

# City of Ann Arbor R4C/R2A Zoning District Study

## Draft Advisory Committee Recommendations January 2011

### **R2A Districts:**

#### **Recommendation:**

- **Areas downzoned from R4C to R2A. (See downzoning information below and attached map)**

### **R2A and R4C Districts:**

#### **Nonconformance**

**Recommendation: For parcels zoned R2A and R4C that would not be able to meet the minimum lot size (R2A= 8,500sf; R4C= 4,000 sf *proposed*).**

**Chapter 55, Section 5:87(Structure Non-Conformance) would be revised to allow reconstruction of non-conforming structures according to the following standards (Note: these changes will apply to R4C and R2A zoning districts):**

- Establish time limit (18 months) on how long after destruction the reconstruction of non-conforming structure is permitted.
- Establish time limit on building completion, once construction has started.
- Require that replacement structures must be of similar style, massing and character.
- Allow the ability to re-build structure only if damaged due to fire, flood, other calamity, and not voluntary destruction.
- Allow non-conforming multiple-family structures to add units without ZBA approval, if the additional units are located within the existing building. Additional units must meet density requirements; however structure can be non-conforming for lot area and setbacks.
- Allow for additions to existing multiple-family structures without ZBA approval if the addition complies with all setback standards for that district. This is currently permitted for single-family houses ONLY.

## **R4C Districts:**

### **Downzoning**

**Recommendation: Initiate rezoning of priority areas for downzoning identified in the Central Area recommendations of the Master Plan Land Use Element, Page 74 (see attached):**

Hoover/Davis Area – Map Area 2

Dewey/Packard/Brookwood - Map Area 3

Prospect/South Forest - Area 4

Other areas identified in the plan are protected by the Old West Side Historic District. These areas are important, but they are already afforded a certain level of protection from demolition and if destroyed, design regulated through HDC.

### **Overlay District**

**Recommendation: Create neighborhood overlay districts. This would provide for additional regulations ‘over’ the standard R4C regulations and recognize differences between R4C neighborhoods. An analysis of the physical characteristics of the selected neighborhood would be conducted and an overlay district would be created to regulate specific characteristics (ex: setbacks, height, open space, building size, porches) of the site.**

Overlay districts can be written to protect existing character, orientation, scale and form of designated areas. Can be customized based on unique characteristics of certain neighborhoods based on existing conditions. Underlying zoning remains in place, but overlay would place additional requirements or permit/encourage specific kind of re-development. Creation of an overlay district could address the following issues raised during focus group and Advisory Committee meetings:

- Out-of scale development – the ‘scale’ of development in certain areas could be calculated using a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to establish an acceptable range or building mass. A maximum foot print of structure could be instituted based on existing development patterns.
- Design not compatible with neighborhood – Design standards can be developed to control general forms, such as porches, roof lines and window placement, and not specific materials.

- Combination of lots – There may be some cases where this is acceptable, prohibition of lot combination could be implemented in certain overlay districts. The concern of lot combinations allowing for development of large ‘block’ buildings could also be mitigated by implementation of a maximum building size.
- Increased/decreased flexibility of uses on parcels – For example, an overlay district could be created that modifies the Area, Height and Placement standard for a selected area.

In order to help illustrate how an overlay district could work in Ann Arbor, please refer to attached maps and corresponding text below:

#### Oakland Avenue (east side) (Map C):

This area is categorized by large multiple-family structures with minimal side setbacks on large lots with significant front yard open space. An overlay district could be created in this area that would require/permit:

- Increased front yard setback
- Larger structures with reduced setbacks

#### Greenwood Ave (Map D):

This area is categorized by very small multiple-family structures on very small lots (< 3,000 s.f.) with minimal excess open space. In order to protect existing streetscape and/o permit redevelopment of existing parcels with similar massing of buildings, an overlay district could be created in this area that would require/permit:

- Decreased setback and open space requirements
- Prohibition of lot combination to preserve existing street pattern

### Minimum Lot Size/Lot Width

**Recommendations: Reduction of minimum lot size to 4,000 square feet for all parcels in R4C zoning district, no minimum lot width requirement.** The current average lot size = 6,052 square feet (exclusive of large church and University parcels)

## Key Features:

- Will bring 985 parcels (out of 1,633 non-conforming) into conformance with required minimum lot area. 648 parcels will remain non-conforming for minimum lot area.
- Used in conjunction with a revised density standard (bedroom/lot area, below), could allow for more flexibility in configuration of new buildings and re-model of existing buildings.
- Could result in increased density on certain parcels if all applicable development codes are met.
- Design, scale or orientation issues of buildings will be addressed by overlay regulations.

