

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, June 27, 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
 Commissioner Gary Van Scoy

Members Absent: Commissioner Tom Hunt
 Commissioner Eric Peters

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Anderson, Van Scoy, Bauer, and Heineman. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.01: Approve the May 23, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Bauer, Heineman, Anderson, and Van Scoy. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS

6.01: Public Hearing: Consider a Conditional Use Permit for a Motor Fuel Station for Take 5 Oil Change at 7990 Sunwood Drive NW

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 7:01 p.m.

Presentation

City Planner Martin presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Conditional Use Permit.

Citizen Input

Ryan Burkman, Garage Holdings, provided a quick overview of the company operations and its ownership group. He noted that while the company is somewhat new to the area, they are the third largest oil change company in the U.S.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked if the applicant considered placing the building on the site closer to Armstrong.

Mr. Burkman commented that they considered both sites but preferred the front for the flow of traffic and visibility.

Gary Gruber, Director of Construction for Garage Holdings, agreed with the comments of visibility as many of their clients come on a drive by basis. He stated that the other building they would propose will fit better with more parking on the rear site.

Commissioner Bauer recognized that the other building is not part of this request and asked if that is speculative or whether there is a tenant.

Mr. Burkman commented that they have inclinations and are working to find a complimentary use as soon as possible but do not yet have that use identified.

Commissioner Heineman asked for more information on the complimentary use. He stated that he would like the use to be complimentary to the area rather than this specific use.

Mr. Burkman commented that it would most likely be coffee or food related and not an auto related use, therefore more complimentary to the area.

Mr. Gruber commented that the layout would allow for a drive-thru lane for that complimentary use.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the only signage would be the signage on the building.

Mr. Gruber commented that they negotiated a spot on the Aldi pylon sign along with their building signage.

Chairperson Gengler asked for details on the Aldi pylon sign location.

City Planner Larson commented that sign is located on the northwest corner of the Aldi site and was designed to have space for other businesses.

Chairperson Gengler commented that she appreciates the greenspace and landscaping. She commented that the gap between this lot and Aldi seems very narrow.

City Planner Larson clarified that area being referenced is a striped pedestrian walkway. He also identified the sidewalk locations which, combined with the pedestrian walkways, help to promote walkability for pedestrians.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked the height of the garage doors on the bays.

Mr. Gruber commented that all the doors are the same height at 11.6 feet noting that all three doors are the same.

Commissioner Van Scoy recognized that this is a unique layout for the COR but noted that it is not off of a street and is instead off of a driveway.

City Planner Martin provided additional details on the constraints of the site.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked who owns the property to the south.

City Planner Martin replied that the parcel immediately south is owned by Phillips Edison and provided details on the different strip mall owners.

Commissioner Anderson asked how any spills would be contained.

Mr. Gruber commented that the buildings are designed to contain all spills internally and provided details on the pits which exist under the bays where vehicles pull in. He stated that the new oil is also contained over a recessed floor and therefore any spills would be routed into those pits. He stated that the pits have the capacity to hold all old oil and new oil within the building. He stated that if that were to occur and the pits were to hold the spills, a truck would then be brought in to haul that out.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if there would be picnic benches or anything on the greenspace.

Mr. Gruber commented that area would be turf.

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Bauer, Van Scoy, Anderson, and Heineman. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:23 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Bauer, to recommend that City Council approve Resolution #24-166, Approving a Conditional Use Permit for a Motor Fuel Station in the COR-2b Zoning District at 7990 Sunwood Drive NW.

Further discussion

Commissioner Van Scoy stated that he was pretty uncomfortable with the request when he began to review it but given the location and circumstances of the property, he now believes this will be a good use. Commissioner Heineman commented that while he has reservations about using that space for an oil change business, as he would prefer more restaurants, the request does meet the requirements and therefore he will support it.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Anderson, Bauer, Heineman, and Van Scoy. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

6.02: Public Hearing: “Skyline on Sunwood” Site Plan Review for a Mixed-Use Building at 7545 Sunwood Drive NW (PSD LLC)

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 7:24 p.m.

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the proposed Site Plan and building with the conditions listed in the draft resolution.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked for details on the built to line for this structure.

Planning Manager Larson commented that the request does meet the build to requirement.

Commissioner Heineman referenced the commercial space proposed to be attached to the residential and asked if that would limit the uses that could occupy that space.

Planning Manager Larson commented that the building would have limitations on what could be within, noting that a full-service restaurant could not be located within because of the logistics but a sandwich shop or coffee shop be there as well as other retail uses.

Chairperson Gengler asked how the retail would impact the parking and whether employee parking is counted within the spaces as well.

Planning Manager Larson commented that the plan set shows the breakdown between each use, noting that the retail use would be higher during the daytime while the residential parking demand would be higher at night. He noted that there is also on-street parking available that was not factored into the parking ratios. He stated that outside of this request, staff is suggesting whether it would be appropriate to place time durations on the street parking, which would allow for faster turnover of those spaces.

Citizen Input

Matt Kuker, PSD, provided a sample of the material they are considering for the siding. He commented that this project would attempt to bring a different level of housing to Ramsey with higher end apartment units designed for young urban professionals or those wanting to downsize from their home. He reviewed some photos from a project their builder is currently completing and identified some of the amenities proposed within the building. He also provided details on the layout of the site, noting that the surface parking was intentionally designed not to be visible from Sunwood. He stated that they will be using magic paks. He stated that they do plan to have space for employee parking for the retail uses in order to make the most convenient parking available for customers. He reviewed some of the potential uses that could go into the retail space. He commented that this will be the nicest of the nine apartment buildings they have constructed thus far, with the price per unit well over \$200,000 per unit.

