

stated that he is always concerned with a brand-new development making the existing homes that were constructed in 1987. He believed that the berm would help to provide a separation between the new and older homes. He stated that he would prefer to have single family homes on the exterior of the development. He again stressed that he would like to see a transition berm as that would help to buffer noise and sight between the developments. He stated that perhaps there can be a maintenance agreement to ensure the ponds are continually maintained as well.

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners Anderson, Dunaway, Peters, VanScoy, and Walker. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Gengler.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 9:16 p.m.

Commission Business

Chairperson Bauer noted that there has been input to the developer on their proposal. He noted that the first action that would be necessary would be related to the Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to recommend that City Council approval of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment and forward the request to the Metropolitan Council for consideration.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Bauer, Commissioners VanScoy, Peters, Anderson, Dunaway, and Walker. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Gengler.

7. COMMISSION BUSINESS

7.01: Interpretation of Regulations Pertaining to Detached Garages and Accessory Apartments

Presentation

City Planner Anderson presented the Staff Report and asked for feedback on this specific building proposal relating to accessory apartment criteria and clarification on the four criteria that City Code outlines in terms of what is considered an accessory apartment.

Commission Business

Chairperson Bauer stated that in the past he recalled issues with the backyard cottage or mother in-law apartment, which is currently not permitted.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that those types of dwelling units are not currently allowed but there are several existing units previously approved under Conditional Use Permit.

Chairperson Bauer stated that from a practical standpoint, his mother in-law has moved in with he and his wife. He noted that his brother in-law has college children that have moved back home as well. He stated that perhaps accessory dwelling units are brought back to the Commission for additional discussion. He noted that the proposed application would have the potential to use as a dwelling unit.

City Planner Anderson stated that often times the intentions of the original applicant are very straightforward and they do not have intention as using it as living space but when the property changes hands or circumstances change, that opportunity arises without the understanding that the area was not intended to be used in that fashion.

Commissioner Walker commented that in terms of sanitation he would consider a half bathroom which does not have a shower or bathroom as acceptable. He noted that living space would require a way to bathe or shower. He asked for clarification on why this ordinance prohibition exists.

City Planner Anderson commented that the concern in the past has been in creating a multi-family setting in a single-family residential area.

Chairperson Bauer noted that as proposed the application would include a full bathroom.

Commissioner Anderson stated that as described it would appear that would be considered a home. He stated that it is not currently allowed as it would create a multi-family home in a single-family area. He noted that the Commission previously considered an application for an art studio that would include a shower that would allow them to clean-up before going into the house. He noted that previous request missed some of the other elements that define a dwelling unit or living space. He noted that as described this could be used as a house and he does not support multiple family living on a single property.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that this appears to be a house with a tuck under garage. He stated that he looks at living space as a finished area that is insulated with lighting and heat which makes it livable. He stated that when he moved into his home, he had an office which was then converted to a bedroom for grandkids. He stated that this would be living space and noted that how someone uses it does not define the character. He stated that while he would love to have this garage himself, he does not believe it would be appropriate because of the number of proposed uses. He stated that regardless of whether the Commission wants to discuss whether the ordinance should be changed, he believes the interpretation of staff to be correct in that this would be defined as living space and would not be allowed.

City Planner Anderson referenced the comment made related to sanitation and a half bath or three quarters bath and asked if the Commission has consensus on that interpretation. He noted that two of the four things could be included, and the space would not be defined as living space. He stated that most likely the applicant will want to modify their request to eliminate at least one of the criteria that defines an accessory dwelling.

Chairperson Bauer commented that if there is a home occupation someone is likely to have an office which would make sense to have a half bath. He stated that this request would include almost a full kitchen on the second floor and asked what would occur in that space.

City Planner Anderson commented that if a full kitchen is installed that would be creating habitable space, per the input of the City Attorney.

Chairperson Bauer commented that inclusion of a half bath would make sense dependent on the use. He stated that in the case of the art studio, it made sense to include the shower. He stated that perhaps a half bath would be allowed but a three quarters bath could be considered as a conditional use.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he would equate sanitation to a restroom, even though that could be expanded to include a shower.

Commissioner Walker commented that he would find a half bath acceptable. He stated that having a microwave and refrigerator would also be okay if this were used for a business. He believed that it would be better to limit the size of said spaces rather than muddling through definitions.

Commissioner Anderson commented that a 40 by 60 square feet building would not be considered a typical office.

Commissioner Walker stated that he does not mind the size of the building as long as the usable office space is limited.

City Planner Anderson commented that this would be a 40 by 60 building but the bulk of that would be garage space with the office area 16 by 40. He asked if there is consensus of the Commission for staff to research accessory dwelling units and bring that back for future discussion.

The Commission agreed they would like to review the topic in the future.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that staff has the necessary feedback to proceed.

