

City of Ramsey
Agenda
Regular Planning Commission
Thursday, March 5, 2020
7:00 pm
Council Chambers, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Citizen Input**
- 4. Approve Agenda**
- 5. Consent Agenda**
 1. Approve the February 6, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.
- 6. Public Hearing**
- 7. Commission Business**
 1. Consider Request for Conditional Use Permit for a Ground Sign and Wall Signage at 7800 Sunwood Drive NW (Project No. 20-102); Case of New Horizon Academy
 2. Consider Request for Conditional Use Permit for Oversized Ground Sign at 7990 Sunwood Drive NW (Project No. 20-101); Case of RGH Ramsey LLC
- 8. Commission/Staff Input**
- 9. Adjournment**

Regular Planning Commission

5. 1.

Meeting Date: 03/05/2020

By: JoAnn Shaw, Community Development

Information

Title:

Approve the February 6, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

Purpose/Background:

n/a

Notification:

Observations/Alternatives:

Funding Source:

Recommendation:

Action:

Attachments

02 06 20 Planning Minutes

Form Review

Inbox

Tim Gladhill

Form Started By: JoAnn Shaw

Final Approval Date: 02/27/2020

Reviewed By

Tim Gladhill

Date

02/27/2020 03:39 PM

Started On: 02/20/2020 11:25 AM

**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 149th 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 145th 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 149th 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 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 consider 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 146th 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 146th 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 146th 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 146th 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 145th 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 146th 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 146th 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:

JoAnn Shaw
Planning Division Secretary

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.

Regular Planning Commission

7. 1.

Meeting Date: 03/05/2020

By: Chris Anderson, Community
Development

Information

Title:

Consider Request for Conditional Use Permit for a Ground Sign and Wall Signage at 7800 Sunwood Drive NW (Project No. 20-102); Case of New Horizon Academy

Purpose/Background:

On January 17, 2020, New Horizon Real Estate Development 6, LLP (DBA New Horizon Academy) purchased 7800 Sunwood Drive (the "Subject Property"), former site of Stone Brook Academy. Subsequently, Spectrum Sign Systems, Inc. (the "Applicant"), on behalf of New Horizon Academy (the "Property Owner"), submitted an application on February 6, 2020 for a Conditional Use Permit to install an oversized ground sign and wall signage on the Subject Property.

Notification:

The City attempted to send a mailing via Standard US Mail to property owners within 350 feet of the Subject Property, as noted in the Anoka County Property Records, notifying them of a public hearing. The Public Hearing will be conducted by the City Council on March 24, 2020.

Observations/Alternatives:

The Subject Property is about 0.84 acres in size and is located in the COR-2 sub-district, slightly east of Northstar Marketplace (Coborns anchored retail area). All of the surrounding properties are also in the COR-2 sub-district, with the railroad tracks and Highway 10 south of the Subject Property.

Per the COR Design Framework, the COR-2 sub-district is where more conventional suburban development is expected, rather than the neo-traditional development planned for the other sub-districts. Most of the sign regulations for the COR-2 sub-district mirror that of the more standard B-1 and B-2 Business Districts, with only a couple exceptions. Ground signs may be up to 100 square feet in area but they are restricted to a height of six (6) feet (note that this would mean a ground that is five feet tall and twenty feet long would be permissible). Similarly, wall signage is based on fifteen percent (15%) of the front facade of a building (just like in the Business Districts), but at least fifty percent (50%) of the signage must be placed on the measured wall. Finally, under project signs in the Design Framework, it is noted that a project sign (as written, this would include ground signs) shall not be in addition to wall signage.

If the COR-2 sub-district is indeed where the more conventional suburban development is expected, the differences in the aforementioned sign standards seem somewhat contradictory. Having a ground sign, as well as wall signage, is very typical for suburban commercial developments. Similarly, a twenty-five (25) foot tall ground sign (which would meet the standards of the Business Districts), near the southern boundary of the Subject Property and presumably visible from Highway 10, also seems very typical for conventional suburban development.

The request for a Conditional Use Permit appears to be reasonable and the proposed signage would be similar in nature to other sites within The COR (e.g. Casey's and Coborns).

Alternatives

Alternative 1: Recommend approval of the Conditional Use Permit to address the deviations from the sign standards. The ground sign, which also includes a decorative base to blend with the building, is within the allowable

square footage. It would seem more desirable to have the ground sign as proposed rather than a design of five (5) feet in height and twenty (20) feet in length, which would actually comply with the Design Framework. Furthermore, having a ground sign and wall signage in the COR-2 sub-district is not out of the ordinary by any means. Staff supports this alternative.

Alternative 2: Recommend denial of the Conditional Use Permit. As previously noted, the COR-2 sub-district is intended for more conventional suburban development. The proposed signage appears to be pretty consistent with conventional suburban commercial development.

Funding Source:

The Applicant is responsible for all costs associated with this application.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approving the request for a Conditional Use Permit for the requested deviations from sign standards.

Action:

Motion to recommend City Council approve Resolution #20-042 granting a Conditional Use Permit to allow a twenty-five (25) foot tall ground sign as well as wall signage at 7800 Sunwood Drive NW.

Attachments

Site Location Map

Proposed Signage and Locations

Draft Resolution #20-042

Form Review

Inbox

Tim Gladhill

Form Started By: Chris Anderson

Final Approval Date: 02/27/2020

Reviewed By

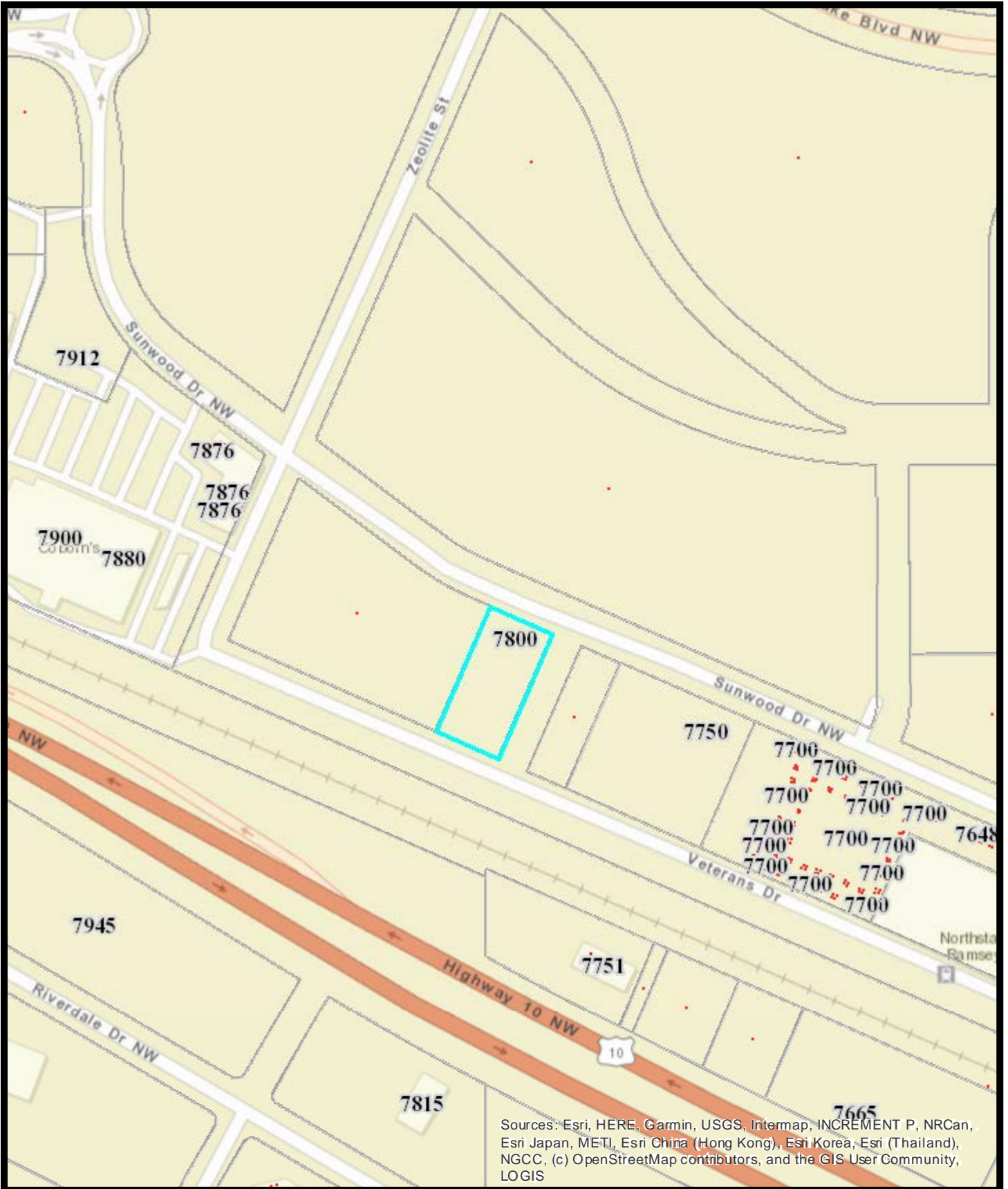
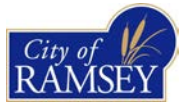
Tim Gladhill

