

# Infill Housing Toolkit Decision Agenda Bellingham Planning Commission public hearing and worksession April 30, 2009

## Issue 1: *The applicability of the Toolkit to Single Family Residential Zones.*

Options for consideration:

1. Concern that the Infill Housing Toolkit will allow multi-family housing forms in single-family neighborhoods could be addressed by deleting the second sentence in 20.28.020.A as follows::

### **20.28.020 Applicability**

A. The housing types in this chapter are permitted in all zones that allow residential uses except: Residential Single, Neighborhood Commercial, and property regulated by BMC 16.80 Lake Whatcom Reservoir regulatory chapter. ~~In single family zones, these housing types may be permitted if approved as part of an amendment to this title through a Type VI process.~~

2. Concern that by requiring a full Type VI legislative process to add any infill housing forms to Residential Single zoned areas, the City is making it too difficult and the forms should be allowed in all residential areas.

Proposal: Allow the Toolkit in all areas of the City that allow residential use except Neighborhood Commercial and the Lake Whatcom Watershed by making the following changes:

### **20.28.020 Applicability**

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3. As written in the Applicability Section, the process required to add one or more of the infill housing forms to existing Residential Single zones is confusing to a number of citizens. Fear that the toolkit may be applied piecemeal to particular lots in existing neighborhoods has also been articulated.

Proposal: Amend 20.28.020 A to clarify that adding the Toolkit to single family zones would require a "rezone" and clarify that any additions would need to be area-wide. If the proposal is not area-wide, require that any additions would also require a Comprehensive Plan amendment and be considered as part of the annual review to strengthen the process requirements.

### **20.28.020 Applicability**

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a Type VI process. Each housing type or types in this chapter shall only be permitted in any Residential Single zone, as a legislative rezone, with all of the notice requirements, hearings and safeguards afforded by a Type VI legislative process. The housing type or types permitted as a rezone in each residential single zone shall be added as a "Special Regulation" to the Zoning Table in Title 20. Addition of the housing types in this chapter to any Residential Single Area shall not be permitted in only a part of any Area, unless such amendment is considered during the annual review of Comprehensive Plan amendments.

4. Make no changes to the current language.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt option #3 to clarify when and how these housing types might be added to Residential Single Family zones, through the rezone process.

5. Other options raised in public process:

- Compromise by allowing only “single-family detached” forms to be added to single-family neighborhoods, e.g. Small and Smaller Lot, DADU, Carriage and Cottage
- Use a pilot or demonstration project to demonstrate forms
- Allow only those neighborhoods who wish to allow the forms to do so
- Only allow Toolkit Housing in Residential Transition Areas surrounding Urban Villages.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON ISSUE 1:**

**The following issues are suggested edits received from the public process conducted to date. The issues and proposed changes are set forth below. Other suggestions are attached with public comment received to date on the proposal.**

**Issue 2:** Clarify that Small Lot and Smaller Lot forms are a detached single family form of housing rather than simply a lot configuration.

Proposal and recommendation Modify the titles of Small Lot and Smaller Lot to Small Home and Smaller Home.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON ISSUE 2:**

**Issue 3:** The backup requirement in alleys is too large and should be reduced.

Proposal and recommendation: Reduce the 22’ back up distance on alleys to 20’.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON ISSUE 3:**

**Issue 4:** Side street parking setback on all forms are too big and will constrain the site.

Proposal and recommendation: Reduce the side street setback for garages, carports and open parking from 20’ to 10 feet. (Revised diagrams contain 10’ side street setback).

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON ISSUE 4:**

**Issue 5:** Open space minimum dimensions in Garden Court should be an average of 20'.

Proposal and recommendation: Change the section to read: 20.28.140.D.1. Shared open space shall be provided in the amount of 200 square feet for each dwelling unit. It shall be consolidated, ~~no dimension less than 20 feet~~ with an average dimension of 20 feet.

**PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON ISSUE 5:**

**Issue 6:** Parking in Garden Court does not allow parking between structures. This should be changed to allow it because it can facilitate better site design and use of available space.

Proposal and recommendation: Allow parking between structures for Garden Court by changing the section to read: 20.28.140.E.2. Minimal parking may not be located between structures, but may not be located or between structures and a public street; and parking generally shall be located to the rear or side only.

**PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON ISSUE 6:**

**Issue 7:** The height limit for the entire Infill Housing Toolkit is 25'. This height limit may be too small for Townhouses, and it may be prudent to allow Townhouses to go up to 35' in some cases. The Planning Commission might consider:

1. Increasing the height for Townhouses from 25' to 35', or
2. Adding a new housing type, the Tall Townhouse which could go up to 35' or
3. Do nothing and leave the proposal as it is.

Proposal and recommendation: Staff can live with any of these alternatives but is attracted to alternative #2 because it would provide another alternative for toolkit implementation.

**PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON ISSUE 7:**

**Issue 8:** The Green Factor landscaping standards that accompany certain forms of the Infill Housing Toolkit specify a multiplier of only .2 for structured soil systems. These systems have proven to be very effective in our area and the multiplier should be increased to encourage their use in these projects. See Attachment F for example Green Factor worksheet.

Proposal and recommendation: Increase the multiplier for structured soil systems to 0.4.

**PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON ISSUE 8:**

**NEW ISSUES NOT PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN STAFF REPORT:**

**Issue 9:** Fairhaven Design Guidelines, City Center Design Guidelines and any new urban village design guidelines are located in BMC 20.26 and are not currently referenced in the Toolkit.

Proposal and recommendation: To ensure that all Toolkit forms include and abide by those guidelines, a reference to BMC 20.26 should be included in the General Standards under Design Review.

**PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON ISSUE 9:**

**OTHER ISSUES PER PLANNING COMMISSION DIRECTION:**