

Olympia Planning Commission

November 2, 2020

Olympia City Council
PO Box 1967
Olympia, WA 98507

Dear Mayor Selby and City Councilmembers:

The Olympia Planning Commission (OPC) is pleased to provide its recommendation on the Housing Options Code Amendments related to the Council Referral to the Planning Commission (2019-0036).

The OPC conducted a public hearing on September 23, 2020 and considered several pages of written public comments as well as comments received at the public hearing and earlier public meetings. Our review focused on the following issues:

- The three options to increase residential building capacity identified by the Council in its referral for consideration, pursuant to 2019's House Bill 1923. These options are specific to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs); duplexes on corner lots; and considerations for duplexes, triplexes, and courtyard apartments.
- Review the recommendations for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Balancing various Goals and Policies within the Comprehensive Plan
- Modifications to the housing types under consideration, as adopted in 2020's House Bill 2343, which affected the ADU and duplex/triplex/courtyard apartment options.

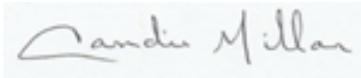
The Commission supports approval of the staff recommendations proposed, with the following modifications:

1. Increase the maximum size of ADUs to 850 square feet. The increase in size is proposed in order to align with the size allowed by the City of Lacey and to help in the sharing of pre-approved ADU plans between the Cities of Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater.
2. During its deliberations, the Planning Commission noticed differences in the way the term multifamily is used. The Commission recommends the City review its use of the term multifamily and make changes, if necessary, to the Unified Development Code (OMC Title 18).
3. In addition to the R6-12 zone as recommended by staff, the Commission recommends allowing triplexes in the R4-8 Zoning District.
4. Allow fourplexes in the R 4-8 and R 6-12 zones.
5. Allow sixplexes in the R 6-12 zone.

Given the numerous recommendations and perspectives of each Commissioner, it should be noted that there was not always consensus on each proposed amendment. To provide the Council with a more complete summary of its deliberation topics, a copy of the Commission's review worksheet is attached.

The Commission would like to thank the City Council for its patience during its review. This included months of public meetings, conducting the public hearing, and Commission deliberations over three meetings. There were several issues to be discussed and worked through before reaching this recommendation.

Sincerely,



Candi Millar, CHAIR
Olympia Planning Commission



Paula Ehlers, VICE-CHAIR
Olympia Planning Commission

cc: Leonard Bauer, FAICP, Director of Community Planning and Development
Cari Hornbein, AICP, Senior Planner, Staff Liaison to the Planning Commission, Olympia CPD
Joyce Phillips, AICP, Senior Planner, Staff Lead, Olympia CPD
CPD file #20-0994



Planning Commission Deliberations Review & Comment Worksheet

The City Council referred three housing options to the Planning Commission for review and consideration. Further, the Council tasked the Commission to develop an ordinance that would implement at least two of the three options. Staff recommendations and public comments were considered at the public hearing held on September 23, 2020, with additional written comments allowed through September 30, 2020.

HOUSING OPTION #1: ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

HB 1923 (Summarized, all one option): Authorize attached accessory dwelling units on all parcels containing single-family homes.... Qualifying city ordinances or regulations may not provide for on-site parking requirements, owner occupancy requirements, or square footage limitations below one thousand square feet for the ADU...To allow local flexibility, other than these factors, accessory dwelling units may be subject to such regulations, conditions, procedures, and limitations as determined by the local legislative authority, and must follow all applicable state and federal laws and local ordinances.

HB 2343 (Summarized, separate options):

- Authorize accessory dwelling units in one or more zoning districts in which they are currently prohibited.
- Remove minimum residential parking requirements related to accessory dwelling units.
- Remove owner occupancy requirements related to accessory dwelling units.
- Adopt new square footage requirements related to accessory dwelling units that are less restrictive than existing square footage requirements related to accessory dwelling units.

