PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA

The Ramsey Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, October 29, 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 6:42 p.m.) Commissioner Jeffrey Lubarski Commissioner Debra Musgrove Commissioner Layee Sanoe
Also Present:	Planning Manager Todd Larson City Planner Adam Martin City Council Liaison Eric Peters

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 Lubarski, seconded by Commissioner Allshouse, to approve the agenda as presented.

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

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.01: Approve the September 24, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

5.02: Adopt the Planning Commission 2027 Calendar

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

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

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS/COMMISSION BUSINESS

6.01: Public Hearing: Consider a Site Plan Review for Elevate Hope House at 7782 Sunwood Drive NW

Public Hearing

Chairperson Gengler called the public hearing to order at 6:32 p.m.

Presentation

City Planner Martin presented the staff report stating that staff recommends approval of the Site Plan.

Commissioner Musgrove asked where the trash enclosure would be located.

City Planner Martin identified the location of the trash enclosure, which would be opposite the driveway entrance of the parking lot. He noted that the materials would match the building.

Commissioner Musgrove asked if the apartment would see the top of the trash or whether that would be covered.

City Planner Martin commented that the stairwell would face the trash enclosure.

Commissioner Musgrove stated that this seems like a great project and she was happy to see something being developed in that area.

Commissioner Cochrane arrived.

Citizen Input

Linda McDermott, applicant, introduced herself and welcomed any questions from the Commission. She stated that Gather is meant to be a place where people from all walks of life can get together and gather. She noted additional opportunities for tutoring and retail space for local artisans. She stated that the apartments for Elevate Hope House will provide continued independence and housing for young moms (18 – 24) and their kids in their program experiencing homelessness. She stated that the moms work with them for up to two years while they work on goals and skill building.

Chairperson Gengler asked if the playground would be for the moms and their kids living in the apartments or for the general public as well.

Ms. McDermott replied that the playground would be open to all, which is why it is located next to the outdoor patio.

Chairperson Gengler commented that it is a beautiful design and appreciated the thoughtfulness of the design and outdoor space.

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

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

Chairperson Gengler closed the public hearing at 6:45 p.m.

Commission Business

Motion by Commissioner Lubarski, seconded by Commissioner Bauer, to recommend that City Council adopt Resolution #26-248, Approving a Site Plan for a Mixed-Use Building at 7782 Sunwood Drive NW.

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

7. COMMISSION BUSINESS

7.01: "Rivenwick Village 5th Addition" – Sketch Plan Review for a 20 – 22 Unit Townhome Development

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson presented the Staff Report stating that staff is seeking direction on the use of the property. If the residential use is acceptable, the Commission is asked to provide any comments on the sketch plans.

Jay Roos, LGI Homes, stated that LGI acquired another builder in 2021 who previously owned this site. He noted that the property was guided for residential on the south side of 139th Lane, and business on the north. He stated that there are 27 townhome units under construction in the current project, which is a small size for that type of development as it places a higher burden of HOA costs onto the units. He stated that they would not pursue the northern part of the property if they did not already own it, as they do not develop commercial sites. He stated that typically if there is a commercial pad, they would sell that to another developer. He stated that they would like to explore the opportunity to add another 20 to 22 townhome units onto the northern part of the property while they are still building out the project. He commented that they previously marketed the property as commercial but received no interest. He stated that the property is less desirable

as commercial property because access would come from 139th Lane and the property does not have great visibility for that type of development. He noted that additional townhome units would reduce the HOA and insurance costs for residents within the development. He asked if the City would support the change in land use to support the proposal.

Commissioner Musgrove asked if the proposed townhomes would be added to the HOA for Rivenwick 4.

Mr. Roos confirmed that the HOA documents were drafted stating that other land they own could be added to the HOA. He noted that is their business practice when they own adjacent land, regardless of the zoning, just to provide for that future opportunity.