Commissioner Bauer asked the price range for rents compared to the other PSD apartment buildings in the COR.

Mr. Kuker provided comparisons of his existing apartment complexes in the COR and noted that this would be \$300 or \$400 higher than the Residence at the COR. He commented that this would most likely not be a first-time apartment renter and will pursue a different clientele.

Commissioner Anderson commented that he would have liked to see more retail on the lower level. He stated that his vision of the Main Street is to have shops along the way instead of apartment buildings along the way. He asked and received confirmation that these units would be leased rather than owned.

Mr. Kuker commented that he is close to securing a higher end restaurant to go into the old Kitchen Table location. He stated that they also want restaurants in Ramsey. He explained that the topic

of rooftops continues to come up, noting that each apartment unit is counted the same as a single-family home.

Commissioner Anderson stated that he wants to see a destination where people can walk rather than people having to leave for those things.

Commissioner Van Scoy stated that he likes the basic concept, as the COR was meant to have a combination of residential and retail. He referenced the significant number of comments from staff and asked if the applicant agreed with those comments.

Mr. Kuker commented that he believes that his team has addressed most of those comments and agreed that some of those things were good ideas that they have incorporated into the plan. He commented that staff has been great to work with on this project.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked for details on snow storage.

Mr. Kuker replied that the snow would be trucked off site, which will be the same for the entire COR area eventually.

Commissioner Heineman commented that he appreciates the retail space in the building. He also understood that Ramsey needs to grow, and this will allow more units for residents while allowing the rural part of Ransey to remain rural. He stated that if the intention is to attract young professionals, the retail space needs to cater to that demographic.

Mr. Kuker commented that he will have control over the businesses that lease those spaces and therefore will pick things that are attractive to the building and area.

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Bauer, Heineman, Anderson, and Van Scoy. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 8:00 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Van Scoy, seconded by Commissioner Heineman, to recommend that City Council approve the Site Plan for a mixed-use building at 7545 Sunwood Drive NW.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Van Scoy, Heineman, Anderson, and Bauer. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

6.03: Public Hearing: Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment Pertaining to Mixed Use

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 8:00 p.m.

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Citizen Input

No comments.

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Anderson, Van Scoy, Bauer, and Heineman. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:02 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Heineman, seconded by Commissioner Van Scoy, to recommend that City Council approve Resolution #24-157 for a Comprehensive Plan text amendment pertaining to Mixed Use.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Heineman, Van Scoy, Anderson, and Bauer. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

6.04: Public Hearing: Zoning Code Updates

Public Hearing

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

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the amendment ordinance.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked for more clarification on lighting requirements. He stated that the language related to the exception is unclear as to whether that would allow the brighter or dimmer light.

Planning Manager Larson provided details on the related lighting table.

Councilmember Woestehoff provided clarification noting that the language is unclear as to which standard applies.

Planning Manager Larson commented that staff could look to clarify that language.

Councilmember Woestehoff suggested an update to the administrative review language.

Planning Manager Larson commented that staff would also update that language. He asked if the Commission desired modification of driveway regulations. He noted that the current regulation has a setback of five feet and the next meeting will have two variance requests to consider placement closer than five feet.

Commissioner Anderson replied that he is comfortable with the five-foot setback.

Commissioner Van Scoy agreed.

Chairperson Gengler asked if there is one zoning district where the variance request is more common.

Planning Manager Larson commented that the two variance requests are within the R-1a district.

Commissioner Heineman commented that he would agree with leaving that at five feet and if people want a variance that can be requested and considered on a case-by-case basis.

Commissioner Anderson commented that having the driveway right on the property line could cause issues as people would be unclear as to where the property line then is.

Citizen Input

No comments.

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Bauer, Anderson, Heineman, and Van Scoy. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 8:15 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner Heineman asked the reason to shift from Council approval to zoning administrator approval for the items proposed.

Planning Manager Larson replied that earlier drafts had multiple levels of wind energy systems, but the Council made cuts to only allow the smaller units and therefore staff believed that routine

administrative review would be appropriate for those personal units, similar to the process for that type of solar.

Commissioner Heineman asked if the request were to be denied by staff, could the resident then appeal to the Council.

Planning Manager Larson confirmed that there is an appeal process.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked if the lighting language could be clarified now.

Planning Manager Larson proposed a solution.

Commissioner Van Scoy asked which standard would be utilized when there is shared parking.

Planning Manager Larson commented that it would be up to the maximum intensity allowed.

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Van Scoy, to recommend that City Council approve Ordinance #24-10 amending various sections of Chapter 106 – Zoning Code with the clarification to Section 106-310 lighting, subparagraph four and to Section 106-331 as discussed.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Bauer, Van Scoy, Anderson, and Heineman. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

7. COMMISSION BUSINESS

8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

Planning Manager Larson announced upcoming grand openings. He also noted a new addition to the planning staff team.

9. ADJOURNMENT

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Anderson, Van Scoy, Bauer, and Heineman. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Hunt and Peters.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Larson
Planning Manager

ATTEST:

Abdi Sahal
Planning Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.