



Community Planning & Permitting

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS BUSINESS MEETING

January 5, 2021 – 10:30 AM
Via Microsoft Teams

Authorization under Article 16-100.A of the Boulder County Land Use Code for Text Amendments to the Land Use Code related to Article 19 (Procedures Following Disasters)

Staff: Hannah Hippely, AICP

Public testimony will not be taken – action requested

SUMMARY

On October 17, 2020, Boulder County declared a local disaster emergency pursuant to § 24-33.5-709, C.R.S., as amended, in response to the Calwood Fire, which caused severe damage and loss of property in Boulder County, in particular to the Mountain Ridge and Foothills Ranch subdivisions west of Foothills Highway.

The County is committed to working with property owners in their recovery from damage or destroyed structures and intends to streamline the rebuilding process in order to focus on the relevant issues in the Mountain Ridge and Foothills Ranch subdivisions through this text amendment of the Land Use Code. The County's aim is to allow property owners to rebuild in a timely, safe and responsible manner.

Current Land Use Code regulations (Art. 4-802.B.3) allow someone to rebuild without Site Plan Review if they rebuild what previously existed (original location, floor area, height) and obtain building permits within one year of the destruction. However, if someone wanted to change the design to their home with a different footprint, location, size, or height, it would trigger Site Plan Review.

After the Fourmile fire, the County adopted specialized regulations to allow people to make minor changes to their homes without triggering the full Site Plan Review process since the County recognized that people may want to make changes to their pre-existing structure when rebuilding. It is the intent of this code amendment to adopt a similar approach, which would evaluate focused issues including geologic hazards, erosion control, and long-term wildfire mitigation while also allowing some flexibility in the design of the homes that are rebuilt.

The County is committed to resilient rebuilding. Fires drastically change the landscape in obvious ways but also more subtle ways such as soil structure. In the aftermath of a fire excessive runoff, debris flows, and rockfall hazards exist. While the subject lots are currently not in immediate danger of wildfire, resiliency planning requires the consideration of longer term wildfire and other hazard mitigation.

On December 15, 2020 a 60 day temporary cessation of building permit issuance in the Mountain Ridge and Foothills Ranch subdivisions was approved by the County Commissioners. Staff intends to develop a focused approach to rebuilding after the Calwood fire in Article 19 (Procedures Following Disasters) of the Land Use Code, and will make any other Code revisions necessary to integrate the changes.

ACTION REQUESTED

Staff requests the Board of County Commissioners authorize staff to pursue the text amendments to Article 19 of the Boulder County Land Use Code to ensure streamlined and resilient rebuilding.