

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, April 8, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Randy Bauer
 Commissioner Bruce Anderson
 Commissioner Andrew Dunaway
 Commissioner Cheri Gengler
 Commissioner Eric Peters
 Commissioner Gary VanScoy
 Commissioner Brian Walker

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Senior Planner Chloe McGuire Brigl
 Deputy City Administrator Tim Gladhill
 City Planner Chris Anderson
 Planning Technician Brian McCann
 City Council Liaison Matt Woestehoff

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Chairperson Bauer welcomed the new members of the Commission and invited them to introduce themselves.

Commissioners Dunaway and Walker introduced themselves.

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

Motion carried.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.01: Approve the March 4, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

5.02: Review the Final Plat and Site Plan for Bunker Lake Industrial Park Third Addition, Case of PSD LLC (Project #21-109)

5.03: Review Proposed Site Plan for Storyteller Café, Case of Stories Foundation (Project 20-120)

Chairperson Bauer noted that he submitted two grammatical changes to the proposed minutes from the March 4, 2021 meeting.

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

6. COMMISSION BUSINESS

6.01: Appoint Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Planning Commission

Chairperson Bauer commented that this is the time each year when the Commission appoints a Chair and Vice-Chair for the next year. He opened the floor for nominations for the position of Chair.

Motion by Commissioner Gengler, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to appoint Randy Bauer as Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

Chairperson Bauer called for additional nominations.

There were no other nominations.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

Chairperson Bauer opened the floor for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Dunaway, to appoint Gary VanScoy as Vice Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

Chairperson Bauer called for additional nominations.

There were no other nominations.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

7.01: Public Hearing: Consider Request for Conditional Use Permit for an Oversized Area Identification Sign for the Preserve at Northfork (Project No. 19-147); Case of BK Land Development LLC

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 that City staff recommends approval of a Conditional Use Permit to the Preserve at Northfork to exceed signage standards for an area identification sign on the subject property.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he was surprised to see that the actual monument structure is included in the size of the signage. He did not recall seeing that included in the calculation in the past.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that she was unsure if a similar situation has been reviewed in the past, but this was the method staff was directed to use to calculate the size. She stated that this is unique in that the sign and monument portions are very separate where typically there is not that separation.

Chairperson Bauer commented that he was thinking that the monument structure acted similar to a signpost and was also confused as to why that was included in the calculation. He stated that he likes the appearance of this type of sign and would encourage more of this style of sign and therefore commented that perhaps the regulation should be reviewed in the future.

Commissioner Anderson commented that he agrees that the sign calculation should be reviewed in the future to determine what may or may not be considered as a signpost. He commented that he does like the appearance of this sign.

Citizen Input

No comments.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 7:18 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Gengler, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #21-087 approving a Conditional Use Permit to the Preserve at Northfork to exceed signage standards for an area identification development sign on the subject property.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

7.02: Public Hearing: Consider Resolution #21-088 Denying an Interim Use Permit for Gravel Outdoor Storage at 8049 146th Ave NW (Project No. 21-111); Case of Minnesota Tree Experts on Behalf of Jacob Gall

Public Hearing

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:19 p.m.

Presentation

Planning Technician McCann presented the staff report stating that staff recommends adopting Resolution #21-088 denying an Interim Use Permit for outdoor storage of a brush pile, and gravel parking of vehicles and equipment on the subject property. The proposed use will likely create public nuisance issues for surrounding property owners, and is an expansion of the existing lawful, non-conforming industrial use onsite.

Commissioner VanScoy asked what staff would suspect to create the public nuisance.

Planning Technician McCann commented that the noise from the grinders would be anticipated to cause complaints from neighboring properties.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that the business also plans to chip the trees onsite and leave an open pile of woodchips. She stated that staff dealt with a nuisance complaint related to a

large pile of brush on this property through code enforcement during the previous year. She commented that an open pile of brush, debris, wood chipping is considered to be a nuisance under Code.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that it sounds that there are multiple concerns.