Proposed Revision	Req'd in 1923 option?	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
Eliminate parking requirement	Yes	x			Commissioner Adams is opposed – streets are congested with on street parking (emergency vehicles). Commissioner Sauerhoff acknowledges complexity of the issue, varies across neighborhoods. Commissioner Richmond supports (transit, affordability factor). Commissioner Cunningham – this is a minimum requirement, some may include it (scenarios can vary, costs). Chair Millar – dissenting opinion on this topic in Missing Middle process (primary house should have 2 spaces) – support as long as that occurs. Commissioner Ehlers concurs with Chair Millar. Commissioner Azegami supports. Commissioner Burns – safety is an issue (consider in R 6-12). Commissioner Huynh supports removal of this requirement.
Eliminate requirement for owner to live onsite	Yes	x			Commissioner Richmond struggles with removal of this requirement – institutional investors, especially from out of town (is there any data to address these concerns?) but agree it is a barrier for non-profits. Commissioner Adams – too difficult to manage. Commissioner Huynh – shares C Richmond’s concerns but supports this change to help eliminate barriers. Commissioner Azegami believes this is a barrier for some (such



					as non-profits). Commissioner Sauerhoff shared outside investor concerns but is in favor of removing this provision. Commissioner Cunningham supports removal of this provision (ADUs won't change the outside investor situation/issues). Commissioner Ehlers supports removal of this provision. Commissioner Millar supports removal of this provision (we need more housing units).
Allow any ADU to be up to 800 sq. ft. regardless of primary house size.	HB 1923 = 1,000 sq. ft. <i>Modified by HB 2343.</i>	x (at 850 sq. ft.)			Commissioner Adams – support cities having shared ADU sizes. Commissioners Ehlers, Millar, Huynh, Cunningham (850 or 1,000), and Azegami support 850 sq ft (to match Lacey). Commissioner Sauerhoff supports 850... Commissioner Azegami is interested in going up to 1,000 sq ft. At least 850 but up to 1,000 sq ft – size of lot? Commissioner Burns supports consistency. Majority supports 850 sq. ft.
Increase max. height for detached ADUs (16' to 24'). If attached, max. height is still 35'.	No	x			Support. Still concerned about solar access and shading.
Clarify ADU could be attached to another Accessory Structure, each at max. size allowed.	No	x			Support.

Straw Poll: OPC general support to accept staff recommendation for ADUs – with the maximum ADU size being increased to 850 square feet.

HOUSING OPTION #2: DUPLEXES ON CORNER LOTS

HB 1923: “Authorize a duplex on each corner lot within all zoning districts that permit single-family residences”

Proposed Revision	Req'd to implement 1923 Option	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
Allow duplexes on corner lots in all zones that permit single family residences	Yes	x			R 1/5 zone – Duplexes may reduce the conservation value.

Straw Poll: Support.

HOUSING OPTION #3: DUPLEXES, TRIPLEXES, AND COURTYARD APARTMENTS

HB 1923: Authorize at least one duplex, triplex, or courtyard apartment on each parcel in one or more zoning districts that permit single-family residences unless a city documents a specific infrastructure or physical constraint that would make this requirement unfeasible for a particular parcel.

HB 2343: Revised language to add quadplexes, sixplexes, stacked flats, and townhouses to the housing types listed above.

To implement Option #3, the Commission’s recommendation should address which of these housing types are appropriate for which zoning districts. Zoning map provided on last page.

