First Reading 1/17/2012
Second Reading 2/6/2012

ORDINANCE 2012- 03

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 110, ENTITLED ZONING, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF OCEAN CITY THAT CHAPTER 110, ENTITLED ZONING, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND BE, AND IT IS HEREBY AMENDED BY ADDING SUBSECTION 110-181(c), AS FOLLOWS:

Sec. 110-181. Application.

. . .

(c) Design guidelines.

(1) These guidelines do not constitute absolute rules and regulations. They are meant to convey to the developer and design professional the town's desire for quality appearance and to set forth the design elements that should be addressed during the site plan review process. These design guidelines are meant to implement the Comprehensive Plan to Ocean City. They apply to all of the corporate limits of the Town of Ocean City except those areas subject to the Downtown Design Overlay Zone (Chapter 110, Article 23) and the Upper Downtown Design Overlay Zone (Chapter 110, Article 26) and those properties being improved as a single family dwelling in R-1 or MH zones. The design guidelines address only the architectural design and appearance of buildings. Other regulations concerning permitted uses, density, bulk, parking, landscaping, signs, etc., shall supercede when inconsistencies may arise.

(2) The application of these guidelines is but one part of the site plan review process. The applicant for site plan approval should submit adequate plans and elevations to illustrate and explain to the Planning Commission how the intent and purpose of these guidelines are being addressed. The Planning Commission shall consider the design and its relation to the guidelines as part of its site plan review duties.

(3) Design elements to be considered. The following design elements should be considered by the applicant for site plan approval.

(a) Neighborhood sensitivity.

(i) In a neighborhood where visual character is clearly defined, that character should be respected. Elements that establish character include

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A. Building height
B. Architectural style
C. Roof style
D. Architectural massing
E. Finish materials, ornamentation and detail
F. Landscaping
G. Windows and doors
H. Siding materials

(ii) In a neighborhood that does not reflect a clear visual character, the designer may have the opportunity to set the standard for future development.

(b) Siting and location of the building on the site.

(i) Setbacks. Underlying zoning will control setbacks in most cases. In instances where existing setbacks (especially streetside setbacks) differ from those permitted by zoning, the existing pattern should be followed as closely as possible.

(ii) Corners. Corner lots are particularly important to the visual character of a neighborhood. The same level of interesting architectural treatment (windows, projections, ornamentation, etc.) should be given to all street sides.

(iii) Shadows. Attention should be paid to the impacts of shadows cast by a new building on existing neighbors. Orientation and stepped-back upper stories can be used to minimize shadows.

(iv) Building and lot orientation. New buildings and lots should be oriented similar to the existing nearby development. The relationship of buildings to buildings and buildings to streets should be consistent.

(v) Parking. When possible, parking should be located within or to the rear of the building. When parking is located between a street and building, it should be screened from view by landscaping and/or fencing.

(vi) Garages. Ideally, garages should not open to the front or streetside. When they must, architectural practices such as recessing the garage or the imaginative use of color or trim should de-emphasize the garage.

(vii) Mechanical systems, dumpsters and other refuse collection items should be hidden or screened from view.

(c) Architectural envelope.

(i) Orientation. Building orientation should reflect that of the neighboring properties. For example, where the predominant pattern in a block is gable ends of buildings oriented perpendicular to the street, infill development should be so oriented.

(ii) Roofs. Infill development and rebuilds should have roof styles, pitches and architectural details that are complementary to the existing neighboring development.

(iii) Massing and proportions. Massing and proportion of established nearby buildings should be reflected in new development. Massing relates to the overall bulk and size of a building. Proportion has to do with how the parts or elements of a building relate to each other. When similar massing is not possible to achieve, the building facade can be broken into smaller elements creating an illusion of a smaller building more in scale with its neighbors.

(d) Openings.

(i) Entryways. The principle entry into a building should be apparent and easily identified. It should most often be placed on the front facade. When possible, the height of the entry should reflect that of its neighbors. Ground level entries in a block of raised entries could disrupt visual continuity. Stairs to a principle entry should be interesting from the street. They could be wide, include planters, intermediate landings, decorative banisters, and lighting.

(ii) Windows. The proportion, size, and detailing of windows should relate to that of neighboring buildings. The ratio of window openings to solid wall should be appropriate. Careful arrangement, placement, proportioning and detailing of windows and trim can add interest, balance and order to the

exterior facade. When possible, window placement should respect the privacy of neighboring buildings.

(iii) Porches. Porches are encouraged in locations where they have traditionally been part of the streetscape.

(e) Finishes and materials.

(i) The choice and mix of finishes and materials is important in providing an attractive streetscape environment. Exterior finishes and materials should be consistent and compatible with those existing in the neighborhood.

(ii) The choice of materials can help express the proportions and massing of a building. Different materials can help define different parts of the building such as the base or an entry.

(iii) Ornamentation. Structures should have finished architectural facade treatment on all sides visible from a public way or adjoining property. Long facades should incorporate recesses and projections to break up the facade. Architectural interest can be added to large structures by introducing the use of a repeating pattern of change in color, texture and material modules at regular intervals. Ornamentation should be consistent with the predominant style of the neighborhood.

(f) Roof detail.

(i) Pitched and gabled roofs are encouraged. When this is not practical, false gables and mansards can achieve a similar appearance.

(ii) Mechanical fixtures on roofs should be hidden from view.

(iii) For larger structures, variation in rooflines should be incorporated to reduce the scale and add visual interest.

(iv) Elements such as dormers, eaves, and secondary roof elements over bay windows and porches are encouraged to reduce the impact of large roof areas.

(g) Color. Color schemes should be compatible with the existing structures in the neighborhood. Facades should use subtle or neutral colors with accent applied to trim elements. More vibrant colors should be used sparingly and with discretion.

(h) Additions should pay careful attention to the architectural style of the existing structure so as not to dramatically change the appearance of the structure and the character of the neighborhood.

(i) The scale and mass of the addition should be in keeping with the original structure.

(ii) Additions should only be constructed on the side or rear of the original building so as not to disrupt the established setback.

(iii) The roof of an addition should match or complement the design of the original structure.

(iv) Architectural elements such as windows should respect the prevailing geometry of the original structure.

(v) Materials used in the addition should be consistent with the original structure.

INTRODUCED at a meeting of the City Council of Ocean City, Maryland held on January 17, 2012.

ADOPTED AND PASSED, as amended, by the required vote of the elected membership of the City Council and approved by the Mayor at its meeting held on February 6, 2012.

ATTEST:

KELLY ALLMOND, Clerk

RICHARD W. MEEHAN, Mayor

Approved as to Form:

JAMES S. HALL, President

GUY R. AYRES III, City Solicitor

LLOYD MARTIN, Secretary