

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Wednesday, July 10, 2019, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Randy Bauer
 Commissioner Bruce Anderson
 Commissioner Torrey Johnson
 Commissioner Eric Peters

Members Absent: Commissioner Cheri Gengler
 Commissioner Gary VanScoy
 Commissioner Matt Woestehoff

Also Present: Planning Intern Elliot Mohler
 City Planner Chris Anderson
 City Planner Chloe McGuire Brigl

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 Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Peters and Johnson. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

4. APPROVE PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

4.01: Approve the Following Planning Commission Minutes:

4.01.1: Planning Commission Meeting Minutes Dated June 6, 2019

Chairperson Bauer noted on page five, line two, it should state, "...second ~~floor~~ floor..." On page 18, the sixth paragraph, it should state, "...~~Chairperson~~ Commissioner VanScoy..." On page 20, Item 7.02 should be deleted.

Motion by Commissioner Peters, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to approve the following minutes as amended: Planning Commission Meeting Minutes dated June 6, 2019.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Peters, Johnson, and Anderson. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.01: Public Hearing: Consider Conditional Use Permit for Oversized Accessory Building at 15800 Traprock St NW, Case of James Couch (Project No. 19-123)

Public Hearing

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:03 p.m.

Presentation

Planning Intern Mohler presented the staff report and recommendation to adopt Resolution #19-161 approving the Conditional Use Permit for an oversized accessory building addition contingent upon compliance with Staff Review comments and conditions.

Chairperson Bauer referenced the comment that a driveway would not be required unless wear is noted on the grass. He stated that the aerial photograph shows wear on the grass already and asked if there is a concern.

Planning Intern Mohler stated that if the grass wear does continue, a driveway would be required.

Commissioner Anderson asked the square footage of the home.

Planning Intern Mohler estimated the home to be between 1,600 to 2,000 square feet.

James Couch, applicant, reviewed some of the outdoor recreational equipment and vehicles that he has on the property and explained that he would like to store the items under a structure rather than keeping them in the yard. He noted that this would protect the items and it would also clean up his yard.

Commissioner Anderson asked if there is an attached garage on the home.

Mr. Couch stated that the three-stall detached garage is the only garage on the property. He noted that the home is 2,100 square feet.

Commissioner Anderson asked the reason 24 feet in height is requested.

Mr. Couch stated that he would like to get a fifth wheel RV and that would require 16-foot doors. He explained at the height of the roofline would match the other buildings on the property.

City Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the height of the building was just noticed during review and therefore staff did not have adequate time to publish notice for a variance request for the 24-foot height. She stated that tonight the Commission can consider a height of 22 feet, as allowed by Code, and if the applicant desires the additional two feet in height, they would need to come back with a variance request.

Chairperson Bauer asked if the applicant would be comfortable with 22 feet in height for the building.

Mr. Couch replied that he would not be comfortable with 22 feet in height, as 16-foot doors would be needed and then with the roof style the height would be 32 feet. He noted that height is similar to another building found in the Traprock Commons area.

Commissioner Anderson stated that the rendering shows windows and asked if the applicant anticipates similar windows on the upper floor.

Mr. Couch stated that he would like to have windows to let in additional natural light.

Commissioner Johnson referenced the vehicles shown outdoors on the site and noted that the building seems to be much larger than what would be needed. He recognized that the applicant made reference to an additional trailer.

Mr. Couch noted the items that are not shown, including another trailer and two tractors.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the applicant has reviewed the amount of square footage that would actually be needed, as that could appease the neighbors. He stated that it would be nice to have building closer to 2,700 square feet.

Mr. Couch confirmed that he could reduce to 2,700 square feet. He noted that the 3,300 square feet would allow additional space to work on a vehicle when needed.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he does have a fifth wheel RV and that only requires a 14-foot door.

Mr. Couch stated that he intended for a 14-foot door with two feet above for clearance.

Commissioner Johnson confirmed with staff that the height of the building would not be discussed tonight, and the only discussion item would be the Conditional Use Permit for the oversized accessory building. He asked if a tow truck would also be parked in the building.

Mr. Couch replied that the tow truck would not be stored in the building and explained that one of his children works for First Choice Towing and takes the tow truck home two nights per week.

Citizen Input

Joe Galindo, 15645 Traprock St, stated that he has been at his home for almost 40 years. He explained that the development still operates under protective covenants. He provided information on an accessory building(s) that he has on his property which matches his home. He stated that Mr. Couch needs the building to help store his items. He stated that the only issue that he would have with the request is the height of the building, as 32 feet is a tall building. He believed that this could be built to a lower height, suggesting eight to ten feet lower.

Chairperson Bauer referenced two emails received from Ronald Bovine that will be entered into the record.

Chairperson Bauer asked if the Commission could recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit with the lower height.

City Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that the Conditional Use Permit could be approved with the allowed height and if the applicant desires a higher height, they could come back before the Planning Commission with that request.

Chairperson Bauer stated that it may be a better option to table the request tonight rather than approving the Conditional Use Permit with a lesser height than desired if the applicant is going to come back with a variance. He noted that there seems to be concern with the size and height of the building and asked the applicant for input.

Mr. Couch stated that he would not be opposed to the smaller size and height. He stated that he could reduce the building to 40 by 68, which would equate to 2,720 square feet and would have a height of 22.5 feet.

Chairperson Bauer noted that 22.5 feet would still require a variance.

Mr. Couch replied that he could reduce to 22 feet if needed. He stated that the higher slope assists in reducing the snow load. He noted that proposed slope would also better match the existing structures on his property.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the square footage of the proposed accessory building would be in addition to the existing 640 square foot accessory building on the property.

Mr. Couch confirmed that would be additional square footage.

Commissioner Johnson noted that the total allowed square footage for accessory buildings on this property would be 2,700 square feet and therefore the applicant would still be over that limit by roughly 700 square feet.

Mr. Couch stated that he would not want to remove the existing barn on the property. He stated that the restrictive covenant of the neighborhood is no longer in place. He stated that he could reduce the size to 2,700 square feet with a height of 22 feet.

Mr. Galindo stated that he has known Mr. Couch since he moved into the neighborhood. He stated that he has agreed to help in the process to the extent possible but simply believed that the height should be lowered.

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Peters and Johnson. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 7:31 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner Anderson asked if a Conditional Use Permit would be needed if the applicant reduces the size to 2,700 square feet and a 22-foot height.

City Planner McGuire Brigl replied that if all of the square footage of the accessory structures were below 2,700 square feet in total, that would not require a Conditional Use Permit. She explained that the detached garage, which is the principle garage, lowers the amount of available square footage for accessory buildings.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he is inclined to table this to the next meeting, as he would want to see new drawings that would meet the requirements.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to table Resolution #19-161 approving the Conditional Use Permit for an oversized accessory building.

Further discussion

Commissioner Johnson stated that he would support the larger building. He stated that he would also want to see more information on the City Code related to square footage and acreage.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Johnson, and Peters. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

5.02: Public Hearing: Adopt Resolution #19-164 for Variance Request to Buffer Yard Requirements for Delta ModTech (Project No. 19-108); Case of Delta ModTech

Public Hearing

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

Presentation

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report and recommendation to approve Resolution #19-164 granting a variance to buffer yard requirements for Delta ModTech.

Chairperson Bauer disclosed that he is a property owner immediately to the west and therefore he received a notice for the topic. He stated that as a property owner he does not have any objections to the request.

Commissioner Anderson asked why the entire site could not be moved 20 feet which would eliminate the need for a variance.

John Kinghorn, Kinghorn Construction, spoke on behalf of the applicant. He noted that when designing a project, they attempt to maximize the amount of developable space. He noted that the building is designed to the west to allow for additional room for expansion in the future to the east. He stated that this design supports better traffic flow and opportunity for future development.

Chairperson Bauer asked for additional details on the proposed buffer.

Mr. Kinghorn stated that they will continue to work with City staff on that topic. He noted that this site elevation is lower than the adjacent residential property and therefore with the lower elevation and staggered trees, that should provide adequate buffering.

Citizen Input

Emery Starkweather, 15151 Jackal St, stated that decisions made tonight are lasting decisions that will impact future property owners. He stated that he moved into the City with the understanding that there were reasonable restrictions as to what could be done with his property. He stated that he is offended that someone would come in, purchase the land, and the first request would be to reduce the zoning requirements. He stated that this would not provide a public benefit and would instead allow the applicant to make more money than they would be able to if they followed the City Code. He did not believe that the Commission should approve the request.

Matt Kuker, PSD, stated that he owns the three industrial properties to the south and advised that he was required to provide a 60-foot buffer to the adjacent Capstone residential development. He believed that the City should be consistent.

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Johnson, and Peters. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 7:48 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner Anderson stated that he agrees with the comments from the residents, noting that the ordinances are in place for a reason. He stated that there is additional space on the land and therefore the building could be moved 20 feet, which would reduce the need for a variance.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to deny Resolution #19-164 granting a variance to buffer yard requirements for Delta ModTech permitting an industrial bufferyard distance of 40 feet from a property line shared with a residential property.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Johnson, and Peters. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

City Planner Anderson stated that the applicant would have the opportunity to appeal the decision of the Commission, which would then be heard by the City Council.

5.03: Public Hearing: Review Site Plan Proposal for PSD Retail Node on Armstrong Boulevard (Project No. 19-111); Case of PSD, LLC

Public Hearing

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:51 p.m.

