STUDY SESSION

MILWAUKIE CITY COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION

JUNE 28, 2011

MILWAUKIE CITY HALL
Conference Room
10722 SE Main Street

WORK SESSION – 5:00 p.m.

A light dinner will be served

Discussion Items:

	Time	Topic	Presenter	Page #
1.	5:00 p.m.	Public Area Requirement (PAR) Grant Program Update	Kenny Asher, CD/PW Director	1
2.	5:15 p.m.	Land Use 101	Katie Mangle, Planning Director	
3.	6:15 p.m.	Residential Development Standards Project	Katie Mangle, Planning Director	3
4.	8:00 p.m.	Adjourn		

Information

Executive Session: The City Council may meet in executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2). All discussions are confidential and those present may disclose nothing from the Session. Representatives of the news media are allowed to attend Executive Sessions as provided by ORS 192.660(3) but must not disclose any information discussed. No Executive Session may be held for the purpose of taking any final action or making any final decision. Executive Sessions are closed to the public.

Public Notice

- The Council may vote in work session on non-legislative issues.
- The time listed for each discussion item is approximate. The actual time at which each item is considered may change due to the length of time devoted to the one previous to it.
- The Council requests that all pagers and cell phones be either set on silent mode or turned off during the meeting.
- The City of Milwaukie is committed to providing equal access to information and public meetings per the Americans with Disabilities (ADA). If you need special accommodations, please call 503.786.7502 or email ocr@ci.milwaukie.or.us at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

MILWAUKIE
Dogwood City of the West

Memorandum

To: Bill Monahan, City Manager

From: Kenneth Asher, Community Development & Public Works Director

CC: Katie Mangle, Planning Director
Gary Parkin, Engineering Director

Date: June 20, 2011

Re: Dark Horse Request for Extension of PAR Grant Program

Attached is a letter I received today from Neil Hankerson at Dark Horse Comics requesting an extension of the recently adopted PAR-relief grant program.

I would request that you share this with the Council and schedule time for a short discussion at the June 28 study session. The timing is important; the company's development team (financial consultant, architect and broker) has scheduled a pre-application conference for the end of this month, and this issue is sure to arise.

According to the Engineering staff, there is $6,142 available in the program today. To my knowledge, there are no other Main Street ground floor conversion-to-retail projects in the pipeline. As I understand council's motivation for the PAR relief grant program, it was to incentivize exactly the kind of redevelopment that Dark Horse is working on. It appears to me that timing is the only factor that distinguishes the Dark Horse project from Main/Monroe Investors LLC, the entity that received the first grant under the program.

It is my recommendation that the program be extended as requested by Mr. Hankerson. This is a no-cost proposition for the Council to consider. It also demonstrates a continued show of support to local businesses that are thinking about investing in their Main Street properties. Finally, it may lead to demonstrable success in the public-private partnership that the city has established with Dark Horse Comics. As Mr. Hankerson notes in his letter, these new investments and improvements to the company's facilities would not be under consideration were it not for the city's engagement of Cavenaugh + Cavenaugh as part of Milwaukie's economic development program. Both the city and the business stand to gain from this venture.

I hope the Council will continue to support this partnership in FY 2011-12.

City of Milwaukie City Council

Dear Mayor Ferguson and Members of City Council,

Suburban Explorations, Inc, a sister company of Dark Horse Comics, Inc. is currently exploring options for the building at 10999 SE Main St (corner of Main and Jefferson). The upstairs area is currently unoccupied. We are looking into the feasibility of remodeling the formerly residential space into office space for Dark Horse Comics. By doing so, it is our intent to move some of our employees from ground floor space to the new area on the second floor. We think the ground floor space would be better utilized as general retail space. Current estimates are that as much as 7500 ft of ground floor could be used for retail.

The deciding factor for our plans would be based on a positive economic model. As you have heard previously from other applicants, the public area requirements add a significant cost to any downtown remodel and adversely affects the feasibility of projects. Our project is not different. Every dollar of cost makes a difference.

Currently, the economic development grant to offset these costs, which council established by Resolution No. 57-2011, expires on July 1, 2011. I would like to request your consideration to extend the expiration of Resolution 57-2011 until July 1, 2012. This will allow our team the necessary time to design, finance, permit, construct and lease the new ground floor improvements, while retaining the opportunity to utilize the city's grant program. I understand that grant funds would not be reserved for our project.

I would also like to thank the Council for the City's assistance in helping get this project started. Real estate development is not part of our core competency at Dark Horse Comics. We are too busy running our businesses to spend time researching development alternatives. Having the City's support has lead to the assembly of an evaluation team consisting of a consultant, an architect and a commercial realtor. The array of information coming from their individual areas of specialty knowledge helps to clear the hurdles that we do not have the time to tackle.

The team is providing advise on current and anticipated market rental conditions, building plans and code requirements as well as financing options. The team has the expertise to address most of these issues, making the project more likely to move forward

Thank you again for your assistance and consideration.

Sincerely,

Neil Hankerson

Executive Vice President

10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR 97222

503.652.8815
fax: 503.654.9440
darkhorse.com

3.

To: **Mayor and City Council**
Planning Commission

Through: **Bill Monahan, City Manager**

From: **Katie Mangle, Planning Director**

Date: **June 17, 2011**

Subject: **Joint Discussion of Residential Development Standards Project**

ACTION REQUESTED

None. This item is for discussion only.

HISTORY OF PRIOR ACTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

May 2011: Planning Commission received a progress report on the project and public involvement activities to date.

February 8, 2011: During a joint meeting to discuss the Planning Commission work plan, City Council requested that the two groups meet more frequently to discuss major initiatives. During its discussion of Council Goals for the coming fiscal year, the Council identified the Residential Development Standards project as one which should be discussed with the Commission long before the final proposal enters the public hearing process.

January 2011: The Planning Commission reviewed and provided guidance on the updated public involvement plan and web-based survey.

October 2010: Staff provided the Planning Commission with a project setup summary including the scope of work and project schedule, and discussed the formation of a Commission subcommittee to guide the project.

March 2010: Staff provided the Planning Commission with a copy of the Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and the State of Oregon that the Council approved in March 2010.

March 2010: City Council approved an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and the State of Oregon that commits the state to funding $50,000 in consultant time and the City to providing staff time, to prepare draft code amendments based on priorities that were identified in the 2009 *Smart Growth Code Assessment Final Report*. The first phase of the project resulted in the Land Use and Development Review Tune Up amendments (which Council adopted in

March 2011). The second phase is the Residential Development Standards project, which will result in a package of proposed amendments to be considered in late 2011.

October 2009: Staff presented the 2009 *Smart Growth Code Assessment Final Report* to Council. Council concurred with the code amendment priorities identified in the report and requested that staff move forward with the next phase of the project.

August 2009: Planning Commission reviewed and provided concurrence on the Action Plan presented in the 2009 *Smart Growth Code Assessment Final Report*.

July - August 2009: Planning Commission held two worksessions to discuss the consultant's code assessment findings prepared during Phase I of the Smart Growth Code Assistance project.

BACKGROUND

Following Council and Planning Commission direction, Planning staff is orchestrating the Residential Development Standards project, a long-range planning project whose objective is to establish a coherent set of zoning code policies to guide residential development in Milwaukie.

Milwaukie has seven established neighborhoods that are mostly built-out. However, many of these neighborhoods contain large lots and older homes, so there is room for both new "infill" development and expansion of existing homes. For years, many in the community have called for more attention to the design and development standards that govern infill residential development and home additions. Over time the City has added some additional regulations (i.e., increased setback requirements for flag lot development), but has yet to add some needed standards (i.e., design standards for multifamily housing). A 2009 code audit outlined the following specific problems with Milwaukie's housing development policies:

This elevation, the original design for the secure residential facility on Balfour St., meets the City's existing single family residential design standards.

- Milwaukie has basic standards for single-family home design that are less restrictive than those of most other cities in the region. We don't have specific standards for garage location or size, and the standards we do have do not apply to significant expansions of existing homes.
- Milwaukie has standards governing minimum lot size, building setbacks, building height, and lot coverage. However, the lot coverage standards are relatively restrictive, so builders are incentivized to build up if they can't build out. This contributes to the perception of new development feeling out of scale with existing development.

Milwaukie's standards often have the unintended effect of eliminating nice features of the original design – in these two examples, the depth of the eaves of the roof were reduced in order to meet the "lot coverage" requirement.

- Milwaukie has limited tools to ensure that new development "fits" into the existing neighborhood fabric. Many tools are available to address compatibility issues, such as variable lot coverage standards tied to lot size, building step-back requirements tied to building height, and larger side yard setbacks tied to the size of the building's side facade.

- Milwaukie's existing policies discourage a variety of housing types by establishing confusing standards and excessive process for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and duplexes, and prohibiting creative solutions such as cottage clusters. And yet the Planning department consistently fields calls from Milwaukie residents who want to pursue these types of development, often for their own family.
- Milwaukie has no design standards for multifamily residential development (only height and setback standards). Milwaukie, therefore, may have the lowest requirements in the region for how multifamily development looks and relates to its surroundings.
- In summary, the zoning code reflects an incoherent and incomplete policy approach to providing needed housing investments in Milwaukie to serve the needs of Milwaukie and its residents.