Date

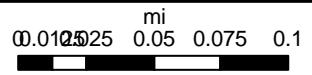
02/27/2020 03:45 PM

Started On: 02/21/2020 04:45 PM

Site Location Map



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, LOGIS



1 | New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - South Elevation

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DATE/REVISIONS

11-19-19	
2-4-20	

DESIGNER

Alex Wasnick

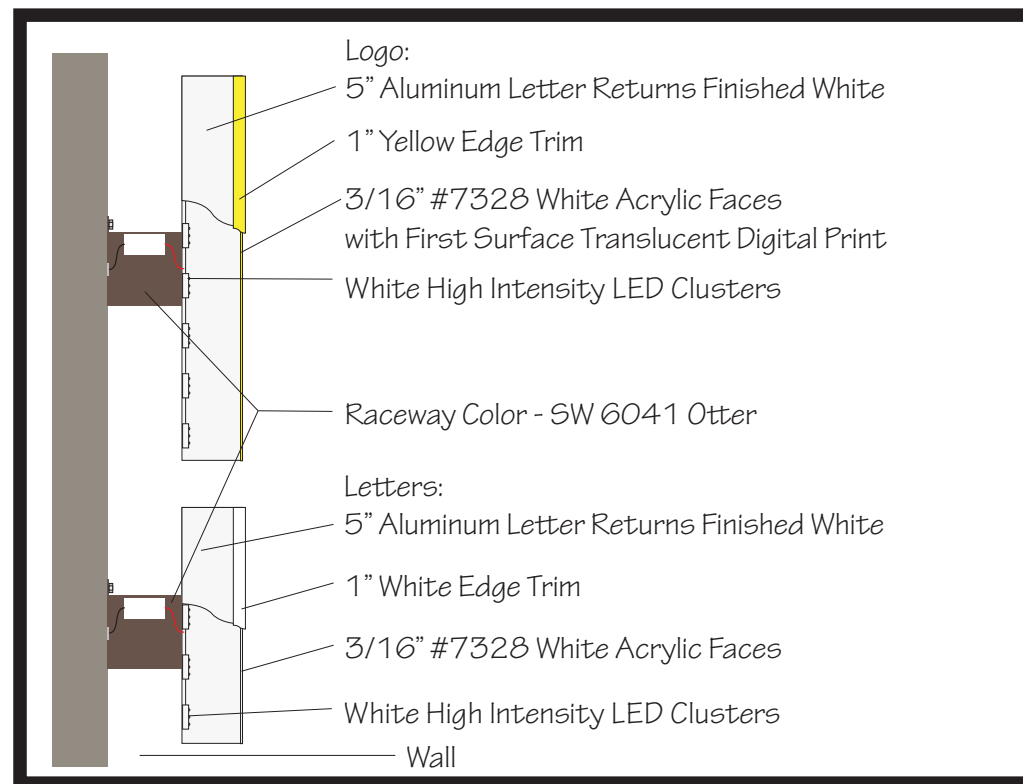
SALESPERSON

Eric Tauscheck

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Customer Approval

Date



Side View

Furnish and Install (1) 4'-11" x 9'-0" LED Illuminated Raceway Mount Exterior Logo Display (44.25 SF)

2 | New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - South Elevation

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Proposed Sign - South Elevation



Existing Sign to be Removed

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7800 Sunwood Dr

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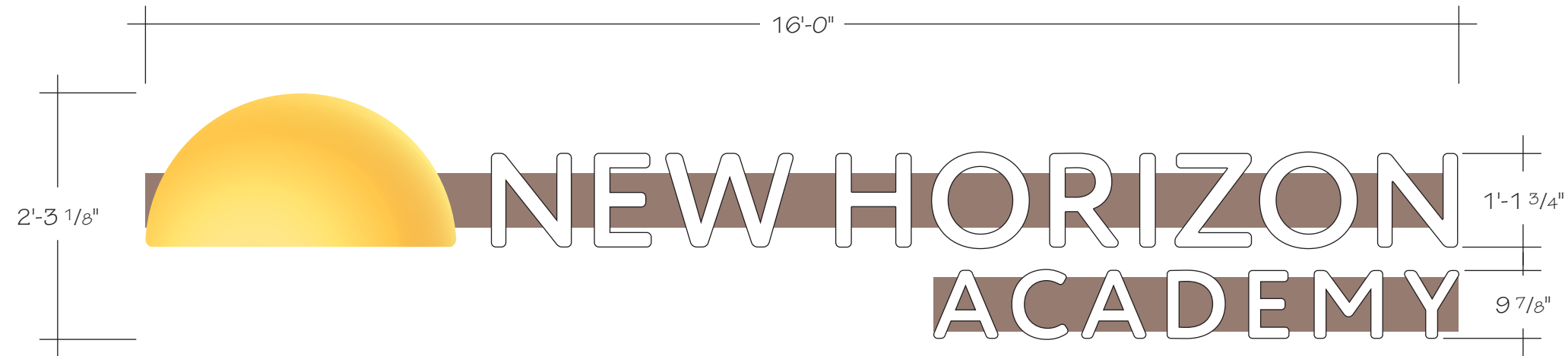
Date

3 | New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - East Elevation

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DESIGNER

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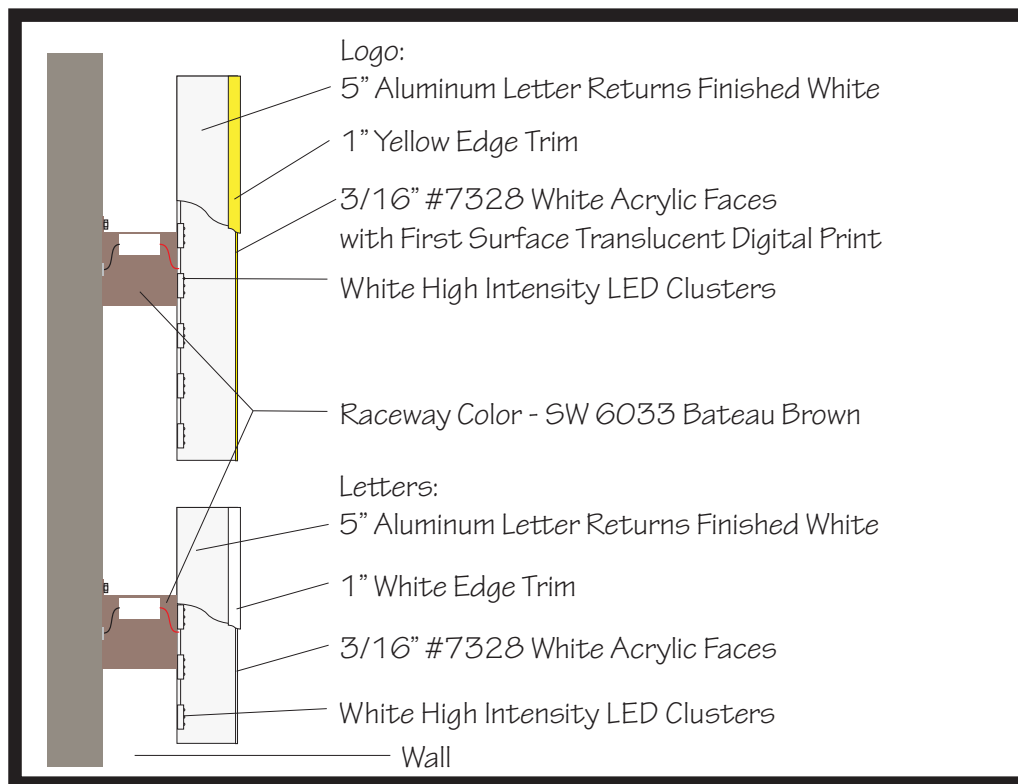
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Customer Approval