Commissioner Musgrove stated that this property has been available for commercial development for more than six years and it does not seem like there has been much interest in developing under that guidance. She believed that the housing plan would flow with the existing development. She stated that while she would like to see additional retail, it does not seem like there is interest from the market.

Mr. Roos commented that they have had the property listed with CBRE for commercial and the only interest he received was from an existing Highway 10 business that chose to relocate in another area.

Commissioner Musgrove asked if economic development staff had any input on this.

Planning Manager Larson replied that commercial and retail development want to be within The COR and along Armstrong Boulevard. He stated that they are not getting any interest in this area. He stated that 22 units of townhomes would produce more tax base than Village Bank does. He noted that businesses like customers, so more housing would support more business coming into The COR. He noted that there are still many other commercial sites that would be available if this were rezoned to residential.

Commissioner Musgrove stated that she believes that this would be a good decision to rezone the property to residential as there has not been commercial interest in this area.

Planning Manager Larson commented that the Rivenwick development began in 1992, so this property has been available for commercial development since that time.

Mr. Roos commented that if they did not own the property, they would not pursue it for development, but because they do and could add it to the townhome development across the street to better spread costs, it makes sense.

Commissioner Allshouse commented that this change seems to make sense.

Commissioner Bauer commented that during the last six years there was a lot of uncertainty on what plan would move forward, and construction was not conducive to commercial. He noted that the economic market is also not great for businesses, and he would prefer to retain the land for

future commercial development. He noted that he would rather see a business than a residential sound wall.

Councilmember Peters stated that as you drive down the highway, there are sections with walls and then no walls, which does not appear consistent. He asked if walls would be extended in front of Suite Living.

Planning Manager Larson stated that MnDOT did ask if Suite Living wanted a wall, but the residents like watching the vehicles drive by, so they did not want a wall. He stated that they could say the property should remain commercial for a period of time, and if commercial does not come through, they could consider residential, but also noted the comments of the applicant that they would want to move forward with residential while they are still building on the property and have the sales office.

Chairperson Gengler stated that she understands where Commissioner Bauer is coming from, but with the property being further away from the highway, there would be more limited commercial uses that would be interested in the property. She noted that it sounds like the townhomes would also add more to the tax base than commercial development, so she would support a change in zoning.

Councilmember Peters asked if the City has tried to find another place for that easement.

Planning Manager Larson stated that MnDOT commented that they have said they are using a little of the easement, but they could follow up to determine if the size/shape of the easement could be changed.

Commissioner Allshouse stated that there is a stormwater pond to the east and asked if they could combine the two, which would free up more space.

Planning Manager Larson replied that MnDOT does not like to share its water and keeps its stormwater ponding for itself.

Mr. Roos stated that there is a cross-ponding agreement between this site and Suite Living, so this site would not need as much ponding because that already exists. He stated that additional ponding would still be needed. He asked if there is support from a majority of the Commission for the rezoning. He explained that if there is support, he would like to move forward with rezoning and Site Plan approval at one time, and he could begin designing that package during the winter.

Commissioner Musgrove asked how much building the applicant has left on the current site.

Mr. Roos replied that they will be starting framing on the last building and will build through winter on that building. He stated that three of the five buildings are completely done, one is in sheetrock phase, and the last building is the one that is ready for framing.

Commissioner Musgrove recognized that timing is important.

Mr. Roos confirmed that timing is important for this request, as they are currently building on the site, but that work will be wrapping up.

Commissioner Musgrove commented that she does support the rezoning because the distance from Highway 10 is not attractive for commercial development.

Commissioner Lubarski commented that he supports the rezoning and believes that would be a better use of the property.

Commissioner Sanoe commented that he would support the rezoning.

Commissioner Cochrane stated that he would also support the rezoning, noting the time the property has been available for commercial development and that this seems to be a positive change.

Planning Manager Larson asked if there are any comments on the proposed layout, should the Council also support the rezoning.

