

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, March 24, 2022, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Randy Bauer
 Commissioner Bruce Anderson (via Zoom)
 Commissioner Cheri Gengler
 Commissioner Eric Peters
 Commissioner Gary VanScoy
 Commissioner Brian Walker

Members Absent: None

Also Present: City Planner Brian McCann
 Senior Planner Chris Anderson
 Community Development Dir/Deputy City Admin Brian Hagen
 City Council Liaison Matt Woestehoff
 City Engineer Bruce Westby

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairperson Bauer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Walker	aye
Commissioner Gengler	aye

appear to fit in with what exists in The COR. He stated that this would be a significant difference in architectural quality.

Commissioner Walker stated that he is hearing that the City was trying to dictate how some of this is developed to encourage people to have a sense of community and want to talk to each other. He stated that he struggles with making people want to be a part of a community. He noted that people will do what they want to do, whether that is socializing or keeping to themselves. He believed that variety is good and would drive competition. He stated that if these homes are on the market and the existing homes are on the market, it will be clear which homes people prefer. He stated that the risk would be of the developer, not the City and therefore he does not see a problem with what is proposed.

Commissioner VanScoy acknowledged differences in taste. He noted that they are not forcing people to communicate and gather but encouraging that and making it easier.

Commissioner Walker commented that if people want to engage with others, they will do so regardless of how their home is designed.

Chairperson Bauer stated that there was a change to allow 55 foot lots in the City, which some people did not think was a good idea but noted that those lots are selling as fast as they go up. He acknowledged that people have different taste and preference for their home and what they want. He agreed that this is the developer's money and risk and they would not build something they do not believe would sell. He agreed that variety is needed.

Commissioner Gengler commented that The COR was created with the idea of being a planned development and design aesthetic in mind. She commented that it is a more urban residential environment with doorways facing towards the sidewalks. She believed that the patio space still achieves the overall intent.

Mr. Palmby thanked the Commission for its input.

7.02: Review Ordinance Amending Digital Display Billboard Regulations

Presentation

Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Hagen presented the Staff Report and asked for direction on any adjustments to the language prior to advertising for a public hearing to be held at the April 28, 2022 Planning Commission meeting.

Commission Business

Chairperson Bauer noted that once the Highway 10 projects are completed and the stoplights in Anoka and Ramsey removed, a vehicle would most likely only see one ad as they drive by. He did not believe that shortening the time by one second would provide much benefit and could instead cause conflict. He supported eight seconds for the message duration.

Commissioner VanScoy believed the original message duration recommendation from the Commission was ten seconds. He stated that he would support the eight second duration if that is the national standard.

Commissioner Walker stated that he did not support the billboard concept when it was originally discussed and believes it is a horrible idea.

Commissioner VanScoy agreed with Commissioner Walker and did not support the idea of having billboards in Ramsey. He commented that the billboard will be massive, distracting, and ugly and did not believe it would be safe.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he also agrees with Commissioner Walker. He referenced the recommendation of the EDA, noting that a sign that large would illuminate a long distance. He did not believe this should move forward.

Chairperson Bauer asked where the billboard would be located.

Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Hagen stated that this has been reviewed a number of times and this is the most current version. He stated that a public hearing will be required for this item and welcomed any recommendations from the Commission towards this version. He stated that this has been supported by the EDA and Council.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that he was the lone person against this concept upon prior review. He explained that this was originally brought forward through the EDA as it would provide better opportunity for the businesses that do not have frontage on Highway 10. He stated that his prior recommendation, and still today, was to be patient as development is starting to pickup again in The COR. He believed that the Highway 10 project would also alter that landscape. He stated that there is support for this under the premise that this will help the businesses in Ramsey. He stated that safety is the most important aspect for timing, but message duration also relates to the number of available time slots for advertising. He noted that perhaps that is why the EDA suggested the shorter timeframe for message duration as it would provide more advertising opportunity.

Commissioner Walker referenced the requirement for notification of a public hearing. He asked if there would be any way to expand that notification for the billboard public hearing. He stated that he would like to receive more input from residents of the community versus the four to six properties that surround the proposed sign location.

Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Hagen replied that general ordinance public hearings do not require mailed public hearing notices, only published notice. He stated that mailed notice would be provided to properties within 350 feet when a conditional use permit is requested.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that perhaps this would be an opportunity for the Commission to hold a public open house prior to the regular meeting in order to obtain additional feedback from the community.

Chairperson Bauer asked if there could be an article in the next *Ramsey Resident* related to this concept and then hold a public open house and public hearing.

Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Hagen replied that the next Ramsey Resident will be mailed May 1st and therefore the deadline for article submission is next week. He confirmed that staff could draft an article on this topic. He asked if the Commission would like to hold the open house and public hearing in the same evening.

Chairperson Bauer agreed that it has worked well to hold the open house prior to the regular meeting. He suggested having an article in the *Ramsey Resident* and then holding a public open house prior to the regular May meeting.

Commissioner Walker asked if there is a way to place public notices in the *Ramsey Resident*.

Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Hagen replied that the Ramsey Resident is delivered every two months, with a deadline for articles one month prior to that date therefore that is not a good option. He stated that the City can use social media and can advertise on the City's electronic message sign. He believed there would be an upcoming discussion on public notice, recognizing there are State minimums for notification, but the City can choose to go above that.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that while he opposes the concept, he expects that it will ultimately pass. He confirmed the consensus of the Commission to support a duration of eight seconds for messages. He asked if the Commission would also like to pass on a recommendation for a size of 400 square feet.

Commissioner Walker commented that if the recommendation was already passed on once and changed, it would seem that recommendation is not going to be accepted.

Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Hagen replied that this language was drafted by staff that is no longer with the City. He stated that he can attempt to track the changes from previous versions.

8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

Chairperson Bauer noted that a new member should be joining the Commission at its next meeting.

Deputy City Administrator/Community Development Director Hagen provided an update on the hiring process for the vacant planning staff position.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he hopes to be back for in person attendance at the next meeting.

Commissioner Walker referenced a property that adjoins the north side of his property, on the end of Sapphire, which has been clear cut. He asked if there are any regulations against that activity.