This project is being led by staff, assisted by grant-funded land use and design consultants, and overseen by a citizen advisory committee that includes Planning Commissioners, Design and Landmarks Committee members, NDA representatives, and a City Councilor. It is the first time since 1968 that the City has conducted a comprehensive review of its residential development and design policies. The goal of this project is two-fold: (1) to update Milwaukie's site development and building design standards for single-family and multifamily housing outside of downtown, and (2) to develop policies that reflect the community's changing housing needs and preferences. The project scope does not include rezoning or density changes anywhere in the city.

Key project questions for the community are as follows:

- How can we ensure that every new residential building is a good neighbor?
- What types of housing are needed and/or desired by Milwaukie's current and future residents?
- How can we encourage, or at least not preclude, more sustainable development?

Staff developed a "Pie Chart" to help articulate the range of issues being tackled by this project. It is included as Attachment 1.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Since this project will likely have a large impact on the look and form of residential development throughout Milwaukie, it has been important to engage the community in this discussion. To that end, Planning and Community Services staff have developed, and are in the process of implementing, a comprehensive outreach strategy to inform and gauge public opinion on the various issues and questions being raised by this project.

Past Community Involvement Efforts:

- Online survey (83 participants)
- Housing Choices workshop (31 participants)

Ongoing Community Involvement Efforts:

- Stakeholder focus group meetings (3 completed)
- One-on-one interviews (20 completed)
- Steering Committee meetings (4 completed)

- NDA and NDA leadership updates

Future Community Involvement Efforts:

- Project Open House

A summary of the community feedback received to date is included as Attachment 2. It includes four components, namely a survey report, workshop summary, interview summary, and stakeholder focus group summaries.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

The project is touching on three aspects of residential development that are currently regulated by the zoning code.

1. Building design standards. These standards regulate what a building looks like from the street, e.g. door location, window size, and human-scaled architectural details.

2. Building and site development standards. These standards regulate building height, mass, and location on the site.

3. Building type regulations. In combination with zoning, these regulations dictate what form housing can take in various locations around the city, e.g. single-family, duplex, cottage cluster, accessory dwelling units, etc.

Staff has begun to formulate some recommendations on how the City's policies could change based on the community feedback we have heard to date. The following are our preliminary recommendations.

<u>Design Standards</u>

- Develop design standards for multifamily housing developments.
- Do not allow garages to dominate the front façade of the house.
- Apply design standards to large house additions.
- Ensure design standards are style-neutral so that property owners are free to apply their own sense of design to their home.
- Respect the scale and design of existing development. It may not be reasonable or desirable to require new development to match existing development, so it's better to strive for compatibility.
- Maintain affordability but don't settle for "cheap."

<u>Development Standards</u>

- Add standards to address compatibility issues related to building height, mass, and placement.
- Maintain or increase setback requirements. Protecting the space between homes allows for privacy, "breathing room," and solar access.

<u>Housing Types</u>

- Allow detached accessory dwelling units. The City currently only allows these kinds of dwelling units when they are attached to or a part of the main house.
- Allow a broader range of multifamily building types, e.g. rowhouses and cottage clusters, to meet the diverse needs of Milwaukie families, encourage home ownership, and facilitate development that more closely resembles the scale of Milwaukie's single-family neighborhoods.

CONCURRENCE

There is no action with which to concur. Community Services is playing a major role in the public involvement and communication aspects of this project. Community Development supports this project as an important way for the City to best prepare the neighborhoods for anticipated development activity that could be attracted by the light rail project.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Planning Department budget for fiscal year 2012 includes $10,000 for project expenses, if needed to address Commission or Council needs prior to the public hearings.

WORK LOAD IMPACTS

This project is a significant aspect of the Planning Department work load, and will continue to be until proposed amendments are adopted.

ALTERNATIVES

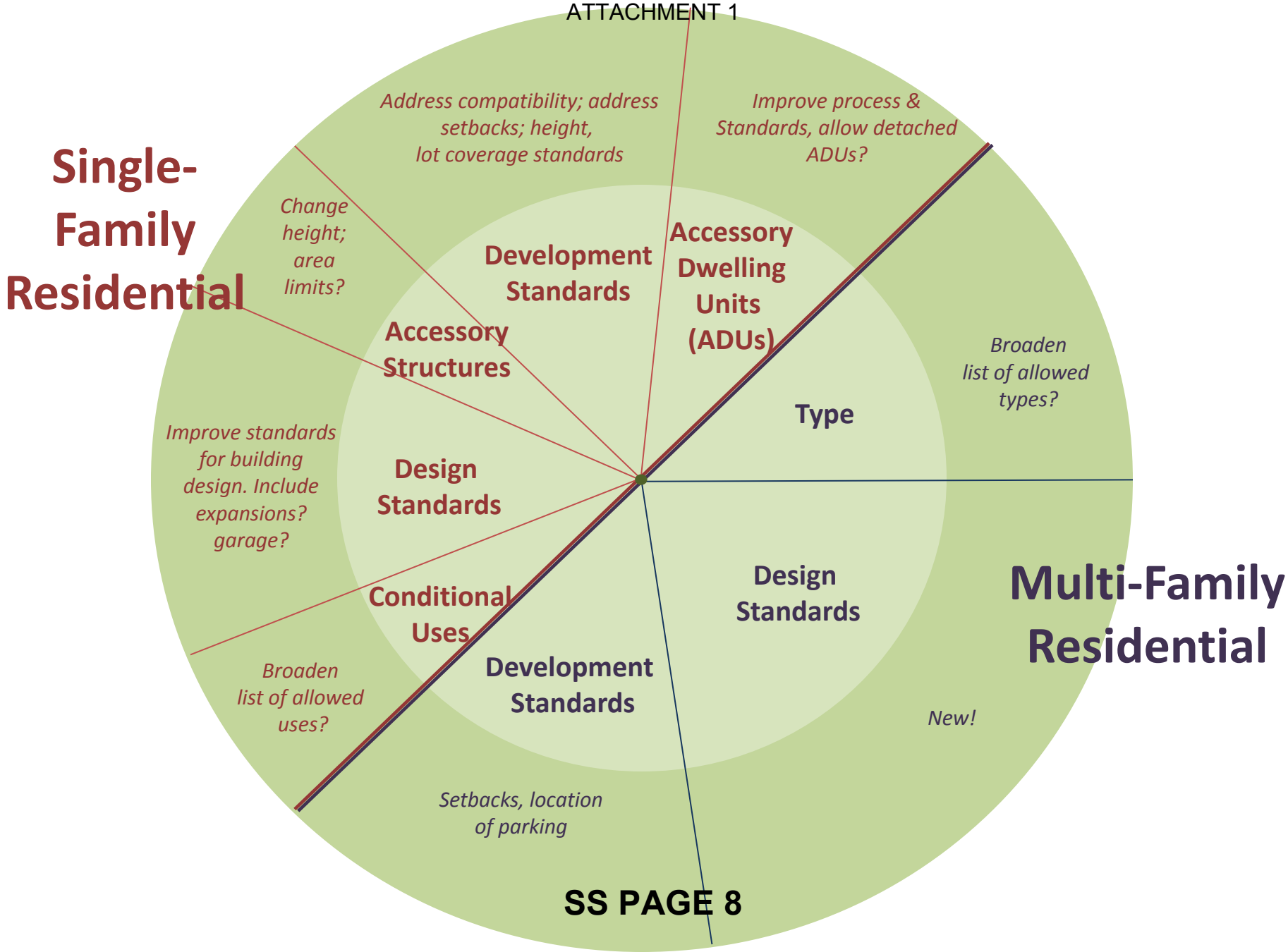
None.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Project "Pie Chart" of Issues
2. Community Feedback from Surveys, Workshop, Interviews, and Stakeholder Focus Groups
   A. Survey Report
   B. Housing Choices Workshop notes, April 25, 2011
   C. Interviews Summary
   D. Stakeholder Focus Group meeting notes

Residential Development Standards Project: Core issues to be addressed & related questions

ATTACHMENT 1



Residential Development Standards Survey Report

March 2011

In January and February of 2011, City staff distributed a survey to gauge community opinion on the look of single-family and multifamily housing and to learn more about the community's housing needs and preferences. This document summarizes all survey responses received.

This survey is part of a comprehensive public outreach strategy that is intended to inform the policies being evaluated by the Residential Development Standards Project. This project is being led by staff, assisted by grant-funded land use and design consultants, and overseen by a citizen advisory committee. It is the first time since 1968 that the City has conducted a comprehensive review of its residential development and design policies.

The goal of this project is to update Milwaukie's site development and building design standards for single-family and multifamily housing outside of downtown.

Key Project Questions:

- How can we ensure that every new residential building is a good neighbor?
- What types of housing are needed and/or desired by Milwaukie's current and future residents?
- How can we encourage, or at least not preclude, more sustainable development?

Survey Outreach:

This survey was posted on the home page of the City's website and distributed at Neighborhood District Association (NDA) meetings and to the December 2010 NDA leadership meeting. Links to the survey were posted on the City's Facebook and Twitter accounts, and the Oregonian ran an article about it. This survey does not claim to be scientific.

