

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, February 6, 2020, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:                   Chairperson Randy Bauer  
  Commissioner Bruce Anderson  
  Commissioner Cheri Gengler  
  Commissioner Torrey Johnson  
  Commissioner Eric Peters  
  Commissioner Gary VanScoy  
  Commissioner Matt Woestehoff

Members Absent:                   None

Also Present:                       Senior Planner Chloe McGuire Brigl  
  City Planner Chris Anderson  
  City Council Liaison Debra Musgrove

**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 Johnson, to approve the agenda as presented.

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

**4.     CONSENT AGENDA**

**4.01:  Approve the January 2, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

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

## **5. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS**

### **5.01: Public Hearing: Review Resolution #20-028 Revised Preliminary Plat for Riverstone (Project #17-106, #19-149); Case of Capstone Homes, Inc.**

#### **Public Hearing**

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

#### **Presentation**

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the staff report stating that staff recommends adoption of Resolution #20-028 approving the Preliminary Plat with minor contingencies.

Chairperson Bauer disclosed that he lives within the Capstone development.

#### **Citizen Input**

Heather Lorch, Capstone, stated that she is available to address any questions.

Commissioner Johnson referenced the mention of a road that could possibly connect this development to the adjacent Northfork parcel

Ms. Lorch replied that the City brought forward that request to consider the previous month.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that a few members of the City Council mentioned that it may be beneficial to have a road connecting the two properties but both developers were opposed to that suggestion. She noted that this point in the Capstone project the addition of a road would be a significant change.

Chairperson Bauer noted that the Planning Commission suggested a path that would allow pedestrian connection between the two developments and asked if that is an option.

Ms. Lorch confirmed that Capstone is willing to provide a sidewalk connection within the neighborhood that would connect at the utility extension location. She confirmed that there would be a trail along Alpine as well, as required in the conditions of Preliminary Plat.

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

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

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 7:09 p.m.

### **Commission Business**

Motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #20-028 Approving Amended Preliminary Plat of Riverstone Addition.

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

### **5.02: Public Hearing: Review Preliminary Plat for Garden View Villas (DC Townhomes); Project #19-136**

### **Public Hearing**

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:10 p.m.

### **Presentation**

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the staff report stating staff recommends adoption of Resolution #20-002 approving Preliminary Plat for Garden View Villas with the following contingencies: updated Landscaping Plan, approval by City Attorney and City Engineer, and staff approval of Architectural Plans.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the front of the home would face to the north towards the R-1 PUD area.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied that the homes will be built as standard homes with the front of the home facing the driveway.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the homes are built offsite in Minnesota.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that she believed the applicant has chosen a builder in Wisconsin but noted that there are similar builders in Minnesota.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if additional landscaping is being requested because of the smaller buffer zone.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the City Code requires base landscaping and in addition this would require density transitioning. She noted that additional landscaping is often chosen to provide the density transitioning.

City Planner Anderson explained that when the sketch plan came forward there was a question to the Commission on whether there could be a reduced width to the buffer area, but the question was not asked as to whether the Commission would then support a lesser requirement for landscaping to match that reduced width. He stated that as proposed the applicant is tasked with providing the landscaping required for the wider buffer and noted that staff would like direction on that item.

### **Citizen Input**

Erin Carlson, applicant, stated that the goal is to provide single-family homes at an attainable price point. She stated that they have resolved all the engineering comments and is confident that they will be able to address the comments remaining. She provided details on the volumetric construction process. She believed that this would be a great addition to the community.

Commissioner Anderson referenced the size of the front porch, which appears to be 6 x 8, and asked if that could be bigger.

Ms. Carlson replied that she believed the front porch size to be 15 x 6.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he has a concern with the transition in the back of the homes that faces R-1 and asked if there are enough trees in that area.

City Planner Anderson stated that as proposed the applicant is deficient in the number of landscaping items. He stated that an updated landscaping plan has been submitted but has not yet been reviewed.

