



City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item

16-0793

Agenda Date: 2/3/2017

2017 COUNCIL STUDY ISSUE

NUMBER

CDD 13-02

TITLE Consideration of Usable Open Space in Required Front Yards

BACKGROUND

Lead Department: Community Development
Support Department: N/A

Sponsor(s):

Board/Commission: Planning Commission

History:

1 year ago: Deferred

2 years ago: Deferred

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

What are the key elements of the study?

Usable open space is required for multi-family residential projects in the city. Pursuant to Sunnyvale Municipal Code Section 19.37.100, landscaped areas in the required front yard cannot be counted towards usable open space. This study would review open space regulations and evaluate whether there are instances or criteria that would permit required front yard areas to be counted towards required usable open space and not be deemed a deviation from the code.

What precipitated this study?

Developers of small townhouse developments have requested and the Planning Commission has approved, through a Special Development Permit, the ability to count a portion of the required front yard area towards the minimum usable open space requirement. The portions that have been credited toward required open space are the privately fenced yards in front of the townhouse units.

Planned Completion Year: 2017

FISCAL IMPACT

Cost to Conduct Study

Level of staff effort required (opportunity cost): Moderate

Amount of funding above current budget required: \$0

Cost to Implement Study Results

No cost to implement.

EXPECTED PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS

Council-approved work plan: No
Council Study Session: No
Reviewed by Boards/Commissions: Planning Commission

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Position: Support

Explanation: The study issue would develop clear criteria for allowing exceptions for front yards to partially meet the open space requirements for residential projects (primarily townhouse projects). By providing specific zoning standards or guidelines that define the conditions and situations where the front yard can be counted toward required open space, it would streamline the review process. Staff had anticipated being able to complete this policy change as part of the zoning code retooling; however, the schedule for the retooling effort fell behind due to other workload items. The retooling effort will recommence in early 2017.

Reviewed By: Andrew Miner, Planning Officer
Reviewed By: Trudi Ryan, Director, Community Development
Reviewed By: Walter C. Rossmann, Assistant City Manager
Approved By: Deanna J. Santana, City Manager