



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 11/17/2022

File #: 22-1547

To: Planning Commission

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Public Hearing

SUBJECT:

Appointment Term and Removal of Planning Commissioners
Countywide
Record No.: PLN-2022-17995

Amendment to the Section 312.1.3 of the Zoning Ordinance to modify the term of Planning Commissioners appointed at large and to create provisions for removal of Planning Commissioners by the Board of Supervisors

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Planning Commission:

Adopt the resolution (Resolution 22-___). (Attachment 1) doing the following:

- a. Find the project exempt from further environmental review pursuant to Section 15061(b (3)) of the State CEQA Guidelines
- b. Make the required findings for adoption of the ordinance; and
- c. Recommend the Board of Supervisors adopt the Ordinance.

DISCUSSION:

Executive Summary:

This item is to implement direction of the Board of Supervisors given at their October 25, 2022, meeting to reduce the term of Planning Commissioner appointed At Large from 4 years to 2 years and to create provisions for the removal of a Planning Commissioner appointed by a member of the Board of Supervisors. Since the modification is to the Zoning Ordinance it requires the Planning Commission make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

The direction from the Board of Supervisors came as part of their consideration of the Planning Commissioner Rules and Procedures and an analysis of how other Counties configure their Planning Commissions. Most of the Counties in Northern California have 5 Planning Commissioners. The Board decided not to reduce the number of Planning Commissioners but chose to reduce the term of At Large Planning Commissioners from 4 years to 2 years appointed in alternating years starting in 2023. The term of Planning Commissioners appointed by district will run with the term of the appointing Supervisor. The appointing supervisor can remove an appointment at any time.

Currently At Large Planning Commissioners can be removed with a majority vote of the Board of Supervisors.

This will not change. Planning Commissioners appointed by District Supervisors can currently only be removed by the District Supervisor. The Board gave direction that the ordinance be modified to allow removal of a Planning Commissioner appointed by a District Supervisor with a 4/5 vote of the Board of Supervisors. The requirement for a 4/5s vote is a higher threshold than a simple majority but allows consideration of removal for cause.

Section 312-1.3 of the Humboldt County Code addresses Planning Commission formation and composition. Attached for the Planning Commission consideration is an ordinance which makes the described changes to the code section.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): The “Common Sense” exemption is being proposed from CEQA Guidelines section 15061 which states; “*CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.*” The term of a Planning Commissioner and the removal of a Planning Commissioner will not have any effect on the environment.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. These are changes directed by the Board of Supervisors. The Planning Commission should consider the language and modify as appropriate.

ATTACHMENTS:

- I.** Draft Resolution
 - A. Draft Ordinance

Please contact John Ford, Director of Planning and Building by email at jford@co.humboldt.ca.us [<mailto:jford@co.humboldt.ca.us>](mailto:jford@co.humboldt.ca.us) or (707)268-3738, if you have any questions about the scheduled public hearing item.