

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Ryan Heineman
Councilmember Chelsee Howell
Councilmember Debra Musgrove
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Dan Specht
Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Deputy City Administrator/ Community Dev. Director Brian Hagen
Planning Technician Brian McCann
Police Chief Jeff Katers
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
City Engineer Bruce Westby
Senior Planner Chloe McGuire Brigl
City Attorney Fritz Knaak

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kuzma called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:34 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Discussion Regarding Union Contract Negotiations with LELS-Patrol (Portions of this case may be Closed to the Public)

Administrative Services Director Lasher introduced the item to provide the Council with an update on the status of the LELS-Patrol Union contract in Closed Session.

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to recess to Closed Session at 5:36 p.m.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Kuzma, Councilmembers Woestehoff, Musgrove, Heineman, Howell, Riley, and Specht. Voting No: None.

The meeting reconvened to Open Session at 5:51 p.m.

Administrative Services Director Lasher summarized the discussion regarding Union Contract negotiations with LELS-Patrol stating that the City Council has agreed to the terms of the tentative agreement. The Patrol Unit Contract, which will be a three-year contract, will be presented for City Council approval on January 11, 2022.

2.02: Discuss Ordinance #21-11 Amending Chapter 10 of City Code: Animals

Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Hagen reviewed the staff report and recommendation to amend Chapter 10 of the City Code.

Mayor Kuzma asked if the Council had any questions.

Councilmember Musgrove provided a recap for the Council. She stated that the goals were to make the animal ordinance user-friendly, code enforcement- friendly, and more concise. Changes that were made included a beekeeping rezoning permit, bringing horses in this chapter instead of being a separate chapter, and reducing some verbiage that was redundant. She noted guidance was given to Planning Technician McCann and Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Hagen to make the document easier to read and understand. She stated one question that came up was whether the Council wanted to remove the inclusion of cats based on the Chief's comments.

Police Chief Katers commented that the current contract with the vendor for animal impoundment does not include cats. Historically, the only time cats have been taken, in is if they bite someone, which is a requirement. His concern was about potential stray cats and people collecting cats or bringing them to the pound. Some costs could be incurred although he wasn't sure what that cost would be. He noted the budgetary line item with the current vendor has been dropped from 4,000 to 2,000 based on the number of dogs. The vendor is pretty good at adopting out the dogs rather than euthanizing them as had been done in the past. That is a consideration as well. He explained cats had not been included previously in the history of the ordinance and it would require a contract re-write with the vendor that they also accept cats, which they do, just not from Ramsey.

Mayor Kuzma asked the Council if there was an interest to add cats.

Councilmember Musgrove replied that she was okay with it since it sounds like it is a very rare occurrence. She stated when she was reviewing the case, there was no State statute on "at large" cats for licensing for cats. From her understanding, whatever the Council includes is what goes for the City, there is nothing for cats from a State level.

Mayor Kuzma asked if there was enough to proceed.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if anyone else had feedback.

Mayor Kuzma stated if there was no more feedback, cats could be left out.

Councilmember Riley commented that the ordinance reads a lot better and is more user friendly, and resident friendly. He asked Staff who enforce this, if this document gives them the power needed to handle problems.

Planning Technician McCann replied he believed it does. He thinks code enforcement and day-to-day planning will continue with this new ordinance.

City Administrator Ulrich stated this will come back for an introduction at the next meeting on January 11, 2022.

Jared Little, 7590 149th Lane NW, stated he has been a beekeeper for about 11 years. He has taught some college courses in agriculture and is part of a beekeeping board in Stillwater. He is in the process of getting his master beekeeper certification and would love to see more people interested in beekeeping. He was asked to speak to the ordinance to make it more user friendly for other beekeepers coming afterwards. The questions he got through email indicated there was concern over the quantity per acreage. He wasn't sure what the concerns were exactly but he was open to questions.

