



ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER #301127

INTERPRETATION OF DEVELOPMENT CODE

CODE SECTION: 20.50.020, Exception #7

Request for Clarification of what constitutes “detached” in the following exception to Table 20.50.020(1): *“The base density for single-family detached dwellings on a single lot that is less than 14,400 square feet shall be calculated using a whole number, without rounding up.”* The applicant has an R-6 zoned lot that is 10, 986 square feet, which would allow two units if attached. The proposal is to place two houses on the lot, attached by a small shed in between the units.

FINDINGS:

The intent of Exception #7 is to allow duplexes (attached housing) on single-family lots that will support the density, but to not allow two separate units on one lot unless the lot is big enough to subdivide. The intent is to maintain the single-family appearance of a neighborhood; to prevent the appearance of higher density that would result by placing two houses on one lot.

The term “detached” is used in this case in the Development Code as a “use” and aesthetic term and does not refer to the Uniform Building Code for a specific definition.

Duplexes are allowed in single-family zones if they meet the following criteria under Section 20.40.340: *“Duplex may be permitted in R-4 and R-6 zones subject to compliance with dimensional and density standards for applicable R-4 or R-6 zone and subject to single-family residential design standards.”*

“Duplex” is defined in the code (Section 20.20.018) as: *“A house containing two individual single-family dwelling units that are separated from each other by one-hour fire wall or floor but not including approved accessory dwelling unit.”* (emphasis added).

Zero lot line development is also allowed in single-family zones as long as the allowed base density is not exceeded.

DECISION:

“Attaching” two separate houses via a shed in between does not meet the intent of the code. “Detached” in this case means two separate units. Attaching the units with a shed or breezeway or carport does not constitute attached housing. The units must be in one building, sharing a common wall and covered by the same roof, such as a duplex or a duplex with zero-lot line construction, and meeting the requirements of the single-family residential design standards.

original signed by Anna Kolousek for Tim Stewart on 12/18/02

Director's Signature

Date