Date



Side View

Furnish and Install (1) 2'-3 1/8" x 16'-0" LED Illuminated Raceway Mount Exterior Logo Display (36.16 SF)

4 | New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - East Elevation

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Proposed Sign - East Elevation

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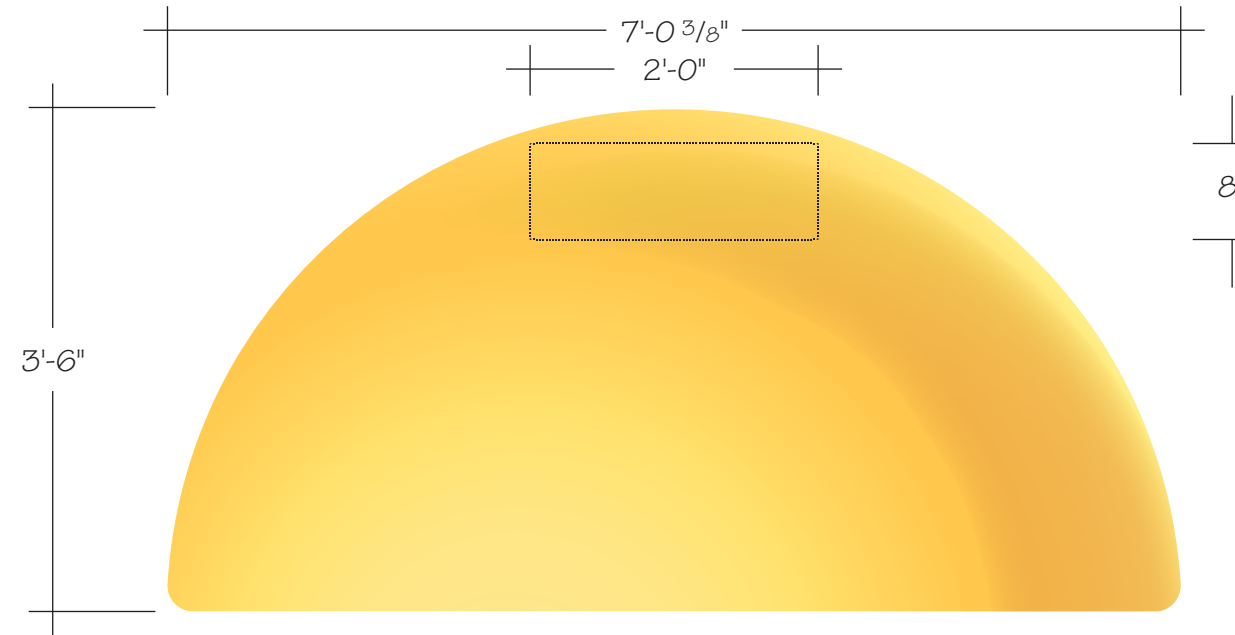
Date

5 | New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - North Elevation

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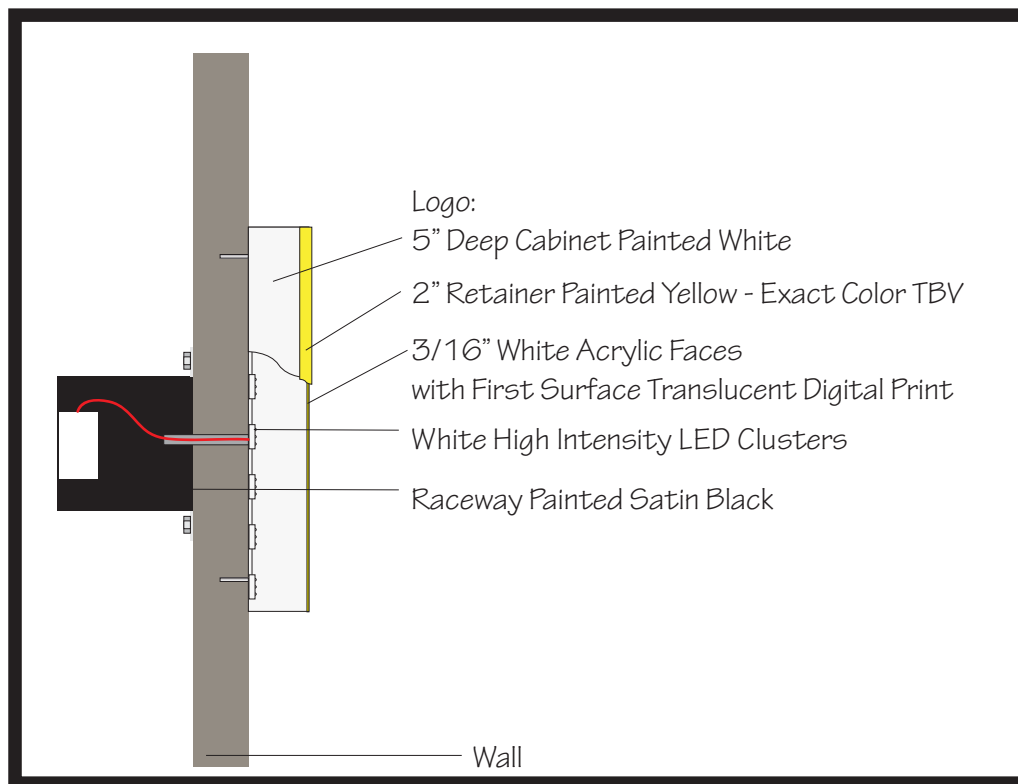
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Customer Approval

Date



Side View

Furnish and Install (1) 3'-6" x 7'-0 3/8" LED Illuminated Remote Mount Exterior Logo Display with Raceway on Backside of Parapet Wall (24.6 SF)

