

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Cheri Gengler
 Commissioner Bruce Anderson (via Zoom)
 Commissioner Randy Bauer (arrived at 8:23 p.m.)
 Commissioner Ryan Heineman
 Commissioner Tom Hunt
 Commissioner Eric Peters
 Commissioner Gary Van Scoy

Members Absent: None

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Gengler called the regular meeting to order at 7:05 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 Hunts, to approve the agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Heineman	aye

Commissioner Peters aye
Commissioner Anderson aye
Chairperson Gengler aye

Motion Carried.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.01: Approve the February 22, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

5.02: Pearson Place 2nd Addition Sketch Plan and Variances (Project No. 24-100)

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

A roll call vote was performed:

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

Motion Carried.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS

6.01: Public Hearing: Consider a Site Plan, Variance, and Conditional Use Permit for a Proposed Automotive Repair Shop at 5195 142nd Avenue

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 7:03 p.m.

Presentation

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report stating that the Environmental Policy Board recommends approval of the landscape plan, contingent upon compliance with staff's review comments and also recommends approval of the variance to the impervious surfacing coverage. Staff recommends approval of the Site Plan and Conditional Use Permit, contingent upon compliance with staff's review comments. Staff received one written comment from a resident which was provided to the Commission via e-mail and in paper version tonight.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked if the southeastern edge of the fence is where the applicant designed and whether there was a condition to move that.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that is addressed in the staff review comments. He noted that could also be added as a condition if desired by the Commission.

Commissioner Heineman referenced the western entrance proposed for 142nd and asked if that would be a right-in/right-out.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that police raised a concern with shifting the access closer to 47 and the applicant is aware of that concern. He stated that the applicant has stated that the entrances as they exist today would create issues with moving vehicles around the site. He explained that vehicles could enter the site through the second entrance before getting to Xkimo.

Commissioner Heineman commented that he would support a do not enter sign at the western entrance.

Citizen Input

Mitchell Web, applicant, stated that everything within the fenced area would be screened. He stated that he does not operate a business where vehicles sit for a long time as this is not an auto body shop with crashed cars. He stated that the vehicles leave in a short period of time after the repair is completed. He stated that they have spent a lot of time and energy looking at ways to reconfigure the parking lot and entrances. He noted that the more they shift the western entrance away from 47, the more difficult it will be for the vehicles in those parking spots to get out of those spots. He noted that reconfiguration would also cause them to lose three parking stalls and they want to ensure the site has sufficient parking available.

Commissioner Heineman asked if the applicant would see any issues with using the eastern entrance for vehicles coming into the site and the western entrance for people leaving.

Mr. Web stated that he could look into that. He stated that they have been working cooperatively with staff throughout this process and their goal is to ensure it is safe for customers and the public to come in and out of the site. He stated that he would want to ensure that there would not be conflict with vehicles coming into the site and whatever is going on behind the screened area.

Commissioner Heineman asked the hours of the business.

Mr. Web stated that their hours would be 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. He stated that all three of the current locations have one or two property lines that abut residential, and they have not had any issues or complaints, often serving vehicles of the neighboring residents.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that he spoke with the City of Andover today as that location is very similar to this proposed location. He stated that the staff member had been there for the past five years and has not received any complaints, noting that site actually borders two single-family home properties. He noted that site is clean and well maintained.

Commissioner Peters asked if there would be a zipper drain in the floor.

Mr. Web commented that they would use proper drainage with an array of drainage systems throughout the building and explained how that system functions and is cleaned.

Commissioner Van Scoy commented that the City is concerned with moving the fence and asked for the thoughts from the applicant.

Mr. Web commented that their initial drawing was more drastic, with the fence two feet from the sidewalk and landscaping inside the fence. He stated that if they move the trees to the outside of the fence, they would only have nine to ten feet between the curb and fence in some spots in order for the trees to grow correctly. He believed that they could put some trees and landscaping outside of the fence in an attempt to meet in the middle as he also has concerns with having enough space for snow storage in the winter. He stated that he has talked to staff about potentially leaving the fence as proposed and adding landscaping on the outside of the fence. He stated that the screened fence does not look terrible, and they are a professional business.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked if the fence were required to be moved, would that create a major issue for the applicant.

