

8-A-23-OA

I support this application, particularly the addition of a “detached multi-family” development type and removal of the special use review requirement for ADUs.

ADUs have enough independent zoning limitations which keep them small and secondary to the main residence - they also have plenty of other feasibility hurdles which make them relatively rare developments. The review process only serves to slow down, disincentivize, or otherwise halt the construction of a housing type that adds tremendous value to our city.

I support the “detached multi-family” development type because I believe it increases the feasibility of developing medium density zones according to their full potential, thus increasing housing diversity and housing development in general in Knoxville.

The particularly bizarre feature of ReCode that detached MF helps to address is the difference in density permitted based on housing type. For example, an RN-4 50x150 lot (the stated intent for which is mixed medium density residential development) can have as many as 3 units - ONLY if the three units are built as one multi-family structure (triplex). Three units in any other configuration - such as townhouses or a single family plus duplex or three single family units - are not permitted, even though they are much more feasible to build because the building code requirements are significantly less stringent than for multiplex developments. So you can imagine how the average developer is definitely not building a triplex here because it is simply not worth jumping to the IBC and having to sprinker everything for such a small development.

Personally, I think it would be better to do away with the variation in density by housing type altogether and apply something like a unit per acre density for each zone. However, that would be a bit more invasive to the code than what is being proposed by this amendment. Adding a detached multi-family type option would provide much needed flexibility in the code and would incentivize maximizing the development potential for these already incredibly rare mixed medium density zones. I believe this amendment is the minimum adjustment necessary to the code to achieve this flexibility.