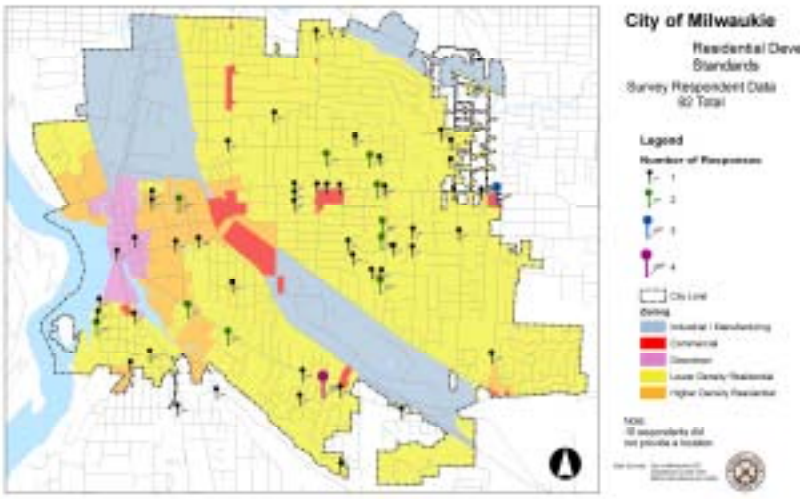
- 83 surveys were completed.
- 75% of respondents were single-family home owners.
- Average age of respondents was 51.

Appendices:

- Appendix A contains a copy of the survey.
- Appendix B contains respondents' complete responses to all open-ended survey questions.

1-2. Respondent Locations:

Eighty of the respondents had a 97222 zip code and two had 97267 zip code. Respondents identified the nearest intersection from their property:



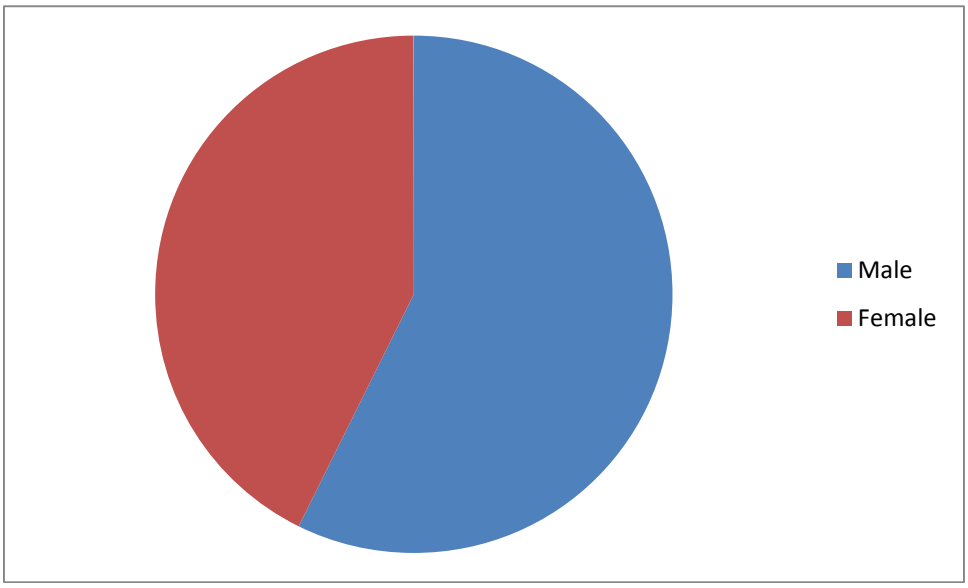
3. Respondent Ages:

Seventy-three people answered this question.

20-30: 4
31-40:9
41-50: 17
51-50: 27
61-70: 11
71+: 5

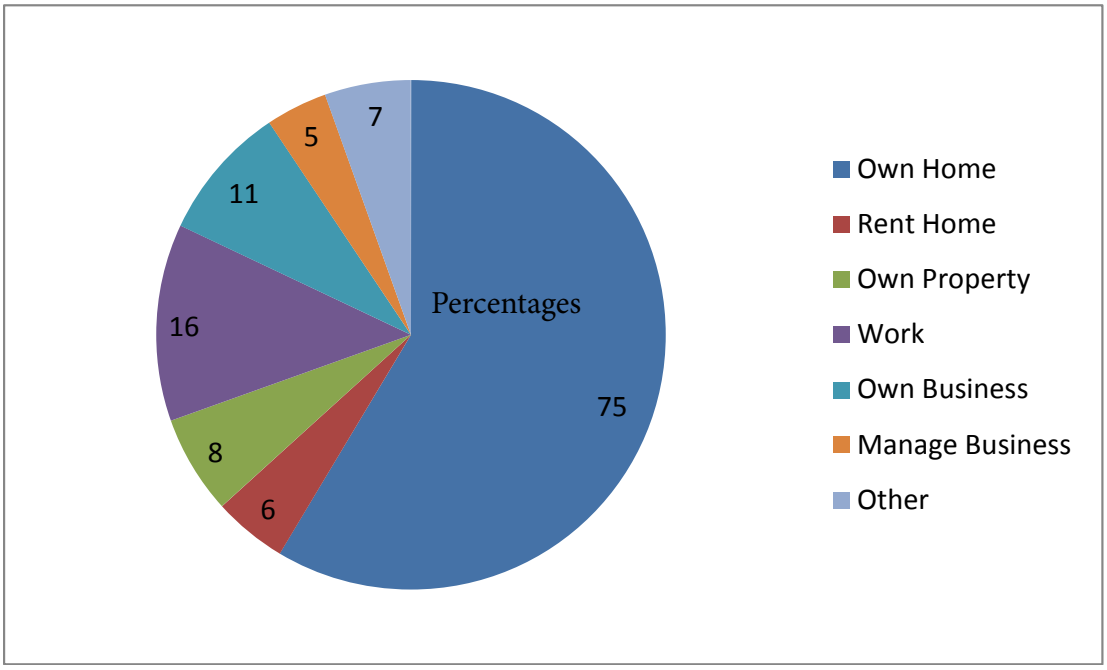
Average age=51

4. Respondent Gender:

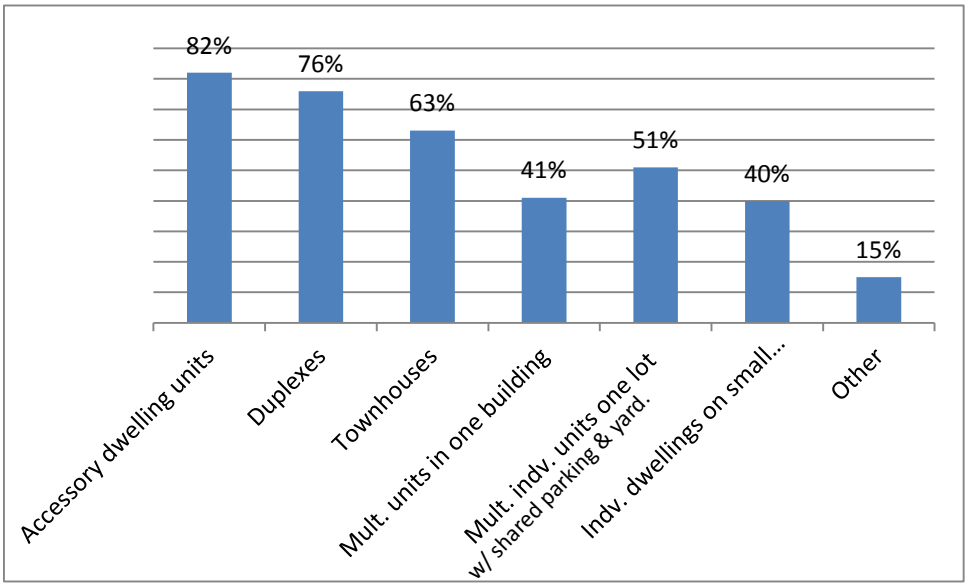


5. "Tell us about yourself: Do you ____ in Milwaukie:"

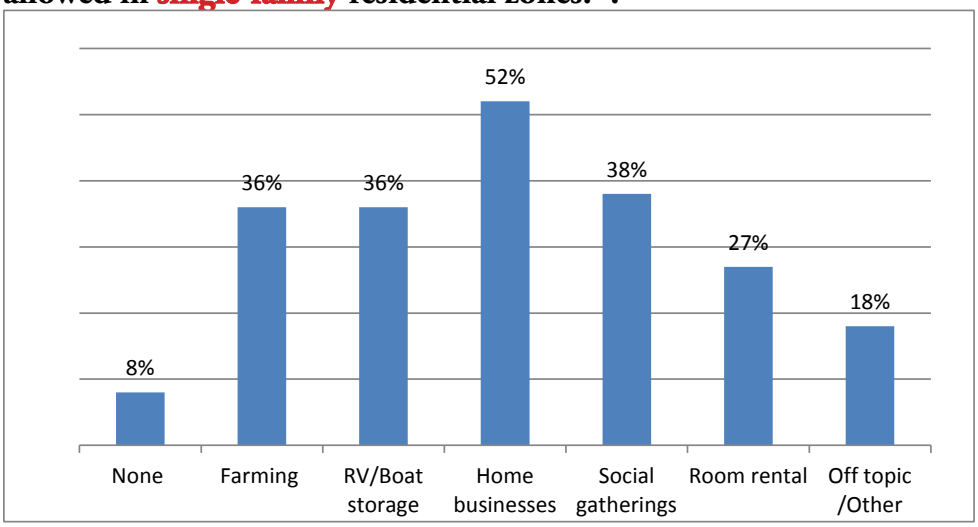
Seventy-five people answered this question.



