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Planning/Building/Fire Policy for Live/Work and Work/Live Units

Live/Work and Work/Live Occupancies – Zoning Defined.

Group LW zoning districts shall be: Live/Work and Work/Live uses located outside of residential zoning districts. It is intended that artists, artisans and similarly situated individuals can inhabit joint living and work quarters. See also the standards in the Central Petaluma Specific Plan SmartCode (updated 2013) Section 4.70.010 and -020.

When the combined live and work area within a unit exceeds 3,000 square feet it shall not be classified by the building official as a Work/Live occupancy and shall be classified as the B/M/F occupancy group use which is most similar to that set forth in Chapter 3 of the California Building Code (CBC).

When the combined area of a Live/Work unit is 3,000 square feet or less the unit shall be classified as Live/Work (R2) occupancy under the CBC.

A Live/Work unit limits the non-residential portion of the unit to no more than 50% of the total area.

A Work/Live has a non-residential area greater than 50% of the total area.

When there is a conflict between Codes, the most restrictive shall apply.

General Requirements

- a. Any building which contains a Live/Work or Work/Live occupancy shall comply with the latest edition of the California Building Standards Code except as provided for herein. Each Live/Work and Work/Live occupancy shall comply with the standards of habitability set forth in the California Building Standards Code.
- b. Newly constructed buildings require the installation of an automatic fire sprinkler system and fire alarm system (2013 California Fire Code). Existing buildings converted to include living space require the installation of an automatic fire sprinkler system and fire alarm system (Petaluma Municipal Code.) Fire sprinkler systems and fire alarm systems must comply with NFPA 13 and NFPA 72 respectively.

- c. Live/Work or Work/Live units shall be separated from each other and from the rest of the building by not less than one-hour fire resistive occupancy separations. An occupancy separation is not required between the work and live areas within a Live/Work unit. Separations are required within Work/Live units.
- d. The total floor area of Live/Work and Work/Live units shall not exceed 3000 square feet.
- e. The non-residential component of a Live/Work or Work/Live project shall be a use allowed within the applicable Zoning District per CPSP Section 3.
- f. Live/Work or Work/Live units require a Minor Use Permit (MUP) or a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The CUP application for reuse of existing commercial or industrial structures shall also include a Phase I Environmental Assessment for the site per Section 4.70.020 B.

Planning/Zoning Requirements Work/Live units are an allowed land use in the Mixed Use and Commercial Zoning Districts in accordance with the Implementing Zoning Ordinance Chapter 4, Tables 4.3 and 4.4. If the proposed Live/Work or Work/Live use is located within the boundaries of the Central Petaluma Specific Plan (see map in Section 2.10), the 2013 Petaluma SmartCode applies. Refer to CPSP Section 4.70.020 for required use permits, design and operating standards and findings.

CA Building Code Requirements

- All Live/Work units shall be classified as an R-2 Occupancy.
- The Live/Work unit is permitted to be no greater than 3,000 square feet in area.
- The non-residential area is permitted to be no more than 50% of the area of each Live/Work unit.
- The non-residential area function shall be limited to the first or main floor only of the Live/Work unit.
- Not more than 5 non-residential workers or employees are allowed to occupy the non-residential area at any one time.

Please note that Planning/Zoning regulations (CPSC Section 4.70.020 E) limit the number of employees to a maximum of 2 that do not reside on the premises.

Each unit will have at least one habitable room with a minimum floor area of 120 square feet of living area. All other habitable rooms except kitchens shall have an area of no less than 70 square feet.

Work/Live occupancies do not meet the CBC requirements for Live/Work occupancies. As such they will be treated as separate occupancies and will require any separations as specified within the CBC for their specific uses.

Electrical, Mechanical, and Plumbing Requirements

Except as otherwise stated herein, all electrical, mechanical, and plumbing work in any building which contains any Live/Work or Work/Live occupancies shall satisfy the latest edition of the California Plumbing, Mechanical, and Electrical Codes as amended by the Petaluma Municipal Code.

Energy Conservation

Buildings or parts of buildings containing Live/Work or Work/Live occupancies shall comply with the California Energy Code energy efficiency standards for residential buildings, unless otherwise determined by the building official.

Exception: Where an occupancy separation within an individual unit is installed between live and work areas, the Energy Code standards for the respective occupancies may apply.

Disabled Access

Buildings with three or more Work/Live or Live/Work units shall comply with the residential disabled access requirements of Chapter 11A of the CBC.

Regardless of the number of units, any area within Work/Live or Live/Work occupancies, where such area is available for use by clients, employees or the general public, shall in addition comply with commercial disabled access requirements of the most recent edition of the CBC.

Exception: In lieu of an accessible public restroom in each Work/Live or Live/Work unit, fully accessible restroom facilities may be provided in common areas located on an accessible route of travel within a reasonable distance of the accessible units.

Any Live/Work or Work/Live occupancies shall also comply with the accessibility requirements of the California, Plumbing, Mechanical, and Electrical Codes.

Occupancy Requirements, Exiting, and Area Separations

Any Live/Work unit shall comply with the applicable provisions of the CBC requirements for an R-2 occupancy group, as defined by CBC Section 310.1.

Work/Live units shall meet the separate requirements of the two areas as specified in the current CBC which most closely match their proposed uses.

The living area of each unit containing any Work/Live shall be provided with at least one exit which does not require persons to exit through the work area.

Mixed Uses and other uses in Live/Work Projects

Mixed use occupancies shall be classified by the building official in accordance with the California Building Standards Code and shall comply with all of the requirements of said code including, but not limited to, occupancy separation, allowable area and independent exits . See also Section 4.70 D1-3 of the CPSP for design standards.

Relationship to Other Code Requirements

Except with respect to those requirements, standards and provisions specifically imposed by this policy, construction materials and methods of construction shall be governed by and in accordance with the California Building Standards Code. In the event there is a conflict between any requirement, standard or provision imposed by this policy and any other provision, standard or requirement of state law, the more restrictive standard shall apply.