



Montgomery Planning Countywide Planning and Policy

04/11/2024

Agenda Item No. 07

Attainable Housing Strategies

Work Session 7 - Background, and Medium Scale Recommendations

Agenda

Staff requests feedback on the current recommendations for the medium-scale attainable housing, including:

- General Information and Definitions
- Medium Scale Attainable Housing
 - Attainable Housing Optional Method (AHOM)
 - Desired outcomes
 - Eligibility criteria
 - Densities (underlying zone, AHOM recommendations, bonus densities)
 - Regulatory Process



Work Sessions Approach

Planning Staff have organized the staff report as a series of recommendations including relevant background information. Each recommendation is a decision point to confirm the Planning Boards support, or desired modifications.



Tentative Work Session Schedule

Attainable Housing Strategies Schedule (2024)	
April 11, 2024	Planning Board Work Session #7 (Medium Scale)
April 25, 2024	Planning Board Work Session #8 (Small Scale)
May 9, 2024	Planning Board Work Session #9 (Large Scale and other issues)
May 23, 2024	Planning Board Work Session #10 (Bring back changes)
June 6, 2024	Planning Board Work Session #11 (if needed)
June 2024	Planning, Housing, and Parks Committee Briefing



Approach – General Recommendations

The draft AHS report was originally written with a companion draft ZTA, lending to some of the specifics on detail and language.

- New approach is to send a final AHS report of recommendations, without attaching zoning text.
 - Specifics on Zoning would be reviewed with one or more follow-up ZTAs for implementation.

Recommendation: focusing the AHS report on general policy recommendations that may result in future changes to the zoning code, other sections of code, or policy reforms, without providing explicit changes to sections of code.

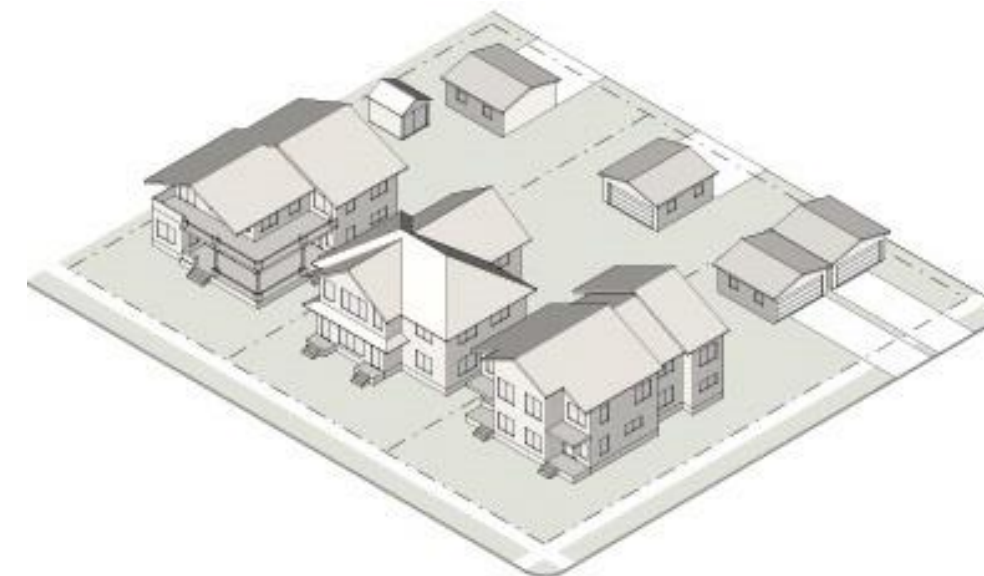
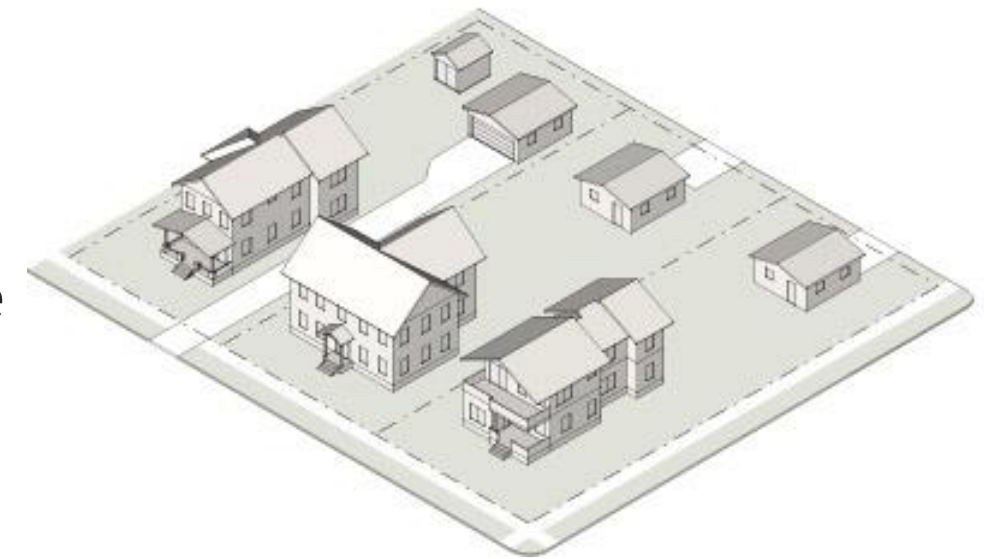
Page 4
Bottom



