

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, May 7, 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
 Deputy City Administrator Tim Gladhill
 City Planner Chris Anderson
 City Councilmember Debra Musgrove
 City Councilmember Jeff Menth
 Planning Consultant Eric Maass

Section 1.0 – 5.02 and 5.05 – 8.0 deleted

5.03: Public Hearing: Consider Recommendations Related to Trott Brook North Project (Project No. 20-103); Case of The Excelsior Group

- **Public Hearing: Consider Ordinance #20-07 Approving Zoning Amendment from R-1 Residential (MUSA) District to R-1 Residential (Detached Villa) District and R-2 Residential (Detached Villas) District**
- **Review Sketch Plan**

Public Hearing

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:57 p.m.

Presentation

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the staff report stating that since this is a legislative (policy) decision of the City due to the fact that the request requires a zoning amendment, staff needs broad policy direction before formulating a recommendation. The Planning Commission should provide feedback on moving the project forward to Preliminary Plat. This is a key time in

the project to make major layout changes, provide feedback on lot sizes, road alignment, trails, etc. before the Developer incurs expense of detailed civil engineering drawings. Staff does believe there is room to compromise on the mix of lot sizes. Based on the 60 Day Rule, Ordinance #20-07 does need to move forward to the City Council. If approved, the Ordinance would be contingent upon approval of a future Preliminary Plat and tied to this project specifically. The Planning Commission would request that the applicant provide an additional 60 Day Extension to provide additional time for discussion, negotiation, and compromise. This would require written confirmation by the Developer. Staff is hopeful that the Developer would be willing to provide an additional extension if the City desires to explore a compromise concept plan.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill noted that there will be additional public hearings with the City Council and opportunities for residents to provide comments.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that she received four emails after the 4:00 p.m. deadline that will be a part of the record.

Commissioner Woestehoff asked if comments had been received from the DNR.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl noted that the DNR confirmed that they received the plans and noted that procedurally because there will likely be additional changes to the plan, the DNR will provide comments at a later time.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if staff received responses from the three residents that they reached out to directly.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that targeted communications were sent to the residents more interior to the site. She stated that one resident responded that he did not feel a special meeting was necessary and was not going to attend tonight. The resident commented that he was aware development would come and hoped that additional homes in the area would lower his taxes. She stated that staff would still recommend density transitioning around the existing lots.

Commissioner Woestehoff asked if staff received input from the developer related to their willingness to provide another extension.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that the developer has signed another 60-day extension that was not included in the case and are willing to work with the City and do not want to pressure the decision.

Commissioner Peters asked if staff has reached out to the school districts and whether they have support for that level of development. He noted that within Brookfield the school district line occurs within the neighborhood.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the site is divided by school district boundaries and therefore half the neighborhood would go to Ramsey and half would go to Elk River. She stated that the school district has stated that they sized Ramsey Elementary to prepare for the projected growth in the community.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that following the US census, redistricting occurs across the country. He stated that the City has expressed a desire to likely have a third elementary school at some point and would love to have a middle school as well. He stated that much of the Anoka High School population is Ramsey residents. He stated that the City hopes to continue to work with the school districts in looking forward at the future.

Commissioner Woestehoff asked for staff to provide input on the comments received from public safety.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that the entire public safety team reviewed the request and did not have any concerns at this time with the exception of plowing related to the cul-de-sacs. She noted that those departments will continue to provide input throughout the review process.

Citizen Input

Ben Schmidt, Excelsior Group, stated that he was present to address any questions. He commented that they understand that during these times things may not move as smoothly as they typically would and would be willing to grant the additional time for input. He stated that he can also reach out to neighbors individually to address questions as desired as well. He understood that neighbors can have concerns when property is proposed for development from farmland. He noted that they will be completing an EAW and advised that this is just the start of the process.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that based on the public comment there is concern with the proposed density and asked if the applicant would be willing to explore an option more in line with the current zoning restrictions.

Mr. Schmidt replied that staff put together a number of 80-foot lots that could be developed, while they believe additional 80-foot lots could be developed. He stated that they are not attempting to increase density over what is allowed, but simply to provide a variety of housing types. He stated that big lots are less favorable in today's market. He stated that they have heard that people do not care as much about the distance between the side neighbors but prefer to have a larger backyard and therefore they have attempted to provide that situation. He stated that not every person wants a big yard and therefore they attempt to provide a variety of housing types to appeal to different people and families. He stated that the plan was not put forth to create extra density and explained that they believed that the plan met the housing goals of the City and the needs of the community. He confirmed that they welcome input.

Commissioner Woestehoff asked for additional details on the variation in housing products and price points.