Commissioner Walker provided comments on his experience with Airbnb and noted that creates the situation where two families may be using the same living space.

Commissioner Peters stated that sometimes large pole barns have campers inside that people can rent for a week.

7.02: Select Planning Representative to Participate on the Interview Panel for the Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Position

Presentation

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Gengler, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #21-248 Approving Preliminary Plat for North Brook Meadows.

Further discussion

Commissioner Peters commented that a lot of the debate that happened tonight is reserved for the City Council. He stated that the job of the Planning Commission is to review the criteria and if those criteria are met, the application must be approved. He explained that there is more leeway for this type of debate with the City Council.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion Carried.

7. COMMISSION BUSINESS

7.01: Consider Allowing Accessory Dwelling Units on Single-Family Residential Properties

Presentation

Planning Technician McCann presented the Staff Report stating that staff recommends that the Commission direct City staff to draft an ordinance to be presented at the regular September 23, 2021 meeting with edits as discussed during the meeting.

Commission Business

Commissioner VanScoy commented that this would be a potential ordinance and noted that he believed this discussion was meant to determine if the Commission would like to consider an ordinance. He believed that a step was skipped.

Planning Technician McCann stated that there is not official ordinance drafting at this time.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that this was meant to be a discussion and determine if the Commission would like to move forward. She noted that the City Council is interested in looking at an ordinance. She stated that staff continues to receive at least one request per month of this nature. She noted that the cost of senior housing is high, and the housing market also has high pricing, which is making more people think about living with a family member, or on the same property. She welcomed input from the Commission on whether they are interested in exploring this further and any other input they may have.

Commissioner Gengler asked why a basement conversion would not be allowed.

Planning Technician McCann stated that if someone wanted to convert a basement there would not be a way for the City to monitor that.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that some people are doing that already. She noted that if there is access to that basement area from the front door, a kitchenette could be added and a secondary living space for a family member could be created.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he called some other communities to gather information. He stated that he spoke with Andover city staff and that city stated that they receive inquiries while they do not see many of those requests move forward. He noted that Nowthen and Anoka do not allow this type of activity and asked how many other communities actually allow this activity.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl provided information on the cities that were selected, noting that most were chosen because there was a connection to the city staff and the ordinances were known to work well.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if there is a minimum lot size specified for other communities, noting that Andover requires 2.5 acres.

Commissioner Peters stated that if his neighbor were putting up a yurt or tiny home on his property, which is an 80-foot-wide lot, he would be opposed to that as he would believe the lot is too small. He stated that if the property is larger and meets the criteria, he would not be opposed.

Commissioner VanScoy asked what would be considered a reasonable sized lot.

Commissioner Gengler stated that she does not believe a lot would need to be huge to have an accessory building. She stated that sheds are already allowed and therefore she does not believe it would need to be a huge property. She stated that she would be comfortable allowing it on an 80-foot-wide lot in the R-1 zone.

Commissioner Walker stated that he would support a one-acre size, but also does not like excluding people from an opportunity to telling them to do on their own property.

Chairperson Bauer stated that perhaps more information could be gained on what is allowed by other communities, such as minimum lot size and any issues they have experienced.

Commissioner Walker commented that parking would be an issue on an 80-foot lot if there is an accessory dwelling structure. He stated that at least a half-acre or full acre lot would be needed in order to accommodate an accessory dwelling unit and parking.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that in order to maintain the character of a rural community, you would not want additional parking structures or driveways. She stated that staff believes that the property should still look like a single-family home. She noted that if there are

problems with a parking, the parking standards would be able to regulate that activity. She stated that if a family member were at your home, they would park in the driveway. She noted that the intent would be to have the property remain looking like one home or single-family home property.

Chairperson Bauer asked if the Commission would like to continue to study this issue and what additional information, they would like staff to gather.

Commissioner Peters stated that he would be open to additional discussion. He noted that if people have sufficient space, he does not see a problem allowing this activity. He stated that he would be concerned with allowing a camper in the backyard of an 80-foot lot. He stated that residents should be provided direction.

Commissioner Gengler stated that she supports this and agree it bears further discussion. She stated that the majority of requests are not going to be for an Airbnb activity but to allow an older family member to live on the property and spend time with their loved ones. She stated that some people will view it as a way to make money, but noted that could be included in the regulations, specifying that rental could not be done. She stated that additional regulation could also be added that would prevent a camper on wheels from being used.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he is not strongly in favor of this, noting that he would want a lot more information on the maximum square footage, minimum lot size, whether there would be inspection of the structures, and the type of neighborhoods where this would be allowed. He stated that if someone has 20 acres of land and wants to build a tiny house next to their home, that would be different than that same structure on a one-acre lot.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he did not think he would support this but as discussion continues, he is more interested in continuing the discussion. He stated that this could have value for the community, especially related to care for aging parents. He stated that he would like to see more information on surrounding communities and their requirements along with any issues they may have experienced. He believed this would be worth the time necessary to complete additional study.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that people are already doing this to some extent and therefore having a way to permit the activity and make it safe would be great. She stated that they are attempting to streamline the ordinances and make the process more efficient and easier to use.

