

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, October 27, 2022, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

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

Members Absent: Commissioner Brian Walker

Also Present: Planning Manager Todd Larson
 City Planner Brian McCann
 City Council Liaison Matt Woestehoff

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairperson Bauer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

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

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.01: Approve the September 29, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

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

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

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

6.01: Public Hearing: Consider a Sketch Plan, Preliminary Plat, and Variance to Minimum Lot Size for Cedar Acres (Project #22-136); Case of Tom Dehn

Public Hearing

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:02 p.m.

Presentation

City Planner McCann presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the variance to minimum lot size as well as the Sketch Plan and Preliminary Plat for Cedar Acres.

Chairperson Bauer asked and received confirmation that the drainage would be proposed south of the cul-de-sac and the cul-de-sac would then line up. He asked if the proposed cul-de-sac would be at the same elevation as the partial cul-de-sac that exists.

City Planner McCann stated that it would appear to be about the same elevation.

Chairperson Bauer referenced the property to the north and asked if that is vacant.

City Planner McCann replied that there is a home on that property.

Planning Manager Larson provided additional details on the elevations.

Commissioner VanScoy referenced the low area designated as stormwater and asked if that is wetland.

City Planner McCann replied that there is not verification but believed it to just be open land and not wetland.

Citizen Input

Tom Dehn, applicant, commented that the water from the cul-de-sac would go south to the retention area. He noted that they previously considered connecting to the Lennar development which would have included a request to include the property in the MUSA but instead have submitted a request for rural subdivision. He commented that they have verified that there are no wetlands on the site.

Chairperson Bauer referenced the two proposed lots on the south side and asked if those align with Lennar or the fire hall.

Mr. Dehn believed that those align with Lennar. He stated that the existing home on the property aligns with the fire barn.

Chairperson Bauer asked where the water from north of the cul-de-sac would go.

Mr. Dehn replied that he did not ask his engineer that question but noted that his engineer was confident that all the water would flow south.

Commissioner Peters stated that there was a case recently where development was proposed but the cost to connect to City services would have been so extensive that it was not required. He noted that this project is very close to City services and asked if that would be an issue.

City Planner McCann replied that the property is zoned and guided rural developing and therefore the property only allows for private utilities.

John Statton, 8050 152nd Lane, commented that when he purchased his lot in 1986, he was told that the row of trees on the south side would be drainage for the 11 acres. He commented that about 10 to 12 years ago there was some excavating that impacted the drainage in the area. He believed that his drainage pond is currently on the area proposed for cul-de-sac.

Chairperson Bauer asked where water ponds on the property after rain events.

Mr. Statton identified the area where water pools and the path that drainage follows.

Mrs. Statton commented that they have a cul-de-sac on the front of their home and now would have one on the back as well. She asked for details on the size of the property.

City Planner McCann reviewed the size of the subject property and proposed lot sizes between the existing lot and two new lots.

Mr. Statton asked what happened to the requirement to have 2.5-acre lot size.

Chairperson Bauer stated that part of the request includes a variance for the smaller lot size.

David Hlavka, 8111 151st Lane NW, commented that this property is in his backyard. He identified the low-lying area where drainage follows. He commented that along the back of his property he has stormwater easement and on the front of his property he has utility and stormwater easement. He believed that this property also has stormwater easement along the back. He commented that years ago one foot of water was common to find within that easement, noting that it has been dryer but that is still wet. He noted that Anoka County has also dropped mosquito pellets into that area.

Planning Manager Larson replied that Metropolitan Mosquito Control handles that duty and does treat hot spots but will also respond to resident requests.

Mr. Hlavka commented that there are berms on the property to divert and slow down water. He stated that if the cul-de-sac is installed, he is concerned with the high volume of water in the springtime.

Dave Foresman, 8100 151st, stated that his main concern is the water runoff pond proposed which is adjacent to his property. He was concerned with the nuisance that could be created from the pond such as bugs, mosquitos, and snakes. He asked who would maintain the pond and where water would go if the pond were to overflow.

Mr. Dehn commented that he has not spoken with the neighbors prior to tonight and could understand their concerns. He commented that they did not just draw lines to split the lots, noting that they are working with the engineer that is also working on the Lennar project. He stated that his engineer is working with the City Engineer to develop the appropriate stormwater plans.

