File #: 20-981, **Version:** 1 **Item #:** PH-3.

CC - PUBLIC HEARING: Introduction of an Ordinance Amending the Definition and Parking Requirement for Fitness Studio Uses.

Meeting Date: June 22, 2020

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Fiscal Impact: Yes [] No [X] **General Fund:** Yes [] No [X]

Public Hearing: [X] **Action Item:** [] **Attachments:** [X]

Planning Commission Action: Yes [X] Date: February 26, 2020 and April 22, 2020

Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas - City Council (06/04/2020); (Posted) City Website (06/04/2020); Gov Delivery (05/21/2020); NextDoor (05/21/2020); (Published in) Culver City News (05/21/2020).

Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director (06/11/2020)

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council introduce an Ordinance approving Zoning Code Amendment P2020-0018-ZCA, amending the definition and parking requirement for Fitness Studio Uses

PROCEDURES:

The following procedures were completed at the meeting of June 8, 2020:

1. The City Council adopted a motion to receive and file the affidavit of publication and posting of the public hearing notice.
2. The City Council opened the public hearing and continued it to June 22, 2020.

The following procedures are to be completed at the meeting of June 22, 2020:

1. The Mayor calls on staff for a brief staff report and City Council poses questions to staff as

desired.
2. The Mayor announces the public hearing was opened on June 8th and continued to June 22nd, and the City Council receives public comment.
3. The Mayor seeks a motion to close the public hearing after all testimony has been presented.
4. The City Council discusses the matter and arrives at its decision.

BACKGROUND:

As part of the Current Planning Division's ongoing review of dated standards in the Zoning Code, staff has identified certain "studio use" code provisions that could be more responsive to recent trends in fitness related uses.

Many current fitness uses emphasize a more specialized and personal approach in a smaller studio format than larger traditional gyms. Consequently, studio fitness business owners are seeking storefront spaces along the City's commercial corridors to attract clients towards a personalized setting. Fitness related studios including indoor-cycling, cross-fit, yoga or Pilates, and martial arts currently operate in the City and are permitted in commercial and industrial zones, provided they meet Zoning Code development and land use standards.

Some fitness related business owners who specifically inquire about spaces previously occupied by a retail or office use, find it difficult to obtain City approvals without making costly adjustments to their business operations to meet Zoning Code parking and land use requirements.

In October 2018, a City-commissioned Downtown Retail Market Analysis expected strong job growth and retail opportunities in Downtown Culver City but noted the nature of retailing was changing. The report indicated that to maintain pedestrian activation along the commercial corridors, the City should consider expanding retail services to include fitness uses, and other similar retail/service industry land use categories.

The changing nature of retail services as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic is again on the City's forefront to align the Zoning Code with current nature of retail service industry.

The following modifications to studio uses are recommended to facilitate development of fitness studio uses:

1. Modify the "Studio" definition to specifically include fitness related activities as a type of permitted studio use and to set a maximum area of instructional space of up to 3,000 square feet.

2. Maintain Studio use parking requirements at 1 stall per 200 square feet except when a studio use is located in the Commercial Downtown (CD) District or within a Mixed-Use project where the parking requirement would be 1 stall per 350 square feet for the greater of 30% or 3,000 square feet of gross floor area.

Staff presented the proposed zoning code amendment to the Planning Commission during their regular meeting on February 26, 2020. At the February 26, 2020 meeting, the Planning Commission

recommended approval to the City Council the proposed Zoning Code Amendment with the following revisions:

- Add language to the definition of a Studio that provides the Community Development Director the authority to determine "similar" studio uses

- Conduct additional research regarding the potential for oversaturation of fitness studio uses in any one area or mixed-use development and incorporate a measure into the text amendment to prevent this from occurring.

At its April 13, 2020, the City Council discussed proposed changes to the Mixed Use Ordinance and recommended that ground floor retail requirements be expanded to include pedestrian activators (e.g. studio uses, child care)

The above recommendations are reflected in the draft ordinance (Attachment No. 1) for City Council's consideration.

DISCUSSION:

On April 22, 2020, the Planning Commission adopted Resolution No. 2020-P002 (Attachment No. 2) recommending to the City Council approval of Zoning Code Amendment P2020-0018-ZCA, related to the standards and requirements for studio uses. The additional refinements requested by the Planning Commission were specific to flexibility in use determination and prevention of oversaturation of fitness studio uses.