Mr. Schmidt stated that for every one foot of street frontage equates to about \$600 in terms of infrastructure and therefore taking out some width helps to reduce the price. He stated that the smaller lot size does not always equate to the less costly option because often empty nesters are choosing those lots and choosing high end options inside. He explained that while the smaller lots often appeal to empty nesters, they can also appeal as more start up housing for families. He

reviewed the ranges of pricing from \$300,000s to \$500,000s. He stated that they see Ramsey as a wonderful community with a lot of City amenities and that can be relatively affordable compared to other areas in the metro where houses cannot be built for under \$500,000.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if the 55-foot lots would have a homeowners' association.

Mr. Schmidt replied that similar to the last case, the homeowners' association would maintain the common space within the entire development and then would also provide yard and snow service to the 55-foot lot homes.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that there is a variety of housing in Ramsey and asked staff for input on the market for the different housing types.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that developers have stated that the villas continue to sell well in Ramsey, but there has also been development of 2.5-acre homes which also sold well. She stated that Ramsey is a desirable place to live. She commented that the middle section lots may have a harder time selling. She stated that the housing study stated that there is a demand for a variety of housing types in Ramsey. She stated that the demand is there but that does not mean that the City needs to allow it.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the City has seen requests for the villa product with a few development requests of the larger 2.5 acre lots. He stated that the 80-foot lot developments are more challenging because of the lot price and related increase in pricing. He used the example of the previous municipal center site which began with 80-foot lots in the first phase and changed to 65-foot lots in the second phase.

Chairperson Bauer stated that within the Riverstone development the narrow lots continue to sell as quickly as they are built. He stated that he also appreciates that he does not have to shovel snow or mow grass.

Commissioner Woestehoff asked if there is any estimation on the timeline or how that may have to be shifted because of COVID-19.

Mr. Schmidt stated that COVID-19 has had an impact, noting that they planned to construct 700 lots this year but will probably shift that to 300. He stated that the homes are still selling, although at about half the rate as expected. He stated that they perhaps would have pushed to begin in 2020 but are now planning to begin in 2021. He noted that this would be a seven-year project for full completion.

Commissioner Peters asked when the park would be constructed, that if this moves forward and the park is included.

Mr. Schmidt replied that they are still early in the process so he is unsure on the phasing or when the park could be accessed. He noted that they would want the park as soon as possible as that would be a selling tool for the development. He stated that they are building a similar project in Hugo that has a City park in the middle and they worked hard to have the park constructed sooner

rather than later. He stated that they are about halfway through that project and the park will open this summer.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that staff would follow the model of Riverstone, where the park is constructed as part of the early stages.

Chairperson Bauer noted that a number of letters and emails were submitted prior to the meeting and have become a part of the record. He stated that several of the comments requested to keeping the lots at 2.5 acre lots but noted that the property is not zoned for 2.5 acre lots. He noted that some of the comments referenced opposition to a requested change to high density and clarified that this request is not to change the density but to change the lot size requirements.

Trista Williams, 7060 168th Ln NW, stated that her biggest concern is the number of homes proposed. She stated that she has concerns with the impact to traffic and to the schools.

Lonnie Gray, 17530 Nowthen Blvd NW, stated that his property is seven acres in size and was concerned with the negative impact to property values that this type of development could have. He stated that he has enjoyed the rural character of the area in the years he has lived at his home. He understood the desire for development and smaller lots sizes but did not want to see that number of homes constructed. He agreed that there would be an impact to traffic in the area. He stated that he does not want to see low income housing, as that would also impact the existing property values.

Chris Hagel, 16650 Dolomite St NW, echoed the comments of the previous speaker related to the impact to traffic that this development would have. He asked how the school would support additional students.

Cynthia Showalter, 6967 170th Trail NW, stated that she moved to her property because it is a rural area. She asked how 55- and 65-foot lots would fit with the adjacent properties. She stated that homes in her neighborhood sell in less than one week and therefore did not believe the statement to be accurate that 80-foot-wide lots are not selling. She did not want to see her neighborhood connected to this development.

Amanda Jongewaard, 6841 173rd Ave NW, stated that she is one of the internal lots. She stated that she supports development, but couple with the Hunt property and Trott Brook North, this would be a lot of development in the area. She commented that traffic is already busy in the area and the impact that these three developments would have would be intense. She stated that while she is excited to have neighbors, she would not want the development to be of this size. She stated that her property would be internal and has farm animals and would be concerned with how her property would mix with the development and homeowners' association.

Chairperson Bauer asked for details on the keeping of farm animals within Ramsey.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that three acre lots and larger are allowed to have additional animals, as larger lots are allowed more animals. She stated that she understood that new residents

may experience a different character, but existing residents should not feel pressure to live differently.

Ms. Jongewaard stated that she is not the only one in the area with farm animals. She asked how that would fit with a neighborhood of this type. She stated that perhaps not all the properties be developed at once as that will be a huge impact to the area.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that she would love to connect to Ms. Jongewaard following the meeting to continue discussions.

