

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, March 27, 2025, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Cheri Gengler
 Commissioner Bruce Anderson (virtual attendee)
 Commissioner Randy Bauer
 Commissioner Tom Hunt
 Commissioner Gary VanScoy

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Planning Manager Todd Larson
 City Planner Adam Martin
 Senior Planner Chris Anderson
 City Council Liaison Eric Peters
 City Attorney Fritz Knaak

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 VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, to approve the agenda as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.01: Approve the February 27, 2025 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Hunt	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS

6.01: Public Hearing: Oak Terrace Ramsey Park Outlot Variance to Subdivision Code at 6549 Highway 10 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 subdivision and variance. Items discussed during the presentation included background on the City-owned parcel to be subdivided, existing manufactured home placement across the current property line, and a need for a cross-access easement across both the existing Oak Terrace lot and the proposed lot to be created and sold to Oak Terrace. Further discussion was held regarding the need for two separate lots instead of adjusting the common lot line to reduce financing constraints.

Citizen Input

Jonathan Septer of 2188 Red Fox Circle, Chanhassen, serving as Counsel for Oak Terrace, stated that he is present to answer any questions.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt aye
Commissioner VanScoy aye
Commissioner Bauer aye
Commissioner Anderson aye
Chairperson Gengler aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:08 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Bauer, to adopt Resolution No. 25-062, Approving a Variance to Subdivision Code at 6549 Highway 10 NW.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson aye
Commissioner Bauer aye
Commissioner VanScoy aye
Commissioner Hunt aye
Chairperson Gengler aye

Motion Carried.

6.02: Public Hearing: Consider a Site Plan for a Proposed Expansion of an Existing Parking Lot at 7900 Riverdale Drive NW (Project No. 25-102); Case of Pleasureland RV Center – North Metro

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 7:09 p.m.

Presentation

Senior Planner Anderson presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Site Plan for the proposed parking lot expansion on the subject property. Items discussed during the presentation included the following: the intent for the parking lot expansion to serve as additional area to display and sell RVs; the plan to connect to municipal water, sewer, and storm sewer; retaining the existing well for irrigation purposes; the project’s adjacency to existing residential development south of the subject property, and; proposed landscaping along Riverdale Drive and the southern and western property lines.

Citizen Input

Gary Meyer of 2418 Serenity Drive, St. Cloud, on behalf of Pleasureland RV, stated that the dump station is only for their use and is not for public use.

Commissioner VanScoy referenced the abandoned septic system and asked what would happen with that.

Mr. Meyer replied that they would follow the Code requirements.

Senior Planner Anderson stated there is a process and paperwork that must be followed and filed, noting that the Building Division will monitor that process to ensure it is done correctly.

Mr. Meyer explained that the septic connection is near the area they will be expanding and, therefore, it made sense to do it all at once.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:15 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner Hunt stated that his concern was with the lighting, given the proximity of the home, but acknowledged that is already being addressed.

Mr. Meyer commented that the new style of lighting is more directionally focused than the existing lighting and noted that all existing lighting will be replaced with the new style, therefore, the result should be better for everyone.

Motion by Commissioner VanScoy, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, to recommend that City Council approve the Site Plan for Pleasureland RV Center's proposed parking lot expansion, contingent upon compliance with staff's review comments.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye

Commissioner Hunt aye
Chairperson Gengler aye

Motion Carried.

6.03: Public Hearing: Ramsey Landfill Solar Energy System Site Plan Review (Cedar Creek Energy)

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 7:17 p.m.

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Site Plan Review. Items discussed during the presentation included an overview of the landfill site, the proposed layout of the solar array south of the existing landfill mound, the proposed berm extension to provide screening of the solar array from adjacent streets, and the proposed transplanting of existing trees on the landfill property to provide for additional screening.

Citizen Input

Alex Gast, 3155 104th Lane NE, Blaine, on behalf of Cedar Creek Energy, stated that they were approached by Connexus and a few other developers to bring a solar array to this site. He explained that all the energy generated will be purchased by Connexus and then used by Connexus customers as an effort to deploy renewable energy sources into its system and to maintain lower rates for customers. He believed that this would be a fantastic use of the land, as buildings cannot be built on the landfill property. He also stated that the solar array layout will allow the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to continue its efforts in treating the landfill.

Commissioner Bauer asked if this would be the final project or whether there would be a possibility for expansion in the future.

Mr. Gast replied that this would be the final design for this site.

Commissioner VanScoy agreed that this would be a good use for this land, as he was unsure what else could be done with the land.

Chairperson Gengler asked if the yellow line shown on the Site Plan is just the border of the project or whether that is some type of fence to be installed.

Mr. Gast replied that the yellow line will be a woven fence, which will allow small animals to move through the area.

Commissioner Anderson agreed that this would be a good project.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:24 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to recommend that City Council approve the Site Plan Review for a Solar Energy System on the Ramsey Landfill Property.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Hunt	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

6.04: Public Hearing: Sign Code Update

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 7:25 p.m.

