

Public Workshop: Concept Development

Better Housing by Design Project

Notes from 2/25/2017 Small Group Discussions

Outdoor Space and Site Design

- Economics can be a barrier to large shared open space.
- Public to private gradient is important.
- Shared open space helps build community.
- Porches and patios should face shared open space.
- Lower the garage and put front porch on top.
- For park deficient neighborhoods, allocate land on private development or put money in a pot.
- Family housing needs to be programmed
- Tradeoff for open space if site is adjacent or near a neighborhood park.
- Open space requirements may take away from much needed units.
- Economic tradeoff regarding buildable square footage – Open space receives development incentives through more FAR.
- Narrow/skinny houses are a waste of open space.
- Semi-public courtyards – part of regulation
- Balconies/patios provide eyes on the street.
- Allow balconies to overhang the public right-of-way
- For family housing/aging in place, both private and shared open spaces are important.
- Increase the 48 square feet minimum requirement.
- Terraces; public to private gradient.
- Allow rooftop space for open space
- Open space amenity means increased costs.
- Don't require every unit to have open space requirement because it leads to increase in rent.
- Pocket parks, median strips.
- Vancouver B.C. is a case study for providing semi-public open space.
- Mid-block parks on big blocks – provide bonus transfers.
- Create pleasant/dynamic experience for pedestrians.
- Balconies can project into ROW, so they can provide open space without taking up so much space on the lot.
- Balconies can be really well-used – look at Chicago examples
- Larger context matters a lot in determining how much open space is needed. Is there a park nearby? Access to shared space at neighborhood level should make a difference.

- Cultural context affects how shared space is used.
- When shared space is used, it creates greater value than private space does, builds community.
- Shared space could be better when it's shared with smaller numbers of people, rather than a really big space for a very large number of people.
- Shouldn't require provision of expensive, use-specific shared space – should be flexible, easily repurposed for different tenant combinations over time.
- Recreation can happen in unlikely-looking places. For example, church parking lot used as a playground rest of the week.
- Shared space should be designed with an eye toward the demographic expected for the building given its characteristics (like size of units, number of bedrooms, etc.)
- Access to shared space shouldn't be limited to only the residents – can act as communal space for larger neighborhood.
- Parking is important, especially for people who don't have a choice not to drive.
- It's fine to have taller buildings if you get more space on the lot for open space, and parking too.
- Transportation Demand Management measures should be incentivized or required to address parking demand.
- Can't choose one option (detached, attached, stacked) – there should be options for site-specific situation – needs to be based on the site.
- Larger context is important – neighborhood parks, commercial destinations, etc. should be factored in.