

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, February 22, 2024, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Cheri Gengler
 Commissioner Bruce Anderson (virtual)
 Commissioner Randy Bauer (arrived at 7:17 p.m.)
 Commissioner Tom Hunt
 Commissioner Eric Peters
 Commissioner Gary Van Scoy

Members Absent: Commissioner Ryan Heineman

Also Present: Planning Manager Todd Larson
 City Planner Adam Martin
 City Council Liaison Matt Woestehoff

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairperson Gengler led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CITIZEN INPUT

None.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.01: Approve the January 25, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Hunt	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

6.01: Harmony Farms (US Home LLC/Lennar) Preliminary Plat for 57 Single-Family Lots Northeast of 167th Avenue NW and Nowthen Boulevard NW

Public Hearing

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

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the preliminary plat with the conditions listed in the draft resolution.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked if there would be two connections to water.

Planning Manager Larson noted that both sewer and water would connect at the northwest corner of the site and how those lines would run through the site.

Commissioner Van Scoy commented that there are two existing homes on 167th and the driveway would appear to be changed.

Planning Manager Larson confirmed that the developer is working with those property owners to square up those connections. He explained that the strip of land was intended to be a street at some time.

Commissioner Anderson asked and received confirmation that these would be city streets and asked for the reason there would be a dead end without a cul-de-sac.

Planning Manager Larson replied that would be a temporary cul-de-sac as the property to the south could develop and that road could be extended to a full cul-de-sac on the neighboring property.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the fire department had concerns with the small cul-de-sac.

Planning Manager Larson confirmed that the proposed cul-de-sac would meet City standards.

Citizen Input

Josh Metzger, Lennar, commented that they have been working with staff to develop the slightly revised plat request noting that they would meet the zoning requirements. He referenced the temporary cul-de-sac and commented that they are working with the engineer to determine what will work best in terms of home placement. He noted that sometimes one of the lots is delayed in development for many years to provide that additional space. He hoped to break ground and start grading this spring if all approvals are received. He stated that they have been in discussion with the two property owners on 167th to configure driveway locations and they will continue to work out those details.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if construction access would be from 168th.

Mr. Metzger replied that they would get access from Nowthen Boulevard.

Commissioner Hunt asked if the developer agrees with the staff recommendations.

Mr. Metzger replied that they do agree with the staff recommendations. He provided details on the privacy screening.

Commissioner Bauer arrived.

Chairperson Gengler asked if the developer is comfortable with the name changes for the streets.

Mr. Metzger confirmed that they would follow the naming grid.

Maria Lindahl commented that she owns one of the homes on 167th where the road will go through. She stated that they have not been in favor of the development and when she did speak with Lennar, she expressed concerns. She stated that she has lived in her home for 26 years. She stated that she has pets, and the neighboring property has young children, therefore she asked about fencing as the road will become a lot busier. She was also concerned with disruption from construction. She stated that Lennar did offer something to them, but she is not happy about that. She commented that she will continue to meet with Lennar but does not guarantee that she will agree to anything. She clarified that her home is on the east side, with the smaller lot.

Lynn Melhop, 6500 169th Lane, asked about outlets B and C and asked for clarification on where those will be.

Planning Manager Larson commented that the current legal description of the property is Outlot B and outlot C, noting that those would be combined to create the entirety of the parcel for development. He explained that the legal description is used for a property when a street address has not yet been assigned.

Chris Hagel, 16650 Dolomite, referenced the property shown as LDR on the southwest corner and asked the potential plans for that property. He asked if another access would be added at Dolomite if that property were developed.

Planning Manager Larson commented that there would not be any new access points entertained that close to 167th. He noted that the County will most likely pursue a roundabout in the near future and therefore any proposed access, if that property were developed, would come through this proposed development.

Mr. Hagel referenced Coquina and asked if that would be constructed to City standards for a residential road and whether water and sewer would be installed at the cost of the City or the cost of the residents.

Planning Manager Larson replied that road is not being changed at this time, noting that change in the road status would most likely come if an adjacent property were to develop and at that time the road would be constructed to residential standards. He stated that at this time the water main will be looped under the road, but water and sewer would not be run. He stated that there are no plans at this time to run sewer down 167th as that would have to come through Elmcrest Park and would have a cost of \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000. He stated that the subject property would be getting water and sewer from the northwest.

Mr. Hagel asked if there are any plans in the coming years to run sewer and water to the sections shown as RR.

Planning Manager Larson replied that the RR section is rural residential, which is outside of the MUSA. He explained that sewer and water connections are not planned for those areas.

Motion by Commissioner Van Scoy, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, to close the public hearing.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:28 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner Hunt commented that he does not love the right-in/right-out.