6. "What types of residential buildings do you think are appropriate in multifamily residential zones outside of downtown?":

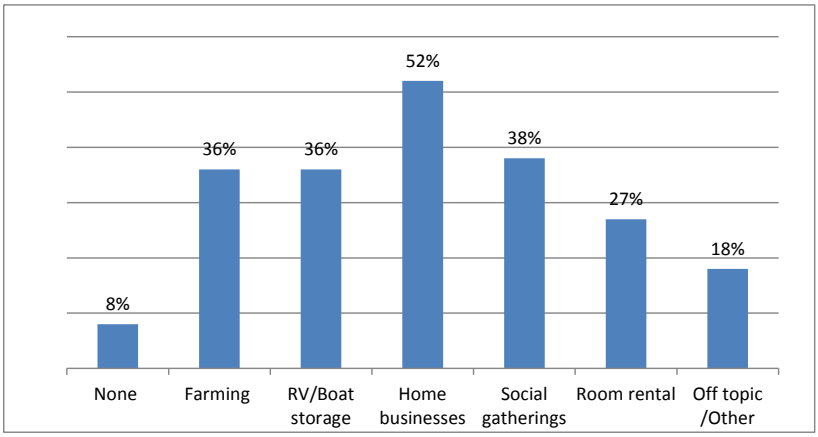


7A: "In addition to being someone's home, properties in residential zones may also allow other uses such as home-based businesses, regular social gatherings, farming activities, RV or boat storage, and/or garage or room rental by others. Thinking about the uses described above, or any other uses, describe what kinds of uses you think should be allowed in single-family residential zones?":

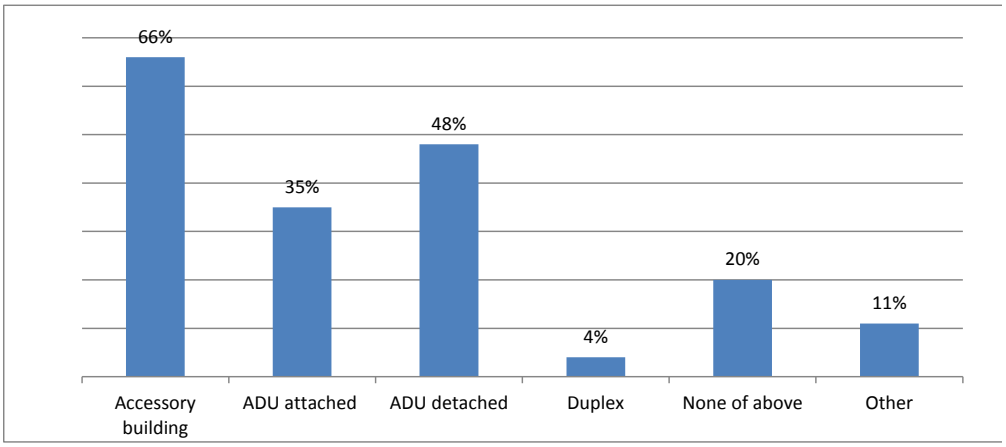


Thirteen percent of respondents indicated that all uses should be allowed. These responses were added to the other categories for the purpose of the graph and better visual understanding. Many respondents did not comment on all the given use categories. Most comments in favor of farming in residential zones were qualified with 'as long as the farming did not create odor or spray on adjacent properties.' Most comments in favor of home businesses and room rentals were qualified with 'as long as low traffic impacts and adequate parking on site.' Most comments in favor of RV and boat storage were qualified with 'as long as they are stored on private property not on the street'. See appendix for full comments.

7B: "In addition to being someone's home, properties in residential zones may also allow other uses such as home-based businesses, regular social gatherings, farming activities, RV or boat storage, and/or garage or room rental by others. Thinking about the uses described above, or any other uses, describe what kinds of uses you think should be allowed in multifamily residential zones":



8. If you own residential property, have you ever thought about using your property in the following ways?

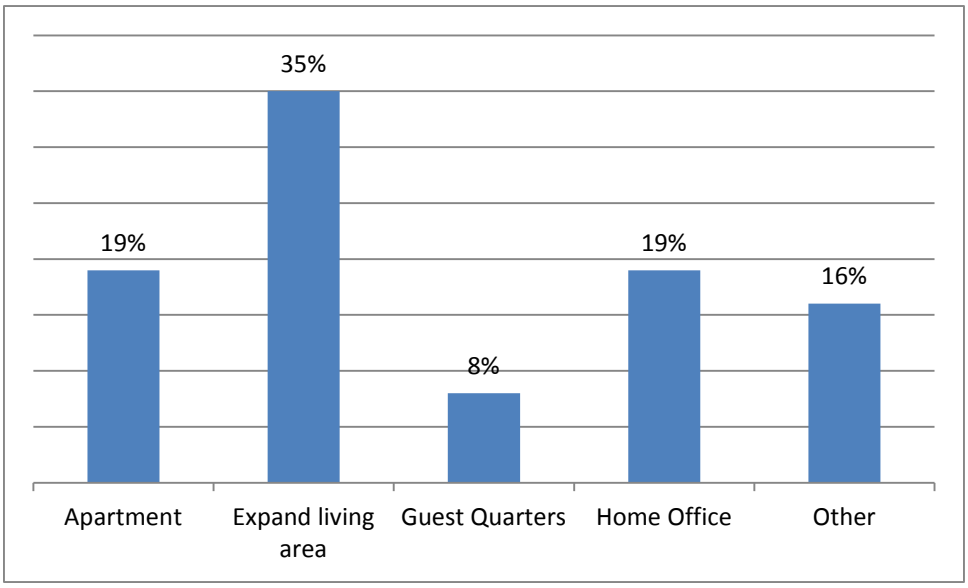


9. If you chose "other", please specify:

The following eight comments were received:

"Adding an artist studio attached to a new garage structure."
"Allow granny flats and artist studios and chicken coops and gardens."
"Would love to have a small business."
"Remove dilapidated house(s), doing a lot consolidation and rezoning to multifamily to construct 3-4 attached units consistent with properties adjacent and nearby."
"More than one detached dwelling unit."
"Creating a part time floral / repair / internet occupation."
"If a detached garage already exists and needs replacement or upgrading that should be allowed."

9B. If you answered "None of the above" to Question #8, might there be conditions or life changes in the future that would cause you to change your answer? If "Yes," for what use?



Fifty percent--or five of the ten people who responded "None of the above" indicated this might change in the future.

If chose "other" please specify:

The following six comments were received:

"I have considered converting the space above the garage into living area for additional living and storage space."

"For expansion of existing living area, a home office or as an auxillary living space."

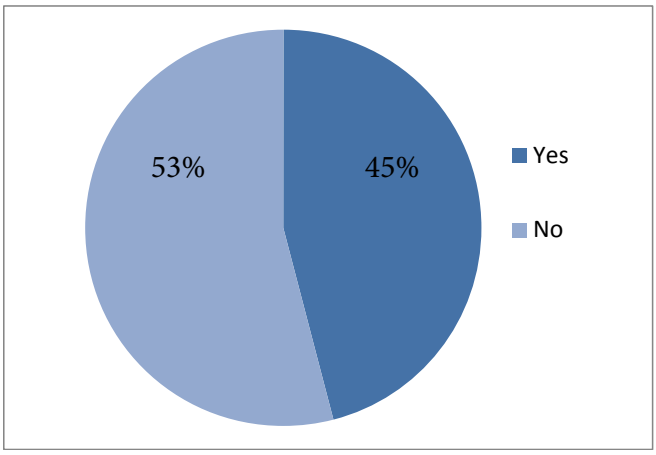
"I'd keep it as a garage, but put a pool table in it instead of my car."

"Exercise area / Play area."

"We built it for actual use as garage."

"Home office/living space combined."

10. If you own residential property with a garage, have you ever thought about converting your garage into living area?



11. If you answered "No" to Question #10, might there be conditions or life changes in the future that would cause you to answer "Yes"?

Twelve respondents--or fifteen percent--indicated "Yes" there might be conditions under which they would want to convert their garage into living space in the future.

11B: If "Yes" please explain:

Comments indicated that respondents might want to add living space for family members , for guest quarters or to add a home office. Twelve comments were received. See appendix B for all twelve comments. The three comments below are examples:

"If I became unemployed I could work at home."

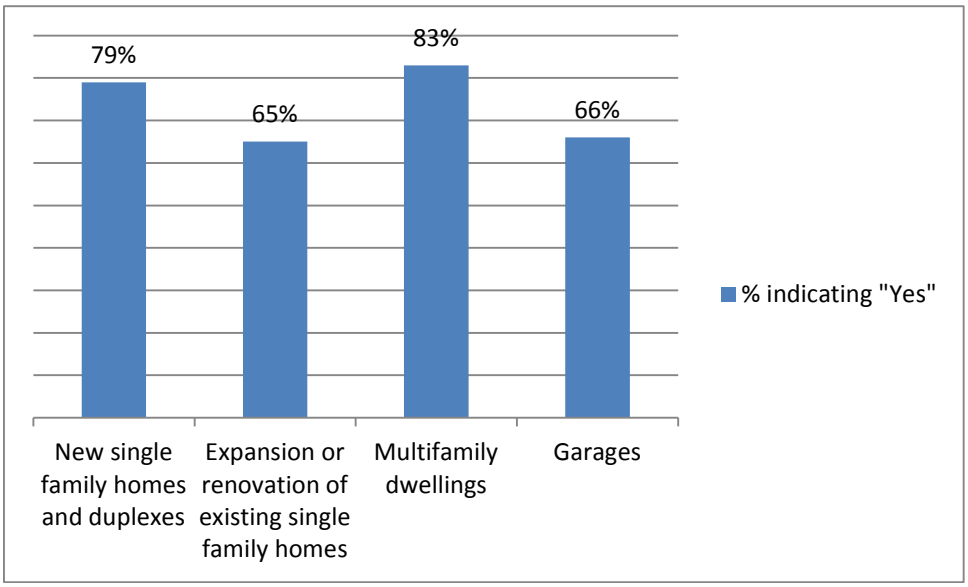
"My garage...may become useful to convert it into a home office at some point."