Building Types

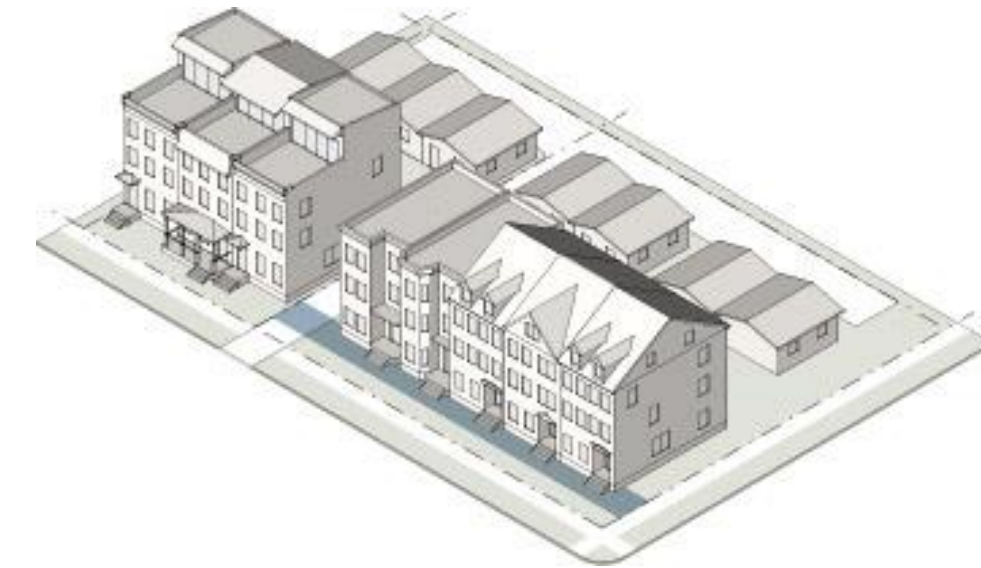
Detached House or a Building for a Cultural Institution, Religious Assembly, Public Use, or Conditional Use allowed in the zone: A detached house is a building containing one dwelling unit that may contain ancillary nonresidential uses, such as a Home Occupation or Family Day Care. A Building for a Cultural Institution, Religious Assembly, Public Use, or a Conditional Use allowed in the zone is a building that accommodates only a Cultural Institution, Religious Assembly, Public Use, or an approved conditional use allowed in the applicable zone under Article [59-3](#), Uses and Use Standards. This building type includes buildings used for agriculture associated with Farming.

