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Date: October 1, 2025

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Karen L. Garner, Director 

Subject: Director's Determination – Self Storage definition to include fully enclosed individual, compartmentalized, controlled storage of vehicles without sales or services (e.g., repair, vacuuming, washing).

Interpretation

Individual, compartmentalized, and controlled storage of vehicles (e.g., boats, recreational vehicles) that is fully enclosed in a building or a group of buildings would be considered self storage, as defined in Zoning Ordinance Sections 130.80.020 (Definitions of Specialized Terms and Phrases) and 130.40.320 (Storage Facilities), provided that there are no services (e.g., repair, vacuuming, washing) or sales connected to the use.

Background

Introduction

A regular question that has arisen is whether fully enclosed storage of vehicles (e.g., boats, recreational vehicles) is considered as self storage use.

Zoning Ordinance Section 130.10.050.A (Record of Interpretations) states that “whenever the Director determines that the applicability or the meaning of any of the provisions of the Title is ambiguous, the Director may issue an official interpretation. Official interpretations shall be in writing, and cite the provision being interpreted, together with an explanation of its meaning or application in the particular or general circumstances that caused the need for interpretation.”

Zoning Ordinance Definitions (Section 130.80.020)

Section 130.80.020 (Definitions of Specialized Terms and Phrases) defines self storage use as the following:

Storage, Self (Use Type). A building or group of buildings in a controlled access and fenced compound that contains varying sizes of individual, compartmentalized, and controlled access units, stalls, or lockers for the storage of lessees' goods or wares. (See also Section 130.40.320: Storage Facilities, in Article 4: Specific Use Regulations, of this Title).

Section 130.80.020 (Definitions of Specialized Terms and Phrases) classifies vehicle storage use as a subtype of Automotive and Equipment use. Automotive and Equipment use is defined as “Establishments that are primarily engaged in sales or services for automobiles, motor vehicles, trucks, small engines, or heavy equipment” and includes uses such as fuel sales, paint and body shops, repair shops, sales and rental, wrecking/dismantling yard, and vehicle storage.

Vehicle storage is defined as the following:

Vehicle Storage. The service and storage of operable vehicles, boats and trailers. Typical uses include recreational vehicle storage lots, fleet storage lots, impound lots, and construction vehicle storage areas. It also includes storage of vehicles incidental to a commercial use, such as delivery, taxicab, and towing services.

Zoning Ordinance Specific Use Standards for Storage Facilities (Section 130.40.320 - Storage Facilities)

Section 130.40.320 (Storage Facilities) is applicable to both self storage and vehicle storage uses, as well as commercial and industrial equipment and material storage yards. The section provides the following self storage requirements.

1. Self storage facilities shall be limited to the storage of personal effects of individuals or equipment and materials by businesses inside of a building or buildings. Use of storage facilities for manufacturing, retail, wholesale, or service uses other than storage shall be prohibited. Human occupancy of individual storage units shall be limited to that required for transporting, arranging, and maintaining stored materials.
2. Vehicle storage areas may be allowed as an accessory use of a self storage site provided such use is allowed in the zone in which the self storage facility is located. Such storage area shall be fenced, screened, and landscaped in compliance with Subsections C.1 and C.2 (Equipment and Material Storage Yards) below in this Section.

Discussion

As described in the definition and specific use standards, self storage use is defined as a building or a group of buildings that provide enclosed individual storage units to customers. Services and sales are prohibited within the self storage use.

Vehicle storage is defined as a subtype of automotive and equipment use. Automotive and equipment use is defined as uses that provide sales or services to vehicles and equipment. Vehicle

storage is defined as the service and storage of operable vehicles, boats, and trailers. Both the definition and specific use standard for vehicle storage imply that typical vehicle storage uses often include an outdoor storage component (i.e., not fully enclosed by buildings) by listing different types of outdoor storage lots and specifying the need to fence, screen, and landscape the vehicle storage areas.

Vehicle storage areas are allowed as an accessory use of a self storage site only if the vehicle storage use is allowed in the zone in which the self storage facility is located. In the commercial zones, vehicle storage use is treated the same as the self storage use with the exception of the Commercial, Professional Office (CPO) zone. Both vehicle storage and self storage use types are conditionally permitted in the Commercial, Community (CC) and Rural, Commercial (CRU) zones and are permitted by right in the Commercial, General (GC) zone. CPO zone does not permit self storage but does conditionally permit vehicle storage.

As for the industrial and research & development zones, Light Industrial (IL) zone permits both vehicle storage and self storage. Heavy, Industrial (IH) zone conditionally permits vehicle storage and permits by right self storage. The Research and Development (R&D) zone prohibits vehicle storage and conditionally permits self storage.

Based on the aforementioned information pertaining to self storage and vehicle storage, individual, compartmentalized, and controlled storage of vehicles (e.g., boats, recreational vehicles) that is fully enclosed in a building or a group of buildings would be considered self storage provided that there are no sales or services (e.g., repair, vacuuming, washing) connected to the use.

Effects of Determination

With this determination, self storage facilities may now consist of facilities that only store vehicles in fully enclosed buildings or facilities that store vehicles in fully enclosed buildings along with the fully enclosed storage of other personal effects. Either scenario would prohibit sales or services (e.g., repair, vacuuming, washing) of vehicles.