Presentation

City Planner Martin presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Sign Code Update. Items discussed during the presentation included a review of the project goals, key features of the new code, language added since the February meeting, a review of Planning Commission's input from the February meeting, and a review of future meeting dates to discuss and adopt the sign code update. Mr. Martin also introduced City Attorney Knaak to answer any legal questions.

Commissioner VanScoy asked for the updated definition of billboard that was mentioned in the presentation.

City Planner Martin provided the updated definition of billboard, highlighting the changes.

Commissioner Bauer thanked staff for all of the work that went into this process. He asked if there is a plan to inform businesses of the signs that require and do not require permits.

City Planner Martin replied that they will be working with the Communications Coordinator in order to communicate the information to residents and businesses.

Chairperson Gengler commented that she likes the grid that was put together. She referenced the prohibition of signs painted on walls and asked how that applies to painted murals. She stated that she would not want to prohibit the opportunity for a mural and stated that perhaps there is a permitting process that could be reviewed.

City Planner Martin commented that a mural likely would not be classified as a sign and would likely be allowed, following a permitting process.

Citizen Input

Nichole Rudack, 14608 Peridot Street NW, asked if the new change in Code would impact existing businesses or whether existing signs would be grandfathered in.

City Planner Martin replied that there is a nonconformity section of the City Code, which carries over language for signs that are already established but may no longer be allowed. He stated that there would be few instances of that because the new regulations are generally less restrictive than the existing regulations.

Ms. Rudack asked if it is the opinion of staff that these changes would have zero financial impact on existing Ramsey businesses.

City Attorney Knaak replied that there is no way to predict the financial impact. He stated that if a business has an existing sign that no longer conforms, it would continue to be allowed. He explained that if there were a big windstorm and the sign were damaged, then there would be additional discussions with the City about replacement.

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

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Anderson	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Hunt	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:40 p.m.

Commission Business

Commissioner VanScoy referenced the definition of billboard, as proposed, which does not mention the sign but the fact that it provides direction. He stated that in his opinion, a billboard is a specific structure that has a certain amount of size to it.

City Planner Martin stated that he reviewed definitions of 30 other cities, and this is a standard definition for this type of sign. He explained that the existing Code includes regulation within definition, and staff tried to clean that up by having separate definition and regulation lists. He stated that they also want to ensure that the definition does not regulate content as that is an issue that is heavily adjudicated.

Commissioner VanScoy stated that the definition does not address the sign itself and asked if there is an assumption that everyone knows what a billboard is.

City Attorney Knaak stated that he has a lot of knowledge in the area of signs and noted a recent course that he taught on municipal signage. He commented that this update is very well drafted, and if adopted, Ramsey will have one of the most updated and well-written sign ordinances that he has seen. He stated that billboards are one of the most heavily litigated issues involving signs nationally; therefore, generally speaking, there should be a billboard definition that does not have a specific size mentioned. He stated that the definition should be very broad and should not mention content, as that would begin to walk on unconstitutional grounds. He provided more specific details on recent litigation cases. He explained that for these reasons, you would want a definition that is very broad and content-neutral. He stated that this is a very well-drafted ordinance. He stated that the regulations for a billboard are found elsewhere.

Motion by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Hunt, to recommend that City Council adopt Ordinance No. 25-07, Adopting the Sign Code Update.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

7. COMMISSION BUSINESS

No comments.

8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

Planning Manager Larson commented that three new members will join the Planning Commission at the April meeting, noting that two of them are present tonight in the audience.

Nichole Rudack and Jeffrey Lubarski introduced themselves.

Planning Manager Larson noted that Debra Musgrove will be the third addition to the Commission.

Commissioner Hunt commented that due to commitments in his professional and personal life, he decided not to pursue another term on the Commission.

Commissioner Bauer thanked Commissioner Hunt for his service on the Commission.

Commissioner Hunt commented on the wonderful job that staff does to make the information easily digestible and easier to do this job. He commented that he has learned a lot in his time on the Commission.

Planning Manager Larson noted that staff are also interviewing candidates for the Planning Assistant position and hoped to have an announcement on that at the next meeting.

Commissioner VanScoy commented that his neighbor had a large oak tree, located within the right-of-way, that died. He commented on the quick and excellent response of City staff in taking that tree down and cleaning up that area.

Commissioner Bauer commented that he will be out of town for the April meeting and will plan to attend virtually.

Commissioner Anderson commented that he will attend the April meeting virtually as well and will plan to attend the May meeting in person.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner VanScoy, to adjourn the meeting.

A roll call vote was performed:

Commissioner Hunt	aye
Commissioner VanScoy	aye
Commissioner Bauer	aye
Commissioner Anderson	aye
Chairperson Gengler	aye

Motion Carried.

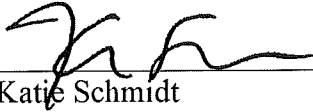
The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Todd Larson
Planning Manager

ATTEST:



Katie Schmidt
City Clerk

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.