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# Memo

**To:** Planning and Zoning Commission  
**From:** Jennifer M. Rauch, AICP, Director of Planning  
Sarah Tresouthick Holt, AICP, ASLA, Senior Planner  
**Date:** January 10, 2023  
**Re:** Neighborhood Design Guidelines Update, Case 22-177ADMO  
Related Zoning Code Amendments, Case 23-002ADMC

## Summary

City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) have discussed the opportunity for more creative and sustainable residential neighborhoods in Dublin relative to community character, open spaces, amenities, setbacks, and lot coverage. Recent residential developments reviewed by PZC and Council have raised concerns about the overall design character and development standards, and they have asked staff to address these concerns in a more comprehensive way. Planning staff conducted a series of Work Sessions with City Council and PZC to gather information on key areas of concern. Based on that input, staff and our consultant have created design guidelines that support the Code's PUD intent language and encourage the desired outcomes.

The draft Guidelines were shared with the Community Development Committee (CDC) on September 28, 2022, and the Committee Members provided feedback to staff. A status update was provided to CDC on November 28, 2022, and the Committee confirmed the project direction and how the comments were addressed. The project was then brought to PZC on December 8, 2022 for a final discussion prior to a recommendation. The Commission was given the opportunity to provide further thoughts and edits, which have been incorporated in the proposed draft. Accompanying Code amendments are outlined below for the Commission's review and recommendation in conjunction with the draft Guidelines. Staff requests a formal recommendation be made to City Council on the draft Guidelines and Code Amendments.

## Background

The topic of residential development standards was initially referred to PZC by Council on June 22, 2020 following concerns related to the Hamlet on Jerome and Oak Park developments. PZC was introduced to the topic on August 20, 2020 and subsequently discussed it on October 1, 2020. The Commission's discussion centered on defining a holistic intent for future residential developments to be timeless, provide a sense of community, and maintain the desired character of Dublin. Other goals included:

1. Avoid being so prescriptive as to limit development and design opportunities;

2. Understand the community's needs and wants for housing, as well as what other communities are experiencing with residential development; and
3. Retain existing Code standards for lower density development with exemptions for higher density where quality of life attributes are provided.

Since these initial discussions, PZC and Council have had further discussions resulting from the Dublin Gateway, Overlook at Tartan Ridge, Ayrshire, and Hyland Glen projects. Both groups have raised additional topics of lot coverage, building coverage, setbacks, building materials, open space amenities and connectivity. Numerous variance applications at the Board of Zoning Appeals were also discussed as part of the joint meeting between the Boards, Commission and Council on December 14, 2020. As part of their work plan for 2021, PZC identified this topic as a target item for the latter part of the year. Staff outlined a comprehensive project work plan at the November 4, 2021 PZC meeting and provided an overview of the existing regulations that govern general residential development. The Commission supported the proposed plan, provided additional feedback, and recommended that the proposed solution should focus on residential PUD projects only, given the limited amount of standard zoning acreage remaining for residential development.

Per the work plan, a series of workshops were held in January 2022 for PZC members and incoming/outgoing Council representatives. Staff requested PZC review a series of discussion topics for feedback: different housing types and details for further study; information about housing types, trends and consumer needs to inform the conversation; and specific dimensional standards. Members were also asked to provide positive and negative examples of residential developments (local/national/international) for discussion. A summary of the feedback was provided, along with recommended solutions, and each were confirmed by the group.

A City Council Work Session was held on April 18, 2022 to share the results and preliminary recommendations from the PZC discussions. Council Members provided input on the preliminary design standards which are organized from the broad, foundational framework of the overall neighborhood, to the street network and streetscape design, then to specific details of individual lots. The design guidelines were further refined and expanded based on their feedback.

More recently, Council raised questions regarding stormwater basins and whether they should be counted toward required open space in residential projects. Concerns were raised that the size of the basins are a significant portion of open space within these neighborhoods, leaving limited usable open space for residents. The topic was referred to CDC and discussed on September 28, and November 28, 2022. At that time, CDC agreed that the project was ready for PZC consideration and discussion, which occurred on December 8. Subsequent to a very positive discussion, staff requested that any more detailed comments be provided by December 16, and these comments have been incorporated into the final draft Guidelines and Code attached. Once the Commission recommends approval, staff will schedule the Guidelines and Code for City Council adoption.

