



Legislation Text

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TO: Franklin Municipal Planning Commission

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Subject

Consideration of Ordinance 2017-12, To Be Entitled: "An Ordinance To Amend Chapters 2 And 3 Of The Zoning Ordinance Of The City Of Franklin, Tennessee, To Modify The Height Overlay District (HTO) Standards and Location." (05/25/17 FMPC 7-0; 6/13/17 BOMA 1st READING 8-0, 7/11/17 BOMA 2nd Reading 8-0) **THIRD AND FINAL READING**

Background/Staff Comments

The (HTO) is a zoning overlay that was created in 1997 and allows a property owner to construct a building up to twelve stories in height. The purpose is to allow buildings to exceed the maximum allowable height in each zoning district. The impetus of allowing twelve story buildings was in response to the desire of the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center to exceed the allowable building height at the time. The standard was reviewed and capped at twelve stories, mainly due to fire protection standards. The 1997 ordinance establishing a new height maximum ushered in a new era of growth for Cool Springs.

The current HTO is mostly located between Carothers Parkway and I-65. Williamson Medical represents the southern-most parcel containing the overlay and the Primus Building represents the northernmost parcel. No properties in the Goose Creek area contain the overlay.

Developer-driven requests have led to piecemeal expansion of the HTO. If a parcel is not in the HTO and the respective property owner would like to exceed six stories in building height, the owner must submit a rezoning request to the City. The rezoning process takes approximately five months from the time the applicant first introduces the project, to the time of approval.

On June 25, 2015, the Planning and Sustainability staff presented the idea of studying building height along the I-65 corridor to the Franklin Municipal Planning Commission (FMPC). The FMPC supported the effort and the staff began researching existing conditions, best practices, and developed recommendations. The Height Overlay Study became intertwined with the formation and adoption of Envision Franklin. The adopted Envision Franklin recommends expanding the current overlay to additional properties along I-65.

Project Considerations

Currently, very few buildings in the HTO are twelve stories tall. Instead, a range of heights exist along the I-65

corridor. Every project within the HTO must adhere to the City's zoning standards, which means not every property in the HTO will be able to support a twelve-story building.

In addition to proactively expanding the HTO, the staff is also recommending two additional safeguards to ensure a desirable urban form. The first is that any building exceeding six stories would automatically trigger review by the FMPC. Currently, the staff can administratively approve buildings exceeding six stories if certain conditions are met. Secondly, buildings exceeding six stories would be required to submit a viewshed analysis that includes three-dimensional imagery of the project and the surrounding parcels to better understand how the building will impact the nearby built and natural environment.

Recommendation

Recommend approval of Ordinance 2017-12 to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.