## Density Calculations -

**Recommendations: Revise method of density calculation to unit per acre count based on total bedrooms in unit. Existing density is calculated based on lot area per unit, regardless of the number of bedrooms within unit.**

## Key Features:

- Provides incentive for creation of units with fewer bedrooms
- Addition of floor area requires site planning on multiple-family structures (but not if no new floor area is added)

Existing regulations: 2,175 square feet required per unit or 20 units/acre

Proposed regulations using three different unit types:

### **Type A: 0-2bedrooms: 1,000 square feet lot area required per unit**

- EXISTING: 8,500 sf lot will permit 3 units, 20 units per acre MAX (up to a maximum of 18 occupants at 6 per unit)
- Using PROPOSED new density standards: 8,500 sf lot would permit 8 units, 43 units per acre MAX
- NEW MINIMUM LOT SIZE: 4,000 sf lot will permit maximum of 4 units (2 bedrooms each), Maximum of 8 bedrooms (maximum occupancy is based on bedroom size under the Housing Code)

### **Type B: 3-4 bedrooms: 2,000 square feet lot area required per unit**

- EXISTING: 8,500 sf lot will permit 3 units, 20 units per acre MAX (up to a maximum of 18 occupants at 6 per unit)
- PROPOSED: 8,500 sf lot would permit 4 units, 20 units per acre MAX
- NEW MINIMUM LOT SIZE: 4,000 sf lot will permit a maximum of 2 units( 4 bedrooms each), Maximum of 8 bedrooms

### **Type C: 5-6 bedrooms: 3,000 square feet lot area required per unit**

- EXISTING regulations: 8,500 sf lot will permit 3 units, 20 units per acre MAX (up to a maximum of 18 occupants at 6 per unit)
- PROPOSED regulations: 8,500 sf lot would permit 2 units, 14 units per acre MAX
- NEW MINIMUM LOT SIZE: 4,000 sf lot will permit a maximum of 1 unit( 6 bedrooms), Maximum of 6 bedrooms, maximum of 6 occupants

Rooming houses (or combination rooming house/apartments): Minimum lot size consistent with R4C lots. Existing parking requirement remains, no change proposed.

Group housing (frats, sororities, co-ops): Maintain existing 8,500 square foot lot area requirement and requirement for approval as Special Exception Use by the Planning Commission.

## Parking Standard

**Recommendation: Revise parking standards based on unit type (above), increasing parking requirements as number of bedrooms in units increase. Existing parking standards require 1.5 spaces per unit. Investigate off-site parking storage concept and alternative parking methods. (Note: .5 spaces rounded up for total parking required)**

### **PROPOSED parking requirement:**

- 0.5 parking space required for each (0-2 bedroom unit)
- 1 parking space required for each Type B Unit (3-4 bedroom unit)
- 2 parking spaces required for each Type C Unit (5-6 bedroom unit)

Key Features:

- Permits a graduated scale based on number of bedrooms in unit
- Provides incentive for creation of units with fewer bedrooms

Attachments:

Chart comparing proposed maximum density and parking requirements with existing

WEBSITE: Map- Dewey/Packard/Brookwood Area

WEBSITE: Map- Hoover/Davis Area

WEBSITE: Map-Prospect/South Forest Area

WEBSITE: Map A – Density example (14,011 sq ft parcel)

WEBSITE: Map B – Density example (6,600 sq ft parcel)

WEBSITE: Map C – Oakland Avenue

WEBSITE: Map D – Greenwood Avenue

WEBSITE: Map E – No minimum lot size

WEBSITE:

<http://www.a2gov.org/government/communityservices/planninganddevelopment/planning/Pages/R4CR2AZoningDistrictStudy.aspx>