MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMISSION/SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CITY OF LOS ALAMITOS

SPECIAL MEETING – March 14, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER
The Planning Commission/Subdivision Committee met in Special Session at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 14, 2019, in the Council Chamber, 3191 Katella Avenue, Chair Riley presiding.

2. ROLL CALL
Present: Commissioners: Chair Riley
Andrade, DeBolt, and Loe

Absent: Vice Chair Sofelkanik
Commissioners Cuilty and Grose

Staff: Les Johnson, Development Services Director
Michael Daudt, City Attorney
Tom Oliver, Associate Planner
Laura Stetson, MIG
Jose Rodriguez, MIG

3. DISCUSSION
A. Study Session for the Zoning Code Update
The Planning Commission and Staff continued discussion of the potential changes proposed at the Special Meeting on February 7, 2019 to the Zoning Code, which includes:

➢ Title 17 – Article 2. Zoning Districts, Allowable Uses, and Development Regulations
  ▪ Eliminate L-I (Limited Industrial) zone per Planning Commission direction
  ▪ Add Town Center Mixed-Use zone (Use Table and Development Standards) to be consistent with the General Plan
  ▪ Modernize Allowed Uses and Permit Requirements for Residential and Commercial/Industrial Zones
    o Removed detailed uses and group uses into similar categories
    o Add more common uses and expanded AUP (Administrative Use Permits)
- Tweak property Development Standards, including Table 2-03 (Residential Zoning Districts General Development Standards)
  - Removed inconsistencies and simplified table
  - Adjusted setback requirements in R-2 zone for building taller than 25 feet
  - Adjusted outdoor living space requirements

- Minor Adjustments to property development standards, including Table 2-05 (General Development Standards for Commercial and Industrial Zones)
  - Adjust setbacks in P-M zone
  - Eliminate parcel coverage and added FAR to commercial and industrial zones

Laura Stetson with MIG summarized the material provided for this meeting.

Commissioner DeBolt commented on discrepancies he observed between the draft distributed, in comparison to what code actually says now, including proposed changes that were never discussed during a Planning Commission meeting.

Commissioner DeBolt noted the following:
- Lack of clarity in the draft provided as it does not show deletions.
- Observed proposed changes that have not been discussed amongst the Planning Commission. Some of those noted were the following:
  - Current code for the R2 zone allows for parcel area of 9,000 square feet, and the proposed is 6,000 square feet.
  - Interior lot parcel width in the R2 zone is being proposed to be changed from 60 feet to 45 feet; corner parcel from 70 feet to 55 feet; reverse corner from 75 feet to 55 feet; parcel depth from 135 feet to 55 feet as a minimum.
  - Code section 17.50 was not in the proposed update.

Chair Riley asked and received clarification from Ms. Stetson as to why they are seeing proposed changes in the draft that were never brought up for discussion amongst the Planning Commission. Ms. Stetson advised that the proposed changes were largely driven by changes in state law as to how density has to be calculated. New state law beefed up the Housing Accountability Act, which indicates that if the general plan allows up to 20 units per acre, you have to allow someone to achieve that density unless there are completely overwhelming circumstances (i.e., easement on the property).

Commissioner DeBolt commented that during the previous General Plan Amendment as a member of the General Plan Committee, there was discussion of density. Maximum 30 units per acre. At the time of discussion, it was implied that
imposing a maximum did not guarantee that had to be allowed but should have for properties that have larger parcels such as in the apartment area. Therefore, 1750 [square feet of property per unit] should establish the density, not the maximum identified. Furthermore, Commissioner DeBolt stated that if such a change is to be considered, then perhaps there should be a general plan modification to keep consistency.

Ms. Stetson advised that during the previous General Plan amendment, the consultant likely encouraged setting a maximum, as the laws were not being enforced as rigorously the way they are now by way of the Housing Accountability Act. If density were to be reduced below 30 units per acre in the R-3 zone, it would be running into conflict with the City’s housing element, which sets a maximum of 30 units per acre, which is considered affordable housing.

Commissioner DeBolt questioned who proposed the 30 units per acre. Ms. Stetson advised high, moderate, low and very low housing – having a zone which allows at least 30 units per acre, would be classified as default density [as established by law]; could be developed with below market rate housing.

Commissioner DeBolt noted that as a charter city, zoning is an area where it is permissible not to be consistent. Furthermore, added that he is not opposed to 30 units per acre however, it should still left to the discretion of elected official and commissioners.

City Attorney Daudt advised that he will bring forward information as to set limits for charter cities with regards to zoning changes.

Commissioner DeBolt would like additional information from the City Attorney, as to the exemptions that the City might be subject to as part of being a charter city before approving the proposed changes in the provided draft.

Staff will be reporting back to the Planning Commission with the following:

- Additional information of the housing laws and provisions associated.
- Verification of the City’s housing element and whether it supports affordable housing.
- Legislative bills being considered which would impose density requirements in the general plan.

Commissioner DeBolt stated that density calculations should exclude alley dedications. Development Services Director Johnson stated that this is already noted.

Ms. Stetson stated that density will be calculated based on net, and shall exclude any dedications.
The Planning Commission and staff discussed some of the current zoning standards for commercial and industrial zones.

Commissioner DeBolt asked and received clarification as to what is dictated in the R1 zone with regards to religious assembly. Ms. Stetson advised that parsonages are permitted on the same site as religious assembly so long as it is in the R1 zone.

The Planning Commission and staff discussed the following:
- Current standards in the town center mixed use area.
- Medical and dental offices are currently prohibited on the ground floor.
- A preference to keep a lower density in residential areas.
- Limiting building height to 60 feet.
- No rear setback requirement unless there is a 15 foot buffer between the town center and residential area.
- No new changes in the overlay zones or special purpose zones.
- The wireless communication facilities ordinance will be regulated differently than has been done in the past. This will be regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

The Planning Commission and staff briefly discussed wireless facilities and their health hazards.

The Planning Commission and staff agreed to hold the next Zoning Code Study Session on March 27, 2019 at 6 p.m.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

The Planning Commission adjourned at 7:16

[Signature]

John Riley, Chair

[Signature]

Les Johnson, Secretary

Special Planning Commission Minutes
March 14, 2019
Page 4 of 4