

COMMISSION ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT: ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO THE RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY
PARK ZONE MINIMUM BUILDING SETBACK AT AN EXTERIOR
BOUNDARY LINE**

BACKGROUND:

Flummerfelt's Shady Grove M.H.C., LLC is requesting a text amendment to the minimum building setback regulations for manufactured home park exterior boundary line regulations. The proposed change to Zoning Ordinance Section 29.705(5) is to reduce the current 30 feet perimeter setback to 10 feet. The applicant proposes that exterior boundary line setbacks along public roadways remain at 30 feet.

The Residential Low Density Park (RLP) is a zoning district that allows placement of manufactured homes in a private community type environment rather than upon standard city lots within a subdivision. The RLP standards govern the size and density of development and Sec. 29.705(5) governs the placement of manufactured homes within the park. The current setback regulations for manufactured homes have been in place with the prior R-5 zoning and incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance rewrite in 2000. The development standards govern placement of manufactured homes relative to adjacent manufactured homes on interior lots and have a separate set of standards for lots that border the exterior boundary line of the park. (*See attachment A for the current RLP zone development Standards*) The rear yard setback for a home on a lot that borders an exterior boundary line is currently 30 feet. By contrast, interior lots have a separation requirement from neighboring homes of 20 feet between manufactured homes. All lots have a 15-foot setback from internal streets.

The manufactured home park located at 1002 Dayton was approved by the City in 2006. The lots in the park are generally configured in rows running east to west along three streets. The interior lots are typically 115 feet deep by 54 feet wide and the lots that abut the exterior boundary line are typically 105 feet deep by 54 feet wide. Many of the single-wide homes in the park, as well as other similar styled manufactured home parks in the community, range in length from 60 to 78 feet.

Flummerfelt's Shady Grove M.H.C., LLC states that the most marketable and desirable mobile home at this time is a 76-foot long single width home. However, this type of home is unable to be placed in the buildable area of the perimeter boundary lots of the manufactured home park located at 1002 Dayton Avenue. The current buildable area on the perimeter lots is 60 feet in depth. The applicant believes the more affordable and longer 76-foot single wide home is better option for the customers he has at 1002 Dayton. To accommodate a 76 foot deep mobile home a minimum additional 16 feet of buildable area would need to be added onto the perimeter lots. Hence, the request for

the text amendment to broaden their options for placement of homes. The letter from the applicant requesting the text amendment is found in Attachment A. The lot design of the property is found in Attachment B.

Staff has reviewed information on manufactured homes to understand the dimensions of the homes and how they fit the buildable areas of lots. Long lots fit the applicant's desire for single-wide 76-foot long homes, medium length lots fit single-wide homes less than 70 feet, and then double wide homes can generally fit in lots with the least depth due to a building area envelope of approximately 60 feet of depth. The applicant's park on Dayton includes interior lots long enough to allow for a full range of housing types. The north perimeter lots of the park would support buildable area for double-wide homes or a single wide homes at or less than 60 feet in depth.

There are generally three areas of the City with RLP zoning (S. Dayton, S. 16th, and SE 16th Street) with 5 separate manufactured home parks within these areas. Any changes to the RLP zoning text would be applicable to all of these parks. The main purpose of the 30-foot perimeter setback is to establish a transition and buffer from the homes to the surroundings. The neighboring uses to this park include industrial on three sides of the park and a small area of commercial. The other parks are bounded by commercial on three sides at Duff and South 16th and apartments, and further west along South 16th Street the ISU Veterinary research lab and Highway 30.

The matter in question at 1002 Dayton Avenue is the separation between residential uses and allowed general industrial uses immediately abutting the property. The general industrial zone regulations located in 29.901(3) allow for large scale industrial buildings within 20 feet from a property line abutting a residentially zoned property. Decreasing setback requirements along the exterior boundary line of a use abutting a General Industrial zone district, especially in the case of residential uses such as the Residential Low Density Park Zone, places that type of use exceptionally close to potentially intrusive industrial uses. In this case the proposed text amendment would close the distance between a potential home and a potential industrial building to as close as 30 feet in total separation between buildings, with potentially a wall or landscape buffer on the industrial property.

Options for the Text Amendment

1. Applicant's Request- Reduce the perimeter setback to 10 feet allowing for the largest range of housing options, least separation and buffering from surrounding uses. This provides the necessary building area on the lot for a larger home, yet the manufactured homes could potentially sit within very short distances from other contrasting uses such as industrial or commercial buildings as well as parking or other accessory activities for those types of neighboring uses. Noise, light and other aspects of very close proximity to contrasting uses could intrude upon the residential character of the homes.