Duplex: A duplex is a building containing 2 principal dwelling units that may contain ancillary nonresidential uses, such as a Home Occupation or Family Day Care.



Building Types

Townhouse: A townhouse is a building containing 3 or more dwelling units where each dwelling unit is separated vertically by a party wall. A townhouse may contain ancillary nonresidential uses, such as a Home Occupation or Family Day Care.



Apartment Building: An apartment building is a building containing 3 or more dwelling units vertically and horizontally arranged. An apartment may contain up to 10% of the gross floor area as Retail/Service Establishment uses, otherwise it is a multi use building.



Building Types

There is a need for a new building type that uniquely accommodates attainable housing types such as triplexes and quadplexes and can permit these uses in residential zones without having to permit townhouses or apartments.

Recommendation: a new building type called the Multiplex which would be;

- **A three or four unit building for multi-unit living, and**
- **Contains separate units arranged horizontally, vertically, or a combination.**



Townhouse Building Type

Modifications are needed to the Townhouse and apartment building types to avoid conflicts with the multiplex building type.

The draft AHS report recommended amending the Townhouse building type to:

- A building with **3 4** of more units where each dwelling unit is separated vertically by a party wall and the dwellings are arranged linearly.

Planning Staff now recommends

- A building with **3 5 or more units** where each dwelling unit is separated vertically by a party wall and the dwellings are arranged linearly.

Apartment Building Type

Modifications are needed to the Apartment building type to avoid conflicts with the multiplex building type.

The Draft AHS Report recommended amending the Apartment building type to:

- A building with **3 5** or more units arranged vertically and horizontally. An apartment buildings with 19 or fewer dwellings is also known as a small apartment building.

Recommendation to modify the definition of Apartment building to 5 or more units, and define small apartment building as 19 or fewer units.



What is ‘Medium Scale’?

- Development of townhouses, stacked flats, cottage courts, and small apartments in addition to small-scale housing (duplexes and multiplexes) in up to 3 stories in height.
- Larger existing properties, or multiple residential lot consolidation.
- Located along Thrive Montgomery 2050 corridors.
- Optional method of development where extra density is allowed in exchange for keeping unit size smaller (price attainable).



Medium Scale Housing



What is Optional Method Development?

Optional Method development provides for greater flexibility in exchange for additional review scrutiny and the provision of a pre-defined public benefit.

- Existing optional method allows for more building types, smaller lot sizes, and more flexible standards in residential zones in exchange for site plan review and:
 - MPDU – providing MPDUs
 - Cluster – providing more open space



Attainable Housing Optional Method (AHOM)

AHS proposes a new Attainable Housing optional method (AHOM) of development for certain residential zones along the *Thrive Montgomery 2050* corridors.

- Idea inspired by a ZTA that was considered, but never introduced.
- One way to jump start corridor focused development before corridor master plans.



AHOM Purpose

The AHOM should specifically support the following optional method policies:

- Support a variety of housing types including duplexes, multiplexes, townhouses, and small apartments.
- Permit higher densities in exchange for more attainable unit sizes.
- Provide flexibility in site design.
- Review with the Planning Board through a site plan.

Page 7
Center

Recommendations:

- **Create a new Attainable Housing optional method (AHOM)**
- **Require site plan review**
- **Permit higher density but require adhering to an average dwelling unit size**



Draft AHOM Definition

The Attainable Housing method of development provides an optional method of development that supports the creation of a variety of dwelling unit types. The focus is to limit the size of new dwelling units to promote sizes and prices that are lower than what existing new developments generally provide. Optional Method Attainable Housing Development allows flexibility in lot layout and variety in residential building types. Density is increased above the underlying zoning in a sliding scale that incentivizes the creation of price attainable housing options. The Attainable Housing Optional Method of Development also provides a transition from more intensive land uses or density to less dense areas near existing and proposed transit infrastructure. An applicant's use of this method of development, and site plan approval for portions of such development, are subject to site plan approval by the Planning Board.

