

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, March 4, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:                   Chairperson Randy Bauer  
  Commissioner Bruce Anderson  
  Commissioner Cheri Gengler  
  Commissioner Eric Peters  
  Commissioner Gary VanScoy

Members Absent:                   None

Also Present:                       Senior Planner Chloe McGuire Brigl  
  Deputy City Administrator Tim Gladhill  
  Police Chief Jeff Katers  
  City Council Liaison Debra Musgrove  
  City Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Bauer called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2.     PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairperson Bauer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3.     CITIZEN INPUT**

None.

**4.     APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Commissioner Peters, seconded by Commissioner Gengler, to approve the agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Gengler	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye

Chairperson Bauer                    aye  
Motion carried.

**5.        CONSENT AGENDA**

**5.01:    Approve the February 4, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**

**5.02:    Approve the February 11, 2021 Planning Commission Work Session Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Gengler, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

**6.        PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**6.01:    Public Hearing: Consider Resolution #21-058 Approving Variance for Deviation from Street Name Grid for Riverstone South; Case of Capstone Homes, LLC**

**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 the City's Public Works and Public Safety teams are not supportive of the requested deviation for public safety reason; however, the Public Works Committee has recommended moving away from Unicorn Street and allowing one deviation from the standard grid as they feel Unicorn Street may be difficult to market.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he appreciates the attempt to honor the Pearson name and asked if there had been consideration to name the park after the Pearson family.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that the City already has a Pearson Park in another area of Ramsey.

**Citizen Input**

Tom Bakritges, Capstone Homes, commented that he provided a more comprehensive presentation to the City Council and Public Works Committee. He stated that the Pearson family has been at the homestead property for 75 years and therefore they would like to honor the family with one of the street names. He noted that Pearson Place and Pearson Park have already been named after the family on other property they owned that has been developed. He commented that unicorn is not a good name in terms of marketing homes and Capstone does not feel that would be a good fit for the neighborhood. He asked that the Commission approve of the request.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that there is already a Unicorn Street in Ramsey and it is part of the County grid. He asked why it is a bad name in the opinion of Capstone.

Mr. Bakritges commented that a unicorn is a mythical figure and not a real animal, therefore it does not technically fit within the grid. He stated that some people do not like those types of names for their street, noting that the City approved a change from Sloth Street to Snowy Owl Street in Riverstone North.

Chairperson Bauer stated that he lives in Riverstone North on Quintana and asked what type of animal that is.

Mr. Bakritges stated that he is not sure of how that name came to be.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that Quintana is not an animal and came about in a similar discussion on the street name. He stated that the Public Works Committee did make this recommendation for the compromise on street naming.

Police Chief Katers commented that public safety and public works provided input at the Public Works Committee noting that police and fire oppose changes to the street name grid as it follows the County grid. He noted that the County grid ensures that public safety can easily respond to calls for service within their own community and in situations of mutual aid as all the communities follow the County grid. He stated that there are 18 addresses on the north end of Ramsey that are on Unicorn Street already. He noted that public safety wants to remain with the logical naming system and therefore oppose deviation from the naming system. He commented that in times of emergency when GPS service is not available, public safety would be able to respond within their own community and neighboring communities based on the County grid system. He stated that public safety also opposed the changes requested by the applicant for Riverstone North in 2017, which were ultimately approved by the City. He asked that the Commission follow the grid system for street names.

Commissioner VanScoy referenced the comment from Police Chief Katers that public works opposes the change, but the case stated that the Public Works Committee supports the change and asked for clarification.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that the Public Works Committee is composed of three City Council members. He noted that meeting of the Public Works Committee was the same night as a special City Council workshop meeting, therefore all six members of the Council as well as the Councilmember Elect were present and there were no comments of opposition.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that after discussion, the Committee supported this compromise to border the development with Pearson Street, similar to the Bowers Drive border on the other side of the development with the other roads inside of the development following the naming grid. She stated that the Committee felt that this was a good compromise to honor the Pearson family and follow the naming grid in the remainder of the development.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 7:22 p.m.

### **Commission Business**

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he has been concerned that other factors have been placed over the opinion of public safety in previous considerations. He commented that a marketing concern versus a safety concern does not seem to pose question, noting that public safety should rank above marketing.

Commissioner Peters agreed that public safety should rank above marketing.

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to deny the variance requesting deviation from City Code street name grid requirements for Riverstone South.

### **Further discussion**

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that if the variance is denied there is a process of which the applicant can appeal the decision to the City Council.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that the record should reflect that the denial was based on the decision that the public safety element outweighs a marketing concern for the street name.

**6.02: Public Hearing: Review Resolution #21-055 Approving Java Properties Concept Plan (Project 21-105)**

**Public Hearing**

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:25 p.m.

**Presentation**

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the staff report stating staff recommends approval of the site plan as drafted in the proposed resolution.

