



Legislation Text

File #: 20-208, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Request-to-set a Public Hearing on Text Amendments to the Land Use Ordinance to Establish a Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability Commission

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is for the Town Council to consider setting a public hearing on text amendments to the Land Use Ordinance that would establish a new Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability Commission as an update to the existing Environmental Advisory Board. The Town Council must receive public input prior to making a decision.

DEPARTMENT: Town Manager, Planning

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INFORMATION: At the February 4, 2020 Town Council meeting, the Council received a presentation on possible adjustments to the scope of duties of the Environmental Advisory Board, Planning Board and Appearance Commission in conjunction with shifting Climate Action Plan implementation to the Town Manager's office. (Agenda materials are available at <https://carrboro.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4321599&GUID=39F32F62-F173-47A0-8FF5-7DCAB95CABA2&Options=&Search=>>.)

The Council directed staff to consult with the advisory boards on the proposed framework/adjustments. Staff met with the three advisory boards, mentioned above, (EAB, PB & AC), in March and again in April/May for discussion and feedback. Some members of the Planning Board and Appearance Commission expressed reservations related to the possible changes, but were willing to proceed with the expectation that they would be provided appropriate training, assistance, and support. All of the boards noted the importance of advancing the implementation of the Community Climate Action Plan and the need for environmental review in the review of developments and changes to regulations.

A draft ordinance has been prepared (*Attachment B*). If adopted, Section 15-45 will describe the requirements for a Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability Commission (CAESC). The name emphasizes the role of the commission as the advisory board tasked with supporting the Town's efforts in implementing its climate action plans. The duties relating to development review would remain. Planning staff would facilitate the discussion of development applications and amendments, when required, to allow the Environmental Sustainability Coordinator to focus on climate action.

The nine-member CAESC would ensure sufficient membership for broad expertise in environmental topics relating to climate action and sustainability as well as development review. A requirement for at least two members to have special expertise related to climate action implementation such as renewable energy use or

energy efficiency in building design and/or construction, use or promotion of alternative transportation, or community engagement/grass-roots organizing related to climate action or similar environmental initiatives, is included. In order for the appointment schedule to align with those for other advisory boards, members appointed initially would serve through January 2021, with a staggered-term schedule beginning for members appointed in February 2020.

The Appearance Commission would continue to serve as the Town's Tree Board under the Tree City USA standards, with some duties shared at times and as appropriate with staff and other advisory boards and commissions.

The Town Council must receive public comments before adopting amendments to the Land Use Ordinance. Orange County and the Planning Board must also review, and staff has identified the Environmental Advisory Board and Appearance Commission review as the amendment relates to their purview.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: Public notice costs and staff time are associated with the review of text amendments for public hearings and advisory board review.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Town Council consider adopting the attached resolution (*Attachment A*) setting a public hearing for June 16th and referring the item to Orange County and Town advisory boards for review.