



CITY OF MERCED ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE FOCUS GROUP

MINUTES

Merced Civic Center
First Floor Sam Pipes Room

678 W. 18th Street
Thursday, December 12, 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: Ann Andersen, Todd Bender, Kenra Bragonier, Adam Cox, Tony Dossetti, Jack Lesch, Bruce Logue, Elmer Lorenzi, Guy Maxwell, Carole McCoy, Joe Ramirez, and Stan Thurston

Members Absent: Jim Abbate, Christina Alley, Ron Ewing, Loren Gonella, Forrest Hansen, Flip Hassett, Michelle Paloutzian, Garth Pecchenino, Mike Salvadori, Brandon Williams, and Jim Xu

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

C. APPROVAL OF ACTION MINUTES

M/S LORENZI-DOSSETTI, and carried by unanimous voice vote (11 absent), to approve the Minutes of November 14, 2013, as submitted.

D. ITEMS

1. Review of Modified Ordinance for Commercial, Industrial, Public Use/Agricultural, and Special Use Zoning Districts.

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Regarding the Business Park development guidelines, the Focus Group discussed the use of the terminology “may” vs. “shall” vs. “should”. The Group discussed the lack of consistency within the definitions. Staff explained that there are instances where items or design are mandated by State or Federal statute to be “shall”, but that staff needs room to adjust a design and work with a developer if the project hits most of the marks, and so there needs to be room for some flexibility to meet the developer’s specific design requirements.

Focus Group Member BENDER said that from a developer standpoint there are a lot of “shalls” that they have to heed and more “shoulds” would allow the project to work. If the project needs exceptions, then the the Planning Commission and City Council should make the decision by establishing conditions for the individual projects.

Following further discussion, the Focus Group recommended the following (beginning on Page 22 of 9-12-2013 memo):

Page No.	Item No.	Terminology
21	4a-d	Change to “shall”
22	5a-c	Change to “shall”
22	7a and 7b	Change to “shall”
22	8a	Remain “shall”
22	9a and 9b	Change to “shall”

Ms. ESPINOSA indicated that she understood the Group’s direction and could go through the remainder of the preliminary draft and make the appropriate changes and bring them back to the Group for review.

2. Draft Downtown & Urban Village Districts and Possible Re-Zonings in Downtown Area

Planning Manager ESPINOSA explained there will be new zoning districts proposed such as “Urban Village” and new Downtown designations, and discussed the options for rezoning some of the downtown areas. She said that the new zones could be established without having to actually rezone any of the properties. There are various options for completing the rezoning. It could be accomplished as part of the Zoning Ordinance update, as development projects lend themselves to rezoning, or while the City addresses any changes required as part of the High Speed Rail project. She

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noted that more discussion should take place at the next meeting regarding these items.

3. Next Homework Assignment

Planning Manager ESPINOSA said that there will be no meeting on January 9, 2014, but she will be sending out more homework for review and discussion at the next meeting on January 30, 2014. She said that if the group finds it necessary, more meetings could be scheduled beyond the February 13, 2014, date.

E. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 a.m. to the next meeting on Thursday, January 30, 2014, at 8:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ David Gonzalves

David Gonzalves, Secretary
Zoning Ordinance Update

APPROVED:

Bruce Logue, Chairperson
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