

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tracy Davis, Alice Thomas, Jim Herreid, Suzie Nakasian, Greg Colby, Steve Rholl, and Richard Schulte

ALSO PRESENT: Betsey Buckheit, Community Development Director Brian O'Connell, City Planner Dan Olson, Recording Secretary Sandra Bremer

- 1) Continue review process for the draft Land Development Code

Chair Davis began the discussion of the Land Development Code where the Commission left off from the last meeting.

The Commission began discussion regarding what should be built and placement on a lot where building should occur. It was noted that 30% of the lot area would be a place to start for building coverage. It was noted that this would not preclude a small home with a four car garage as long as there was adequate land to accommodate the size of the house and maintain a 30% lot coverage standard. It was agreed that building area ratio (BAR) would be used as a determining factor for lot coverage. There was discussion that R1-B should be set at 25% and N1-B should be set at 30% lot coverage. Some members felt that the number for both districts should be the same. The concern was to avoid the creation of nonconforming structures.

A motion was made by Schulte and seconded by Thomas to have the ratio at 25% for the R1-B. Schulte voted no. Motion carried

A motion was made by Thomas and seconded by Herreid to set the lot coverage for the N1-B at 30%. All in favor. Motion carried.

It was agreed that the definition of building area ratio would be based on the GIS presentation at the last meeting.

It was noted that the ordinance needs a tool box that can provide options. It was noted that impermeable surfaces needed to be discussed as an issue of how much of the lot is covered. The question was raised regarding what the percentage of impervious surface should be over and above the 25-30% building area ratio already adopted?

It was agreed that Staff would research and provide data for the next meeting on language for impervious lot coverage. Also, Staff would provide data behind the surface water calculations for the residential districts and suggest performance standards.

Staff presented information found regarding “dominant garage” ordinances. Staff felt that the greatest impact would be in the N2-B because builders have set floor plans, many of which include dominant garages.

Members noted that the builders did not like the idea of being forced to build the garages setback towards the rear of the home instead of the front of the home. It was suggested that 30% of the front façade could be covered by the garage. It was noted that this would not work for a standard lot and home that could be built on the lot. It was noted that if the garage cannot meet the percentage to be built in the front of the lot, it would have to be built to the rear of the home. It was noted that 30% could force many garages to be built to the rear of the homes. It was suggested that a garage could be allowed at 24' wide and only larger if the lot were large enough to accommodate it. It was noted that in the unbuilt areas of

Northfield it is easier to set the standard; however, in the already built area, it may be necessary to allow a certain size of garage to be built to the front to be compatible with the existing structures. It was suggested that 30% of the home width or 24' whichever is greater could work as language.

It was agreed that the garage would have to be offset by 6 feet from the face of the principle structure. It was noted that if a garage had two doors it could be a maximum of 28 feet in width. If the garage is a side loaded garage, it would not have to be offset from the principle structure.

There was discussion that in the existing areas of the City if a garage would be built to the front flush, could it have a second story built over it. It was pointed out that this is an architectural style that could warrant an exception to having the garage set back from the front of the home. It was suggested that keeping the regulation at offsetting a garage 6 feet back from the front of the home might be better for now and it could always be adjusted differently later either before the LDC is adopted or after there has been a time to see how it works once the LDC is in place.

It was agreed that the standards set would be for R1-B and N1-B districts.

Colby arrived at 8:33 p.m.

It was agreed that Staff would look at adding a purpose statement for both attached and detached garages.

The Commission then started reviewing Table 3.2-1. Staff noted the various residential R2-B and R3-B proposed setbacks are okay districts on the draft zoning map. Commission agreed that for 3+ residential units, proposed setbacks are all right.

Staff reviewed the section regarding height and massing. The question was whether the Commission wanted an exception to the height requirement. The question raised was if the block has ramblers, should a two story building be allowed among them. The consensus was that it should be allowed. It was then asked if the homes were two stories, would a lower home be allowed. It was noted if a home is allowed to add a second story, it is changing the visual dimension of the home. It was agreed that if the lot would accommodate the extra mass of the building, it might be all right; however, on a smaller lot, it might not fit the neighborhood well. Staff will research possible height requirements and restrictions for neighborhood compatibility. It was noted that a lot of rambler homes could only accommodate a half story.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Submitted by:

Sandra Bremer
Recording Secretary