"If need additional bedrooms/living space."

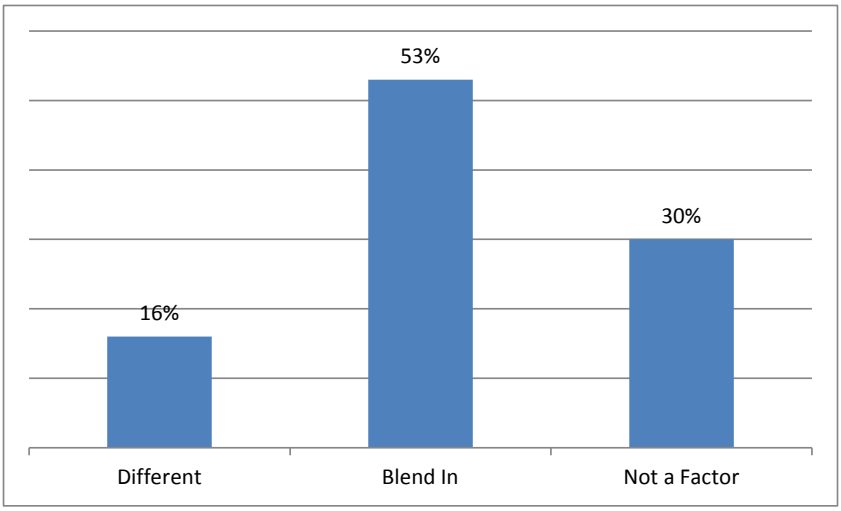
12. Do you think the City should have design standards for:

A. New single-family homes and duplexes?
B. Expansion or renovation of existing single-family homes?
C. Multifamily dwellings?
D. Garages?

Percentage indicating "Yes" there should be design standards:



13. "Think about successful new residential development you have seen in Milwaukie or elsewhere. In your opinion, are they successful because they blend in with existing structures, or because they are different?"



14. If they "blend in", in what ways are they the same as what is already there? (Check all that apply):

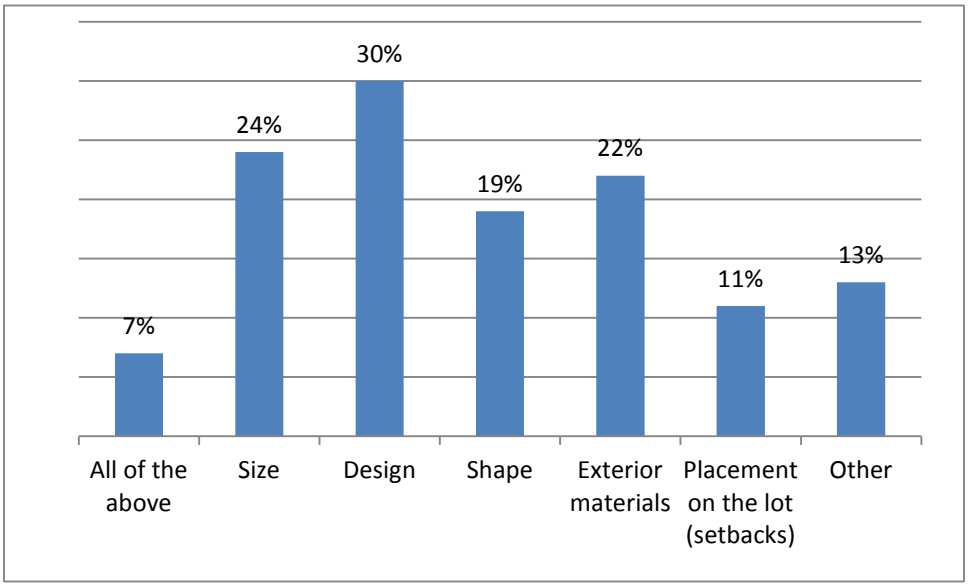
Due to an error in the survey, respondents could not check more than one box. As such, none of the respondents checked any of the boxes and rather chose to leave comments instead. See appendix B for all comments. Sixteen comments were received. The following are examples:

> "They are compatible in architectural style and building scale to adjacent buildings—this includes exterior materials and setbacks."

> "I think in a well established well designed neighborhood, 2-3 similar attributes are attractive and cohesive. But I don't like cookie cutter neighborhoods where all or most of the homes are identical with only minimal changes (ie: mirror images, colors, different shaped eyebrow or porch, etc)."

> "Using the same amount of land space for house."

15. If they are "different", in what ways are they different from what is already there?

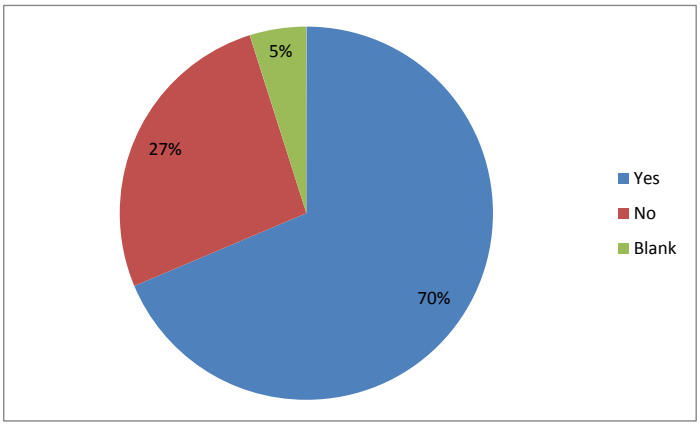


Additional comments elaborated on how infill in Milwaukie is different. See appendix B for all comments. A few examples:

> "Variety gives a neighbor personality, outlandish design is out of place."

> "Consistency in design and shape isn't necessary. I feel that unique styles enhance a neighborhood providing that the size and placement are consistent with the surrounding homes. For instance a modern design like {gives specific house} doesn't match the hodgepodge of design mixed through the neighborhood but it is a beautiful house that is consistent with the size of their neighbors, setback is similar to the other homes on the street and the style adds value to the surrounding environment."

16. Milwaukie's neighborhoods have developed incrementally over the past 100 years. Do you think residential areas in Milwaukie have a special character worth preserving?



If "Yes", please describe what qualities you think are most important to keep or protect:

Of the forty-seven comments received, themes included keeping mature trees and green spaces/parks; keeping large lot sizes; preserving historic homes; and maintaining setbacks and similar scale to surrounding houses. Several people commented on a need for more sidewalks. There were also several comments asserting that there is a lack of architectural character in Milwaukie and that many areas are eclectic and/or unattractive.

"Mature trees in a neighborhood can make up for a lot of architectural mediocrity."

"I think some neighborhoods have character worth preserving and others may not. I would hate to see Milwaukie lose it's character of having a mix of large lots among more intensively developed areas - and would not like to see restrictions on larger lots that might apply to smaller lots, such as ability to keep animals - chickens come to mind - based on "design standards". Generally I am in favor of allowing variety in the development of housing options as long as safety standards are met, and the new houses do not overpower the existing built space by a combination of size and density - although I suppose I would be open to allowing more density along transportation corridors in order to preserve space in other areas."

"Yes but only in a few neighborhoods. Most of the neighborhoods in Milwaukie would best be leveled and start over. The ones worth preserving are the historical homes, most of the homes in Milwaukie are bad ranch style homes with no redeeming qualities."

"Small town feel and LARGE lots; in most areas neighbors have breathing room."

"The homes are mostly different in construction and they are spaced apart leaving room for green spaces, however the flag lots and mix of mobile homes installed on a single-family lot should be a thing of the past and not carried forward."

"Old single-family homes older than 1960 and lack of sidewalks."

"Small homes in a bungalow style with green spaces."

"Milwaukie is no Ladd's Addition. Milwaukie is eclectic and that's that. We happen to live in a 1928 Craftsman style bungalow on Lake Road but our neighbors on 27th live in a beautiful mid-century ranch. Please, no cookie cutter neighborhoods. Embrace our architectural diversity--even if it looks a little funky."

17. What should the City's highest priorities be for this project?

Of the sixty-nine comments received, themes included efficient use of land; sustainability; keeping homes affordable; limiting taxes and fees; consistency and clarity in standards; standards that encourage new development to fit with style and scale of surrounding buildings; and truly seeking and listening to the desires of the community. See appendix B for full comments. A few examples follow:

"Encourage efficient use of existing housing and new development sites."

"Set quality standards for design/materials which are not too cost prohibitive for middle-middle class residents. The City needs to be "friendly" in its regulations to set out a ""welcome mat"" to people who want to improve their properties..."

"Protecting further intrusion by companies building properties intended for assisted living facilities within a residential neighborhood. Those buildings are massively out of scale to other residences. The city should consider both the rights of a property owner to expand their building size, add sheds or garages or operate a home-based business, balanced against the right of other property owners to have a peaceful, aesthetically pleasing neighborhood."

"Write a code that will maintain housing values while also providing flexibility to develop new housing that provides a variety of housing types and is energy and transportation efficient."

"Communication of what they would be through web site for proper evaluation."

"Make sure that people building new homes consider the privacy factor of their neighbors. For example, don't build a tri-level home next to a one story ranch on a small lot."

"New infill should be similar in size, shape and setback as neighbor's house."

