



CITY OF MERCED ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE FOCUS GROUP

MINUTES

Merced Civic Center
First Floor Sam Pipes Room

678 W. 18th Street
Thursday, February 12, 2015
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, Kenra Brangonier, Adam Cox, Loren Gonella, Jack Lesch, Bruce Logue, Elmer Lorenzi, and Guy Maxwell

Members Absent: Jim Abbate, Christina Alley, Todd Bender, Tony Dossetti, Flip Hassett, Carole McCoy, Michelle Paloutzian, Des Johnson, Joe Ramirez, Mike Salvadori, Stan Thurston, Brandon Williams, and Jim Xu

Staff Present: Director of Development Services David Gonzalves, Planning Manager Kim Espinosa, and Recording Secretary Francisco Mendoza-Gonzalez

C. APPROVAL OF ACTION MINUTES

M/S LORENZI-MAXWELL, and carried by unanimous voice vote (13 absent), to approve the Minutes of January 29, 2015, as submitted.

D. ITEMS

1. Questions/Comments on Focus Group Review Draft of Zoning Ordinance

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The Focus Group discussed Chapter 20.10 – Commercial Zoning and made the following recommendations:

Business Park (B-P) 20.10.010(G). Group Member ANDERSEN suggested that the term “back office” should be defined in the glossary section of the Zoning Ordinance. She believes that defining a “back office” will protect the office nature of the B-P zone and prevent a large retail business from claiming to operate as a back office. Planning Manager ESPINOSA concurred with Group Member ANDERSEN and explained that retail may be allowed in the B-P zone at a limited capacity to serve employees in the area. Staff will update the glossary to include a definition for “back office.”

Day Care Centers (Children and Adults). Group Member LORENZI was concerned that sufficient off-street parking is not provided at adult care facilities. He believes that the parking requirements should be increased to satisfy the parking needs of employees, patients/residents, and visitors. Director of Development Services GONZALVES concurred with Group Member LORENZI and explained that the parking requirements for adult care facilities could be revised to include the number of employees working during the largest shift and the square footage of the building.

Planning Manager ESPINOSA indicated that there is a typo on Table 20.10-1 – Day Care Centers (Children and Adults). Note #5 should not be included in the table.

Emergency Shelters. The Focus Group suggested that emergency shelters should be located in a zoning district that is highly accessible to the community. They believe that the B-P zone lacks accessibility and that it is not an appropriate zoning designation for emergency shelters. The Focus Group came to the consensus that a more appropriate zoning district is the C-T zone (with Conditional Use Permit approval).

Hospitals. The Focus Group came to the consensus that there needs to be a clear distinction between hospitals and surgery centers. They believe that surgery centers should be a separate category and that they should be allowed in the C-N zone (with Conditional Use Permit approval).

Alcoholic Beverage Sales. The Focus Group came to the consensus that bars and nightclubs should be permitted in the B-P zone as an accessory use to a primary use (e.g. hotel or a restaurant), with a Conditional Use Permit.

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Planning Manager ESPINOSA noted that Alcoholic Beverage Sales will be subject to the special provisions outlined in Section 20.44.010 (Alcoholic Beverage Sales for Off-Premises Consumption). The reference to these additional regulations will be added to Table 20.10-1.

Bed and Breakfast. Planning Manager ESPINOSA noted that Bed and Breakfast establishments will be subject to the special provisions outlined in Section 20.44.030 (Bed and Breakfast). The reference to these additional regulations will be added to Table 20.10-1, and based on the Focus Group's previous recommendation, the requirement for historic designation will be removed.

Check Cashing/Payday Loan Establishments. The Focus Group came to the consensus that the definition for a check cashing establishment should be broadened to include payday loan establishments.

Multi-Screen (6 or more) Movie Theaters. The Focus Group came to the consensus that multi-screen (6 or more) movie theaters should be permitted with Conditional Use Permit approval in both the C-N zone and the C-T zone in addition to the C-C Zone, which is the only zone where these are currently allowed.

Farmers Market. The Focus Group came to the consensus that farmers markets should also be permitted in the C-O zone with Conditional Use Permit approval.

Flea Market. The Focus Group came to the consensus that a Flea Market should not be permitted in the B-P zone due to land-use incompatibility reasons.

Gas and Service Stations/Car Washes. The Focus Group came to the consensus that gas and services stations should be permitted in the C-SC zone (with Conditional Use Permit approval), but only in association with a grocery store.

Restaurants. Planning Manager ESPINOSA announced that restaurants within the B-P zone will be subject to Note #12 and Note #13, as shown on page 25 of the Draft Zoning Ordinance. This reference will be added to Table 20.10-1.

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Vehicle Sales. The Focus Group came to the consensus that vehicle sales should be located in the C-C zone, but not within the City Center area (Note #10 to be added to Table 20.10-1 in the C-C zone).

Airports and Heliports. The Focus Group came to the consensus that the zoning districts for heliports should correspond to that of hospitals as a hospital may want to use a heliport for emergency/service purposes.

Mobile Food Vendors. The Focus Group came to the consensus that non-food mobile vendors (e.g. mobile dog grooming vendors, etc.) should be considered as a separate category from mobile food vendors and that zoning regulations should be established for them.

Primary Building Standards (Stories). The Focus Group came to the consensus that there should not be a restriction on the maximum number of stories that a building is permitted. However, building height restrictions should remain as shown on Table 30.10-2, Development Standards for Commercial Zones.

2. Scheduling Future Meetings

At the recommendation of staff, the Focus Group scheduled a meeting for February 26, 2015, at 8:15 a.m. Planning Manager ESPINOSA requested that for the next meeting, the group members focus on Chapters 20.12 (Industrial Zoning Districts), 20.14 (Downtown Zoning Districts), 20.16 (Urban Village Zoning Districts), and 20.18 (Public Use and Agricultural Zoning Districts), on pages 33-63 of the Draft Zoning Ordinance. Ms. ESPINOSA also noted that possible dates for additional meetings will be discussed at the next meeting.

E. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Kim Espinosa (for David Gonzalves)

David Gonzalves, Secretary
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APPROVED:

Bruce Logue, Chairperson
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