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April 2, 2018

Mayor Chris Coursey and City Councilmembers
CITY OF SANTA ROSA
100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 10
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

SUBJECT: Resilient City Development Measures
Request to Add Provision to Utilize Current Small Lot Standards for Lots Less
Than 6,000 SF Within the Coffey Park Fire Area

Dear Mayor Coursey and Councilmembers:

The purpose of this letter is to request that the Resilient City Development Measures Ordinance you will be considering on April 3 be amended to include provisions to allow lots less than 6,000 square feet within the Coffey Park fire area to utilize the current small lot development standards included in Section 20-42.140 of the Zoning Code.

The rebuilding help and streamlining provided by the RC (Resilient City) Combining District zoning overlay adopted on October 24, 2017, was much appreciated. However, it didn't address some items that have come up specifically regarding my Coffey Park neighborhood.

The majority of lots in the Coffey Park area are less than 6,000 SF in size and are classified as "small lots" under Section 20-42.140 of the Zoning Code. However, when these lots were originally created back in the mid-1980's there were no small lot standards and Section 20-42.140 of the Zoning Code did not exist. These lots were created at that time under the PD (Planned Development) District and each project had its own individual development standards for setbacks, lot coverage, etc.

The result is that we have a number of lots of similar size in the same area with differing setback requirements which creates confusion and situations where some lots are more restricted than others for no apparent reason. Additionally, these differing development standards don't match our current small lot standards codified in Section 20-42.140 of the Zoning Code.

I would like to request that you include provisions in this new Ordinance to simply state that lots less than 6,000 SF in size within the burn areas (RC overlay areas) can utilize the small

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lot standards already codified in Section 20-42.140, specifically those included in Section 20-42.140 F. under subparagraphs 4 (Setback Requirements), 5 (Private Open Space), 6 Height Limits), and 7 (Site Coverage). I am attaching a copy of Section 20-42.140 of the Zoning Ordinance with these specific provisions highlighted in yellow.

This will not only help eliminate confusion but will also eliminate the need for processing a number of minor variance applications that will likely be forthcoming.

Additionally, this will also encourage more front porches to be included in the rebuild as the provisions of Section 20-42.140 F.4.a. allow a front porch to encroach into the front setback up to 6'. Currently the small lots in Coffey Park are not allowed to have front porches encroach into the front setback and are forced to choose between having a 6' front porch or having an additional 6' in the backyard. Front porches are encouraged in our General Plan (Policy UD-G-6) and in our Design Guidelines (Section 3.1.D) and are an important element to encourage in the rebuild in my opinion.

Again, thank you for all of your efforts to assist our community in recovering from the disaster of the October fires and thank you for considering this proposed addition to the Resilient City Development Measures Ordinance.

Very truly yours,



Curt Nichols
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cc: Jessica Jones, Supervising Planner
Clare Hartman, Deputy Director - Planning

Santa Rosa City Code

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[Title 20 ZONING](#)[Division 4 Standards for Specific Land Uses](#)[Chapter 20-42 STANDARDS FOR SPECIFIC LAND USES](#)**20-42.140 Residential small lot subdivisions.**

A small lot residential project shall comply with the requirements of this Section, where allowed by Division 2 (Zoning Districts and Allowable Land Uses).