Sarah Wolf, Landform, stated that the landscape plan on the screen is the second revision, which provides additional plantings. She stated that they also did a mockup using the 45-foot standards but noted that most of the trees would be unhealthy because of the spacing. She believed that the landscaping proposed would be sufficient to the live/work community.

City Planner Anderson stated that he was unaware that the plan on the screen was the revised version but was unsure yet if that meets the Code requirements.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the homes would be inspected by the Ramsey Building Inspector.

Ms. Carlson stated that the homes are inspected at the plant by a third-party inspector. She stated that before the first home is set in Ramsey, they would plan to meet with the Ramsey Building Inspector and would invite him to the building location as well.

Chairperson Bauer asked if the Wisconsin builder is comparable to Dynamic Homes in Detroit Lakes. He noted that he is very familiar with Dynamic Homes and commented that they are top quality.

Ms. Carlson confirmed that they are very comparable and noted that they chose the Wisconsin builder because they have a relationship with that company.

Noah Barka, 7520 149<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW, stated that he and his wife look forward to the development of this area. He stated that his primary concern is with the transition plan between the subject property and their property. He commented that even though there is a home business, that is not a traditional commercial use. He stated that a larger transition zone would ensure harmonious interaction between the properties. He stated that he also has concerns with how the transition will be defined as the area has sandy soils and would not support plantings without adjustments to the soil and irrigation. He asked how the buffer would be maintained after construction. He suggested hardscape such as a berm or fencing. He expressed concerns to the wetland and the impact this development may have on the wetland. He asked how the lights pollution would be mitigated. He did not believe it would be appropriate to approve the proposal tonight and asked that the additional elements be addressed prior to approval.

Commissioner Anderson asked how the resident feels about the comments made by the developer about additional trees.

Mr. Barka commented that currently there is a very minimal transition, noting that there would not be a barrier between the two properties. He stated that even if there are extensive landscaping plans condensed to the buffer, it would be difficult to ensure that the plantings and landscaping continues to be maintained.

City Planner Anderson reviewed the basic landscaping requirements of the City including the requirement for topsoil. He stated that the Development Agreement would stipulate that the plantings are there permanently and therefore would need to be replaced when needed. He stated that while irrigation systems are no longer required, there were plans that included an irrigation system. He stated that the stormwater management plan was approved by engineering and the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization and described the treatment that would be provided.

Commissioner VanScoy referenced the area designated as PUD, which the resident commented is generally used for residential. He stated that it appears the residential is far to the north with business activity to occur to the south and closer to this development parcel.

Mr. Barka confirmed that the homes are located on the northern parcel of the property with the bottom third intended for commercial use. He stated that when there was commercial activity, there was a conflict between the two uses. He stated that even though the property is zoned in that method, the ultimate goal is to create an orderly and harmonious development and therefore the issue with the transition is the same.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the northern properties feel as common residential uses when you are onsite, even though commercial activity is allowed.

Commissioner Gengler asked what the dotted line north of the development identifies.

Darren Lazan, DC Holdings, replied that the dotted rectangle is a symbol identifies that area is available in another plan. He noted that area is the buffer area and is shown, enlarged, in another plan in their submission.

Commissioner Anderson asked for details on the crosshatched pattern to the north.

Mr. Lazan stated that they share in the concern for the plantings. He stated that it is a challenge to meet the ultimate plantings for a larger buffer within a smaller buffer area. He noted that landscaping is the largest budget item in the development. He stated that the number of the plantings required by Code, for this application, is in violation of another area of the Code which calls for sensible and responsible planting. He stated that any additional plantings would not result in greater canopy but would instead result in poor health for the trees and plantings. He stated that this revised plan adds boulevard trees, trees in the northwest corner, and adds the maximum responsible density to the northern property line. He stated that from the beginning they objected to provide the buffer, as the responsibility in the buffer falls to the more intense use. He stated that the adjacent property is zoned commercial and therefore that would be the more intensive use and when developed, that commercial property should provide additional buffering. He recognized the existing single-family homes to the north and noted that is why they are agreeing to provide the buffering proposed. He displayed the grading of the site which identifies the berm along the western and eastern property lines. He asked that the Commission consider the buffering as a whole.