DUPLEXES

Proposed Revision	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
DUPLEXES				
Allow new duplexes in the R4 zone	x			<u>Oct 5 Comments:</u> Commissioner Burns – not opposed to concept but still have some concerns about this option 3. Comp plan language (some single family areas only). PL 16.11 contradiction? Is a comp plan amendment needed? Commissioner Azegami - there are a lot of provisions in the plan we are still working to implement (neighborhood centers, etc). Commissioner Richmond – appreciate T Burns comments but also support these recommendations. Commissioner Huynh supports. Commissioner Cunningham – other Comp Plan language supports. Commissioner Azegami – several policies to consider, balancing. <u>Oct 19 Comments:</u> Burns is opposed – concerns about process & where we came from. Still have to make the decision that these
Allow new duplexes in the R 4-8 zone	x			
In the R6-12 zone, modify lot size standards to allow “on each parcel”	x			

				<p>recommendations are consistent with the comprehensive plan. This option #3 is similar to Missing Middle. What other avenues are there to address this? Do we need a comprehensive plan amendment? Plain meaning of the word multifamily. Richmond agrees – question about lot size in R 6-12. Cunningham & Ehlers – recommend reducing parking requirements. Millar – we do need to look at parking and how to encourage non-motorized uses. Richmond – agree to consider addressing parking issues in a separate process. Would like to see these parking spaces as maximums rather than minimums. Millar – feeling conflict (consider duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and sixplexes) between what is “multifamily.” Feel like the Comp Plan should be looked at again as far as what multifamily means. Burns: MRSC glossary for multifamily says two or more. Fix the issue. Don’t see this as a legal issue. At least signal the issue to the City Council in the recommendation letter.</p>
--	--	--	--	--

Straw Poll: Move forward but include in the letter the issue around the term of Multifamily and suggest a Comprehensive Plan Amendment: Burns. DOES NOT PASS.

Straw Poll: Approve, suggest adding a definition of multifamily in OMC, we don’t really need a comprehensive plan amendment: PASS (unanimous).

TRIPLEXES

Proposed Revision	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
TRIPLEXES				
In the R 6-12 zone, modify lot size standards to allow “on each parcel”	x			Same concerns as above.
Limit to two stories	x			Support.
Clarify: 5 parking spaces are required	x			No opposition (although concerns about car dependency).

Straw Poll: Support.

Should triplexes be allowed in any other low density zones not included in the staff recommendations? (Already allowed in Residential Low Impact, RLI)				
	Yes	No	Unsure	Comments
Residential 1 unit/5 acres (R1/5)		x		Millar – concerns, conservation values. Richmond – agree about the value but it is developable in the City/UGA. Sauerhoff – pressure to help on a farm, a triplex could help (could have less impact than three separate units).

				Ehlers – More dense housing type. R 6-12 fine, 4-8 probably okay too. Don't really need to go into the other zones. Sauerhoff – Concerns about options to support more housing while maintaining a farm. Cunningham – Could have a 7,000 square foot home but can't have a 3,000 square foot triplex? (Correct).
Straw Poll: Approval? (two support, three if you could tie it to a farming purposes). DOES NOT PASS.				
Res. – 4 units per acre (R4)		x		Ehlers – More dense housing type. R 6-12 fine, 4-8 probably okay too. Don't really need to go into the other zones.
Straw Poll: Approval? Two support. DOES NOT PASS.				
Res. - 4 units per acre, Chambers Basin (R4CB)		x		Ehlers – More dense housing type. R 6-12 fine, 4-8 probably okay too. Don't really need to go into the other zones.
Straw Poll: Approval? Two support. DOES NOT PASS.				
Res 4-8 units/ acre (R4-8)	x			Ehlers – More dense housing type. R 6-12 fine, 4-8 probably okay too. Don't really need to go into the other zones.
Straw Poll: Anyone Opposed? Two opposed. DOES NOT PASS.				
Straw Poll: Support? Four support. PASS.				

Richmond – Would like people to keep Neighborhood Centers in mind. There are 17 dispersed across the UGA.