Chairperson Bauer stated that many of the comments have been related to traffic and asked staff to provide information on the traffic studies that are completed to determine the potential impact.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that a traffic engineer would need to assist with that level of detail. She stated that staff could complete some preliminary forecasts if desired, but otherwise that information would be developed through the full traffic study required for preliminary plat.

Steve Gronke, 17220 Nowthen Blvd NW, stated that when he moved to his home there were two farms and now there would be 1,600 homes if this moves forward. He stated that he is concerned with property value impacts, traffic increases and is also concerned with children in the new development that could wander onto his property. He asked if there would be fencing or signage to control children from wandering onto adjacent properties.

Mr. Schmidt stated that they are early in the process, but staff mentioned the idea of buffering between the proposed development and the existing homes. He stated that his company recognizes the need to engage with adjacent farm properties to ensure that their activities are not disturbed. He stated that they call out in the homeowners' association documents the activities that occur on the adjacent farm properties to ensure that new homeowners are aware that there is active farm adjacent. He stated that in another instance they paid and constructed a fence on the farm property to prevent residents from spilling onto the adjacent property.

Mr. Gronke stated that he has a creek on his property and would be concerned with liability from children wandering onto his property.

Mr. Schmidt stated that the natural elements are part of what make the property appealing, noting that the creek also runs through the subject property.

Kim Salocka, 7230 175th Ave NW, stated that people choose this location for a specific reason, to enjoy the rural character. She stated that people hunt in her backyard and she enjoys the wildlife in the area. She stated that the homes in the area tend to sell quickly and wondered if the developer has considered other types of development for the property, such as higher priced homes. She asked if a study was done to determine the type of development that would be desirable in the area.

Mr. Schmidt stated that they have not completed a market study in Ramsey, although the City has completed a series of studies on housing within the community. He stated that the property is

guided to support three units per acre, as the property is zoned to support sewer. He stated that the proposal is for 2.7 units per acre. He stated that if the property were developed with all 80-foot lots in a different configuration, they could still fit about the same number of homes as proposed. He stated that in terms of values the proposed homes would range from \$350,000 to \$650,000 and therefore would not be low income housing but would still serve a wide variety of residents that want to live in Ramsey.

Ms. Salocka, referenced the Maxfield study and asked if residents can access that information.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that she can share that information with anyone that requests it. She noted that she could also place that information on the project website.

Ms. Salocka asked at what point residents would be able to meet with the developer to discuss their concerns, such as buffering.

Ms. Schmidt stated that it would depend upon the development and the process of the city. He stated that this meeting is a good start to gather input from residents. He stated that following this meeting they would start to meet with the residents most directly impacted to develop a plan that would work for both parties.

Ms. Salocka stated that ultimately this product seems to be a detached townhome.

Mr. Schmidt stated that he does not like the term detached townhome as this is a single-family home on a single-family lot. He stated that the only difference is the inclusion of a homeowners' association that would provide yard and snow service.

Ms. Salocka asked if the homes would all look the same.

Mr. Schmidt stated that even within the villa product there would be different product types and would not be the same style of home one after the other.

Peter Meyer, 7190 175th Ave NW, referenced the wetland and specifically the pond shown to be on the high ground and asked for details on the runoff plans for the site.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that all projects need to go through the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization to address water management.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the pond is likely setup in that location to support runoff from the adjacent proposed homes. She noted that she could follow up with the resident after the meeting to further discuss the pond.

Mr. Meyer stated that there is currently a marker from the WPA on the corner of his property.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that once a plat is approved, a survey is completed of existing monuments and set new monuments with the property lines. He stated that surveys would be set appropriately.

Mark Winger, 7610 168th Ave NW, stated that he has lived at his home for over 40 years and the zoning was originally setup to create zones of density. He stated that this property was zoned for 80-foot lots, which he still believes to be too small and the developer is requesting even smaller lots. He stated that this would be a perceived density between this development and other recently proposed developments among more rural properties. He asked the Commission not to rezone the property as this seems to be an aggressive amount of development. He stated that from his perspective taxes will not decrease from this development and could increase because of the increased pressure on the school district.

Jill Winger stated that she understands that development will occur but believed that a different type of development could occur on this property to better fit with adjacent properties. She commented that their taxes increased by \$600 this year because of the Elk River School District and did not want to continue to see those increases because of additional pressures on the schools. She stated that they love their property and the walking trails and did not see this type of development as a benefit for the existing residents.

Courtney (last name not stated), resident on 167th, commented that the City holds The Draw concert series for another development and asked if the developer would have plans to hold community type events or features.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the Park and Recreation Commission will also review the plans to provide input on the desired features.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that residents can provide input on the park elements that they would like to see on this property through email.

Courtney stated that she believes that the boardwalk would be eliminated and some walking trails.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the boardwalk would remain and provided additional details on pedestrian connectivity.

