

**MEETING DATE: 4/12/2017**

**TITLE:**

**First reading of an Ordinance Amending Title 2 of the Municipal Code Restructuring the Planning Commission and Reestablishing the Architectural Review Committee.**

**FROM:**

Pat Milos, Community Development Director

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the City Council introduce and provide first reading, by title only, an ordinance amending Title 2 of the Cathedral City Municipal Code restructuring the Planning Commission and reestablishing the Architectural Review Committee.

**BACKGROUND:**

On August 14, 2013 the City Council adopted the current sections, 2.29.010, 2.29.020, 2.29.030 and 2.29.040 of the Cathedral City Municipal Code to increase the membership of the planning commission from five to seven members, appointed in the manner and for the terms prescribed in Section 2.06.010.

At that time, the Council also eliminated the separate standalone Architectural Review Committee and Streets and Transportation Committee and reassigned the tasks of those committees to Planning Commission subcommittees. The purpose of these changes was to improve efficiency and streamline the development review process. The Code currently states the following with respect to each subcommittees' duties:

"A. Architectural Review Subcommittee (ARC). The subcommittee shall include three members of the planning commission and consist of a licensed architect and landscaped architect. The subcommittee shall meet when necessary to perform the duties identified in the Cathedral City Development Code. The meetings of the subcommittee are subject to the Brown Act. The subcommittee shall review projects for compliance with the applicable provisions of the Development Code and submit a recommendation to the full planning commission. The architectural review subcommittee will ensure the following:

1. That all projects will create an image with a high degree of quality that improves the

built environment, and incorporates quality amenities with regard to architecture, landscaping, and the streetscape.

2. That effective design guidelines are created and to assist in the formulation of policy and code amendments related to architectural design and landscaping.

3. That recommendations are forwarded to the planning commission regarding the architectural design and landscaping for all development projects.

The architectural review subcommittee is authorized to take final action on architectural design and landscaping for administrative design reviews and modifications to conditional use permits where appropriate.

B. Streets and Transportation Subcommittee. The subcommittee shall include three members of the planning commission and shall meet when necessary to perform the duties identified in the Cathedral City Development Code. The meetings of the subcommittee are subject to the Brown Act. The subcommittee shall review projects for compliance with the applicable provisions of the Development Code and submit a recommendation to the full planning commission."

#### **DISCUSSION:**

The City Planning Department has worked within the confines of the current municipal code since its adoption in 2013. The streamlining benefits anticipated with the expansion of the planning commission and the associated creation of the sub-committees has proven to be less than desired and initially anticipated and has created some unintended processing difficulties such as limiting flexible scheduling for the sub committees, filing the ARC sub-committee with qualified architects and landscape architects. The seven member planning commission has also created logistical challenges related to the audio visual broadcasting system and related voting software.

Due to these concerns the item was discussed during the March 22, 2017 Cathedral City Council Study Session. The discussion included considering returning to a five person planning commission bound by residency and appointing an architectural review committee including qualified architects and landscape architects that are independent of the Planning Commission with a residency exemption, if needed, for up to two members of the ARC.

On April 5, 2017 The City Council met jointly with the Planning Commission and discussed the associated options.

In summary the proposed ordinance does the following:

- Establishes a separate five-member Architectural Review Committee.

- Requires that the ARC include one registered Architect and one registered Landscape Architect. The other three seats on the committee have no special qualifications attached. A residency

exemption is allowed for the two specialized slots in the event that qualified residents cannot be found. The other three seats have no residency exemption.

-Establishes initial appointments to the ARC to enact staggered terms. Three initial appointments are for three-year terms and two are for two-year terms.

Restructures the Planning Commission as a five-member commission with no residency exemption for any of the seats.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There are no fiscal impact related to this action

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Ordinance