City Planner Anderson stated that in a perfect world they would have 35 feet on center between trees, but the intention of the density transitioning is to create a buffer between uses and planting the trees in that manner would not provide adequate screening.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if a commercial use would need to provide additional screening.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl clarified that would not be required because of the PUD.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that it appears that part of the issue is that there is more space behind the homes to the south compared to the north.

Mr. Lazan stated that there is a larger drainage easement along the south. He stated that the development could potentially be moved a few feet south to create a little more separation. He stated that because the homes to the north are 300 feet from the property line, they did not expect this concern. He was unsure that another ten feet would provide more balance.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that an additional ten feet would be more standard for transitioning.

Mr. Lazan confirmed that he could look to determine if that could be done. He commented that this is a very tight site layout.

Chairperson Bauer asked if the lots in question would still meet the front yard setback if moved ten feet.

Mr. Lazan stated that the homes to the south would need to be moved in order to create that ten feet.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl asked if the Commission is comfortable moving this forward with direction to work with the applicant on the contingencies prior to the City Council review. She noted that staff could also speak with the residents that expressed concern in attempt to gain additional input.

Commissioner Woestehoff referenced the driveway width of 25 feet and asked if there is a reason for the extra five feet of width.

Mr. Lazan noted that the driveway may have just been dropped in matching the frontage of the home. He noted that they would not want to provide more driveway than needed, as that takes away from greenspace, and would review that to ensure it is correct.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that staff received a letter that has been added to the agenda and is available in the agenda and in the packet. She stated that it is a letter of opposition from an adjacent property owner and will become a part of the record.

Chad Lindgren, 5561 145<sup>th</sup> Circle, referenced the topic of inspections. He suggested that it could be challenging for a third-party to inspect rather than the Ramsey Building Inspector.

Commissioner VanScoy asked who would issue a certificate of occupancy.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the City issues the certificate of occupancy. She noted that the City has experience with residents moving homes from another city and placed on foundations in Ramsey and therefore there is a process and path to figuring out those details.

Mr. Lazan stated that it is a very common practice and concern as to how inspections are handled in volumetric building. He commented that the inspector used for this product is certified in Minnesota. He noted that once the building is set on the foundation, the Ramsey inspectors would be inspecting components as well.

Katelyn Brock, 7528 149<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW, expressed concern with the buffer. She appreciated the consideration of extending another ten feet. She stated that perhaps a fence would create a better barrier. She stated that they use their property strictly as residential and therefore placing additional landscaping on her property would simply be the burden of her household.

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

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

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 8:04 p.m.

### **Commission Business**

Commissioner Anderson expressed concern with City staff not having time to review the revised landscaping plan. He stated that he also has concerns with the buffer.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that he is comfortable with a 30-foot buffer, 20-foot driveways, and the landscaping plan shown tonight pending approval by City staff.

Commissioner Gengler stated that she also feels comfortable with the Preliminary Plat but has concerns with the buffering and concerns from the neighbors. She stated that she would feel comfortable moving forward with those items as contingencies. She confirmed that she would be comfortable with a 30-foot buffer.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl asked if the whole 30-foot buffer would need to be planted or just the 20-foot area planted with an additional ten feet.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he believes additional plantings could be added that would not impact the health of the proposed landscaping.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she heard comments about a desire for a fence and asked if the Commission would like City staff to consider that element, or simply work with plantings.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that part of the work would be for the developer and residents to meet with City staff to find a solution that the parties can agree to.

Chairperson Bauer stated that he favors natural buffers rather than artificial structures.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that the role of the Commission is to ensure that Code is followed. He stated that residents can apply for a fence permit if they desire a fence.

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #20-002 Granting Preliminary Plat Approval of Garden View Villas, with the following contingencies: updated landscaping plan, approval by City Attorney and Engineer, staff approval of architectural plans, to rework the plan to provide a 30 foot buffer in the rear of the northern homes, the plan include 20 foot wide driveways, and recommend that the developer and residents discuss acceptable buffering to both parties and acceptable plantings for the 30 foot buffer.