City Administrator Ulrich referenced a chart that lists lot sizes and the number of hives allowed. 4 acres allows up to 40 hives, as the acreage goes down, that number decreases.

Councilmember Heineman referenced language included that says "the hive shall not exceed 20 cubic feet in volume" and asked for perspective what the dimensions might be.

Mr. Little replied that is larger than any hive he has ever seen and he has seen large ones. The dimension of most hives are 16 by 20. A 20 cubic foot hive would have to be close to eight feet tall, which he doesn't think will ever been an issue. Mr. Little said that occasionally a very strong hive can be present that is a high producing honey hive but even if a bee keeper would start to get a hive that is close to that size, they can remove honey and reduce the cubic feet if that did occur but it is very unlikely.

Councilmember Heineman asked if this is referring to the actual physical hive itself, not the container that contains the hive.

Mr. Little confirmed this adding that a hive will almost never contain more than 100,000 bees, which would be a very healthy hive. He explained bees cap themselves out as far as the number of bees but will continue to add honey. It is preferable to make sure bees have extra space to avoid swarming.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the number of hives listed seemed adequate for a reasonable installment of bees.

Mr. Little replied that it is workable, yes. Before, it used to be only six with no regard to the lot size within the City limits of Ramsey. That is difficult because in order for a beekeeper to be sustainable, they need to be able to create future hives. He explained that instead of letting the bees swarm and find another location, it is best to be ahead of it by taking out frames to make

another hive. This is typically done every year so there is enough going into winter to account for losses. He noted six was tight and most beekeepers he knows want more than one or two hives. With the current numbers that are presented, it would be accurate and most hobby beekeepers in this area keep under 20 hives.

Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Hagen referenced Mr. Little's comments that most hives are significantly smaller than 20 cubic feet and asked if that number should be adjusted to something smaller.

Mr. Little replied he would suggest removing the whole line, or leaving it as is because enough room needs to be ensured to prevent swarming which would create a problem for neighbors.

Mayor Kuzma thanked Mr. Little for coming.

Mr. Little offered to answer any further questions or contribute to an Expo about bees.

2.03: Review Comprehensive Plan Amendment Options for MUSA Areas North of Trott Brook

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl reviewed the staff report. She stated that the Metropolitan Council requested more units be added on the property to be in compliance with the City's Comprehensive Plan. That would require a down zoning with smaller properties. Two options were presented: the Metropolitan Council's preference of reducing lot size to three units per acre, or amending the Comprehensive Plan to allow for a lower density in unique situations. Staff's recommendation is to create a new designation in the Comprehensive Plan to allow for lower density, less than three units per acre. The main question regarding this case is why less than three units per acre are allowed everywhere in the MUSA district because it would be supportive of the rural character, but if the City goes under three units per acre, which the Metropolitan Council tracks, they would stop allowing sewer and water permits for commercial, industrial and residential projects. It would be a misuse of their waste water system which would halt the City's growth. She explained it is not recommended to go under three units per acre as a City but in certain situations it could be allowed. Staff is recommending an amendment be made to the Comprehensive Plan which would be called an Urban Residential Low District. It would be based on a similar one done by the City of Andover because this area is adjacent to existing low-density residential, there are a lot of wetland on site, and is a constrained site with only one entrance on both sides, that a lower density of units would be allowed.

Councilmember Riley referenced Senior Planner McGuire Brigl's comments mentioning wetlands and asked if the case refers not just to developable acres because that is a constraint that the City, and this property has.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied that the Metropolitan Council tracks density much differently than the City would. Certain things are allowed to be excluded such as designated wetlands and flood plains, but roads, buffers, stormwater ponds cannot be excluded. She noted that even though the density from the City's perspective with quarter acre lots, 80 foot wide, would typically be four units and an acre would make sense logically because these exclusions are not

allowed, the density is coming in a lot lower. The last calculation of the Metropolitan Council was about 1.35 units per acre, with some exclusions it could be up to two units an acre, but there is essentially no way with the calculation the Metropolitan Council uses to get to the three units per acre threshold.