2. Partial Perimeter Setback- Reduce the perimeter setback to 20 feet to match a rear yard setback of standard single-family homes. This brings the rear yard setback on exterior boundary lots in line with that of the current single family home standards and would give an extra 10 feet of depth to the building area on exterior boundary lots. Reducing it to 20 feet may allow a somewhat greater variety of manufactured homes to be placed on the lots in question. This would allow somewhat deeper length of building envelope for manufactured home structures, but would not achieve the depth the applicant desires. An additional 6 feet of building depth would still be necessary based on the applicant's request if the rear was reduced to 20 feet rather than 10 feet.

3. Modify Front and Perimeter Setbacks- This approach tries to create a larger buildable envelope while preserving as much perimeter area as possible. Reduce the perimeter setback from 20 feet to 18 feet and reduce the interior street lot line setback from 15 feet to 10 feet. This gives the applicant the desired building area they are requesting albeit at a different setback that keeps the perimeter setback at a greater distance and reduces the interior front streetline setback somewhat to account for the remaining desired buildable area.

4. No Change-This would maintain current requirements. The developer could pursue redesigning the lot layout pattern and add 10 feet to the designed depth of the perimeter north lots, but this would not fully meet his interests. If there was no change to the lotting pattern, the applicant would likely have to exclusively market the lots for double wide homes.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The Planning & Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council adopt the proposed amendment changing the Residential Low Density Park Zone Minimum Building Setback at an Exterior Boundary Line as proposed by the applicant.
2. The Planning & Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council deny the proposed amendment changing the Residential Low Density Park Zone Minimum Building Setback at an Exterior Boundary Line.
3. The Planning & Zoning Commission can recommend that the City Council adopt a modified version of the text amendment changing the Residential Low Density Park Zone Minimum Building Setback at an Exterior Boundary Line.
4. The Planning & Zoning Commission can refer the matter back to staff and/or the applicant for further information.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The text amendment, as proposed by the applicant, requests a change to a key standard in the Residential Low Density Park development standards that govern the

location of manufactured homes relative to exterior property boundary lines and thereby the relationship to neighboring uses. As proposed by the applicant, the change would increase the options for housing types on lots that are part of the park at 1002 Dayton as it create more buildable area on the lots that have already been established for the park.

Staff does not believe the change is essential to allow for use of the perimeter lots of the manufactured home parks. Staff believes there is a balance to widening housing options and maintaining siting standards and expectations for transitions. Perimeter setbacks should be important in RLP areas due to the wide range of neighboring uses and that a buffer distance of 30 feet helps to address. **Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Department of Planning and Housing that the Planning and Zoning Commission act in accordance with Alternative #2, which is to deny a request to change the standards.**

Attachment A

TEXT AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE TABLE 29.705(5) “RLP” RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY PARK ZONE

- A. Explanation of Reasons for the Zoning Text Amendment. In the quest for affordable housing, manufactured homes have become a significant option, as the construction and structures have become more and more similar to stick-built residences as time has progressed. Manufactured homes are no longer metal-sided disposable temporary housing as was common in the past, but have become structures with fully-insulated walls, insulated windows, and pleasant looking exteriors. As the progress in appearance, the efficiency and comfort of living has progressed over the years, the model most attractive to consumers has trended to 76 feet in length. 76 foot manufactured homes would typically have around 1,000 square feet of living area with amenities found in stick-built residences of comparable size. The size and the amenities have attracted consumers to the 76' model, and manufacturers have developed processes that make the 76' model the “best buy” for cost per square foot and living comfort. Unfortunately, major site development plans of the past have not necessarily considered this length of manufactured home when establishing exterior boundaries. In order to accommodate the demand for this popular and livable model of manufactured home, Flummerfelt Four Seasons M.H.C. LLC is seeking a Text Amendment to Table 29.705(5), amending minimum building setback, manufactured home park exterior boundary line to ten feet (10').

The purpose of the zoning amendment is to enhance the living experience for those seeking affordable housing in Ames by allowing them to buy the best value-priced home and while having affordable housing, live in the same comfort as those in stick-built residential districts. As shown by the attached Plat, without the Text Amendment, as many as thirty future owners of affordable homes would be deprived of the opportunity to receive the best value and larger square footage available in the 76' model.

For safety and aesthetics, the thirty foot (30') setback would remain in place for exterior boundaries that abut public roadways and other exterior boundaries would be amended to ten feet (10'). The Text Amendment would have no effect on clearance between structures or interior setbacks for the development.

- B. Description of the Property, Zones, and/or Areas Affected. The zoning for Four Seasons Park major site development plan is RLP; it's location on South Dayton Avenue is surrounded by commercial zoning. The major site development plan is attached showing the description of the development and amenities of the development. Also attached is the GSI map showing a view of the area.

Attachment A, cont.