6 | New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - North Elevation

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Customer Approval

Date



Proposed Sign - North Elevation



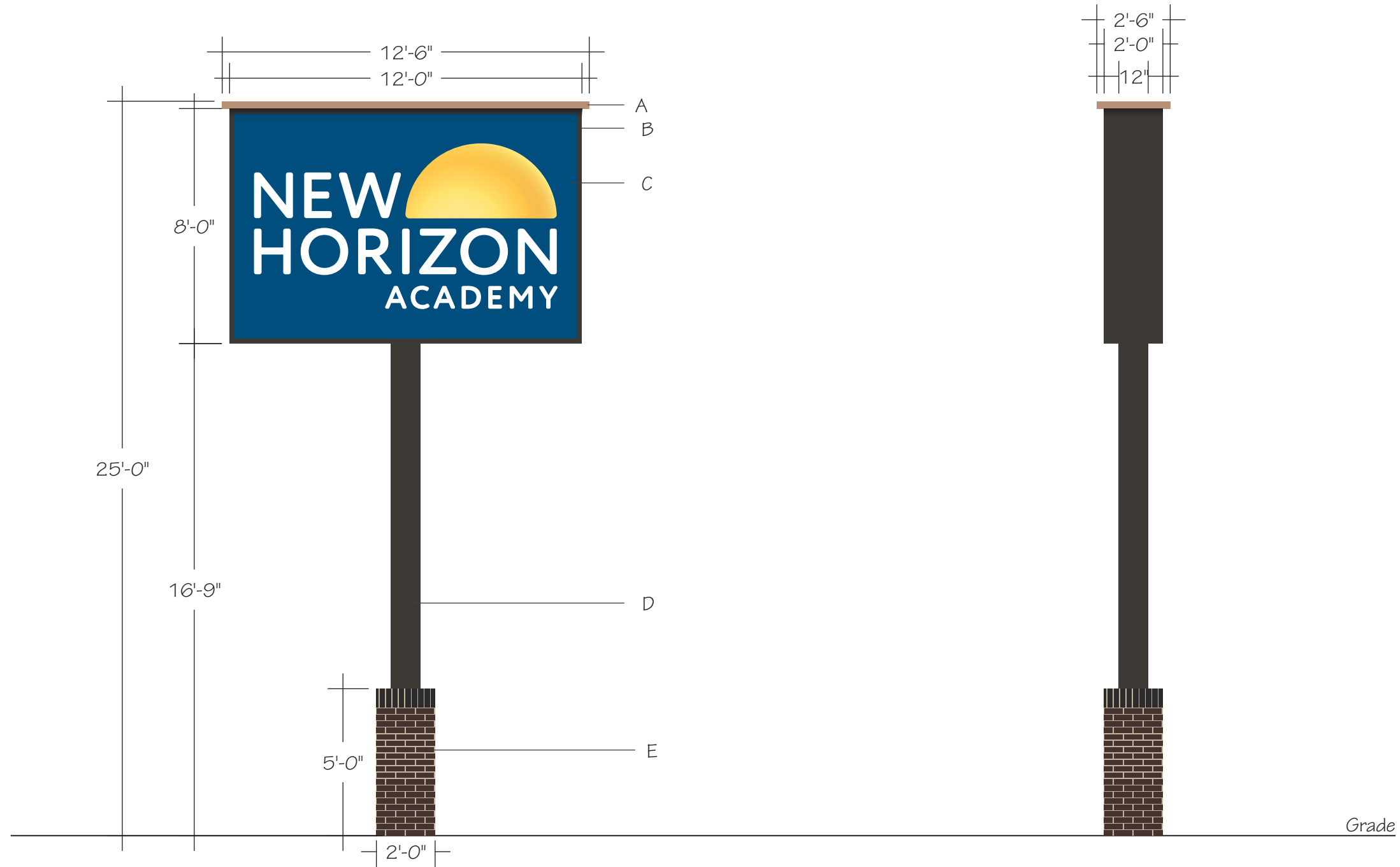
Existing Sign to be Removed

7 | New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - Pole Sign

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Furnish and Install (1) 8'-0" x 12'-0" D/F LED Illuminated Pole Sign (96 SF)

- A. Aluminum Cap Painted to Match Building - Color TBV
- B. 8' x 12' x 2' D/F Cabinet with 2" Retainers Painted Dark Bronze
- C. Digitally Printed Translucent Flex Face - Background to Match Pantone 301 C
- D. 12" Diameter Schedule 40 Pole Painted Dark Bronze
- E. Brick Base to Match Masonry on Building - Brick and Grout Color TBV

- Due to variances among color monitors, the colors shown may vary from actual finish color -

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Proposed Sign - East Face

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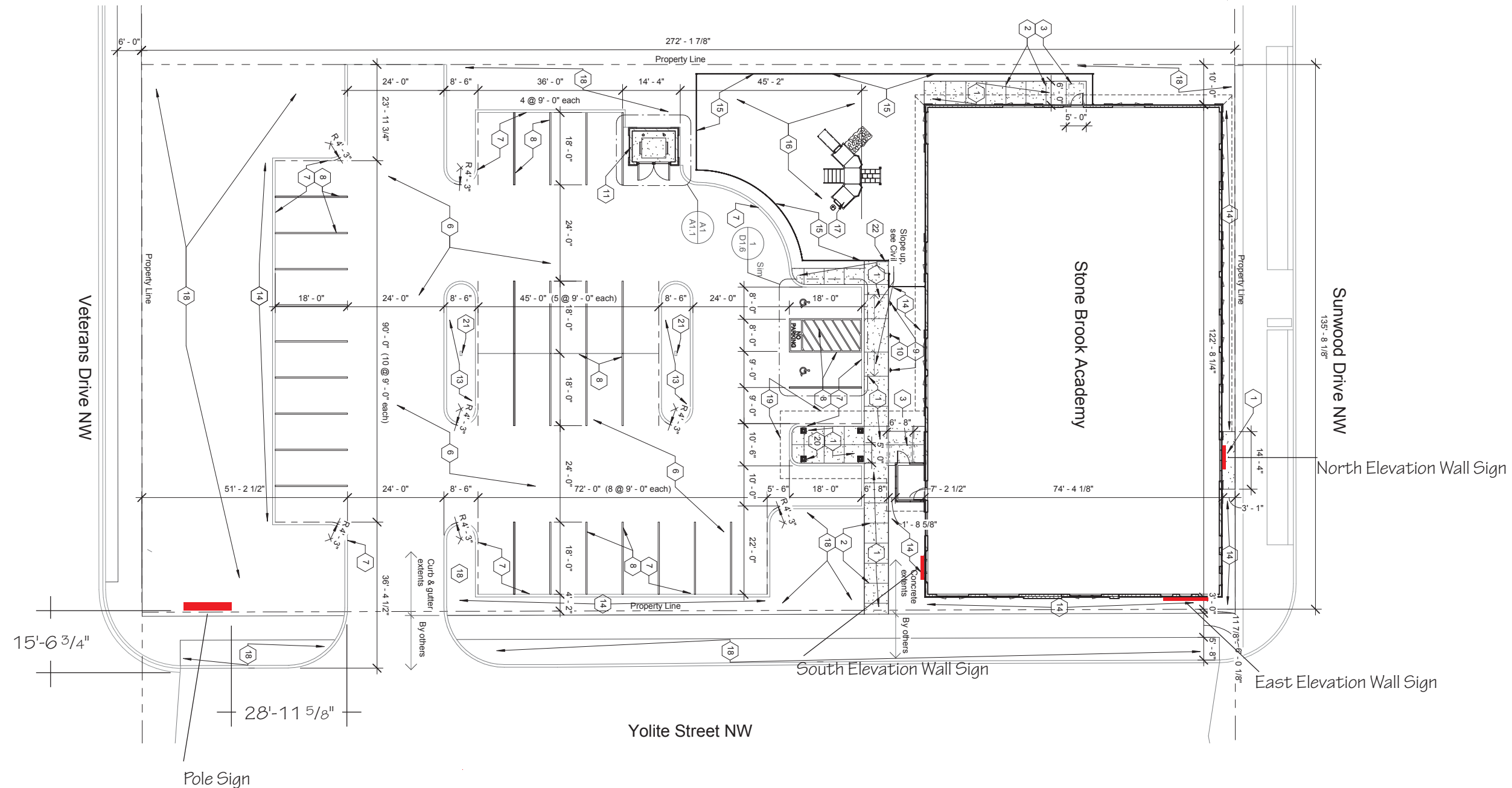
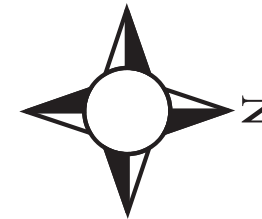
Date

9 New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - Site Map

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Scale: 1/4" = 7'-3 1/4"