Mr. Web commented that he feels that would create a major issue. He stated that they do not have a lot of room for snow storage on the western side of the site and therefore want to ensure there is space for snow storage on the east. He noted that they did move the fence on the north to add three or four trees on the outside. He believed that they could collaborate to find a solution that would work for everyone.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that staff could explore shifting some of the plantings into the boulevard if there is sufficient space. He stated that they could also look at column growing arborvitae that do not require much space. He stated that the applicant has been very open to this discussion, and they continue to work together to find a solution.

Commissioner Heineman commented that it does not appear that the other locations have screened fencing and asked if that is correct.

Mr. Web stated that is not correct. He provided details noting that they use black screen privacy fencing, explaining that the installation of the fencing at one location was delayed until the time a tenant moved out of the building and they were able to install the fence.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked for clarification on whether staff wants the fence in a specific location.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that staff is not specifying where the fence will be, they just want the plantings moved to the outside of the fence.

Commissioner Van Scoy referenced the need of the business owner for storage space.

Senior Planner Anderson believed that they could look at alternative species of trees that will require much less growing space. He believed that staff could continue to work with the applicant to find a solution that would leave enough space for snow storage and place plantings on the outside of the fence.

Commissioner Hunt referenced the DNR comments related to stormwater runoff. He asked if the pond would have adequate storage space to accommodate for this site and what would happen if there were not adequate space.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that there is a stretch of undeveloped parcels that face this same situation and therefore staff is confident in this proposed solution for treatment. He believed that the City would be able to obtain the necessary approvals to expand the regional pond.

Chairperson Gengler asked if the east entrance would typically be open during business hours.

Mr. Web replied that the goal would be to have that open during the majority of the time.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that crossing a painted median into a driveway is legal, therefore there is nothing that would prohibit that movement for people to turn into the western entrance.

Wendy West, 14233 Xkimo Street, commented that her neighbor sent the letter mentioned. She noted that her major concerns are related to the entrance. She believed that using the eastern entrance for traffic to enter the site and exit to the west would be the best flow for traffic. She also agreed with the mention to have a narrower growing tree to use on the outside of the fence. She commented that the traffic on Xkimo is awful, and she has difficulty turning out of her driveway. She commented that the applicant appears to be doing a great job working with City staff and therefore does not have any objections. She asked how residents would receive updates on the progress.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that the next step would be to move these recommendations forward to the April 9th or 23rd City Council meeting. He stated that there would not be another mailing, but the City Council agendas can be found on the City website.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Heineman	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Genger	aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:46 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to approve Resolution #24-088 Granting a Variance to the Maximum Impervious Surfacing Standard in the Scenic River Protection Overlay District.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Heineman	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Hunt	aye
Chairperson Genger	aye

Motion Carried.

Motion by Commissioner Heineman, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #24-089 to Approve the Site Plan and Conditional Use Permit with the City Council to consider the feasibility of the alternate entrance.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Heineman	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Genger	aye

Motion Carried.

6.02: Public Hearing: Haviland Fields (Presbyterian Homes) – Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Preliminary Plat, and Site Plan Review for a Multi-Family Residential Development at 14501 Nowthen Boulevard NW

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 7:49 p.m.

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Haviland Fields development proposal. Staff received many letters and emails from residents which have been provided to the Commission.

Citizen Input

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that the City Council actually reviewed the EAW twice, asking for additional information on traffic after the first review. He noted that the approved EAW has been posted on the City website.

Sam Jagodzinski, representing the applicant, echoed the comments from the staff report. He stated that they are working with a host of partners who are great at what they do and introduced some of the members present tonight. He stated that they want the development to look intentional with the density transitioning to the south, away from the adjoining residential homes. He provided a recap of the proposal, noting that the existing Lord of Life Church would remain the focus of the site with complimentary uses proposed to be added. He acknowledged the different approvals that would be needed for this development to move forward and reviewed the process thus far which began in 2022. He recapped how the input received from the public, Commission and City Council has helped to guide the development of their plans. He noted that a PUD is being required but they do meet the standards of R-3 zoning with the exception of the density calculation because of the items (including the church property) that must not be included in the overall site calculation.

