



## **CITY OF KIRKLAND**

**Planning and Community Development Department**

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### **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** September 12, 2007

**To:** Houghton Community Council

**From:** Dorian Collins, Project Planner 

**Subject: COURTESY HEARING ON REVISED DRAFT INNOVATIVE HOUSING REGULATIONS (FILE ZON07-00005)**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Houghton Community Council take public testimony at the courtesy hearing, and make a recommendation to the Planning Commission prior to their public hearing, scheduled for October 11, 2007.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The revised draft regulations for "Cottage, Carriage and Multiplex Housing" are attached (see Attachment 1). These regulations will also be discussed at the Planning Commission study meeting on September 13<sup>th</sup>. Since the materials for the Houghton Community Council courtesy hearing must be mailed before comments from the Planning Commission meeting can be prepared, staff will provide oral comments from that meeting to the Community Council at the meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup>.

The revisions to the draft regulations include changes made based on direction provided by the Planning Commission in July, modifications suggested by other staff planners, and additions or changes suggested by William Kreager of Mithun Architects. Staff had solicited input from Mr. Kreager, who had participated in discussions on the innovative housing regulations earlier this year with the Builder/Architect Advisory Group, primarily with regard to design issues. Mr. Kreager has an extensive background in working with infill development and small lot design. He is well-known as the creator of the "Honey I Shrunk the Lots" presentation, which helps accentuate the positive aspects of innovative site planning, rigorous attention to architectural detail and new design concepts.

## **BACKGROUND**

At the Houghton Community Council meeting on August 20<sup>th</sup>, staff presented an earlier draft of the regulations for "Cottage, Carriage and Multiplex Housing". The Community Council discussed the regulations, and provided the following comments for staff to pass along to the Planning Commission:

- ◆ The Community Council discussed FAR, and concluded that a higher FAR than the .28 proposed by the Planning Commission would be necessary to make the program attractive to developers. The Community Council also supported providing an option to allow for an applicant to request a higher FAR through a Process IIA review. Staff passed along this suggestion to the Planning Commission for their discussion on September 13<sup>th</sup>.

*Section 113.25 of the draft regulations (Attachment 1) presents the staff recommendation that FAR be increased to .30, with an increase to .35 for projects which incorporate affordable housing.*

- ◆ The Community Council supported a simpler approach to determining the affordability level (other than the sliding scale).

*Section 113.40 (Attachment 1) indicates the options for affordability presented to the Planning Commission. Staff recommended that a simpler approach be used, which would require 10% of the units in projects of 10 or more units to be affordable to households early 100% or less of median income. Staff also recommended that an FAR bonus of .05 be provided to offset this requirement.*

Also at the meeting on August 20<sup>th</sup>, the Community Council asked that staff provide information regarding the properties within the Houghton area that could be developed with cottage housing. At the meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup>, staff will provide a map indicating parcels (both vacant and developed) that contain at least 14,400 square feet, which would be the minimum parcel size for a cottage project in the RS 7.2 zone. The map will also indicate parcels which may have more potential for redevelopment, based on the criterion that where land value exceeds improvement value by more than 50%, a property owner may be more likely to elect to redevelop the property.

There was also a suggestion by some council members at the meeting on August 20<sup>th</sup> that the regulations allow for increased lot coverage where low impact development (LID) techniques were included in the design. The regulations have been clarified to state that lot coverage will be determined for the entire development, rather than the individual lots. This approach should allow for considerable flexibility in site design. Also, this issue can be included in the City's overall study of LID, and may be more appropriately addressed on a city-wide basis.