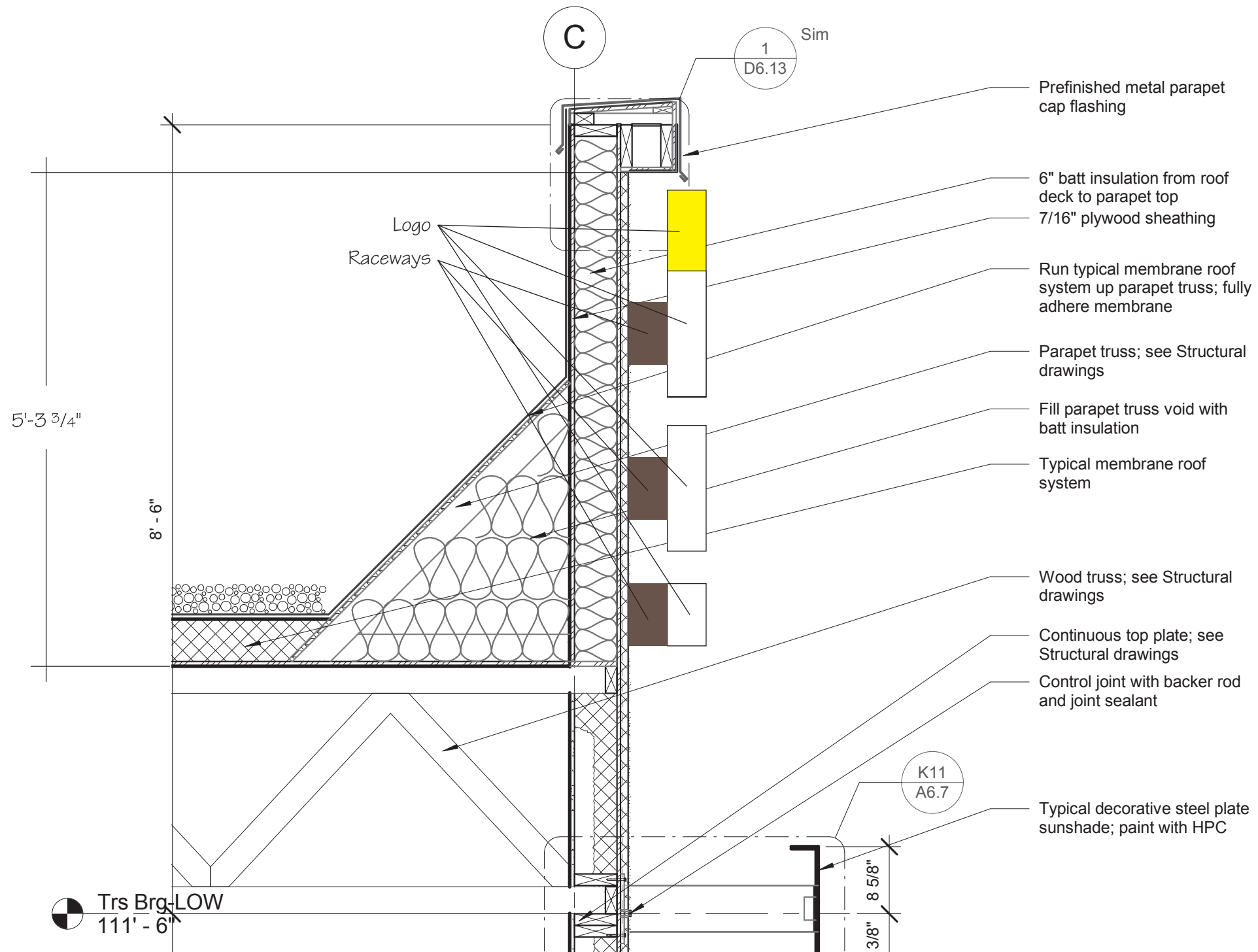
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10 | New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - South Elevation Wall Section

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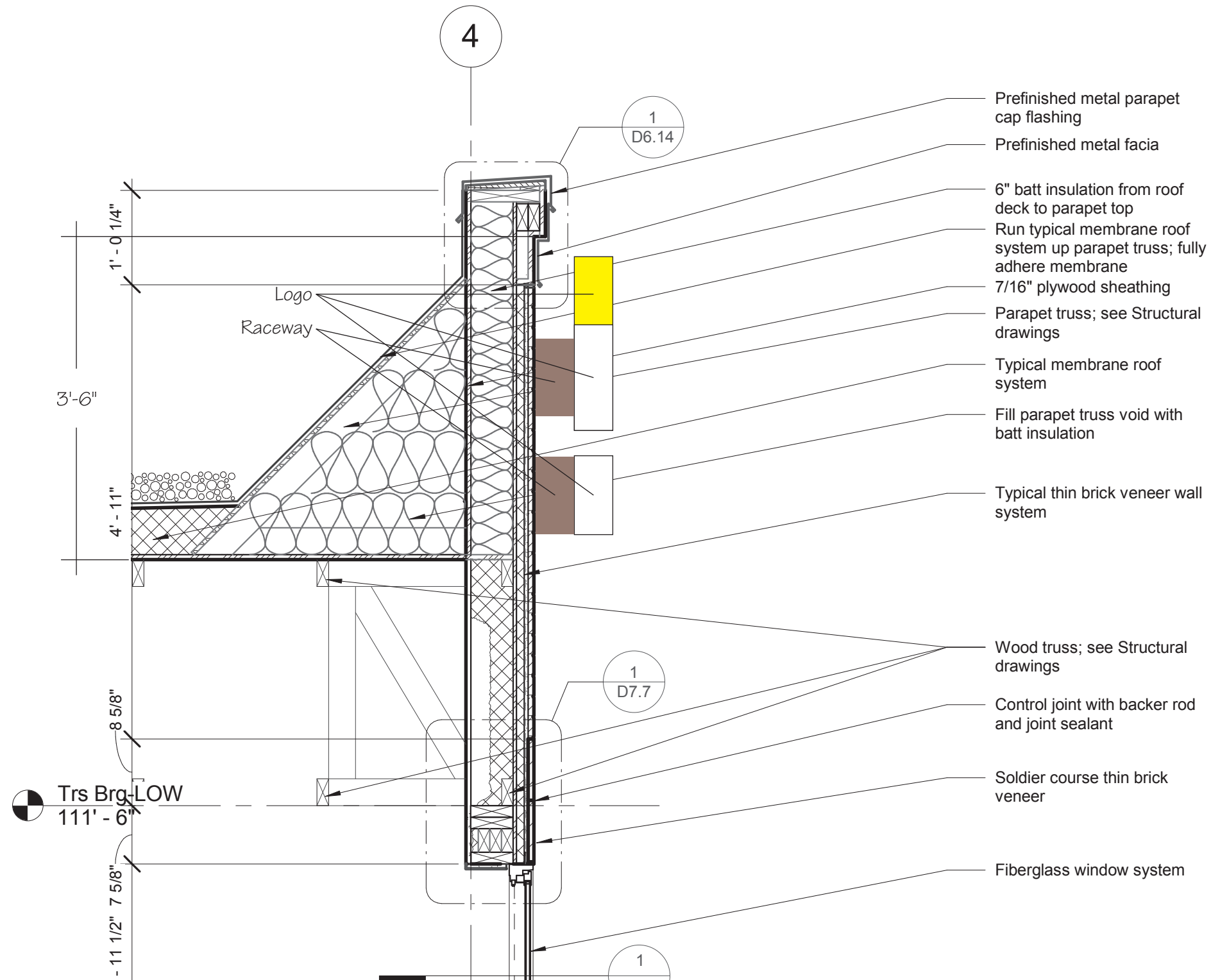
Date

11 New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - East Elevation Wall Section

190787E



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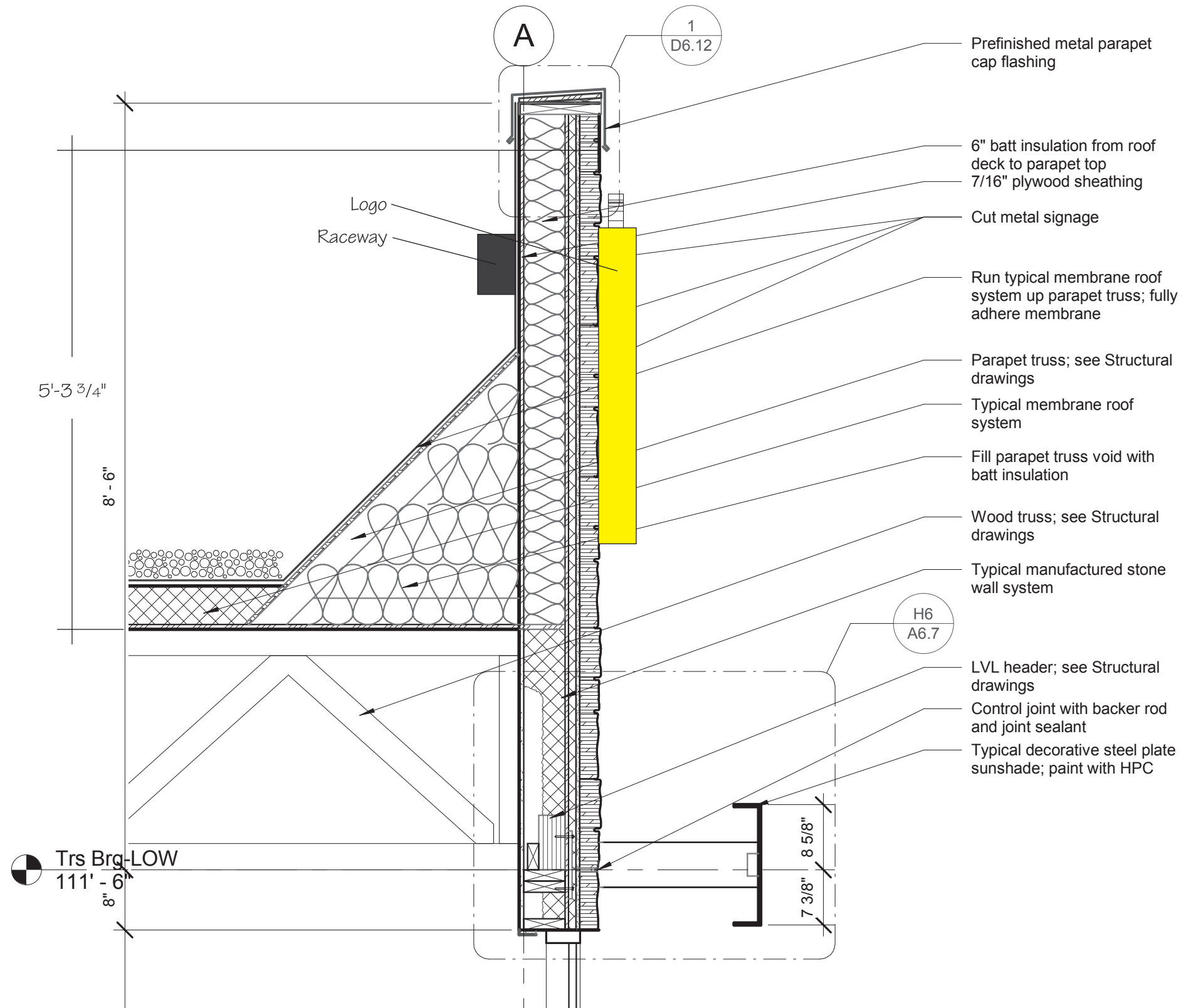
Date

