

Public Hearing: YES  NO

Department: Planning & Sustainability

**SUBJECT:**

**COMMISSION DISTRICT(S): All Districts**

**Application of the Director of Planning and Sustainability for a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 27, Article 2.11.2. Dimensional Requirements, in all districts of DeKalb County.**

**PETITION NO: N10. TA-20-1244276 2020-1183**

**PROPOSED USE: Minimum Unit Size**

**LOCATION: County-wide.**

**PARCEL NO. : N/A**

**INFO. CONTACT: Matthew Williams, Zoning Administrator**

**PHONE NUMBER: 404-371-2155**

**PURPOSE:**

Application of the Director of Planning and Sustainability for a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 27, Article 2.11.2. Dimensional Requirements. To amend Table 2.4 Medium and High-Density Residential Zoning Districts Dimensional Requirements to allow 500 square foot minimum unit size in multi-family zoning districts HR-2 and HR-3. This text amendment is County-wide.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**COMMUNITY COUNCIL: CC-1 Denial; CC-2 Denial; CC-3 Denial; CC-4 Denial; CC-Deferral.**

**PLANNING COMMISSION: Full Cycle Deferral.**

**PLANNING STAFF: Full Cycle Deferral.**

**STAFF ANALYSIS: Staff recommends deferral until the first zoning cycle after the PECS Committee approves the text amendment without revisions. See attached staff report.**

**PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Full Cycle Deferral 8-0-0.** G. McCoy moved, J. Johnson seconded for a Full Cycle Deferral, per Staff recommendation.

**COMMUNITY COUNCIL VOTE/RECOMMENDATION: CC-1 Denial 2-0-1; CC-2 Denial 3-0-0; CC-3 Denial 7-0-0** CC-3 Board acknowledged that there is a need and demand for small units and affordable housing but thought that a reduction in current minimum size should be subject to SLUP review to allow evaluation by affected neighbors. **CC-4 Denial 11-0-0; CC-5 Deferral 7-0-1.**



**DeKalb County Department of Planning & Sustainability**

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**Planning Commission Hearing Date: November 5, 2020**  
**Board of Commissioners Hearing Date: November 19, 2020**

**TEXT AMENDMENT ANALYSIS**

**AGENDA NO.:** N. 10    **ZONING CASE NO.:** TA-20-1244276    **COMMISSION DISTRICTS:**  
Countywide

**APPLICANT:** DeKalb County Board of Commissioners

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**SECTIONS OF ZONING ORDINANCE AFFECTED BY AMENDMENTS:** CHAPTER 27, SECTION 2.11.2 (MEDIUM AND HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS: TABLE 2.4—DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS—HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL -2 (HR-2) AND HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL -3 (HR-3) MINIMUM UNIT SIZE)

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**REASON FOR REQUEST:**

The dimensional requirements of Table 2.4 for Medium and High Density Residential Zoning Districts contains minimum lot sizes, minimum lot widths, maximum heights, density ranges, open space requirements, minimum building setback requirements, and other standards for residential structures permitted in those zoning districts. Presently, multi-family dwelling units in the High Density Residential -2 (HR-2) and High Density Residential -3 (HR-3) zoning districts are limited to a minimum unit size of 650 square feet.

The Board of Commissioners requested that staff initiate an amendment of Table 2.4 to reduce the minimum dwelling unit size to 500 square feet. The proposed text amendment is attached for further review.

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**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**Planning Department:** Application of the change countywide may not be the most prudent approach. It may be worthwhile to limit this unit size reduction to transit-oriented development (TOD), for instance. It may also be helpful to get a better understanding of the viability and functionality of a 500 square foot multi-family dwelling size for studio or one-bedroom arrangements. While the proposed text amendment is a simple replacement of text, Staff requests more time to fully consider the matter. Staff recommends deferral until the first zoning cycle after the Planning, Economic Development, and Community Services (PECS) Committee approves the text amendment without revisions.

**Community Council:** Four of the five community councils recommended denial of the proposed text amendments as a countywide application to the HR-2 and HR-3 zoning districts. Alternatively, many council members acknowledged the need to study the proposal as it is likely to affect affordable housing, housing cost, housing options, and residential density considerations within the County.

Sec. 2.11.2. - Dimensional requirements.

Dimensional requirements, including overall site requirements, individual lot dimensions, setbacks, and heights for Medium and High Density Residential Zoning Districts, are provided in Table 2.4, "Medium and High Density Residential Zoning Districts Dimensional Requirements." In addition, compatibility and transitional buffers as defined and required in article 5 may apply.