Definition

Fitness studios offer small groups of individualized and specialized instruction at the same time and are listed under the land use category of *"*Studios for Art, Dance, Music, Photography, etc.*"*. However, the current definition of a studio is prohibitive for fitness studios with unique layouts, technology or equipment as it limits studio uses to one group in one instructional space without the use of fitness related equipment.

Staff surveyed ten existing fitness studios uses in Culver City to determine the average size of a fitness studio. Floor area ranged from approximately 550 square feet to approximately 4,800 square feet. The average floor area of these facilities was 2,133 square feet. Staff also reviewed data from the Association of Fitness Studios (AFS), a trade association that supports studio owners and entrepreneurial fitness professionals. The AFS stated the average size of a personal/training and small group studio use is 2,970 square feet.

Staff recommends the definition of "Studios for Art, Dance, Music, Photography, etc." specify the term "fitness studios" for clarity purposes and limit the maximum size to 3,000 square feet in overall instruction area for any one studio use. Any studio use larger than 3,000 square feet in instructional area would be considered "Specialized Education" or "Health/Fitness Facility" as appropriate. At the request of the Planning Commission, the definition also includes language for Director determination of "similar" studio uses.

Parking Requirements

Parking requirements also present a barrier for the establishment of fitness studio uses. Parking requirements of one (1) parking space per 200 square feet, compared to retail and office uses parked at one (1) parking space per 350 square feet, generally prevent new fitness studio uses that cannot provide the additional code required parking.

Staff conducted research into average parking demand for fitness studio uses. For additional information on this research, refer to Attachment No. 3, Planning Commission Staff Report of February 26, 2020. The Institute of Traffic Engineer (ITE) Parking Generation Data for "Health/Fitness Clubs" specifies that the average parking required for a fitness use was one parking stall per 211 square feet of floor area, consistent with current Zoning Code parking requirements.

Staff also researched clients of fitness studios' commuting patterns along with the survey of ten existing fitness studios uses. Estimates from the fitness business owners showed that while 80 percent of clients came from the surrounding communities, the most frequent mode of travel to the studio locations was by car. However, fitness business owners stated that a growing number of local patrons biked or walked and used alternative modes of travel.

The proposed modification to parking requirements for "Studio" uses is narrow in scope and only applies when located in the Commercial Downtown Zone (CD) or located within mixed-use developments as existing data supports that fitness studio uses draw a higher parking demand than their retail commercial counterparts and it is consistent with ITE standards for "shopping centers".

The ITE defines "shopping center" to include an integrated group of commercial establishments that is planned, developed, owned, and managed as a unit. The ITE use of "shopping center" is similar to Culver City's existing commercial downtown district with district parking, as well as the development of mixed-use projects along the City's commercial corridors. ITE parking supply ratio for shopping center is approximately one parking stall per 362 square feet, consistent with the City's existing parking requirements for retail uses.

At the February 26, 2020 meeting, the Planning Commission expressed concern regarding a potential for oversaturation of fitness studio uses in any one area or mixed-use development and requested staff to incorporate a measure into the Zoning Code Amendment to prevent this from occurring. Staff conducted additional research into the potential for oversaturation of fitness studio uses in any one mixed-use development. As a case study, staff reviewed square footage and parking scenarios for the mixed-use development referred to as the "Lucky" that is currently under construction at 12821 Washington Boulevard. The Lucky is a five-story mixed-use development with 37 dwelling units and 7,200 square feet of retail space. Table 1 provides parking requirements based on use for the individual tenant spaces. Tenant 105 is proposed as a fitness studio use.

