

Responses to Council Questions and Comments

12/18/2023

Item #13:

- Question: Can the parking lot in front be redesignated to a more generic use so it can include social events, or is that included in the commercial designation?
 - Response: Social events on the fairgrounds parking lot, which is currently zoned mixed use (MU1B), would be permitted through a temporary zoning permit (Attachment 1, Section D-3). Depending on the scope of the proposed event, the city may also require a special events permit.

The proposed ordinance also allows approval of those uses that are greater in duration than those permitted by a temporary zoning permit (60 days) that provide a public benefit such as a farmers' market and is consistent with the Fairgrounds Guiding Principles adopted in City Council Resolution 2022-167 N.C.S, is subject to a license agreement with the City and does not construct new permanent structures. The purpose behind the "Public Benefit Use" provided in Subsection 5.080(D)(4) is that it allows the City to be flexible in allowing new and creative uses that provide a public benefit which the Zoning Code might not otherwise allow. Which may act a pilot program while the Fairgrounds Master Plan is being created.
- Question: If new construction is not allowed, can existing buildings be demolished if a building is red-tagged?
 - Response: Any maintenance and repair to existing buildings, including demolition would be allowed and is addressed in the proposed ordinance (Attachment 1, Section D-1e). However, the construction of new buildings would require both Planning Commission and City Council approval under the proposed ordinance. The reasoning behind this is that Fairgrounds property is so important to the future of the City, that new permanent improvements would need to go through a public process and approval of City Council.
- Question: Can temporary encampments for the homeless be built?
 - Response: Yes, under the proposed ordinance, a temporary use that provides a public benefit and is in conformance with the Fairgrounds Guidelines resolution, such as an emergency shelter is an allowable use on the fairgrounds.