

TO: Mayor Craft & Members of the City Council

FROM: Lee Jones, Director of Planning & Community Development

SUBJECT: ZTA20-06 – Garage Placement – Zoning Text Amendment

DATE: January 4, 2021

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

The City of Gulf Shores seeks to amend the Garage Setback standards in Article 6-3, as well as affected area and dimensional requirements in Table 7-1B. The proposal also contains a housekeeping amendment to the Maximum Density permitted within the R-1-5 Zoning District.

BACKGROUND

- August 27, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting – The Commission deferred application #ZTA20-06 to give staff additional time to meet with stakeholders, gather input, and revise the proposed text amendment based on feedback received. Staff held multiple meetings with homebuilders, developers, engineers, and surveyors to review and discuss the amendment. Significant revisions were made to the draft as a result.
- December 15, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting - The Planning Commission recommended disapproval of the motion to approve the amendments with the addition of a grandfathering clause exempting lots with preliminary plat or master plan approval and providing those applicants the option to choose the standards of the proposed amendment or the standards that were in place at the time of preliminary plat approval.

PROPOSAL

The reason for the proposed setback standards is two-fold. First, many of the vehicles parked in tandem do not fit within the current 35ft setback. Increasing the Min. Front Yard for R-1-4 and R-1-5 from 35ft to 40ft will allow most vehicles to park in tandem within the setback, and they will not overhang the sidewalk. Secondly, the proposed text amendment provides options for single family building designs on smaller lots that will minimize the impact of garages and parking aprons on the streetscape.

The garage placement options proposed in the text amendment will provide greater flexibility in the placement of homes, as well as increased buildable area if the applicant opts to construct the garage in a configuration that lessens its impact on the pedestrian environment. By choosing to bring habitable spaces closer to the street or by turning prominent garage doors away from the street, builders can increase pedestrian comfort and help create a stronger sense of community and walkable neighborhoods as envisioned by the Vision 2025 Future Land Use Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council approve the amendment as proposed.

ATTACHMENTS

Staff Report