Courtney asked the type of personality the park would have, whether the natural elements would be preserved, or whether the area would be restructured for the entire area.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the Wetland Conservation Act protects the wetlands and their delineated boundaries. He stated that Trott Brook is also a protected element in the City and its natural corridor.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl summarized the comments of the resident that she would prefer a more rural character type of park, rather than the rural feel of The Draw. She stated that she could connect the resident with Parks staff to provide additional input.

Pauline Nocks, 16931 Willemite St NW, stated that she interpreted the Comprehensive Plan to designate 499 new residential units during the next ten-year period. She stated that the Hunt and Trott Brook proposals would include 435 units, without counting the residential development

included in the previous case. She asked the purpose of projecting growth in the Comprehensive Plan if the City is already proposing to exceed that projection within tonight's cases. She commented that this is too much density too far outside of the The COR and Highway 10 corridor. She explained that residents in this area purchases their property in order to remain in a more rural type of development. She stated that change is an opportunity for growth but believed that the City must also consider pleasing the existing residents and not just attempting to attract new residents. She confirmed that she was referencing the Comprehensive Plan which runs through 2030.

Chairperson Bauer noted that the plan that runs through 2040 is in draft format and once adopted will be the path the City plans to follow.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill explained that these projects will not build 400 lots at one time, noting that 20 to 40 lots would be built per phase. He explained that Brookfield took 10 to 15 years to complete its phasing. He confirmed that the growth fits within the forecasts for 2030 and does not even reach the full growth anticipated for 2040. He stated that more aggressive proposals have come through that staff has pushed back on in the past as well. He stated that he would welcome additional conversations with the resident to help explain the previous and current Comprehensive Plans.

Norm Novak, 7041 175th Ave NW, stated that this is too many homes for that size property. He stated that this would add 1,800 to 2,000 more people (estimating four to five people per home) with multiple vehicles per home. He stated that he has reached out to staff through telephone. He expressed concern with the tree removal and replacement. He stated that he does not want to see villas, which he believes to be detached townhomes. He asked if the homes would have basements or be on slab and whether they would be single- or two-story homes. He asked for details on the tree size for front yards and the landscaping and fencing. He asked how City sewer and water would be connected to the site avoiding Trott Brook. He stated that putting homes this close together is not the way it should be done. He stated that he moved to this area 17 years ago. He stated that when his neighbor sold their 35 acres, he attempted to purchase five acres, but the City would not allow the subdivision. He stated that it is sad that he was denied the ability to purchase additional property, but the City is not allowing this type of subdivision.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that staff could follow up with the resident to address his concerns and comments.

Chairperson Bauer briefly recessed the meeting.

Chairperson Bauer reconvened the meeting.

Trista Williams stated that she has concerns with a pedestrian bridge linking the neighborhoods together. She stated that her neighborhood enjoys the walking trails, which are not crowded, and believed that this additional development would crowd the existing trails.

Commissioner Peters stated that considering the number of residents in Brookfield it does not seem that crowded on the trails and noted that the proposed development could perhaps be more concerned with existing residents coming onto their trails to use that park.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that Brookfield neighborhood originally included plans for a park, but the developer defaulted on that and therefore this neighborhood would propose to include a park that could be enjoyed by the public.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl read aloud comments received related to the zoning of the property. She stated that the property has been zoned for City utilities going back before 2000 and has been zoned in this district since 2012. She referenced another resident comment she received related to speed increases from increasing traffic and asking why the City is considering the zoning request and responds to development requests where they occur. She clarified that the City legally has to respond to any application requests.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the City is planning to reconstruct Variolite this year with State dollars, noting that elements are being added to slow the speed of traffic on Variolite.

Commissioner Woestehoff commented that the Variolite reconstruction is well overdue. He commented that the additional elements added should help to slow the speed of traffic.

Chairperson Bauer stated that the City's long-range plan identifies the zoning that specifies the type of development that would be allowed on parcels, but the requests come forward at the will of development. He stated that this proposal would continue the density allowed on the parcel but would request an amendment to the lot width.

Brian Walker, 17289 Variolite St NW, stated that even with the poor condition of Variolite there are cars drag racing side by side in front of his home. He believed that additional residential development would only increase those traffic problems. He stated that most of the residents that have spoken in opposition live on lots ranging in size from one acre to ten acres. He stated that he is relatively new to the area and purchased the home based on the Comprehensive Plan the City had. He asked how the City can not justify allowing 55 wide lots in an area that is rural.

Chairperson Bauer commented that the Comprehensive Plan identifies this parcel with zoning that allows 80-foot lot and this request is simply for smaller width. He stated that this parcel is not zoned for 2.5 acre lots.

