



Town Council Agenda Report

Date: June 8, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Town Council

Subject: DISCUSSION REGARDING SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DESIGN CRITERIA

From: Douglas Robertson, Town Manager

Submitted by: Lori Lamson, Assistant Town Engineer
Planning

Budgeted Item: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive and file.

SUMMARY

This discussion item was requested by Mayor Pro Tem Leon on December 10, 2019 and added to the on-going list of possible Development Code Amendments initiated by the Town Council. Currently, design criteria for single-family residences are divided into two (2) categories, tract development and single lot development.

In 2015 an Ad Hoc Committee of two members of the Town Council and two members of the Planning Commission together with staff reviewed the criteria of single-family residential design criteria. These members consisted of Council Members Bishop and Stanton and Planning Commissioners Kallen and Tinsley. Several recommendations came out of this Ad Hoc Committee including modifications to the residential tract design criteria and the criteria to evaluate residential infill lot development.

For single-family residences in tract developments a minimum of three (3) floor plans, up to five (5) floor plans and a minimum of six (6) different elevations up to fifteen (15) different elevations are required depending on the number of units in the tract. Building articulation, materials and traditional architectural styles are encouraged. Each project requires a Development Permit which would be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission. The Development Code states that for single-family residential structures, “focus shall be on the development of high-quality residential environment”.

Single lot development or also referred to as infill development can include a subdivision that is being developed as custom lots, a stock plan that is used on infill lots throughout Town, and one of a kind, custom, infill lot development.

The Ad Hoc Committee recommended policy that was adopted was to ensure that quality development, that was being expected for tract development, was being built for single lot development. As such, a design criteria policy was adopted in the form of a point-driven checklist containing a comprehensive list of design elements to select from. The point system checklist was adopted in February 2016 by Planning Commission Resolution. Prior to the point system being implemented, the quality of some single-family residence on single lot development were not at the caliber being built in tract development or historically found throughout Apple Valley's vast examples of custom home neighborhoods.

The point system checklist is divided into two (2) sections identified as major and minor features. Items from the major list will count as (1) point; however, five (5) items from the minor list is required to achieve one (1) point. The number of points required is based on the overall size of the house, excluding any covered porches or patios. Staff can review design features not specifically identified on the list and has the flexibility to add them as appropriate. This process allows staff flexibility to work with the designer/builder to encourage quality, customize details that qualify as a major or minor point, and provide suggestions or examples of how a design can be improved to meet the Town's quality design expectations. Pictorial definitions for each design element was included in the adopted resolution and examples of architectural style are available in the Planning Department.

Prior to implementation of the checklist criteria, staff experimented with the point system to determine if additional adjustments would be necessary. It was tested to measure the architectural features presented in several custom homes. Most of the homes reviewed met the criteria of the checklist; however, a couple did not. Staff was able to tweak the checklist to a reasonable expectation that could work for developers and obtain the desired result of quality designs. This modified checklist was presented to the Ad Hoc Committee which was then forwarded to the Planning Commission for adoption.

Apple Valley was founded on single lot sales and development of custom homes of quality architectural design. To ensure that quality design was continuing to be built, the point system created, provides some measure of quality control and reduces the amount of subjectiveness in plan review. It also has built in flexibility so that the standards are not rigid and can be worked out between staff and the developer/builder. Ultimately, if the developer/builder is not satisfied with the results, the decision can be appealed to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Attached are examples of the types of homes that were being constructed prior to the point system that were not at the caliber expected to maintain quality design in Apple Valley (Attachment No. 1).

Now that the point system has been in place for five (5) years, we have seen more than 300 single lot development of residences and many more in plan check. The quality of

projects has been outstanding and attached are included some of the examples of these homes (Attachment No. 2). At the beginning of implementing the point system, designers and builders had a learning curve to understand the expectations, but now seem to understand and are successful at the process. They are sharing with staff that they like and are proud the products being built and are receiving a great response from home buyers. We have not received any appeals of the process to the Planning Commission.

Attached is a copy of the point system worksheet and Planning Commission Resolution No. 2016-002, which implemented this program (Attachment No. 3).

Fiscal Impact:

Not Applicable

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Pictures of homes built before the Point System

Attachment 2 – Pictures of homes built after the Point System was implemented

Attachment 3 – Planning Commission Resolution No. 2016-002 w/ attachments
(Point System)

Attachment 1 - Prior to Point System Checklist









Attachment 2 – After Point System Checklist









