

Draft Ordinance with Options for Discussion

August 11, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting

Background

This is a work-in-progress based on the previous white paper discussed in July and the feedback from the August 4 Town Council Meeting. I submit this for discussion, amendment by planning, and possibly sending to public hearing in September.

An Ordinance Regulating Fire Protection in Subdivisions

Whereas, the Boulder Town Council wishes to provide greater clarity on the requirements for fire hydrants in new subdivisions, and

Whereas, the Boulder Town General Plan has the objectives of promoting farming, ranching and the conservation of open lands to support agricultural endeavors and of maintaining diverse community structure by creating housing opportunities for seasonal workers and low to moderate income individuals, and

Whereas, the requirements for fire access roads, fire-flow, and hydrant spacing in the 2018 International Fire Code for one and two-family dwellings do not consider the circumstances of 5-acre or larger lots which may be used in part for agriculture, and

Whereas the Utah Wildland – Urban Interface code requires a water supply within 1000 feet of a dwelling, and

Whereas, the location of all future buildings is not known at the time of subdivision, and

Whereas, the applicable codes provide for the fire authority to make certain site-specific interpretations of the requirements,

NOW THEREFORE, be it ordained by the Boulder Town Council:

Add to Section 152.041 (G) (3) "Fire protection and suppression requirements the following and renumber as needed:

(a) All new subdivision lots shall be within 400 feet of a fire hydrant connected to a water supply meeting applicable fire code requirements.

(b) The fire authority may increase the allowable distance from hydrant to lot line based on unbuildable sensitive lands and any legally binding building restrictions indicated on the plat. The fire authority may allow alternative fire-flow and storage if where exceptions in the fire code are applicable. Economic hardship shall not be considered in determining fire protection requirements in new subdivisions.

(c) The distance requirement in (3) (a) may be waived in the case of subdivisions not requiring construction of new streets, served only by private driveways or existing streets, and creating no more than one additional lot.

Replace the current wording in Standards for All Proposed Streets, Fire Hydrants as follows:

Delete: ~~Where feasible, all lots shall be located within 400 feet of a fire hydrant, located within the street right-of-way or easement(s), as approved by the town's Fire Marshal~~

Add: Where feasible the water supply and fire hydrants shall be located within the street right-of-way. Alternative routing may be approved by the fire authority provided the necessary easement is recorded as part of the plat.

END OF DRAFT ORDINANCE TEXT

Discussion of Options

Option 1 – Distances between 250 feet and 600 feet appear reasonable based on ordinances in other jurisdictions. Given that a 5 acre lot is 330 by 660 feet a hydrant 400 feet from the front of the lot could be about 1000 feet from a building at the rear of the lot.

Option 2 – This provision allows for situations restricting future buildings on the lot such as open space, agricultural, or conservation easements or consideration of options in the fire code such as reduced fire-flow for fully sprinklered buildings.

Option 3 – This resolves a contradiction between the current inclusion of hydrants in street standards and the recent ordinance change allowing private driveways. This exception would allow continuing the past Boulder practice of allowing more flexibility for small subdivisions and would help avoid "suburban-type" subdivisions.