

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE LITCHFIELD PARK PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
May 11, 2021**

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was held online via Zoom and called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chair Ledyard.

Members Present: Vice Chair Faith, and Commissioners Alvey, Darre, Lawrence, Ledyard; and O'Connor.

Members Absent: Commissioner Fraser.

Staff Present: Jason Sanks, Planning Consultant; Pamela Maslowski, Director of Planning Services; and Dawn Morocco, IT Assistant.

**II. Business**

**A. Zoning Code Update**

Mr. Sanks stated that a great majority of the Zoning Code update involves refining, reformatting, and restructuring the existing Code; however, there are a number of items that need review and discussion. At the April meeting, the Commission discussed the possibility of revising some of the accessory structure requirements. The City established standards that limit the size of accessory structures to 500 SF (square feet) due to concerns regarding overbuilding residential lots. Since that time, the City has received requests to allow larger guest houses, shade structures and garages. This has prompted discussion regarding whether some of the requirements/restrictions should be revised. He reviewed and discussed his Staff Report that was included in the agenda packet.

- The definition of an accessory structure includes any detached structure whether it is built within the building footprint or outside of it. Staff's proposal, based on the Commission's discussion and on discussions with the sub-committee that has been meeting with Staff, is to change the definition of an accessory structure to:

*A subordinate structure located on the same lot as the principal building, located either partially or entirely outside of the required main building setbacks. Structures located within the main building setbacks shall not be considered accessory structures, shall be considered part of the primary structure whether attached or detached, and are subject to the development standards of the zoning district for which it is located. In all cases, building code requirements remain applicable to all structures.*

He noted the language regarding the building code might seem redundant. However, while it might be fine to locate an accessory structure closer to an existing home from a design perspective, there could be restrictions under the building codes. This puts the applicants on notice that, in addition to the Zoning Code regulations, there might be specific building codes that require larger setbacks. He would like the Commission to consider this change.

- Mr. Sanks had technology difficulties and left the meeting for a short time. In response to questions, Ms. Maslowski supplied the requirements for accessory structures on lots bordering golf courses.
- Mr. Sanks returned to the meeting, and stated that Staff would like to know if the Commission had any concerns or direction regarding RV garages. RV garages have been a concern because of their size and the difficulty in architecturally integrating them with the home so they do not look like large storage boxes. The preference has been that RV garages be located within the main building envelope rather than as an accessory structure that would be allowed to be built closer to the property line. Mr. Sanks referred to the RV garage illustration in his Staff Report, noting that it gives an idea of the scale and height for an RV garage, although some RVs would require an even

larger sized structure. He did check other cities' requirements for accessory structures. The Town of Gilbert allows a 20' height, whereas Litchfield Park caps the height at 15'. An RV garage usually requires a height of at least 20'.

- Staff is also proposing changing one of the requirements regarding lot coverage and size. The Code requires that no accessory structure or combination of structures shall occupy more than 25% of the area lying between the rear property line and the rear of the home. This metric is difficult to calculate due to the different types of properties in the City, and the calculations are rarely provided by the applicants. Staff would like to propose that this requirement be removed.
- The maximum size allowed for all accessory structures or combination of structures is 500 SF. This includes any attached shade structures. When lot coverage is calculated, it includes everything under roof and that is also used to determine the square footage of accessory structures. Staff is proposing that language be added clarifying that any attached shade structure is to be considered in calculating the total square footage.
- Based on recent discussions with the sub-committee and the Commission last month, Staff would like some direct input on increasing the maximum size (500 SF) allowed for accessory structures on larger lots within the City. He has proposed keeping the 500 SF maximum, except for lots within Residential Estate (RE) districts, where the maximum allowed would be 1,000 SF. It was first thought that the R-1 District lots should be included; however, upon further review, Staff found that many of these lots are already fairly densely packed. Staff feels that including only the RE Districts in the allowance for larger structures remains consistent with the City's goal to not over develop residential lots. Commissioner O'Connor noted that the sub-committee discussed increasing the allowable maximum size for the R-1 districts to 700 SF. Mr. Sanks responded that there was discussion regarding tiering the allowable height; however, he was not entirely clear after the if that was the case. He explained his reasoning for limiting the additional height to the RE districts and noted that, if the Commission wants to tier the allowable height, the requirement can be revised.

Commission discussion and comments included:

- A very large RV garage could be built as long as it is attached to the house; is within the required building footprint of the main house; does not cause the property to exceed the maximum lot coverage allowed; and the colors, materials, and finishes match the existing home. Also, the Design Review Board has a general policy that the ridge height of the RV garage may not exceed the ridge height of the existing home.
- There are about 24 lots with RE zoning, and there are very large lots of an acre or more that are not within an RE District. Mr. Sanks noted that a minimum lot size could be used as the threshold rather than the zoning district.
- A question was raised regarding a large house on Old Litchfield Road with a large RV garage and other structures. Mr. Sanks explained the history of the property and noted that the house is located on a very large lot with additional structures connected via trellises, making them a part of the home. The house, including the attached structures, are all located within the buildable area of the lot. The height is within what is allowed.
- It was suggested that the Commission could move forward with those changes the Commission agrees with at this point for the Code update. Additional changes to this section could be reviewed and discussed at a later date as a separate text amendment when there might be more public involvement.
- Mr. Sanks noted that Staff is bringing items to the Commission that have been brought to Staff's attention. The Commission could consider only the suggested changes to the definition at this time. That would probably take care of many issues where garages are being added within the building envelope and then being required to be attached to house with trellises and such. If the main building setbacks are met, whether the proposed addition is attached or detached, the size should not be restricted as long as it is approved by the Design Review Board. Allowing larger structures on larger lots could be a discussion for a future text amendment.

- Vice Chair Faith asked for clarification that, with the new definition, accessory structures would only apply to structures built within the setbacks. There would be no cap for a structure located within the building envelope. Mr. Sanks stated that was correct, except they would be limited by the maximum lot coverage.

Chair Ledyard noted that there appears to be interest in adjusting the definition for accessory structures. He asked if there were any Commissioners opposed to giving direction to Staff to change the definition. Commissioner Lawrence asked for clarification that the direction being given only regards the change to the definition and not the increase in size on certain sized lots. Mr. Sanks responded that was correct. The increase in size would not be a part of the current Zoning Code update, but could be part of a future text amendment. What would be included in this direction is changing the existing definition language as noted in the Staff Report. No Commissioner spoke in opposition.

#### **B. Design Review Board/Board of Adjustment Update**

Commissioner O'Connor noted the report was included in the agenda packet, and there were no comments.

#### **C. Topics for Referral to City Council**

There were no topics referred.

#### **D. Minutes**

Commissioner Lawrence **moved** to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2021 minutes; Commissioner O'Connor **seconded; unanimous approval.**

### **III. Staff Reports**

Mr. Sanks reported on the progress of the Dysart and Camelback Center, the Sun Health La Loma Campus, and the proposed Major General Plan Amendment schedule.

### **IV. Commission Reports**

There were no reports given.

### **V. Adjournment**

Commissioner O'Connor **moved** to adjourn; Commissioner Lawrence **seconded; unanimous approval.** The meeting was **adjourned** at 7:56 p.m.

APPROVED:

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**

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David Ledyard, Chair

/pm