

**JOINT CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION WORK SESSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, February 11, 2020, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor John LeTourneau (attending remotely)
Acting Mayor Chris Riley
Councilmember Nadine Heinrich
Councilmember Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Jeff Menth
Councilmember Debra Musgrove
Councilmember Dan Specht

Planning Commission

Members Present: Chairperson Randy Bauer
Commissioner Bruce Anderson (attending remotely)
Commissioner Cheri Gengler
Commissioner Torrey Johnson
Commissioner Gary VanScoy
Commissioner Matt Woestehoff

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Fire Marshal Carey Schiferli
Police Captain Brad Bluml
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
Deputy City Administrator Timothy Gladhill
City Engineer Bruce Westby
Senior Planner Chloe McGuire Brigl

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Mayor Riley called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Receive Update on Riverstone Preliminary Plat (Master Plan) and Discuss Puma Street Reconstruction Options

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill provided a broad overview of the purpose of the discussion tonight.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl reviewed the staff report and details related to the proposed land use changes to the plat.

Acting Mayor Riley asked the number and location of 40-foot lots.

Heather Lorch, Capstone, identified 38 proposed detached townhomes, which would replace the 48 proposed quad homes, and pointed out the location for those homes.

Councilmember Kuzma asked the price range and size of the homes.

Ms. Lorch replied that the price range would be between \$265,000 and \$295,000 with square footage ranging between 1,800 and 2,400 square feet.

Acting Mayor Riley asked for details on the discussion that occurred related to the potential connector street between this development and the neighboring development.

Ms. Lorch replied that they did receive the suggestion from the comments but both developers believed that it would be better to have standalone developments. She stated that Capstone is willing to provide a pedestrian connection that could connect the two developments.

Councilmember Kuzma asked for input related to the sewer and water connection to the adjacent development that was previously discussed.

Stephen Bona, Capstone, replied that Capstone came to an agreement with AKM following the last discussion, that has since expired, and they are awaiting a new agreement to be signed.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she likes that Capstone heard the comments from the residents to eliminate the quad homes and adjust the plan in this manner. She commented that she also does not like the idea of a connecting the road between the developments and appreciated the willingness of Capstone to put in the pedestrian connection between neighborhoods.

Planning Commissioner Chair Bauer disclosed that he lives in the Riverstone development and does not believe that a connecting road with the adjacent parcel would provide a benefit.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed the remainder of the staff report related to the Puma Street reconstruction. He noted that Paxmar submitted an email in opposition of the proposed assessment.

Acting Mayor Riley asked if there is a reason that the roadway would not be improved to the City's street standards.

Mayor LeTourneau asked how the new alignment would lay with the density of the housing.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill identified the proposed realignment, which has always been contemplated following the Preliminary Plat approval of Paxmar.

Planning Commission Chair Bauer stated that Puma Street might be utilized by more than just the residents, with the industrial park in that area. He stated that the employees and possibly trucks accessing the industrial park will increase traffic on Puma Street and therefore believed the City should contribute to the project.

Councilmember Kuzma asked if this is an MSA street.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that this roadway is included in the MSA system, and would be eligible for MSA funds, but the City would need to decide if this is the correct project to use MSA funds on, as there is a large demand on the limited MSA funding. He noted that the Public Works Committee will continue that discussion.

Councilmember Specht agreed that the City should financially contribute towards the project.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for background information on the temporary construction of Puma Street.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill provided background information on the creation of Puma Street.

Councilmember Heinrich asked if there have been similar projects in years past.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill replied that there have been a variety of similar projects. He stated that some projects in The COR have been funded by the City at a rate of 60 percent that could be reimbursed through TIF.

Councilmember Specht asked if the cost-share is lesser in this case because these are residential developments rather than commercial.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that looking holistically at the City's transportation needs; this is not the same setup as the Bunker Lake industrial park scenario. He noted that the Bunker Lake industrial park scenario was more linked through economically development and the City funded its portion through the County HRA funds.

Councilmember Specht asked for details on the position of Paxmar in its email.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that Paxmar stated that he is unsure of the exact amount Paxmar feels would be fair but believes that one third is too much for their development to be assessed. He noted that the Paxmar parcel is still awaiting rezoning to support its proposed development.

Mayor LeTourneau asked if the City is still the owner of the parcel east of Puma Street.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the City largely owns the four-acre parcel where the road alignment would occur.

Councilmember Kuzma suggested that the City proceed with the benefit analysis study to support any potential assessment.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that Capstone does have an aggressive schedule for the next phase of development, and they would not be able to build on those lots within the realignment area until the Puma Street agreement is finalized.

