

**CITY OF ST. HELENA
PLANNING DEPARTMENT 1480 MAIN STREET-ST. HELENA, CA 94574
PLANNING COMMISSION**

DECEMBER 17, 2013

AGENDA ITEM: 10.1

City of St. Helena initiated **ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT** amending Title 17, Chapter 17.164, Section 17.164.060 of the Municipal Code and adding Section 17.164.065 to the Municipal Code to **ALLOW ADMINISTRATIVE DESIGN REVIEW OF MINOR PROJECTS**.

PREPARED BY: Greg Desmond, Interim Planning Director and Christine O'Rourke, Contract Planner.

SUMMARY

Chapter 17.164 of the municipal code does not provide administrative exemptions from the design review process.

The purpose of this amendment is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of local government while protecting the character and design of sites and structures within the city, it is the purpose of this ordinance to allow administrative design review of minor projects that would not have a significant impact on neighboring properties or the general vicinity.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

The following are the proposed amended sections to Chapter 17.164. Existing language is in black, proposed new language in purple underlined text and language to be removed in ~~red strike-out~~ text.

17.164.060 Exemptions.

~~A. Whenever the city planner finds that a proposal raises no substantial design problem of the sort outlined in Sections 17.164.010 through 17.164.030, the planner shall place such an exemption recommendation on the planning commission's consent agenda.~~

B. The planning commission may delegate to the planning director responsibility for review and recommendation for applications for zoning and building permits in those cases, where in the opinion of the commission, the proposed use or structure would not have a significant impact on neighboring properties or on the entire area, or in cases where the proposed use of structure is clearly consistent with the purposes of Sections 17.164.020 and 17.164.030 and the remaining requirements of this chapter and the general plan.

~~C. The city planner may review and approve the replacement of existing architectural features that do not involve substantial design changes or changes in materials.~~

17.164.065 Administrative Review.

Design review applications for the following items are considered to be minor projects and may be acted upon by the planning director in lieu of planning commission review and approval:

- A. New structures or buildings not exceeding two hundred-fifty (250) square feet;
- B. Additions not exceeding two hundred fifty (250) square feet to existing buildings and structures, or expansion of an existing building or structure involving less than twenty-five (25) percent of the existing floor area, whichever is less;
- C. Removal or alteration of not more than twenty-five (25) percent of the exterior walls or wall covering of a building or structure, as determined by the planning director;
- D. The replacement of existing architectural features that do not involve substantial design changes or changes in materials, as determined by the planning director;
- E. Signs subject to the permit requirements of Chapter 17.148 of this code;
- F. Residential second units in conformance with Section 17.116.030 of this code;
- G. Modifications to approved design review permits when determined by the planning director to be minor in nature; and
- H. Any other work determined by the planning director to be minor or incidental in nature and consistent with the intent and objectives of this chapter.

ANALYSIS: CEQA

The staff finds that the action to adopt this Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because the action is exempt from environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3). The activity is covered by the general rule which exempts activities that can be seen with certainty to have no possibility for causing a significant effect on the environment.

STAFF COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission open the public hearing and receive public testimony, identify any specific issues or amendments, and make recommendations to City Council.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

1. Determine that the ordinance amendments are categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).
2. Open public hearing, take testimony, amend as necessary and recommend City Council approval of the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments to Chapter 17.164.

ATTACHMENTS

None