



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

To: Mayor Graham and City Council
From: Ted Shekell, Planning Director
Walter Denton, City Administrator
Date: June 5, 2006
Subject: An Ordinance Amending the Municipal Code of the City of O'Fallon, Illinois Chapter 155, Zoning Code, and Chapter 150 Building Regulations, To Establish and Clarify Minimum Building, Construction and Design Requirements for Single-Family Dwelling Construction in the City and to Establish Temporary Regulations on Issuance of Certain Single-Family and Two-Family Dwelling Building Permits Pending Establishment of Different or Supplementary Permanent Regulations.

List of committees that have reviewed: The CD Committee reviewed the proposed ordinance at its May 22, 2006, meeting, and unanimously recommended approving the ordinance on emergency passage by two readings at the June 5, 2006 meeting.

Background:

We recently received notice from a large national homebuilder that they want to build a large new subdivision in O'Fallon, and after doing some investigation into the company and their proposed product, we became concerned about the quality of their construction techniques, materials, and the design of the homes they propose to build. We were able to determine that the product line was clearly inconsistent with the high standards of quality and design the community has become accustomed to seeing. It should be noted that they are not the only builder proposing housing of such minimal quality for O'Fallon.

Some of the issues we noted with these housing types include construction without any eaves, gable overhangs, or soffit materials; use of subpar vinyl siding (less than .42 mil); no front doors facing a public street front for emergency visibility and access; homes constructed at an elevation too low to meet minimum building code requirements; and numerous design and architectural feature omissions that are inconsistent with the minimum community and industry standards that have been built applying O'Fallon's existing codes.

In response, we have prepared an ordinance that will put into effect certain minimum building and zoning code requirements, such as requiring a minimum 12" overhang on one- or two – family dwellings; requiring fascia and soffit to be installed and using approved materials; and requiring the front door of a house to actually face a street. In addition to these minimum additions to the building code, we are also proposing temporary zoning regulations to last 120 days to give the staff and consultants time to perform additional research into the issue, as well as time to conduct a visual preference survey with residents in the community to establish what types of standards they want to see in their neighborhoods, particularly relating to the design of housing and general subdivision layout. The result of this community survey and research will be to develop minimum design standards for housing and subdivisions in the City's newly developing neighborhoods. Essentially, the goal of these temporary zoning regulations is to maintain the "status quo" in the building industry in O'Fallon for the next 120 days, ensuring that while the current housing types and standards can continue being built, the ordinance will prevent the "worst of the worst" from being started during the 120 day period.

Legal Considerations, if any: Dan Vogel prepared the ordinance in consultation with staff. An emergency passage provision was included in the ordinance by Dan after consultation with Dale Funk to allow for two readings on June 5.

Budget Impact: None

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the ordinance as presented.