12 New Horizon Academy - Ramsey - North Elevation Wall Section

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Customer Approval

Date

Councilmember _____ introduced the following resolution and moved for its adoption:

RESOLUTION #20-042

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE ISSUANCE OF A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW BOTH A GROUND SIGN AND WALL SIGNAGE ON THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 7800 SUNWOOD DRIVE NW AND DECLARING TERMS OF SAME

RECITALS

1. Spectrum Sign Systems, Inc., hereinafter referred to as the “**Permittee**”, has properly applied for a Conditional Use Permit to construct and maintain a ground sign and wall signage on the property generally known as 7800 Sunwood Drive NW and legally described as follows:

Lot 1, Block 1, COR Stone Brook Academy, Anoka County, Minnesota

(the “**Subject Property**”)

2. That the City of Ramsey (the “**City**”) received an application for a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction and maintenance of both a pylon sign and wall signage on the **Subject Property** on February 6, 2020.
3. That New Horizon Real Estate Development 6, LLP (the “**Property Owner**”) is the owner of the **Subject Property**.
4. That the **Subject Property** is located within the COR-2 District as are all the surrounding properties.
5. The **Subject Property** is approximately 0.84 acres in size.
6. That the **Permittee** is proposing to construct a twenty-five (25) foot tall, ninety-six (96) square foot pylon sign in the southeast corner of the **Subject Property** and install wall signs on three (3) walls (south, east, and north) of the building (together, the “**Signage**”).
7. That per The COR Design Framework, ground signs (including pylon signs) within the COR-2 sub-district are limited to 100 square feet in area (or an aggregate of 200 square feet if double faced) and six (6) feet in height.
8. That The COR Design Framework limits wall signage to fifteen percent (15%) of the front façade of a building and restricts wall signage to one (1) wall, except for lots with multiple frontages, where signage is allowed on one (1) wall per frontage.
9. That The COR Design Framework requires at least fifty percent (50%) of the wall signage to be placed on the measured wall.

10. That deviations from sign standards are permissible with the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit.
11. That the **Subject Property** has three (3) frontages: Veterans Drive, Yolite Street, and Sunwood Drive.
12. That the **Permittee**, on behalf on the **Property Owner**, has proposed placing forty-two percent (42%) of square footage of the wall signage on the south (measured) elevation, with the remainder split between the east and north elevations (along Yolite Street an Sunwood Drive, respectively).
13. That The COR Design Framework states that within the COR-2 sub-district, more conventional suburban development is expected, rather than the neo-traditional development planned for the other COR sub-districts.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. That the **Signage** will not be unduly dangerous or detrimental to persons residing or working in the vicinity of the use, or to the public welfare.
2. That the **Signage** will not substantially adversely impair the use, enjoyment or market value of any of the surrounding properties.
3. That the **Signage** will be harmonious with and in accordance with the specific objectives of the comprehensive plan.
4. That the **Signage** will be constructed and maintained so as to be harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity and will not change the essential character of the area.
5. That the **Signage** will not be hazardous to existing or future neighboring uses.
6. That the **Signage** will not impact essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures, or schools.
7. That the **Signage** will not create excessive additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services and will not be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.
8. That the **Signage** will not involve uses, activities and equipment that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare or odors.
9. That the **Signage** will be consistent with the intent and purposes of the Zoning Chapter.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THIS CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RAMSEY, ANOKA COUNTY, STATE OF MINNESOTA, as follows:

That the Ramsey City Council hereby grants approval of a Conditional Use Permit (the “**Permit**”) for the **Signage** on the **Subject Property** contingent upon the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

1. That this **Permit** allows for the **Signage**, including a pylon sign and wall signs on the **Subject Property**.
2. That the **Permittee** shall obtain all necessary permits, including a Sign Permit, prior to construction of the **Sign** on the **Subject Property**.
3. That the pylon sign shall not exceed twenty-five (25) feet in height nor 100 square feet (aggregate of 200 square feet if double-sided) in size.
4. That the wall signs shall be installed on the south, east, and north elevations of the building with at least forty-two percent (42%) of the signage on the south (measured) elevation.
5. That the **Permittee** shall comply with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations.
6. That no part of the **Signage**, above or below ground, shall encroach within any drainage and utility easement on the **Subject Property** without approval and execution of an Easement Encroachment Agreement.
7. That no additional ground or wall signs will be permitted on the **Subject Property** unless in full compliance with City Code.
8. That this **Permit** shall be perpetual in duration as long as the terms are herein complied with.
9. That the **Permittee** shall be responsible for all **City** costs incurred in administering and enforcing this **Permit**.
10. That the City Administrator, or his/her designee, shall have the right to inspect the premises for compliance and safety purposes annually or at any time, upon reasonable request.
11. That this **Permit** shall automatically expire if the use is not initiated by March 24, 2021 and issuance of a Sign Permit for the **Signage** shall be considered as initiating the use.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Councilmember _____, and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

and the following voted against the same:

and the following abstained:

and the following were absent:

whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted by the Ramsey City Council this the 24th day of March, 2020.

CITY OF RAMSEY:

By: _____
Mayor

By: _____
City Clerk

STATE OF MINNESOTA)
) ss.
COUNTY OF ANOKA)

On this _____ day of _____, _____, before me a Notary Public personally appeared John LeTourneau and Colleen Lasher, to me personally known, who, being each by me duly sworn, did say that they are respectively the Mayor and City Clerk of the City of Ramsey, the Municipal Corporation named in the foregoing instrument, and seal affixed to said instrument is the corporate seal of said Municipal corporation, and the said instrument was signed and sealed on behalf of said Municipal Corporation by authority of its City Council, and said John LeTourneau and Colleen Lasher acknowledge said instrument to be the free act and deed of said Municipal Corporation.

Notary Public

This document drafted by:
City of Ramsey
7550 Sunwood Dr NW
Ramsey, MN 55303

Regular Planning Commission

7. 2.

Meeting Date: 03/05/2020

By: Chris Anderson, Community Development

Information

Title:

Consider Request for Conditional Use Permit for Oversized Ground Sign at 7990 Sunwood Drive NW (Project No. 20-101); Case of RGH Ramsey LLC

Purpose/Background:

The City received an application from RGH Ramsey LLC (the "Applicant") for a Conditional Use Permit to construct and maintain an oversized ground sign on the property located at 7990 Sunwood Drive NW (the "Subject Property"). The Applicant has an active purchase agreement with the City for the Lots 1-3, Block 1 COR TWO, which includes the Subject Property. The Planning Commission conducted a Public Hearing on February 6, 2020 regarding the Applicant's original request and tabled action to provide the Applicant an opportunity to make modifications to the request.

The original request was for a sixty (60) foot tall sign with 999 square feet of sign area to be located on a city-owned parcel west of Armstrong Blvd ('off-premise'). Based on discussion and feedback from the Planning Commission, the Applicant modified the request to locate the proposed sign 'on-premise' (on the Subject Property), reduced the square footage from 999 down to 324, and increased the height from sixty (60) feet to seventy-five (75) feet.