Page 7
Bottom

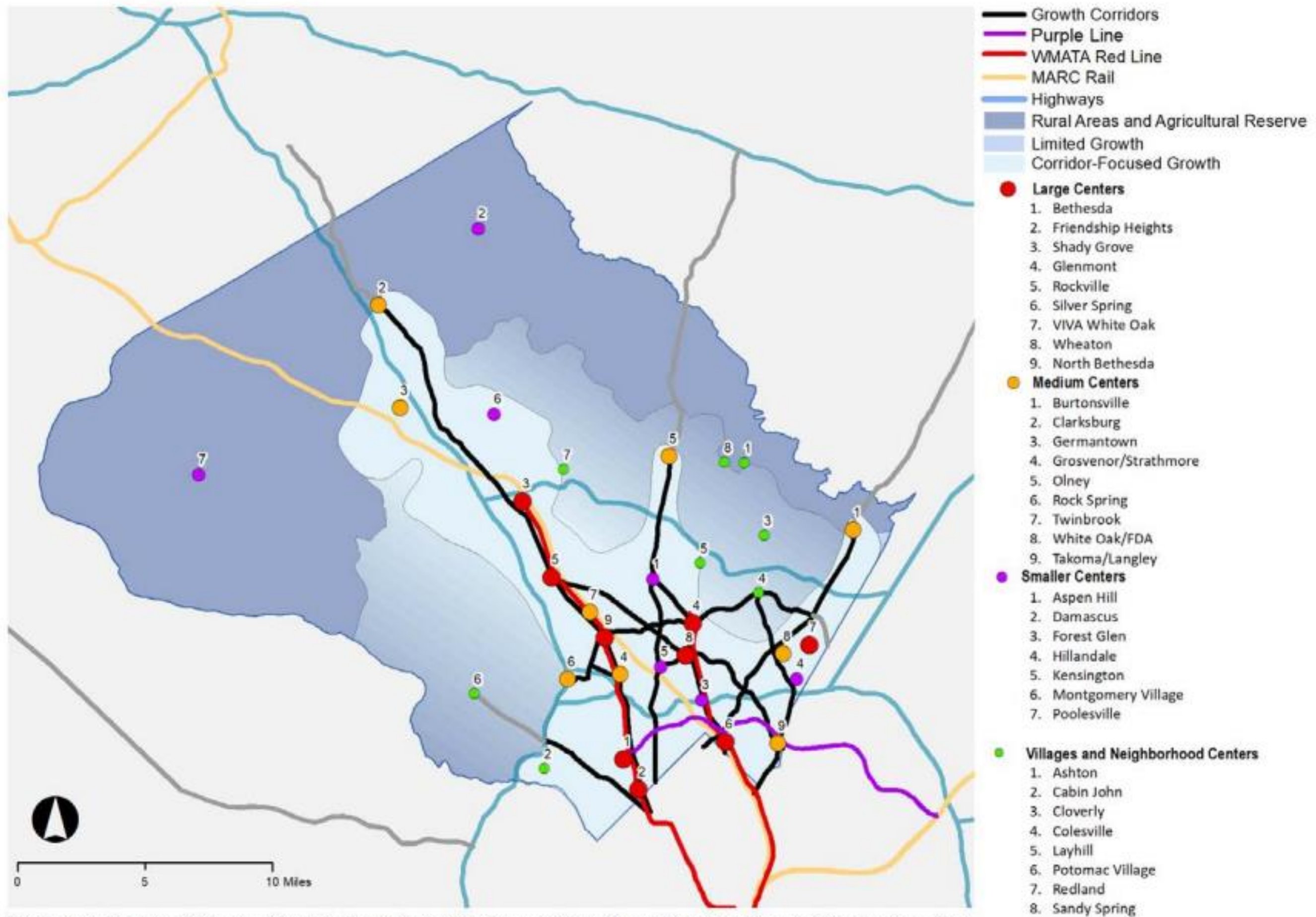
Recommendations – clarify that Planning Board approval is through a site plan.



