

Code Refresh
High Quality Places Working Group
Meeting #1 – May 5, 2025 (Module 1)

TABLE 1

- 1. In the RD and RA, if two units plus an ADU is allowed, what is the appropriate arrangement of the units (one structure or two?)**
 - Hard to fathom 25' lot with 2 DU + 1 ADU
 - Jackson Ward, Fan (easier to grasp w/ this context)
 - RD-A: side by side to much visual diversity from existing character
 - Comments on how duplexes do not fit w/in character of neighborhood
 - Concerns about increased rentals
 - Comment on like of mix of owners + renters, but reality – are these becoming AirBnBs?
 - Need to ensure these are long term rentals + AirBnB is enforced
 - Less support for two units on larger lot zoning district, but more open in smaller lot/ more dense communities where it is more commonplace (MAJORITY comment)
 - A few of us were open to the infill in all forms though to support increased housing
 - But how do we avoid demo of quality/rehab-able structures?
- 2. Should small commercial uses be allowed within RA? RD? If permitted, should there be limitations regarding size, location in the building or accessory structure, outdoor dining, etc.?**
 - Arthur Ave, Sub Rosa + Roosevelt
 - Thrive on major roadways/intersections
 - Ginter Park – large corridors w/ potential if small/local establishments, 1st story commercial
 - What about allowing it w/ an SUP?
 - Open to diversity in how its located on site (bottom of building, attached to front, stand-alone).
 - Like SUP if doing outdoor dining.
 - RD-C, RA-C lots make sense for commercial – already dense.
 - Another couple of group members are just open to this in diverse forms.
 - Commercial zoning supported for areas w/ homes that were historically commercial to be used that way again
- 3. Are there any concerns with the heights of mixed-use zoning districts in the Neighborhood and Micro Nodes that abut residential zoning districts? Is there a maximum height that you would not want to see surpassed beside a 3-story residential district? Should building stepbacks be considered to limit height or height bonuses for certain types of development?**
 - Comment on opposition to something that doesn't blend w/ adjacent development.
 - Have the zoning districts transition from residential to MX-4, MX-6, MX-8, etc. so height changes are gradual.
 - Building stepbacks for Southside Plaza in parts that are near residential districts.
 - Interested in stepbacks that go from adjacent building height and then build up.
 - Contextual
 - North side of Broad (more urban) different than south side with residential
 - The Shenandoah – taller than neighboring but loved anyway due to architectural interests and value
- 4. What are your thoughts on the window requirements which begin in the RD-C District?**
 - Comment on importance of minimums of window requirements
 - Mixed use – increased window requirements (context of area – walkability)

- Greater window coverage if less architectural detail.
- Comments for 30% min for ground floor residential

TABLE 2

- 1. In the RD and RA, if two units plus an ADU is allowed, what is the appropriate arrangement of the units (one structure or two?)**
 - Pushback against allowing 2 units + ADU in RD districts
 - Support for duplex in one building/structure
- 2. Should small commercial uses be allowed within RA? RD? If permitted, should there be limitations regarding size, location in the building or accessory structure, outdoor dining, etc.?**
 - Support for making RD for special use instead Conditional Use
 - Support for allowing small scale commercial in RA
 - Fine with 1,500 SF + commercial only building
 - Outdoor dining
 - RA-A → corner lots by-right
 - RA-B → corner lots by-right
 - RA-C → corner lots by-right; mid-block SUP
- 3. Are there any concerns with the heights of mixed-use zoning districts in the Neighborhood and Micro Nodes that abut residential zoning districts? Is there a maximum height that you would not want to see surpassed beside a 3-story residential district? Should building setbacks be considered to limit height or height bonuses for certain types of development?**
 - Setbacks if it abuts RD districts
 - Prefer 3 stories instead of 4
- 4. What are your thoughts on the window requirements which begin in the RD-C District?**
[no notes]

TABLE 3

- 1. In the RD and RA, if two units plus an ADU is allowed, what is the appropriate arrangement of the units (one structure or two?)**
 - Not all duplexes should be permitted by right in residential (based on lot width min). Potential for only developers to benefit and for displacement. Could apply to small and large size lots. – continued on Parking Board
 - If current zoning is 90 ft (RD-A), it would have subscribe to these dimensions given that how should it be oriented.
 - Don't think it should be two structures.
 - Dependent on where house is to begin w/ but putting behind is preferable
 - RD-A preferences would be: RD-A (if allowed) currently 2 by right allowed
Carriage houses are essentially ADUs/ older examples
Vertical is nice in RD & RA visually & prevents sprawl
- 2. Should small commercial uses be allowed within RA? RD? If permitted, should there be limitations regarding size, location in the building or accessory structure, outdoor dining, etc.?**
 - Hours of operation can be included/expressed, signage
 - Yes for RA
 - No for RD, no interest in 12 person daycare or small grocery. Leads to abandonment of category of "single family". Why is it wrong to keep this as is?