### Revisions to Draft Regulations

Key changes made to the draft regulations since they were last discussed by the Houghton Community Council include:

- ◆ Floor Area Ratio (FAR): Several options are provided, including the .28 suggested by the Planning Commission, and the .30 recommended by staff.
- ◆ Affordability Requirement and FAR Bonus: As staff discussed with the Houghton Community Council, while the Planning Commission was in agreement that affordability should be a component of the development of this type of housing, they did not provide strong direction regarding the use of an incentive to accompany the affordability requirement. Staff has provided several options to address affordability in the draft regulations (Section 113.40). The options range from *requiring* affordability with and without an FAR bonus, to *encouraging* affordability with a bonus FAR. The options also include variations on the approach to use for establishing the target income for the affordable unit.
- ◆ Structure of Regulations: The organization of the Chapter has been revised somewhat to flow more clearly. The regulations regarding garages have been removed from Section 113.30, which was formerly titled "Basic Requirements for Accessory Uses and Buildings". The garage regulations have been added to the section in "Design Standards and Guidelines" that included other regulations for garages and surface parking design. As a result, Section 113.30 has been renamed "Community Buildings and Community Space in Cottage Projects".

Also to provide more clarity, Section 113.35, "Design Standards and Guidelines" is now split into subsections for regulations related to "Cottage Projects", and "Multiplexes not included in Cottage Developments". The topics within this section have also been re-ordered.

- ◆ Design Standards for Multiplexes (113.35.2):
  - Garages: These regulations have been revised to restrict the number of garages to no more than three on a façade. Also, a reference has been added to ensure that garage and driveway standards for detached single family homes and duplexes (in Chapter 115) apply to multiplexes.
  - Entries: Language related to entries has been revised, based on input from Bill Kreager. New draft language would be: "Multiplexes shall maintain the traditional character and quality of detached single-family dwelling units by using design elements such as the appearance of single points of entry addressing the street, pitched roofs, substantial trim around windows, porches

and chimneys. Ideally, the multiplex will have no more than one entry on each side of the structure”.

- ◆ Common Open Space: These standards have been revised to prohibit fences, and to allow for some surface water management facilities in common open space areas. Previously, the text stated that all surface water management facilities were prohibited in common open space areas. The proposed new language would state: “Surface water management facilities shall be limited within common open space areas. Low Impact Development (LID) features are permitted, provided they do not adversely impact access to or use of the common open space for a variety of activities. Conventional stormwater collection and conveyance tools, such as flow control and/or water quality vaults are permitted if located underground”.
- ◆ Building Height: Revised standards for building height, in response to comments from staff and Bill Kreager:
  - Accessory structures (such as community buildings) would still be restricted to one-story, but would be allowed 18’ in height, rather than 15’ as previously drafted. Mr. Kreager suggested that a 15’ maximum would encourage a very shallow pitch.
  - Maximum building heights for dwelling units are clarified to be consistent with the interim ordinance, which allowed up to 25’ in building height, where a minimum roof slope of 6:12 were provided for all parts of the roof above 18’. In the RSX zones, the maximum height would be 27’ (traditional single family development in the RSX zones is allowed 30’ in height).
- ◆ Distance between Projects: While the distance between cottage housing developments remains at 1,500’ under the revised draft regulations, the distance between single multiplex developments is revised to 500’. There would be no minimum distance requirement between a cottage project and a single multiplex. The distance of 500’ between individual multiplex developments was arrived at based on guidance from the City’s subdivision ordinance for block length:

**22.28.070 Blocks—Maximum length.**

Generally, blocks should not exceed five hundred feet in length. Blocks that are more than seven hundred fifty feet in length should allow for midblock pedestrian access pursuant to Section 22.28.170 of this chapter. (Ord. 3705 § 2 (part), 1999)

- ◆ Major Modifications: Removed provisions for applicants to propose major modifications from the standards in the Chapter.

- ◆ Tree Plan: Requirements for tree retention, protection and density. Staff has added a regulation that would require Tree Plan III for these projects. This Tree Plan was selected since it would apply tree retention requirements to the subject property rather than to individual lots. This approach should work well, since specific site plans will be submitted, showing the building footprints, lot layout, unit design, etc. Related to this, a design standard has been added to encourage the retention of mature trees within areas of common open space.

#### Next Steps

Following the Planning Commission's hearing in October, the City Council will study the recommended draft regulations at a study session on November 20<sup>th</sup>. It is anticipated that the City Council will take action before the end of the year. Following action by the City Council, the item will return to the Houghton Community Council for approval.

#### Attachments

1. Draft Innovative ("Cottage, Carriage and Multiplex") Housing regulations, dated September 4, 2007

cc: File ZON07-00005