Chairperson Bauer noted that the Commission did review this at its February worksession.

**Citizen Input**

Mark Crow, Java Companies, commented that staff has been great to work with and all the recommendations thus far have been reasonable. He stated that they would like to begin construction this summer and they are excited to become a part of the community.

Commissioner Gengler referenced a previous comment made by the Commission about adding a bike rack to the property and asked for input.

Mr. Crow stated that they will be adding the bike rack component when updating the plans before this moves forward to the City Council.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 7:30 p.m.

### **Commission Business**

Motion by Commissioner Gengler, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #21-055 Approving the Site Plan and CUP for Java Properties.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

### **6.03: Public Hearing: Consider Resolution #21-008 for Site Plan and Final Plat for GiGi's Salon and Spa (Project #20-140)**

#### **Public Hearing**

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:32 p.m.

#### **Presentation**

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the staff report stating that staff is supportive of the project and recommends approval of Resolution #21-008.

Chairperson Bauer recalled that there was previous discussion that the building did not run parallel to Sunwood Drive but was instead parallel to the buildings to the east.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that the application would like to more align the building with Veterans Drive because of the trapezoidal shape of the property. She noted that the building is within the built to setback line of the COR area, closer to Sunwood than the daycare center.

Chairperson Bauer noted that the Commission previously reviewed a request for a hotel for the property between the salon and daycare and asked how that property aligned.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that the proposed hotel would run parallel to the salon and daycare, noting that the applicants worked together to ensure alignment would be gained and shared parking could be provided.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he understands the rationale with not directly aligning with Sunwood, although he would have preferred that. He stated that in reviewing the floorplan,

the COR framework states that the front of the building should be at Sunwood, but it does not appear that is the front.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that similar to the other properties along Sunwood, the façade along Sunwood is more of a faux façade with parking and the main entrance along the auxiliary street. She stated that has become the common practice as long as the design standards can be met for the Sunwood facing side. She commented that it would be consistent with the surrounding uses.

Chairperson Bauer noted that there was a similar discussion with the daycare center, to have the Sunwood side not have the appearance of the back of the building, while allowing the entrance off the other side of the building.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that the other businesses still have an entrance on the Sunwood side whereas this would not have that entrance. He stated that this is a corner lot and therefore in the framework it states that it should be situated in the corner of the lot. He was unsure that this building would fit within that build to zone.

Chairperson Bauer noted that there are two doors on the north elevation which would face Sunwood.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that one of the doors is for the staff patio and the other would be an exit door.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that there will be parking along Zeolite and confirmed that bushes and trees would be used for screening. He commented that there would be some potential issues with equipment screening but believed that was covered within the project documents. He asked for details on the structure shown in the northeast corner.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that is the fenced in area.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that it appears in the floorplan there would be a hot tub in that area. He was unsure that wood fencing would be allowed.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that staff discussed whether alternate materials would be more appropriate for the fencing.

Commissioner Anderson asked where the wellhead is located relative to the property.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl identified the well, which is on the adjacent property that will remain an outlot.

### **Citizen Input**

Curt Strandland, Classic Construction, spoke on behalf of the applicant. He referenced the doors on the north elevation noting that one door would exit to the patio. He stated that they would be

open to different types of fencing for the hot tub area but did not believe wrought iron would provide adequate fencing but would be open to other materials. He noted that the cedar fencing would match the proposed pergola. He stated that they have worked with staff to meet the requirements of the COR but are open to other suggestions from the Commission.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that there are two doors on the north side, noting that the other door appears to go to a mechanical room.

Mr. Strandland confirmed that the mechanical room door would not be used for access. He confirmed that the second door on the north would be used for staff to reach the patio area.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that there appear to be four egress doors on the plan and received confirmation. He asked and received confirmation that the staff patio would not be fenced.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 7:51 p.m.

### **Commission Business**

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #21-008 Approving the Site Plan and Final Plat for GiGi's Salon and Spa.

### **Further discussion**

Commissioner VanScoy noted on page 52 of the amended COR framework it states that the main entrance of each principal building must face the street. He stated that the Commission has been working around that with the intent to have an entrance on Sunwood. He noted that this would not be an entrance. He understood that the main entrance ends up being where people park. He noted that he would be opposing this request based on that factor. He believed that the Commission should review the COR framework as the applications continue to get further from that intent.