Chris Palkowitsch, BKV Architects, commented that staff did a thorough job presenting the request. He noted that the intent of the design was to create a park-based campus, focusing on the natural environment and the church. He felt that with the amount of wetlands preserved and the church space, the density will not be as condensed as it would seem in the calculation. He explained how the team worked together to incorporate the feedback from the residents, noting that park homes adjacent to the single-family homes and moving the density to the south.

Michael Rice, 14620 Flourine Street NW, commented that this property backs to the Lord of Life property. He stated that he moved to this area to have a low, calm life. He stated that his main concern is the additional burden that this would place on the schools. He believed that the issues with the schools should be addressed before adding more families to this area.

James Berreau, 14641 Flourine Street, commented that his backyard also overlooks the firepit for Lord of Life Church. He did not think the senior building should be in that location. He stated that many of his concerns are related to traffic, commenting on the gross negligence of the first traffic study that was done. He commented that any data obtained from that study should be considered null and void and believed that traffic counts estimated were significantly underestimated. He commented that for his street it takes about three to four minutes to get out of the neighborhood when school is in session. He believed that at minimum there should also be an exit from this property directly onto 47.

Chad Lindgren, 5561 145th Circle NW, commented that he believes that bringing in more residents will help ease the burden through increased tax base. He commented that the development looks fine, but his concern is with traffic. He noted a previous development concept which required a

turn lane improvement, but thought that this would seem odd to have a bigger development which would not trigger traffic improvements. He commented on a recent accident that his neighbor was involved in on 146th Avenue which caused injuries. He asked that something be done to protect the safety of the existing and new residents in terms of traffic control.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Heineman	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Genger	aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 8:23 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner Heineman referenced the intersection of Nowthen Boulevard and Sunwood and confirmed that there is no stoplight currently. He asked if there has been consideration to add a stoplight at that location.

Planning Manager Larson replied that the intersection is the top rated for the County radar, with plans to install a roundabout in that location within the next two years or so. He stated that there are other intersections that the County would also like to upgrade. He noted that both of the driveways into this project from County Road 5 would have turn lanes.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that one of the big takeaways of reviewing the traffic study was the input from the County, as this is a County road. He stated that he defaults to the County in making those decisions and agreed that the Sunwood intersection improvement will help as well.

Commissioner Van Scoy commented that his major concern is with the people that would be leaving this site and traveling south. He stated that the ability to turn right when exiting this site, travel down a short ways and turn around in the roundabout will be a huge benefit, but asked what would be done in the meantime until that is constructed.

Planning Manager Larson replied that vehicles could turn left from the southern exit for the property, but vehicles using the northern exit/entrance would need to turn right and travel in that direction.

Commissioner Bauer commented that he is very familiar with that area and noted the difficulty in making a left turn from that side of Nowthen Boulevard. He believed that the roundabout would be a huge improvement.

Commissioner Hunt agreed, noting that he also travels that stretch of the road multiple times per day. He agreed that a healthy majority of people exiting that property in the morning would be traveling south and that volume of traffic trying to exit from one location would create a traffic problem.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked for details on the phasing of the development.

Mr. Jagodzinski commented that phasing is still not completely set but the all-ages building would most likely be constructed first, beginning in 2025 and the senior buildings would follow. He noted that it would be a multi-year process and therefore the roundabout would most likely be in place prior to full build out.

Councilmember Woestehoff noted that the senior building would also have a much different traffic pattern than the all-ages building.

Commissioner Peters referenced the all ages building and asked the anticipated price point for rentals.

Mr. Jagodzinski replied that those units would start at \$1,450 per month.

Commissioner Peters asked the type of air handling units that would be used.

Mr. Jagodzinski replied that they would be using magic-paks.

Commissioner Hunt asked if there are plans for a playground.

Mr. Jagodzinski replied that while it is not currently in the plans, they would be open to discussions.

Chairperson Gengler asked if one HOA would cover all the housing sections or whether they would be separate.