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

**5.03: Public Hearing: Consider Request for Conditional Use Permit for Oversized Ground Signs at 14590 Armstrong Blvd NW (Project No. 20-101); Case of RGH Ramsey LLC**

**Public Hearing**

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 8:10 p.m.

**Presentation**

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report stating that while a request for an oversized ground sign is not necessarily unusual, the square footage proposed with his request is larger than contemplated in previous discussions. As a result, staff is in need of some policy direction from the Planning Commission before any specific recommendation can be provided. While staff understands the Planning Commission desires to broaden the scope of administrative approvals for signs, the size is larger than what had been discussed in the past, and larger than staff is comfortable with approving administratively at this time. Staff is understanding of the desire for visibility from Highway 10 for businesses and does believe that signage could help attract businesses to the area. He noted that two letters of opposition from adjacent landowners were received and included in the case.

Chairperson Bauer asked the typical size of a billboard sign.

City Planner Anderson replied billboard signs are typically between 600 and 700 square feet. He confirmed that as proposed the original sign request exceeded that size.

Chairperson Bauer asked if the City has ever approved placing a private sign on City property.

City Planner Anderson stated that he is not aware of a private sign on City property but noted that there are City signs that promote local business through tenant spaces.

Chairperson Bauer asked the visibility concerns raised from businesses in The COR to attract additional drivers from Highway 10.

City Planner Anderson replied that is a common concern from businesses. He stated that typically there are blue MnDOT signs that alert drivers to upcoming businesses but noted that those signs are not an option in Ramsey. He confirmed that prospective businesses have expressed the need to have visibility from Highway 10.

Chairperson Bauer commented that the entire sign ordinance should be reviewed, as the ordinance is too restrictive in many ways.

Commissioner VanScoy referenced the existing community signs and asked if those are on City owned property.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that those signs are on City owned property.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that while he understands the need and desire, he is appalled at the magnitude of the sign proposed. He stated that this request has multiple conflicts with the ordinance. He stated that the City has an opportunity to address the issue of visibility but did not think it appropriate to do that with a private sign on City property. He stated that perhaps a third community sign would solve this problem.

### **Citizen Input**

Rob Hardy, applicant, provided background information on himself, experience, and his local connection to Ramsey. He stated that when he looked at Ramsey, he could not figure out why the City was not attracting retailers. He stated that he attempted to purchase land on Highway 10 and was quickly educated on why that property would not work for development because of the Highway 10 improvement proposed to occur. He stated that retailers were interested in being on Highway 10, but there is not available land. He stated that he then spent time working on the parcel in The COR that he holds a Purchase Agreement on. He stated that the retailers that have declined interest have stated that it is because they would not have visibility on Highway 10. He advised of a sign that he recently saw along a highway advertising businesses, which caused him to pull off the highway to visit those businesses. He explained that the reason Ramsey does not have the retailers that other communities have is because it lacks exposure for those businesses on Highway 10. He explained that the sign he proposed would cost over \$500,000 and explained how those costs would be recovered from the tenants. He noted that the original sign proposal included a City branding area and a digital reader board, which could be used by smaller businesses that perhaps could not afford a tenant space. He noted that after receiving the feedback from staff, he removed those sections. He stated that he also reduced the height to match the U.S. Bank sign. He explained why the proposed location was chosen. He stated that Ramsey has a unique challenge in that The COR properties in that the businesses will want visibility from Highway 10. He believed that the time has come for the City to consider putting a larger sign on the City property, suggesting a modern digital sign which could be used to advertise local businesses, local events, and other civic announcements. He stated that without visibility from Highway 10, Ramsey will not be able to attract retailers.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the issue of private signage on City owned property will be a policy discussion for the Commission to consider.

