

NPU-V Special Call Meeting
Zoning Quick Fixes
February 21st, 2018
Rick McDevitt Center
1040 Crew St SW
Atlanta, GA 30315

Introduction

City Planner Nathan Brown led the discussion. Atlanta's zoning ordinances were last updated in 1982. The 'quick fixes' are the first step to address flaws and improve efficiency. The next phase will be a more in-depth discussion of the code followed by a rewrite. 11 NPU-V members were in attendance.

Topic 1: Accessory Structure Height

Most modern A/C units are 44 inches in height and require a zoning variance. Other utility equipment is included in the new height restriction, but all of these units must exist within the setback area of the property and not the buildable space.

Topic 2: Accessory Structure Size

Currently, accessory structure size is based on 30% of the main dwelling livable floor space and must be placed within the setback boundaries. Total floor area of the accessory structure is counted, but only the main floors and attic of the primary structure are used. There were concerns the definition is too restrictive to help alleviate affordable housing solutions outside of a dwelling.

It was recommended that the porch and basement of an accessory dwelling be removed from calculations of size.

Topic 3: Accessory Uses in Residential Districts

Current code does not allow for an amenity area in a subdivision and all lots must conform to lot size. The suggested change would allow for amenities i.e. pool, clubhouse, etc. to have a different lot size from the rest of the subdivision. A concern was raised this would encourage subdivision-style development in large land parcels in the city.

Topic 4: Bike Parking Standards

All of the bike ordinances are going to be consolidated into one section.

Topic 5: Deletion of Unused Districts

Some Special Public Interest (SPI) districts have been absorbed into other districts and no longer exist. Typically, these districts are created by Council members or a business alliance for special provisions such as unique sidewalk and setback requirements.

There was a request for information on the Mechanicsville SPI for the next NPU meeting.

Topic 6: Independent Driveways

The proposed change to driveway requirements would not affect parking requirements. The intention would be to encourage use of alleys for home access, but the alleys have been abandoned by the city and are in disrepair.

It was recommended to strike this topic as a quick fix.

Topic 7: MR/RG Single and Two-Family Minimum Lot Sizes

This change would enable single-family developments on small lots in multi-family zoning. Currently, lot minimums are 2,000 ft² and 5,000 ft². These lot minimums would be changed to 1,000 ft² for single family homes, allowing for dense development and more variety within multi-family zoning.

Topic 8: MRC Building Placement

There are only two options for side windows in MRC districts:

1. No window and placement of structure at the zero lot line
2. Windows but 20ft building setback from the zero lot line

The change will eliminate the 20ft requirement and rely instead on building and fire codes for setback for more flexibility. This would only affect MRC that abuts other MRC/Commercial/Industrial zones.

Topic 9: Unified Development Plans

Each lot must meet zoning requirements currently. The change would allow for a distribution of the zoning requirement within a development site and setbacks would only apply to the development boundary. For example, parking for office towers in the development could be located on a separate corner of the development instead of on-site for each office tower.

It was recommended to strike this topic as a quick fix.

Topic 10: Non-Conforming Minimum Facade Heights

If a building were to expand, the addition would have to have a facade height of at least 24 ft, regardless of the current height. The change would allow for the building to extend 35 ft. before conforming to the 24 ft facade height requirement for better continuity.

Topic 11: SUP Transfers

The proposed transfer process would eliminate most review steps as long as conditions remain the same.

It was recommended to add an NPU-V review step, which is currently not required.

Topic 12: Sidewalk Requirements

Concerns were raised about ramifications since property owners are responsible for sidewalk repair.

It was requested new sidewalk changes go through the NPU-V for review.

Topic 13: Storage Pods in R-Districts

There are no standards currently.

Topic 14: Non Conforming Lots

Currently, non-conformity prevents buying of lot sections. The proposed change would allow for transfer of portions of land as long as the non-conformity is not increased.

Final Vote

It was moved and seconded to approve the quick fix proposal with the NPU recommendations and requests for topics 2,6, 9, 11, and 12: 9-yes, 0-no, 1-abstain