Mr. Jagodzinski replied that most likely they would have one entity to control all of that.

Chairperson Gengler asked for more details on the emergency access gate.

Planning Manager Larson replied that fire and police wanted a connection, but public works was not supportive of a through public street, nor did the applicant, which lead to the addition of the gate to allow emergency access if needed but prevent through traffic.

Commissioner Hunt commented that there have been quite a few times he has noticed the parking lot is very full during events and asked if the church would plan to hold less events or whether the shared parking would accommodate the events.

Michelle Anderson and Woody Nelson, representing Lord of Life Church, replied that they would continue to hold their events and look forward to involving this new community. She believed the allocated parking space would be sufficient.

Motion by Commissioner Peters, seconded by Commissioner Heineman, to recommend that City Council approve the Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Plat, and Site Plan Review for Haviland Fields.

Further discussion

Commissioner Van Scoy commented that his major concern is with traffic control but acknowledged that the County is aware and has plans to take action. He asked if the County would take action sooner if there are significant issues. Planning Manager Larson replied that would be a combination of different City departments with the County taking the lead to find a solution for whatever problem were to pop up. He confirmed that public safety has reviewed the plans.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner Van Scoy	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Heineman	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Genger	aye

Motion Carried.

6.03: Public Hearing: Consider a Site Plan and Final Plat from St. Katharine Drexel at 7633 161st Avenue NW

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 8:41 p.m.

Commissioners Bauer and Van Scoy recused themselves from this item because of their affiliation with St. Katharine Drexel.

Presentation

City Planner Martin presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Site Plan and Final Plat.

Citizen Input

Tom Peterson, representing the applicant, stated that he was present to address any questions of the Commission.

Chairperson Gengler asked the anticipated timeline for the building and mentioned expansion.

Mr. Peterson replied that there is no set timeline for a future expansion at this time, noting that they are just providing the ability to expand in the future if that is needed.

Chairperson Gengler asked for details on the site configuration.

Mr. Peterson provided further clarification on how the traffic would flow through the site, noting that the plans also showed how the site could grow in the future as well. He stated that if there were an expansion proposed in the future, that would follow the same review process.

Commissioner Heineman asked if the sidewalk heading west would connect to something.

Mr. Peterson commented that would connect to the parking for PACT Charter School to accommodate for shared parking.

City Planner Martin commented that there is a shared parking agreement between the church and school.

Commissioner Peters asked if there would be church bells.

Randy Bauer, representing St. Katharine Drexel Church, commented that the church does not have immediate plans for bells although they may consider a bell tower at some time in the future. He stated that the multi-purpose space where services would be held would have just under 400 seats, noting that the current space has 200 seats. He commented that will allow quite a bit of growth and anticipated a minimum of ten years before the church would look at plans for phase two.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Heineman	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Hunt	aye
Chairperson Genger	aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 8:53 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Heineman, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #24-093 Approving a Final Plat and Site Plan Review for St. Katharine Drexel Church Addition.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Heineman	aye
Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Chairperson Genger	aye

Motion Carried.

Commissioners Bauer and Van Scoy rejoined the Commission.

7. COMMISSION BUSINESS

8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

Planning Manager Larson noted that the Chair and Vice Chair elections will take place at the next meeting. He stated that Commissioner Anderson was reappointed by the City Council and there were no other expiring terms.

Commissioner Hunt noted that he will not be in attendance at the April meeting.

Commissioner Van Scoy noted that he would also not be present at the April meeting.

Planning Manager Larson advised that the Commission is scheduled to hold three public hearings at the April meeting.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that the City Council will hold a special worksession the following Tuesday to discuss a City position, for or against, State legislature consideration of bills that would limit local land control laws. He stated that he opposes the issue, as do many cities and the League of Minnesota Cities.

9. ADJOURNMENT

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
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Commissioner Peters aye
Commissioner Heineman aye
Commissioner Bauer aye
Commissioner Van Scoy aye
Commissioner Hunt aye
Chairperson Genger aye

Motion Carried.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Larson
Planning Manager

ATTEST:

Dana Verbeek
Planning Administrative Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.