



ARCADIA ZONING & SUBDIVISION CODE UPDATE

Ad Hoc Committee Meeting #2 Summary

December 15, 2014

Revised: January 28, 2015

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Introduction

ON DECEMBER 9, the Arcadia Zoning Code Ad Hoc Committee was convened to review Policy Issues Whitepaper #2. The following information provides a summary of the Ad Hoc Committee input on the four topics discussed. The following Ad-Hoc Committee and staff members were present at this meeting: Gary Kovacic, Sho Tay, Ching Chiao, Sam Falzone, Jason Kruckeberg, Lisa Flores, and Jim Kasama. As well as members from the Arcadia Improvement Association (AIA): April Verlato, Bobby Bluehouse, and Sharon Logan.

Restructuring Commercial Corridors

Some of the shopping centers and strip retail centers on Duarte Road, Las Tunas Drive, and Live Oak Avenue are underperforming and outdated. This is probably due to a declining level of commercial investment, physical neglect, not having the right mix of uses, and difficulties small businesses have in completing with the popular chains at Westfield mall. While individual establishments along the corridor have had various degrees of success, there is no synergy in these areas and existing incentives in these areas have not been successful. Some of the options that were considered by the Committee to revitalize these corridors were: rezoning the properties to meet today's market demands (mixed use zoning to allow residential), add a residential flex overlay to allow greater flexibility for development, or leave it as-is and beautify the street corridors as an attempt to enliven the areas. The Committee did not want to pursue zoning changes at this time. The Committee wanted to consider proposed projects on a case by case basis but also develop a more comprehensive and robust economic development strategy or set of programs that will help deliver retail growth over time. The program will examine existing retail conditions and activity levels, provide information about the changing resident and visitor needs, and demand in the marketplace. This would be accomplished through the City's Economic Development Division. Additionally, existing and new businesses on Baldwin Avenue, south of Duarte Road should place entries on Baldwin Avenue and the doors should remain

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open during the business hours to help return Baldwin Avenue to a vibrant corridor it once was and to increase pedestrian traffic.

Electronic signs

In addition to the large message boards at Santa Anita Park, the City has allowed electronic signs at three other locations: the Chamber of Commerce, Masonic Temple, and Church of the Good Shepherd, all through the modification process. Electronic price signs are also allowed at service stations. Several business owners are requesting electronic signs to get their message across. The Committee agreed with staff that the City should establish a formal process for allowing electronic signs, but the electronic signs should be limited to only institutional uses, service station price signs, and at civic centers and facilities. The electronic signs should also be of very high quality. The electronic signs shall not allow any advertisements of off-premise businesses or events.

Changes to Downtown Arcadia Land Uses

The Arcadia Improvement Association (AIA) shares the same goal as the General Plan to create a pleasant, walkable environment that offers a sense of place to live, shop, dine and recreate. The AIA has submitted a proposal that would allow certain uses such as retail stores, restaurants (with or without entertainment), and residential units on upper levels; and restrict other uses that are currently allowed such as general offices and personal services. The AIA vision is to extend the Downtown Mixed Use (DMU) zone south along First Avenue to California Street, and west to Santa Anita Avenue.

Three major outcomes from the AIA proposal would be:

1. Allow residential uses on the north and south side of Huntington Drive (density to be up to 50 du/acre) in a Mixed-Use format with ground floor commercial, and change the land use designation from Commercial to Downtown Mixed Use.

2. Limit the type of land uses in the Downtown Mixed Use zone so they are more restrictive than permissive. For example, allowing retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses only on the ground floor in this area, and not allowing other uses like offices, tutoring centers, etc., unless grandfathered in, or on upper floors.
3. Remove mixed use from east of Santa Clara Street and Wheeler Avenue, between First Avenue and Second Avenue. It is clear that the area north along Santa Clara, St. Joseph, and La Porte Streets, needs to be some type of commercial zone other than Commercial-Manufacturing, so this sub-area transitions to small-scale offices and neighboring commercial uses that support the surrounding established neighborhoods and any new residential development in Downtown.

During the meeting, staff explained that this is a topic that needs to be vetted through the public outreach process and the Committee. The first topical meeting will be held on January 29, 2015 at 6:00 PM at the Arcadia Museum Education Center. At this meeting, the following topics will be discussed: downtown, commercial uses, and parking.

The Committee discussed the preliminary recommendations and provided the following feedback:

- Not opposed to the land uses changes and limiting the type of uses in the Downtown Mixed Use so they are more restrictive than permissive. Consider setting up a program that restricts certain uses, along with a parking program to help existing businesses and the downtown area. This could be implemented through some sort of pilot program that sunset after a certain time period.
- Consider creating a "Recruitment Strategy" to bring in certain entertainment uses and tenancy in order to create a pleasant, walkable environment that offers a sense of place to live, shop, dine, and recreate.

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Downtown Parking

The Committee agreed that if parking was to be pooled, businesses in the Downtown area could take advantage of the available existing off-site parking by opting into an areawide shared parking program or a parking credit program. Under this option, existing businesses could potentially change land uses or expand and be able to do so without providing new off-street parking. In addition, the Committee recognized that the parking situation may change when the light rail service begins. This issue should be vetted through the public outreach process and the City should consider other parking options and/or modify the parking requirements in the Downtown area.