Cat Cafe District Expansion

UDO Text Amendment

Asheville City Council
April 25, 2023

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Background & Proposed Amendments

- Cat cafés are defined as “premises used to house or contain homeless, orphaned, or unwanted cats and that is owned, operated, or maintained by an organization that is licensed by the State as an animal shelter and devoted to the welfare, protection, and humane treatment of animals for the purpose of adoption, and which incorporates retail sales to support the interaction of patrons with cats, such as a café, bookshop, or other permitted use.”
- Cat cafés are currently only allowed as a permitted use in the CBD zoning district.
- A request was received from a business owner seeking to open a cat café in the Haywood Rd Corridor district (HR-3).
- This amendment would allow cat cafés in zoning districts that currently allow eating/drinking establishments, including: NB, OFF I, OFF II, OB, CBI, CBII, NCD, HB, RB, CI, RSRT, INST, RIV, URD, UV, UP, ARPT, CBD EXP, COM EXP, HR-1, HR-2, HR-3, HR-4, HR-6, HR-7, RAD-LYH, RAD-NT, RAD-SHP, RAD-RIV, and RAD-IND.

Review Process

- Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) - April 5, 2023
  - Approved (Vote 5:0).

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Pros & Cons

Pros

- Allows cat cafés to operate as a permitted use in more commercial districts of the city.
- Provides more opportunities for cat adoption by city residents and visitors in a commercial establishment such as a café or bookstore which also provides neighborhood-serving retail services.

Cons

- None identified.

Comprehensive plan goals

Living Asheville Comprehensive Plan

- Supports a number of goals in the Plan:
  - **Promote Small and Independent Business, Entrepreneurship and the Maker Economy** - by evaluating land use policies to ensure that zoning regulations support small business growth and a local maker-based economy (p. 195).
  - **Facilitate Real Estate Development that Maximizes Public Benefit** - by ensuring all necessary land use types are provided for (p. 201).

Recommendation

- Staff concurs with the Planning & Zoning Commission and recommends **approval** of the proposed zoning text amendment.

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