

Development Ordinance Workshop Summary

March 9, 2002

Conventional Subdivision

R-1 and R-2

Facilitator: John Hawkins

Staff: Kay Pearlstein

Participants: Council members Jim Ward and Ed Harrison, Warren Mitchell of Mitchell and Westendorf, P.A., Betsy Pringle from the Historic District Commission, Rudy Juliano Coker Hills East Neighborhood Association President, Sally Keeney of the Pine Brook Estates neighborhood and real estate editor for the Herald Sun, and Mrs. John Ryan of the Coker Hills west neighborhood.

Scenario #1 – Redevelopment of three Single-family lots in the R-1 zoning district

The following issues were identified:

- **Setback:** The proposed ordinance gives a minimum setback of 10 feet and a maximum of 35 feet. The current ordinance has no maximum setback and a minimum setback of 28 feet. There is no size limit for floor area under either ordinance.

Discussion: In the existing older neighborhoods, Coker Hills and Pine Brook Estates for example, many houses are deeply set back from the road and are of modest size. The proposed ordinance imposes a new order on development. Under the new ordinance construction to the 10 foot setback line has the potential of breaking with existing development patterns in some neighborhoods. It was felt that even the 35 foot maximum setback was potentially too close to the street. Construction flexibility reflecting typical patterns in older neighborhoods of citing homes in the middle or rear of the lot was desirable.

It was felt that the 5 foot interior setback was appropriate in some places and not in others. It could have the effect of building larger homes. We need to decide whether we want to encourage larger homes and higher density to be developed or not. Perhaps different requirements for redevelopment versus new development need to be addressed.

- **Impervious Surfaces:** The existing ordinance does not contain impervious limits for R-1. The proposed ordinance limits impervious area to 24% of the lot without a retention pond and 50% with a pond.

Discussion: The limit of 24% impervious surfaces did not appear to be a major concern in the R-1 except that it could limit the creation of “McMansions” on small lots. There was concern over the appropriateness and effectiveness of retention ponds on single family lots with 50% impervious surface under the proposed ordinance.

- **Multi-family:** Under the existing ordinance, a multi-family development may be developed on 5 acres with a Special Use Permit in the R-1 zoning district. Under the proposed ordinance this would be reduced to 1 acre with a Special Use Permit.

Discussion: It was acknowledged that this shift to increasing density in existing neighborhoods is subject to Council approval. However, the participants were concerned that the units would not be designed to blend into the existing neighborhood and a Council may not be as sensitive to what identifies a neighborhood as unique.

On a recent development the option of developing a multi-family development on one acre or more, as proposed under the new ordinance, would have been desirable. Scarlett Drive Town homes were developed with the creation of a new zoning district in order to build multi-family development on approximately 2 acres.

One participant likes the diversity of single family and multi-family in the same development. Ironwoods, North Haven, and Rhododendron Drive near The Reserve were mentioned as successful developments with this mix.

Scenario #2 – Redevelopment of three Single-family lots in the R-2 zoning district

The following issue was identified:

- **Setback:** The existing ordinance requires an 11 foot interior setback. The proposed ordinance requires an interior setback of 0.

Discussion: The lack of an interior setback could fit in some instances better than others. It was not appropriate in all situations. Could 2 adjacent houses be touching?