

Planning and Zoning Commission Work Session Minutes
February 23, 2023
Conference Room 1A & 1B - 1st Floor City Hall

Call to Order

Commissioners Present – Burns, Carroll, Geuea Jones, Kimbell, MacMann, Placier, and Wilson
Commissioners Absent – Loe, Stanton
Staff Present – Smith, Teddy, Thompson, and Zenner

Introductions

Approval of Agenda

Meeting agenda adopted unanimously

Approval of Minutes

February 9, 2023 work session minutes adopted as presented.

Old Business

A. UDC Text Amendment – RC (Residential Cottage) District

Mr. Zenner gave an overview of the proposed structure of the new zoning district based on the memo that was distributed with the Commission work session agenda. He apologized for not having something more substantive to present to the Commission; however, in light of the staff changes that were forthcoming he noted that time did not permit him to work on the textual version of the proposed changes.

As a means of providing context for the proposed changes Mr. Zenner displayed the City Code and Chapter 29. He noted to accommodate the RC district several sections of Chapter 29 would be altered. A few of the immediately obvious changes that would be required included a new definition for “cottage dwelling” in Section 29-1.11, a new district designation in Section 29-2.1, and a description of the RC district in Section 29-2.2 similar to that of the other residential districts. Mr. Zenner then noted that the more substantive changes would occur within Article 3 beginning with the Permitted Use Table and the “use-specific standards” ending with revisions to Article 4 specifically address dimensional standards for residential districts.

Mr. Zenner noted that the concept with the revisions to the Permitted Use Table would include creating a new zoning district column for the RC zone and transferring over the dimensional standards from the R-2 district relating to “cottage”. Commissioner’s asked a question about the “cottage” standard remaining available in the R-2 district following the proposed RC district creation and removal of the Board of Adjustment approval provisions. Mr. Zenner noted that this could happen; however, this would not provide the guarantee that cottage-style development would occur which was the underlying purpose for creating the new RC district.

Commissioners stated that the intent with leaving the option for cottage-style development within the R-2 district following the proposed change was to potentially offer a way for existing substandard lots within the R-2 and/or possibly R-MF districts to be redeveloped without the necessity of consolidation. Mr. Zenner explained that what was being suggested may be a potential option; however, the issue with R-MF substandard lots was the definition of “legal lot” within the code which did not include R-MF zoned land. He noted that to convince a property owner to downzone to R-2 to allow for redevelopment without a replat may be challenging given the current situation is that most owners of vacant R-MF land are engaged in a “waiting gaming” with their neighbors in hopes that they can acquire more R-MF property that can be consolidated; thereby, allowing the benefits of the R-MF zoning to be realized.

There was additional discussion on this topic. Mr. Zenner noted that to accommodate what the Commission was suggesting he would need to determine dimensional standard boundaries for cottage-style development so that

there would be assurance that the desired style of development (i.e. small footprint detached single-family housing) was all that could occur on a substandard lot. There was discussion of some possible approaches.

Mr. Zenner further noted that part of the Permitted Use Table changes would also involve determining what other uses would be allowed within the RC district. He noted that given the small lot area that would be associated with the district accessory uses such as ADUs, home-based businesses, daycares, etc may be problematic. Mr. Zenner stated that one way in which these issues could be addressed may be to include an “exception” in those uses’ existing “use-specific standards” such that they not be allowed in the RC district.

Mr. Zenner also noted that it was likely that there would need to be unique “use-specific standards” created for the RC district. Such standards would establish particular design criteria and other standards that would be desired for the type of construction occurring. He noted that he intended to develop such a list of standards from some of the form-based code provisions considered when the UDC was being drafted.

Mr. Zenner then noted that there would need to be changes to the dimensional standards table that is found in Article 4. It was within this table that the summary information that was provided in Section 29-2.2 would be more fully explained. He reiterated that the provisions shown under “cottage” in the R-2 district column would be shifted over to the new RC column and there potentially would be some adjustment to ensure there was a clear break between allowable lot sizes. He noted that his initial inclination was to have the minimum lot area expressed as a range from 3000 sq. ft.- 4,999 sq.ft to ensure the only type of product to be built in the RC district was a “cottage” sized home. He noted that without specifying a range there would be limited incentive to ensure the type of housing desired (i.e. small footprints) would be constructed.

Commissioners questioned if the lot area should be segmented and referred back to ensuring that “cottage” was retained within the R-2 district. Retaining such a use in the R-2 would potentially allow substandard lots (based on lot width) the option to construct a small footprint home when the lot contained more square footage than the RC district without the need for requiring a replat of the property. Mr. Zenner understood the point and stated he would figure out how to incorporate such development within the R-2 district. To do so may require reducing the minimum lot frontage for “cottage-style” lots in the R-2 to include lots ranging from 30-feet to less than 60-feet width. Commissioners also discussed correspondence submitted by Commissioner Loe, given her absence, that offered observations on the setbacks and lot area discussed in the Staff Memo on this topic. Her correspondence suggested considering reductions in setbacks, retaining historical lot areas, and potentially considering the imposition of a maximum lot coverage ratio.

Mr. Zenner acknowledge that he had received Commissioner Loe’s correspondence and would look at the comments offered as he proceeded forward. He noted that he should be capable of preparing a more complete text change relating to this topic for the March 9 work session.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:55 pm

ACTION(S) TAKEN:

Motion made by Commissioner MacMann, seconded by Commissioner Carroll, to approve the agenda as proposed. Motion passed unanimously. Motion made by Commissioner MacMann, seconded by Commissioner Carroll, to approve the February 9 work session minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.