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

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

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

Commission Business

Commissioner Gengler asked the zoning of the Lennar property to the south.

City Planner McCann replied that property is R-1 MUSA.

Commissioner Anderson asked how comfortable staff is with the engineering details, as there have been a lot of comments about water tonight.

City Planner McCann replied that in the first round of review there were corrections to the plans. He stated that new plans were received this morning and he has not heard any new comments.

Planning Manager Larson replied that the stormwater had to do with around the cul-de-sac and out, noting that the flow area is unbuildable and would not impact the lots or septic areas.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he does have concerns with the adjacent property and the impact that this development could have on drainage and pooling water. He stated that he would like to hear from engineering that the stormwater pond would work.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that there have been a lot of concerns related to drainage and ponding. He asked the process that the City uses to validate plans. He asked if the Commission would need to wait to make a decision or whether the normal process would resolve those issues.

City Planner McCann replied that the normal process would address any concerns, as engineering holds the expertise in that area, not planning staff.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that if the variance and sketch plan were to be approved, engineering would then ensure that drainage would not impact adjacent properties.

City Planner McCann confirmed that one condition of approval would be to address the concerns and comments of staff.

Chairperson Bauer asked if the variance were to be approved but the project not move forward, the smaller lot sizes would then be allowed for something going forward.

City Planner McCann noted that the variance could be tied to the approval of the plat.

Commissioner Hunt commented that he is satisfied with the answers that have been provided, noting that there are not many properties in this area holding to the 2.5-acre lot size and therefore he supports the variance. He stated that he would agree with tying the approval of the variance to the approval of the preliminary plat.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that the lot sizes proposed would be similar to all other lots in this area with the exception of the lots to the north.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if this would be reviewed by the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization (LRRWMO).

City Planner McCann replied that the LRRWMO review would not be triggered by this request.

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to adopt Resolution #22-232 Approving a Variance to Minimum Lot Size for Cedar Acres, contingent upon approval of preliminary plat and sketch plan.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Commissioners VanScoy, Peters, Anderson, Gengler, and Hunt. Voting No: Chairperson Bauer. Absent: Commissioner Walker.

Chairperson Bauer commented that he is not comfortable with the drainage without additional review by engineering.

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #22-233 Approving a Sketch Plan and Preliminary Plat for Cedar Acres, with a real focus for engineering to consider drainage.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Commissioners VanScoy, Anderson, Gengler, Hunt, and Peters. Voting No: Chairperson Bauer. Absent: Commissioner Walker.

6.02: Public Hearing: Consider Request for an Interim Use Permit to Allow Open and Outside Storage on a Portion of the Property Located at 9525 156th Avenue NW (Project No. 22-138); Case of Name Brand Self Storage Ramsey, LLC

Public Hearing

Chairperson Bauer called the public hearing to order at 7:41 p.m.

Presentation

City Planner McCann presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Interim Use Permit (IUP) for open and outside storage on the subject property for five years.

Chairperson Bauer stated that he did reach out to staff about the four-year request as typically five years is allowed. He noted that part of the proposal for outdoor storage is because of decreased demand for indoor storage and therefore the five-year period would seem appropriate.

Citizen Input

Josh Peterson, applicant, thanked the Commission for the consideration. He stated that he was not aware the typical term for an IUP was five years and therefore would like that length of time. He noted that he has not been able to complete the full build out because of increase costs and interest rates and therefore he believes that this proposal will allow the business to continue to grow and scale up.

Commissioner VanScoy asked the demand for outdoor storage.

Mr. Peterson replied that they do receive calls but because they did not have the appropriate approvals, he did not want to go too far down that path.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the site is paved.

Mr. Peterson replied that the site is setup with curb and gutter around the perimeter with landscaping as a buffer and class five in any area where a building has not yet been constructed. He stated that they paved around the existing buildings and 12.5 feet around the north side. He stated that they would complete the paving as demand grows and buildings are constructed. He stated that there is class five material on the entire site.

Commissioner Gengler referenced the north end and asked if there is a fence.

Mr. Peterson replied that there is a fence around the entire facility.

Chairperson Bauer commented that he visited this property, and it looks like there are some outside storage items, campers.

Mr. Peterson confirmed that to be true and noted that they would be moving those items to the north and would propose to have 49 spaces allotted.

City Planner McCann stated that 50 spaces would be allowed.

