overall vision or development plan for The COR since the last update. The document has been updated with all development within The COR since the last update and the Mitigation Plan has also been updated. The EPB reviewed the draft of The COR AUAR in October. The City did receive comments from multiple agencies during the 10-day comment period and responses were incorporated into the document where necessary. The document is now ready for adoption.

Chairperson Valentine stated that it is extremely valuable to have the AUAR in place, as that is a tool that handles environmental review for multiple projects within a smaller development area and helps to avoid all applicants being required to complete an EAW or EIS. He commended staff for the excellent job they have done to compile the information for the update.

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Bernard to recommend that the City Council approve Resolution #19-041 approving The COR AUAR update.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Valentine, Board Member Covart, Bernard, Fetterley, and Moore. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Hiatt and Madison.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

- **Recycling/Shredding Events**

City Planner Anderson explained that shredding has become very popular at the recycling events. He stated that Ramsey has partnered with the City of Anoka and in addition to the shredding offered at the regular Ramsey recycling events, Ramsey will host two additional shredding events and Anoka will also host two shredding events.

Chairperson Valentine stated that during the past year he has spoke about a gathering of environmental councils around the metro area in order to share ideas. He stated that there is a new representative on that effort, as Board Member Moore has agreed to join the Steering Committee for the event. He believed that the event this year will be held on April 13th. He thanked Board Member Moore for stepping up into that role this year.

Board Member Moore confirmed that the event will be held on April 13th at the Hennepin United Method Church Art Gallery. She stated that she will share more details as they develop.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Fetterley to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
City Planner

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.