Where would AHOM be allowed

- R-90 and R-60 Zones
- Property must abut a *Thrive Montgomery 2050* corridor
 - Before the adoption of Thrive, it was previously defined as:
 - Planned for BRT in the 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Plan
 - Connecticut Avenue
 - River Road inside the Beltway
- Or a property recommended for AHOM or a residential floating zone by a master plan.





The Growth Map should be considered in the context of the Compact Growth and Complete Communities chapters. The centers of activity shown are not exhaustive of all existing or potential centers. Some of the centers listed on the growth map are not subject to Montgomery County zoning authority.



Where would AHOM be allowed

- AHOM as a density transition between growth centers/corridors and the interiors of residential neighborhoods.
- Thrive growth corridors are to be a focus of future growth and have or are planned for frequent transit service.
- Master Plan recommended Floating Zone areas have already been identified by a master plan as an area capable of supporting additional densities.

Page 8
Bottom

Recommendation: AHOM be allowed on properties in the R-60 or R-90 Zone that;

- **Abut a Thrive Montgomery 2050 growth corridors (major corridors), or**
- **Is recommended for AHOM in a master plan, or**
- **Is recommended for a residential floating zone in a master plan.**



AHOM Procedures

The structure of the AHOM should be based on the existing MPDU optional method of development.

- Site Plan review
- Development across zones
- Density based on usable area
- MPDU rules still apply

Recommendation – extend existing MPDU optional method development procedures to the AHOM.

AHOM Development Standards

Like with the procedures for development, the AHOM should use the MPDU optional method as a basis for the development standards table.

- Site Standards
 - Minimum site area, density, open space, site coverage
- Lot minimum dimensions
- Building placement
 - Setbacks
- Height

Recommendation – use the MPDU optional method development standards table as a reference point for the AHOM standards table

AHOM Building Types

There are some specific development standards that should be unique for the AHOM:

- Building Types
 - Detached house, duplex, multiplex, townhouse, small apartment.

Page 9
Bottom

Recommendation - add multiplex and small apartment building types columns to the development standards table.



AHOM Usable Area

There are some specific development standards that should be unique for the AHOM:

- Usable Area
 - Two times the minimum lot size for a detached house in the underlying zone.
 - Intent to encourage lot assembly or utilize larger underdeveloped areas.
 - Larger sites to minimize curb cuts and better enhance the corridor boulevard.

Page 10
Top

Recommendation – set the minimum usable site area at two times the lot size of a detached house in the underlying zone.



Base Density vs AHOM Density

R-90 Zone

- Base Density of 4.84 units/acre
- Recommended AHOM Base of ~10 units/acre

R-60 Zone

- Base Density of 7.26 units/acre
- Recommended AHOM Base of ~13 units/acre

Bonus Density

- 2% density increase for each 1% decrease in average unit size below 1,500 SF
- 20% decrease in unit size (1,200 SF) = 14 units/acre in R-90 and 20 units/acre in R-60



Density Precedents

Staff looked at multiple sources when determining what AHOM base density to recommend.

- Density allowed in the TLD, TMD, THD zones
 - 9, 12, and 15 units/acre
- Existing townhouse developments in the CR zone
- Missing middle study for the *Veirs Mill Corridor Plan*
- Other resources



Density Precedents



Rock Spring Park

- I-3 optional method
- 168 units, 10.62 acres, 15.8 units/acre
- 18'x40' typical ground floor



Randolph Farms

- RT-15 floating zone, LMA G-964
- 104 units, 8.44 acres, 12.3 units/acre
- 16-20' x 40' typical ground floor



Density Precedents

Housing Type	Missingmiddle.com	MM Housing Study
Cottage/Bungalow Court	5-10	10-15
Duplex side-by-side	8-17	14
Townhouse	11-25	24
Multiplex	5-12	
Stacked Flats		30-34
Stacked Triplex	15-38	33
Small Apartment	21-35	20-40

Robindale Site from Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan.