"To maintain the existing neighborhood's personality and character."

"Facilitate affordable housing."

"Affordable, energy efficient, flexible standards that permit reasonable development."

“Try increasing the requirements for green or sustainable development.”

“To minimize costs and regulations so builders will want to do business in Milwaukie.”

“Community outreach: This is asking our citizens to do more for a better place. They will respond. If they don't it won't make any difference.”

“Public involvement and inclusion of citizen input.”

“Livability, stainability, safety, community.”

“Do not allow skinny houses on small lots or manufactured homes; add badly needed sidewalks; switching to underground utilities when replacements are needed will eventually save money, power outages, and create more beautiful neighborhoods. New housing developments should install sidewalks and underground utilities. When allowing infill or new home construction, please, ensure that their design and placement on the lot respects adjoining existing homes.”

“Preserving the rights of individual property owners and let us live our lives in peace. Enough with the "Nanny Government" already!”

“Creating a means to thrive on much less energy (transport, heating, sewage processing) water (capture rainwater) recycling.”

Residential Development Standards Update Project

Steering Committee Meeting / Housing Choices Workshop

April 25, 2011, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Milwaukie Public Safety Building

Steering Committee Members attending:

David Aschenbrenner
Jean Baker
Mark Gamba
Frank Hemer
Arlene Miller
Jim Perrault
Dion Shepard
Terry Whistler

Staff attending:

City of Milwaukie
Katie Mangle, Planning Director
Susan Shanks, Senior Planner
Ryan Marquardt, Associate Planner
Li Alligood, Assistant Planner
Beth Ragel, Program Specialist

Consultants
Marcy McInelly, Principal, Urbsworks

Introductions

Planning Director Katie Mangle welcomed the group to the meeting. She explained that the workshop was part of the Residential Development Standards update project, and the scheduled April meeting of the project steering committee was being conducted as workshop so the committee and staff could hear from community residents.

- The purpose of the workshop was for community residents to review different dwelling typologies and discuss which types should be allowed in the city. It was not a discussion about density, but what types of single-family and multifamily housing should be allowed in the areas where those types are allowed. No decisions would be made during the workshop.
- Introduced three questions for consideration during the workshop:
    1. Should detached accessory dwelling units (ADUs) be allowed in lower-density residential zones?
    2. Should duplexes be allowed wherever single-family homes are allowed?
    3. Should additional housing types be allowed in the higher-density residential zones?
- Provided an overview of the Residential Development Standards project via PowerPoint, including issues with the current standards.

Marcy McInelly, Principal, Urbsworks, reviewed a presentation about housing choices in Milwaukie via PowerPoint, including a review of demographic trends and housing needs.

Small group discussion

Katie and Marcy facilitated a brief question and answer session. Each of the 31 people present was assigned to a small group at one of six tables in the room to discuss the focus questions. Each table was facilitated by City staff and a note-taker took notes of the discussion.

Areas of general agreement included:

<u>Question #1: Should detached ADUs be allowed in lower-density residential zones?</u>

- Support for efficient use of space and additional housing opportunities
- Consider whether the size & number of detached ADUs could be proportionate to lot size
- Consider issues of privacy– height, placement on lot, setbacks
- Consider issues of compatibility– size, materials, design, relationship to primary dwelling unit
- Concerns about increased traffic, infrastructure impacts, and parking needs
- Concerns about additional rental units in low-density residential areas

<u>Question #2: Should duplexes be allowed wherever single-family homes are allowed?</u>

- Support for duplexes on corner lots
- Preference for duplexes that look like a single-family house
- Consider issues of compatibility – lot size, design, appearance
- Consider/minimize impacts on neighbors and neighborhoods
- Concerns about additional rental units in low-density residential areas
- Disagreement amount whether the process should be easier or if Planning Commission review should be required.

<u>Question #3: Should more housing types be allowed in higher-density residential areas?</u>

- Individual housing types discussed included row houses, cottage clusters, “skinny” houses, 2 single family houses on 1 lot, and detached ADUs.
- Support for design standards for multifamily residential development
- Support for row houses as a housing type, but concerns about location, size, design, and number
- Support for cottage clusters as a housing type, but concerns about privacy / height
- Support for housing types or projects that incorporate green space
- Consider issues of compatibility– bulk, massing, transition between higher-density and lower-density areas
- Concerns about privacy for adjacent properties
- Lack of support for “skinny houses” and 2 houses on 1 lot

Group reporting

Following the small group discussions, Katie and Marcy asked attendees to raise their hands in response to the three discussion questions. Facilitators at each table recorded their table's votes. The results were as follows:

Question #1: Should detached ADUs be allowed in lower-density residential zones?

- Yes: 15/31 (45%)
- No: 0/31 (0%)
- Depends: 16/31 (52%)

Question #2: Should duplexes be allowed wherever single-family homes are allowed?

- Yes: 14/31 (45%)
- No: 3/31 (10%)
- Depends: 14/31 (45%)

Question #3: Should more housing types be allowed in higher-density residential areas?

- Yes: 25/31 (81%)
- No: 0/31 (0%)
- Depends: 6/31 (19%)

Comment Cards

Although there were 31 attendees present during the small group discussion, one person arrived late so staff received 32 comment cards. Attendees were asked to respond to several questions before they left the workshop. The questions and individual responses are below.

Question #1: Should detached ADUs be allowed in lower-density residential zones?

- Yes: 19 (59%)
- No: 0 (0%)
- Depends: 12 (38%)
- No Answer: 1 (3%)

Question #2: Should duplexes be allowed wherever single-family homes are allowed?

- Yes: 11 (34%)
- No: 5 (16%)
- Depends: 16 (50%)

Question #3: Should more housing types be allowed in higher-density residential areas?

- Yes: 26 (81%)
- No: 0 (0%)
- Depends: 6 (19%)

How would you rate this workshop?

- Very Useful: 17 (53%)
- Somewhat Useful: 4 (13%)
- Not Very Useful: 0 (0%)
- No Answer: 11 (34%)

Did this workshop change your mind about anything?

- Yes: 10 (31%)
- No: 10 (31%)
- No Answer: 11 (28%)

If yes, what?

- The value of cluster housing for nursing homes and other institutional uses; doesn't have to look institutional.
- Broader cross-section of opinion/concern to guide next steps.
- My concerns
- Value of having a broad housing base
- Housing needs and demands in our community
- Was shocked and disappointed by the huge prejudice and bias in the discussion. The word "rent" was synonymous with "slum", "crime", and "minority." I am disappointed and shocked - amazing that this exists in such a degree in 2011. Wow…
- Please continue with more meetings!
- Variety of ideas
- Allowing / encouraging cottage cluster development and setting stringent design standards.
- Would like to be able to build ADU

Other Comments or Questions?

- Do duplexes have to be 2 garage doors and split in the middle? Can they be stacked? True thoughts of infrastructure, water runoff, traffic flow, and loss of green space with accessory dwelling.
- Redouble our efforts to provide more parks and open space as we infill. Can't depend on schools. Add a layer of approval required for these types of projects. To make sure they fit in, are designed nicely, and of good quality. Thank you!
- Duplexes can provide more units on the same parcel, but can also break up the continuity of a neighborhood. New construction rarely ends up blighting an area, but common sense must still prevail.
- Square footage of lot should be larger for duplexes but not necessarily doubled. Row houses should be limited.
- Would be OK if lot size is adequate.
- I like cottages.

- I would like maximum flexibility to build detached or attached ADUs, perhaps more than one, on a single property. It's no one's business whether I do this for my own family members or if I choose to rent it out a non-family member (sorry to see bigotry is alive and well in America).
- In considering the housing format in Milwaukie, you need to take into advisement that from 1970-mid 90s the housing stock was decimated by taking down the majority of the housings close in Milwaukie and replaced with a vast amount of apartments, Section 8, etc. This brought down the demographics in Milwaukie. Milwaukie has become the preferred location for agencies for those individuals with challenges. Why - because the land is cheaper here. How are we going to change this trend?
- 1. Permit one level ADUs with current setbacks. 3. As long as there is parking for 2 cars per unit.
- Good design standards and reviews. Cottage clusters should be allowed in lower density and higher density zones.
- No more apt buildings!
- Thanks for bringing us together and revising the codes!
- I believe flexibility to alternate housing is important but it should be with design review and compatibility to promote a livable aesthetic. Also detached accessory dwellings should be evaluated on individual basis.
- Design review or standards are key. How it fits in neighborhood.
- Infrastructure capacity, design standards, parking requirements, lot size - maybe not "wherever" single family homes are allowed.
- Keep Marcy involved!
- Yes - but we need to create design standards and development standards for ADUs and other housing types.
- I am in favor of a lot of options with quality design standards and adequate green space.
- My concern with making it easier to develop duplex units is further increasing the percentage of rental vs. owned properties.
- Yes on all as long as there are healthy guidelines and boundaries. Q1. Yes - with guidelines. Q2. Yes - with guidelines. Q3. Yes - with guidelines.
- I do not support multi-unit dwellings. I feel we have too many rental units already. Not opposed to row houses or cottage clusters, as long as owner-occupied. Support allowing ADUs as long as they do not look out of place in neighborhood and do not interfere with the livability of neighbors. Prefer housing that provides off street parking. Duplexes might be acceptable if they are owner-occupied, or shared mortgage owned and occupied. Row houses would be acceptable if NOT rental units.
- What is difference between attached ADU vs. duplex?

