



THE CITY OF FIRCREST

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Memo

MEETING DATE: September 5, 2017
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Jeff Boers, Principal Planner
SUBJECT: 2017 Zoning Code Amendments -- Discussion Draft

Background

Staff is proposing a number of land development code (zoning) amendments intended to clarify code administration, fine tune regulations, and respond to input and direction received since the most recent rounds of amendments in 2015-2016. The following discussion summarizes the proposed amendments, which are provided as an attachment. Additional background and explanation will be provided at the September 5th meeting. The amendments should be considered working drafts that are being provided to the Commission to initiate a discussion as to the advisability of making each change.

Process

Amendments generally supported by the Commission will be revised, if recommended, and then published as a public hearing draft. The Commission will then need to conduct a hearing to consider public comment and forward its recommendations to the City Council. Council will then conduct its own hearing before taking action to adopt, with or without modification, the package of amendments.

Summary of Proposed Amendments

- Amend the R4, R4C, R6, R8, R20 and R30 zones by revising the articulation language to apply only to buildings exceeding one story in height. The articulation standards were enacted in 2015 and have worked, as intended, for two story dwellings. However, an unintended consequence has been that for certain one-story buildings, including a detached garage, the articulation requirement has been difficult to meet. Since the original concern that led to the establishment of this standard pertained to two-

story buildings that had blank walls or little articulation, staff recommends this provision be tweaked to focus on buildings taller than one story – as single-story buildings were not the issue being addressed in 2015.

- Amend the R-4-C zone by inserting “other uses” in place of “family group home and public or quasi-public building” in several of the development standards. The current language narrowly applies these standards to just two uses when the standards should be applied more broadly to multiple uses.
- Amend the R-4-C zone by increasing the maximum height from 35 to 45 feet for uses other than cottage housing and small lot development. The new height limit could apply to assisted living facilities or similar uses where multi-story construction may be desirable. By allowing a taller height limit, building footprints could be reduced, thereby minimizing environmental impact by reducing impervious surface coverage, maximizing tree retention, and achieving other goals consistent with the intent of the R-4-C zone.
- Amend the R8, R10-TCD and R20 zones by adding references to the city’s previously adopted multifamily design standards and guidelines. This would be consistent with language previously adopted for other zones that allow multi-family development.
- Amend the CMU zone by clarifying where mini-storage would be allowed. The intent of the current language is to limit these facilities to lots that do not have street frontage – meaning landlocked parcels toward the rear of larger sites such as Sunrise Center. This revision would eliminate a potential loophole where a developer might subdivide a parcel to create new parcels without public street frontage that would then qualify for mini-storage – a use that the city historically has not wished to encourage – and one that would be at odds with the CMU land use designation.
- Amend nonconforming use provisions to refer to “vacated” properties rather than “abandoned” properties – consistent with recent case law.
- Add a new chapter 22.23 establishing a binding site plan process. This process can be used to subdivide commercially zoned and developed properties for the reasons explained in purpose section of the chapter. It can be used to ensure that as sites are developed or divided and sold off, utilities, access and other critical project elements can continue to serve the affected properties – to the benefit of all parties.

- Amend the project permit application framework in 22.05.003 to include binding site plans as a Type II-B permit subject to staff-approval.
- Amend the parking standards for drive-through facilities in 22.60.012 to provide greater flexibility or opportunity for drive-throughs when located on property fronting an arterial street. If the Commission is comfortable with making this change, staff recommends additional standards be developed to mitigate potential impacts that may be associated with drive-through facilities. Current city standards for drive-throughs are almost non-existent. These additional standards can be formulated and provided to the Commission at its next meeting.
- Add an “administrative interpretations” section to establish a process and standards by which a staff-level interpretation of the code may be requested. Recommended by legal counsel Carol Morris.

Attachment: September 5, 2017 Discussion Draft Land Development Code Amendments