

Revised Summary – DRAFT 9/5/18

Bachrach Comments – 9.7.18

While I believe the RIP package the PSC has pieced together over the last couple of months is a strong planning concept, I’ve come to believe it needs to be streamlined and scaled back in order to make a more practical and implementable code amendment package. With that overview in mind, some of my comments are below in red:

Housing Options and Scale

1. Allow for more housing types (R7, R5, and R2.5 zones)

- a. Allow for houses, duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes *Allowing fourplexes is a step too far. The possibility of four units on a single family lot is an antagonizing talking point that risks undermining the package. I now lean towards staff’s original concept of triplexes on corner lots and duplexes elsewhere. Let’s get acceptance of two or maybe three units on single family lots – and make it as simple as possible to build them - and then see what happens over the next few years. A future BPS and PSC can then look at increasing the allowed density.*
- b. Allow a house to have two accessory dwelling units (ADU’s) or a duplex to have one ADU
- c. Limit lots with the following constraints to a house plus one ADU, or a corner lot duplex:
 - I. Medium or high value natural resource inventory (NRI)
 - II. Combination of stormwater/steep slope/landslide history
 - III. Sewer service constraints
 - IV. 100-year floodplain
 - V. Unpaved streets
- d. Set a minimum lot size for lots with 1-2 units and a larger lot size for lots with 3-4 units.

2. Limit the overall size of structures on a lot (R7, R5, and R2.5 zones)

- a. Set a total maximum floor to area ratio (FAR) that is less than what is achievable today.
- b. Scale the FAR to increase as the number of units increases on the site.
- c. Exclude attics and basements from FAR.
- d. Allow an additional increase in FAR for the site if:
 - i. *At least one of the units is affordable (80% MFI), or As the PSC came to recognize, RIP is not a realistic way to gain mandatory affordable housing (i.e., inclusionary zoning). I would recommend we not clutter up the package with affordability requirements that are likely to be rarely if ever utilized. The goal is to create opportunities for more housing types and density in single family zones, there should not be added conditions imposed on people who are trying to do that.*
 - ii. An existing house is converted to multiple units and the street-facing facade of the house remains substantially unaltered.
- e. Allow existing houses to expand by up to 250 square feet without having to meet (or show compliance with) FAR limits. *That’s too small a limit on existing home owners. I’m not sure what the sweet spot is, but something more than 250 sq feet.* One such addition is allowed every 5 years.

		R7	R5	R2.5
# of	Allowed	FAR	FAR	FAR

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Units	Housing Type	4,200 sq. ft.		3,000 sq. ft.		1,600 sq. ft.	
		Base	W/Bonus	Base	W/Bonus	Base	W/Bonus
Minimum lot size (1-2 units)		4,200 sq. ft.		3,000 sq. ft.		1,600 sq. ft.	
1	House	.4	NA	.5	NA	.7	NA
2	Duplex or House + ADU	.5	.6	.6	.7	.8	.9
Minimum lot size (3+ units)		5,000 sq. ft.		4,500 sq. ft.		3,200 sq. ft.	
3	Triplex, Duplex + ADU, or House + 2 ADUs	.6	.7	.7	.8	.9	1.0
4	Fourplex						
Current allowed FAR (based on setbacks, height and building coverage)		1.1 FAR		1.35 FAR		1.75 FAR	

I've raise my concern that the maximum FAR for a single family house in the R5 and R7 is too low.

I believe we were told the average (or was it the mean?) house size built in the city in recent years was about 2,800 square feet. We are proposing a cap of 2,500 square feet for a house on a standard 5,000 sq foot lot in the R5 zone. That's denying a significant portion of the home buying public the ability to buy what it wants. Allowing bigger homes via basements or an expensive and uncertain adjustment process are not reasonable alternatives. Both practically and symbolically I think the maximize size limitation is another step too far. It sends a message to larger families who want a bit more house that they're not wanted in Portland and they should look to the suburbs. As one commenter said to me, "Have you asked the school district what they think about the house size limitation?"

3. **Require at least two dwelling units when new development is proposed on a double sized lot (R7, R5, and R2.5 zones).**
4. **For 3 or 4 units, require at least one unit be visitable. Visitable includes:** As commented above, I don't think we should impose more conditions on builders who want to try building a duplex or triplex. Instead, the city should look to other mechanisms, besides the zoning code, to incent or mandate new housing to meet visitability requirements.
 - a. No step entry
 - b. Wider doorway
 - c. Living space and bathroom on the ground floor
 - d. Provide exceptions for existing buildings or when the slope between the street and the front door is greater than 20%
5. **Rezone roughly half of the historically narrow lots that have the highest access to amenities from R5 to R2.5. Allow the remainder of the historically narrow lots in the R5 zone to be confirmed for attached houses.**
6. **Allow small flag lots through property line adjustments (R5 and R2.5 zones).**
 - a. Require that the existing house be retained.

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- b. Limit the size of the house on the small flag lot to 1,000 sq. ft. and require additional exterior design elements.
- c. In the R5 zone, limit the height of the house on the flag lot to 20 feet.

7. Continue to allow added flexibility in building form and site arrangements through a discretionary planned development review. Set allowances to match new rules

Building Design

8. Revise how height is measured (all zones).

- a. Measure height from the lowest point near the house, not the highest point.
- b. Clarify that small dormers are excluded from the height measurement.
- c. Continue to allow 2½ story houses (30 feet high) on standard lots.

9. Building features and articulation

- a. Limit how high the front door can be above the ground (exempt lots in floodplains).
- b. Allow eaves to project up to 2 feet into setbacks.
- c. Allow a front setback reduction to align with the house next-door in R7, R5 and R2.5 zones.
- d. Do not require the front door of each corner lot duplex unit to face separate streets.

10. Keep current rules for ADU's (size, height, and living area) except:

- a. Allow basement ADU conversions to exceed the 800s.f./75% size cap in an existing house.
- b. Allow the front door of an internal ADU to face the street.

11. Parking

- a. Delete minimum parking requirements for residential uses in single dwelling zones.
- b. If a lot abuts an alley, require parking access to be from the alley when parking is provided.
- c. Prohibit driveways and parking between the building and a street when the building façade is less than 22 feet wide. Continue to allow parking behind the building.

12. Improve building design on lots less than 32 feet wide.

- a. Limit the height of a detached house to 1½ times its width.
- b. Require attached houses on lots 25 feet wide and narrower.