Chairperson Bauer asked if there are other properties with wood chipping within Ramsey.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that she is not aware of any wood chipping businesses within Ramsey. She stated that in terms of noise staff has experience with wood chipping equipment as part of other large-scale developments.

Commissioner Walker stated that in reading the case it seems that the applicant wants to keep a month's worth of brush on the property and chip the material all at once during a period of six to eight hours. He asked if that length could be cut down in duration to perhaps four-hour periods to alleviate noise concerns.

Senior Planner McGuire commented that staff would still have the same concerns related to outdoor storage. She stated that although improvements could be made that would make the application more appealing, staff still has major concerns with the proposal. She stated that because this is an Interim Use Permit, the Commission has full latitude as to whether it should be approved.

Chairperson Bauer asked if staff could provide additional input on the concerns that staff has with the application.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that staff could provide additional input on items that could improve the application but if the Commission supports the recommendation to deny the request, staff would simply recommend that the Commission follow that action and recommend denial of the permit.

Citizen Input

Jacob Gall of Minnesota Tree Experts, applicant, stated that he would like to store brush on the site and use trucks that pick-up limbs and branches. He stated that once there was enough material, he would chip that material and haul it offsite. He believed that he would need six to eight hours to chip the material to haul offsite.

Chairperson Bauer commented that he thought the staff presentation mentioned that the woodchips would be left onsite.

Mr. Gall confirmed that the chipped material would be hauled offsite. He confirmed that the outdoor storage would be the limbs and brush. He commented that he would leave that debris onsite until there is enough to chip, at that time he would bring that equipment onsite to chip the material and then haul the chipped material offsite. He was unsure of the noise decibel of the chipping equipment.

Commissioner Peters asked if input has been received from the neighboring property owners. He stated that this property is adjacent to the Armstrong Retail Center and he would be concerned that this activity would be a deterrent to the tenants that location is attempting to draw in.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that staff has spoken with adjacent property owners, one of whom is present to address the Commission tonight. He stated that planning and economic development staff share the same concerns about how this use could impact the long-term vision for this area. She reviewed the outdoor storage that would be proposed for this site including vehicles and equipment.

Commissioner Walker commented that he is attempting to support the request and asked if it would be possible to do the grinding twice as often to avoid the eight-hour period of grinding.

Mr. Gall replied that it is not a major deal to grind more often. He stated that he has other locations in the metro that he dumps debris at, the closest being Brooklyn Park. He commented that ideally, he would like to grind material monthly, but could possibly do that biweekly. He commented that he it would be more of a hassle to bring the grinding equipment onsite more often than that.

Commissioner Walker explained that people seem concerned with the six-to-eight-hour period for grinding material and the noise that would be generated. He stated that he is attempting to find a compromise, perhaps running the equipment for four hours twice per month.

Mr. Gall commented that would be a possibility. He stated that he would be flexible and could do the grinding at off-peak times.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he had a tree removed from his yard that was damaged in a storm and there was grinding which was extremely loud.

Mr. Gall commented that type of chipper is much louder than the tub grinder that he would use.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that his concern would not only be with the length but also the noise level. He asked why this location is desired and whether a different location was selected, as it is adjacent to retail development.

Mr. Gall commented that he has been looking for property for the past 18 months and this property seems to fit his needs because there is a shop where he could store items that need to be secured. He stated that he is experiencing theft at the Brooklyn Park location because there is not a building at that location.

Commissioner Anderson asked how much dust this grinding operation generates.

Mr. Gall commented that there is minimal dust generated from the grinding of debris. He stated that most of the material is just converted to chips and there is not much dust generated.

Commissioner Anderson commented that the adjacent property has the possibility of two drive through windows that face the property, and he is concerned with the dust and noise and interference that could occur.

Mr. Gall commented that he has never had issues with dust.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that in addition to the noise concern, staff is concerned with the perception of allowing a large brush pile when the City is actively sending violation notices for similar brush piles throughout the City. She commented that they would want to ensure that all properties feel that they are being treated equally. She stated that perhaps a site within the heavy industrial area of Ramsey would be more suitable for this type of business.