Matt Kuker, PSD and Armstrong West Retail, stated that he is the adjoining property owner. He stated that if the City wants to do something with the property, it should consult the adjacent property owners to determine if they are interested in purchasing the lot. He stated that he has invested a significant amount of money into his site and to allow the applicant to put a sign closer to Highway 10 than his sign, and of this size, would be appalling. He stated that he is doing a fully electronic sign. He stated that he was asked to work with the applicant but does not have experience with the applicant and would prefer to own his sign and allow his space for his tenants. He stated that if the applicant wants property along Highway 10, he could have sold

him property where Diamond's was. He stated that the City has never offered an off-premise sign to his knowledge. He stated that he would have liked to increase the size of his sign but followed City ordinance. He stated that if the Commission grants this, he will sell portions of his land along Highway 10 to be used for signs. He stated that allowing this action would open Ramsey to becoming signville. He stated that he has spoken with the adjacent property owner about buying his land to continue retail use and this sign would fall directly in the center. He stated that PSD is a business of the community that has invested in the community and does not feel that approving this for future retailers would be the right move.

Mr. Hardy agreed that he does not have anything invested in the community as of yet but does have a Purchase Agreement with the City. He stated that he has the financial wherewithal to complete this project. He stated that if there is available land, he is unsure why there are not buildings going up on those properties. He stated that in his discussions with staff, the proposed Highway 10 improvements show tremendous impacts to the properties along Highway 10, with most of those properties no longer having access. He stated that if he goes away, the next developer will come in and want the same thing, exposure from Highway 10. He stated that this issue will need to be addressed.

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

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

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 8:56 p.m.

### **Commission Business**

Chairperson Bauer stated that it seems the developer is willing to delay this to March to allow time to review additional options.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that he would suggest determining the square footage of a billboard. He stated that he would much rather see another sign of 330 square feet at 75 feet. He stated that he likes the idea of having combined signs for multiple tenants.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that if this is going to be delayed to March, there could be the same discussion if nothing is done between now and then.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that he would like to see the sign on land owned by the applicant and not City owned land.

Commissioner VanScoy recognized that the visibility issue is a huge policy issue that needs to be dealt with.

Chairperson Bauer agreed that the sign ordinance needs to be reviewed, as visibility will continue to be a huge issue for The COR.

City Planner Anderson provided additional details on the different types of signage allowed. He stated that the Council has talked about going away from The COR branding and focusing on the City of Ramsey.

Councilmember Musgrove provided additional input on recent Council discussions related to uniform City of Ramsey branding and signage.

Chairperson Bauer asked if this topic could be added to the joint meeting with the City Council the following week.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied that she did not believe that agenda would have space for an additional topic. She asked for input from the Commission on whether it would support an off-premise sign.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he would not support an off-premise sign for the applicant specifically but would support a community sign for multiple tenants/projects.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he would like the Commission/City to consider a community sign, looking at the long-term needs for The COR. He stated that perhaps a partnership could be done to support that action. He stated that he would like to see more signage for the businesses but also wants to see the City have control.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that he would appreciate a community sign but believes that the Ramsey overpass would need to be completed prior to that sign being added because of future visibility issues.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that the Armstrong interchange has caused a significant negative impact on visibility for businesses even though it was a positive for transportation.

Commissioner Peters stated that he has an issue with the size of the sign. He stated that the population of Ramsey will support the businesses and not the traffic that pulls off the highway by chance.

Commissioner Woestehoff asked if a decision would need to be made in March, if tabled tonight.

Chairperson Bauer stated that if the issue is still not resolved in March, the Commission can recommend it not be approved. He stated that tabling does not require the request to come back in March.

City Planner Anderson replied that the City has a 60-day timeframe for review but can issue a 60-day extension if needed. He noted that anything beyond one extension would require consent of the applicant.

Commissioner Johnson asked what would change between now and the next review.

Commissioner Anderson suggested that there be a worksession before the next meeting to allow additional discussion.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that she can schedule a worksession for signage. She noted that the applicant has some urgency because of potential tenants.

Chairperson Bauer stated that it seems the consensus would be a community sign on City property or a comparable sign (to Armstrong Retail) on private property.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to table the request and allow the applicant time to revise the proposal for consideration at a future meeting.

### **Further discussion**

Commissioner Johnson requested that the worksession occur at least one week prior to the regular Planning Commission meeting. He thanked Mr. Hardy for his input tonight.