Christine Reud commented that she understands that the Comprehensive Plan speaks of balancing the rural character of the community with growth and asked how the City justifies the proposed development on the agenda tonight that detracts from the rural character of this area of the city. She stated that she would prefer to have 80-foot lots and less homes.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl identified the areas of the City marked for development with City sewer and water and those areas identified for well and septic.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that a balance of urban growth and rural character was an overarching theme of the Comprehensive Plan and noted that the majority of the City is still planned to remain rural with larger lots and sewer and well. He noted that the urban growth follows the availability of City utilities (sewer/water). He stated that the question before the Commission tonight is related to the lot width.

Ms. Reud asked if the developer commented that the smaller lots would sell from \$250,000 to \$650,000.

Mr. Schmidt replied that the finished homes would range from \$350,000 \$600,000 noting that the smaller lot homes would begin at the lower price and the larger lots would have the higher priced homes.

Ms. Reud asked if the \$350,000 range is the product that the developer believes that empty nesters and first-time buyers would select.

Mr. Schmidt confirmed that it is difficult to build a new home for less than that price in today's market. He stated that when the home value averages \$400,000 that does not devalue the existing property values.

Chairperson Bauer stated that he has seen virtually no teenagers in the Riverstone development, noting that the development primarily has empty nesters in the villas and young families in the larger single-family homes which fits with the market projection that the developer suggests.

Mr. Walker asked how many of the Commissioners live on larger lots and could understand the concerns of the existing residents tonight.

Commissioner Peters commented that he lives on an 80-foot lot in Brookfield that will neighbor this development.

Chairperson Bauer noted that his neighbor's home is ten feet from his house in Riverstone.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that he is on an 80-foot lot in the Woodlands neighborhood and joined the Commission because there are a lot of homes on 80-foot lots and he wanted to be that voice. He stated that his wife is excited that they could have six chickens on their lot.

Mr. Walker commented that he raises horses and is concerned with the impact that this level of development would have on his horses and the wildlife in the area. He recognized that it could be hard for others to imagine how the residents in this area live if they do not live in that manner.

Chairperson Bauer commented that the same wildlife would not remain whether this is developed with 80-foot lots of smaller lots.

Commissioner Peters stated that he has woods backing to his home and has deer, turkey and sandhill cranes in his yard. He stated that he sees the wildlife and therefore the lot size does not always make that go away. He noted that the deer often eat his wife's hostas in the front yard.

Ms. Reud stated that if the pine trees are removed where the wildlife live, that will cause those animals to leave.

Cyndy Showalter stated that people do not drive to this area to look at homes. She stated that people that want smaller lots are not going to want to drive out this far. She stated that the majority of residents in this area do not want this type of development in this area and moved to the area to see and be a part of the natural setting. She stated that while they understand that the property will develop, it was intended to support 80-foot lots. She did not think the plan should be changed to accommodate development because the residents of this area purchased their homes based on the development plans of the City.

Jill Winger stated that although the property is zoned for 80-foot lots, she would believe that there are people that want to see larger lots.

Mark Winger stated that the plan to specify a density rating and lot width is to ensure that only a certain number of homes could be constructed. He believed that the original plan for development of this parcel should be followed with less homes allowed.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl referenced a resident comment received asking where the developer is from and that the City is not Minnetonka where homes are built close together. She commented that Excelsior Group is based out of Saint Louis Park.

Mr. Schmidt stated that his office is in Saint Louis Park and he lived in North Oaks.

Norm Novak stated that he believes that this is too much density. He stated that if this moves forward, he wants to ensure that the developer does not take shortcuts and wants to make sure the development is done right.

Chairperson Bauer commented that he understands that the developer has agreed to another 60-day extension and asked the applicant for feedback on what may be recommended in terms of modifications.

Mr. Schmidt stated that he would want to get further into the process before he looks to modify the plan. He recognized the comments of the existing residents and stated that while he would like to be mindful of their concerns, he has experience in development and knows that things change. He stated that the Comprehensive Plan allows three units per acre for this site, as that would be the only way to make a development would from an infrastructure standpoint with urban utility services. He stated that he is sympathetic to the comments and concerns and will continue to listen and have more dialogue, which is why he agreed to the additional 60-day extension to continue the process.

Chairperson Bauer referenced some of the comments recommended by staff and the Commission and asked if the developer would be open to tabling the request tonight to allow additional time for the developer and staff to review those suggestions and come back in June.

Mr. Schmidt stated that they are not opposed to spending additional time discussing but would not want to see an indefinite tabling of the request. He confirmed that they are open to continued discussions but would want to get a vote at some point.

Chairperson Bauer explained that if the City does not take action after the 60-day extension, the request would automatically be approved, which prevents the issue of indefinite tabling.

Mr. Schmidt commented that staff has been professional, and they appreciate the time they have been given tonight and looks forward to continuing discussions.