- Would be okay if it was in RD but only on major thoroughfares limited by location – should be on primary street and not w/in a duplex or residential
 - Location → Adaptive reuse/ avoiding demolition; prefer busier street
 - Micro-node – separate small scale/ mixed use zoning
- 3. Are there any concerns with the heights of mixed-use zoning districts in the Neighborhood and Micro Nodes that abut residential zoning districts? Is there a maximum height that you would not want to see surpassed beside a 3-story residential district? Should building setbacks be considered to limit height or height bonuses for certain types of development?**
- No mixed-use zone lower than 4
 - There shouldn't be 1 story buildings along commercial corridors
 - If there's a main thoroughfare that opens to more intense dev. we should prioritize preserving historic character and setbacks
 - Comm. corridors can easily accept 3 stories
 - Oregon Hill good example to examine for small scale commercial growth
 - Setbacks don't look good anymore/ not really effective/ bad architecture
 - Wouldn't really need height bonuses
 - Shouldn't reward things w/ extra height – even if for affordable housing/ Just do it through zoning
 - As far as max height it's dependent on node size – priority growth node vs. micro might permit higher buildings?
- 4. What are your thoughts on the window requirements which begin in the RD-C District?**
[no notes]

TABLE 4

- 1. In the RD and RA, if two units plus an ADU is allowed, what is the appropriate arrangement of the units (one structure or two?)**
- Maintain existing form – scale
 - 2 structure per lot can provide movement through the lot and increased opportunities for housing
 - Form limitation if we allow multiple units
- 2. Should small commercial uses be allowed within RA? RD? If permitted, should there be limitations regarding size, location in the building or accessory structure, outdoor dining, etc.?**
- Concern for noise
 - Hours of operation
 - Parking especially until ped. + transit infrastructure in place
 - Like CUP for commercial
 - Scale is small + mainly for people in the neighborhood
- 3. Are there any concerns with the heights of mixed-use zoning districts in the Neighborhood and Micro Nodes that abut residential zoning districts? Is there a maximum height that you would not want to see surpassed beside a 3-story residential district? Should building setbacks be considered to limit height or height bonuses for certain types of development?**
- Require setback adjacent to residential – at the edge
 - But expensive + eliminate developable space
 - Concern with height on the south side of Broad
 - Better transition to height on Broad
 - Consider the width of the street for height

- More robust streetscape between residential + mixed-use
 - Allow 1-story above the adjacent residential
- 4. What are your thoughts on the window requirements which begin in the RD-C District?**
- 25-30% minimum
 - Consult with structural engineer on potential impact on cost
 - Why do we need to regulate?

TABLE 5

- 1. In the RD and RA, if two units plus an ADU is allowed, what is the appropriate arrangement of the units (one structure or two?)**
- Allow any configuration = more options; more variety
 - Depends on what design is like
 - Esp. in urban neighborhoods
 - Must be consistent
 - Where are the outside stairwells, windows (in relation to neighbor's property)
 - *Height of the ADU → must be consistent w/ neighborhood
 - Property owners should have protections in the zoning code. But neighbors building next door have property rights too
 - No commercial ADUs
- 2. Should small commercial uses be allowed within RA? RD? If permitted, should there be limitations regarding size, location in the building or accessory structure, outdoor dining, etc.?**
- Size → yes
 - Types of businesses
 - Don't want a retail/food business (brewery) in backyard
 - *Don't want to hear the noise
 - Yes, allow for walkability
 - Allow in only more-urban residential neighborhoods?
 - Limit commercial uses to corner lots? On major roads? (road classification)
 - Reference current zone R-63 for how this could be structured
 - Allow with conditions:
 - Size → up to 1,500 sq ft. Approp. size Garnett's Café. Bigger needs CUP
 - Uses → coffee shop, cafes, neighborhood serving
 - Locations → on corners
 - In RA districts, allow small businesses/ pop-up shops
- 3. Are there any concerns with the heights of mixed-use zoning districts in the Neighborhood and Micro Nodes that abut residential zoning districts? Is there a maximum height that you would not want to see surpassed beside a 3-story residential district? Should building setbacks be considered to limit height or height bonuses for certain types of development?**
- If there are houses behind it, it should be lower
 - Example: Forest Hill/Westover →
 - The Veil has a school behind, no houses = taller OK
 - Other side of Forest Hill has houses behind = shorter
 - Concerns about people/shoppers looking into my yard/windows
 - Regardless of height, just add design requirements
 - Buffer landscaping?

- Orientation of balconies/windows
- Upper level stepbacks → terraced design → inclined plane
- HEIGHT BONUS for senior housing!
- Height should conform to neighborhood practice
- [Diagram of a 4-floor base height allowance with additional stories allowed via inclined plane]
- In existing/historic neighborhoods, should not be tall. Should match 3 story houses. Sunlight blocking. Hard limit. No inclined plane.
- *Compromise? Neighborhood context to start, then inclined plane

4. What are your thoughts on the window requirements which begin in the RD-C District?

- There should be a minimum
- Requirements on side streets should be lower than front

PARKING BOARD

- Trees – opportunity to require trees – without administrative waivers.
- Setback of commercial structures to accommodate wide sidewalks, amenity space, green strip.
- Buildings should have articulation @ the top
- Comment on hearing concerns about parking struggles
- Strategic ways to develop nodes in neighborhoods
- Continuation from #1: Are there districts that duplexes should exclusively not be permitted? Developers aren't from here. Concerns about "all or nothing approach". RD-C is 1/3 of what's currently the smallest but its getting smaller. Initially purchased house as is – wouldn't necessarily disapprove a duplex that looks similar or identical or a garage but the concern is multiple > subdividing. Concerned with changing underlying rules that will allow for increased density. Kim clarified an SUP and subdivided process needed and that's a public process.
- R-5
- SUP off 40ft lots to create 20 ft lots – doesn't look right
- Need more representation of horizontal lot coverage
- Examples of RA-A ADUs/ real life examples. Nothing in docs provided.
- Nonconforming uses due to development before zoning code
- Duplexes/ADUs on lot lines > attached visuals v. detached visuals in doc
- Zoning the unbuilt environment
- Micronodes: R300 talks about nodes and Code Refresh doesn't. Should have a nodal zone.