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TO: City Council

FROM: Department of Planning and Housing

DATE: May 23, 2019

SUBJECT: Referral of Scenic Development text amendment request regarding Zoning Ordinance Sec. 29.401(5) Multiple Buildings on Single Lots.

Background:

This memo is in response to the City Council's referral on May 14, 2019 related to Zoning Ordinance Sec. 29.401(5) Multiple Buildings on Single Lots specifically, to "allow nursing/convalescent and assisted living facilities to have more than one principal building on a lot." The applicant has developed a large site with a combination of senior living/apartment building uses and desires to build a third building on the same site for assisted living/memory care without having to subdivide the site.

Currently, nursing/convalescent homes and assisted living facilities are categorized in the Zoning Ordinance as a Group Living residential use. Any residential building (other than an apartment dwelling) is required to be located on its own individual lot. City standards allow for other types of uses, such as commercial, industrial, and institutional uses, to have multiple buildings on a lot.

29.401.(5) Multiple Buildings on Single Lots.

(a) More than one commercial, industrial, hospital, institutional or public principal building may be erected on a lot, where such uses are permitted, provided that all setbacks from the property line otherwise required for a single principal building are observed. The distances between substructures shall be determined by the provisions of the City Building Code.

(b) More than one apartment dwelling is permitted on a single lot, provided that all area and setback requirements are calculated as if each structure were on its own individual lot. (Ord. No. 4122,09-11-12; Ord. No. 4161, 10-8-13)

The requirement of an individual lot for each residential building results in a mandatory subdivision process. This process allows the City to consider the design and layout of a project in relation to on-site and off-site improvement standards and criteria. It also supports creating smaller site sizes for ownership purposes. Until 2015, the only method to address off-site infrastructure needs was through the subdivision process. In 2015, the City adopted a missing infrastructure ordinance that applies to all uses, except one and two-family homes, that require frontage improvement at the time of development regardless of the subdivision process. The 2015 ordinance has minimized the need for some of the zoning standards related to subdividing a lot for multiple buildings.

The current limited options for multiple buildings on a lot causes difficulty when uses are classified as residential, but are viewed by the owner/operator as more of a commercial or institutional use. The two most common examples of this issue are hotels/motel buildings and senior living/group living buildings. The primary difficulty with the subdivision requirement is not the creation of the property line, but the accompanying zoning standards related to setbacks, shared access, parking, landscaping and open space requirements that must be met for each lot and its property lines. Parking location and access are the most common complications for subdivision of a site.

Options:

Option #1 – *Allow for multiple Group Living buildings on the same lot.*

Authorize an application for a Text Amendment to change the Multiple Buildings on a Single Lot zoning standard to allow group living uses of assisted living/nursing facilities similar to apartment dwellings. This section requires all area and setback requirements are calculated as if each building were on its own individual lot. This option would meet the particular referral request interests and be limited in scope.

Option #2- *Update both residential and commercial standards for multiple buildings*

Authorize a text amendment application that would update both residential and commercial uses standards for multiple buildings on a lot, except for one and two-family dwellings. This option would meet the particular interests of the referral request, but also address other issues that arise from time to time for other uses. Staff would consider new language that best addresses interests of lot development standards for a variety of uses and the differences of residential and commercial zoning districts to make a recommendation on a specific text amendment.

Option #3 - *Initiate no changes to the Multiple Buildings on a Single Lot zoning standard*

If the Council does not support the request, Council may decline to initiate changes. In this case, the applicant would have to proceed with one of the existing options of a PRD rezoning or an Integrated Site Development Plan Subdivision submittal in order to proceed with Phase 3 of their Campus Master Plan. Examples of facilities developed under the current methods of review include Northcrest and Green Hills.

Staff Comments

The Multiple Buildings on a Lot standard has been a very important standard for the City in the past to address issues related to development of a site and infrastructure improvements. Recent city ordinance that address infrastructure needs and landscape standards have minimized the importance of the current standard. The requirement to subdivide does cause complicating factors for some applicants about how to meet zoning standards individually when the goal is for a site to operate cohesively and not independently. **Staff would be in favor of Option 2 and reassess language of the whole standard rather than add one additional use to the standard.**

Due to the desire of applicant to proceed with a project in the near term, they are asking that the referral be addressed expeditiously as a direct application submittal that does not require prioritization as a work plan item. Staff believes that even with Option 2 having a slightly broader scope than Option 1, staff can address this request as a minor project that proceeds directly to P&Z for a recommendation and then approval of an ordinance by the City Council.



CIVIL DESIGN ADVANTAGE L.L.C.

ENGINEERS, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS,
PLANNERS & SURVEYORS

April 19, 2019

Honorable Mayor and City Council
City of Ames
Planning Department
515 Clark Avenue
Ames, Iowa 50010

RE: Northridge Village Memory Care - Request for Text Amendment

Honorable Mayor, City Council:

On behalf of CCRC of Ames, we respectfully request consideration for a Zoning Ordinance text amendment to allow nursing/convalescent and assisted living facilities to have more than one principal building on a lot. The Northridge Village Campus is zoned FS-RM (Suburban Residential Medium Density) and currently consists of 2 buildings with attached garages and 2 detached garages. The existing west building is a two-story assisted living, skilled nursing, and independent living facility with 24-space attached garages and a 9-space detached garage. The existing east building is a two-story independent living facility with 20-space attached garages and a 10-space detached garage. CCRC of Ames is proposing to add a 16-unit memory care facility with 9 parking spaces to the campus. All facilities are a part of the same campus and will function cohesively together.

Currently, Chapter 29, Article 4 "Development Standards", of the Ames Municipal Code, Paragraph 5 "Multiple Buildings on a Single Lots", subparagraph "A" states "More than one commercial, industrial, hospital, institutional or public principal building maybe erected on a lot, where such uses are permitted, provided that all setbacks from the property line otherwise required for a single principal building are observed. The distances between substructures shall be determined by the provisions of the City Building Code." We request this be revised to state "More than one commercial, industrial, hospital, nursing/convalescent home, assisted living, institutional or public principal building maybe erected on a lot, where such uses are permitted, provided that all setbacks from the property line otherwise required for a single principal building are observed. The distances between substructures shall be determined by the provisions of the City Building Code."

If the text amendment should not be executed, the process would require a Major Site Plan, Integrated Site Plan, Preliminary Plat, and Final Plat moving through the Planning & Zoning Commission, then onto City Council. Without the text amendment, the submittal, review, and approval processes become significantly more lengthy and complex, to achieve the same result as the text amendment would.

Please consider this text amendment request and let us know if you have any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

CIVIL DESIGN ADVANTAGE, LLC

Nicole Neal

cc: Gib Wood, Scenic Development
Jordan Anderson, Scenic Development
Keith Weggen, CDA
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