Matt Kuker, PSD, commented that over the past 18 years PSD acquired the lot and constructed the strip mall. He stated that tenant interest stalled during COVID but during the past two to three weeks he has been starting to receive a lot of interest in the spaces. He commented that he is not a fan of telling people what to do with their property but has a number of concerns with this use on the property. He stated that a change in property ownership typically forces the property to come into compliances. He stated that the site does not have stormwater ponding or curb. He stated that the applicant would propose industrial trucks that would leak fluids and oil into the groundwater. He commented that he has used tub grinders and they are quite loud. He stated that he is more concerned with the sight of a pile of debris laying on the site for a month rather than the noise. He stated that the site has been a mess and the City has worked through code enforcement to clean it up and he is concerned that this application would create more blight. He stated that PSD has made a massive investment in their property and he has interest from another party that would be interested in constructing a standalone restaurant on the outlot. He stated that if the site looks at a brush pile, it would not be desirable adjacent to a restaurant. He stated that the subject property is zoned retail, and it should be converted upon sale. He stated that this would be a chance to lessen the blight on the site rather than increasing it. He stated that if this does move forward, he would request an oversized fence to help buffer the site but asked the Commission not to approve the request.

Chairperson Bauer asked how tall a brush pile would be anticipated to be.

Mr. Gall commented that the brush pile would be about eight feet tall.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Gengler	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Dunaway	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Walker	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye

Chairperson Bauer aye

Motion carried.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 7:43 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner Gengler commented that she appreciates Mr. Gall as a business owner and would like to welcome his business to Ramsey but does not feel that this business is a good fit for this space.

Motion by Commissioner Gengler, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #21-088 Denying an Interim Use Permit for outdoor storage of a brush pile and gravel parking of vehicles and equipment on the subject property.

Further discussion

Commissioner Anderson commented that he shares the concern related to noise and dust. He stated that the neighboring retail business is attempting to attract tenants and the City is attempting to bring all the properties back into compliance. He commented that denying this request would allow the City to continue to work towards bringing the parcel into compliance with the zoning. Commissioner Walker commented that he is a proponent of attempting to bring business into Ramsey would rather see this go back to the staff to allow the applicant to work with staff to work together. He noted that perhaps this could be used for a temporary period of time while the owner looks for another location in Ramsey. He believed noise issues could be mitigated by setting time parameters. Commissioner VanScoy commented that he also wants to see businesses come into Ramsey and there are other locations in Ramsey that would be appropriate for this type of business. He stated that staff offered to work with Mr. Gall to find another location and encouraged the applicant to work with staff to find another location that would be suitable for this business as this location would be inappropriate for that type of activity. Chairperson Bauer commented that if this motion passes, the item would still move to the City Council or the applicant could work with staff to find a more appropriate location. He echoed the comment that they would like to see Mr. Gall expand his business to Ramsey, in a more suitable location.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

7.03: Consider Ordinance #21-06 Consolidating all Landscape Requirements into a Single Section and Amending Landscape Standards in the Employment Districts

Public Hearing

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:49 p.m.

Presentation

City Planner Anderson presented the staff report stating that the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) recommends adoption of Ordinance #21-06 to consolidate the landscape requirements into a single section of City Code and amending landscape standards in the Employment Districts.

Commissioner VanScoy asked whether the changes would only apply to the E-1 district and not the other zoning districts.

City Planner Anderson confirmed that to be essentially true. He noted that there were some minor changes and some language cleanup completed in some of the other zoning sections but aside from relocating the information to a single section, the only substantive changes would be proposed to the employment district standards.

Citizen Input

Matt Kuker, PSD, commented that he supports the amendments as proposed. He stated that PSD is building the industrial park and stated that this type of planning would be a good move. He stated that when he buys properties, he is unsure of how the property will be split until the tenants come through. He noted that while smaller buildings would allow for additional landscaping, a larger building would occupy more space and would not have the same amount of space for plantings.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

Chairperson Bauer closed the public hearing closed at 8:01 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to recommend that City Council adopt Ordinance #21-06 to consolidate the landscape requirements into a single section of City Code and amending landscape standards in the Employment Districts.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

8. COMMISSION BUSINESS

8.01: Review Sketch Plan for Williams Woods; Case of Bill Boyum (Project 20-138)

Presentation

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the Staff Report stating that staff recommends the Commission direct the applicant to move forward into developing formal Preliminary Plat application.

