APA MN Knowledge at Noon: The Planning Process as an Economic Development Tool

Using the Long Range Planning and Development Review Process to Entice Projects to Advance Your Vision

Presentation will Start Soon
RAMSEY, MN
THE CITY, not the COUNTY

- 28,000 people
  - 18,000 in 2000
  - 23,000 in 2010
- 7,000 employees
- 2nd Fastest Growing Community in Anoka County
- 150 new households per year
RAMSEY IS A GREAT PLACE TO BE!
TIM GLADHILL, AICP

• Deputy City Manager (and Community Development Director)
  – The Beginnings
    • Public Works Maintenance Worker
  – Transition (Minnesota State Mankato, University of Minnesota)
    • Planning Intern
    • Planner/Planning Manager
    • Community Development Director/Economic Development
  – Oh, yeah, and Past President of APA Minnesota!
MOVING TO THE ‘PATH TO YES’
Our Role as Planners in the ‘Path to Yes’
PRE-DEVELOPMENT
LONG RANGE PLANNING

A Foundation for Success
YOUR VISION IS YOUR FOUNDATION
YOUR PLAN PROVIDES CERTAINTY

• Certainty reduces risk and reduces cost
• Allow for change and adaptation
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
CURRENT PLANNING/ZONING ADMINISTRATION

Implementing Success
How your plan becomes an economic development tool
CITY AS DEVELOPER
FROM REGULATOR TO DEVELOPER
RAMSEY’S EXPERIENCE AS A MASTER DEVELOPER
SEE THE PROCESS THROUGH THE APPLICANT’S LENS

Applicant

• When can I get my permit?

City

• OK, Review Coordinator has to start this off
• Add plan reviewers
• Determine completeness
• Mark up plans and send to Review Coordinator
• Use a lot of Planning Jargon
• Send it to end of queue when revised plans come; first come, first served
## Our Metrics for Success and Resource Allocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard Residential Plan Review</td>
<td>2 Weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex Commercial Plan Review</td>
<td>4 Weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use Application Plan Review – Initial Plans</td>
<td>3 Weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use Application Plan Review – Revised Plans</td>
<td>2 Weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return Phone Calls</td>
<td>Same Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolve Inquiries</td>
<td>2 Days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUCCESS INGREDIENT #1: NO SURPRISES!
**Eliminate Unknowns**

**Is Your Community RFI Ready?**

Here are common requests in RFIs that your community can prepare in advance of the project. Communities that are able to prepare site and community information in advance of receiving an RFI will be better prepared to meet the tight turnaround times expected by companies and consultants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE AND BUILDINGS</th>
<th>ZONING AND PERMITTING</th>
<th>UTILITIES</th>
<th>ENVIRONMENTAL</th>
<th>VISUALS</th>
<th>TAXES</th>
<th>INCENTIVES</th>
<th>WORKFORCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site size, shape and dimensions</td>
<td>Permitted and conditional uses</td>
<td>Service provider names and contact info</td>
<td>Phase I environmental site assessment</td>
<td>Aerial photograph with site boundaries</td>
<td>State and local tax rates</td>
<td>Business incentives policy</td>
<td>List of largest employers in the county</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impediments to develop, privacy, and plan for mitigation</td>
<td>Process, timeline, and necessary approvals for zoning and/or</td>
<td>Cost and schedule of extensions and upgrades</td>
<td>Geotechnical assessment</td>
<td>USGS topographic map with site boundaries</td>
<td>Property tax statement and special</td>
<td>Policy to support state incentives</td>
<td>List of largest manufacturers in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building size, height, floor thickness</td>
<td>zoning and site plan changes</td>
<td>Cost of electric lines serving site</td>
<td>Wetland delineation</td>
<td>FEMA floodplain map with site boundaries</td>
<td>assessments</td>
<td>FF&amp;E tax statement, seeking from fund</td>
<td>List of recent closings or layoffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership/contingent and asking price/lease rate, or terms of purchase option</td>
<td>Zoning and land use surrounding the site</td>
<td>Voltage of electric lines serving site</td>
<td>Archaeological/Cultural resources</td>
<td>Zoning and site plan maps</td>
<td>Instructions on how to calculate property</td>
<td>Policy and procedures</td>
<td>Technical college enrollment, graduation and training resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forms, fees, and timeline for all applicable permits</td>
<td>Size and capacity of water and wastewater lines serving site</td>
<td>Protected species</td>
<td>Utility infrastructure map</td>
<td>Local utility incentive policy</td>
<td></td>
<td>List of recent project announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Site and system capacity</td>
<td></td>
<td>County soil surveys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUCCESS INGREDIENT #2: FOCUSED, EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE REVIEW

