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**CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF RAMSEY  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a regular meeting on Monday, August 12, 2024, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Mark Kuzma  
Councilmember Chelsee Howell  
Councilmember Debra Musgrove  
Councilmember Michael Olson (attended remotely)  
Councilmember Chris Riley  
Councilmember Dan Specht  
Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Members Absent: None

Also Present: City Administrator Brian Hagen  
City Engineer/Public Works Director Bruce Westby  
City Attorney Fritz Knaak (attended remotely)  
Community Development Director Stephanie Hanson  
Assistant Building Official Thomas Knight

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Kuzma called the regular meeting of the Ramsey City Council to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Kuzma.

**2. PRESENTATION**

None.

**3. CITIZEN INPUT**

None.

**4. APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Councilmember Howell, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to approve the agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Musgrove aye

Councilmember Riley        aye  
Councilmember Howell       aye  
Councilmember Specht       aye  
Councilmember Woestehoff   aye  
Mayor Kuzma                 aye

Motion carried.

**5.        APPROVE MINUTES**

Motion by Councilmember Wostehoff, seconded by Councilmember Howell, to approve the following meeting minutes:

- 5.01: City Council Work Session dated July 23, 2024
- 5.02: City Council Regular Session dated July 23, 2024

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Musgrove    aye  
Councilmember Riley        aye  
Councilmember Howell       aye  
Councilmember Specht       aye  
Councilmember Woestehoff   aye  
Mayor Kuzma                 aye

Motion carried.

**6.        CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Howell, to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda:

- 6.01: Receive June 2024 Financial Reports - General Fund, EDA, and Enterprise Funds
- 6.02: Receive Cash and Investments for Period Ending July 31, 2024
- 6.03: Note the following Boards, Commissions, and Committee Meeting Minutes:
  - Planning Commission Meeting Minutes Dated June 27, 2024.
  - Public Works Committee Meeting Minutes Dated June 18, 2024.
- 6.04: Approve Business Licenses
- 6.05: Adopt Resolution #24-218 Approving Cash Disbursements Made and Authorizing Payment of Accounts Payable Invoicing Received During the Period of July 18, 2024 through August 7, 2024.
- 6.06: Adopt Resolution #24-122 Approving Change Order No. 1 for Improvement Project #21-08, Water Treatment Plant Trunk Watermain Improvements
- 6.07: Adopt Resolution #24-186 approving a Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment Pertaining to Low Density Residential.

- 6.08: Adopt Resolution 24-194 Approving Change Order No. 1 to AET Proposal for Improvement Project #21-09, Centralized Water Treatment Plant
- 6.09: Adopt Resolution #24-201, Approving a Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, Site Plan, and Assessment Agreement from Voice of Hope Church at 15620 Armstrong Blvd NW
- 6.10: Adopt Resolution #24-209 Approving Change Order No. 2 for Improvement Project #21-08, Water Treatment Plant Trunk Watermain Improvements
- 6.11: Adopt Resolution #24-210 Approving a Final Plat for "GH Ramsey" and a Development Agreement for Take 5 Oil Change (Case of Garage RE LLC)
- 6.12: Adopt Resolution #24-213 Accepting Bids and Awarding Contract for 2024 MSA Pavement Overlay Improvements, Improvement Project #24-06
- 6.13: Adopt Resolution #24-214 Accepting Quotes and Awarding Maintenance Project #24-57, 2024 Spray Patching Contracted Services
- 6.14: Adopt Resolution #24-215 Approving Plans and Authorizing Bids for Improvement Project #25-01, Rivers Bend Regional Stormwater Improvements
- 6.15: Adopt Resolution #24-220 Accepting Geotechnical Proposals for 2025 Pavement Management Program Projects

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Musgrove	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Howell	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Woestehoff	aye
Mayor Kuzma	aye

Motion carried.

**7. PUBLIC HEARING**

None.

**8. COUNCIL BUSINESS**

**8.01: Adopt Resolution #24-202, Approving a Conditional Use Permit for Motor Vehicle Rental and Self-Storage Facilities for U-Haul at 8725 Riverdale Dr NW**

Community Development Director Hanson reviewed the Staff report in regard to the Conditional Use Permit request for U-Haul. She shared the Planning Commission’s recommendation of approval.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked what they plan on doing for fencing and how high it will be.