Commissioner Peters commented that as someone that lives in Brookside, you can hear accidents when the windows are open and therefore the roundabout will be a welcome addition. He stated that the right-in/right-out will be necessary because of the proximity to that intersection.

Motion by Commissioner Van Scoy, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #24-060 for the Preliminary Plat of Harmony Farms.

Further discussion

Commissioner Peters commented that he hopes that the developer continues discussions with the two residents on 167th. He recognized that it is an uncomfortable situation that no one will really be happy with, but hopefully they can find a solution that works recognizing that the residents were most likely aware that was City land between.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Hunt	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

7. COMMISSION BUSINESS

7.01: Discuss a Zoning Amendment to Allow Higher Density Residential Development in the COR (proposed Norhart development)

Presentation

City Planner Martin presented the staff report stating that staff is asking the Planning Commission to provide feedback and guidance to determine which method should be used to address zoning and density regulations for the Norhart development.

Commission Business

Commissioner Bauer referenced the recent updates to the zoning code and the reason for the zoning designation on this parcel.

City Planner Martin commented that those designations were carried over from the previous iteration. He stated that this property is part of the property being platted for Waterfront Village. He noted that the density would have been assigned long before the time of current planning staff.

Commissioner Van Scoy noted that the intent of the original zoning was to provide density transitioning throughout the COR. He referenced the text amendment option and asked where the other COR-4b properties are located.

Commissioner Hunt commented that most of the 4b properties have already been developed. He asked if the text amendment would then allow other 4b properties to develop with an apartment complex.

Commissioner Van Scoy commented that he has requested several times for the COR Framework to be revisited and updated. He noted that the intent was to place townhomes along Bunker, with higher density apartments to be internal. He stated that he would not be opposed to changing the map for this parcel but would not want to change the density within 4b.

City Planner Martin highlighted the other properties in the COR zoned 4b, 4a and 4c. He stated that if the map amendment were the chosen path, Norhart and Greenway Terrace would be in the same zoning district.

Commissioner Van Scoy confirmed that he would prefer to change the zoning of the property rather than changing the allowed density for 4b.

Commissioner Bauer asked the requested number of units.

City Planner Martin noted that the applicant could provide additional details but stated that staff noticed 223 units on the initial submittal. He noted that would be consistent with a neighboring apartment building.

Commissioner Bauer asked the number of units for the hotel to the south.

Planning Manager Larson believed that the hotel will have 96 or 98 units.

Marie Dickover, representing the applicant, confirmed that they are proposing 223 units.

Councilmember Woestehoff believed that the project was proposed at 150 units when the concept was discussed in March of 2023 and asked the reasoning the unit count increased substantially.

Ms. Dickover commented that she believed that the unit count was always intended to be around 200, but stated that based on Council comments it was determined that over 200 units would be desired which is why the plan was updated.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that in his opinion the Council is more interested in the retail components of the proposal.

Commissioner Anderson asked the amount of space on the bottom floor that would be designated for retail and whether that space is included in the units per acre calculation.

City Planner Martin replied that the applicant proposes 5,000 square feet of retail space, noting that retail space is not factored into residential density.

Commissioner Anderson referenced a lot shown in purple on the map and asked the size of that lot.

Commissioner Peters noted that there would be studios along with one-, two- and three-bedroom units and asked the approximate rent values for those units.

Ms. Dickover replied that she could provide those at the March meeting. She stated that typically studios would be about \$1,100 while three-bedroom units would have a rent over \$2,000.

City Planner Martin replied that the lot to the east of Center Street is 1.36 acres in size.

Commissioner Anderson commented that he believes that the building would be too tall as the intention was to transition throughout the COR. He did not believe that this would fit the character of the neighborhood.

Chairperson Gengler noted that those details would be discussed at the March meeting when the submittal is reviewed.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he would prefer to provide the developer with this input now. He noted that this is a large building with a very small retail area next to townhomes.

Chairperson Gengler commented that it would make sense to change the zoning to 4c. She asked if there would be a benefit to the text amendment path versus the zoning change.

Planning Manager Larson replied that there would not be any additional benefit to the text amendment path.

Commissioner Peters asked the type of air conditioning units that would be used for the building.

Mr. Dickover replied that they use Magic Packs.

Chairperson Gengler confirmed the consensus of the Commission to pursue the zoning change rather than the text amendment as that would only impact this parcel rather than having a more widespread change.

8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

Planning Manager Larson commented that the March meeting will be long as there are five public hearings to hold and provided a summary of those requests that will appear on the agenda.

Commissioners Van Scoy and Bauer commented that they would be late arrivals to the March meeting.

Planning Manager Larson provided other planning and development updates.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Van Scoy, to adjourn the meeting.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Larson
Planning Manager

ATTEST:

Dana Verbeek
Planning Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.