



office memorandum

TO: Citizens of Norman

DATE: May 23, 2013

FROM: Susan F. Connors, AICP, Director *SFC*
Planning & Community Development

SUBJECT: Amended High Density Residential Zoning Districts Ordinance

BACKGROUND:

The City Council Planning and Community Development Committee met on May 13, 2013 to continue their discussion on the proposed High Density Residential Zoning Districts Ordinance. The Committee made several changes to the proposed Ordinance. Staff made the Committee's changes as outlined below and marked those changes in red to the attached draft Ordinance.

DISCUSSION:

The first set of Committee recommended changes "require" first floor commercial and retail uses in the HDR-3 district and "strongly encouraged" those uses in the HDR-2 district when an HDR-2 project is located in a commercial/retail area.

The second set of Committee recommended changes require that HDR-1 buildings shall not exceed three stories or forty-five feet; HDR-2 buildings shall not exceed four stories or fifty-five feet in height; and HDR-3 buildings shall not have any height or story limitations. In addition, as recommended by the Committee, Staff has deleted the provision providing for an "allowable height exception". As a result, the draft Ordinance no longer provides for an additional six feet of height for architectural features such as pitched roofs, gable roofs, elevator overruns, or other similar features.

The next Committee recommended change is in Section 4(a) concerning Architectural Standards. It adds the following sentence: "There is considerable information in the High Density Discussion Series Final Report, June 11 – August 30, 2012 to inform applicants and the High Density Design Review Committee." Also, as recommended by the Committee, Section 4(b)(1) has been modified as follows: "High density building and site design must be compatible within the context and character of the neighborhoods in which they will be constructed. It is the obligation of the applicant to demonstrate compatibility sufficient to satisfy both the High Density Design Review Committee and the City Council."

Section 4(c)(1)(vii) has been amended to allow "breaks in wall planes" and "roof lines shall vary" to occur every *twenty-five* to fifty feet in the HDR-2 district.

The next set of changes recommended by the Committee is in Section 9(a)(1) of the proposed Ordinance. The location requirements for the HDR-2 district have been amended to require HDR-2 zones to be located on an arterial street or located on a collector street within *700 feet* of an arterial street, instead of within two blocks as previously required. Also, HDR-2 zones “are discouraged” from being located adjacent to or across the street from single family uses, and HDR-3 zones “are prohibited” from the same.

In Section 13, paragraph (b) has been added that requires the following: “Staff shall make a recommendation to Council, which will accompany the rezoning application, regarding how to maintain the current level of traffic service in the area surrounding the proposed development.”

In Section 14, paragraph (c)(ii)(3) has been amended to conform to the language for removal of committee and commission members as stated in Chapter 4 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Norman. The paragraph now reads as follows: “Members may be removed by a majority action of the City Council.”

The last change suggested by the Committee is to insert the following sentence into Section 14(c)(iv)(2): “The High Density Design Review Committee shall make a finding as to the compatibility of the proposed project in relation to the context and character of the neighborhood in which it will be constructed. Such a finding shall take into consideration the High Density Discussion Series Final Report, June 11 – August 30, 2012.”

In making the above changes to the proposed Ordinance, Staff has suggested three minor changes in order to clean up the proposed Ordinance. These changes are marked in blue. First, in Section 2, the Permitted Uses have been modified to prohibit “drive-in” as well as drive-through service. This is a clarification so there will not be any doubt as to the intention of the prohibition. Second, in Section 3(a) there is a density listed for each level of HDR zoning, and that duplicative language has been removed. Lastly, Section 3(b)(5) was added because the current Zoning Ordinance allows in Section 431.3(b) certain elements such as chimneys, elevators, flagpoles, spires, etc., not used for human habitation, to extend above the height limit. This is a general section which refers to all zoning districts. If the Committee desires for the proposed height limitations to apply to these elements as well, then application of this ordinance provision should be specifically prohibited in the HDR zoning districts.

The next meeting regarding the HDR draft ordinance will be held on May 30, 2013 from 6 PM to 8 PM. This will be a public meeting held in the City Council Chambers to allow the public to hear information regarding the proposed Ordinance and to ask questions regarding the draft Ordinance.