Community Development Director Hanson shared that it is her understanding that they will not have fencing as it is not a part of the requirement. She noted that they will have some landscaping on the south side of the property along Riverdale Drive.

Mayor Kuzma asked about lighting for this business with there being residential housing in the area.

Community Development Director Hanson explained that they have lighting requirements in the code that U-Haul will be required to follow. She added that the lighting will have to be downcast and cannot shine off of the property.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if this is also to approve the site plan.

Community Development Director Hanson said yes.

Councilmember Specht asked if they had heard from any residents in this area on their opinions of this project.

Community Development Director Hanson said no.

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Howell, to adopt Resolution #24-202, Approving a Conditional Use Permit for Equipment Rental and Self-Storage Facilities at 8725 Riverdale Dr NW, subject to the conditions specified within the Resolution.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Musgrove	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Howell	aye
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Woestehoff	aye
Mayor Kuzma	aye

Motion carried.

**8.02: Consider a variance for a lean-to structure at 6960 148th Lane NW (Curtis Forster)**

Community Development Director Hanson reviewed the Staff report concerning the variance request for a lean-to structure at 6960 148th Lane NW. She shared that this is an appeal of the Planning Commission's decision of denial for the lean-to structure.

Councilmember Howell asked if there are materials that could be placed on the sides of the structure that would be safe enough for fire hazards.

Community Development Director Hanson said she cannot speak to the specifics of the Fire Code; however, from an architectural standard, the materials would have to be similar to what is on the home.

Assistant Building Official Knight shared that there are building materials that could be used that would meet the Fire Code. He added that it would have to go all the way back to the five-foot setback mark.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the State Building Code has any rules or regulations about setbacks or if this is up to the cities.

Assistant Building Official Knight said this is left up to the discretion of the City, other than the fire setback separate, which is a five-foot requirement.

Councilmember Woestehoff shared that he attended the Planning Commission meeting where this was discussed and he shared that in order to get it fire-rated, they would have to use a similar siding material to what is on the house, plus fire-rated drywall, plus a vapor barrier, plus another interior layer.

Councilmember Specht asked if the requirement for the roof of the lean-to structure to match the roof of the home is a City or State requirement.

Assistant Building Official Knight said this is a City requirement.

Councilmember Specht asked why this is a requirement as the roof of the structure could only be seen from above.

Community Development Director Hanson shared that it is her understanding that the roofing materials that were used on the structure are not allowed in the City Code and since this structure is attached to the garage, it needs to have the same matching roof materials.

Mayor Kuzma asked if the Council was to deny this variance request, what the process would be for the homeowner.

City Attorney Knaak stated that the homeowner would have certain rights to bring an appeal to the court.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if this were to get approved and the denial of the Planning Commission was overturned if the original complainant would be able to file a lawsuit against the City for allowing this structure.

City Attorney Knaak shared that the only rights that are enforceable under the code do not just belong to the homeowner. He explained that if another homeowner believes that the City has mistakenly granted this approval in violation of City ordinances, then that other homeowner would be able to bring forward a lawsuit.

The applicant, Curtis Forster, 6960 148th Lane NW, came forward to address the Council. He stated that he is aware that the Council has granted many variances throughout the City. He shared that a majority of the complaints about the structure came from residents on the south side of his home who drove around looking for things out of compliance. He noted that he has spoken with

his direct neighbors, and they do not have an issue with the structure. He explained that he is just here tonight for a variance, and he understands that he would need to get the structure fire rated. He added that he has gutters and snow guards on the roof. He shared that he chose to use cedar as the building material for this structure as it is cohesive with the cedar accents on his home.

Councilmember Specht asked Mr. Forster why he did not put this structure elsewhere on his property.

Mr. Forster explained that all of his utilities are on the other side of his property. He added that there is also a large hill on this side of the house that would need to be filled. He noted that he would have also had to add a new driveway on this side of his home. He shared that he had originally wanted to add a garage to the east side of his property. He explained that in order to fit his camper, the garage would need to be at least 30 feet. He noted that the road curves in on this side of his home and he has a marsh in the back so it would not be able to fit on this side. He explained that when he moved into this home, he could not keep the grass alive that was where the lean-to structure currently is due to the heat from being in between the two homes. He added that the aluminum paneling on the side of his camper had even started warping due to this heat.