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

A roll call vote was performed by the Deputy City Administrator:

Commissioner Gengler	aye
Commissioner Johnson	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Woestehoff	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Chairperson Bauer	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye

Motion carried.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 10:06 p.m.

Commission Business

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that if the Commission tables the request, staff would still appreciate direction as to whether there is an appetite towards a mix of lot sizes.

Chairperson Bauer stated that if the Commission feels that 80-foot lots would be the choice, that recommendation should be made tonight. He stated that if the Commission is open to a mix of lots, that direction should be provided along with additional elements for the developer and staff to work on.

Commissioner Anderson stated that the City worked hard on the draft Comprehensive Plan and would not support anything other than 80-foot lots as anything else would not support the character of the neighborhood.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the Brookfield development has only 80-foot lots.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that Brookfield has 80-foot lots.

Councilmember Musgrove referenced the comment made by a resident that density ranges from denser in The COR and then moves towards wider lots as you go out from there. She stated that she would also support 80-foot lots.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if Councilmember Musgrove is speaking as a member of the Council or whether that is her personal opinion.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that is her personal opinion. She stated that the Council has had recent discussion related to housing and density. She stated that her comment was not meant to sway the Commission but felt that was an important comment made by the residents.

Commissioner VanScoy echoed the comment that there was a lot of intent in developing the draft Comprehensive Plan and zoning in order to support a transition in zoning. He stated that he would support the 80-foot lot size and would not support smaller lot sizes on the property.

Commissioner Gengler stated that she is open to smaller lots sizes in the development. She understands the intent of the zoning but feels like there have been some changes to what consumers desire in the housing market. She stated that it does not seem that 80-foot lots are as popular as they once may have been. She stated that she understands the idea of changing a neighborhood is scary and therefore would support the idea of surveying residents to gather additional input and clarify some misunderstanding that may exist. She stated that perhaps the 55 lots against Variolite would be an issue and would encourage 80-foot lots and buffering in that area.

Commissioner Peters stated that he lives in Brookfield, noting that the previously existing homeowners' association has been disestablished. He stated that he has lived in a range of housing products and in different areas and therefore has a wide understanding of different living arrangements. He commented that some people desire different things. He stated that sometimes an 80-foot lot is more than some people can handle and maintain. He commented that you are not able to pick your neighbors and sometimes smaller lots are easier for some to maintain in a well-kept manner. He stated that perhaps a single parent desires a smaller lot with less maintenance.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that he finds himself in a position of compromise quite a bit and supports the element of affordable housing. He stated that the more different the people around you are, the better person you ultimately become. He stated that to say that a home valued at \$350,000 is low income housing is absurd and it is helpful to have variety in housing. He commented that he does not believe that an R-2 zoning would be appropriate but would continue to support R-1 zoning. He commented that he wants to see the park and other elements remain. He stated that he would love to see a compromise to bring diversity to the development.

Chairperson Bauer clarified that R-1 villas would support 65-foot lots, rather than the 55-foot lots supported by R-2.

Commissioner Woestehoff encouraged the Commission to remember that a lot of time has been spent on this case and he would encourage a decision rather than tabling.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that regardless of the direction tonight, staff plans to bring this forward to the City Council at the May 26th meeting for input.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if input has been received from all the Commissioners.

Commissioner Johnson commented that he would be in favor of smaller lots but in respect to the Comprehensive Plan and comments of the neighbors he would support 80-foot lots. He stated that he lives on a 66-foot lot in the Woodlands and loves it, often seeing wildlife in his yard. He stated that based on the feedback and intent of the Comprehensive Plan he would support 80-foot lots.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he has no problem with smaller lots in certain areas, closer to Highway 10. He commented that as you move out from that corridor and into the rural area, the intent for the parcel was to have 80-foot lots and he would support that. He stated that this area is intended to transition to rural and he would like it to remain that way.

Motion by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend that City Council deny Ordinance #20-07 approving a Zoning Amendment for the Makowsky Property for The Excelsior Group.

Further discussion

Commissioner Gengler asked the ramifications of denying this amendment. Chairperson Bauer noted that this is a recommendation to the City Council, who will make the ultimate decision. Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that if the City Council denies the application, a period of one year would need to pass before the City would consider it again but a modified application could be submitted. Deputy City Administrator Gladhill clarified that if the motion passes by the City Council, the zoning would default to the standard R-1 MUSA District. Commissioner Woestehoff clarified to those attending the meeting, supporting the motion of denial means the member is supporting 80-foot lots while opposing would support lesser sized lots.

A roll call vote was performed by the Deputy City Administrator:

Commissioner Johnson	aye
Commissioner Gengler	nay
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Woestehoff	nay
Commissioner Peters	nay
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Chairperson Bauer	nay

Motion failed.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend that City Council table Ordinance #20-07 approving a Zoning Amendment for the Makowsky Property for The Excelsior Group with the direction that staff work with the developer to develop another plan with a combination of 75- and 80-foot lots.

