

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

DECEMBER 17, 2013

AGENDA ITEM: 10.3

City of St. Helena initiated **ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT** amending Title 17, Chapter 17.124, Section 17.124.070 of the Municipal Code to **FOR CONSISTENCY WITH TITLE 15, CHAPTER 15.36, SECTION 15.36.100 - FIRE APPARATUS ACCESS ROADS**

PREPARED BY: Greg Desmond, Interim Planning Director

SUMMARY

The purpose of this amendment is to establish consistency between the recently adopted the 2013 California Building Code and Municipal Code Title 17 – Zoning, Chapter 17.124, Section 17.124.070. This section is specific to standards for access drives and driveways.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

The following is the amended section with existing language in black, proposed new language in purple underlined text and language to be removed in ~~red strike-out~~ text.

17.124.070 Standards for driveways and access drives.

A. Residential Driveways. A residential driveway provides direct vehicular access from a public street, or a private street developed to city standards, to the required parking for an individual dwelling unit. That portion which connects a residential driveway to the street is a driveway approach and is typically located in the right-of-way. The intent of these standards is to provide for emergency vehicle and/or fire equipment access:

1. A residential driveway shall have a minimum length of twenty-four (24) feet (measured from the property line) which may be reduced to not less than twenty (20) feet in length if a roll-up garage door or carport is utilized.
2. A residential driveway shall have a minimum width of ten (10) feet. The standard residential driveway approach shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet in width and a maximum of twenty (20) feet as shown in the city of St. Helena Street, Storm Drain and Sidewalk Standards.
3. Residential driveways in the woodlands and watershed zoning district, or elsewhere as deemed necessary by the fire chief/fire code official, ~~shall be paved as shown in the city of St. Helena Street, Storm Drain and Sidewalk Standards. Decomposed granite, shale or other all-weather surfaces may be used in other residential districts provided that there is twelve (12) inches base material with ninety percent (90%) compaction.~~
4. ~~Residential driveways~~ providing access to a lot which does not have public street frontage ~~shall meet the standards for an access drive, or~~ or

5. ~~Residential driveways which~~ are greater than one hundred (100) feet in length shall meet the standards for an access drive as set forth in ~~subsection B of this section except as follows:~~
 - a. ~~A residential driveway over one hundred (100) feet in length may be permitted if the furthest point of any structure on the property is one hundred fifty (150) feet or less from the street curb.~~
 - b. ~~Upon the approval of the fire chief, a residential driveway over one hundred (100) feet in length may be permitted, provided that the driveway is widened to sixteen (16) feet (for a minimum of thirty five (35) feet in length) connecting the street to a point within one hundred fifty (150) feet of the furthest point of any structure on the property. Chapter 15.36.100 of the City municipal code. CFC Title 24 chapter 9 California code of regulations 2013.~~

B. Standards for Access Drives.

1. An access drive is a way located outside of the public right-of-way that provides vehicular access between the public street and the required parking for more than one lot, or for one lot if the length of the drive is greater than one hundred (100) feet.
2. The design of all features relating to access drives is subject to review and approval of the public works director and fire chief/fire code official and may require a grading permit. The applicant shall submit a detailed, dimensioned plan with accurate topographic background showing the layout of the proposed access drive, parking and other related features on the site being developed. These features may include curbs, gutters, sidewalks, drainage facilities, pavement structural section, traffic circulation signing and markings. The plan shall also include finished grades. ~~When it is determined that an~~ The access drive ~~will~~ shall be designed to serve traffic loads as specified in Chapter 15.36. Where the access is determined by the public works director to serve traffic loads ~~that are~~ equivalent to those typically encountered on public streets, the public works director ~~may~~ shall require the design of the access drive to meet public street standards.
 - a. All access drives shall be designed for two-way traffic, unless specific approval is obtained from the public works director and fire chief/fire code official to allow one-way access drives. ~~One way access drives will only be permitted when a two way drive is not feasible or when traffic conditions on the public street may benefit.~~
 - b. Access drives in areas as ~~the woodlands and watershed zoning district, or elsewhere as~~ deemed necessary by the fire chief/fire code official, shall be paved as ~~shown in the city of St. Helena Street, Storm Drain and Sidewalk Standards. Decomposed granite, shale or other all weather surfaces may be used in other residential districts provided that there is twelve (12) inches base material with ninety percent (90%) compaction noted in Chapter 15.36.~~
 - c. To avoid congestion at the entrance from the street, no on-site parking space or gate shall be allowed within the initial ~~twenty (20)~~ thirty (30) feet of the access drive ~~where it connects to the street~~ from the property line.
 - d. ~~A suitable on~~ On-site turnarounds or circulation patterns meeting design criteria set forth in ~~the St. Helena Standard Specifications for Public Improvements~~ Chapter 15.36 shall be

provided that will enable the access drives to function properly for traffic and emergency vehicles. Backing out of access drives shall not be allowed.

- e. The following widths are minimums that will allow for the safe passage of emergency vehicles. Width for required parking areas must be added to the access drives. Widths are also as specified in ~~CFC Title 24 Chapter 9 California code of regulations 2013 Chapter 15.36~~ and are applied based on length of the access drive.
- f. The minimum vertical clearance shall be fourteen (14) feet at all points across the required width of the access drive.
- g. ~~One~~ Emergency vehicle turnouts ~~area~~ shall be provided ~~at every five hundred (500) feet of access drive length per Chapter 15.36. CFC Title 24 Chapter 9 California code of regulations 2013. Design shall meet criteria set forth in the St. Helena Standard Specifications for Public Improvements, or as approved by the city engineer and fire chief.~~
- h. An adequately sized firefighting operational area shall be provided ~~within one hundred fifty (150) feet of the farthest point of any and all structures as required by Chapter 15.36.~~
- i. Access drives grades ~~shall not exceed a grade of sixteen percent (16%), except that one run of one hundred (100) feet or less in length may be at eighteen percent (18%) grade upon approval of the fire chief.~~ shall follow the requirements of Chapter 15.36
- j. Access drives shall be inspected annually by the ~~fire-marshall~~ fire chief/fire code official to ensure that landscaping or other obstructions do not hinder emergency vehicle access.
(Ord. 05-4 § 1 (part); Ord. 02-6 § 10; prior code § 27.252)

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 (Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq.) (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 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 a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to Section 17.124.070.

ATTACHMENTS

None