7.02: Review Ordinance Amending Digital Display Billboard Regulations

Presentation

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the Staff Report stating that the Planning Commission should provide feedback on the draft ordinance and direct staff to bring the ordinance forward to City Council for final approval.

Commission Business

requirements in conjunction with the lot sizes in the different zoning districts. He summarized that the proposed ordinance is too restrictive, and the Commission would favor regulation of lots 2.5 acres and smaller with no restriction on lots larger than 2.5 acres at this time.

Commissioner Walker asked how many vehicles could be parked on a 2.5-acre lot or less.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied that six vehicles could be parked outdoors and no limit on indoors.

Commissioner Walker commented that he did not believe a 300 square feet would be enough to cover that. It was noted that some of those six vehicles would be parked in the driveway.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that four vehicles parked on a pad would be 1,000 square feet which would be 1/10 of the lot.

Commissioner Walker stated that he would like to see 500 square feet.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that a standard parking space is nine feet by 18 feet.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that 500 square feet could be a nice round number to start with and see if that works for what people need. She stated that they would still intend to review this in one year to determine if the changes work.

Chairperson Bauer summarized the direction of the Commission to allow one pad of 500 square feet on lots of 2.5 acres or less. He stated that staff will bring back the proposed ordinance for review again at the next meeting.

Commissioner Dunaway asked if there would be anything regulating the distance from the property line.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that currently parking pads following setbacks for accessory use.

7.02: Consider Allowing Accessory Dwelling Units on Single-Family Residential Properties

Presentation

Planning Technician McCann presented the Staff Report stating that staff recommends directing City staff to draft an ordinance to be presented to the Planning Commission during its regular meeting on October 28, 2021 with edits as discussed during the meeting.

Commission Business

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he is a little uncomfortable with the concept of allowing rental of these units. He noted that many regulations require a familial connection. He stated that

it seems to make sense to allow these units in those instances where a family member needs additional care but was unsure of allowing these to be used as rentals.

Chairperson Bauer commented that he has a 97-year-old mother-in-law that lives with them. He stated that he could see the benefit of having this type of structure for her but asked what would happen with that structure when she is no longer using it, or when they sell the home.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that staff considered that as well, noting that there have been concerns with rentals. She noted that they are attempting to be generous with the ordinance and there is a regulation that requires the property owner to live in the main home or accessory dwelling unit, which should ensure there are not problems. She agreed that in most instance a family member is using the unit and used the example of a college student whose parents perhaps charge rent in order to prepare them for the world.

Commissioner Walker stated that he likes the regulation Dayton has on attached versus detached and the required lot sizes. He stated that he is in favor of this action as people will do it anyways and the City would be able to capture license revenue.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that in addition to revenue this also provides quality control to ensure the structures are safe.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he started in favor of this action, and commended staff on the research completed. He stated that after reading the research, he is against this action as it would create two houses on a single-family lot. He asked what would happen when the people are gone that needed the accessory dwelling structure, noting that the next owner could use it for purposes not intended. He did not believe Ramsey should do this at this time and he felt it would open the City up to having more buildings. He asked if the accessory dwelling unit would be taxed as another home.

Commissioner Peters stated that a person is taxed on livable space, and therefore this would increase the taxes paid on the property as the property value would increase.

Chairperson Bauer commented that when looking at the demographics and the increase in the aging population, there is and will continue to be, a need for people to care for their aging family members. He noted that not everyone has space for that in their home and this would create another opportunity to care for an elderly parent or family member.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that this would bring more people to Ramsey and allow people to age in Ramsey without increasing density. She noted that accessory dwelling units can also be an opportunity for a fun Airbnb experience which opens more people to the beauty of Ramsey. She stated that they are attempting to make it easy for people to do as typically these units are expensive to build. She noted that this will be an investment in properties for those that choose to do so.

Commissioner Gengler stated that she is very much in favor of having this ordinance in place as more requests will most likely come forward for this type of unit. She also believed that this makes

sense. She commented that it is expensive to build these units and therefore she did not believe there would be a rush of applications.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he also liked the Dayton ordinance which separated detached and attached units and would like to see that in the Ramsey ordinance.

Chairperson Bauer stated that he was a bit concerned with the clause that the Dayton ordinance included related to an expiration as the building would still remain.

Commissioner Walker stated that he thinks the idea would be that if he built the unit and obtained the proper license, that would expire when the property is sold, but the new property owner would be able to apply with the City to obtain their own license.

