



TO: Longview Planning Commission

FROM: Steve Langdon, Planning Manager

HEARING

DATE: June 13, 2018

SUBJECT: CASE NUMBER PC 2018-4 - Amend Residential Development Standards For Properties Where Parking Is Accessed From An Alley.

BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

In 2017 changes were made to the zoning code to encourage multi-family development. One of the goals was to facilitate redevelopment of existing properties in the high density residential districts by allowing increased density and reduction of on-street parking requirements. This goal appeared to be accomplished with the adoption of Ordinance No. 3369. However, recent review of the enacted ordinance and discussion with local developers has identified a couple of other changes that would help encourage development. Both of the proposed code changes apply where vehicle access to parking is from an alley. They are

- Allowing a 50% reduction in the side yard setback for parking spaces in the rear yard that would apply to all residential zoning districts
- Reducing the front yard setback from 20 feet to 10 feet for buildings in the R-3 and R-4 Residential Districts.

At their April 4 regular meeting, the Planning Commission discussed proposed code amendments developed by City staff and then decided to schedule a public hearing on the proposed amendments for their May 2 regular meeting.

Proposal

Text that is underlined is new wording, text that has a line through it is meant to be deleted.

Chapter 19.78 Off-Street Parking and Loading

19.78.030 Spaces – Location.

(2) All off-street parking spaces located in the residential districts R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, and TNR shall be located so as to not encroach in any required yard setback area.,~~except that parking shall be permitted in the rear yard setback area for those properties with alley access .~~ Exception: for those properties where parking is accessed from an alley, parking shall be permitted in the rear yard and the side yard setback adjacent to that parking may be reduced by 50%.

Chapter 19.20 Residential Zoning Districts

Section 19.20.030 Density and dimensional standards.

Table 19.20.030 -1 Density and Dimensional Standards by Zone					
Standard	Zoning District				
	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4	TNR
Front yard setback (feet)	25	25	20	20	20
Front yard setback (alley-loading) ³	15	15	10	10	10

3. In the R-1, R-2, and TNR districts, the reduced front yard setback applies to lots in a subdivision or short subdivision where the reduced setback was approved as part of the overall approval process for the subdivision or short subdivision. To utilize the reduced setback, alley access must be provided and all off-street parking, garages and driveways for a given lot and residence shall be located and accessed from the alley.

S.E.P.A. Determination

An Environmental Checklist for the proposed zoning code revision was reviewed pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act and a determination of non-significance was issued on April 16, 2018. [E 2018-7 SEPA checklist]

The comment period for the SEPA checklist ended on April 30, 2018. SEPA documents were given to the Planning Commission for the May 2018 meeting. No comments were received.

Additional Information

Pursuant to Chapter 19.81 of the Longview Municipal Code, a legal notice was published in the Longview Daily News on June 2, 2018 and on June 12, 2018.

Citizen Correspondence

As of this writing, the City has received no written comments.

LONGVIEW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Classification intent statements for the primary residential classifications are given below:

Low Density Residential

The low-density residential classification designates areas intended primarily for single-family dwellings. Manufactured housing parks designed according to firm standards for screening, buffering, parking, recreational area, distance between units, and other matters may be appropriate when deemed compatible with adjacent property by the City or County planning commissions and local legislative bodies. Home occupations may be acceptable. The recommended density is up to 6 dwelling units per gross acre.

Traditional Neighborhood Residential

The Traditional Neighborhood Residential classification is characterized by predominantly residential uses, by a grid pattern of streets with sidewalks and may include alleys. This classification allows residential dwellings that are designed to contribute to the harmony and pedestrian orientation of a street or neighborhood. This classification accommodates individual dwelling units located on a single lot in a fashion that may allow reduced lot size, reduced or eliminated setback and street frontage requirements, and zero lot-line or common wall construction in order to provide design flexibility and produce a more desirable living environment in areas where it is desirable to preserve open space, sensitive areas, and difficult terrain. Housing types include single-family houses on small lots, second units, cottage clusters, and courtyard housing. Townhouse development may be allowed with approval of a planned unit development. Design standards will be prepared for each housing type to ensure that development successfully contributes to the street and neighborhood and minimizes potential negative impacts. Residential densities within the Columbia Valley Garden neighborhood should range between 6 and 8 units per gross acre; other areas with this classification will have densities that range up to 12 units per gross acre.

