

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, April 25, 2024, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Cheri Gengler
 Commissioner Bruce Anderson
 Commissioner Randy Bauer
 Commissioner Ryan Heineman (arrived at approx. 7:40 p.m.)
 Commissioner Eric Peters

Members Absent: Commissioner Tom Hunt
 Commissioner Gary Van Scoy

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 7:00 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 Bauer, to approve the agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.01: Approve the March 28, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

6. COMMISSION BUSINESS

6.01: Appoint Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Planning Commission

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to appoint Cheri Gengler as Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

Motion by Chairperson Gengler, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to appoint Randy Bauer as Vice Chairperson of the Planning Commission.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

7.01: Public Hearing: Consider a Zoning Amendment for Donna Farms

Public Hearing

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

Presentation

City Planner Martin presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Zoning Map Amendment.

Commissioner Bauer noted that the lot to the west is zoned B-2 and asked if that lot is currently developed.

City Planner Martin replied that lot is still occupied by the Pearson family home.

Commissioner Bauer asked what would be permitted/not permitted in B-2 versus B-3.

City Planner Martin replied that B-2 is geared more towards community businesses such as service and retail, and staff believes that B-3 would blend well with whatever is developed in the B-2 zoning.

Citizen Input

Steve Young, applicant, commented that he does have first right of refusal on property mentioned zoned B-2 that is owned by the Pearson family, noting that the Pearsons actually live a bit further down and not on that specific property. He stated that his hope would then be to rezone that property to B-3 as well.

Commissioner Bauer explained that he just wanted to ensure that there would not be a conflict between uses but that becomes a non-issue if Mr. Young plans to purchase that property as well.

Commissioner Peters recognized that an RV business will be going onto one of those properties and asked if RVs would be allowed to park on the street.

Mr. Young replied that he is unsure. He stated that he paid for one third of the street himself and therefore if there is right-of-way, that should be fine to temporarily park on the street. He noted that the RV business site will be five acres and therefore will have room for parking. He stated that he spoke with every member of the City Council with the exception of one, who were all excited about the two businesses that will be utilizing these sites. He believed that the project would compliment the highway and would provide a larger home for RV World, which has been bought out by the new company.

City Planner Martin commented that loading and parking standards would be reviewed upon site plan review but the RV business plans to have unloading and parking included on the site plan.

John Marquartz, RV business owner, stated that he is available to answer any questions. He stated that their business is family owned with locations in three other cities. He commented that they build nice, clean facilities that are kept well. He stated that RV World is not their standard and it is their ambition to build something better. He stated that the idea of loading and unloading on the street would never enter their mind. He stated that they will have those areas designated on their site. He stated that the current RV World location is too small and does not meet their standard, which is the reason for the new location.

Chairperson Gengler acknowledged that site plan review will be done at a later time. She stated that this is a unique location against Highway 10 with residential across the street and wanted to ensure that the residential properties would be the least impacted.

Mr. Marquartz commented that they are more interested in increasing visibility along the highway side and blending along the other side, noting that their priority is not visibility along Riverdale. He stated that while they would not want to wall off with trees, they would be open to having several trees along that side to provide some blending. He commented that if they have a good looking location, with premium touches, there should not be a reason to heavily screen.

Commissioner Peters commented that he would worry about the amount of light on the lot.

Mr. Marquartz commented that they want sufficient light for security but displaying the RVs at night is not a priority they have. He stated that they close at 6 p.m. and therefore he would be confident that lighting would not be an issue as they would use LED downcast lighting.

Councilmember Woestehoff referenced the existing RV World location and asked if that property will be absorbed by the highway project or if there would be plans for that property.

Mr. Marquartz commented that ideally, he would like to sell that property, but if they did not sell that site they could perhaps use that for overflow storage. He commented that the RV business does not fit that site and if there was a new business that better fit that site it could be a good use of that property.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:20 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Peters, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to recommend that City Council adopt Ordinance #24-08, Approving a Zoning Map Amendment for Donna Farms.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

7.02: Public Hearing: Consider Sketch Plan and Related Variances for a Proposed Minor Plat of Pearson Place 2nd Addition at the Southwest Corner of Riverdale Drive and Highway 10 (Project No. 24-100); Case of John Dobbs

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 7:21 p.m.

Presentation

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report stating that staff recommends adopting Resolution #24-108 granting multiple variances associate with the proposed subdivision known as Pearson Place 2nd Addition.

Commissioner Anderson asked if all three of the issues requiring the variances were caused by the City in essence with the changes to the Code.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that is correct.

