



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

To: Mayor Graham and City Council
From: Ted Shekell, Planning Director
Walter Denton, City Administrator
Date: July 3, 2006
Subject: An Ordinance Amending the Municipal Code of the City of O'Fallon, Illinois Chapter 155, Zoning Code, and Chapter 150 Building Regulations, Regarding Proposed Amendments to the Building and Zoning Regulations

List of committees that have reviewed: The CD Committee reviewed the proposed ordinance at its June 26, 2006, meeting, and unanimously recommended its approval. This was originally scheduled for a vote at the Council meeting on June 5, with a special PC meeting being scheduled for that evening prior to the Council meeting. However, since the PC could not constitute a quorum the public hearing had to be rescheduled. The PC held a rescheduled public hearing this Tuesday, June 27, and unanimously recommended the ordinance for approval. One amendment was recommended, which was to have the temporary regulations in place for 180 days instead of 120 days, thereby giving us a couple of extra months to gain public input and to draft the architectural standards.

Background: We recently received notice from a large national homebuilder that they wanted 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 180 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 180 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 180 day period.

Legal Considerations, if any: Dan Vogel prepared the ordinance in consultation with staff. Dale Funk was also consulted on the ordinance language.

Budget Impact: None

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the ordinance as presented.
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