



CITY OF MERCED ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE FOCUS GROUP MINUTES

Merced Civic Center
First Floor Sam Pipes Room

678 W. 18th Street
Thursday, October 17, 2013
8:15 a.m.

Mission of Focus Group

Update the Zoning Ordinance to be more user-friendly and easier to understand for the Community.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Logue called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Members Present: *Jim Abbate, Ann Andersen, *Kenra Bragonier, Tony Dossetti, Loren Gonella, Jack Lesch, Bruce Logue, Elmer Lorenzi, Guy Maxwell, Carole McCoy, **Michelle Paloutzian, and Mike Salvadori

(Secretary's Note: *Arrived at 8:17 a.m.; **Arrived at 8:26 a.m.)

Members Absent: Christina Alley, Todd Bender, Adam Cox, Ron Ewing, Forrest Hansen, Flip Hassett, Garth Pecchenino, Joe Ramirez, Stan Thurston, Brandon Williams, and Jim Xu

Staff Present: Director of Development Services David Gonzalves, Planning Manager Kim Espinosa, Recording Secretary Terri Lucas, and City Manager John Bramble

C. APPROVAL OF ACTION MINUTES

M/S LOGUE-ANDERSON, and carried by unanimous voice vote (11 absent), to approve the Minutes of October 3, 2013, as submitted.

Zoning Ordinance Update Focus Group Minutes

October 17, 2013

Page 2

D. ITEMS

1. Follow-up Items from Last Meeting

Planning Manager ESPINOSA continued the discussion from the last meeting regarding the review of the Modified Ordinance for Residential, Commercial, and Industrial Zoning Districts.

The Focus Group discussed the process for approval of parks. Staff explained that a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) is required in all residential zones for the land use for a park, but that the design of the park is handled as a separate process not involving the Planning Commission. The Group discussed the various sizes and types of parks and the impacts on neighborhoods from lack of parking. Staff explained that there is no standard for parking for neighborhood parks and that it would be helpful to staff if there was such a standard. The Group was of the consensus that there should be a parking standard for parks and the size, type, uses, and design of the park should dictate the parking requirements for parks.

The Group then discussed the land use tables for residential zones. Staff explained that the uses and development standards have been put in table format so that they are easier to understand than the paragraph format in the current ordinance. There have been no changes to the uses or standards except minor changes to exterior and side yard setbacks so they are consistent throughout the code.

Staff noted that there would need to be clarification or removal of footnote [2] on Page 7 regarding the 10-foot yard setback for all interior yards. Staff and the Focus Group concurred that this did not make sense for all interior yards to be ten feet for taller buildings, especially if trying to encourage density. Staff will review with the consultant and either clarify or remove the footnote.

Regarding MMC Section 20.08.030, Subsection F Parking, Ms. ESPINOSA explained that this is the section that would need to be modified to allow garage conversions and legal parking spaces in the driveway and/or on the street.

Following a brief discussion, the consensus of the Focus Group was to not make any changes to the required parking in residential zones. There were no more comments on the Residential section

Regarding Commercial zoning, the proposed ordinance combines all commercial zones and adds the new Business Park zone into table format so land uses are easier to understand.

Zoning Ordinance Update Focus Group Minutes

October 17, 2013

Page 3

The Focus Group agreed that there is a clear distinction between heavier use Business Parks vs. support use Business Parks and the Business Park zone should be part of the Commercial land use table to allow flexibility, and not the Industrial land use table.

It was also noted that under the current General Commercial zone, there is a 4-acre minimum size for the zone itself but there is no minimum in the proposed ordinance. Staff agreed that without a minimum acreage requirement, a single lot could be rezoned, impacting the surrounding area. It was agreed that the minimum acreage in the current code should be retained.

For the next meeting, the Group was asked to review the Commercial lane use table on Pages 12-15 carefully and come back with questions for discussion. They were also asked to review the table reflecting the current ordinance at Pages 16-18, and the design standards on Pages 19-22.

E. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 a.m. to the next meeting on Thursday, October 31, 2013, at 8:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ David Gonzalves

David Gonzalves, Secretary
Zoning Ordinance Update

APPROVED:

Bruce Logue, Chairperson
Zoning Ordinance Update