Wrap-up

Katie thanked everyone for coming, and invited attendees to chat with staff after the workshop. She noted that the presentations and notes from the workshop as well as background information on the project would be available on the project web site at http://www.ci.milwaukie.or.us/planning/residential-development-standards-update-project.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY – KEY POINTS
Residential Development Standards Update Project
April 22, 2011

GENERAL NOTES

- Interview responses have been combined by theme and edited for clarity as needed. Where appropriate, individual responses have been listed.
- Comments about issues outside of the scope of this project (building codes, parking requirements, sidewalks, flag lot standards, measurements, re-zoning, increased residential density, home occupation standards, etc.) were not included in this summary, but have been recorded for future projects.

BACKGROUND

- Staff interviewed 20 volunteers during the period of February 15 – March 31, 2011. Volunteers were identified through the January – February online project survey.
- Most, but not all, interviewees were Milwaukie residents, with an average residency of 15 years and a range from 7 years to 50+ years. All interviewees were single-family dwelling homeowners.

INTERVIEWEE RESPONSES

Question: What type of dwelling do you live in, and in what neighborhood?

Individual responses included:

- Owns a small house in the Hector Campbell neighborhood.
- Longtime resident. Lives in traditional home in the Historic Milwaukie neighborhood. Not against change or development, but feels that several recent projects have degraded the quality of the neighborhood.
- Owns a home and a rental house in the Historic Milwaukie neighborhood.
- Lives in a house near North Clackamas Park, outside of Milwaukie.
- Longtime homeowner of a large lot in the Hector Campbell neighborhood.
- Owns a home in Milwaukie.
- Moved to Milwaukie 8 years ago to buy in a house in the Historic Milwaukie neighborhood.

- Longtime homeowner in the Historic Milwaukie neighborhood. Bought large lot with idea of partitioning at some point; now interested in accessory dwelling unit (ADU) as second best option.
- Lifelong resident. Owns a house in the front portion of a flag lot in the Linwood neighborhood. Concerned about poor quality homes and design in the city.
- Longtime resident. Has lived in the Llewellyn neighborhood for about 7 years.
- Owns a property in the Lake Road neighborhood that includes a home, a home occupation, a rental home, and a large shop/garage.
- Longtime resident. Owns a house in the Island Station neighborhood. Recently divided large lot to build a duplex.
- Longtime resident. Owns a small house in the Lewelling neighborhood.
- Longtime resident. Lives in a house with a detached garage in the Lake Road neighborhood. Works out of a home office in daylight basement.
- Longtime resident. Had house on Fieldcrest but yard too small for agricultural and /gardening needs. Kept it as a rental and moved to large lot in the Ardenwald neighborhood.
- Lives in a house in Happy Valley. Has built many houses in Milwaukie and Metro area.
- Lives in single-story ranch house in Milwaukie.
- Lifelong resident. Lives in a house on a large corner lot in the Lake Road neighborhood.

Question: Why do you care about this project?

Individual responses included:

- Interested in improving quality of development and growing the quality of the community.
- Interested in sustainable development.
- Interested in dividing lot in the future.
- Wants Milwaukie to maintain small town character while moving forward.
- Interested in improving value of property.
- Concerned about poor quality homes and design in the city.
- Interested in sustainability, accessory structure standards, and financial-social-environmental issues.
- Has seen the neighborhoods decline over the years.

Question: Are your housing needs being met now? What about your friends and family members? Are you worried about them being met in the future?

Generally, people felt that their current housing needs were being met and were not particularly concerned about their future housing needs or those of their families. The most common responses included:

- May want an ADU in the future to house a caretaker or family member.
- City should allow a large variety of housing types to accommodate all stages of life.
- May need to build a front door ramp to age in place.

Question: What would you like to see as an outcome of this project?

There were many areas of general agreement, including the following:

- The project should:
    - Make the community members feel they have been heard.
    - Consider environmental impact of development.
    - Minimize “red tape.”
- Development standards should:
    - Allow additional housing types in multifamily residential zones, including detached ADUs.
    - Encourage housing variety and options for people at all stages of life.
    - Consider issues of solar access, etc.
    - Protect the small town feel of the community.
    - Be clear and user-friendly.
    - Encourage sustainable and environmentally sensitive development, or, at the very least, not preclude it.
    - Protect setbacks. They are important for privacy and space.
- Design standards should:
    - Be user-friendly and easy to communicate and understand.
    - Apply to new single-family houses, additions, and garages.
    - Guide new projects to be compatible with existing development.
    - Not prohibit or deter alternative or creative development.
    - Not require a certain type of style or period design.
    - Encourage environmentally sensitive design.
    - Require the orientation of houses to the street (for “neighborliness”).

Areas of disagreement included:

- Whether design and compatibility or considerations of environmental impact should be the primary goal of the project.
- Which, if any, housing types besides detached ADUs should be allowed in multifamily zones.
- Whether setbacks should be fixed or flexible.
- Whether more or fewer accessory structures should be permitted on a lot.

City of Milwaukie - Code Assistance Phase 2

Stakeholder Meeting #1
Summary

March 14, 2011
City of Milwaukie Planning Department

Overview

The purpose of this meeting was to explore the city's existing standards for single-family residential (SFR) development and gather feedback from stakeholders. The discussion focused on case studies of residential lots in Milwaukie that were used to illustrate how the existing standards work and the type/size of development they currently allow. Because Milwaukie is mostly built out, much of new residential development is infill rather than new subdivisions. As such, compatibility with the existing neighborhood is especially important. Stakeholders were asked to consider the question "How can the city ensure that new single-family residential developments are good neighbors?"

Attendees

The following PMT members attended the meeting.

- Katie Mangle, City of Milwaukie Planning Director
- Marcy McInelly, Urbsworks President
- Ryan Marquardt, City of Milwaukie Planner
- Serah Breakstone, Angelo Planning Group

The following stakeholders attended the meeting:

- Gary Michaels, Island Station NDA
- Bryan Dorr, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek NDA
- Linda Hedges, Hector Campbell NDA
- Mary Weaver, Hector Campbell NDA
- Mary King, Ardenwald-Johnson Creek NDA
- Jim Mishler, Island Station NDA
- Pepi Anderson, Lewelling NDA

Summary

- Katie provided an overview of the project and the core issues that the city is hoping to address.

- Ryan provided a quick summary of the city's current review and permitting process for new SFR development.
- One stakeholder asked how this project might impact flag lot development. This project will not change the regulations for creating a flag lot. Development standards for SFR on a flag lot will be the same as other SFR development (meaning any changes to SFR development standards will also apply to SFR on flag lots). Flag lots currently have more stringent setback standards than other SFR development.
- One stakeholder asked if this project is coordinating with the city's Walk Safe Program and noted that "eyes on the street", traffic calming, and safety/security should all be considered as part of the new residential development standards. It was suggested that safety factors should be outlined first, and then new standards should be developed around those factors.
- Marcy then began to walk through the case studies of three vacant lots in the R-7 and R-10 zones. Each case study presented an aerial photo of the lot, summary of lot characteristics, and applicable development standards. Each case study also included a prototype illustration to depict allowable building area and envelope based on existing standards.
- One stakeholder noted that a 5-foot side yard setback is too narrow for privacy and also raises fire safety concerns. Another participant stated that minimum standards for separation between buildings are based on fire safety codes. Serah noted that 5 feet for a side yard is a fairly typical setback requirement in other cities.
- A stakeholder asked if there is a minimum house size standard in Milwaukie's code and whether or not an exception might be needed to develop a small house. The building code has some basic standards for housing size but the development code does not specify a minimum requirement for houses. Small lot sizes are likely to be more of an issue because the city does have minimum lot size requirements that could restrict development on a site.
- Ryan reviewed the lot coverage requirement, noting that lot coverage includes primary and accessory buildings and some decks, but not pavement. Lot coverage also does not take into account non-buildable areas like steep slopes; it is solely based on the total lot area. Katie noted that the city's lot coverage standards are somewhat lower than other comparable cities.
- There was a lot of discussion about whether or not a large (relative to the homes around it) new infill home that is well-designed and well-built can be compatible with adjacent homes that are smaller and older. Many stakeholders agree that it's difficult for a newer home (even with good design) to relate to existing houses that were built in a different era. However, there was also general consensus that variety in housing type and style is desirable, and infill homes should not be required to be carbon copies of their neighbors. One stakeholder also pointed out that a home that seems out of place in the current surroundings may become more compatible over time as other infill development occurs around it. The character of a neighborhood may change slowly over time and that's not something the city should necessarily try to control. It was noted that a balance should be struck between regulatory oversight and a property owner's right to express personal taste in building design.
- The group discussed the issue of remodels and expansions in terms of when design standards should apply. Currently, single-family remodels and expansions do not have to comply with design standards (they would have to comply with basic development standards such as setbacks, etc.). Several stakeholders felt that expansions should have to comply with design standards, and that perhaps a size threshold is needed to determine when standards apply.
- Several stakeholders mentioned privacy concerns particularly when homes are close together (narrow setbacks) and their windows are facing each other. The question was raised: how much

should the city try to regulate this issue? One stakeholder noted that privacy issues can be addressed through sensitive design and appropriate building scale.

