

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

On Wednesday, May 20, 2020, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) conducted a virtual/remote meeting.

Members Present: Chairperson Michael Valentine
 Board Member Jane Covart
 Board Member Michael Hiatt
 Board Member Jared Little
 Board Member Laura Moore

Members Absent: Board Member Reid Bernard
 Board Member Melissa Fetterley

Also Present: City Planner Chris Anderson
 City Council Liaison Jeff Menth

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

1.01: Receive Disclaimer and Meeting Instructions for Remote Meeting per Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13D.021

City Planner Anderson read a statement related to the COVID-19 pandemic and local state of emergency. In declaring this Local State of Emergency, the City of Ramsey has determined that in person meetings and meetings conducted under Minnesota Statutes Section 13D.02 are not practical or prudent because of the declared health pandemic emergency.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

A roll call vote was performed by the City Planner:

Board Member Moore	aye
Board Member Little	aye
Board Member Covart	aye
Board Member Hiatt	aye
Chairperson Valentine	aye

Motion carried.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated March 16, 2020

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Chairperson Valentine to approve the regular meeting minutes dated March 16, 2020.

A roll call vote was performed by the City Planner:

Board Member Little	aye
Board Member Hiatt	aye
Board Member Covart	aye
Board Member Moore	aye
Chairperson Valentine	aye

Motion carried.

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Appoint Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that annually, each Board and Commission is required to appoint a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

Chairperson Valentine opened the floor for nominations.

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to appoint Michael Valentine as Chairperson of the Environmental Policy Board through March, 2021.

Further discussion: Chairperson Valentine confirmed that he would accept the nomination.

A roll call vote was performed by the City Planner:

Board Member Covart	aye
Board Member Little	aye
Board Member Moore	aye
Board Member Hiatt	aye
Chairperson Valentine	aye

Motion carried.

City Planner Anderson opened the floor for nominations for the position of Vice Chairperson.

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Chairperson Valentine to appoint Michael Hiatt as Vice Chairperson of the Environmental Policy Board through March, 2021.

Further discussion: Board Member Hiatt confirmed that he would accept the nomination.

A roll call vote was performed by the City Planner:

Chairperson Valentine	aye
Board Member Little	aye
Board Member Covart	aye
Board Member Moore	aye
Board Member Hiatt	aye
Chairperson Valentine	aye

Motion carried.

5.02: Review Natural Resources Aspects of Hampton Townhomes Preliminary Plat

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the City has received an application for Preliminary Plat review for Hampton Homes, a 26 unit attached townhome project located over three existing parcels (14600, 14544, and 14520 Nowthen Blvd NW) and an outlot. The subject property is located in the R-2 Residential District and allows for a density between four and seven units per acre.

Board Member Moore asked for additional details on the language related to invasive species removal.

City Planner Anderson stated that there was a lot of public comment about preserving as many trees as possible, especially along the western border, and therefore the developer is attempting to save as many trees as possible. He stated that because that boarder strip of trees is outside the development area, there would be no reason to require the developer to go into the wooded area to remove invasive species.

Councilmember Menth asked if the request meets all the requirements.

City Planner Anderson stated that related to density transitioning on the northern boundary, staff believes that at least two evergreen trees should be added in addition to the evergreen shrubbery.

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Little to recommend approval of the Landscape and Tree Inventory and Preservation Plans contingent upon compliance with Staff's review letter.

A roll call vote was performed by the City Planner:

Board Member Little	aye
Board Member Covart	aye
Board Member Hiatt	aye
Board Member Moore	aye
Chairperson Valentine	aye

Motion carried.

5.03: Review Natural Resource Aspects of Garden View Villas Revised Sketch Plan

City Planner Anderson read aloud email comments that staff received from a nearby property owner related to this proposed project.

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the City has received an application for a Revised Sketch Plan for Garden View Villas, located generally north of 147th Avenue, east of Center Street and west of Rhinestone Street. The project has been revised to include a total of 17 detached villas, all gaining access from 147th Avenue NW. The subject property is located in the R-2 Residential (Detached Villa) District and allows for a density between four and seven units per acre. Normally a sketch plan submittal does not include detailed information such as a Landscape Plan, Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan, Grading Plan, however, it was included with this application, which allows the EPB to proceed with review earlier in the process than normal.

