



# TOWN OF FAIRFAX

## STAFF REPORT

### January 21, 2021

**TO:** Planning Commission

**FROM:** Ben Berto, Director of Planning and Building Services

**SUBJECT:** Review Commission draft work program and priorities for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2021 and for upcoming Fiscal Year 2022

---

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Review the recommended Planning Commission work program and provide direction on the program and priorities for Fiscal Years 2021 and 2022.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The CoVid pandemic significantly impacted the Planning Commission's work activities this last calendar year. In addition to forcing the cancellation of the March 2020 Commission meeting, the Commission and staff, in common with the Town Council, other government agencies, and many other groups, had to start meeting virtually. Meeting via virtual webcasting is anticipated to continue for some time.

The Planning Commission had a number of accomplishments, including: completion and adoption of HRD amendments clarifying their potential applicability across all residential zoning districts, and approval of a dozen live-work units at School Street Plaza, which resolved its long-standing housing violations.

Several other of the Commission's major work program efforts are ongoing or have recently begun, and include:

- Ridgeline Scenic Corridor zoning map digitization and code clarifications. There have been 8 meetings and counting on the effort to fully apply the Chapter 17.060 Ridgeline Scenic Corridor code language and digitize zoning maps.
- Objective Design and Development Standards (ODDS)/Historic. This was discussed by the Planning Commission several times in 2020, most recently at the Commission's November 19 meeting. The Commission's ODDS/Historic subcommittee also met with the consulting design team on November 30.
- Housing Element Update. This was agendized at the December 17 Commission meeting, but due to the lateness of the hour, was tabled to a future meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM #4**

## **DISCUSSION**

This report focuses on major work program elements proposed for 2021.

Objective Design and Development Standards (ODDS) regulations and standards: Fairfax is participating in developing ODDS as part of an effort by eleven Marin jurisdictions. ODDS arose out of a need to adopt such standards in order to retain meaningful local review of multi-family housing development projects.

The full Planning Commission will be reviewing the draft toolkit in the spring. The ad hoc ODDS / historic subcommittee will be continuing its review in the meantime.

Marinda Heights (Wall Property) Subdivision: The Town Council approved the EIR contract for the project in November 2019. Unfortunately, environmental and merits review have been on hold due to an apparent lack of funding. The applicant indicated last week that he expects financing for review of the project shortly.

Ridgeline Scenic Corridor Mapping: The Planning Commission has conducted eight meetings so far on digitizing ridgeline scenic corridor maps and text amendments to Chapter 17.060. The Commission is scheduled to review the latest work at this meeting.

Housing Element Update: The Planning Commission is scheduled to review the HE Update separately at this meeting. The Town is obligated by State law to update its Housing Element (HE) every 8 years, and the next HE is due to be completed by the Town by December 2022.

Inclusionary Housing – The Town has secured an SB2 grant in cooperation with other Marin jurisdictions to produce inclusionary (affordable) housing regulations for the Town. Inclusionary Housing will be considered in 2021.

Reach Codes (potential): The Town's Climate Action Committee is leading consideration of energy efficient codes exceeding what the State of California has already implemented via its CalGreen code program. The emphasis is switching to electrical energy.

Miscellaneous housing regulations: As noted previously, the State continues to pass new laws intended to facilitate housing production, which erode local discretionary authority and force local jurisdictions into a reactive mode to maintain regulatory compliance and (try to) retain some local review authority. The afore-mentioned ODDS work is an example of such a local effort. Staff will monitor State legislation and adjust Town regulations to comply with State mandates.

Other Planning Commission Initiatives, Zoning Amendments, Priorities: This is an opportunity for Commissioners to suggest possible work items to consider along with the other priorities.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Planning Commission and staff will have a full plate of planning work items going forward. It is likely that additional monthly meetings will be necessary to make headway.

Some of this has to do with State compliance, some with local initiatives or projects. Staff looks forward to working with Commissioners in a productive 2021.

PC work program rpt 010821 d1