Councilmember Riley asked if the Staff suggestion is to exclude this one property, noting the City as a whole, which is in the approval process, would help Ramsey as whole, but it doesn't help with the issue with this property.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed this adding with all of the plats that have come in 2020 and this plat, if it came in with around two units per acre, the City would be at 3.00 units as a City. Riverstone South and North would bump the City up but due to the large acreage of this area, it would bump the numbers down. If any additional acreage would be allowed to go less than three units per acre, that could halt sewer extension permits from the Metropolitan Council.

Councilmember Howell commented that the Metropolitan Council has a lot of power and the City is stuck with it.

Councilmember Woestehoff agreed with the Staff that amending the Comprehensive Plan makes more sense than allowing more units in this set of properties.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if it was correct that if the Council does approve the Urban Residential Low District, different areas of the Comprehensive Plan would be looked at that might also qualify in order to keep the City in compliance with the 3.00 housing rate.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied this would apply to this project and the adjacent project, Northbrook Meadows. If the Council wanted additional areas considered and mapped, recalculation would have to be done on the change to the City's density. At this time, it is recommended that the two that have active projects associated with them be considered. A tool would then be available in the future if a project came in under the density which would have to be re-guided at that point. She explained a Comprehensive Plan Amendment is typically a stand-alone document on the City website. Revisions would not be done on the existing Comprehensive Plan. It would be done only for these two sites at this time and a map exhibit would be created to provide to the Metropolitan Council showing those sites.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the second property referred to is the Hunt Property.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied, yes, the Hunt and Makowske properties.

Councilmember Musgrove commented in the case, wider areas are proposed and asked if that is a different discussion.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied that in the proposed amendment, the Makowske and the neighbor, plus the Hunt property are included to create a general planning area. Additional areas could be considered by the Staff if the Council wanted. She stated Staff is open to amending the

map as well as the criteria that were outlined in the case. She added one criteria that Andover didn't have to relate to is the rural character of this area.

Mayor Kuzma commented that additional areas could be added for consideration in the future.

The consensus of the Council was to direct Staff to move forward with the proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan as outlined in the case.

2.04: Discuss Ordinance #21-18 Amending Section 117-349 of City Code to Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's)

Planning Technician McCann reviewed the staff report and recommendation to adopt Ordinance #21-18 Amending City Code Chapter 117-349 of the City Code to allow ADU's. He stated that calls are received at minimum once per month from residents asking about accessory dwelling units, Mother-in-Law suites or some form of alternative living space on the same parcel. The proposed Ordinance was drafted based off a similar ordinance by the City of Dayton.

Councilmember Heineman questioned if this would allow residents to build an accessory dwelling unit to rent out as an airbnb and things of that nature.

Planning Technician McCann confirmed this.

Councilmember Heineman questioned if rental would be allowed with how the ordinance is written.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl confirmed this, adding with a rental license a requirement would be that the owner would have to either be living in the house or the ADU on the subject property.

Mayor Kuzma questioned how 'she sheds' that are already in place would be affected.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied that 'she sheds' would not be affected. If the homeowner wanted to create a more habitable place and allow someone to sleep there, now there is a way to permit it. She explained that right now in the City Code, a bathroom, a washroom, or a small kitchen in a detached garage which is past the certain threshold that would be needed to get this.

Councilmember Riley commented that one benefit to this is that the City is getting things to be in compliance so the ADU would have sewer, water, and heat. With the current code, these things are not allowed so any that are out there doing that under the radar, may be done in an unsafe way. Overall, he isn't supportive of this, but if it cleans up something that may be happening already, he can see the benefit of it.