Commissioner Musgrove commented that she believes that the layout is good and there are other factors that will determine whether there can be 20 or 22 units that will be worked out in the design process.

Commissioner Cochrane asked about the number of bedrooms and bathrooms proposed for the units.

Mr. Roos commented that they would not change the exterior design but could make changes to the interior. He stated that currently there are three different floor plans. He stated that the end units are larger, with four bedrooms and 2.5 bathrooms, while the interior units have three bedrooms and 2.5 bathrooms. He stated that some of the units also have a loft that can act as a bonus room.

Chairperson Gengler asked about orientation and whether there would be decks facing Highway 10.

Mr. Roos stated that they submitted two concepts dependent on whether the pond stays or goes, which are relatively the same, and provided additional details. He stated that the sewer is shallow in that area, so it would be easier for those units to face south. He noted that the snow would melt more easily for the driveways if they face south.

Chairperson Gengler stated that there could be a case to add greenery or walls along the highway.

Mr. Roos commented that there would either be a wall or landscaping to buffer from the highway, so the back of the buildings would not be as visible from the highway as the existing units are.

7.02: 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update – Land Use Chapter

Presentation

Planning Manager Larson presented the Staff Report stating that the Commission is asked to provide feedback. The goal is to have the Land Use definitions and map drafted by March 1, 2027, so that traffic and utilities modeling can begin.

Commissioner Musgrove noted that it sounds like the urban low-density residential is no longer needed because it is the same category as low density and asked if mixed use would then be low, medium, and high.

Planning Manager Larson replied that it would just be low-density residential. He stated that there will be some tweaks to the mixed-use definitions, but the change would be mapping those properties. He provided additional information on the proposed changes to mixed-use.

Chairperson Gengler referenced high-density residential, noting that a range of 12 – 55 units per acre is a large jump from eight to 12 units per acre.

Planning Manager Larson replied that they are going to map things to what they were developed to be. He noted that there are apartments in The COR that would fall into that higher range. He stated that there are some other older-style apartment buildings in other areas of the community with fewer units, but that style of apartment is no longer market-feasible to build. He stated that mixed-use will be reserved for undeveloped property so they do not preclude retail development from occurring within The COR.

Commissioner Musgrove referenced the averages and asked if that is unique to Ramsey or whether the averages were meant to be a way to measure the whole city. She asked if a consultant would be assisting in the drafting of the plan update.

Planning Manager Larson replied that it is not unique, noting that other cities also use that but might do a better job of explaining what the average means, which is why they want to drop that average and assume everything is on the low end. He stated that Ramsey will be doing as much of the plan update in-house as possible, as it is expensive to hire a consultant.

Commissioner Musgrove asked how solid the top number is and whether there has been any Council discussion on that. She recognized that these are goals, but they are planning land use based on those goals.

Planning Manager Larson replied that the goal is assumed to be the worst-case scenario, which is why they measure at the bottom. He explained that the average hurts them and getting rid of it will help them. He stated that staff will also be working with the Council, but noted that the Planning Commission serves as the land use advisory body. He noted that the intention is to update the plan rather than revise the whole plan.

Commissioner Bauer thanked staff for their work.

Planning Manager Larson commented that staff have been meeting with the larger landowners in the community to review the current vision and receive feedback on their vision for their property. He stated that some property owners are happy under the current designation while others would like to consider changes. He provided an overview of some of the requests they have received from those landowners. He stated that staff will start working on the map and math to bring back to the November or December meeting.

Commissioner Musgrove commented that she was appreciative that staff took the time to meet with residents and property owners to get their feedback and consider their requests.

Chairperson Gengler commented that this lays the groundwork for setting definitions and providing guidance for those who have not been a part of this process in the past.

8. COMMISSION / STAFF INPUT

Planning Manager Larson noted items that may appear on the November and December meeting agendas.

9. 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 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Larson
Planning Manager

ATTEST:

Kalia Lor
Planning Assistant

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.