

RESOLUTION NUMBER 21-002 (PCS)

(Planning Commission Series)

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA DECLARING ITS INTENTION TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDING TO THE CITY COUNCIL THAT THE COUNCIL AMEND THE TEXT OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO MODIFY ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW PROCESSES AND THRESHOLDS

WHEREAS, the City of Santa Monica has a long-standing commitment to quality urban character and form, and assuring that buildings, structures, or other developments are in good taste, good design, and harmonious with surrounding developments, and in general contribute to the preservation of Santa Monica's reputation as a place of beauty, spaciousness, and quality; and

WHEREAS, this commitment is implemented through various architectural review standards and procedures set forth in the City's Zoning Ordinance, Santa Monica Municipal Code Chapters 9.01 to 9.52, inclusive; and

WHEREAS, Santa Monica Municipal Code Chapter 9.55: Architectural Review (the "Architectural Review Ordinance") promotes the public health, safety, and general welfare by establishing procedures and providing regulations deemed necessary to preserve existing areas of natural beauty and cultural importance; and

WHEREAS, the Architectural Review Ordinance establishes an Architectural Review Board (“ARB”) and sets forth standards and procedures for the ARB to implement the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have devastated nearly all of the City’s revenue streams, including sales tax, transient occupancy tax, parking revenue, and business license revenue; and

WHEREAS, after reviewing these impacts at its April 14, 2020 meeting, Council directed staff to develop a plan to restructure City operations to meet the challenges posed by COVID-19 and to balance the budget; and

WHEREAS, on May 5, 2020, the City Council adopted a restructuring plan (the “Restructuring Plan”) to: merge the Planning and Community Development Department and Building and Safety, City Planning, Economic Development, and Mobility divisions (the Mobility division since having been moved and merged with the Big Blue Bus to form a Department focused on mobility and transportation) into the Community Development Department, and merge the Community & Cultural Services Department and the Housing Division into the Community Services Department; and

WHEREAS, the Restructuring Plan included a proposal to reimagine the City’s design review process, including a reduction in the projects that are reviewed by the ARB; and

WHEREAS, on June 25, 2020, the City Council adopted the FY 2020-21 through FY 2024-25 Five-Year Forecast, the FY 2020-21 Proposed Budget, and the FY 2020-22 Proposed Biennial Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget, and approved City staff’s recommendation regarding a restructured design review process; and

WHEREAS, on October 13, 2020, the City Council adopted Ordinance Number 2651 (CCS) (“Ordinance 2651”), which began restructuring the design review process by increasing the thresholds for administrative approval and established formal procedures for administrative approval; and

WHEREAS, on February 17, 2021, the Planning Commission considered amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to further the restructuring process by modifying design review processes and thresholds, which are detailed in Exhibit A, and hereby declares its intention to consider such changes by adopting this resolution pursuant to Santa Monica Municipal Code Section 9.46.030(B).

NOW, THEREFORE, THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Pursuant to Santa Monica Municipal Code Section 9.46.030(B), the Planning Commission does hereby announce its intention to consider recommending to the City Council that the City Council amend the text of the Zoning Ordinance to modify architectural review processes and thresholds, as set forth in Exhibit A, attached to this Resolution.

SECTION 2. The Director of Planning and Community Development shall certify to the adoption of this Resolution, and thenceforth and thereafter the same shall be in full force and effect.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

GEORGE S. CARDONA
Interim City Attorney

Adopted this 17th day of February, 2021.

Chair, Planning Commission

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution of Intention was duly and regularly introduced and approved at a meeting of the Planning Commission on the 17th day of February, 2021 by the following vote:

Ayes:

Noes:

Abstain:

Absent:

ATTEST:

Director of Community Development Department

EXHIBIT A

The potential amendments to the text of the Zoning Ordinance include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Revisions to the Architectural Review Board (“ARB”) process to streamline review
- Modifications to thresholds for design review by the ARB
- Exploration of revisions to ARB’s authority to modify certain development standards