Table 1: Lucky Parking Requirements

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Tenant Space	Area (sf)	% of Total	Code Required Parking*	
			Retail (1/350sf)	Fitness Studio (1/200sf)
Unit 101	1,494	21%	4.3	7.5
Unit 102	1,488	21%	4.3	7.4
Unit 103	1,438	20%	4.1	7.2
Unit 104	801	11%	2.3	4.0
Unit 105-Studio	2,000	28%	5.7	-
Instructional Area	1,335	-	-	6.7
Ancillary (reception, office, lockers, etc.)	665	-	-	-
Total Retail Area	7,221	100%	20.6	32.8

As shown in the table, twelve (12) additional parking spaces would be required if the building was tenanted entirely by fitness uses. Staff suggests that commercial parking for fitness studio uses be reduced by excluding non-instructional space such as locker rooms or reception as such areas of studio uses do not create their own parking demand. By comparing parking requirements for only the proposed fitness use in Unit 105, one (1) additional parking space would be required because ancillary areas would not be included in parking calculations. If the tenant space were proposed with all instructional area and no ancillary areas, the use would require four (4) additional parking spaces.

The subject tenant space occupies 28 percent of the subject mixed-use development and would require between one (1) and four (4) additional parking spaces if parked at the existing rate of one (1) per 200.

As discussed during the Planning Commission meetings, fitness studio uses may be neighborhood serving in mixed-use buildings, which allows for some internal capture of trips (trips entirely within the mixed-use development). It is expected that surrounding residents, including those residing within mixed-use projects, will patronize the fitness studio business and that fitness studio users will also patronize other businesses within the mixed-use development.

A fitness studio square footage cap of 30 percent gross commercial floor area, consistent with the Lucky case study, would allow property owners to lease to fitness studio uses while ensuring that parking demand does not exceed what would generally be absorbed by internal capture. If a developer wanted to allow additional fitness studio floor area exceeding the 30 percent allowance, it would be parked at the general ratio of one (1) parking space per 200 square feet.

Proposed Amendments

Staff recommends updating Chapter 17.700 to define “Studio” uses as follows:

Studios for Art, Dance, Music, Photography, and the like. Small-scale facilities, typically accommodating ~~one group of~~ students ~~at a time, in no more than one instructional space~~ in no more than 3,000 square feet of instructional area. These include facilities for: individual and group instruction and training in the arts; performing arts and production rehearsal; photography, and the processing of photographs produced only by users of the studio facilities; and fitness studio uses

including, but not limited to, martial arts training, ~~studios;~~ ~~and~~ aerobics, yoga, personal training, indoor cycling, pilates, and gymnastics, or a similar use as determined by the Director ~~studios with no other fitness facilities or equipment~~. Larger facilities are included under the definition of "Schools, Specialized Education and Training or "Health/Fitness Facilities."

Staff recommends modifying Chapter 17.320 to reflect Studio parking requirements as follows:

Land Use Type: Recreation, Education & Public Assembly	Vehicle Spaces Required
Studios for dance, art, music, photography, martial arts, personal fitness, etc.	1 space per 200 sf of gross floor area. Ground floor fitness studio uses with less than the greater of 3,000 sf or 30% of the gross floor area of the total mixed-use project commercial floor area in the CD Zone or in mixed-use projects, shall provide 1 space per 350 sf. Remaining commercial floor area parking shall be calculated at 1 space per 200 sf of gross floor area.

Proposed text amendments are also provided in Exhibit A to Attachment No. 1.

Public Comment:

Staff received no public comment prior to the finalization of agenda packets.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

Pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act, the proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment is considered exempt because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity to amend Zoning Code Sections 17.320 - Off-Street Parking and Loading and 17.700 - Definitions, will have a significant effect on the environment. The ZCA by itself, does not result in any physical changes in the environment because it will only amend the Zoning Code to modify parking requirements and definitions to clarify smaller scale and specialized fitness studios, and does not result in changes to existing land use, density or an intensification of development beyond what the Zoning Code currently allows.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

There are no fiscal impacts related to introduction of the proposed Ordinance.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Ordinance and Exhibit A- Zoning Code Text Amendments
2. Planning Commission Resolution No. 2020-P002 and Exhibit A - Code Amendments in "strikeout/underline" Format
3. Planning Commission Staff Report April 22, 2020 (without Attachments)
4. Draft Planning Commission Minutes April 22, 2020
5. Planning Commission Staff Report February 26, 2020 (with Attachments)
6. Planning Commission Minutes February 26, 2020

MOTION:

That the City Council:

Introduce an Ordinance approving Zoning Code Amendment P2020-0018-ZCA, to modify the definition and parking requirement for fitness related studio uses.

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