



City of Apache Junction

Development Services Department



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 3, 2020

TO: Mayor Jeff Serdy and City Council

THROUGH: Bryant Powell, City Manager

FROM: Dave Zellner, Building and Safety Manager
Larry Kirch, Development Services Director

SUBJECT/ISSUE: 2020 Amendments to the AJCC, Volume I, Chapter 7: Buildings, Article 7-1: Division of Building Safety and Inspection Administrative Code, §7-1-9 Unsafe Building or Unsafe Property, and § 7-1-11 Construction Standards for Manufactured Home, Mobile Home, Park Model, and Recreational Vehicle Standards

Background:

On November 5, 2019, the City Council gave direction to staff to proceed with possible amendments to Volume 1, Chapter 7. The proposed changes involved some corrections to the zoning districts where manufactured homes are permitted and the public asked that some requirements regarding park models be revisited.

The main issue involved the size of Arizona rooms constructed next to park models. Staff proposed additional changes regarding the age of manufactured homes and park models that could be placed in the city in MH and RV Parks. As the draft ordinance was presented, the Manufactured Home/RV park industry objected to the additional restrictions. Staff was proposing to further restrict the age of both manufactured homes and park model RVs to units no older than five years old that could be placed in a park.

City staff has met with the industry representatives four times over the last two months and have reached a consensus has been reached. Many of the suggested changes that staff made were revisited and many of the provisions regarding the age restrictions for manufactured homes were not allowed as they have been preempted by the state.

Park models are not regulated, per se and so the city developed a compromise that any park model coming into the city or moved within the city be inspected to the HUD minimum Housing Quality Standards. City staff will be able to verify that a park model is decent, safe, and sanitary

under the HUD guidelines prior to issuance of a “set permit.” The city and industry agreed to use a modified version of the HUD HQS standards that are appropriate to park models.

Manufactured Home question:

The new rules for manufactured homes outside manufactured home parks, inadvertently left RS-GR out of the listing of zoning districts where the new rules for the age of homes, and required amenities are identified. Staff believe the intent was to include RS-GR along with RS-20M and RS-54M which sets maximum age, minimum size, type of foundation, roof pitch, driveway and carport requirements. Staff and the industry made revisions regarding the age of units in a park and clarified the pre-HUD versus post-HUD definitions regarding rehabilitation of units.

Park model question:

Some contractors who specialize in the building of park model additions, otherwise referred to as “Arizona rooms,” have questioned the requirement that limits the size of habitable room additions to park models to the same size as the park model. In general this will allow for a 320-400 square foot addition. Mesa has limited these additions to 400 square feet plus 120 square feet for storage. Staff believe the limitation is necessary due to the increasing size of rooms being added in RV parks which have lesser separation amounts than conventional homes. Based on the growing size of the additions, the fire loads of individual park models and their additions are approaching or exceeding that of single family homes, which are required to be a minimum of 5 feet from property lines.

Additionally, the increased power loads of the newer park models and the large additions are stressing or exceed the electrical infrastructure installed when the parks were developed. This is creating significant problems in at least one of the parks noted below. Staff understands from the contractors that this is only an issue in the four RV subdivisions, specifically Roadhaven, Golden Vista, Superstition Mountain Resort and The Pueblo where the individual lot and the park model are owned together. All of the other RV parks are rental parks.

Staff proposed a five-year age limit on park models just as we did for manufactured homes. Rather than set a strict age limit, all park models would have to have a certified inspector inspect or Arizona licensed home inspector the unit per HUD housing quality standards prior to a permit being issued. This approach seems workable for both the city and the industry who wish to keep the housing affordable but also in good condition for the owner or renter. The city receives permits for park model installations for 1980 and older models, which are at or beyond their intended life span. The city also grapples with unpermitted installations of remodeled and modified park models which creates other issues.

Unsafe Buildings or Unsafe Property Appeal Process

Another proposed correction is to create an appeal process for buildings and properties that are declared unsafe.

Recommended Motion:

Staff recommends that Resolution 20-05 and Ordinance No. 1485 be approved along with the noted amendments as mutually agreed upon by city staff and the manufactured housing industry.