Commission Business

Chairperson Bauer stated that a comment was received related to a 60-foot corridor around the lake and asked if that is included in the plan.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that the plan has not incorporated that at this time. She stated that the 40-acre piece that the lake is on is completely wetland and not buildable.

Chairperson Bauer commented that he would like those comments to be a part of the record along with the comments from Police Chief Katers related to the cul-de-sac and second access.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that without the City getting involved and taking property from other property owners through a court process, a second access would not be available.

Commissioner VanScoy referenced the December 3rd project documents and noted that there was a comment from the Fire Department which states they prefer the second layout but believe a second connection to the other neighborhood would need to be made. The comment stated that without a second access there would be too many homes in the area with only one access.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl clarified that the December proposals included both 19 lots and nine lots.

Commissioner Gengler commented that there have been comments related to future divisions and potentials for lot splits. She asked if this were to move forward as nine lots, would there be potential for additional lot splits in the future.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that staff also discussed that potential. She stated that if there were a future request to split property following the creation of nine lots, it would have to meet the subdivision requirements. She commented that while future development cannot be restricted, it would be difficult to add more lots with the layout as proposed. She stated that the applicant is proposing to market the two northern lots as executive lots and there is planned tree preservation, but the applicant could speak to that more.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that there would be two 20 acre lots and if someone wanted to subdivide in the future and eliminate the cul-de-sac, extending that to the north, he would not believe there to be an issue with lot width.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that it would sound that the cul-de-sac would need to be extended in order to support that. She stated that properties would also require road frontage and could not be landlocked. She commented that situation would require a variance. She confirmed that type of request would need to go through a similar process to this.

Joe Bailey, representing the applicant, commented that they have discussed the possibility of connecting through to the neighboring development but that would require going through City park and connection to the east there is a wetland. He stated that they are working to minimize the impacts to the wetlands in this area. He stated that the larger two properties to the north could be further divided in the future but as noted by staff that would require additional variance.

Chairperson Bauer commented that there is concern from public safety related to the length of the cul-de-sac and asked if there are any other options to address that.

Mr. Bailey commented that they are limited on access to the site without disrupting adjacent properties. He stated that the Fire Department was concerned with the width and therefore they have agreed to increase the width of the roadway. He stated that the access from 175th is currently very narrow and therefore there are not options to add a secondary access.

Todd Olin, representing the applicant, commented that they have looked at a number of variations for the site and this proposal balances the road width, number of lots, wetland impacts and preservation of natural features. He stated that they received input from the neighbor to the west requesting that the corridor to the west be protected. He stated that it would be very difficult to

get across wetlands to provide another access to the west or east. He stated that they have attempted to plan a development that would be sensitive to the environment and they reduced the number of lots to decrease the density and number of vehicles on the road. He stated that they also widened the road to accommodate the comments of the Fire Chief. He stated that the length of the cul-de-sac is related to the shape of the property, preservation of trees and attempt to avoid wetlands. He stated that any increase in the number of lots or road length would require a variance, noting that would cover the concern that the lots would be further subdivided. He stated that they are doing their best to limit the number of lots on the property and minimize impacts on the wetlands and natural features.

Chairperson Bauer asked for information on what lies to the northeast. He asked if there is undeveloped land in that area that could be acquired to extend the road.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that land is already privately owned and functioning as residential property.

Chip Davids, 7730 178th Lane, stated that he has lived in his neighborhood since 1973 and it is a quiet secluded place in Ramsey. He stated that the neighbors like the privacy and adding an access through the park into that neighborhood would increase traffic by 200 percent, as it would create a shortcut from CR 64 to CR 5 that people would use as a cut through. He would highly recommend avoiding an access through the park as it is a beautiful area that is home to wildlife and would be a detriment to the existing neighborhood.