COURTYARD APARTMENTS

Proposed Revision	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
COURTYARD APARTMENTS				
In the R 6-12 zone, modify lot size standards to allow “on each parcel”	X			Cunningham supports. Adams, Huynh, Richmond, Millar and Ehlers support.
Limit to two stories	X (5)	(2)		Cunningham would not require this but would recommend. Millar supports.
Require shared open space	X (4)	(3)		Cunningham & Huynh would not require this but would recommend instead. Adams supports, need vegetation and main floor bedrooms. Sauerhoff & Huynh supports definition. Richmond supports. Millar – courtyard apartments have character of shared open space; support. All support the idea of having shared open space but some Commissioners would not necessarily require it.
Require direct access of ground floor units to shared courtyard	X (4)	(3)		Cunningham would not require this but would recommend. Huynh – require for some but not all. Richmond & Millar support.
Require private open space	X (4)	(3)		Cunningham & Huynh would not require this but would recommend. Richmond & Millar support.

Concerns expressed that open space requirements for Courtyard Apartments may restrict the ability to provide more housing units. Support for diversity of housing types.

Straw Poll: Support for staff recommendations: Unanimous.

Should Courtyard Apartments be allowed in any other low density zones not included in the staff recommendations? (Already allowed in Residential Low Impact, RLI)				
	Yes	No	Unsure	Comments
Residential 1 unit/5 acres (R1/5)	(2)	X (5)		Millar, Richmond, Ehlers & Adams do not support.
Straw Poll: Do not recommend.				
Residential – 4 units/acre (R4)	(2)	X (5)		Millar, Richmond, Ehlers & Adams do not support.
Straw Poll: Do not recommend.				
Res.-4 units per acre, Chambers Basin (R4CB)	(1)	X (6)		Millar, Richmond, Ehlers & Adams do not support.
Straw Poll: Do not recommend.				
Res. 4-8 units per acre (R4-8)	(3)	X (4)		Millar, Richmond, Ehlers & Adams do not support.
Straw Poll: Do not recommend.				

Overall Straw Poll: Do not recommend allowing Courtyard Apartments in the R 1/5, R-4, R-4CB, or R 4-8 zones.

OTHER HOUSING TYPES ADDED BY HOUSE BILL 2343*

**If the Planning Commission recommends adding any of these housing types, staff suggests limiting to two stories in all low density neighborhood zoning districts.*

Proposed Revision	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
FOURPLEXES				
Should fourplexes be allowed				Support allowing fourplexes in the R 6-12 zone. Ehlers did not support this in any of these zones. Huynh supports variety of housing types. Millar supports in R 4-8 and R 6-12, the allowed densities in these zones could support fourplexes. Richmond would support if neighborhood has more of a grid layout.
If yes, in which zones?				
R1/5; Yes – 1, No – 6. R4; Yes – 1, No – 6. R4CB; Yes – 1, No – 6. R 4-8; Yes – 4, No – 3. R 6-12 Yes – 6, No - 1				

Straw Poll: Support allowing fourplexes in the R 4-8 and R 6-12 zones.

Proposed Revision	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
SIXPLEXES				
Should sixplexes be allowed				
If yes, in which zones?				
R1/5; Yes – 1, No – 6				
R4; Yes – 1, No – 6				
R4CB; Yes – 1, No – 6				
R 4-8; Yes – 1, No – 6				
R 6-12; Yes – 4, No – 3				

Straw Poll: Allow sixplexes in the R 6-12 zone.

Proposed Revision	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
STACKED FLATS				
Should stacked flats be allowed	(0)	(7)		Ehlers – this was not really discussed through the process. Not comfortable supporting this or sixplexes. Huynh – no clear definition, not as well understood as to what it means. Adams – don’t support voting on this without a definition of what it is.
If yes, should they be defined?				
If yes, in which zones?				
R1/5;				
R4;				
R4CB;				
R 4-8;				
R 6-12				

Straw Poll: No support for allowing stacked flats in the low density residential zones without a definition of what stacked flats are.

CONSISTENCY

Proposed Revision	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
CONSISTENCY				
Include the draft language requiring the City to annually monitor density in the low density neighborhood zones	X (6)	(1)		Cunningham did not support. Huynh – the data could be helpful for looking at trends and any inconsistencies too. Millar – agree that it is worth it to review for consistency and be transparent.

Straw Poll: Support including consistency provision.