### **Neighborhood Design Guidelines**

The draft *Neighborhood Design Guidelines* provides a series of design solutions for evaluation of future residential PUD projects to ensure the City's desired design goals are met. The Guidelines are organized into a hierarchy of three levels from the broad macro public realm of open spaces

and preservation areas, to the micro level public realm of streetscapes as outdoor rooms, to the private realm of individual lots and the functions of various areas within the lots and lot types.

*Public Realm, Macro Level*

The macro level of the public realm is the organization of neighborhoods around a designed framework of public open space, including both the preservation of existing natural features and the thoughtful creation of new open spaces as neighborhood amenities and focal points. The Guidelines reference the applicability of conservation design within PUDs and offer an alternative for projects of any size and location in the new Open Space Framework requirement.

*Public Realm Micro Level*

The micro public realm focuses on the design character of neighborhood streetscapes as high-quality public and semi-private spaces. The Guidelines reference the applicability of the Residential Appearance Code as the minimum, emphasize that PUD expectations are higher based on Code intent language, and provide aspirational ideas and images appropriate for PUDs.

*Private Realm*

The private realm addresses the need to ensure adequate private space within each lot, independent of lot size. Included are requirements for setbacks, AC locations, yards, and buildable areas. Multiple-lot exhibits would be required as part of a Concept Plan application to better understand development patterns within a typical block of a proposal.

**December Commission Comments and Responses to Guidelines**

The Commission provided written feedback on the following topics by December 16. For clarity, these are presented below with responses in italics.

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Resolution</b>
How to calculate the right amount of open space	Will vary from site-to-site; determined with Open Space Framework
Maintenance of open space in perpetuity	PDP item; staff will address during process
Undulating/meandering sidewalks	T&M does not support
Additional direction on AC locations on corner lots	See graphic, page 44
Alley setbacks: take out numeric requirement to stay flexible	Alleys will need to be public per City Council; will require some kind of setback; to be negotiated with specific applications
6' side yard; need total 14' side yard measurement	See language, page 37
Avoid over-building the lot at the outset	Lot samples indicate appropriate lot coverages
Show building envelopes on all lots	Yes, including concept that BEs can be staggered to prevent monotony
Dry stormwater facilities as active space	See language, page 19
Connectivity to larger trail networks/destinations	See language, pages 13 and 19 and in existing Code
Not every street tree has to be a shade tree	See language, page 27
Use of hedges as unifying streetscape element	See language, page 29
Alleys @ 60' too wide	Alleys will need to be public per City Council;

	to be negotiated with specific applications
Houses around front open space and distance to address street	See language, page 47 and photo, page 48
Need stipulations on open space and what counts	Will vary site-by-site. Additional language provided on page 12
Include all pertinent analysis to define developable areas of site	Clarified page 12
Street tree arrangements and preferences	Code requirements and City Forestry oversight still remain for healthy spacing. Additional language provided page 27
Garage proportions when front-facing	Language added, page 35
Front-facing garages ought not be eliminated	Agreed; variety of garage locations emphasized page 35
Parking in alleys needs guidance	Alleys will need to be public per City Council, which will affect how parking is arranged; will be negotiated with specific applications
Potential to have different sidewalk dimensions	Possibly street-by-street to set up a hierarchy, which is not precluded
Stormwater counted as "active" open space	See Code amendment language
Not in favor of alleys	They would be a significant hurdle to overcome, with City Council/Eng requirement that they are public. We want to maintain the option, however.
Pg 6: add "a purposeful open space network"	Added
Pg 7: show how open space is connected to City-wide network	Added
Pg 7: public realm should also include front-facing terraces, patios, etc.	Added
Pg 12, Step 1: Should there be a specific checklist of required submittals?	This should be tailored to each site, based on its specific characteristics. Staff will help do this. Language included to explain.
Pg 11, Step 3: Can we provide a kit of parts for street design, landscape widths, etc.	This is provided in the Standard Engineering Drawings
Pg 12: Show native vs. non-native vegetation?	Will be tailored to each site
Pg 13: Show topographic & hydrologic information	Is vetted through stormwater plans and shown in graphic 1-C
Pg 18: typos and good to illustrate 5- and 10-minute walking radius	Corrected and language this is added to the implementation language page 6
Pg 21: dry basins as recreational opportunities	Added to language
Pg 26: Public realm doesn't stop at ROW	Staff will ensure smooth transition of spaces during review
Pg 27: Proximity of trees for healthy growth	See Code amendments and added language page 27
Pg 29: variety of potential door yard spaces	See language, page 32