- One stakeholder stated that the city should attempt to find a balance between providing quality housing stock and keeping prices affordable. The city should not be so regulatory that it discourages new development.
- One stakeholder noted that the existing fence height limit (six feet in side yards) is not always sufficient to provide privacy and that an 8-foot limit should be considered. Another stakeholder pointed out that the 6-foot limit is due, in part, to structural limitations – a fence over 6 feet in height would need additional structural elements to protect against wind damage.
- It was suggested that the city could provide a booklet of favorable design options for new infill development to encourage quality design, but not require it. Incentives such as a reduced permit review fee could also be used to encourage better development.
- Katie closed the meeting with a brief wrap-up and discussion of next steps. She highlighted upcoming opportunities for public involvement and encouraged stakeholders to attend.

City of Milwaukie - Code Assistance Phase 2

Stakeholder Meeting #2
Summary

April 5, 2011
City of Milwaukie Planning Department

Overview

The purpose of this meeting was to explore the city's existing standards for single-family residential (SFR) development and gather feedback from developers and real estate professionals in the Milwaukie area. The discussion focused on case studies of residential lots in Milwaukie that were used to illustrate how the existing standards work and the type/size of development they currently allow. Because Milwaukie is mostly built out, much of new residential development is infill rather than new subdivisions. As such, compatibility with the existing neighborhood is especially important. Stakeholders were asked to consider the question: How can Milwaukie achieve the community's goals for compatibility without dissuading new development?

Attendees

The following PMT members attended the meeting.

- Susan Shanks, City of Milwaukie Senior Planner
- Marcy McInelly, Urbsworks President
- Serah Breakstone, Angelo Planning Group

The following stakeholders attended the meeting:

- Dale Smelser, DB3 Construction Company
- Steve Smelser, Smelser Homes
- Ernie Platt, Home Builders of America
- Mark Meek, Markram Properties, LLC
- Daryl Winand, Portland Metro Association of Realtors

Summary

- Susan provided an overview of the Residential Development Standards project and explained the meeting's focus on single-family development and design standards
- Marcy gave an overview of national trends in household size, and the impacts on the housing market of the current recession, the baby boomer generation, and immigrants and their families.
- Marcy also provided a quick explanation of the prototypes for single family development in Milwaukie. She explained that the focus of this discussion is on infill development and

compatibility solutions such as requiring transitions, limiting scale, using gradients, or a combination of all these elements.

The following are stakeholder comments and questions, along with any response from the project team:

- Does the city allow deviations or adjustments to dimensional standards without a variance? The answer is no, but the city has recently revised its variance language with the intent of making the variance process simpler.
- ADU development is a significant issue since it has the potential to impact density without being accounted for (ADUs are not included in density calculations).
- ADUs should have a size limit but the current limits (600 or 800 sf) are too restrictive and don't allow for quality ADU development.
- It's important to note that feedback from citizens is different depending on how you approach the issue – most people want regulations to apply to others, but not to them.
- It's likely that good design standards can help to alleviate concerns about density increases and associated compatibility issues.
- When land values are high enough, it becomes feasible to tear down existing development and rebuild larger homes that may not be consistent with surrounding homes.
- Why shouldn't a land owner be able to build a large "McMansion" if they want to? It has the potential to have negative impacts on surrounding development, and can be perceived as incompatible and unattractive. It also has the potential to create privacy concerns for neighbors.
- Building a house totally out of character with its surroundings does not make good business sense because buyers will not be interested. However, not all projects are done by developers and the city has many examples of "undesirable" development.
- How significant is the incompatibility issue? The answer is that incompatibility issues have been raised on several occasions and tend to generate a large, negative response from citizens. In addition, it creates concerns about what could happen in the future as infill development continues.
- Detached ADUs are generating concerns in Portland regarding privacy because they are built above a garage and have windows that overlook neighboring yards and homes.
- To address compatibility/privacy issues in Portland, side yard setbacks are sometimes based on the square footage of the façade facing the neighboring yard. As the square footage of the façade increases, so does the setback. This is something Milwaukie could consider in its code amendment project.
- The menu approach for design standards makes sense and could be extended to the development standards as well. For example, a developer could meet 3 out of 5 of the development standards (and not have to go through a variance for the 2 it does not meet). This approach would provide flexibility without using the variance process.
- ADUs are important for mother-in-law apartments and should be accessible. The city should consider limiting detached ADUs to one floor in height. This would address both accessibility and some privacy concerns.
- Off-street parking requirements in Milwaukie are currently two per single family dwelling and one per ADU. The city may want to consider revising the ADU requirement down to zero in order to encourage more ADU development.

- ADUs should not require conditional use approval – the process serves as a disincentive to ADU development. In addition, the occupant of the ADU should not be required to be related to the property owner or be owner-occupied.
- Could the city consider some kind of compatibility assessment for infill development that considers surrounding development and adjusts the standards accordingly?
- Do setbacks help mitigate incompatibility concerns? Yes, setbacks can be useful for compatibility. However, setbacks also effectively decrease buildable land on a site so setback requirements must be balanced with the need to have adequate building area.
- The city needs standards to regulate the size, location and design of garages. Garages should be setback from the front of the house to avoid "snout house" development.
- "Snout house" development often occurs because it is an economical design – they are simpler and less expensive to build and provide affordable homes.
- The city could consider using incentives to discourage snout house development. For example, the front yard setback could be decreased for the house (without needing a variance), but not the garage.
- The current list of design elements on the design menu is reasonable. However, the 12% window façade requirement is difficult to meet, especially on narrow infill homes. The city could consider including doors, porches, balconies, etc in the window calculation to make it easier to meet.
- Instead of roofline off-sets, the city could require articulation along the house façade. This would automatically create roofline off-sets.
- Eaves should not be included in the lot coverage calculation because it discourages the use of eaves.

City of Milwaukie - Code Assistance Phase 2

Stakeholder Meeting #3
Summary

May 3, 2011
City of Milwaukie Planning Department

Overview

The purpose of this meeting was to explore options for new multi-family development and design standards and gather feedback from developers and designers in the Milwaukie area.

Attendees

The following PMT members attended the meeting.

- Susan Shanks, City of Milwaukie Senior Planner
- Marcy McInelly, Urbsworks President
- Serah Breakstone, Angelo Planning Group
- Attendees: Brett Schulz (architect), David Burdick (developer), Sara Garrett (Motive Space director), Paul Klein (architect), Stephen McMurtry (Northwest Housing Alternatives), Gene Dieringer (developer), Pat Dieringer (developer), Mary Bradshaw (Housing Authority of Clackamas County).

Summary

- Susan provided an overview of the Residential Development Standards project and explained the meeting's focus on multi-family development and design standards.
- Marcy gave an overview of national trends in household size, and impacts on the housing market of the current recession, the baby boomer generation, and immigrants and their families.
- Marcy also provided a quick explanation of the prototypes for multi-family development in Milwaukie. She explained that the focus of this discussion was on infill development and compatibility solutions such as requiring transitions, limiting scale, using gradients, or a combination of all these elements.
- The stakeholders were asked to consider the question: How can Milwaukie achieve the city's goals for compatibility without dissuading development of multi-family housing? They were asked to share what kinds of standards help them build good projects and what kinds of standards prevent or make it difficult for them to build good projects based on their experience developing multi-family housing.

The following is a summary of stakeholder responses to the above question.

- Design standards should not be too prescriptive and should allow flexibility. It is better to include goal or intent statements so the developer understands what the city is trying to achieve. Overly prescriptive standards tend to filter out both bad and good design (especially more modern design) and result in development that is mediocre.
- The city should have an avenue for a developer to demonstrate better design that is not technically in compliance with standards, without having to go through a variance or other cumbersome process.
- The code should not preclude development of sustainable structures at higher densities. For example, setbacks and parking requirements consume land that could be used for high-quality, dense design. Some street-facing façade requirements preclude the development of buildings that are designed with a south-facing solar access orientation and/or with an inward-facing courtyard.
- Lot size will be an important factor to consider if the city wants to encourage a greater variety of multifamily development. The city is evaluating revisions to existing lot size standards as part of this project. The city is <u>not</u> amending the density standards.
- The master planning process is useful for multifamily development because it allows flexibility and incorporates more public involvement.
- The city should be aware of other programs and certifications (LEED, LEED ND, etc) when writing new code so that conflicts are not created that might preclude these types of green certifications, as they are often required by the funders of affordable housing projects.
- Clark County code allows the option of meeting their design standards or meeting the LEED Living Building Challenge instead. The city could consider this approach for the new code.
- Some level of design standards is necessary. Clear and objective standards are desirable. Allow flexibility through an alternative design review process.
- Has the city considered allowing more flexibility between standards to achieve compatibility? For example, allowing more height in exchange for less lot coverage or allowing more lot coverage in exchange for less height.
- The code should create incentives for good multifamily design and minimize disincentives. The zoning code should not create conflicts with the building code.
- Higher density does not necessarily equate to unlivable communities, which is sometimes the perception. A city can achieve both with good design standards. It's also helpful when the community can visualize the design standards at higher densities - the city should consider using illustrations and graphics to help people understand the intent of the standards.
- "Cookie cutter" developments should be avoided. The challenge is that some repetition makes housing affordable and too much makes it monotonous. Over time, uniform development becomes less uniform as homeowners personalize their houses. However, this transformation takes a long time.
- Lot consolidation and density averaging can be useful for larger multifamily developments. Lot division standards should allow for lots to front on a common green or courtyard, not just on a public street.
- Access to staff and their involvement is very helpful, especially when going through an alternative design process. Staff discretion is also important. Common sense should take precedence over specific code language.
- Coordination between the planning department and other departments (transportation, building, fire safety) is important to ensure the permitting process is smooth and efficient for the developer.
- The code should encourage re-use of existing housing stock whenever possible. Allowing ADU development can help achieve that goal.