Planning Commissioner Anderson asked what would happen in the case that the third party does not move forward, specifically whether the City and Capstone would be then stuck with a 50/50 split.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that as long as the City follows the proper metrics, appraisals show the increase in value is equal to the assessment amount; the City would be fully protected.

Councilmember Heinrich asked for input from Capstone or their thoughts on the potential cost-share split.

Ms. Lorch stated that Capstone was aware that there was a need for an assessment on this part of the parcel and was under the impression that it would be a similar cost-share to the previous. She stated that they hoped that the cost-share would be less with another developer. She stated that Capstone did fund 18 percent of the improvement cost for Bunker Lake Boulevard because it felt that improvement would provide a benefit to its residents. She stated that Capstone would agree to the third split, with the caveat that the City and other developer equally contribute.

Planning Commissioner Woestehoff asked if there are safety concerns with Alpine in that area.

Police Captain Bluml stated that this would correct the safety concern with the Alpine walking trail that previously existed.

Planning Commissioner Woestehoff suggested that the City take a larger share in this from a safety standpoint and contribute at a rate of 50/25/25.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill noted that the Public Works Committee can discuss that option.

Councilmember Menth asked if Paxmar is on board with this proposal.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed that Paxmar does not agree with this proposal. He noted that Paxmar was invited to attend tonight but chose not to be a part of the discussion.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if Paxmar would perhaps accept the cost-share of 50/25/25 in order to allow this project to proceed at a quicker pace and without the need for the additional study.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that while she supports the safety aspect, she does support the third split scenario and would support moving forward on that.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that it would be difficult to determine what would be assessed until the benefit analysis study is completed. He stated that if supported, he would support the third split scenario.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that staff can bring forward the two cost-share scenarios (the third scenario and 50/25/25) to the Public Works Committee for further discussion.

Mr. Bona stated that the schedule is moving fast, and they would like to begin grading in March, with roads paved by June. He appreciated any assistance the City could provide in the Puma Street agreement moving forward to allow their schedule to continue to move at that pace.

2.02: Discuss Policy Direction on Pearson South/Riverstone South Subdivision; Case of Capstone Homes

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed the staff report related to land use.

Acting Mayor Riley commented that he would like to see less 40-foot wide lots.

Planning Commissioner Woestehoff asked if this property is zoned R-1 MUSA.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed that to be true and noted that a Comprehensive Plan amendment and zoning amendment would be needed.

Councilmember Menth referenced the surrounding area and asked how that land is planned to be developed.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill identified the landowners and land use guiding of the surrounding properties.

Councilmember Menth stated that in the past he has heard discussion of connecting Bowers Drive to another roadway.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill noted that would be a separate discussion that would involve the development of a different parcel.

Councilmember Kuzma asked the reasoning for the smaller lots.

Tom Bakritges, Capstone, stated that their goal is to have spring construction in 2021. He stated that this is a good opportunity to move to the south with development. He stated that this piece of ground is contained and is unique as they will be faced with challenges from the adjacent uses (solar farm, industrial/commercial, and residential). He stated that they would like to mirror what they have done to the north, noting that they attempt to provide housing to all the different

markets. He stated that the smaller lots would be bordered by the future commercial/industrial area and the solar farm, he noted that the site would transition as you move south in order to match the existing residential development.

Mr. Bakritges stated that the solar farm and commercial/industrial is not very attractive to be adjacent to residential and therefore that is why they are proposing a lesser price point residential product in that area.

Councilmember Specht commented that he believes that this is a good mix of housing products and supports the plan moving forward. He stated that residents on Bowers Drive have commented that it would be nice to have another method to connect rather than only having access onto Highway 10.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that the plan as presented is a great place to start. He stated that as a resident of Bowers Drive, there has been a discussion by those residents. He stated he is appreciative of the 50-foot buffer and prefers this use to additional commercial/industrial. He appreciated that this product would mirror the existing residential that it would border.

Planning Commissioner VanScoy stated that he supports the suggestion of staff to connect this to Bowers Drive. He commented that from a safety perspective he would imagine that this would be an issue.

Police Captain Bluml stated that the Police would like access to Bowers Drive as it would provide additional opportunity in emergencies.

Fire Marshal Schiferli commented that it is important to have two accesses for many reasons. He stated that this is the longest cul-de-sac in the City, and this is a non-hydrant area, therefore the Fire Department needs to bring in water. He commented that if a tree goes down, or a power line, that could block the only entrance to Bowers Drive as it currently exists. He noted that the new development would also be connected to City water and therefore would have hydrants and the road connection would only improve the element of safety.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill advised that an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) would be required as this moves forward and would include a traffic study.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer stated that if a connection is going to be made, Public Works would like to have a full road connection.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that as a homeowner on Bowers Drive, he can comment that the resistance that the City would have to the homes is less resistant now but there would be quite a bit of resistance in regards to a second access point.