Pg 31: Street-facing garage doors and setbacks along alleys	See previous comments and responses
Pg 7: clarify staff criteria for evaluation	Clarified, page 12. Want to leave criteria somewhat open for site-by-site determination
Pg 19: consider adding "where appropriate" related to historic elements	Explanatory paragraph added page 17
Pg 21: sometimes, we might want ponds in the back	Explanatory language added page 19 to allow ponds in best locations
Pg 32: 3 garage doors on 2 planes too strict	Added language that an architectural or landscape separation is required between banks of doors, page 37
Alleys: can there be storage for trash cans and package delivery locations?	Staff shall negotiate that with applicants on alley-loaded projects
Narrow lots: windows should avoid looking directly into adjacent homes	Statement added page 37
Open space: should have variety of sizes including large sports fields and nooks	Agreed: address with Guideline language
High quality building materials and avoidance of materials with class action lawsuits	Architect consultant and materials review will address
Sustainability: use of solar or other renewable energy sources	Will be addressed with the upcoming solar code amendments

### Zoning Code Amendments

In addition to the proposed Neighborhood Design Guidelines, staff has identified a series of Code amendments that need to be considered to achieve the desired character. These were presented to the Commission for discussion and confirmation on December 8. Staff identified additional Code amendments that were needed to ensure the procedural connection between residential development activities and the new Guidelines are made, and these are outlined generally below. Draft Code language is attached for review.

1. §152.002: In order to link the Subdivision Regulations platting activity in PUDs, with the new Neighborhood Design Guidelines, a reference to the Guidelines is made.
2. §152.086: The Open Space Requirements refer to the Guidelines for residential PUDs.
3. §153.050: The PUD section of the Code should also have specific links to the Guidelines as part of the purpose and application introductory section.
4. §153.052: A request was made from Council that stormwater ponds not count as open space. Staff has drafted a Code amendment that will describe that they only be permitted to count with superior design.

Current Code permits the use of easements and required setbacks as open space, and these areas, unless carefully designed, can become straight, unimaginative alleys. Staff has drafted a Code amendment about how these areas shall be integrated into a broader and more meaningful open space network.

5. §153.054(A), (B), and (C): Links the submittal requirements for Concept Plan, PDP, and FDP to the Neighborhood Design Guidelines.
6. §153.071(4)(e): During the interviews, all PZC and Council members indicated that they would not be opposed to higher densities where design is superior. Current maximum lot coverage is capped at 45 percent per the Code, which limits higher densities and different housing products. Staff has drafted a Code amendment, with goal language, to allow this possibility within PUDs.
7. §153.134(A)(1)(a-f): Commission and Council members agreed that creative landscaping, especially street trees, is imperative to making a sense-of-place within a neighborhood. This section of the Code currently permits a variety of large, medium, and small street trees with corresponding spacing requirements. The corresponding Guidelines III, D speak to these goals, so staff proposes code language to emphasize that design intent.
8. §153.190(A), (B) and (C): Clarifications that the Appearance standards apply only to standard zoning and are not intended for residential PUDs; these use the Neighborhood Design Guidelines.

**Recommendation**

Planning recommends the Planning and Zoning Commission make a recommendation of approval of the Neighborhood Design Guidelines and associated Zoning Code amendments to City Council.