- C. Explanation of Consistency of Text Amendment with Land Use Policy. The preface to the Land Use Policy has been critical of the density of housing in the City of Ames in the past. A manufactured home village assists the City in achieving greater density with less land consumption, and a facility like Four Seasons Park provides amenities to the homeowner that are typically only available in dramatically more expensive neighborhoods.

The 2030 housing projection in the Land Use Policy shows substantial need for additional single-family housing, and certainly mentions that housing should be affordable. Part of affordable housing is having the best features available in that affordable housing, and because of the manufacturing methods of the 76' model manufactured home, the features like countertops, cabinets, and sinks, are roughly equivalent to what one would find in those stick-built in the 1,000 to 1,200 square foot size. Having single-family housing available with competitive features that is affordable is in complete harmony with the Land Use Policy.

Chapter 2 of the Land Use Policy shows that of 2,834 acres to be put into future use, 2,291 of those acres are for one and two family housing, 336 acres to multiple family housing, and only 75 acres dedicated to other alternatives for housing. Since the future amount dedicated to residential low-density park zones is so small in comparison to other forms of housing, it is important that we strive to allow those homeowners to have the most affordable per square foot and attractively-sized units as possible.

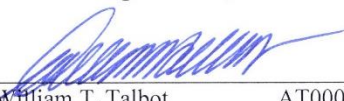
Finally, because RLP areas are generally surrounded by multi-family or commercial zoning, there is no impact from this proposed Text Amendment on the Land Use Policy.

- D. Existing Ordinance. The existing language is found in Table 29.705(5), the title is Minimum Building Setback, Manufactured Home Park Exterior Boundary Line. The requirement then states thirty feet (30') except for awnings and raised open decks that may extend ten feet (10') into this setback. A photocopy of Chapter 29, Article 7, Pages 9 and 10, are attached hereto for full context.
- E. Proposed Ordinance Language. The development standard side of the Table would remain unchanged; the proposed text change under "RLP Zone" would read as follows:

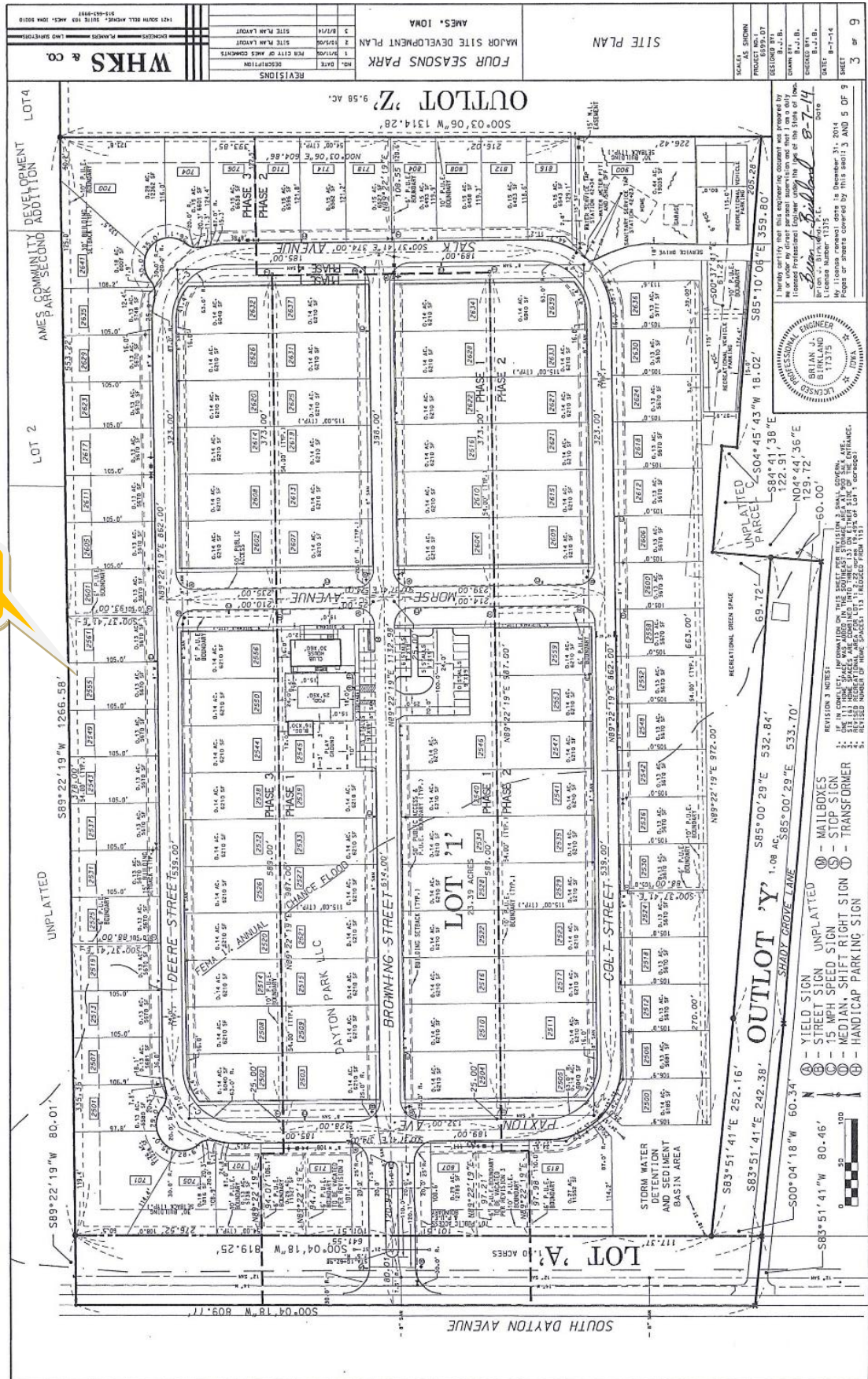
"Thirty feet (30') for exterior boundary abutting public roadways, except for awnings and raised open decks that may extend ten feet (10') into this setback; exterior boundaries not abutting public roadways, ten feet (10')."