Councilmember Riley asked Mr. Forster why he did not get a permit for this building.

Mr. Forster explained that he had planned on building the garage and by the time he realized he could not build a garage it was late in the year, and he had to start digging footings before the ground froze. He said he is coming asking for forgiveness and apologized for doing this without permitting. He stated this has been a massive headache and wishes he would have waited until this year to build the structure with proper permitting and approvals.

Councilmember Howell asked Mr. Forster if there were any other hardship reasons why the structure was built where it is other than being limited on the other side of his property in order to protect his assets.

Mr. Forster said that funds were not an issue that played into the structure being placed on this side of his home. He added that he also had a window on the east side of his home that would just look into the lean-to if it were built on that side of the home. He noted that he has a fireplace on the east side of his home and the chimney does come out on this side of the home.

Mayor Kuzma asked if he would be willing to bring the structure up to code and bring it in five feet.

Mr. Forster said if he had to bring the structure in five feet, then there would be no point in even having the structure as it would not fit his trailers. He explained that he is here for the variance to keep the structure at 20 feet wide so he can fit his trailers.

Councilmember Howell asked Mr. Forster if a roof only structure would be an option if this were to move forward.

Mr. Forster said yes.

Councilmember Woestehoff shared his concerns with how close the structure is to the property line. He noted that he is aware that they have done driveway variance before to allow them to be closer to the property line. He said he likes the idea of a roof-only structure.

Councilmember Riley said that he would be more comfortable with this structure if it was roof only.

Councilmember Howell stated that she likes the steel roof that is currently on the structure rather than it having to be changed to asphalt shingles. She asked if they would be able to make it a part of the variance that he could keep the metal roof.

Community Development Director Hanson explained that City Code requires asphalt roofs so this would have to be a variance.

City Attorney Knaak said they can make this a part of the variance this evening as long as there is not a substantial difference from the original variance request. He explained that variance requests require public notice that allows people to respond to them; however, this would diminish the amount of encroachment and difficulty so they would be able to add this as an amendment to the proposed variance.

Councilmember Riley asked if they would also need an encroachment agreement if they allow the driveway to stay where it is.

Community Development Director Hanson said yes and explained that when they bring back the resolution it would also include the encroachment agreement.

Motion by Councilmember Howell, seconded by Councilmember Specht, to direct Staff to prepare a resolution approving the variance for a slab and a lean-to structure, including allowing the existing metal roof, based on the following practical difficulties: the curve in the road on the other side of the property and the location of the utilities.

Further Discussion:

Mayor Kuzma said he would not be able to support this motion.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if this motion is essentially to allow the structure to remain as is while bringing it up to Building and Fire Code.

Councilmember Specht said yes.

Councilmember Musgrove shared that she is not supportive of allowing the walls to stay on the structure due to fire concerns of the proximity of the buildings. She noted that if some action had already been taken to help make the walls fireproof then she may have a different opinion. She said fires can be very fast and dangerous and not having walls on the structure could help minimize this concern.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the walls of the structure would still need to be brought five feet in from the property line to meet the code.

Assistant Building Official Knight said the walls would just need to be fire-rated five feet in from the end of the structure.

Councilmember Riley said he will also not be supporting this motion as he thought they were heading in a good direction by discussing allowing the structure to be roof only.

Councilmember Olson shared that the walls increase the functionality of the structure and also make it look better than it would without walls.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Musgrove	aye
Councilmember Riley	nay
Councilmember Howell	aye
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Woestehoff	nay
Mayor Kuzma	nay

Motion carried.

## **9. MAYOR, COUNCIL AND STAFF INPUT**

City Administrator Hagen announced upcoming meetings and events.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilmember Howell, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to adjourn the meeting.

A roll call vote was performed:

Councilmember Musgrove	aye
Councilmember Riley	aye
Councilmember Howell	aye
Councilmember Olson	aye
Councilmember Specht	aye
Councilmember Woestehoff	aye
Mayor Kuzma	aye

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the City Council adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brian S. Hagen  
City Administrator

ATTEST:

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Katie M. Schmidt  
City Clerk

Drafted by Ava Major  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*

A recording of this meeting is available for viewing online at [www.qctv.org](http://www.qctv.org)  
<<http://www.qctv.org>>. Recordings are available for 36 months after the date of the meeting.