- A. Purpose. The provisions of this Section are intended to provide opportunities to increase the supply of smaller dwelling units and rental housing units by allowing the creation of subdivisions with smaller lots and dwellings, and to establish design and development standards for these projects to ensure that they are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, where the General Plan anticipates no change to existing neighborhood character.
- B. Location. A small lot subdivision may be proposed and approved on any site within the R-1, R-2, and R-3 zoning districts. A small lot subdivision shall not be allowed where the review authority determines that public utilities and services are inadequate. No detached single-family dwellings are allowed within a small lot subdivision in the R-2 or R-3 zones.
- C. Project review and approval. A proposed small lot subdivision shall require the approval of a Conditional Use Permit in compliance with Section [20-52.050](#), and a Tentative Map in compliance with the Subdivision Ordinance (City Code Title 19).
- D. Permit requirements. A Conditional Use Permit for a small lot project shall be reviewed and approved by the Commission prior to the approval of a Tentative Map. Applications for Conditional Use Permit and Tentative Map approval may be submitted and considered concurrently, provided that the Conditional Use Permit is first approved. The Conditional Use Permit shall be prepared, filed, processed, and approved or disapproved in compliance with Section [20-52.050](#) (Conditional Use Permit and Minor Conditional Use Permit).
- E. Allowable land uses and permit requirements. A small lot project may be developed with, and used for, only the land uses allowed by the zoning district applicable to the site, except as the range of allowed uses may be limited by Conditional Use Permit approval.
- F. Site planning and project design standards.**
1. Allowed lot configurations. A small lot project may be designed to include zero lot lines, angled Z lots, zipper lots, alternate-width lots, quad lots, and motor court lots.
 2. Maximum density. A small lot project shall not exceed maximum density allowed by the applicable zoning district, or 18 units per acre, whichever is less.
 3. Minimum lot area. Except for attached single-family units (e.g., townhouses), or rowhouses, minimum lot area may range from 2,000 to 6,000 square feet. A project that is larger than three acres shall be designed to provide a variety of lot configurations and lot sizes.
 4. **Setback requirements.** Each small lot project shall comply with the following setback requirements, provided that an applicant may propose, and the review authority may approve different setbacks, if the review authority determines that the alternative approach is more appropriate to the characteristics of the site and surroundings. Proposed setbacks shall be shown on the proposed site plan, including identification of proposed building areas, and areas for possible future additions to proposed housing units.
 - a. **Front setback.** A minimum front setback of 10 feet shall be required, provided that a one-story covered porch may project up to six feet into the setback, and provided that no front porch shall have a depth of less than six feet. Front yard setbacks shall be varied along each block face.
 - b. **Side setbacks.** Except for attached single-family, rowhouse, or zero lot line units, the one-story portions of a proposed structure shall be set back a minimum of four feet from side property lines, and the two-story portions of a structure shall be set back a minimum of eight feet from side property lines.
 - c. **Rear setbacks.** A minimum rear setback of 15 feet shall be required, except as provided for garages in Subsection F.4.d, and except where a 10-foot setback is authorized by the review authority in

compliance with Subsection F.5.

d. Garage.

(1) Garage facing or near the street. A garage entrance facing a street shall be set back as follows.

(a) 19 feet from the rear of the public sidewalk, or 19 feet from the street property line or street plan line, whichever is greater.

(b) 19 feet from the back of the driveway approach on a private lane with no sidewalks.

(2) Garage near the rear lot line.

(a) A garage entrance facing an alley shall be placed either at a point three to five feet from the edge of the alley, or at a point 19 feet from the edge of the alley.

(b) A garage placed in a rear yard without alley access shall be placed a minimum of four feet from the rear or side property line.

5. Private open space. Each single-family parcel shall provide a minimum of 400 square feet of usable private open space with no dimension less than 15 feet.

6. Height limits. Proposed structures shall not exceed a maximum height of 35 feet for primary structures. Accessory structures shall comply with Section 20-42.030 (Accessory Structures and Uses). Proposed second dwelling units shall comply with Section 20-42.130 (Residential Second Dwelling Units).

7. Site coverage. Proposed structures shall not cover more than 65 percent of the lot.

8. Two-story structures. Proposed dwellings other than row houses and townhouses shall be designed so that:

a. The floor area of a second story is no more than 50 percent of all the roofed first floor area of the dwelling (including covered porch area and an attached garage, but not a detached garage); or

b. 25 percent of the dwelling units in the project are one-story; or

c. All two-story units have one-story elements.

Individual unit or project design alternatives other than those in Subsections F.8.a, b, and c above may be authorized by the review authority as part of Conditional Use Permit approval.

9. Second dwelling units. A residential small lot subdivision may include second dwelling units, provided that the units comply with the standards in Section 20-42.130 (Residential Second Dwelling Units), except that a second unit over a garage in a small lot subdivision may instead comply with the setback requirements of Section 20-42.140.F.4.d(2)(b).

G. Additions and changes to project or approved units. Subsequent expansions or additions to dwelling units and the construction of second dwelling units not shown on the approved site plan for the project may be allowed with Minor Conditional Use Permit approval, provided that any proposed expansion is in compliance with all applicable requirements of this Section, and is not in conflict with the approved site plan.

(Ord. 3711 § 1 Exh. A, 2005; Ord. 3677 § 1, 2004)

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