



Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update – Zoning Advisory Group

City of Milpitas

Zoning Advisory Group (ZAG) Meeting #1 Summary

INTRODUCTION

At 6 p.m. on May 23, 2023, the first meeting of the City of Milpitas Zoning Advisory Group (ZAG) commenced. The meeting was conducted in person at Milpitas City Hall and with virtual attendance available via Zoom. Notifications of this meeting were distributed by the City and posted on the project website (www.milpitaszoningupdate.org). The meeting was recorded and posted on the project website so it may be viewed at any time.

ATTENDANCE

ZAG Members

- Mercedes Albana – Planning Commission
- Frank Bush – Energy & Environmental Sustainability Commission
- Prakash Daryani – Economic Development and Trade Commission, ZAG Chair
- Ricky Davis – Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Commission, ZAG Vice Chair
- Joyita Ghose – Arts Commission
- Becky Strauss – Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Commission

City Staff

- Jay Lee – Principal Planner
- Holly Pearson – Zoning Update Project Manager
- Kristina Phung – Associate Planner
- Liz Medina – Administrative Assistant

Lisa Wise Consulting, Inc.

- Jen Murillo – Director/LWC Project Manager
- Stefano Richichi – Senior Associate
- Caroline Chen – Associate
- Abby Weizer – Associate

OVERVIEW

Jay Lee, Principal Planner, introduced the Zoning Ordinance Update item. LWC Director, Jen Murillo, then gave a PowerPoint-supported presentation. The presentation covered the following topics:

- Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update Overview
- ZAG Roles and Responsibilities
- Feedback – Beneficial Regulations and Effective Traits of the Zoning Ordinance (What We've Heard is Working)
- Feedback – Issues with the Zoning Ordinance (What's We've Heard is Not Working)
- Discussion Questions
- Wrap Up & Next Steps

After the presentation, time was given for ZAG members to ask their questions about the overall project, group role and responsibilities, and the feedback presented on the existing Zoning Ordinance. Afterwards, time was provided to discuss the Ordinance Update. The presentation offered sample discussion questions as follows:

1. In what ways do you see the zoning regulations/update effort intersecting with the topics and issues within the purview of your Commission?
2. What do you find beneficial or effective about the current Zoning Ordinance?
3. Are the use regulations effective in allowing desired uses? Keeping out incompatible uses?
4. What are the Zoning Ordinance's shortcomings in achieving quality development?
5. How well do the procedures work (use permits, noticing, appeals, nonconforming)?
6. What aspects of the Zoning Ordinance should be clarified?
7. Other?

ZAG MEMBER COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

The bullets below provide a summary of topics raised during ZAG discussion comments and questions.

- The Zoning Ordinance Update will implement community-driven City policy documents. This includes the 2040 General Plan (adopted 2021), the Milpitas Metro Specific Plan (adopted February 2023), and other policy documents (Economic Development Strategy, Climate Action Plan, etc.).

- General interest in the source of the feedback presented and how the community will be engaged in the future. The people of Milpitas are knowledgeable, experienced, and engaged. Interest in developing workshop format and community outreach in a way that reaches all sectors of the community (e.g., residents, business owners/operator, industrial/employers, etc.).
- Relationship with the Gateway-Main Specific Plan effort was discussed. The Gateway-Main Specific Plan is not yet drafted. When it is drafted, the City will determine how to incorporate Gateway-Main Specific Plan provisions into the Zoning Ordinance.
- The Zoning Advisory Group's role is as an advisory body to City staff and the consultant.
- Interest in how historic buildings will be addressed in the Zoning Ordinance. Desire to preserve historic buildings, including historic buildings on private property.
- Discussion regarding how the Zoning Ordinance can help improve efforts to beautify the City. There are current public art requirements for larger projects. Sign regulations should consider public art (i.e., murals).
- There is concern regarding managing future change while preserving the environment and retaining all parkland. Desire to strike a balance between growth and preservation.
- The Zoning Ordinance should reflect and support energy efficiency goals, transit-oriented development, and modern development practices and uses, especially relating to technology.
- There is interest in streamlining the permitting process and using accessible language understood by the 'everyday person' in the Zoning Ordinance, permit applications, and related supplemental materials.
- Discussion regarding height regulations in residential areas, especially related to privacy and shading (e.g., taller building blocking solar panels). Lack of control over private property due to State legislation is a concern. There is an interest in improving privacy provisions related to accessory dwelling units (ADUs), where possible considering State ADU law.
- Desire to preserve the beauty and natural resources of hillside areas.
- A goal of the City is to revitalize Main Street into a 'downtown' via the Milpitas Gateway-Main Specific Plan.
- Future ZAG meetings may not be held on Tuesday evenings due to conflicts with the School Board meeting schedule (ZAG member Chris Norwood).

- ZAG Meeting #2 will tentatively be held in August 2023. City staff will coordinate with ZAG members and the consultant to determine the best date. The Background Review and Recommendations Report will be prepared for ZAG Meeting #2 discussion. The new zoning districts and zoning map will also be available for discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

After the ZAG discussion, the City provided an opportunity for public comment. One public comment was given before the conclusion of the meeting. The bullets below provide a summary of topics raised by the public commenter.

- There is an interest in continuing to prioritize mixed-use in the Zoning Ordinance. The new zoning district, Neighborhood Commercial Mixed Use (NCMU) District, will help prioritize mixed-use sooner than the rest of the Zoning Ordinance, as the new NCMU standards will be prepared and adopted ahead of the comprehensive update.
- There is an interest in incremental deliverables related to the overall Zoning Ordinance update effort. The Ordinance update process is roughly two years.
- Desire to address economic development goals (technology park, etc.) and balance with other City goals.