

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

On Monday, April 17, 2023, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) met in the Council Chambers at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W., Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Laura Moore
 Board Member Reid Bernard
 Board Member Melissa Fetterley
 Board Member Thomas Hagerty
 Board Member Hassan Salami
 Board Member Jessica Vikander

Members Absent: Board Member Michael Hiatt

Also Present: Senior Planner Chris Anderson

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Moore called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chairperson Moore welcomed the new members of the Board. The members of the Board introduced themselves.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Board Member Bernard and seconded by Board Member Fetterley to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Moore, Board Member Bernard, Fetterley, Hagerty, Salami, and Vikander. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Hiatt.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated March 20, 2023

Motion by Board Member Bernard and seconded by Board Member Salami to approve the regular meeting minutes dated March 20, 2023.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Moore, Board Member Bernard, Salami, Fetterley, Hagerty, and Vikander. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Hiatt.

5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS

5.01: Appoint Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He provided information on the new policy limiting the number of terms a member can serve consecutively as Chairperson. He noted that if interested, Chairperson Moore would be eligible to serve one more term in that position.

Chairperson Moore opened the floor for nominations for the position of Chairperson.

Board Member Bernard nominated Laura Moore for the position of Chairperson.

There were no other nominations.

Chairperson Moore accepted the nomination.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Moore, Board Member Bernard, Fetterley, Hagerty, Salami, and Vikander. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Hiatt.

Motion by Board Member Salami and seconded by Board Member Moore to appoint Melissa Fetterley as Vice Chairperson of the Environmental Policy Board.

There were no other nominations.

Board Member Fetterley accepted the nomination.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Moore, Board Member Salami, Bernard, Fetterley, Hagerty, and Vikander. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Hiatt.

5.02: Consider Natural Resources Aspects of Home2Suites Site Plan

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the City has received an application from Ramsey Properties, LLC for a proposed new hotel to be located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Sunwood Drive and Zeolite Street. The application includes both a plat and site plan. He presented a revised landscaping plan which addresses all his previous comments, with the exception of the addition of pavers, and provided an overview.

Chairperson Moore asked if the applicant is purchasing the entire parcel shown in blue with plans to expand.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that the applicant is only purchasing the area marked and identified the boundary. He stated that the City will retain ownership of the remainder of the land.

Board Member Fetterley referenced the circles shown in the parking lot and asked if those would be trees or shrubs.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that it would be a combination of the two noting that there would be overstory trees with shrubbery below.

Board Member Fetterley noted a triangle area in the southwest corner marked for future expansion and asked how that area would appear until that time.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that would be a dry sand seed mix designed for an area without irrigation.

Motion by Board Member Bernard and seconded by Board Member Salami to recommend approval of the natural resources aspects of the proposed plat and site plan for Home2Suites, contingent upon the condition of staff related to pavers.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Moore, Board Member Bernard, Salami, Fetterley, Hagerty, and Vikander. Voting No: None. Absent: Board Member Hiatt.

5.03: Review Proposed Tree Preservation and Landscaping Ordinance Updates

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report. He stated that the Planning Division is currently working on an overview of the Zoning Code, which includes topics such as Tree Preservation and Landscaping. The tree preservation standards of various communities similar to Ramsey were included in the packet for comparison purposes as well as the drafts proposed by staff. He welcomed feedback from the Board.

Chairperson Moore commented that she supports eliminating extra and repetitive language and agrees with the proposed changes. She referenced the previous case where there was mention of aspen trees, which are not considered significant. She noted that on that property there are many aspens on the northern portion and while she would not want to put in different size requirements for different tree species in terms of removal, she also does not want to see a site clear cut.

Senior Planner Anderson stated that his first portion of the presentation was related to landscaping and welcomed those comments before moving to tree preservation.

Board Member Fetterley agreed with the changes proposed to the landscaping section.

Chairperson Moore commented that she also supports the simplified buffer yard regulations.

Senior Planner Anderson provided an overview of the proposed changes to tree preservation.

Chairperson Moore commented that she would prefer the smaller size for definition of significant tree. She agreed that it would be burdensome to provide a size for each species of tree but noted that perhaps it could be broken down in another manner such as hardwood versus softwood.

Senior Planner Anderson asked if the suggestion would be for a different size for hardwoods and softwoods in the inventory.

Chairperson Moore provided additional clarification suggesting that perhaps some others are listed as softwoods would almost never reach that size.

Board Member Fetterley stated that she agrees that she would like to preserve as many trees as possible but after the resources provided, she believes that Ramsey compares to similar communities and would not want to overcomplicate things. She believed that the eight-inch size is reasonable based on what other communities are doing. She did believe that calling out additional species would complicate things.

Senior Planner Anderson provided clarification on the tree preservation standards for the new members of the Board.

6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT

- **Spring Recycling Day – May 6, 2023; 8am – 12pm, Ramsey Public Works Campus (14199 Jasper Street NW)**

Senior Planner Anderson noted the upcoming spring recycling event details.

- **Compost Bin Distribution Event – May 16, 2023; 3pm – 6pm, Ramsey Public Works Campus (14199 Jasper Street NW)**

Senior Planner Anderson provided details on the upcoming event.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Board Member Bernard and seconded by Board Member Salami to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Anderson
Senior Planner

ATTEST:

Dana Verbeek
Planning Administrative Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.