Chairperson Bauer commented that the intent of that language is to provide walkability within the COR. He noted that thus far there has been a focus more on automobile access and perhaps that is something that needs to be revisited as to whether the intent is to focus on pedestrian or vehicle access. He agreed that there should be continued discussion on the vision for the COR.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he understands and agrees with those comments but noted that this is a unique lot in that there is no parking on Zeolite or Veterans Drive and therefore the only option for parking is within the parking lot. He noted that it would be hard for this property to meet that intent of the framework.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he understands the change in nature and the unique character of the lot but believes that the Commission needs to review the framework in order to make better decisions on current conditions. He stated that other businesses have a customer entrance on Sunwood. He stated that he reviewed the floorplan in detail and commented that this is an interesting and exciting concept that he would like to see be successful. He believed that it could work as proposed and believed the issue of street edging has been addressed. He noted that his vote in opposition will be strictly based on the verbiage of the COR framework.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that the COR framework was intended to be flexible. He stated that flexibility has been shown on other properties within the COR such as Casey's and Allina. He stated that the walkable feel of the COR will take some time. He noted that the building is proposed to the build to line with a door off Sunwood, although this user will not be using that door for access. He noted that the COR framework was intended to be flexible in order to allow for more creative projects that come forward.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

#### **6.04: Public Hearing: Consider Resolution #21-054 Approving an Interim Use Permit for an Accessory Structure for the Church of St. Katharine Drexel**

##### **Public Hearing**

Chairperson Bauer stated that he and Commissioner VanScoy do not have financial interest in the church but are very involved, noting that he signed the application on behalf of the church. He noted that he and Commissioner VanScoy will not be participating in this discussion as members of the Commission but instead as representatives of the applicant.

Acting Chairperson Anderson called the public hearing to order at 8:02 p.m.



Commissioner Gengler                    aye  
Acting Chairperson Anderson           aye

Motion carried.

Acting Chairperson Anderson closed the public hearing closed at 8:12 p.m.

**Commission Business**

Motion by Commissioner Peters, seconded by Commissioner Gengler, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #21-054 Approving an Interim Use Permit for an Accessory Structure on the subject property for a term of five years.

**Further discussion**

Councilmember Musgrove asked for details on the foundation for the accessory building.

Mr. Bauer replied that there would be a cement slab.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that she would like the five-year period for the IUP, recognizing that an extension could be granted, or perhaps additional storage space would be needed.

Mr. Bauer commented that the accessory structure is being built to fit future needs, therefore a larger size will not be needed. He noted that the draft resolution states a period of two years and asked for clarification on the desired length.

Commissioner Peters stated that his intention was to allow a five-year time period.

Commissioner Gengler confirmed that she would support five years.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Peters                    aye  
Commissioner Gengler                    aye  
Acting Chairperson Anderson           aye

Motion carried.

Chairperson Bauer and Commissioner VanScoy rejoined the meeting as Commission members.

**7. COMMISSION BUSINESS**

**7.01: Review Sketch Plan for Trott Brook Property, Makowsky Addition, Case of the Excelsior Group (Project 20-103)**

## **Presentation**

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the Staff Report stating that staff recommends that the Planning Commission direct the applicant to move forward with developing a formal preliminary plat, compliant with all City Code standards. The review by staff outlines minor adjustments to the plan that shall be required in order to achieve full compliance with Zoning Code. The overall project complies with the Zoning Code.

## **Commission Business**

Commissioner Gengler asked for input on the accesses that would be provided into the development, noting there appear to be two entrances on 173<sup>rd</sup> and one on Variolite.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that there is one proposed entrance from Nowthen onto 173<sup>rd</sup>, which is currently a dirt driveway that would be upgraded to a public road. She stated that there would be one entrance off Variolite. She stated that improvements would likely be necessary on Nowthen Boulevard, such as a turn lane, to support this development.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if there would be a conservation easement as part of this development.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that staff learned that conservation easements are extremely difficult to enforce, therefore required buffer would be taken through outlot or the City would take fee title of.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the discussion has not reached that level yet, noting that it would depend upon whether the development would have an HOA that maintains ownership of outlots, or whether the City would take ownership of the outlots.

Councilmember Musgrove referenced the potential number of lots that may not meet the minimum size standards and asked if that could change the layout and ultimate number of lots.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied that staff flagged some lots that will need to be double checked in terms of size. She stated that the wetland delineation has the most potential to change the ultimate number of lots because of required buffers. She stated that perhaps five to ten lots could be lost if this moves forward.

Ben Schmidt, Excelsior Group, commented that they have been working on this for over one year and they believe they can move forward meeting all the minimum requirements. He recognized that this is high level but believed that they would be able to provide the minimum lot sizes. He agreed that the wetland delineation would be the factor that could impact the ultimate number of lots. He believed that this would be a great project for the City, and they are excited about the new park area that would be brought to the northern area of Ramsey.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he noticed a lot of ponds and asked if those are wetlands or whether those would be created.

Mr. Schmidt replied that those would be infiltration basins to be used for stormwater management.

Commissioner Anderson commented that he plows snow for the City and cul-de-sacs take about 15 minutes each to plow. He noted that this sketch has nine cul-de-sacs which would equate to a few hours of plowing just for this development. He stated that the City would then most likely have to hire another staff member to plow and additional equipment would be needed. He asked if some of the cul-de-sacs could be eliminated.