- ~ 30 units/acre
- Illustrative diagram that does not illustrate all code requirements, utilities, stormwater, or emergency access
- Small unit sizes between 650 and 1,450 SF
- Does not account for previous or newly dedicated ROW as tract area



AHOM Density

Page 11
Center

Recommendations:

- **to set the density allowed for projects utilizing the AHOM at around two times the base density of the underlying zone.**



Bonus Density

R-90 Zone

% Reduction in Average Unit Size	Average Unit Size (SF)	Density Incentive Factor	Net Density (units/acre)	SF of Development (per acre of site)
Base	1,500	100%	10	15,000
5%	1,425	110%	11	15,675
10%	1,350	120%	12	16,200
15%	1,275	130%	13	16,575
20%	1,200	140%	14	16,800
25%	1,125	150%	15	16,875
30%	1,050	160%	16	16,800

R-60 Zone

% Reduction in Average Unit Size	Average Unit Size (SF)	Density Incentive Factor	Net Density (units/acre)	SF of Development (per acre of site)
Base	1,500	100%	13	19,500
5%	1,425	110%	14.3	20,378
10%	1,350	120%	15.6	21,060
15%	1,275	130%	16.9	21,548
20%	1,200	140%	18.2	21,840
25%	1,125	150%	19.5	21,938
30%	1,050	160%	20.8	21,840

Bonus Density

- Linear density increases tied to average unit size decreases
 - 30 percent decreases in average unit size from 1,500 SF to 1,050 SF result in as much as 16 and 21 units/acre
 - Development as measured in gross floor area is ‘maximized’ at a 25% reduction in average unit sizes

Page 11
Center

Recommendation - Support bonus density 2 percent increase for every one percent reduction in average unit size.



Dwelling Unit Standards

Focus of the AHOM intended to incentivize the production of attainable sized and priced housing.

- Average dwelling unit size – 1,500 SF.
 - Individual units may be larger, this is an average across all units (a 2,000 SF townhouse offset by a 1,000 SF apartment).
 - Limiting dwelling unit size as a means to provide more attainable new construction.
- Maximum dwelling unit for a Detached House is 1,500 SF.
 - Idea to incentivize the creation of ‘cottage court’ housing, or other more price attainable small detached houses.



AHOM Dwellings Unit Standards

Page 12
Center

Recommendation:

- **Limit the average dwelling unit size to 1,500 SF across all dwellings**
- **Set a maximum unit size of 1,500 SF for detached houses.**



AHOM Open Space

Typical site planned residential projects are required to provide common open space:

- Amount required varies, but average of 20%, AHS recommends AHOM projects provide at least 10%.
 - Smaller anticipated AHOM project areas
 - Design requirements for common open space ensure some usable area

Page 11
Bottom

Recommendation - AHOM projects provide common open space equal to 10% of the site area.



AHOM Parking

Adjustments are recommended to vehicle parking for AHOM developments.

- 50% reduction (2 spaces/unit reduced to 1 space/unit) for sites where 50% or more of the site frontage does not allow street parking.
- 75% reduction (2 spaces/unit reduced to 0.5 spaces/unit) for sites where 50% or more of the site frontage does allow street parking.

With ZTA 23-10, any AHOM site within ¼ mile of a BRT station funded for construction is exempt from any parking.

*Page 37-38
Draft AHS Report*

Recommendation:

- **Support the AHS recommendations of a 50% reduction in parking on sites with <50% street parking, and**
- **a 75% reduction in parking on sites with >50% street parking.**



Correspondence Received

- Planning Staff has received nearly 70 pieces of written and verbal correspondence.
- Staff is currently compiling a matrix to better organize and understand the scope of the comments received.
- Most comments were general in nature or were focused on small scale attainable housing.
- Staff will provide the Planning Board with an updated comment matrix for the next work session.



Next Steps Schedule for AHS

Attainable Housing Strategies Schedule (2024)	
March 21, 2024	Planning Board Public Comment Session on AHS
April 11, 2024	Planning Board Work Session #7 (Medium Scale)
April 25, 2024	Planning Board Work Session #8 (Small Scale)
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