

HOUSING

MOTION

In a volatile rental housing market such as the one in Los Angeles, a decision that can eliminate important rental housing from the market should be supported by accurate information. There is a nearly constant flow of condominium conversion cases at present in CD 5 and throughout the City for which this is relevant.

The City's condominium conversion process is set forth in Section 12.95.2 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC). It assigns the task of determining the suitability of conversion applications to the Advisory Agency, an entity mandated by the California Subdivision Map Act. In Los Angeles the Advisory Agency is the Director of Planning. The Director typically assigns case-level decisions to department staff referred to as the Deputy Advisory Agency.

One of the key requirements of Section 12.95.2 is found in subdivision F.6.(1). This requirement is that the Advisory Agency be able to formally find that "the vacancy rate of the planning area in which the property is located is five percent or less" and determine that the conversion's impact on the surrounding rental housing market is not significant.

The Section does not specify how often the rate should be updated, leaving it to administrative discretion. According to City Planning staff the Department currently calculates the vacancy rate after analyzing data obtained from the Department of Water and Power, but it appears the calculation is not always made on an annual basis. This allows conversion case decisions to be made without benefit of current data and potentially in error.

In order to facilitate appropriate decision making by the Advisory Agency which reflects a current vacancy rate and allows for a credible required finding that the conversion will not have a significant cumulative effect on the rental housing market in the planning area in question, the City has an obligation to keep the official vacancy rate calculation timely.

I THEREFORE MOVE that Section 12.95.2 F.6 of the LAMC be amended to require that no condominium conversion be approved by the Advisory Agency if the vacancy rate for the planning area in which the case is located has not been updated within the last 12 months; and

I FURTHER MOVE that the Department of City Planning be instructed to update the vacancy rate by March 1st of each year.

PRESENTED BY: _____



PAUL KORETZ
Councilmember, Fifth District

SECONDED BY: _____



MAY 03 2017

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