Further discussion

Commissioner Woestehoff asked if an amendment could be made to the motion to allow a mix of 65- and 80-foot lots, which would still remain within the R-1 district. Commissioners Anderson and VanScoy confirmed to allow that amendment.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to amend the motion to recommend that City Council table Ordinance #20-07 approving a Zoning Amendment for the Makowsky Property for The Excelsior Group with the direction that staff work with the developer to develop another plan with a combination of 65- to 80-foot lots with the recommendation that the 65 lots are no more than 30 percent of the lots.

Further discussion

Commissioner Johnson asked the ratio of 65-foot lots that would be allowed and commented that he believed the maximum percent of 65-foot lots should be 30 percent. The Commission confirmed consensus. Commissioner VanScoy stated that he would also like to see what the density transitioning would be. Commissioner Anderson stated that he would prefer the smaller lots to be in the interior of the development, similar to the Paxmar request. Councilmember Musgrove asked what would be presented to the Council on the 26th if this motion passes. Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the information from tonight’s meeting would be presented. Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the input would be gathered from the Council as well, before the developer attempts to amend their sketch plan.

A roll call vote was performed by the Deputy City Administrator:

Commissioner Gengler	aye
Commissioner Johnson	nay
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Woestehoff	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	nay
Chairperson Bauer	aye

Motion carried.

5.04: Public Hearing: Consider Recommendations Related to Hunt Property Development Proposal (Project No. 20-105); Case of Platinum Land, LLC

- **Public Hearing: Consider Ordinance #20-08 Rezoning Hunt Property from R-1 Residential (MUSA) District to R-1 Residential (Detached Villa) District and R-1 Residential (Detached Villas) District**
- **Review Sketch Plan (Major Subdivision)**

Public Hearing

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 10:34 p.m.

Presentation

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the staff report stating that since this is a legislative (policy) decision of the City due to the fact that the request requires a zoning amendment, staff needs broad policy direction before formulating a recommendation. The Planning Commission should provide feedback on moving the project forward to Preliminary Plat. This is a key time in the project to make major layout changes, provide feedback on lot sizes, road alignment, trails, etc. before the Developer incurs expense of detailed civil engineering drawings. Staff does believe there is room to compromise on the mix of lot sizes. Based on the 60 Day Rule, Ordinance #20-08 does need to move forward to the City Council. If approved, the Ordinance would be contingent upon approval of a future Preliminary Plat and tied to this project specifically. The Planning Commission would request that the applicant provide an additional 60 Day Extension to provide additional time for discussion, negotiation, and compromise. This would require written confirmation by the Developer. Staff is hopeful that the Developer would be willing to provide an additional extension if the City desires to explore a compromise concept plan.

Commissioner VanScoy asked the purpose of comments through a citizen survey.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the idea of surveying residents is to make sure the right question is asked, and the addresses are known. He stated that the existing petition struggled to identify the addresses and proximity to the project location.

Commissioner VanScoy clarified that it would be a voluntary survey online where residents could input comments.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that this would be another method to provide assistance and validate that the input is from Ramsey residents as door to door action is not allowed in terms of forming a petition.

Commissioner Gengler asked the zoning of the parcels to the west.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that the property to the west is zoned R-1 (MUSA) as well.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if transitioning would be required.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that density transitioning would be required because of the existing rural residential use, rather than the R-1 (MUSA) zoning.

Jason Bebo, applicant, stated that when he looks for property to develop, he looks for the highest and best use and to provide diversity, which is why he desires different lot sizes. He stated that the diversity in lot sizes allows different consumers to purchase the homes.

Citizen Input

Chairperson Bauer commented that the written comments received become a part of the record of tonight's meeting along with the verbal testimony on the previous case that also apply to this case.

Ryan Hunt, 1755 Nowthen Blvd NW, stated that the plan submitted by the developer looks like a nice mixed layout. He recognized that some residents are concerned with the size of the lot frontage, but the request meets the density of the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that if the City restricts itself to a larger frontage it would be hard to meet that density and reduce the ability of the developer to provide a creative layout. He stated that the property will be developed and will be different than farmland. He stated that the developer should be given the freedom to use creativity and make this a good development. He stated that the concept of form-based code is to think of the result that you want and work backward from that. He stated that he has grown up in Ramsey and watched development occur, making Ramsey less rural. He stated that Ramsey will continue to develop and wants to see the development occur smartly and look good. He asked people to let go of the psychological hurdle of 80-foot lots and allow the developer to have freedom and creativity to make this a good development.

Amanda Jongewaard, 6841 173rd Ave NW, asked what the transitioning would look like, whether it would be fencing or trees and landscaping.

City Planner Anderson replied that density transitioning is typically done with landscaping in a mix of different styles of trees.

