

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

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Cheri Gengler
 Commissioner Michael Allshouse
 Commissioner Randy Bauer
 Commissioner Bradley Cochrane (arrived at 8:01 p.m.)
 Commissioner Jeffrey Lubarski
 Commissioner Debra Musgrove
 Commissioner Layee Sanoe

Members Absent: None

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Gengler called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 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 Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Lubarski, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Bauer, Lubarski, Allshouse, Musgrove, and Sanoe. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Cochrane.

5. APPOINTMENT OF PLANNING COMMISSION OFFICERS

5.01: Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Commission

Chairperson Gengler stated that annually, the Commissions and Boards appoint Officers. She asked if there was any interest in the position of Chair, noting that she would be willing to continue to serve if desired.

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Musgrove, Bauer, Allshouse, Lubarski, and Sanoe. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Cochrane.

Commissioner Musgrove commented that she would be willing to serve as Vice Chair.

Chairperson Gengler noted that Commissioner Bauer is currently the Vice Chair and asked if he had an interest in the position as well.

Commissioner Bauer confirmed that he would also be willing to continue as Vice Chair.

Motion by Commissioner Allshouse, seconded by Commissioner Lubarski, to appoint Randy Bauer as Vice Chair of the Planning Commission.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Allshouse, Lubarski, Bauer, Musgrove, and Sanoe. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Cochrane.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

6.01: Approve the March 26, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Musgrove, seconded by Commissioner Lubarski, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Musgrove, Lubarski, Allshouse, Bauer, and Sanoe. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Cochrane.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS

7.01: Public Hearing: Consider a Zoning Map Amendment for I-1, Light Industrial to I-2, General Industrial for 14021 Azurite Street NW and 14021 Basalt Street NW; Case of ACE Solid Waste

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 7:04 p.m.

Presentation

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

Commissioner Bauer stated that within the description, it states that 14050 Basalt Street has been owned by ACE for years and was inadvertently rezoned from E2 to I1, and that the applicant is responsible for all costs for this process. He questioned why the applicant would be responsible if the City inadvertently rezoned the property.

City Planner Martin stated that, as the Zoning Map was adopted in 2023, the City accidentally put the wrong zoning on that parcel. He stated that the applicant is also requesting rezoning of two other parcels, so there is no additional cost for the 14050 Basalt Street NW.

Citizen Input

Dave Wiggins, ACE Solid Waste, 19671 Yellow Pine St NW Oak Grove, stated that he is present to answer any questions. He stated that the intent is to expand the area for truck parking into parcel B, and container maintenance will be shifted to parcel C.

Commissioner Musgrove asked if there are any other properties in the area owned by ACE that could be used for additional expansion in the future, or whether this would be the final expansion.

Mr. Wiggins commented that these are the only other properties outside of the main campus that are currently owned by ACE.

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

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Bauer, Lubarski, Allshouse, Musgrove, and Sanoe. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Cochrane.

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 7:11 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Musgrove, seconded by Commissioner Lubarski, to recommend that City Council adopt Ordinance #26-06, Rezoning Property at 14021 Azurite Street NW, 14021 Basalt Street NW, and 14050 Basalt Street NW from I-1 to I-2.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Musgrove, Lubarski, Allshouse, Bauer, and Sanoe. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Cochrane.

8. COMMISSION BUSINESS

8.01: Consider a Sketch Plan for a Proposed 15-Lot Single Family Residential Subdivision at 17400 & 17650 Erkium Street NW (Project No. 26-106); Case of Thomas Allen Homes LLC

Presentation

Senior Planner Anderson presented the Staff Report stating that staff recommends directing the applicant to proceed with preparing the Preliminary Plat plan set and applying for Preliminary Plat review.

Commission Business

Commissioner Bauer asked if emergency response had any concerns with the length of the cul-de-sac.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that there were no concerns identified, outside of the requested additional width and signing for no parking on one side of the road.

Commissioner Bauer asked for the width of the street that would be needed to allow parking on both sides of the road.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that he did not ask that question of the Fire Marshal, but in the urban areas, the standard street sections are 32 feet wide.

Commissioner Bauer stated that he lives on a road with similar parking restrictions on one side, and the restriction is not always followed or enforced unless someone calls to complain. He stated that he would prefer a wider road with parking on both sides.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that one significant difference between the proposed development and the neighborhood of Commissioner Bauer would be the distance between homes. He stated that this neighborhood would have 15 homes with larger lots and distance between homes, whereas the other neighborhood has 200 to 300 homes.

