



CITY OF FORT BRAGG

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COUNCIL COMMITTEE ITEM SUMMARY REPORT

MEETING DATE: June 28, 2016
TO: Community Development Committee
FROM: Scott Perkins
AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Receive Report and Provide Recommendation to Community Development Committee Regarding Update to the Inland Land Use and Development Code to make it more Business Friendly

Background

The City held a community workshop on June 23rd to inform the update to the City’s zoning regulations. Every few years, the City reviews the effectiveness and accuracy of our zoning code, and makes revisions where appropriate. Over the past year the City Council has provided policy guidance relating to changes for vacation rentals and commercial cannabis manufacturing. Staff has also reviewed the Zoning Ordinance in light of recent projects and has identified the following additional potential changes: home-sharing in residential neighborhoods, possibly allowing brewery/restaurant tandem uses in commercial and industrial districts, allowing tattoo businesses in more zones, allowing residential use of homes located in commercial districts, some modest modifications to signage requirements, allowing second units in more situations, and revisiting the City’s beekeeping regulations. Additional ideas that community members would like to see revised were also discussed at the workshop and these will be brought forward to the committee orally.

Workshop Topics

Vacation Rentals

Vacation rentals are homes which are rented on a transient basis (fewer than 30 days). Vacation rentals are presently prohibited in Fort Bragg. In the past year, City Council, the Community Development Committee and the Planning Commission have discussed agenda items relating to vacation rentals. Council has directed staff to prepare and propose an ordinance which would allow for vacation rentals, and to explore the following limitations:

1. Requiring a discretionary permit (possibly a Minor Use Permit)

2. Place limitation on quantity of permits available (20 at first)
3. Means for revoking permits if violations persist
4. Limit locations to only second and third floors over commercial uses in the Central Business District.

Vacation rentals have the potential to bring more tourists to local businesses and increase downtown vibrancy, by providing building owners with an additional source of income.

Workshop participants expressed a strong desire to expand the location for vacation rentals to include the Highway Commercial and General Commercial districts.

Home-Sharing in Neighborhoods

Home-sharing is different from vacation rentals as the primary resident lives in the house and actively hosts guests during their visit. The Council has indicated a desire to discuss this ordinance further. During the workshop a number of issues came up with regard to home sharing, including: Limit the number of rooms that could be rented in a house, limit the number of days a year of rental, focus on weekend and summer use when there is limited availability of hotel rooms in town. Address the following issues: revocation of use permit if there are complaints of police visits and address noise and parking concerns.

Residences in Commercial Districts

There are some vacant homes available in town in commercial districts, while the housing market remains tight. In the General Commercial zoning district, these vacant homes are zoned for commercial use and cannot currently be rented as residences. Single-family residences are presently not permitted in the General Commercial zoning district. At the zoning code workshop, the participants were very supportive of allowing single-family residential uses in vacant single-family structures throughout the Commercial districts. A Minor Use Permit would likely be required.

Breweries with Restaurants

North Coast Brewing is a major employer in the City, and Overtime Brewing is completing building renovations to open a second brewery in town. Breweries are a trendy land use nationwide, often operating in tandem with a restaurant. Locally, this allows for the business to operate two revenue streams and capitalize on the tourism industry of the City. Breweries and restaurants are not presently permitted in the same zoning districts. The zoning code update should allow for these tandem uses. At the workshop, people expressed concern that allowing restaurant uses in the industrial zone would result in industrial uses being displaced by restaurant/brewery uses.

Tattoo Businesses

The City recently received an application for a tattoo studio in a vacant commercial space in the Highway Commercial zoning district. The business license application had to be denied because tattoo studios are not permitted in the Highway Commercial zoning district, even with a Use Permit. "Tattoo services" are presently defined as a "Personal Services – Restricted" use, alongside palm readers, psychics, pawnshops and check cashing stores. These uses are presently only permissible in the Central Business District or General Commercial districts with the benefit of a Use Permit.

The stigma associated with tattoo businesses has dissipated since this definition was concocted, and staff feels that tattoo businesses could be permissible in additional districts. Workshop participants were supportive of this change.

Second Units

The code currently limits the conditions under which second units are permissible in the residential zoning districts. Generally a lot must be larger than 6,000 square feet and located on a street with at least 35 feet in width or have alley access. Many parcels in Fort Bragg cannot have second units due to these limitations. The City has a housing crisis and relaxation of these limits would help to address the housing shortage. The regulations were originally passed in order to limit parking issues on narrow streets. However, parking challenges could be addressed by limiting unit size on smaller parcels or by requiring that all parking be provided on the parcel.

Signage

Consider modification of the signage ordinance to regulate advertising in windows and limit it to 20% of the total window area. This would reduce visual clutter. There is some desire to prohibit window advertising for hard alcohol and cigarettes.

Community Ideas

A number of additional ideas came up at the first meeting, including:

1. A general shortage of industrially zoned parcels
2. The need for a bike cleaning station to support the mountain biking tourism
3. Look at allowing light industrial uses in the General Commercial zone.

Community Development Committee Input

Staff seeks the following input from CDC:

1. Review the ILUDC update items presented in this staff report.
2. Review the Commercial Use table and provide recommendations to staff.
3. Provide direction to staff prior to production of an ILUDC update.