



Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: Ord. 986 **Version:** 1 **Name:**
Type: Ordinance **Status:** Second Reading
File created: 12/16/2016 **In control:** City Council
On agenda: 2/7/2017 **Final action:**
Title: Consider Zoning Text Amendment Ordinance - R1 Lot Building Area Ratio.

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. 1 - Ordinance, 2. 2 - R1 Building Coverage Analysis, 3. 3 - Planning Commission Rationale, 4. 4 - R1 Building Area PowerPoint Presentation

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
1/17/2017	1	City Council	approve the first reading	Pass

Date: February 7, 2017

To: City Council

From: Scott Tempel, City Planner
Chris Heineman, Community Planning and Development Director

Consider Zoning Text Amendment Ordinance - R1 Lot Building Area Ratio.

Action Requested:

The Northfield City Council approves the second reading of the Ordinance to increase the Building Area Ratio for residential properties in the R1 zoning district from 25% to 30%.

Summary Report:

Staff is recommending City Council approval of an amendment to the Land Development Code (LDC) standards for Building Area Ratio (BAR) in the R1 zoning district. Table 3.2-1 of the LDC sets the Building Area Ratio at 25%, which is the area of the lot covered by the footprint of a principal building, detached garage, and covered porches expressed as a percentage of the total lot area. This standard was put in place in 2011 in an attempt to limit the construction of large homes in the R1 zoning district that are out of character with a neighborhood. It is not intended or designed to address impervious surface or stormwater runoff issues.

The impact of this standard has affected existing homes more than proposed homes. While two preliminary home designs have had to be slightly reduced to meet the standard, six variances have been issued to owners of small lots wishing to add a garage. Many other residents have inquired about the process and opted not to go forward with a variance application which would be required to make their garage project or small addition permissible.

To address this situation, staff is recommending that the BAR be raised to 30% for the R1 zone. This is the same BAR as in the N1 zoning district. Only one BAR variance has been requested and granted in the N1 in the

past three years. The attached document (Attachment #2) provides further technical analysis as to the need for the change.

In the R1-B Building Coverage Analysis, study one provides the baseline for the district. Based on this information, approximately 20% of the existing parcels currently exceed the lot coverage standard. The second study removed irregular, large, or small parcels not indicative of the residential district classification description, church properties, college properties, or municipal properties. This allows for more accurate analysis of the impact of the standard.

The third study analyzed how many of these remaining parcels currently do not have a garage, and a calculation was performed to estimate the impact of adding a single car garage to these properties. Over 27% of the existing properties would need a variance to add a small garage.

A fourth study took this one step further and analyzed the impact of adding a two car garage to these properties. Over 37% of the existing parcels without a garage would need a variance to add a two car garage. In summary, the Planning Commission believes it is overly restrictive to force a third of affected residents through the variance process to add a single garage to their property.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing at its meeting on December 15, 2016. There were no comments received in writing or at the public hearing regarding this issue. Following the public hearing, the Planning Commission determined that the regulation was too restrictive and voted to recommend the text amendment ordinance for approval by the City Council.

Alternative Options:

The City Council can deny the Text Amendment request.

Financial Impacts:

There is no direct financial impact to the City of Northfield; however a loss of tax capacity is projected over time from the lack of investment in residential properties in this area as a result of the current Land Development Code requirements.

Tentative Timelines:

The City Council approved the first reading of Ordinance No. 986 on January 17, 2017. If approved, the summary publication of the ordinance will be on Wednesday, February 15, 2017. The ordinance would then be effective on March 15, 2017.