Commissioner Allshouse asked how many streets in the area of the proposed development have similar parking restrictions.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that he was unsure whether there were any other neighborhoods in that area that would have similar parking restrictions.

Commissioner Musgrove asked where TH 47 is in regard to the development orientation.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that TH 47 would be to the west.

Commissioner Musgrove commented that she did drive out to the surrounding area and asked if 177th Ave NW is on the street project list and whether it could be added to the scope of this development project.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that the gravel road that Commissioner Musgrove spoke about is a private driveway for a shed. He stated that 177th ends in a cul-de-sac, and there is a 35-acre parcel between the end of 177th and the proposed development. He stated that should the property to the west develop, staff was attempting to demonstrate that there could be a logical through street from the 177th Avenue cul-de-sac to the proposed cul-de-sac within this proposed development. He provided clarification on the scope of the proposed development and the potential through street that could be developed if the property to the west were to be developed in the future. He noted that the only access into the development would be Erkium.

Commissioner Bauer commented that this sketch plan appears to meet all current City Code regulations, with the exception of the two items noted for variances. He asked if the City would not have to permit this to go forward aside from the two variances.

Senior Planner Anderson stated that, other than the exceptions for cul-de-sac length and lot depth for lots five and six, this request would meet all other requirements.

Commissioner Bauer stated that if the two variances were not approved and the applicant adjusted their plans to remove the need for the two variances, there would not appear to be any reason to deny the request. He asked about the liability the City would have if it were to deny a request that met all City requirements.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that the City would be in a position of a lawsuit if it were to deny a project that met all standards.

City Attorney Johnson confirmed that if a project meets all City Code requirements and the City denied it, the applicant would have the ability to sue because that decision would have been arbitrary and capricious. We have to have reasonable reasons to why we say no to something and if it meets our code, we would not have valid reasons to say no and it would fall under arbitrary and capricious.

Chairperson Gengler invited the applicant to speak.

Tom Dehn, applicant, 11261 Fernbrook Lane Dayton, stated that he is friends with the property owners who reached out to them with interest in development. He stated that City staff have been great to work with throughout this process. He commented that this property has beautiful woods, and their goal is to create homes with values of \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000. He stated that their proposal is to minimally clear what is needed for development with custom grading.

Commissioner Bauer noted a number of staff comments that were provided and asked if the applicant had concerns with those.

Mr. Dehn replied that he believed all of that would be achievable, and there was nothing suggested that would be unreasonable.

Commissioner Bauer asked for the input of the applicant on the street width and whether they would prefer the staff recommendation with no parking on one side or his suggestion for a wider road that would allow for parking on both sides.

Mr. Dehn commented that these are big lots with long driveways, so most people will not choose to park on the street. He did not have any concerns with the recommended width of the Fire Marshall, but did not believe the road would have enough use to require a width of 32 feet.

Chairperson Gengler recognized that this is not a public hearing but provided an opportunity for residents to provide input.

Paul Olson, 5750 177th Avenue NW, commented that he owns the property to the west of the subject property. He asked when the restriction was made for the maximum length of 600 feet for a cul-de-sac.

Planning Manager Larson replied that the 600-foot length has been in Code for decades and provided additional explanation on how that calculation arose based on the length of hose that was carried by a firetruck.

Mr. Olson asked if developments are required to have multiple access points. He noted that, as shown in the packet, the ghost plat would have a road running through his property. He commented that the structures on his property have substantial value, and it would not make sense to sell his property to a developer. He stated that if his property were sold in the future, it would most likely be to a farmer or someone with horses.

Roger Rowbotham, 17715 Erkium Street NW, stated that he is on the corner between Erkium and 177th and provided more context on that intersection, noting that all the neighborhood traffic comes through that one intersection. He stated that there are 24 homes coming through that bottleneck, and this proposal would add 15 or 16 additional homes. He agreed that these would be beautiful lots with beautiful homes, but it needs to fit into the area. He noted that the two additional options to expand access within the neighborhood (Fluorine or 177th) are not likely or ideal. He asked how the traffic could be alleviated rather than increased. He stated that he spoke 20 years ago when the property was last for sale, and it did not go through because of many issues. He stated that in that experience, he reached out to the Councilmember for that ward, and he was out walking the area the next day and set up a neighborhood meeting to discuss the pros and cons. He stated that with this proposed development, he reached out to the Councilmember twice and has yet to receive a call back.

