Memorandum 11-051 Ordinance 11-03 Amending Definitions in Zoning Code

Memorandum ID: 11-051
Memorandum Status: Backup

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M E M O R A N D U M 11-051

TO: MAYOR HORNADAY AND HOMER CITY COUNCIL
WALT WREDE, CITY MANAGER

FROM: RICK ABBOUD, CITY PLANNER

DATE: March 22, 2011

SUBJECT: Ordinance 11-03, Amending Definitions in Zoning Code w/proposed amendments

RE: Considerations

My quick review of the Attorney's memo dated March 22, 2011 brings a few considerations to mind. I understand why the Council may not seek to further the goals as presented in Ordinance 11-03. As is stated, the Council may chose not to follow the recommendations of the Commission. If this is the case, I highly recommend that the Council vote the proposal down.

If the Council believes that a change is in order, then a request should be made to the Planning Commission to develop a recommendation for such. Recommendations for a code change are a duty not taken lightly by the Commission. Each suggestion must be analyzed for its impact on the subject district, neighboring districts and the City as a whole while evaluating whether it is meeting the intent of the Comprehensive Plan and purpose statements found in code for the districts in question. The Planning Commission routinely does this in a series of work sessions, agenda items and public hearing(s) involving many hours of study and debate prior to making a recommendation to Council.

There are many guiding statements used to develop and evaluate code changes suggested in the residential districts including:

Homer Comprehensive Plan
Chapter 4
Goal 3: Encourage high quality buildings and site design that complements Homer's beautiful natural setting.
Goal 5: Maintain high quality residential neighborhoods; promote housing choice by supporting a variety of dwelling options.

Appendix b, Land use designations
R-1 (Urban Residential)
Residential is primary use; but allows for other uses where these uses maintain residential character.

Homer City Code
21.14.010 Purpose. The urban residential district is primarily intended to provide a sound environment for medium-density residential occupancy including single-family, duplex and low-rise multiple-family dwellings of

various types and designs and other compatible uses as provided in this chapter. (Ord. 08-29, 2008).

21.16.010 Purpose. The residential office district is primarily intended for a mixture of low-density to medium-density residential uses and certain specified businesses and offices, which may include professional services, administrative services and personal services, but generally not including direct retail or wholesale transactions except for sales that are incidental to the provision of authorized services. A primary purpose of the district is to preserve and enhance the residential quality of the area while allowing certain services that typically have low traffic generation, similar scale and similar density. The district provides a transition zone between commercial and residential neighborhoods. (Ord. 08-29, 2008).

21.12.010 Purpose. The purpose of the rural residential district is primarily to provide an area in the City for low-density, primarily residential, development; allow for limited agricultural pursuits; and allow for other uses as provided in this chapter. (Ord. 08-29, 2008).

This is just an example of things that get attention at the Planning Commission level. Some may be able to find other examples of statements that may be perceived as supporting other actions or conclusions and that has to be examined along with many of the ‘what ifs’ that various scenarios may inadvertently pop up as a result of the proposed amendment. The point being is that you have a Planning Commission and professional staff dedicated to help guide you through the ‘minefield’ of planning and should carefully consider any action that does not make use of this most valuable resource.

Related Ordinances**Memorandum - Related Ordinances:** Ordinance 11-03(A) Amending Definitions in Zoning Code

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