Board Member Little stated that as a former landscaper it would look better to put the developer in charge of the initial landscaping rather than the builders to ensure a more consistent plan.

Chairperson Valentine echoed the comments of Board Member Little in preferring the developer to handle the initial landscaping to ensure continuity.

Motion by Board Member Covart and seconded by Board Member Little to recommend approval of the Landscaping and Tree Preservation Plans contingent upon compliance with the staff review letter.

A roll call vote was performed by the City Planner:

Board Member Little	aye
Board Member Moore	aye
Chairperson Valentine	aye
Board Member Hiatt	aye
Board Member Covart	aye

Motion carried.

5.04: Review Natural Resources Aspects of Cobblestone Hotel Site Plan

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the City has received an application for Site Plan review for a proposed hotel development to be located between Sunwood Drive and Veterans Drive, directly west of and adjacent to New Horizon Academy. Included with the submittal is a Landscape Plan. The site is devoid of any significant trees and therefore, a Tree Inventory and Preservation Plan is not required. Furthermore, there are no wetlands or floodplains on the subject property either, so this review will focus only on the Landscape Plan.

Board Member Little referenced the planting islands proposed and asked if City Code requires a minimize size for those islands.

City Planner Anderson replied that in other zoning districts the minimum size is 162 square feet, but The COR district has its own set of standards and does not include a minimum size. He noted that a recommendation could be made to ensure that the islands be large enough to ensure adequate soil volume for plantings.

Board Member Moore stated that from the map, it appears that there is not a lot of opportunity for planting trees and greenery. She asked if there would be a way that the business could implement other measures to make the building green in return for less plantings required.

City Planner Anderson stated that there is always room for discussion. He stated that there is flexibility in landscaping requirements within The COR, noting that the focus was on the public street side of the building and not the internal plantings. He stated that he is not one to require plantings in areas where they would not survive but noted that there would appear to be room for plantings along Veterans Drive. He stated that perhaps three to six trees could act as boulevard trees along Veterans Drive. He stated that staff will have that conversation with the development group related to increasing landscaping on the Veterans Drive side of the property.

Chairperson Valentine stated that he would support that conversation to encourage the developer to include additional trees.

Board Member Little stated that he is hesitant to see trees planted in the landscaping islands because it is not the best environment to support a tree.

City Planner Anderson thanked Board Member Little for his input, noting that he does not like to set trees up for failure. He noted that if the tree can be healthy in that environment, there is an added benefit aesthetically and from a shade standpoint. He agreed that shrubs and perennials tend to exist better in those parking lot islands.

Board Member Hiatt agreed that if there are ways the builder could be creative in the building materials that could be a good trade off, rather than requiring trees to be planted where they may not be successful. He asked if there are any buildings in The COR designated as LEED Certified, noting that perhaps this could be an opportunity.

City Planner Anderson replied that the VA clinic is LEED Certified. He stated that LEED Certification is fairly expensive, and some people instead choose to incorporate some of the LEED elements without becoming certified. He stated that the Allina Clinic is not LEED certified but has incorporated some of those elements in the building.

Board Member Hiatt stated that he would support staff suggesting that the developer incorporate LEED elements, if possible.

Motion by Board Member Hiatt and seconded by Board Member Covart to recommend approval of the Landscape Plan contingent upon compliance with the staff review letter and directing staff and the developer to explore any potential green or LEED elements that may potentially be incorporated into the building.

A roll call vote was performed by the City Planner:

Board Member Covart	aye
Board Member Moore	aye
Board Member Hiatt	aye
Board Member Little	aye
Chairperson Valentine	aye

Motion carried.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

- **Update on Recycling Contract**

City Planner Anderson reported that the City Council considered this topic in worksession on May 12th and provided staff with direction to initiate contract negotiations with ACE. He noted that the results of the negotiation will go back before the City Council for consideration.

- **Other**

Chairperson Valentine invited the newest member to introduce himself.

Board Member Little provided background information on himself, career experience, and experience with the community.

Councilmember Menth thanked Board Member Little for showing interest in joining the team.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

A roll call vote was performed by the City Planner:

Chairperson Valentine	aye
Board Member Hiatt	aye
Board Member Moore	aye
Board Member Covart	aye
Board Member Little	aye

Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
City Planner

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.