Denny Donovan, 17605 Argon Street NW, stated that it seems that they are pretty far along in the process, and yet the sign was just posted on the property about ten days ago. He stated that he does not have an issue with the developer, as he seems logical and like he has a desire to protect the property. He acknowledged the variance that would be necessary for the length of the cul-de-sac and asked if that would be a deal breaker for the project. He referenced the comments of liability for the City if the project were denied, but noted that the variance for cul-de-sac length is based on the assumption that the property to the west may develop. He noted that the property

owner spoke tonight and stated that the development of his property would be unlikely. He echoed the comments of the previous speaker about the traffic concerns.

Chairperson Gengler clarified that the cul-de-sac would not go onto the adjacent property and would be enclosed within the property in question.

Mr. Donovan commented that a variance would be necessary for that length to be approved.

Senior Planner Anderson confirmed that a variance would be needed for a cul-de-sac that extends more than 600 feet. He stated that when staff review a proposed development, they need to take a broader look at the surrounding area. He used the example of developments with utilities, which are also required to be extended to the end of a property, should the adjacent property develop. He noted that in this case, the cul-de-sac would be required to extend to provide an opportunity for a through street, if the neighboring property were to develop, as that could provide a second point of access. He recognized that the current property owner does not have plans for development, but at some time in the future, the property will change ownership, and there is no way to predict what the next property owner would want to do.

Matthew Clue, 17330 Germanium Street, commented that he lives west of lots nine and ten and expressed concerns with inconsistency. He stated that a neighbor called the City on him about two trees that he cut down, and it was urgent that those be replaced. He noted that in this scenario, many more trees would be removed from the subject property.

Senior Planner Anderson stated that a tree inventory is required as part of any development where data would be collected. He provided additional information on the tree preservation ordinance and its requirements. He noted that the resident referred to complaints about tree clearing, which he responded to, and this property owner was very cordial and willing to cooperate. He noted that the trees were removed by the river, where there are more concerns with erosion. He stated that this project would not be treated any differently than any other subdivision, but a tree inventory is not required at this step in the process.

Mr. Clue referenced lots nine and ten and asked about the distance from Trott Brook.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that lot nine would include a very small portion of Trott Brook, whereas lot ten would have a wetland area associated with Trott Brook.

Mr. Clue asked if they are aware of the flooding that occurs from the waterway.

Senior Planner Anderson noted the map provided, which delineates the floodplain.

Christine Barrett, 17610 Argon Street, commented that they are about the narrow portion of what is being proposed and asked if any members of the Commission have driven through the neighborhood to see the wildlife and trees. She stated that it was mentioned that the tree inventory is a part of the Preliminary Plat process, but asked who had been in her backyard looking at the trees last week.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that it was not City staff.

Mrs. Barrett referenced the wetland and asked about the proposed plan for added drainage that would be created by the additional homes.

Senior Planner Anderson stated that homes cannot be built on a wetland. He stated that wetland delineations would be completed throughout this process. He stated that information, along with stormwater management plans, would be reviewed by the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization (LRRWMO). He stated that drainage and utility easements would be required for all wetlands, as well as an extension beyond that. He noted that the stormwater management plans would be reviewed by the City as well to ensure that the plans would not cause increased drainage onto other properties.

Cody Pretorius, 17740 Fluorine Street NW, commented that there is a difference in driving during the day and driving during high traffic times. He asked if there would be plans to increase speed and law enforcement on 7th and TH 47.

Senior Planner Anderson stated that there are no plans for increased enforcement, but if there are concerns, those can be brought to the attention of the Police Department, which can then increase patrols in that area.

Dalton Maue, 17850 Erkium Street, asked if anyone has counted the number of delivery and service trucks that go down the streets in this area. He commented that the streets are posted at 30 mph and had concerns with the speeds of the vehicles in that area already, along with an increased number of homes. He asked if there could be additional patrols in the neighborhood in addition to the roads mentioned by the previous speaker.

Todd Blanchard, 17500 Erkium Street, stated that while he is not excited about development, he acknowledged that they cannot stop development, and they will not do better than Mr. Dehn developing the property as proposed. He believed that parking on one side would be sufficient and did not believe that the road would need to be 32 feet wide. He commented that wetland mitigation would be required for the road and believed that that activity should be minimized to the extent possible. He believed that this was a smart and reasonable development with a great developer.

Mr. Dehn stated that he understands the request of the City to extend the cul-de-sac west, but would be fine with not building that as well. He commented that if the City believes that Erkium should be curved, he could do that, but noted that fewer trees would be removed in the other scenario. He clarified that he has not threatened any lawsuits and has worked well and collaboratively with staff.