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

Mr. Kuker stated that he also owns the land at Armstrong and Bunker, and if off-premise signs are allowed, he could potentially make that retail and post signage along Highway 10. He just wanted to ensure the Commission thinks about precedent that could be set.

## **6. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

### **6.01: Consider Amended Sketch Plan for Odyssey Homes; Case of Odyssey Homes (Project No. 19-140)**

#### **Presentation**

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the Staff Report stating that staff recommends that the applicant proceed to the Preliminary Plat phase with revisions outlined in the staff review files. She stated that a letter of opposition was included in the case.

#### **Commission Business**

Commissioner Gengler asked the cul-de-sac standards.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that the standard would be 600 feet for cul-de-sac length.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he does not recall a 900-foot cul-de-sac length for this type of density, although there are R-1 developments with longer cul-de-sacs.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl provided input from the County comments related to Nowthen and emergency access.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he does not believe he would support a 900-foot cul-de-sac.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that recently there was a requirement for a certain size for a bus to turn around and asked that size.

City Planner Anderson explained that within the rural area a 65-foot radius is required and in the urban area a 60-foot radius is required.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that she spoke with Public Safety and the comment was that the cul-de-sac would need to be full-sized in order to accommodate larger vehicles (plows, garbage trucks, etc.).

Commissioner VanScoy commented that the right-in/right-out option seems like it would be a good compromise but would require a divider because people would attempt to turn in. He assumed that most of the traffic leaving would be heading towards Highway 47.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the applicant is going to propose a right exit only, which has not yet been vetted by Anoka County.

Commissioner Woestehoff asked if the County concern would be the connection to 146<sup>th</sup> and that traffic would cut through.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl believed that the issue was with the spacing.

Commissioner Woestehoff suggested removing the connection to 146<sup>th</sup> which would eliminate the cut through ability, making the access on Nowthen with the cul-de-sac at the other side of the development.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the development checks all the boxes for R-2 and this type of development.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that in general all the bulk standards are met with the sketch plan, though items like storm water management, landscaping, density transitioning, traffic, etc. will need to be addressed with the preliminary plat.

Jason Bebeau, 15363 Radium St NW, stated that as the developer his goal would be to have a right on only onto CR 5, with no entrance into the development from CR 5.

Craig Jochum, Hakanson Anderson, referenced a City comment of at least 25 feet, noting that 50 feet is included. He stated that they would ensure that emergency vehicles have access.

Commissioner VanScoy referenced the plan to have a right-out only and no entrance and asked for input from the engineer.

Mr. Jochum stated that the County stated that they would consider a right-in/right-out with a turn lane. He stated that they have not yet proposed the right-out only option to the County.

Alena Hunter, 14628 Helium St, thanked everyone for the opportunity to have the open house. She described the path traffic takes from Highway 47 onto and along CR 5. She stated that if the only entrance into the development is from 146<sup>th</sup> that will cause a bigger traffic problem on CR 5. She believed a right-in/right-out may be a good solution. She believed that the intersection of CR 5 and 146<sup>th</sup> is already a dangerous intersection and should be addressed before this development could be added. She stated that the existing trail stops before this development property and does not continue until Sunwood, although there is a full trail on the other side of CR 5. She stated that there are arborvitaes that are very dense and could solve the problem of screening. She stated that drainage is a huge issue as the property sits in a low spot. She stated that she was happy to hear that the homes would be priced around \$250,000 to \$300,000. She stated that she will look at the development the developer completed in Isanti. She commented that she wants to see a high-quality development and wants this to be reviewed from a holistic perspective. She asked the Commission to think this through as this development will be right off a major City roadway that already has traffic/safety issues.

Chad Lindgren, 5561 145<sup>th</sup> Circle, stated that traffic is a big issue for this area. He stated that many residents that attended the open house were concerned with tree density. He understands that the developer meets all the requirements for the development. He liked that the developer has stated that they will try to save the trees that can be saved. He agreed that arborvitaes would be a great addition as they grow quickly and provide great transition. He appreciated the time of the Commission and developer to listen to the residents earlier at the open house.

