

STAFF REPORT ON PETITION FOR ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT

ZOTA 2012-8: AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 2 FOR GIS-BASED ZONING MAP

INITIATED BY: Urban County Planning Commission

PROPOSED TEXT: See attachment

STAFF REVIEW:

The Planning Commission has initiated a text amendment to modify Article 2 of the Zoning Ordinance to change the official zoning map atlas from a series of 81 black and white maps, to a digital geographic information system (GIS). A GIS integrates hardware, software, and data for capturing, managing, analyzing, and displaying all forms of geographically referenced information, such as the zoning data for Lexington-Fayette County. Having a GIS allows the government as well as citizens and developers to view, understand, question, interpret, and visualize data in many ways that reveal relationships, patterns, and trends in the form of maps. A GIS can also produce reports and charts to assist with these tasks.

The transition from hard-copy maps to this geographic database system of polygons and tables of support information has been occurring for several years. The first step was converting the existing zoning information from the current set of 81 maps to a usable GIS layer of data. Once created, the Office of GIS and the Division of Planning have been working together to maintain the data and keep it up to date. Keeping a GIS-based zoning map current will be easier than updating multiple hard-copy maps in different divisions throughout the government, which has been the historical practice.

The Planning Commission initiated the updates to Article 2 of the Zoning Ordinance in August 2009; however, there was concern about adopting a text amendment, in essence officially adopting the GIS layer of data as the official map, prior to a significant and thorough review of all of the information. Since the Planning Commission initiated the amendment in 2009, the staff has been working to compare the existing zoning map atlas to printed maps of the GIS zoning layer data, and to correct all errors that have been found in the GIS information. In some cases, this correction process requires researching the zone map amendment cases back to 1969. The staff is very close to completing this task in the next few weeks. Therefore, we are prepared for the new zoning map to become effective in August 2012. Because of software deficiencies and personnel transfers from Planning to GIS, the hard-copy maps have recently become out of date, which makes adopting the GIS zoning layer and data even more time sensitive.

The Staff Recommends: **Approval**, for the following reason:

1. This is a timely and appropriate amendment to Article 2 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to make the official zoning map atlas a part of the government's digital geographic information system (GIS), rather than a series of 81 black and white, static maps. This text amendment will make it easier and more efficient to update the official zoning map, because the information is held in one location and shared digitally, rather than the historical practice of updating multiple hard copy maps in different divisions throughout the government.

TLW/BJR/JWE
6/5/12

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