**Table 2.4 Medium and High Density Residential Zoning Districts Dimensional Requirements**

Medium and High Density Residential					
KEY: Housing Types: SFD: Single-Family Detached, SFA: Single-Family Attached, TTF: Two/Three-Family, MF: Multi-Family, MU: Mixed-Use, U-SF: Urban Single-Family Character Areas: RC: Regional Center, TC: Town Center, TN: Traditional Neighborhood, NC: Neighborhood Center, SUB: Suburban					
Elements	RSM	MR-1	MR-2	HR-1	HR-2 and HR-3
<b>Overall Site Requirements (minimum, unless otherwise specified)</b>					
Dwelling units per acre (maximum base density and maximum possible with bonuses)	4—8	8—12	12—24	24—40	HR-2: 40—60 HR-3: 60—120
Open space required (minimum %)*	20%	20%	15%	15%	15%
Transitional buffers (feet)	See article 5				
<b>Lot Requirements (minimum, unless otherwise specified)</b>					
<b>Single-Family Detached Conventional (SFD)**</b>					
Lot area (square feet)	5,000/2,000 cottage	5,000/2,000 cottage	5,000/2,000 cottage	Not permitted	Not permitted
Lot width, street frontage (feet)	50/20 cottage and detached townhome	45/20 cottage and detached townhome	40/20 cottage and detached townhome	Not permitted	Not permitted
Lot coverage (maximum % per lot or total parcel acreage)	50	60	65	Not permitted	Not permitted

<b>Single-Family Attached (SFA)</b>					
Lot area (square feet)	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Lot width (feet)	25	25	20	20	20
Lot coverage (maximum % per lot or total parcel acreage)	70	80	85	85	85
<b>Urban Single-Family (detached)</b>					
Lot area (square feet)	1,350	1,350	1,000	1,000	1,000
Lot width (feet)	25	25	20	20	20
Lot coverage (maximum % per lot or total parcel acreage)	70	80	85	85	85
<b>Two/Three-Family (TTF)</b>					
Lot area (square feet)	4,000	4,000	4,000	Not permitted	Not permitted
Lot width (feet)	60	55	50	Not permitted	Not permitted
Lot coverage (maximum % per lot or total parcel acreage)	50%	55%	55%	Not permitted	Not permitted
<b>Multi-Family (MF) and Mixed-Use (MU)</b>					
Lot width, street frontage (feet)	Not permitted	100	100	100	100
Lot coverage (maximum % of total parcel acreage)	Not permitted	65%	75%	85%	85%
<b>Building Setbacks: SF and SFA for Individual Internal Lots; MF, SFA, MU for Overall Site****</b>					
From thoroughfares and arterials (min. and max. feet)	All: min. 20, max. 30	SFD: min. 15, max. 25 Other: 10—20	All: min. 10, max. 20	All: min. 10, max. 20	All: min. 10, max. 20
Front - all other streets by	RC/NC/TC: 15	0 - Determined only by utility placement, ROW, and streetscape			

character area (min. feet)	SUB: 20	(article 5)			
Front with alley access (min. feet)	10	SFD & TTF: 10 SFA & MF: 5	SFD & TTF: 10 SFA & MF: 5	5	5
Side - interior lot (feet)****	SFD & TTF: 3 ft. with minimum 10 ft. separation between buildings; SFA; N/A; MF & MU; N/A; U-SF; 0 ft. side setback with minimum 3 ft. separation between building				
Side - corner lot on public street (feet)	Same as front setback (see also article 5, corner lot)				
Rear without alley (feet)	SFD: 20; SFA: 15; TTF: 15; All others: 20	SFD: 20; SFA: 15; MF & MU: 20; MF: 20; CM/OF/MU: 15 (see also transitional buffers, article 5)			
Rear with alley (feet)	10	10	10	10	10
<b>Unit Size, heated living area (square feet, minimum)</b>					
Single-Family Detached (SFD)- Conventional	1,200	1,200	1,000	Not permitted	Not permitted
Single-Family Detached (SFD)- Cottage	800	800	800	Not permitted	Not permitted
Single-Family Attached (SFA)***	1,200	1,200	1,000	1,000	Not permitted
Urban Single-Family (U-SF) Detached	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	Not permitted
Two/Three-Family (TTF)	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	Not permitted
Multi-Family (MF)***	Not permitted for new developments	650	650	650	<del>650</del> <u>500</u>
<b>Height (maximum and whichever is less when indicated as stories or feet)</b>					
Single-Family Detached (SFD) Except Res Infill Overlays = 28 feet	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet	Not permitted	Not permitted
Single-Family Attached (SFA)	3 stories or 45 feet	3 stories or 45	3 stories or 45	Not	Tables 2.13

and Urban Single-Family (U-SF)		feet	feet	permitted	and 2.15
Two/Three-Family (TTF)	35 feet	35 feet	3 stories or 45 feet	Not permitted	Not permitted
Multi-Family (MF)***	N/A	4 stories or 60 feet	Table 2.9	Tables 2.13 and 2.15	Tables 2.13 and 2.15
Mixed-Use (MU)	N/A	4 stories or 60 feet	Table 2.9	Table 2.11	Tables 2.13 and 2.15

\*Open space requirement shall apply to new subdivisions if project is > 5 acres or ≥ 36 units (see chapter 14). See article 5 for enhanced open space requirements.

\*\*Where two numbers are indicated, the first number is the standard and the second number applies only to housing type that is indicated, e.g., cottage or townhome.

\*\*\*See article 5 for building separation and minimum multi-family unit size details; Urban-SF with 0' side setback must meet fire walls, sprinklers and any other fire code applicable to attached townhouse dwellings.

( [Ord. No. 15-06](#), 8-25-2015)