

---

## Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission (ZOCO) Meeting Summary, March 10, 2015. PC

**Members in Attendance:** Steve Cole; Chris Forinash; Erik Gutshall (chair); Jane Siegel; **Staff:** Deborah Albert, Arlova Vonhm. **Community Members:** Lucia de Cordre; Sally Duran; Rob Mandle; Inda Stagg; Kedrick Whitmore.

---

**Zoning Ordinance Update Phase IIC Use Classification System** ZOCO discussed additional changes to the short term indoor and outdoor events and activities provisions advertised by the County Board. Staff also provided an overview of some technical updates the County Board will consider advertising in March. Comments from ZOCO members and community members are summarized below.

### Short term indoor and outdoor events and activities

The chair asked community members present to comment on the preliminary staff proposal.

Comments included the following:

- Short term uses for the Crystal City BID are used as a tool for economic development; site plan amendments do not work as a solution for extension of short term uses; and it is not clear why an event that is less than one year is excluded from being allowed longer than 90 days.
- The Crystal City BID prefers not to differentiate between community service and other uses. Another community member agreed that such a distinction makes enforcement and application muddled.
- The Crystal City BID advocates for use of BID work plans to allow short term uses; A ZOCO member responded that BID work plans do not involve community input and may include uses that conflict with zoning, and inquired as to how these work plans are adopted or accepted by the County Board.
- Options for renewing short term uses are good; nobody wants to by-pass site plan, but an additional one year renewal should be considered.
- The Rosslyn BID would still prefer a longer time period, but is optimistic that the adopted provisions will address many short term uses; efforts should go into administrative process and permitting for these provisions.
- It was suggested that a cost-benefit analysis should help inform the regulations based on cost of administration of short term uses.

ZOCO comments included the following:

- ZOCO members did not object to staff's preliminary proposal in agreement with the advertised amendments to 1) remove the limit on consecutive number of days for outdoor cafes; 2) to allow the Zoning Administrator to renew a short term use if a site plan amendment has been filed; or 3) to extend the period of time signs are allowed prior to a short term use.

Duration of short term indoor and outdoor events and activities:

- Would like some additional information from applicants about why the site plan amendment process is so onerous. This statement seems contradictory given that most

minor site plan amendments seem to move forward on the consent agenda. If this is a problem, perhaps some assurances that minor site plan amendments will not open up other issues could be addressed through policy and practice.

- The discussion should be more about the definition of 'short term' rather than about the nature of the use. Agree with staff that these uses should be short term, but do want to discuss how long is 'short term'
- The discussion should really be about how to achieve flexibility for legacy site plans and moving forward.
- Some members indicated they may be leaning toward not having a distinction between community service and other uses. Other members did not have final comments on appropriate duration for short term uses.
- One member urged the County to move toward greater flexibility in general regulation of land uses.
- Short term uses should not be linked to economic distress. There are off-spaces scattered throughout the County that may not lease for various reasons. Further, short term use of vacant space is a community benefit to everyone, no matter the current economic environment.
- Perhaps there is a way to allow all community-serving uses for a longer time period than general commercial uses, such as parking lots as seen in a recent example.
- ZOCO members inquired about the County Board's guidance to the County Manager regarding a report on short term uses in October and exploration of other tools or options for short term uses.

## Technical Updates

- ZOCO members did not comment on any of the proposed technical updates.