



Legislation Text

File #: 24-0013, Version: 1

Consider and take action on an Ordinance amending Chapter 125, Article 4, entitled, “Zoning” to revise regulations related to landscaping requirements (Mayor Long and Councilmember Cones)

The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended denial, 6-0-0 with two members absent on December 4, 2023.

Project Timeline:

November 2023 - Councilmember Cones and Mayor Long co-sponsored the proposed amendments to the Unified Development Code.

November 17, 2023 - Notice of the public hearings was published in the paper.

December 4, 2023 - The Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing and made a recommendation of denial to City Council, 6-0-0 with two members absent.

January 9, 2024 - City Council is scheduled to hold a public hearing and consider the request.

January 23, 2024 - Subject to approval on first reading, City Council is scheduled to hear the item on second reading.

Project Summary:

Approval of this request will amend the text of the Unified Development Code to allow for shade trees to be substituted for palm varieties.

The following changes to the ordinance are proposed.

- Allow for required shade trees to be substituted with palm varieties.
- Create minimum requirements for palm varieties.

Planning Commission Points:

On December 4, 2023, the Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing and made a recommendation to deny the request, 6-0-0 with two members absent. No members of the public spoke during the public hearing. The following concerns were expressed by the commission during the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting:

- Palms with dates could create a maintenance issue due to shedding tree debris. A recommendation was made for a provision of code to address maintenance to ensure by-products of certain palm trees would not create a nuisance.
- Shade trees offer urban heat reduction with the larger canopies providing a more comfortable pedestrian environment, lower temperature, and less strain on electrical grid by the shading of equipment and structures.
- Shade trees have a higher carbon sequestration, a larger root system, a larger biomass which has a greater effect on reducing pollution.
- Shade trees support biodiversity by providing larger habitats for animals in the area.
- Cities such as San Diego and West Palm Beach have rolled back ordinances involving palm trees.
- Higher aesthetics of palm trees would result in higher property values and would result in higher property taxes.

Staff Recommendations:

As originally proposed to P&Z, palm trees were required to have a minimum height of 12 feet with a minimum trunk line of 8 feet. Staff recommends changing the requirement to a minimum height of 10 feet with a minimum trunk line of 6 feet to better align with current shade tree requirements. This requirement is reflected in the attached proposed ordinance.

Attachments:

1. Data Sheet
2. Proposed Ordinance
3. Redline Changes

CONTRACT ORIGINATION:

Planning Department
Applicant: City of League City

FUNDING

{X} NOT APPLICABLE

STRATEGIC PLANNING

{X} NOT APPLICABLE