Councilmember Heinrich appreciated the input from Mayor LeTourneau. She commented that while residents enjoy their privacy, public safety is of utmost importance for the residents and therefore supports a full road connection.

Councilmember Menth asked if the Bowers Drive connection would occur through this design proposal or whether it would connect across Armstrong.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that currently the plan includes an oversized road connection with breakaway barriers for Public Safety, but Public Safety would like that to be a full road connection at that point. He stated that conceptually it is not difficult to add that road at this step in the plan and noted that is the purpose of tonight's discussion.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she would support the full road connection.

Mayor LeTourneau stated that the residents are all in favor of having the access to Highway 10 changed and would support the connection to Riverdale Drive.

Acting Mayor Riley confirmed the consensus of the Council to provide direction for a full road connection.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed the Riverdale Drive extension element and potential cost-share elements. He noted that the City could attempt to compete for MnDOT funds. He noted that staff could bring forward the discussion to the Public Works Committee.

Councilmember Specht stated that because the roadway is part of the Highway 10 plan, he would support the City having a higher share of the cost.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill confirmed that staff would prioritize Riverdale over Puma Street and that is why the third/third/third cost-share scenario was proposed on Puma Street.

2.03: Discuss Policy Direction on Outlot C, Northfork Development Proposal; Case of BK Land Development

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill provided a broad overview of the purpose of the discussion tonight.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl reviewed the staff report.

Councilmember Heinrich asked if a gate or fence would be around the entire development.

Luke Konewko, BK Land Development, commented that would go along Alpine as a form of a buffer. He stated that they would be open to suggestions from the City and noted that the fence could also be berming or landscaping.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill asked for input on the appropriate/desired mix between the housing products.

Councilmember Kuzma stated that he supported this plan when it was previously presented, primarily because the demand for the smaller product is high and those homes sell quickly. He stated that he continues to support the plan as presented.

Councilmember Menth asked public safety to comment on the road width.

Fire Marshal Schiferli stated that the parking would need to be restricted on one side. He noted that the aerial truck would take up the entire road width. He stated that the narrow roads can work but would need to be posted for no parking on one side. He commented that he would like to see wider roads.

Police Captain Bluml stated that he would defer to fire, as fire trucks are much larger than police vehicles. He stated that a narrower road provides less time for driver reaction for pedestrians. He noted that parking could occur on one side during the day, but overnight parking is not allowed on any City road.

Councilmember Kuzma commented that the neighboring development already has roads of this width.

Public Works Superintendent commented that Public Works can live with the 29-foot road, but no parking has to be enforced in order to support snowplows.

Councilmember Musgrove asked, and received confirmation that the road would be signed and designated as no parking on one side.

Acting Mayor Riley stated that this would match the adjacent development and therefore would be a good use. He commented that he would like to see the overall number of the smaller lots reduced.

Planning Commissioner Woestehoff stated that he has received resident comments that the housing prices are too expensive, noting that the smaller homes have a lesser cost and therefore he will support this proposal.

Councilmember Specht commented that he will also support the plan as proposed.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the villa product would be part of an HOA.

Mr. Konewko confirmed that the villas would have a full HOA, while the single-family product would have an HOA that only maintains common areas.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she supports this proposal.

Planning Commission Chair Bauer commented that he lives in a villa in Riverstone and there is a high demand for that product. He commented that he and his neighbors are very satisfied, noting that the villa is a great product for snowbirds. He believed that it would not make sense to increase the number of single-family lots, as there is high demand for the villa product.

Mayor LeTourneau commented that he would welcome the mix of house styles and has a greater concern with the tax base that will be generated through this project. He noted that the growth in

the housing community will also support the desire of the overall community to attract additional retailers.

Councilmember Menth stated that during the previous review he expressed a desire for less villas and more single-family homes. He stated that he has since driven through the adjacent development and has no problem with the mix proposed. He stated that he spoke with residents that live in the villas and are very satisfied with the product.

Councilmember Heinrich stated that she originally had concern with the number of smaller lots but noted that she could support the smaller lots if the road width were increased.

Mr. Konewko stated that they could look into increasing the road width but would want to ensure that the mix of products would not be impacted and the separation between products could continue to be provided.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill noted that the input has been received by the developer and it will be their choice whether to move forward on the project.

2.04: Note Additional Policy Projects and Development Proposals of Interest

No discussion.

3. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

3.01: Review Future Topics/ Calendar

Noted.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Administrative Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.