Doug Hiltz, 7711 178th Lane NW, commented that the neighbors enjoy the privacy of the secluded neighborhood which is quiet and peaceful and home to wildlife. He stated that losing the park would be a detriment to the neighborhood and the wildlife that use that area. He did not want to see a connection through the park.

Chairperson Bauer referenced the larger lots proposed on the northern end and possible future subdivision of those lots. He commented that if there is not a second connection the only way to do that would be to request a variance for a longer cul-de-sac, therefore it would seem further subdivision could be limited by not issuing an additional variance.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl noted that additional language could be added to the Preliminary and/or Final Plat stating that additional subdivision requests would need to come before the City Council.

Chairperson Bauer noted that formal action from the Commission is not required tonight but any concerns and comments should be raised before the applicant invests additional funds into this process.

Commissioner Walker commended the developer for limiting the number of lots and keeping the rural feel of Ramsey in this area. He stated that he would prefer to leave the park and not provide the second connection. He stated that he likes that the developer chose larger lots at a lesser number in order to fit with this area of Ramsey.

Commissioner Anderson commented that once again this would create the dilemma of issuing a variance for things outside of the City Code. He stated that this is the same issue as Bowers Drive. He noted that longer cul-de-sacs create a safety concern as noted by Public Works and Public Safety. He asked the liability the City would have if there were an emergency and access cannot be gained. He stated that perhaps it would be time to review the maximum cul-de-sac length and determine if an adjustment should be made to City Code. He stated that he would love to see this development go through but could not support something that would put the City or the residents at risk. He stated that he would like input from Public Safety and Public Works on the appropriate length of a cul-de-sac.

Commissioner Gengler commented that she supports the proposal. She realizes that it may not be ideal but given the unique circumstances of the property and adjustments that have been made to the road width, she can support the application.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that he appreciates the comments from the residents on 178th and likes that the developer is proposing fewer lots. He stated that he does have concern with the lack of a second access, as that is critical for long term development, noting that this would landlock 40 acres. He commented that making the property nice for a few individuals is not the best for the City. He stated that this is the first time that he has seen a sketch plan where the Council has developed a resolution to influence the mission.

Commissioner Dunaway commented that in reviewing the site plan and sketch plan he was unable to see another potential access for the site. He stated that he was unsure the Commission could require an applicant to purchase another property. He echoed the comments of Commissioner Walker that there are a lesser number of smaller lots, as that mitigates the impact on Public Safety.

Commissioner Walker asked if it would make a difference if the developer widens the road even a bit further. He commented that there are several fire hydrants on Variolite that could be utilized by a pumper truck. He asked if a 40-foot-wide road would satisfy the concerns with the cul-de-sac length. He stated that he supports the application as presented but is trying to find a compromise for those that struggle.

Commissioner Anderson commented that he likes that idea. He stated that he would even support wider than that road, or perhaps a divided roadway.

Commissioner Peters commented that he would support a larger cul-de-sac at the end which would allow for trucks to turnaround. He commented that a divided road would require residents to only travel in one direction from their driveway in order to get around the development.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl stated that the Fire Department recommended a 32-foot roadway. She was unsure of the plowing concerns that would come with a 40-foot road.

Chairperson Bauer commented that this is a unique situation in which the property is landlocked by existing development. He recognized that there have been compromises already reducing this proposal to nine lots. He encouraged the applicant to continue to work with City staff and Public

Safety to address as many concerns as possible with a single access. He stated that perhaps additional sketches come back before the applicant expends the funds on Preliminary Plat.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill recognized that there are constraints on the site and therefore this would be a candidate for a variance. He referenced the comment related to the Council resolution and noted that is not an uncommon situation. He stated that the Commission has reviewed a sketch plan for this parcel previously and there was a split decision, therefore further direction was requested and provided by the City Council. He noted that similar direction from the Council has been provided for other developments, using the recent example of Riverstone South.