Medium Density Residential

This classification provides for a mixture of housing unit types, including single-, two-, three-, and four-family dwellings; townhouses; or clusters thereof. The classification is also intended to apply to planned unit developments having a mixture of housing unit types and limited commercial land uses. Development should incorporate safe, attractive, and continuous connections and walkways for travel and access by foot at a human scale as an integral part of its overall layout and design. Development adjacent to lower density uses should incorporate elements in the site design and building design to soften its impact and to result in a compatible transition. Multi-family development should incorporate provisions for transit service and pedestrian and bicycle access. Manufactured housing parks designed according to firm standards for screening, buffering, parking, recreational areas, distance between units, and other matters may be appropriate when deemed compatible with adjacent property by the City or County planning commissions and local legislative bodies. Home occupations may be acceptable. The recommended density is up to 18 dwelling units per gross acre.

High Density Residential

This classification provides primarily for multi-family dwellings of more than four units. Multi-family development adjacent to lower density residential uses should incorporate elements in the site design and building design to soften its impact and to result in a compatible transition. Multifamily development should incorporate provisions for transit service and pedestrian and bicycle access. Manufactured housing parks designed according to firm standards for screening, buffering, parking, recreational areas, distance between units, and other matters may be appropriate when deemed compatible with adjacent property by the City or County planning commissions and local legislative bodies. Some home occupations may be acceptable including some professional offices. The recommended density is up to 25 dwelling units per gross acre.

Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives and Policies

There many goals, objectives and policies within the comprehensive plan that relate to residential development. Related goals, objectives and policies from the Land Use Element and the Housing Element are attached as Exhibit A.

STAFF DISCUSSION

In 2017, the number of parking spaces required for multifamily development was substantially reduced in the interest of more efficient use of land. One of the goals voiced by some city council members was to allow a five-plex on a standard 6,000 square foot lot (50 ft. by 120 ft.). The 2017 code amendments reduced the number of parking spaces required for a five-plex (providing all units have less than 4 bedrooms) from eight to five. The five required parking spaces could fit along the width of a lot except the current zoning code does not allow parking to encroach into the side yard setback. For a standard interior lot that means only forty feet is available (50 feet less five feet on each side yard). Five parking spaces will not fit in 40 feet per the current code. The proposal will allow parking to encroach into the side yard setback by 50%. Thus, 45 feet would be available for parking and that is adequate distance to fit five parking spaces.

The 50% percent reduction in side yard setbacks would also apply to corner lots. All of the residential districts (except the TNR district) have a street-side side-yard setback of 15 feet. Consequently, parking in all of those districts could be located within 7.5 feet of the street-side side lot line. For the TNR district, the parking could be with five feet of the street-side side lot line.

In the R-3 and R-4 Residential Districts, for new development where vehicle access to parking is from the alley, the City already allows for a 10 foot front yard building setback. In existing neighborhoods the front yard setback currently is 20 feet. In the past the City was concerned that allowing a lesser setback (10 feet) when all the existing building were setback 20+ feet would impact the look and feel of a neighborhood and may be contrary to crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). In the

interest of efficient use of land, the City is now looking to allow the lesser setback in existing neighborhoods.

City staff has some reservations about allowing a lesser setback for existing neighborhoods. Porches, as long as they are open on three sides, are allowed to project six feet beyond front setback line. With a ten foot setback, this means the porch could come within 4 feet of the front property line and then the steps could reach the property line. In an existing neighborhood, this could be intrusive. What can mitigate the impact is when the street has wide planting strip (the grass and/or landscaped area between the sidewalk and the curb). City staff is asking the Planning Commission to consider allowing outright the lesser setback when the planting strip is 10 feet or wider. If the planter strip is less than 10 feet wide then a special property use permit would be needed to have the lesser setback.

STAFF FINDINGS

Staff has examined the merits of the proposal to amend the Longview Zoning Code to update the residential and subdivision portions of the zoning code and makes the following findings:

1. The proposal is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of the City of Longview Comprehensive Plan.
2. The proposal is consistent with the intent statements for the Low, Medium and High Density classification and the Traditional Neighborhood Residential classification
3. The proposed amendment complies with the provisions set forth for amendments in LMC 19.81 and proper notice was given.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the direction given by the City Council and the Planning Commission, staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council adoption of the proposal.

EXHIBITS

- A. Relevant Goals, Objectives & Policies from the Land Use and Housing Elements

Report Date: June 6, 2018