Presentation

City Planner McGuire Brigl presented the staff report and recommendation to adopt Resolution #19-155 approving Site Plan, Final Plat and Conditional Use Permit for Armstrong West Retail Mall.

Commissioner Anderson asked where the retaining wall would begin along Armstrong.

City Planner McGuire Brigl identified the placement of the retaining wall and the continuation of the sidewalk.

Commissioner Anderson stated that the arrows on the west side seem to indicate that there would be an exit on 146th Avenue.

City Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that would be one access and noted that there would also be a right out on 147th.

Matt Kuker, applicant, noted that the waterline under the drive line will also be redone to provide looping. He noted that part of the design was done to accommodate the County easement on the site. He provided additional details on the proposed materials, which will incorporate different colored bricks and stone to provide an elevated design. He stated that there will be nine bays, noting that a large user, such as a restaurant, could encompass more than one bay. He noted that currently he has interest from three parties. He stated that the sign height is requested to increase visibility because of the County sound wall.

Commissioner Peters referenced the reader board and asked if that would face residential properties.

Mr. Kuker stated that the reader board will only face the traffic on Highway 10.

Commissioner Anderson asked if this property is located within the MUSA.

City Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that this is within the MUSA.

Mr. Kuker confirmed that the buildings would be fully sprinkled.

Citizen Input

No additional comments.

Motion by Commissioner Peters, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to close the public hearing.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Peters, Johnson, and Anderson. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 7:59 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner ___, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #19-155 approving Site Plan, Final Plat, and Conditional Use Permit for Armstrong West Retail Mall.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Johnson, Peters and Anderson. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

6. COMMISSION BUSINESS

6.01: Consider Resolution #19-154 Approving Site Plan for Suite Living (Project #19-121); Case of Hampton Properties

Presentation

City Planner McGuire Brigl presented the Staff Report and recommendation to adopt Resolution #19-154 approving the Site Plan for Suite Living contingent upon compliance with the Staff Review comments and future Development Agreement.

Commission Business

Commissioner Anderson noted that the staff report mentions aligning with Jasper Street and asked if there was feedback from the developer.

City Planner McGuire Brigl stated that she did not have that discussion with the applicant.

Joe Larson, applicant, stated that a new plan was submitted to staff with the desired alignment and provided a copy.

Chairperson Bauer referenced the recommendation from MnDOT regarding the sound study and patio.

Mr. Larson stated that he would object to that as it is used for grilling and is located near the kitchen. He explained that if the patio is moved it would require a longer walk to serve residents.

Chairperson Bauer asked if the patio is used primarily for cooking or also used for recreation.

Mr. Larson stated that the patio is primarily used for cooking but could be used by residents on occasion.

Chairperson Bauer stated that any patio used by residents could be a safety concern which could be addressed by fencing the area.

Mr. Larson noted that typically the patio is secured to prevent wandering. He noted that the nearby townhomes have patios that face the highway and did not see a difference. He stated that there would be some landscaping and trees, but the residents like to watch the traffic and therefore he does not want to fully screen the area.

Commissioner Anderson acknowledged that the patio would be fenced. He agreed that residents like to watch activity, such as passing traffic.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #19-154 approving the Site Plan for Suite Living contingent upon compliance with the Staff Review comments and future Development Agreement.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Peters and Johnson. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

6.02: Consider Final Plat for Site Plan for Ramsey Storage Center (Project No. 19-119); Case of Ramsey Storage Center LLC (Bob Mikulak)

Presentation

City Planner Anderson presented the Staff Report and recommendation to approve the Final Plat and Site Plan for Ramsey Storage Center.

Commission Business

Commissioner Anderson stated that a previous request for this site showed a northeast corner there was a cul-de-sac bulb for snow removal on 148th and asked the difference in this plan, specifically whether the additional area on this request would be used for snow storage.

City Planner Anderson replied that by the end of the previous review process there was a snow storage agreement between the previous applicant and public works and public safety staff to extend 148th slightly beyond the manhole cover to allow City staff to push the snow slightly beyond that manhole to be stored on this property in lieu of the cul-de-sac. He noted that the plans match the previously approved plans.

Commissioner Anderson stated that it appears there is a small driveway to the south of the building and asked if that would extend to the bottom parcel.

City Planner Anderson noted that comment is contained within the Staff Review letter. He noted that in previous discussions Anoka County was only going to allow a single access from Ramsey Boulevard and the intention would be to provide a shared access to lot two when ultimately recorded. He noted that the applicant is discussing the possibility of another access from Bunker Lake Boulevard as well. He confirmed that the driveline would need to extend to the boundary in the case that lot two develops in the future. He noted that there are no pending applications or proposed projects for lot two at this time.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the County would differ from their right-in/right-out policy.