Mr. Olin stated that this proposal would have a similar number of lots to a 600-foot cul-de-sac. He noted again that they have reduced the number of lots in their proposal in order to address Public Safety concerns, minimize wetland impacts and preserve trees.

Chairperson Bauer commented that he does not particularly like variances for long cul-de-sacs but feels that the applicant has done the best they can to meet the concerns and there does not seem to be a realistic alternative. He encouraged the applicant to continue to work with Public Safety to address those concerns as this moves forward.

8.02: Confirm Vision and Land Use Policy Direction for West Armstrong Retail Area

Presentation

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl presented the Staff Report stating that staff recommends the following policy statements:

1. The City desires to maintain the current redevelopment and revitalization vision long-term.
2. In order to implement this vision, especially in the interim, the City desires to focus zoning review on those items that are protected by lawful, non-conforming statutes and limit interim uses that are not protected and would further deviate or otherwise detract from the longer-term vision.

Commission Business

Chairperson Bauer asked for clarification on the areas that would be identified for retail and those that would be identified for industrial.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl identified the parcels planned for retail, commercial retail, and industrial. She stated that staff is looking for feedback on the two policy statements within the case, as that would be a nice document to provide those interested in the parcels to prevent unnecessary time spent on applications that would also require staff review time only to be denied.

Chairperson Bauer commented that he would prefer to wait until the joint meeting with the Council and EDA occurs to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Commissioner Peters agreed that it would be helpful to have all groups on the same page.

Commissioner Anderson agreed that the only way to ensure everyone is on the same page is to wait for the joint meeting.

Chairperson Bauer commented that the consensus of the Commission is to postpone action until a joint meeting could occur.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that this will still move forward to the City Council and discussed at a future worksession. She stated that the EDA has already recommended approval. She stated that she would recommend that the Commission provide input as the Council will still discuss this item. She noted that the parcels are being actively marketed and there is interest, therefore these policy statements are needed prior to the time when a joint meeting could occur.

Commissioner Gengler stated that she feels that these statement reflect what she feels should be done with these parcels.

Commissioner VanScoy agreed with the statement from Commissioner Gengler. He commented that the statements are accurate.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that he would recommend that the Commission participate and make a motion so that it does not get left behind in this discussion. He felt that all the groups are on the same page in bringing business into The COR, but the concern is related to cases where non-traditional uses continue to come forward because the parcels have not been modified to their future use. He stated that these statements would support getting to the future desired states for those parcels.

Commissioner Peters commented that in terms of these properties he would support the statements. He stated that on a larger scheme related to Highway 10 and The COR it would be helpful to have a joint worksession.

Motion by Commissioner Peters, seconded by Commissioner Gengler, to recommend that City Council adopt the following policy statements:

1. The City desires to maintain the current redevelopment and revitalization vision long-term.
2. In order to implement this vision, especially in the interim, the City desires to focus zoning review on those items that are protected by lawful, non-conforming statutes and limit interim uses that are not protected and would further deviate or otherwise detract from the longer-term vision.

Further discussion

It was noted that the Commission supports these statements in the interim but would still request a joint meeting with the Planning Commission, EDA, and Council.

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

9. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

Chairperson Bauer commented the there was a case for Connections Church related to the lot west of Comfort Suites. He stated that the church is occupying a building in Coon Rapids and asked if that is temporary or whether that is an interim location.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented she believed the plan is still to move forward and the church is focused on fundraising.

Deputy City Administrator Gladhill commented that the church previously met at Ramsey Elementary but with the pandemic restrictions they needed to find a temporary location, but their plan is still to build in Ramsey.

Chairperson Bauer commented that because there are two new members, he thought it would be appropriate to have a refresher on the open meeting law.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl provided a brief overview on the open meeting laws. She stated that a new full-time code enforcement employee will join the team next week.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that the Storyteller Café case was well documented and options were clearly stated, which helped in his review.

10. ADJOURNMENT

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

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chloe McGuire Brigl
Senior Planner

ATTEST:

JoAnn Shaw
Community Development Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
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