Councilmember Peters stated that the resident to the west is requesting more vegetative barriers between the properties and asked if the applicant would be open to that.

Mr. Dehn commented that they are not planning to cut vegetation near the perimeter with the exception of the cul-de-sac, so he was unsure of the need for additional vegetation. He commented that the lots would be more centered with the perimeter trees remaining.

Commissioner Bauer provided an alternative suggestion where the cul-de-sac towards 177th was eliminated and instead extended past lot one, along the back sides of lots one through four. He asked if the lots would still meet all size requirements in that scenario.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that the smallest lot size proposed is 2.7 acres, where City Code only requires a minimum lot size of 2.5 acres. He stated that staff would need to do some math to determine if wrapping a road around the backside of the lots would reduce the size of those lots below the minimum requirement.

Chairperson Gengler thanked the applicant and residents for this input tonight, noting that this is the first step, and the applicant will use that input as guidance in moving forward in the application process.

Richard Rudin, 17740 Fluorine Street NW, commented that he would be two homes down from the development and asked if there would be notification if there were changes or additional dwellings were proposed in the future. He stated that it seems that this process has been fast-tracked, as he only received a one-week notice of this meeting.

Senior Planner Anderson stated that there is nothing locking in the Sketch Plan as shown tonight. He commented that if this moves forward to a Preliminary Plat, it would be notified as a public hearing, and notice would be sent to property owners within 700 feet of the subject property. He believed that the developer could have squeezed in a few more lots if they wanted, but he seems to believe there is more benefit in developing the property as proposed.

Mr. Rudin commented that his family had moved from St. Paul and was concerned about the construction vehicles that would be in the neighborhood with his young children. He implored the Commission to think about the community and wildlife that would be disrupted rather than development. He had concerns with the variance to extend the cul-de-sac and the combination of that length and only one access into the development. He did not believe that this property was consistent with the other examples provided by staff. He asked about the required turnaround standard for emergency vehicles and whether the proposed cul-de-sac would meet that standard.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that the Fire Marshall did provide comments on the length of the Erkium Street extension and required sizing and paving of the cul-de-sac.

Mr. Rudin asked if there had been a traffic analysis for this development.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that there is no requirement for a traffic study for the development of 15 lots.

Mr. Rudin asked if there had been an analysis of how this would impact drivers and the safety of families in the area.

Senior Planner Anderson replied that it had not been done at this stage.

Mr. Rudin commented that additional review is needed, and this item should be tabled until the safety of families is clearly addressed.

Chairperson Gengler reiterated that this is the initial Sketch Plan and thanked everyone for their feedback.

Senior Planner Anderson commented that the next step would be for the applicant to develop civil plans for the Preliminary Plat process.

Commissioner Musgrove thanked the residents for their input and acknowledged the need to balance those comments with property rights. She appreciated the efforts of the developer to minimize development impacts and preserve the perimeter trees. She stated that she would not recommend the curving of Erkiem in order to accommodate the 200-foot lot depth rather than 180 feet. She stated that she would not want to consider the looped option suggested by Commissioner Bauer, as that would remove buffering on the northern portion of the property and the adjacent neighbors. She stated that if the Preliminary Plat comes back with no additional homes, that would be great. She recognized that this is a beautiful area, but it is within the Rural Developing District, so development should be expected to some extent.

Commissioner Cochrane arrived.

8.02: Planning Commission Training

The new and existing members of the Commission introduced themselves.

Planning Manager Larson introduced the staff members.

City Attorney Johnson introduced herself and conducted a training with the Commission, reviewing the role of a Planning Commission and providing information on City administration, open meeting law, Data Practices Act, conflicts of interest, gifts law, municipal planning, public hearings, Conditional Use Permits, and Variances.

9. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

Planning Manager Larson stated that there were no land use applications scheduled for the May meeting, but noted that there will still be a meeting as they gear up for the Comprehensive Plan update process.

Councilmember Peters encouraged members of the Commission to take part in the Dine and Dash 5k and Ramsey Recycling Day events.

Commissioner Bauer also noted the upcoming Business Expo.

Senior Planner Anderson provided additional information on the Recycling Day as well as the upcoming Arbor Day event.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Bauer, seconded by Commissioner Lubarski, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion Carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Gengler, Commissioners Bauer, Lubarski, Allshouse, Cochrane, Musgrove, and Sanoe. Voting No: None. Absent: None.

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Todd Larson
Planning Manager

ATTEST:



Kalia Lor
Planning Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.