Councilmember Musgrove questioned if these would count toward the number of houses for the Metropolitan Council because they need extra sewer and water.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied that is a great question but no, it would not count toward the density because density is tracked with platting. These would not be allowed to be split off, they

have to share utilities with the house, so it wouldn't count. She offered to push it with the Metropolitan Council if that was wanted.

Councilmember Howell questioned if a tiny home community was started, would that count.

Councilmember Woestehoff replied that as the ordinance is written, there is only one ADU on a property along with the home.

Councilmember Howell clarified that she meant a tiny home community to meet the Met Council's requirements.

Councilmember Woestehoff replied if it was zoned for high density.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied that likely would count because it would have an application associated with it.

Councilmember Musgrove commented that some areas of the City that are going to be excluded from this are townhomes and other areas and questioned if that language was included or if it needed to be.

Mayor Kuzma replied there is a minimum lot size required.

Councilmember Howell referenced garage conversion and questioned if that referred only to a detached garage or if someone could convert an attached garage into a dwelling.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl replied that an attached garage would be under an attached ADU or an internal ADU. For a detached garage conversion, it would need the CUP.

The consensus of the Council was to direct staff to bring the ordinance forward for introduction in January.

2.05: Discuss Ordinance #21-20 Amending City Code Chapter 117, Sections 1 and 351 Regarding Home Occupations

Zoning Code Enforcement Officer Raines reviewed the staff report and introduced the ordinance. She stated this was brought to the Planning Commission on November 18, 2021. The changes requested regarded a more clear definition of home occupation as a result of recent code enforcement cases.

Councilmember Howell referenced Section 117- 351, Item J, and commented that one concern she had was that it didn't take into consideration people who might be artists or tutors or music teachers who run a business to be able to do so as eight daily trips wouldn't be sustainable for them. She stated she is from Fargo originally where there is a robust artist community and a lot of home-based music teaching businesses. Councilmember Howell commented that she looked at the city code for Fargo, which includes a section for those people and could serve as a model for Section

J. The Fargo city code had categories for minor and major home occupations which were clearly defined and could serve as a model for clarity.

Zoning Code Enforcement Officer Raines commented that home occupations require a CUP so changes would have to be made regarding the number of trips. She offered to look into modifying it.

Councilmember Howell questioned if it was correct that the first section addresses businesses that don't require a CUP.

Zoning Code Enforcement Officer Raines confirmed this.

Councilmember Howell commented that the Fargo city code had a clear division which was nice.

Zoning Code Enforcement Officer Raines referenced Item 1G and commented that the Planning Commission asked for it to be reduced to 200 square feet. That would be the minimum square footage of garage or accessory building space to be maintained for the residents. She questioned if that was something the Council agreed with or would like to see changed, noting it was originally 400 square feet.

Councilmember Musgrove questioned what the thought process was behind changing it or having it included.

Mayor Kuzma replied it was the size of the car so if it is a two-car garage, they could still get a car in.

Zoning Code Enforcement Officer Raines confirmed this.

Mayor Kuzma commented that he didn't have a problem with it.

Councilmember Woestehoff referenced Zoning Code Enforcement Raines's comments that these are all CUP's so even if it is the case that it is not identified, as Councilmember Howell said, for music teachers or artists who may have more trips in a CUP there is the opportunity to give them that excess traffic.

Zoning Code Enforcement Officer Raines confirmed this.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl commented that in the current Zoning Code there are three types of home occupation levels. The first is someone who has a home office or an artist, someone who doesn't have anyone coming to their house. Those are the people who are asking about it the most and they don't need a permit. Then there is the administrative permit, which is typically piano teachers. In that case, an administrative permit is drafted which goes through City Staff review. Also included are those who are shipping things and have one person coming to the house at any given time. Those uses fall under the administrative permit and don't have to come to City Council. She explained it comes to the City Council when it gets excessive or there are complaints

about it. For the most part these minor home occupations are handled administratively. She liked the example of definition from the Fargo city code.

Mayor Kuzma questioned if Staff wanted to update it and bring it back to the Council.