Chairperson Bauer noted that the entire area is well screened.

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

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

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

Commission Business

Commissioner Anderson asked if the IUP would be a continuation of what is already there.

City Planner McCann replied that the length of time would go from the date of approval at the City Council.

Commissioner Anderson noted that there is already outside storage of RVs on the property.

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #22-243 Approving an Interim Use Permit for a Period of Five Years for Open and Outside Storage on a Portion of the Subject Property.

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

7. COMMISSION BUSINESS

7.01: Discuss the Zoning Code Update Pertaining to Business Districts

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson presented the Staff Report and reviewed the recommended zoning districts and asked for the input of the Commission.

Commission Business

Chairperson Bauer stated that he never liked the employment district and therefore likes that simplification to general business or industrial.

Commissioner Anderson asked if a coffee shop would fall under B-1. He stated that he likes all the changes, especially the table.

Planning Manager Larson replied that every type of use does not need to be listed in B-1. He stated that the intent of the coffee shop serving the adjacent neighborhood would be acceptable. He provided some additional examples of neighborhood businesses.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that locations and the use of gas stations can be contentious and asked where that would fit.

Planning Manager Larson replied that a gas station is more vehicle driven and therefore would not fall under B-1, but more of B-2 or B-3.

Commissioner VanScoy asked if exclusions or allowed businesses would be listed anywhere. He asked for additional details on the CUP and when it would be eliminated.

Planning Manager Larson replied that a CUP would remain as a tool but there are some requests that do not have any additional conditions when approved and therefore it would be appropriate to use performance standards and eliminate the need for the CUP. He noted that the Commission would still be reviewing the site plan for those requests.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that he believed that the purpose for the CUP was that the use would be allowed for that property if found acceptable by the Commission and Council.

Planning Manager Larson replied that a conditional use is a permitted use that additional conditions could be placed upon. He provided examples of conditions that could be placed upon a CUP versus the conditions of the site plan review. He stated that a CUP can be revoked, and the business could be shut down if the conditions are not followed. He stated that cemeteries are currently listed as a conditional use, but in reality, could not be shut down and converted to something else, therefore that is most likely not the appropriate use of a CUP.

Chairperson Bauer asked for examples on how existing areas would fit into the new zoning districts.

Planning Manager Larson replied that the remapping exercise would come at a later time after additional review.

Commissioner Gengler commented that she likes the idea of looking at the scope of customers served for the business districts. She liked the reference of access by pedestrians and automobiles but noted that perhaps other multi-modal forms of transportation could be mentioned as well.

Planning Manager Larson commented that he believes that pedestrians is a broad term that could include bicycles and other forms of transportation of that nature.

Commissioner VanScoy asked how the different levels of outdoor storage would be defined.

Planning Manager Larson replied that at some point they will focus more on the performance standards and what would be allowed. He noted that the intent tonight was to focus on the districts

themselves and they will continue to work through the details at a later time. He reviewed some of the different outdoor storage categories such as outdoor display, outdoor vehicle storage, etc.

Commissioner Anderson commented that staff did an excellent job and believed this to be a huge step forward.

Planning Manager Larson provided additional explanation on different uses such as commercial recreation versus fitness clubs.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that it seemed that hotels allowed in B-1 would be a bit odd and therefore liked the updated version. He believed that taprooms could be a conditional use within B-1. He asked for the definition of WCES.

Planning Manager Larson replied WCES is wind conversion energy system. He noted that there was concern that a brewery on boiling day could be stinky and impact a residential neighborhood which is why B-2 was decided.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that agrees from a brewery perspective but commented that taprooms could be within B-1.

Planning Manager Larson replied that the second table is an accessory use list. He stated that the accessory use would be tied to a principal use, therefore, to have a taproom you would need to be associated with a brewery.

Chairperson Bauer commended staff for taking on this project and cleaning up something that has needed cleaning up for many years.

Planning Manager Larson commented that staff will continue to work on the next step and continue to check back with the Commission for input.

8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

The Staff Update was noted. It was noted that the November meeting will take place on December 1st.

Chairperson Bauer noted that the developer for the site behind Casey's pulled out for the time being because of the disruption that will occur from the Highway 10 project.

Commissioner Anderson commented that he will be attending the December 1st meeting remotely.

9. ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Larson
Planning Manager

ATTEST:

Dana Verbeek
Planning Administrative Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.