

Comments from Commissioners Schultz and Rudd re: Scale Work Session

June 7, 2017

Chair Schultz' comments are in blue.
Commissioner Rudd's comments are in green.

1. Limit the size of houses (R7, R5, and R2.5 zones).

1.1 Establish a limit on house size by zone that is proportional to lot size using a floor area ratio (FAR) calculation.

Issue 1: WHAT size for a single house?

Option 1 - No because I believe limiting size will help discourage demolitions

Option 2 - Maybe if analysis was provided that demonstrates this is the "sweet spot"

Option 3 – No

Option 4 - Yes because I feel more analysis needs to be done to convince me that staff's proposal hits the "sweet spot" between discouraging demolition yet maintaining homeowners investment.

Option 5 - I support having neighborhood context inform size. Not sure how to do this in base code. Perhaps this can be addressed in DOZA

Issue 2: WHAT size for a building with more than one unit?

Option 6 – Yes

Issue 3: HOW to measure the size of buildings?

Option 7 - No because I believe using FAR is too complex

Option 8 – Yes

Option 9 - No Setbacks should control the size of the street facing facade. I am not convinced that building depth needs to be regulated.

Option 10 - No - too complex to manage two sets of rules

Concerned generally about complexity associated with using FAR

1.2 Exclude attics and basements from house size limits.

Potential amendments:

1. No Too complex. If we stick with FAR, using to outside wall to draw building footprint verses having to draw and determine the wall assembly is easier
2. No Align with building code (as proposed by staff)
3. No My preference would be to have the definition of a basement align with the building code
4. New Amendment - exempt basement area below the flood plain. If a house is built at an elevated height by utilizing a tall basement, then the basement area should not count towards FAR - point being to encourage homes in the flood plain to be elevated

- 1.3 Allow an additional .15 FAR for detached accessory structures (e.g. garages, sheds and accessory dwelling units).

Potential amendments:

1. Yes. Whether the methodology is FAR or Building Coverage/Height/Etc., it seems to me this provision is more about building bulk/scale and therefore floating it between a primary residence and DADU makes sense and provides flexibility.

Won't an 800 sf ADU necessarily be more affordable than a non-ADU just given the significant size restriction? Not sure we need to restrict it or could meaningfully monitor.

Why not allow two external ADUs? For example, convert garage to ADU with second unit on top?

2. Revise how height is measured (all zones).

- 2.1 Measure height from the lowest point near the house, not the highest point.

Potential amendment:

1. No. I believe that staff's proposal works to limit scale and bulk. If we are to revise how height is measured, I would like to understand how this amendment compares with the building code and to see a diagram for how that would affect scale.

- 2.2 Clarify that small dormers are excluded from the height measurement.

I support staff's proposed language to exclude small dormers

- 2.3 Continue to allow 2 1/2 story houses (30 feet high) on standard lots.

I staff's proposed language to allow 2 1/2 story houses and 30' height.

3. Improve front setbacks to better reflect those of adjacent houses.

- 3.1 Increase front setbacks from 10 feet to 15 feet in the R5 zone.

Potential amendment:

1. Yes. I reject staff's proposed setback increase. Should the majority of the PSC support staff's proposed increase than I would support
2. No Unless the majority of the PSC voted to support staff's proposed setback increase.

Would not increase.

4. Improve building design (R10, R7, R5 and R2.5 zones).

Potential amendments:

1. No. We have front door & rain cover requirements in the commercial zones, so including in the residential zones makes sense to me
2. Yes Unless the majority of the PSC voted to support staff's proposed setback increase.

- 4.1 Limit how high the front door can be above the ground.

Potential amendment:

1. Yes - exempt homes in the flood plain to encourage living areas to be built above flood level

In Johnson Creek Floodplain area my understanding is that there have not been high damage or loss of life events to date. If that is not the case in other floodplain areas potentially impacted by the code amendments we should proactively discuss whether we want to increase residential density in risky area. Just needs to be a thoughtful choice.

4.2 Allow eaves to project up to 2 feet into setbacks.

I support staff's proposal. Requesting alignment with the building code if they are not aligned.

4.3 On a lot abutting an alley, require access from the alley

I support required access from alleys on lots abutting alleys

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

Potential amendments:

1. Yes.
2. Yes While I see how this allows flexibility for historic homes, I don't see how providing flexibility for all homes dis-incentivizes historic homes from utilizing this flexibility.
3. Yes. Maintain flexibility
4. Yes
5. Yes
6. No. I do not support limiting ADU's. I do support limiting bulk/size of built structures on a lot, but don't see the logic behind mandating that the primary residence be larger and feel this could discourage the development of ADUs. For example if the primary residence is 800 sf - why couldn't the DADU also be 800 SF? or if the primary residence was 1600 SF and was divided into two with each unit being 800 sf and allowing a DADU also being 800.sf - this would align with my support of Option 2 being allowed throughout the City.

Parking

Potential amendments

Option 1 – No.

Option 2 – Yes

Option 3 – Yes.

Option 4 – Yes as follows:

a. - No

b. - No

c. - Yes

d. – Yes

Gut reaction is large institutions should provide parking or at least have an acceptable TDM program.

Would we need driveway to accommodate two cars or the property to accommodate two cars?

One parked in garage and one in driveway with limited ability to get parking passes in a permit program if you have onsite property. My concern with saying no parking pass if you have onsite

parking is the 4 adults living together renting a home with 3 or 4 cars. Maybe a strictly enforced waiver program to get additional on street parking permits?

Reluctant to require an affordable unit if you provide onsite parking. For example, disabled person may build home and need proximate parking but not qualify for affordable housing.

Handout on Detached accessory structures:

- FAR proposal: 0.15:1
 - NO
 - Floor area ratio- .15 of 5000 sf lot is just 750 sf. Would prefer not to start requiring adus to be below 800sf. Having looked at some floor plans seems like a reasonable size. Concerned about measuring in a way that discourages environmental features.
- Proposal for what types of structures are allowed an ADU:
 - House – Yes
 - Attached house – Yes
 - Detached primary structure on a multi-dwelling development site (PD) – ?
 - Duplex in the ‘a’ overlay – Yes
 - Triplex on corners in ‘a’ overlay when meeting affordability requirement – No-allow 4plex
- Maximum size (living area) – Proposed amendment – no limit
- Maximum size (living area) proposal: Generally, no change. Basement ADUs in existing houses are not limited in size. - Yes
- Visitability proposal: If three or more units on site, one of the units must meet visitability standards – Yes
- Parking proposal: No change. If second ADU, then no parking required on the site – Yes
- Location on site: 40 feet from front lot line or behind house – See comment re: Chris’ Amendments
- Can you change the designation of buildings on a site so existing structure in front becomes accessory and one in back becomes primary? Is not, is there a compelling reason we don’t want someone to be able to make the new structure the primary and, if it is small enough, the existing structure the adu? If we are going to potentially allow flag lots I’m not sure I am concerned about which house is considered primary and which is considered accessory, even if it means the smaller house is in front. If we want to avoid discouraging demolition, does making the accessory dwelling be in back support that goal (if we require it be in rear or attached.)