Senior Planner McGuire Brigl questioned if updates should be brought back to a work session or regular meeting.

City Administrator Ulrich replied if the Council is okay, the definitions could be adopted and brought back as an ordinance introduction unless Council would like to see it again at a work session.

Councilmember Howell questioned if this would eliminate music teachers or someone who tutors at their house from having to go to the City and get a permit. This was confirmed by staff. Councilmember Howell stated her goal was to create a robust arts community and for the City to be friendly to those sorts of endeavors.

The consensus of the Council was to direct staff to bring it back for consideration as an Ordinance.

2.06: Discuss Ordinance Amending Sections 117-111, 117-349, and 117-355 of the City Code Creating Additional Requirements for Driveways and Parking Pads

Planning Technician McCann reviewed the staff report regarding the proposed ordinance which included parking pads for properties two and a half acres or larger while also limiting driveway width to the side of a garage to 15 feet. The purpose of this is to better regulate off street parking violations and zoning permits for driveway or parking pad additions.

Councilmember Musgrove commented this case was heard during a Planning Commission meeting where there were thoughtful comments that the garage would be on the same side as the pad so there would be some uniformity instead of people having pads on both sides of their house. She agreed with this standardization if additional parking spaces were wanted.

Councilmember Woestehoff agreed. He commented that the Planning Commission spent a lot of time on this case and came up with a reasonable set of solutions that allows for freedom but keeps things tight.

The consensus of the Council was to accept the changes.

3. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

3.01: Review Future Topics/Calendar

City Administrator Ulrich stated that a legislative update is on the agenda for the regular City Council meeting tonight. He noted that part of future discussions will be to bring local legislators into the session and talk about what is going on and expectations for the upcoming session. That will be discussed more at the regular meeting tonight. He stated a date will need to be set for an

annual Council planning discussion, which is usually done the first part of February in the coming year on a work session night. He noted a list of topics for future discussion was attached to the case and additional topics the Council saw as priority for the first quarter of 2022 could be added.

Councilmember Woestehoff questioned if there was a timeline for a City website review. He felt work session time would be pertinent as time permits.

City Administrator Ulrich replied that since it is a 2022 topic, it would be timely for discussion on how that will be approached.

Councilmember Musgrove referenced a point about possible re-districting and asked if that had a time frame.

Administrative Services Director Lasher replied that she is currently is in the process of studying this topic. She has watched a few webinars and guidance is taken from Anoka County. She noted there is a date in February by which decisions will be made. Administrative Services Director Lasher committed to getting an update and revisiting this in the beginning of February. She will send out an informational email with more concrete information.

Administrative Services Director Lasher commented there was a Charter Commission meeting in November where proposals were made to start updating the elections chapter, Chapter 4, of the Charter. This is not listed for discussion but she will add it to the list.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Deputy City Clerk

Drafted by Joni Helmeke
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.

**CITY COUNCIL CLOSED SESSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a Closed Session on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Mark Kuzma
Councilmember Ryan Heineman
Councilmember Chelsee Howell
Councilmember Debra Musgrove
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Dan Specht
Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Police Chief Jeff Katers
Administrative Services Director Colleen Lasher
Deputy City Administrator/ Community Dev. Director Brian Hagen
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
City Attorney Fritz Knaak

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kuzma called the Closed Session of the City Council to order at 5:36 p.m.

2. COUNCIL BUSINESS

2.01: Discussion Regarding Union Contract Negotiations with LELS-S Patrol (Closed to the Public)

Administrative Services Director Lasher explained that the purpose of the case is to give the Council an update on the union contract negotiations for LELS-Patrol.

Following discussion, the consensus of the Council was to provide direction for the Staff to continue negotiations.

3. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Heineman, to adjourn the Closed Session

Motion carried.

The Closed Session was adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Katie M. Schmidt
Deputy City Clerk

Drafted by Joni Helmeke
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.