City Planner Anderson stated that he could not definitively answer that question but noted that a phased approach was previously approved and provided details. He stated that the applicant has stated that they would prefer to have the access in its final location rather than taking the phased approach.

Chairperson Bauer referenced the two separate lots and the County only allowing one access. He asked if that would restrict the current owner to maintain ownership of the second lot rather than providing ability to sell that lot for development.

City Planner Anderson explained that the shared access agreement would solve that problem. He noted that conceptual drawing showed an access onto Bunker but advised that would need further discussion and approval from the County.

Bob Mikulak, applicant, stated that the previous owner owned the entire parcel and has many ideas. He stated that his idea is to develop the self-storage and sell the corner lot. He stated that he is not interested in a phased access and would rather place the access in its final location to begin with. He highlighted the differences between this request and the previously approved request which includes elimination of the garage doors, elimination of the fencing, no site lighting, less blacktop and hardcover, increased greenspace, and downcast LED lighting on the building and along the entrance/exit. He stated that the previous request was roughly 125,800 square feet which would be constructed in several phases while this facility would be completed in one phase with similar square footage. He stated that this building will be much more efficient in terms of energy and technology. He stated that loading and unloading would all occur inside the facility rather than having outdoor units, which will make the quiet quieter and cleaner.

Chairperson Bauer asked the size of the interior loading/unloading space.

Mr. Mikulak replied that the doors would be 12 feet high and therefore could accommodate typical moving vans but would not accommodate a U-Haul type vehicle. He noted that the unloading section is 40 feet by 60 feet.

Ron Powell, architect representing the applicant, stated that his firm has experience with self-storage buildings and their experience is that most zoning laws do not provide for self-storage facilities in terms of parking requirements. He stated that a list of six buildings in the metro area was provided that range from seven to 12 parking stalls and therefore they feel the 25 required stalls would be excessive. He stated that they would be proposing 13 parking stalls. He noted that he also included national examples, which range from five to 12 parking stalls. He noted that one city has an updated zoning ordinance that bases the number of stalls on the number of storage units and using that calculation this facility would require 12 stalls. He stated that they would have 13 exterior parking stalls and four interior stalls, which they feel would be more than adequate.

Chairperson Bauer asked the basis of the staff request to add additional parking.

City Planner Anderson stated that recommendation was based on the recommendation of the civil engineer of the applicant, which stated 25 or 26 parking stalls. He clarified that the City does not have self-storage minimum parking standards within the zoning code. He stated that the City would typically look to see how others have addressed the issue and there are not a lot of standards out there specifically related to self-storage facilities. He stated that he did review the ordinance of Portland, Oregon and the parking proposed by the applicant would meet the parking proposal of the applicant. He stated that there is more greenspace on the site than existed in previous proposals. He noted that proof of parking could be accepted, as there would be space for additional parking on the site, should that become an issue in the future.

Mr. Mikulak replied that the civil engineer does not have the experience of self-storage parking and developed that number of stalls initially working with the previous applicant that desired additional parking that could be shared with a future user of the adjacent site when that is developed.

Commissioner Anderson asked for additional clarification from staff on the parking. He stated that the applicant is proposing 13 stalls, which appears to be enough. He asked how staff would recommend the proof of parking requirement.

City Planner Anderson stated that staff can work with the applicant to update the Site Plan to call out proof of parking. He noted that a condition would then be added to the Development Agreement that would stipulate that the proof of parking would become parking in the future if that becomes necessary.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #19-159 approving the Final Plat and Site Plan for Ramsey Storage Center contingent upon the comments within the Staff Review letter and proof of parking.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Johnson, and Peters. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

6.03: Review Site Plan Proposal and Final Plat for Name Brand Self Storage; Case of Josh Peterson (Project #19-120)

Presentation

City Planner McGuire Brigl presented the Staff Report and the recommendation to adopt Resolution #19-150 approving Site Plan, Final Plat and Development Agreement for Name Brand Storage.

Commission Business

Todd Olin, engineer representing the applicant, stated that from a site selection standpoint, this use fits the area well as it is in an E-1 zone surrounded by E-1 uses with the exception of the railroad and golf course. He noted that there is additional landscaping proposed adjacent to the golf course. He stated that the use does not require sewer or water hook-ups.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the stormwater holding pond is located to the lower left of the plan.

Mr. Olin confirmed that was done with the original plat process in 2008 and was created with conservative calculations. He noted that soil borings were done to determine the infiltration rates but believed the basin to be adequately sized.

Motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #19-150 approving Site Plan, Final Plat, and Development Agreement for Name Brand Storage.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Johnson, Peters and Anderson. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

7. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

7.01: Receive Staff Update

The Staff Update was noted.

8. ADJOURNMENT

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Peters and Johnson. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Gengler, VanScoy and Woestehoff.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Gladhill
Community Development Director

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.