Patrick Hampton, 15551 Potassium St NW, stated that he is the owner of the northern parcel of land and thanked the Commission for providing him an opportunity to speak. He stated that the Commission seems to be honest and fair and attempts to look at the issue from all sides. He stated that he has been on both sides of the issue and provided background on an issue that occurred 15 years ago when a development was proposed across from his parcel which would cause him to lose land and be assessed. He stated that he spent three years and \$20,000 fighting against the City. He stated that now he is on the other side and has welcomed the input from the residents. He stated that in this case the residents are not going to lose land or be assessed. He agreed that as many trees should be saved as possible, but also commented that it is his land and they are his trees. He stated that he wants to sell his land to help with his ongoing medical issues. He stated that the neighbors have enjoyed the benefits of his property being undeveloped for many years without paying any of the associated costs. He commented that its frustrating that this process is moving slowly and appreciated if this could continue to move forward. He thanked the Commission for listening to concerns and being fair in its consideration. He stated

that he has lived in his home for over 60 years and would hate to lose the home that he and his elderly mother live in because of the medical expenses and issues he has, when the sale of this property would resolve that issue. He recognized that there are issues with traffic because Ramsey is becoming a City rather than a little rural township.

Chairperson Bauer explained the intent of a sketch plan, which allows the Commission and residents to provide input to the developer before additional expense is incurred developing the Preliminary Plat elements.

Commissioner Anderson commented that the developer should proceed to Preliminary Plat but work with staff to address the questions raised tonight at the meeting and through the open house.

Commissioner Peters asked what is keeping CR 5 from having the speed limit lowered, noting that there are now two elementary schools along that roadway.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that he had the same concern with Alpine and learned that a speed study could result in a higher speed limit posted, as the County will adjust to what drivers are driving.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that she would speak with Public Works, as the City could send in a request to have the speed limit reviewed.

Commissioner Gengler stated that this is a viable option for this site, and she likes the density, but the CR 5 piece is the problematic piece for her.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he is comfortable as long as there could be some type of access on the southern end, noting that he would prefer the right-in/right-out. He acknowledged that would be a decision of the County. He stated that the traffic on CR 5 is what it is and adding a few more vehicles will not significantly change the conditions.

Ms. Hunter stated that there was discussion at the open house related to a left-hand turn lane northbound on CR 5 at 146<sup>th</sup> and asked if the City could ask the County about that option. She noted that this may be an opportunity for the developer to fund that improvement.

Mr. Hampton thanked the Commission for providing him the opportunity to vent and for agreeing to allow the project to move forward. He stated that he has been trying to sell the land since May and the developer began this process with the City in September, so it can just be frustrating with the length of time needed for these types of projects to move ahead.

Mr. Bebeau stated that he agrees that the left turn lane would be beneficial but did not believe that is an expense that the developer should pay for, as that would require widening CR 5. He recognized that the turn lane would benefit the hundreds of other homes in that area, rather than the additional 26 homes. He noted that type of expense would most likely kill this project.

Chairperson Bauer stated that he would not think that expense would be of the developer.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that it is her understanding that if a development warrants a change to a major road, the developer is responsible to making the improvement. She explained that if the County required that improvement, the developer would be responsible.

Chairperson Bauer commented that the issue already exists without this development present.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl explained that if the traffic levels are changing because of this development and the improvement is required to support the development, the developer would be responsible.

Mr. Bebeau stated that he does not believe that the County would require the left turn lane. He recognized that if the right-in/right-out is approved/selected, he would be responsible for constructing the right turn lane.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that the County traffic report has no discussion requiring left turn lanes and did not address the 146<sup>th</sup> intersection at all.

Chairperson Bauer stated that the property is zoned R-2 and this is on the low end of the density that would be allowed. He agreed that the County should have input as to what is considered safe and what could/should be done.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the applicant moves forward to the Preliminary Plat phase, addressing the concerns raised.

## **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, Gengler, Johnson, VanScoy, and Woestehoff. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chloe McGuire Brigl  
Senior Planner

ATTEST:

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JoAnn Shaw  
Planning Division Secretary

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