Citizen Input

John Dobbs, 2453 Skyline Drive Bloomington, MN, applicant, commented that he has worked with/for the Pearson family for more than a decade. He stated that going through the Riverstone South development process with Bowers Drive and the park planning, access ended up where it did which then created the need for variances. He stated that they are aware of the Donna Farms development and are supportive of their projects.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson aye
Commissioner Peters aye
Commissioner Bauers aye
Chairperson Gengler aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:35 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to adopt Resolution #24-108 Granting a Variance to Standards Addressing Double Frontage Lots, Additional Width for Corner Lot, and the Setback from an Arterial Road.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Bauer aye
Commissioner Peters aye
Commissioner Anderson aye
Chairperson Gengler aye

Motion Carried.

7.03: Public Hearing: Consider a Zoning Amendment, Site Plan and Variances to Height Regulations in the COR Framework for Norhart Ramsey at 7975 and 7979 Sunwood Drive NW

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 7:36 p.m.

Presentation

City Planner Martin presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Zoning Map Amendment, Site Plan, and Variance to Height Regulations in the COR Framework.

Commissioner Heineman arrived.

Commissioner Bauer noted the dewatering that has been done within the COR and asked if the lower parking level would encounter issues with groundwater.

City Planner Martin replied that the position of the sunken parking garage was designed to minimize the impact on the water table.

Commissioner Peters asked where the water would be going from the parking area.

City Planner Martin replied that all stormwater from this site would go to the regional stormwater pond, similar to the other developments in this area.

Commissioner Heineman referenced the proposed 5,000 square feet of retail space and asked if there have been any concepts on what will occupy that space.

Citizen Input

Marybeth Weiss, applicant, replied that they have not yet designated the retail user but have begun to have those discussions. She stated that they have spoken with several restaurants. She stated that they have welcomed input from staff as well as the owner of Hom2Suites and would welcome input from the residents as well in order to bring forward something that is desired.

Commissioner Heineman commented that restaurants continue to be of high demand.

Ms. Weiss provided a brief presentation on Norhart, which is a family-owned company based in Forest Lake and they design, build and manage the apartments that they develop. She stated that their construction crew are also Norhart employees and therefore have the same sense of pride. She described the Norhart way which focuses on creating a better way of living with luxury amenities, convenience and community. She stated that they currently have 12 developments in the metro and provided some concept images of projects currently proposed, or under development, in two other communities. She provided an overview of the proposed project, amenities, and retail space. She stated that they will satisfy the build to setback line requirement and provided additional details on the proposed building height variance, noting the similarity in height to another apartment building within the COR. She provided details on the updated photometric plan and reviewed the proposed developing timing. She stated that they look forward to being in Ramsey and contributing to the community.

Commissioner Bauer asked the typical resident for Norhart.

Ms. Weiss replied that there are a mix of residents, depending on where the building is located. She stated that the typical residents would be young professionals, young families, and some retirees.

Chairperson Gengler referenced the two main doors and asked if there would be additional entrances.

Ms. Weiss provided details on the different accesses for the building, noting that those are secured doors that use a fob to unlock.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Bauer aye
Commissioner Heineman aye
Commissioner Peters aye
Commissioner Anderson aye
Chairperson Gengler aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 8:03 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Heineman, to adopt Resolution #24-115, Approving a Variance to Height Regulations in the COR Zoning District for Norhart Ramsey at 7975 and 7979 Sunwood Drive NW.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson nay
Commissioner Peters aye
Commissioner Heineman aye
Commissioner Bauer aye
Chairperson Gengler aye

Motion Carried.

Motion by Commissioner Peters, seconded by Commissioner Heineman, to recommend that City Council approve the Site Plan and Zoning Map Amendment for Northart Ramsey.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Bauer aye
Commissioner Heineman aye
Commissioner Peters aye
Commissioner Anderson nay
Chairperson Gengler aye

Motion Carried.

8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

Planning Manager Larson commented that the items considered tonight will move forward to the City Council at the May 14th meeting.

Senior Planner Anderson reported that the spring recycling event will be held from 8 a.m. to noon on May 4th at the Public Works Facility.

Commissioner Peters commended Connexus Energy for the cleanup that they did on CR 5 recently.

Commissioner Bauer noted the upcoming Ramsey Business Expo this Saturday at Adrenaline Sports.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Peters, to adjourn the meeting.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Peters	aye
Commissioner Heineman	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Larson
Planning Manager

ATTEST:

Dana Verbeek
Planning Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.