Notification:

The City is advertising for a new Public Hearing due to the change in proposed location and size of the ground sign. The City attempted to send a mailing via Standard US Mail to property owners within 350 feet of the Subject Property, as noted in the Anoka County Property Records, notifying them of the public hearing. The Public Hearing will be conducted by the City Council on March 24, 2020.

Observations/Alternatives:

As noted, based on feedback from the Planning Commission, the Applicant has modified the request. The proposal is for a ground sign (the "Sign") that would be 324 square feet in area (or an aggregate of 648 square feet for a double-sided sign) and seventy-five (75) feet tall. The revised proposal represents a reduction in square footage of about sixty-seven percent (67%). Furthermore, the Applicant has modified the proposed location of the Sign to be on the Subject Property, which would be 'on-premise' rather than the previous proposal, which was 'off-premise' on a city-owned parcel.

The proposed Sign is now very comparable to other approved and/or existing ground signs in the vicinity of the Armstrong Blvd overpass (see table below). Furthermore, the Sign does include a decorative base consisting of faux stone that is approximately eleven (11) feet in height, maintaining an enhanced appearance at the pedestrian level. Finally, the Sign would provide tenant space for all three (3) parcels at the southeast corner of Armstrong Blvd and Sunwood Drive.

Project	Square Footage	Height
Northstar Marketplace	334 Square Feet	75 Feet
Ramsey Commons (former US Bank)	225 Square Feet	75 Feet
West Armstrong Retail/PSD (approved not installed yet)	320 Square Feet	75 Feet

Alternatives

Alternative 1: Recommend approval of the proposed Sign. The Applicant has made significant modifications to the Sign to reduce its size and relocating it so that is is 'on-premise'. The Sign would include tenant space for all three parcels providing the necessary exposure to help entice prospective businesses to building in The COR. Staff supports this alternative.

Alternative 2: Recommend denial of the proposed Sign. Based on feedback from the Planning Commission at the February 6, 2020 meeting, the Applicant has made significant modifications to the proposal. The proposed Sign is now very similar to others in the vicinity of the Armstrong Blvd overpass that were granted Conditional Use Permits. Staff does not support this alternative.

Funding Source:

The Applicant is responsible for all costs associated with this application.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approving the request for a Conditional Use Permit for an oversized ground sign.

Action:

Motion to recommend City Council approve Resolution #20-027 granting a Conditional Use Permit for an oversized ground sign at 7990 Sunwood Drive NW.

Attachments

[Site Location Map](#)

[Proposed Sign](#)

[Exhibit of Approved Oversized Signs](#)

[DRAFT Planning Commission Meeting Minutes Dated February 6, 2020](#)

[Resolution #20-027: Draft Conditional Use Permit](#)

