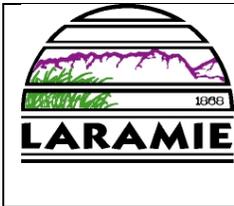


CITY OF LARAMIE COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING July 5, 2016



Agenda Item: Original Ordinance - Public Hearing

Title: Original Ordinance No. 1949 amending Title 15 of Laramie Municipal Code for the purpose of amending the Landscaping Requirements

Recommended Council MOTION:

Public hearing; no action can be taken.

Administrative or Policy Goal:

“... this code should be regularly reviewed, evaluated and amended, if necessary, based on private and city economic conditions, vision for the community, changing planning and zoning principles, frequent difficulty in implementing or enforcing any specific standard(s), or changes in the state, federal or case law. All city or citizen initiated amendments must be adequately vetted through the public hearing processes identified in the code.” (Sec. 15.02.050, LMC)

Background:

July, 5 2016 Update

The City Council considered this item on June 21, 2016, and voted (6 yes, 2 no, 1 absent) to approve on first reading and delay second reading to August 2, 2016. The Council requested that additional information be provided to provide them with better guidance, including real world examples, when making a decision. The Public Hearing was scheduled prior to delay of second reading and staff views this as an opportunity for public comment.

Prior Information

The amendment is initiated by the City of Laramie as part of the continual effort to keep the Unified Development Code (UDC) accurate, correct concerns, and remove potential avenues of confusion. All prior revisions to LMC Chapter 15 (Unified Development Code) can be found online at www.cityoflarmie.org/UDC.

Staff frequently receives complaints regarding our landscaping requirements- specifically that they are perceived as too burdensome and too costly for development to install and maintain. Staff analyzed the existing landscaping requirements and propose several amendments to address problems that frequently arise.

Notable changes are as follows:

- A reduction in the overall required landscaping from 20% of a development area (excluding building(s) or use footprint) to 15% of a lot or parcel area (excluding building(s) or use footprint). This effectively reduces landscaping you would see internal to the site and along the perimeter. (LMC 15.14.050.C.1)
- Addition of a Xeriscape/Water Conserving Landscaping option to allow for a low water use landscaping option in nonresidential development applications. (LMC 15.14.050.C.4)

- A reduction in the amount of required living landscaping materials from 75% to 65% of the ground cover. This will result in less living landscape such as grass, bushes and shrubs and more hardscape such as rock, bark and decorative pavers. (LMC 15.14.050.C.5)
- Modification to the size requirements of plantings to reflect industry standards (LMC 15.14.050.D.2)
- Change the way perimeter lengths are calculated for required landscape units to exclude measurement for driveways and pedestrian connections. This results in less required planting and landscape units along a property line with a driveway or pedestrian connection. (LMC.15.14.050.F.3.a – page 8)
- Reduction in Site Perimeter landscaping units required based on development project size. The larger the development, the less landscape units required. (LMC.15.14.050.F.3.b – page 9)
- Reduction in bufferyard requirements, L2, L3 and L4 bufferyard widths and reduction in required landscape units for all bufferyards. (LMC Tables 15.14.050 2 and 3 – pages 9 and 10)

The above mentioned changes will ultimately have a reduction in the amount of required landscaping within and on the perimeter of development sites. The reduction in landscaping requirements and introduction of a Commercial xeriscape option will also result in lower irrigation costs for development.

The Planning Commission heard this item on June 13, 2016. Citizen comments were made at the meeting expressing concern that the sliding scale site perimeter landscaping requirements were unfair since they only benefitted larger developments. Additionally, a comment was received requesting that development targeting low income housing should be granted flexibility to have reduced landscaping standards.

At the meeting a motion to remove the sliding scale perimeter landscaping requirements for larger developments (proposed LMC 15.14.050.F3.b on page 9 of the Ordinance) failed due to a tie vote (3-3) vote. Ultimately, the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council approve the text amendment as recommended by staff (5 yes, 1 no, 1 absent).

The Planning Commission staff report is included. The attachment, the proposed Ordinance, has been removed because it is attached separately. Otherwise, no changes have been made.

Legal/Statutory Authority:

- Laramie Municipal Code: Title 15 (Unified Development Code)
- Wyoming State Statutes: Title 15, Chapter 4, Article 3: Property, Financial Affairs, Contracts, Streets, Subdivisions and Utilities

BUDGET/FISCAL INFORMATION:

REVENUE

Source	Amount	Type
Fees/Charges for Service	\$0.00	Application Fee
Grants for Projects		
Loans on Project		
Total	\$0.00	

Responsible Staff:

Future dates are subject to change

Charles W. Bloom, AICP, Principal
Planner, 721-5232

Work Session	
Advertised	
Public Hearing Held	July 5, 2016
Pub. Hearing Advertised	June 18, 2016
Introduction/1 st Reading	June 21, 2016
2 nd Reading	August 2, 2016
3 rd Reading	August 16, 2016

Attachments:

Legal Advertisement
Proposed Ordinance
June 13, 2016 Planning Commission Staff Report