



Snohomish County

SNOHOMISH COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

October 8, 2024

Snohomish County Council
County Administration Building
3000 Rockefeller Avenue, M/S 609
Everett, WA 98201-4046

SUBJECT: Planning Commission recommendations on proposed code amendments related to Accessory Dwelling Units

Dear Snohomish County Council:

On behalf of the Snohomish County Planning Commission, I am forwarding our recommendation to amend Snohomish County Code under the proposed Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance. The Planning Commission had a briefing on this topic on August 27, 2024, and conducted a public hearing and deliberated on September 24, 2024.

The proposed ordinance would make a variety of amendments to ADU standards. Some of the changes would meet new state mandates, while other amendments are discretionary. Mandated changes include both non-substantive changes in terminology for consistency with state law and substantive changes to provide for new configurations of ADUs in urban zones. New mandated urban configurations include allowing single family residences to have two attached or two detached ADUs. (Currently urban single family dwellings may have two ADUs, but only if one is attached and the other detached.) The proposal would also redefine ADUs so that they must no longer be under common ownership with the principal unit; this change is in response to state requirements that ADUs must be eligible for sale as condominiums.

Discretionary changes in the proposed ordinance includes allowing duplexes and attached single family dwellings to have ADUs. The ordinance referred to the Planning Commission includes discretionary incentives to encourage ADU development. Among these, the Planning Commission recommendation recommends a larger incentive regarding maximum lot coverage than was in the ordinance we received. The original

proposal was to give a 5% bonus to maximum lot coverage, which is generally 35%, so that lots containing ADUs could have up to 40% lot coverage. Based on public input and deliberations among planning commissions, the Planning Commission recommends allowing 55% lot coverage for lots with ADUs. This lot coverage matches other incentives offered to Planned Residential Developments and subdivisions using Lot Size Averaging.

The County Council also referred a possible amendment that would give relief to building setbacks from road rights-of-way to the Planning Commission for consideration. The Planning Commission recommends including relief from these setbacks but suggests alternative phrasing in its recommendation. The alternative phrasing is based on a suggestion from Planning and Development Services (PDS) and corrects the phrasing “road centerline” to read more correctly as “right-of-way” centerline. According to PDS, the alternative phrasing that refers to SCC 30.23.120(1) instead of to use of the variance process provides an easier process to administer while determining appropriate setbacks.

The Planning Commission received one public comment prior to the September 24 hearing. The hearing was open for public comment, one person commented at the hearing.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Regarding the ordinance as submitted by staff, Commissioner Sheldon made a **Motion** seconded by Commissioner Campbell, recommending APPROVAL of the proposed ordinance.

VOTE:

9 in favor (*Ash, Busteed, Brown, Bush, Campbell, James, Larsen, Niemela, Sheldon*)

0 opposed

0 abstention

Motion PASSED

Regarding the amendment referred to the Planning Commission by the County Council, Commissioner Campbell and seconded by Commissioner Brown recommended approval of the amendment with modified phrasing to as follows:

Setbacks for Accessory Dwelling Units from public and private road rights-of-way may be reduced as follows. Five feet from rights-of-way that are at least 60 feet

wide. For rights-of-way under 60 feet wide, the smaller of (1) 35 feet from the ~~((road))~~ right-of-way centerline or (2) ~~((an amount authorized by an approved variance))~~ pursuant to SCC 30.23.120(1).

VOTE:

9 in favor (*Ash, Busted, Brown, Brush, Campbell, James, Larsen, Niemela, Sheldon*)

0 opposed

0 abstention

Motion PASSED

Based on public input and a motion made by Commissioner Ash, seconded by Commissioner James the Planning Commission recommends increasing the maximum lot coverage incentive proposed to be at SCC 30.28.010(2)(d)(i) as follows:

(i) The maximum lot coverage allowance may be increased ~~((by 5% for lots with accessory dwelling units))~~ to 55%;

VOTE:

9 in favor (*Ash, Busted, Brown, Brush, Campbell, James, Larsen, Niemela, Sheldon*)


0 opposed

0 abstention

Motion PASSED

This recommendation was made following the close of the public hearing and after due consideration of information presented. It is based on the findings and conclusions presented in the August 27, 2024, staff briefing and as supported by the Staff Report dated August 12, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,


Robert Larsen (Nov 14, 2024 16:20 PST)

SNOHOMISH COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Robert Larsen, Chair

cc: Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive
Mike McCrary, Director, Planning and Development Services


Planning Commission Recommendation Letter ADUs

Final Audit Report


2024-11-15

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