Form Review

Inbox

Tim Gladhill

Form Started By: Chris Anderson

Final Approval Date: 02/27/2020

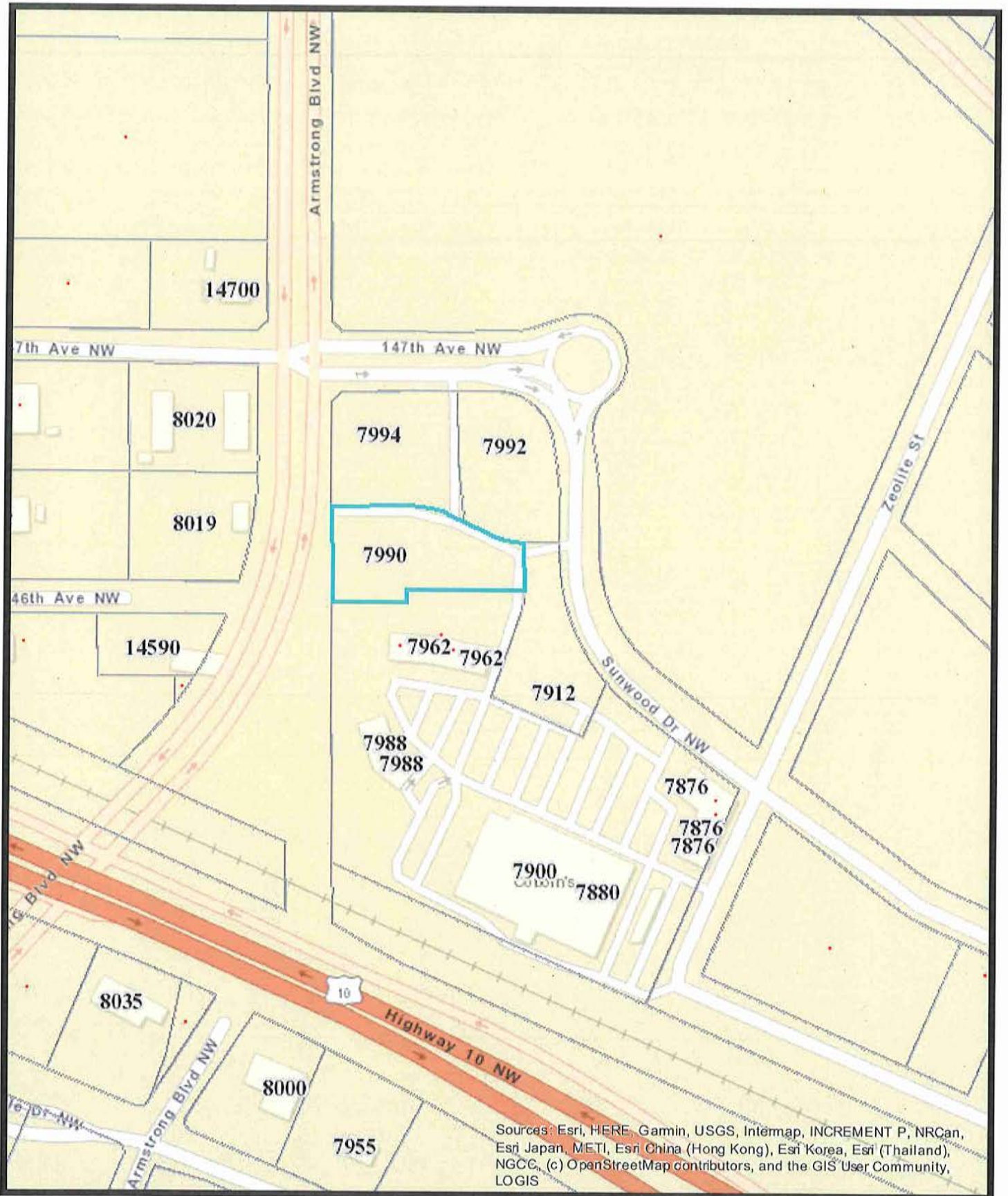
Reviewed By

Tim Gladhill

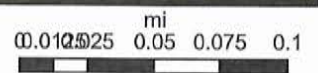
Date

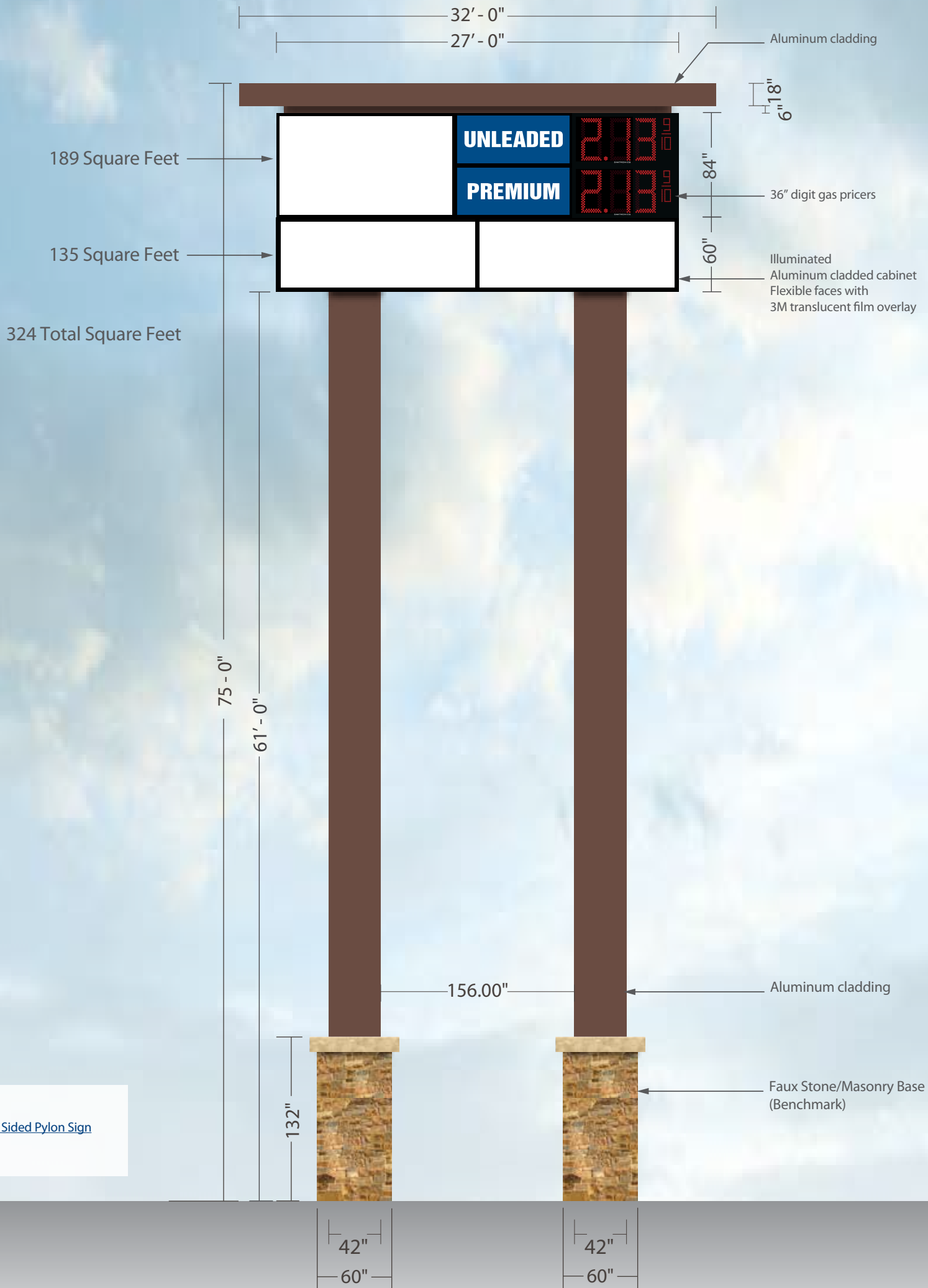
02/27/2020 03:40 PM

Started On: 02/18/2020 09:53 AM



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, LOGIS





Illuminated Double Sided Pylon Sign

INDIGO SIGNWORKS

fargo | alexandria | bismarck | grand forks | minot | st. cloud | minneapolis

The ideas and designs contained in this original and unpublished drawing are the property of Indigo Signworks, Inc. and may not be used or reproduced in whole or part without written permission from Indigo Signworks, Inc.

File location: G:\H\Hardy, Rob\Working Sketch Files\Fargo_Pylon_64753_FINAL

Rob Hardy

Fargo, ND
Quote # 64753 FINAL

Date: 02/05/2019
Revised Date: 03/13/2019 05/09/2019 12/12/2019 12/30/2019 02/04/2020 02/06/2020 02/12/2020 02/13/2020

Sales Representative:
Jill Gustofson

Drawn by: GAN

Page Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"
Page Size: 11x17





- ① Coborns Sign:
75' tall; 334 sq. ft.
- ② Ramsey Commons Sign:
75' tall; 225 sq. ft.
- ③ West Armstrong Sign*:
75' tall; 320 sq. ft.
* Not installed yet
- ④ Proposed Sign:
75' tall; 324 sq. ft.

Parcels outlined in blue are under contract for purchase by Applicant from City.

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.

Councilmember _____ introduced the following resolution and moved for its adoption:

RESOLUTION #20-027

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE ISSUANCE OF A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW AN OVERSIZED GROUND SIGN ON THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 7990 SUNWOOD DRIVE NW AND DECLARING TERMS OF SAME

RECITALS

1. RGH Ramsey LLC, hereinafter referred to as the “**Permittee**”, has properly applied for a Conditional Use Permit to construct and maintain an oversized ground sign on the property generally known as 7990 Sunwood Drive NW and legally described as follows:

Lot 1, Block 1 COR TWO

(the “**Subject Property**”)

2. That the City of Ramsey (the “**City**”) received an application for a Conditional Use Permit to allow the construction and maintenance of an oversized ground sign on the **Subject Property** on January 10, 2020.
3. That the **City** is the current owner of the **Subject Property**.
4. That the **Permittee** has an active Purchase Agreement with the **City** for Lots 1-3, Block 1 COR TWO, which includes the **Subject Property** (Lot 1).
5. That the **Subject Property** is located within the COR-2 District as are all the surrounding properties.
6. The **Subject Property** is approximately 1.37 acres in size.
7. That the **Permittee** is proposing construct a seventy-five (75) foot tall, 324 square foot, ground sign (the “**Sign**”) on the **Subject Property**.
8. That as proposed, the **Sign** would have a total of three (3) tenant panels and would include a decorative base of faux stone as well.
9. That ground signs within the COR-2 sub-district are limited to 100 square feet in area (or an aggregate of 200 square feet if double faced) and six (6) feet in height.
10. That deviations from sign standards are permissible with the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit.

11. That since the completion of the Armstrong Blvd overpass, the **City** has approved three (3) Conditional Use Permits for oversized ground signs for Northstar Marketplace, Ramsey Commons, and West Armstrong Retail.
12. That all three of the approved Conditional Use Permits allowed for signs that were seventy-five (75) feet tall and 334 square feet, 225 square feet, and 320 square feet in area, respectively.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. That the **Sign** will not be unduly dangerous or detrimental to persons residing or working in the vicinity of the use, or to the public welfare.
2. That the **Sign** will not substantially adversely impair the use, enjoyment or market value of any of the surrounding properties.
3. That the **Sign** will be harmonious with and in accordance with the specific objectives of the comprehensive plan.
4. That the **Sign** will be constructed and maintained so as to be harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity and will not change the essential character of the area.
5. That the **Sign** will not be hazardous to existing or future neighboring uses.
6. That the **Sign** will not impact essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures, or schools.
7. That the **Sign** will not create excessive additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services and will not be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.
8. That the **Sign** will not involve uses, activities and equipment that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare or odors.
9. That the **Sign** will be consistent with the intent and purposes of the Zoning Chapter.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THIS CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RAMSEY, ANOKA COUNTY, STATE OF MINNESOTA, as follows:

That the Ramsey City Council hereby grants approval of a Conditional Use Permit (the “**Permit**”) for an oversized ground sign on the **Subject Property** contingent upon the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

1. That this **Permit** allows for an oversized ground sign (the “**Sign**”) on the **Subject Property**, not to exceed 324 square feet in area or seventy-five (75) feet in height.
2. That the **Permittee** shall obtain all necessary permits, including a Sign Permit, prior to construction of the **Sign** on the **Subject Property**.
3. That the **City** will not issue a Sign Permit for the **Sign** until such time that the **Permittee** has fee title to the **Subject Property** and a Building Permit has been issued for the construction of a building on either the **Subject Property** or Lots 2 or 3, Block 1 COR TWO.
4. That a survey, completed by licensed surveyor, of the **Subject Property** must be completed to verify that the determined **Sign** location will not conflict with existing utilities or encroach upon any easement on the **Subject Property**.
5. That the **Permittee** shall comply with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations.
6. That no part of the **Sign**, above or below ground, shall encroach within any drainage and utility easement on the **Subject Property** without approval and execution of an Easement Encroachment Agreement.
7. That no additional ground signs will be permitted on the **Subject Property** unless in full compliance with City Code.
8. That this **Permit** shall be perpetual in duration as long as the terms are herein complied with.
9. That the **Permittee** shall be responsible for all **City** costs incurred in administering and enforcing this **Permit**.
10. That the City Administrator, or his/her designee, shall have the right to inspect the premises for compliance and safety purposes annually or at any time, upon reasonable request.
11. That this **Permit** shall automatically expire if the use is not initiated by March 24, 2021 and issuance of a Sign Permit for the **Sign** shall be considered as initiating the use.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Councilmember _____, and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof:

and the following voted against the same:

and the following abstained:

and the following were absent:

whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted by the Ramsey City Council this the 24th day of March, 2020.