Chairperson Bauer noted that Dayton uses an Interim Use Permit, which he does not favor using. He believed that an ordinance should address subsequent ownership.

Commissioner VanScoy noted that the Dayton ordinance only allows familial occupation. He stated that Ramsey would allow rental and therefore that would be irrelevant.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that a lot of cities in Iowa were previously challenged on the definition of family and did not believe that is something Ramsey wants to get in the business of; regulating who is or is not family. She stated that if the units are desired, she would suggest they be allowed and not dictate who lives in the unit.

Commissioner Walker commented that he would like to see a draft following the Dayton model, without the IUP. He stated that for attached units he would like to limit the lot size that it could be on.

Commissioner Gengler stated that she believed that internal units are already allowed without permitting.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed that as long as the unit can access the front door from the interior, it is currently allowed.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl summarized the input from the Commission and noted that staff will prepare a draft ordinance for the Commission to review at its October meeting.

Commissioner Gengler asked if the Commission would support these units on lots under 2.5 acres.

Commissioner Walker commented that he believed the direction was to allow attached on lots under 2.5 acres and detached would be allowed on lots over 2.5 acres.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that she did not believe there would be many requests on smaller lots because of the required setbacks and maximum lot coverage requirements.

8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

Commissioner Anderson stated that his concern is related to safety. He noted that if drivers are taking their eyes off the road to look at a sign, it causes a safety concern. He did not see the need for additional distractions until the stoplights are taken off Highway 10.

Commissioner Gengler commented that there are digital billboards throughout the metro and therefore she is unable to make the connection that the sign is responsible for accidents. She stated that perhaps fewer signs be allowed within The COR if these larger signs are going to be allowed.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that The COR Framework is specific to what is allowed, but the City continues to issue variances outside of that framework. He stated that the monuments were meant to communicate what is within The COR. He expects that this ordinance will pass even though he does not like the idea of allowing billboards in Ramsey. He commented that billboards are a distraction and, in his opinion, are not worth looking at and detract from the look of the community. He stated that he does like using a CUP as that would allow additional review of each proposed location. He commented that perhaps eight seconds is too low for message duration.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that she would recommend ten seconds.

Commissioner Walker commented that people are often caught up on how short eight or ten seconds is when it is longer than it seems. He noted that by the time a driver sees the sign, they would only see one or two messages before they pass the sign.

Chairperson Bauer reviewed the consensus items from the Commission related to this ordinance.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that based on the comments he would suggest taking this item off the Consent Agenda for the regular meeting to allow those opposed to vote against the request.

2.02: Consider Ordinance #21-18 Allowing Accessory Dwelling Units on Single-Family Residential Properties

Planning Technician McCann reviewed the staff report.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl noted that staff attempted to make this as simple as possible.

Chairperson Bauer suggested a language change.

Commissioner Dunaway stated that the ordinance states that an accessory dwelling unit would be allowed for properties over 2.5 acres. He noted that there is also language related to a garage conversion and found that confusing as to whether properties under 2.5 acres would qualify.

Chairperson Bauer replied that only properties 2.5 acres or larger would be eligible.

Commissioner Dunaway commented that in the previous discussion he recalls discussion about elderly family members that may require direct care and whether the regulations would be too restrictive.

Chairperson Bauer asked for input on whether Commissioner Dunaway would support garage conversion for an accessory dwelling unit on a property under 2.5 acres.

Commissioner Dunaway commented that he would support an allowance for a garage unit but not a detached accessory dwelling unit on smaller properties.

Commissioner Walker used the example of an 80-foot lot, noting that those garages do not have much room above the vehicles and therefore there would not be space to create living space in that area. He stated that he would support one acre lots for detached units and garage conversions.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if the garages mentioned are attached or detached, or whether that is not specified.

Chairperson Bauer commented that the way the language reads, it would apply to any garage.

Commissioner Walker commented that he would not want an accessory dwelling in an attached garage.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that the existing code already provides for an attached unit, which would address an attached garage.

Commissioner Anderson commented that there are height restrictions that he believes would limit the ability to add that space above a garage. He asked if tiny houses would be addressed.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that the structure would need to be on a foundation and built to Code.

Commissioner Gengler stated that she would also support the one-acre size. She stated that restricting this to 2.5 acres and above would take out a large number of properties. She believed that one acre would be sufficient.

Chairperson Bauer confirmed the consensus of the Commission to support the change to one acre.

2.03: Consider Ordinance #21-15 Creating Additional Requirements for Driveways and Parking Pads

Planning Technician McCann reviewed the staff report.

Chairperson Bauer asked for clarification on a specific example and whether it would be allowed.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl provided clarification.

Chairperson Bauer noted that there are a number of homes that have a parking pad on the side of the driveway in front of the home. He noted that it would appear that those would become