



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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**WESTLAKE PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING
MARCH 29, 2023**

Present: Chairman Brad Lamb, Matt Jones, Duane Van Dyke, Lauren Falcone, Bonnie Smith
Also Present: Planning Director Jim Bedell

The work session meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Lamb.

BUSINESS

Ord. 2023-6 code amendments Chapter 1211 “Residential Districts” as to Multi-family townhouse, cluster, two-family dwelling and apartment developments, ref. 2/2/23

Mr. Bedell summarized the moratorium process. He stated the purpose of this work session is to follow up on questions and comments from the first work session and other items remaining, address any final edits in preparation for recommendation to Council in April.

Mr. Bedell and members of the subcommittee discussed the following recommendations from the City’s Consultant and the subcommittee and revisions resulting from the prior work session: agricultural use removed from the Schedule of Permitted Buildings and Uses, as there are no remaining farms, orchards or vineyards and schools and places of worship are still allowed in the one-family residential zone; a correction to 1211.07 from the earlier draft that omitted language for duplexes that are to remain in the code in order for existing duplexes to not be considered legally non-conforming and existing duplexes in multi-family districts will not be affected by these changes, since they are allowed in 1211.08 (a) that is not changing and new two-unit townhomes will be allowed; for table 1211.09 footnote “o” changed to “Maximum building height - see section 1203.06 (m)” to eliminate redundancy in the code; in 1203.06 (m) add the following for clarification and potentially for walk-out basements “The average finished grade level is the average of finished ground elevations at the center of all walls of the building, established for the purpose of regulating the number of stories and the height of the building”; during the Planning Commission review of development plans for multi-family uses modifications can be granted if needed for walk-out basements; a correction to 1212.03 from the earlier draft to allow clusters in PUD districts based on 14,520 s.f. or land area instead of 15,000 s.f. and this does not increase residential density as there is no vacant PUD property and any rezoning would require a referendum per the Charter; change 1212.07 (b) to read “One-family, single-family cluster, two-family and townhouse dwellings shall not exceed thirty feet in height – see 1203.06 (m)”; parking requirements will continue to be two per unit with at least one inside, with the addition of guest parking at one per four units as previously discussed; remove the word “guidelines” from Chapter 1237 and were applicable replace with “principles”; discussed tree preservation, Chapter 1137, and questioned if the requirements were high enough for residential districts and decided to update this chapter separate from this process with input from experts and other communities; case study illustrations showing how setbacks for a multi-unit building abutting one-family residential land changes as the building gets taller and also share with Council, noting minimum distances; Center Ridge Apartments in Rocky River and how that development would fit into the Westlake Zoning Code; staff will verify that the draft requires patios for units and addresses the location for utilities; occupancy permits are issued by the Building Department and per the State Building Code are not held up by zoning but Engineering will have the developer bond for landscaping that is incomplete through their permitting process; front setbacks will be from the planned right-of-way as is done for commercial development; prescriptive buffer will be better for everyone.

The following members of the audience addressed the commission: Mr. Edward Pavicic, EFG Custom Homes and Jim O’Connor, Pulte Homes are doing developments in Westlake and asked if Council could apply the old code for property next to the Hope Pointe Place townhomes that is to be the second and final phase; increase in trees increases costs for

homeowners; grade is set based on the finished floor of the garage and that can be used to measure the height of the building; saving trees is challenging unless it is a long property; HOA standards for maintaining a certain number of trees; challenges with developing split zoned property due to the narrowness of the multi-family zoned portion; Westlake has a robust code; collaboration to find balance because not all developments are the same; prescriptive codes are great for the developer to understand and achieve; how to balance parking so to not create excessive parking; model home provisions should be in the code, which is related to the Building, Fire and Engineering codes.

Councilman Van Dyke thanked Planning Commissioners and staff for their efforts in this process and noted the input, debate and ideas generated illustrates how well the commission worked to refine the code. Mr. Lamb thanked the subcommittee members.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Chairman Brad Lamb

James Bedell
Director of Planning and Economic Development

Approved: _____