• If a project helps achieve your vision, don’t let process get in the way.
• 45 Days or 60 Days to approval?
• This presentation is about how speed and accuracy of development review can be a marketing tool for your community.
Traditional Approach
Plan Review

Planning → Engineering → Public Works → Public Safety → Building
TRADITIONAL APPROACH

REVIEW LETTER AND RESPONSE LETTER

• Fix something on Page C1.1.
• We fixed something on Page C1.1.
• You didn’t fix something right on Page C1.1. Please correct.
• WE DID FIX IT!
• NO YOU DIDN’T! PLEASE FIX.
• I DON’T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
• Where is the redlined set (all 4 of them)?
90% Resolution
Better Communication
COMMUNICATION WITH APPLICANTS

- Pre-Application Meeting
- Weekly Check In Meetings
- Planning Commission
- City Council
- Post-Approval
- Pre-Construction
COMMUNICATION WITH PUBLIC

- Zoom for Recorded Development Updates
  - YouTube Channel
- www.cityoframsey.com/development
- Ramsey Resident Newsletter
- Social Media
Technology Enhancements
Technology

- Remote Meetings
- Electronic Plan Review
- ePermits
TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENTS

- ePermits
- Electronic Plan Review
- Tools to make us to our job better
- Reduce plan review time by 50%
ELECTRONIC PLAN REVIEW
ELECTRONIC PLAN REVIEW

• Reduce Plan Review Time by 50%
**Electronic Plan Review Best Practices**

- Requirement, not an option
  - Exception – homeowners
- Tool for Staff, not customer
  - Support, not replace
REMOTE MEETINGS

• Minnesota Statute 13D
  – 13D.02 = normal remote meetings
  – 13D.021 = emergency/pandemic clause (don’t worry, we’ll never use this…)

• Remote Attendance
  – Councilmembers/Commissioners
  – Staff
  – Project Representatives
  – Public

• Meeting Types
  – Public Meetings
  – Workshops
  – Meetings
REMOTE MEETINGS

• Remote Meeting vs. Webinar
• Zoom/Zoom Webinar
• Microsoft Teams (some better collaboration tools)
• Google Meetup
• Cisco WebEx
• GoToMeeting/GoToWebinar
• Many Others
REMOTE MEETINGS BEST PRACTICES (POST PANDEMIC)

• Webcam if you are going to speak
  – In Person Attendance an option if you don’t have/don’t want to use
• Don’t allow phone in
  – Too hard to manage
• Consider Webinar Format
  – Better audience control, less interruptions
CUSTOMER SERVICE
HYBRID OFFICE
CUSTOMER SERVICE
HYBRID OFFICE
FUTURE OF OFFICE ENVIRONMENT?

• Hybrid?
  – 3 days in office
  – 2 days remote

• Technology Considerations
  – Soft Phone (office # at home)
  – Virtual Private Network (VPN – network access)
  – Portable Hardware
  – Quick Huddles – webcam style
CASE STUDY

Riverstone Neighborhoods
Riverstone Neighborhoods
Riverstone Neighborhoods

- Comprehensive Plan Amendment
- Environmental Review
- Shoreland Overlay

Source: League of MN Cities
Do you want to get this project to the finish line?
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

HIGHWAY 10 SOUTH SMALL AREA PLAN RIVERSTONE SOUTH PLANNING FRAMEWORK

June, 2020
**PRE-APPLICATION STEPS**

- Council, do you want us to work on this project?
- Public Engagement and Design Charette (light)
- Planning Framework
- Concept Layout
- Weekly Meetings w/Developer and Property Owner
- Preliminary Plat
Consensus Building over Speed

• Built Community Support for Project
  – Part of the design process, not reacting to alternatives
• Developer saved +/- $10,000 in design costs
  – Concept looked much different in the end
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