Mr. Schmidt recognized that cul-de-sacs are not desired by public works. He stated that he is sensitive to that but noted that from a marketing standpoint, people like to live on cul-de-sacs because it slows traffic and increases safety. He stated that there could be a negotiation but felt that the value of the homes could create a tax base that would help to offset the additional public works time. He noted that they would be willing to work with staff on that detail.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that she presented the sketch plan to the Public Works Director, who agreed that cul-de-sacs require additional time but believed that some planning could assist in offsetting that time. She stated that the driveway locations will be run by public works during each phase in attempt to make it easier for plows.

Commissioner Anderson commented that typically the smaller trucks do cul-de-sacs, and the larger trucks do the main road. He commented that public works and public safety vehicles should continue to be a part of the cul-de-sac discussion.

Kim Ksaloka asked when buffer zones between the proposed development and existing properties would be discussed.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that staff noted that the density transitioning would be required at a level two, which would be a 35-foot berm or 45-foot planted buffer. She stated that buffer would be required against the existing rural lots.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he likes the proposal and noted that the applicant has done a great job reacting to previous input. He noted that this is a much more preferable design to the original sketch plan.

Chairperson Bauer noted that in previous review the Commission was comfortable with some smaller interior lots but recognized that the Council did not support those lot sizes.

Councilmember Musgrove confirmed that this submission is more in line with the previous direction from the City Council. She recognized that she has not yet seen much community input on the new design.

Chairperson Bauer noted that this seems on track with the desire of the developer and the previous direction from the City Council.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed the consensus of the Commission to direct the applicant to move forward towards preliminary plat. She noted that this will go forward to the City Council on the March 23<sup>rd</sup> agenda.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the description for parcel B is accurate in the letter submitted.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that it is very common to have this type of description in a metes and bounds division therefore this is accurate.

## **8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT**

Chairperson Bauer noted that he and Commissioner VanScoy have conflicts with the April meeting date and suggested postponing that meeting by one week.

Councilmember Musgrove noted that the Park and Recreation Commission meets on that night. She suggested moving to the third Thursday.

Chairperson Bauer noted that he and Commissioner VanScoy have a conflict with that date as well. It was confirmed that the Planning Commission meeting for April would be held the second Thursday in April. He noted that some members of the Commission attended a City Council worksession where a pause on multifamily housing development was discussed for City owned property. He noted that the Commission members expressed concern for the rational in pausing that development when the properties are zoned for that type of development. He stated that perhaps a joint worksession with the Council, EDA, and Planning Commission be held to review the plan for the COR to ensure everyone is on the same page.

The Commission members agreed that it would be helpful to have a joint discussion to discuss the general land use vision of the COR and multifamily housing.

Chairperson Bauer asked if Councilmembers Musgrove and Woestehoff would be open to making the request to the Council for a joint meeting.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if that would be the only way for this type of joint meeting to occur.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill stated that the multifamily discussion has come forward a few times and therefore he would prefer this be a broader discussion. He noted that staff could bring forward the suggestion for a joint worksession but urged the focus to be on the land use plan for the COR.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that the Council had the discussion related to multifamily housing and indicated support for a pause on that development as well as focusing on attracting retail development to support the residents that have come into the COR. She felt that the minutes from that meeting reflect that direction. She commented that a lot of rooftops have been added and the Council wants to focus more on bringing businesses to support the needs of those residents.

Chairperson Bauer stated that he was looking at discussing the overall plan for the COR and land along Highway 10. He stated that he suggested bringing in the EDA because it has been stated that retailers look for a population of 30,000, which Ramsey has not yet reached that level. He stated that the quickest way to reach that population is with multifamily development and therefore that may need to be a factor in reaching the goal to bring more businesses. He believed that involving the EDA would be critical to ensure all factors are considered and everyone moves forward in the same way to reach the ultimate vision of the COR.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that staff would need to be careful how to navigate this as there has been direction from the Council on multifamily housing. He stated that the Commission could request a joint meeting to focus on overall land use in the COR and the Council would then make the decision whether to hold that meeting.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that from his perspective collaboration with the different Boards is an important function. He stated that members of the Commission can reach out to Councilmembers from their Ward or the At-Large members to express their comments as residents. He noted that while the decision was not unanimous, the Council did make the decision to pause multifamily development on City owned property. He recognized that retail may not bounce back as quick as desired following COVID, but perhaps it will.

Motion by Commissioner Gengler, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to request a joint meeting with the Planning Commission, City Council and Economic Development Authority to discuss the land use plan for the COR and Highway 10 corridor.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to adjourn the meeting.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chloe McGuire Brigl  
Senior Planner

ATTEST:

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JoAnn Shaw  
Community Development Assistant

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