Ms. Jongewaard asked if the developer would need to install their own transitioning rather than counting the trees on her property.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that the developer would need to incorporate the transitioning on their property as part of their project.

Ms. Jongewaard asked the proposed price point for this development.

Mr. Bebo replied that his project would begin around the \$300,000s for the villas and \$350,000 for the larger lots.

Ms. Jongewaard asked if there is typically an issue with homes ranging from \$300,000 to \$600,000 within the same development.

Mr. Bebo replied that he will not have \$600,000 homes in his development.

Ms. Jongewaard stated that she is excited to have neighbors and additional children in the area but just wants to ensure that the development occurs in the correct manner and that that mix of development is right. She noted that this case and the previous case would share a street and become a large neighborhood.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill replied that the City can regulate aesthetics but cannot regulate price. He stated that a reasonable goal would be to have a range of housing products from starter to executive, which these two products would provide.

Ms. Jongewaard stated that she would want to ensure that there is a sense of community within the range of different priced homes.

Chairperson Bauer stated that is a decision the developer makes, and they do their research to ensure that the mix of homes would be cohesive.

Mark Winger, 7610 168th Ave NW, stated that he is bothered by the statement that the developer needs to make the lot sizes smaller in order to meet the density for the site. He stated that this request includes every home with a smaller lot size than originally guided for.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed a resident comment stating that the resident was opposed to 55- and 65-foot-wide lots and requested a berm along 165th with a ten-foot privacy fence.

Norm Novak commented that this is too many houses in a small area. He stated that if approved he would like the berm and privacy fence to provide a buffer but noted that he would also support nice trees and grass and sod that provide a nice aesthetic buffer. He stated that he would like the development to look nice if it moves forward.

City Planner Anderson provided details on density transitioning and tree size requirements. He stated that an agreement is also recorded against the property in terms of maintaining and warranting the transitioning area, which is meant to remain in eternity. He stated that the City also has a nuisance code to address weeds and vegetation concerns, should that not be maintained. He provided details on the tree inventory that would need to be completed and replacement that would be required depending upon the proposed removal. He noted that he could follow up with Mr. Novak to provide additional details.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill reviewed a comment from a resident related to traffic on 175th and Nowthen Boulevard.

Kim Salocka, stated that she was curious as to how the utilities would be brought to the site.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl advised how the water and sewer would be brought to the site.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill referenced a comment from a resident related to how the City would ensure that well water supply would not be impacted. He stated that the City is involved in two water studies at this time and provided additional details on how the City monitors water usage and future options. He stated that the City would ensure that private wells continue to operate properly.

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

A roll call vote was performed by the Deputy City Administrator:

Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Woestehoff	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Johnson	aye
Commissioner Gengler	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Chairperson Bauer	aye

Motion carried.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 11:05 p.m.

Commission Business

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill summarized the decision of the Commission on the last case and noted that a similar action could carry over for this case.

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that the last case was voted to table with comments but noted that this case does not have a written extension from the developer and asked if the Commission would therefore need to make a decision tonight.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the developer is open to granting an extension, similar to the previous request.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he cannot support a 55-foot lot. He stated that while he would rather have 80-foot lots, he would be open to 65-foot lots. He stated that he would like to follow a similar direction from the last case with a mix of 65-foot lots and 80-foot lots.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that if similar direction is made from the previous case, that could be done.

Mr. Bebo stated that he does agree with the 60-day extension and sent an email to staff stating such. He stated that the villas are an in-demand product and stated that he would be willing to work between 55 feet and 80 feet because he likes to have diversity within the development. He stated that he would like to have some 55-foot lots but would like the ability to have that flexibility.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to recommend that City Council table Ordinance #20-08 approving a Zoning amendment for the Hunt Property for Platinum Development, LLC with direction for staff and the developer to work together on a plan that includes diversity of lots between 65- to 80-foot lots with a small percentage of 55-foot lots in the interior.

Further discussion

Commissioner Woestehoff stated that he would not feel comfortable with that as the Commission just told the last developer that 55-foot lots would not be allowed on a larger piece of property. Commissioner VanScoy echoed those comments and noted that he would like to see 80-foot lots. Commissioner Anderson stated that he would be open to an amendment to the motion. Commissioner Woestehoff suggested that the minimum lot size be 65-foot wide. Commissioners Anderson and Peters agreed to the amendment.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to amend the motion to recommend that City Council table Ordinance #20-08 approving a Zoning amendment for the Hunt Property for Platinum Development, LLC with direction for staff and the developer to work together on a plan that includes diversity of lots between 65- to 80-foot lots.

A roll call vote was performed by the Deputy City Administrator:

Commissioner Gengler	aye
Commissioner Johnson	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Woestehoff	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	nay
Chairperson Bauer	aye

Motion carried.