

PLANNING COMMISSION

The charge of the Planning Commission is to assist the Council in achieving the Town's Comprehensive Plan for orderly growth and development by analyzing, evaluating, and recommending responsible town policies, ordinances, and planning standards that manage land use and involving the community in long-range planning.

RECOMMENDATION FOR HOUSING CHOICES FOR COMPLETE COMMUNITIES LUMO TEXT AMENDMENT

October 04, 2022

Recommendation: Approval Approval with Conditions Denial

Motion: Wesley McMahon moved, and Louie Rivers seconded a motion to recommend that the Council adopt Resolution A (Resolution of Consistency).

Vote: 6 – 0

Yeas: Jonathan Mitchell (Chair), Wesley McMahon, Chuck Mills, John Rees, Stephen Whitlow, Louie Rivers

Nays:

Recommendation: Approval Approval with Conditions Denial

Motion: Wesley McMahon moved, and Louie Rivers seconded a motion to recommend that the Council approve Ordinance A (LUMO Text Amendment), with the attached comments as supplements to their recommendation.

Vote: 6 – 0

Yeas: Jonathan Mitchell (Chair), Wesley McMahon, Chuck Mills, John Rees, Stephen Whitlow, Louie Rivers

Nays:

Commission Notes to Council: On October 4, 2022, the Planning Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to recommend to the Council approval of two separate LUMO text amendments proposed by Town staff, titled “Affordable Housing Development Review” and “Housing Regulations and Housing Choices for a Complete Community,” subject to the

comments below. The comments are intended for both staff and the Council. They include only substantive comments bearing on the amendments themselves; they do not cover certain comments conveyed to staff regarding how the amendments are described or positioned for the public (although we urge staff to consider those as well.) The ordering of comments below reflects the sequence of our discussion and not necessarily the relative importance.

Housing Regulations and Housing Choices for Complete Communities

1. The Planning Commission discussed whether drawing the line at fourplex (vs. higher) goes far enough. Some members wondered why the Town should impose any constraint on density within a building envelope that complies with the “form” requirements, or what approach should be used to calibrate such a constraint. Another member urged caution, noting that numerous other cities and states in North America have drawn the line at fourplex (or triplex), which may reflect both practical and political factors that we have not fully explored. The Planning Commission did not reach a resolution of this issue but wishes to flag it for the Council’s consideration. To be clear, the Planning Commission supports the current proposal, which is an important step forward.
2. It is not clear why the NCDs should be categorically exempt from this proposal. We understand that special considerations may apply in some cases. One idea would be to use a special exception/variance process to address the question of density within the NCDs.
3. In the future, the impact of the existing minimum lot size requirement should be studied.
4. We urge removal of parking minimums.
5. Rather than totally excluding rear-loaded garage spots and driveways from parking maximums, which could result in six parking spots per townhouse, we urge staff and the Council to consider applying a discount factor to rear-loaded garage spots and driveways (e.g., such spots count 50% toward the maximum).
6. In the context of the Town’s desire to incentivize rear-loaded townhouses, the Planning Commission discussed the impact of fire code requirements for minimum alley widths. Members noted that adding a rear alley seems to make townhouses no less safe, from a fire perspective, than having no alley. Meanwhile, configuring alleys for convenient access by fire equipment results in more impervious surface (and sometimes fewer housing units), somewhat diminishing the benefits of rear-loaded townhouses. We would like to see future dialogue between the Fire Marshall and the Town to promote appropriate balancing of safety and other objectives.
7. In the future, impediments to broader adoption of ADUs (which are currently allowed) should be studied.

Prepared by: Jacob Hunt, Planner II

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

The charge of the Housing Advisory Board is to assist the Chapel Hill Town Council in promoting and developing a full spectrum of housing opportunities that meet the needs of the Chapel Hill community.

RECOMMENDATION HOUSING CHOICES FOR A COMPLETE COMMUNITY TEXT AMENDMENTS

Recommendation: Approval Approval with Conditions Denial

Motion: A motion was made by Dowling, seconded by Vice-Chair Morande, that the HAB recommend the Town Council approve the proposed revisions to the Town's Land Use Management Ordinance as presented.

Vote: 7-0

Ayes: Sue Hunter (Chair), Robert Dowling, Anne Hoole, Rex Mercer, Dustin Mills, Brandon Morande, Anthony Williams

Nays:

Additional Comments:

Prepared by: Emily Holt, Staff