Respectfully submitted,

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North Perimeter



Attachment C

USE CATEGORY	STATUS	APPROVAL REQUIRED	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
INDUSTRIAL USES	N	--	--
INSTITUTIONAL USES	N	--	--
TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND UTILITY USES	N	--	--
MISCELLANEOUS USES	N	--	--

Y = Yes: permitted as indicated by required approval.
 N = No: prohibited
 SDP Minor = Site Development Plan Minor: See Section 29.1502(3)
 SDP Major = Site Development Plan Major: See Section 29.1502(4)

(a) The following uses are allowed in the RLP Zone only so far as they are shown on the Site Development Plan consistent with the requirements set forth in Section 29.1502(4): a manager's office and residence, which may be of a conventional type construction; community centers and recreation facilities; laundry facilities; outdoor drying area; maintenance buildings and/or facilities; recreational vehicle and boat storage; commercial uses, limited to those shown and described in the plan for the use and development of the manufactured home park approved by the City Council as herein required, are permitted provided that such commercial uses are of a sort intended exclusively for the service and convenience of the residents of the manufactured home park, any buildings so used are designed to reflect the residential character of the park, there is no advertising sign other than a single identification sign no larger than four square feet placed flush on the wall of the building containing the commercial use which shall not be readily observable from outside the manufactured home park; and other uses of a similar nature for the exclusive use of the manufactured home park residents.

(b) A manufactured home sales lot is permitted in connection with an approved Manufactured Home Park under the provisions of this Ordinance, provided that the sales lot ceases when 90% of the manufactured home spaces have been occupied. However, if it is the intention for the sales lot to continue beyond such initial period, the sales lot area must be in a district where such use is permitted.

(c) Only one (1) manufactured home is permitted on each approved manufactured home space, in accordance with the provisions of this section and applicable regulations of the State of Iowa statutes. Only one (1) manufactured home per manufactured home lot in a Manufactured Home Subdivision is permitted on each approved manufactured home lot.

(5) **Zone Development Standards.** The zone development standards for the RLP Zone are set forth in Table 29.705(5) below:

Table 29.705(5)
Residential Low Density Park (RLP) Zone Development Standards

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS	RLP ZONE
Minimum Parcel Size for a Manufactured Home Park	10 acres
Maximum Density of Manufactured home Spaces	7/gross acre
Minimum Area of Manufactured Home Space	To be determined by the size of the manufactured homes, separation requirements and occupied lot area ratios
Maximum Area of Detached Garage	600 sf.
Minimum Lot Frontage	35 ft., only in a Manufactured Home Subdivision.
Minimum Building Setback, Manufactured Homes Interior Street Lot Line Between Manufactured Homes, including structural additions	15 ft. 20 ft., except for detached garages, that can be within 6 ft. of another garage or a manufactured home
Minimum Building Setback, Manufactured Home Park Exterior Boundary Line	30 ft., except for awnings and raised open decks, that may extend 10 ft. into this setback
Minimum Building Setbacks, Detached Garages Interior Street Line From Exterior Boundary Rear	20 ft. 20 ft. 20 ft. clear between structures
Minimum Recreation Area	8%
Maximum Height	15 ft. or 1 story, whichever is lower
Parking Allowed Between Buildings and Streets	No
Drive-Through Facilities Permitted	No
Outdoor Display Permitted	No
Outdoor Storage Permitted	No