Lowrise Multifamily

Zoning Code Corrections (CB 118385)

City Council Central Staff / Department of Planning and Development
Planning Land Use & Sustainability (PLUS) Committee Briefing
May 19, 2015
1. Inclusion of unenclosed, exterior spaces in floor area ratio (FAR) calculations.
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- **Existing Code**: All of corridor exempt from FAR.
- **DPD Draft**: All of corridor would count against FAR.
- **CB 118385**: Only portion shaded red would count against FAR.

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- **DPD Draft**: All of corridor would count against FAR.
- **CB 118385**: All of corridor exempt from FAR.
2. Area limit for clerestories.

- CB 118385 would limit clerestory features to 30% coverage of the roof consistent with allowances for other architectural projections.

The +4’ height exception is used for a clerestory that covers most of the roof, enabling lofted space in top floor units. CB 118385 would limit coverage to 30%
3. Passive House qualification for FAR increase.

- **Existing Code**: A FAR increase is available for projects that achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver; or Built Green 4 Star rating.

- **CB 118385**: Add the Passive House Institute U.S. energy performance standard as a rating that qualifies for the green building performance FAR increase. Passive House is a rating system focused on thermal performance, and airtightness with mechanical ventilation.
4. **FAR and height exemptions for partially-buried floors.**

**Existing Code and CB 118385:** The portion of the basement that is partially below grade is not counted against the FAR limit, and an extra 4’ of height is allowed for buildings that include a partially below grade story.

**DPD Draft:** Eliminated FAR and height exemptions for partially buried floors.

Located in the partially below grade basement story in this example:
- 8 small efficiency dwelling units*
- Laundry room
- Mail room
- Mechanical & electrical rooms

* Though built before new SEDU regulations, the basement units would approximate SEDUs if built today.
5. Upper-level setback requirements for street-facing facades.

- Graphic illustrates the proposed upper level street-facing setback that would apply on the downhill side of a sloping lot.
5. Upper-level setback requirements for street-facing facades.

- The proposed street facing upper level setback would apply to a building like this example. The area limit for clerestories would also apply.
6. Rounding thresholds for density limits.

- **Existing Code:** Subdivision of a commonly platted 5,000 sf lot to take advantage of density rounding threshold (0.5). 2,500 / 1,600 units per lot area = 1.5625 rounds to 2 units.
- **CB 118385:** Raise rounding threshold to 0.85 for lots smaller than 3,000 sf.

Current practice results in 4 units on a 5,000 sf parent lot as seen in this example.
7. Density limits for rowhouses in LR1 zones.

- **Existing Code:** Placement of 2 rowhouses on a small ‘front’ lot avoids density limit.
- **CB 118385:** Addition of one unit / 1,600 sf rowhouse density limit prevents placement of 2 rowhouses on a small front lot. \( \frac{2,200}{1,600} = 1.375 \). Rounds to 1 unit.

Current practice results in 4 units on a 5,000 sf parent lot by placing 2 rowhouses on a subdivided small front lot.
8. Side setback requirements for rowhouses.

- Rowhouses are housing located at the front of a lot with all units facing the street.
- For the rowhouses to be a feasible alternative to townhouses, full use of lot width is needed.

### Design Review Thresholds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LR3</th>
<th>LR2 (Proposed – CB 118385)</th>
<th>LR1</th>
<th>Townhouses – All Zones</th>
<th>Small Efficiency Dwelling Unit (SEDU) Projects – All Zones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than 8 units – Board Review</td>
<td><strong>More than 8 units – Board Review</strong></td>
<td>No Design Review required, except for projects with 3 or more townhouses</td>
<td>3 or more units, Streamlined Design Review (SDR)</td>
<td>5,000+ gross square feet (GSF) – SDR</td>
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<td>12,000+ GSF – Administrative Design Review</td>
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<td>20,000+ GSF – Board Review</td>
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</tbody>
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### 2014 Dwelling Unit Production in LR Zones (building permit applications)

**LR3**
- 645 apartment type units. (In 41 total projects.)
- **11 projects.** (9 apartment type)

**LR2**
- 369 apartment type units. (In 18 total projects.)
- **10 projects.** (9 apartment type)

**LR1**
- 345

**Design Review Scaled Projects...**