

ZAC Meeting Summary February 27, 2019

General Announcements

Next ZAC meeting planned for March 27, 2019.

Walkthrough of the Zoning Code:

Code Studies staff members Erick Lopez and Erin Coleman presented an overview of each of the articles in the administrative working draft of the Zoning Code. In addition to reviewing previously discussed concepts, such as Form and Frontage Districts and Development Standard Sets, some new information was also introduced to the ZAC, including the concept of the Zoning Code Atlas Map. The Zoning Code Atlas is the formal name we are giving to the long-standing practice of establishing regulations based on maps; examples are the Hillside Area Map, Airport Hazard Maps, and Coastal Zone Maps. The Atlas will be used to identify where particular Zoning Code provisions apply. Overlays and specific plans, such as Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs) will remain in the zone string.

An update was given on some new thinking that has surfaced regarding density and the density indicator in the zone string. Staff informed the ZAC that they are looking at adding some new density intervals to allow for the creation of three and four unit housing complexes- a part of the 'missing middle' strata of housing in many communities. Staff also remarked that they have been asked to consider creating a new density indicator for parcels that do not have a density maximum in the Downtown Los Angeles area. Additionally, a ZAC member recommended adding a column showing density per acre on the density chart to make the new system easier to understand.

An overview of the new incentive system structure was also presented by staff. Incentives are broken down into three categories under this new organizational structure: Residential, Non-Residential, and Adaptive Reuse. Transfer of development rights, an incentive listed in the Non-Residential category, was discussed as an example of an incentive. Staff noted that this incentive is primarily limited to designated historic buildings, and there has to be a designated receiver site in order for the incentive to be granted. One of the ZAC members opined that the limitation on designated historic buildings should be expanded to more broadly cover historic districts.

Following the overview of the new draft Code, the Code Studio team gave a presentation on parking structure design and outdoor amenity space.

Parking Structure Design

The hierarchy of parking structure design was listed as follows: no treatment, screened, adaptable, and wrapped. Screened parking structures refers to structures that have a covering on the façade that helps hide the interior of the garages, and also helps to limit the light that escapes from the garages at night. Adaptable parking structures are those that are designed with the ability to be converted to other uses in the future. Wrapped parking structures feature usable building space covering one or more sides of the structure. Requirements for how parking garages are to be designed are established in the Development Standard Sets. Issues related to parking structure design, such as ventilation, day lighting, and cost of implementing these various design requirements were all discussed in detail. One of the ZAC members raised the point that we should focus on the intent of these regulations rather than having

prescriptive design measures in the Code. Discussions were also had about how implementing design features like enhanced screening techniques and requiring parking structures be adaptable for future conversion could drive development costs up, though it should be noted that parking structures are only proposed to be adaptable where no parking is required.

Outdoor Amenity Space

The Code Studio team explained that Outdoor Amenity Space includes private open space, common open space, pedestrian amenity space, and privately owned public space, and that the minimum required dimensions vary for the type of outdoor amenity space being provided. Outdoor Amenity Space is proposed to be required as a percentage of lot area, and is set in the Form District. Code Studio also explained that another proposed change for how we think about Outdoor Amenity Space is allowing for the possibility of covered spaces to count toward outdoor amenity space requirements, as long as a minimum vertical clearance is met. For covered spaces to count towards required Outdoor Amenity Space, the height between the floor and the covering must be 1.5 x the depth of the space. This is a proposed change from the current Code, which does not allow for any required open space to be covered.

Staff asked ZAC members in attendance about the most effective ways to require more open space as a building gets taller. Some ZAC members argued that open space is a challenge to provide in dense, vertically oriented buildings, and increasing the required amount of open space could make development more challenging and expensive in these areas. Another ZAC member said that in these areas, the whole of the public realm can be thought of as open space, so the need to provide it in the building itself is diminished, but allowing for some covered spaced to count toward the open space requirements would be a helpful change. At the conclusion of the meeting, a ZAC member suggested that a working group be established to work through this discussion in more detail.