

city of saint paul  
planning commission resolution  
file number 13-26  
date May 17, 2013

RECOMMENDATIONS ON WEST GRAND ZONING STUDY

WHEREAS, the City Council, in August 2012, enacted Ordinance 12-53, an interim ordinance restricting any multifamily development greater than 40 feet high along West Grand Avenue between Cretin and Fairview Avenues, and requesting that the Planning Commission study whether the current RM2 multiple-family residential zoning and B2 business districts best further the Comprehensive Plan's land use objectives along this stretch of Grand Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the City Council subsequently expanded the West Grand Zoning Study Area to include B2 parcels along Grand Avenue immediately east of Fairview Avenue; and

WHEREAS, *Generalized 2030 Future Land Uses* maps in the Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan show the commercial node at Grand and Fairview as the west end of a "Mixed Use Corridor," Grand Avenue west of the commercial node at Fairview as a "Residential Corridor," and residential areas north and south of Grand Avenue as "Established Neighborhoods;" and

WHEREAS, Strategy 1 of the Land Use Chapter, to target growth to areas where there will be compact mixed-use communities where housing, employment, amenities, and transit can work synergistically to serve the needs of people who live and work there, states that its "core goal" is "higher density development;" and

WHEREAS, Strategy 1 of the Land Use Chapter specifically intends for development to take place "at densities greater than currently found in the community," and states that "higher density development is not an objective sought solely for itself," but to "contribute to the goal of creating a vibrant, economically strong community that is environmentally sustainable;" that policies in Strategy 1 "direct new, higher density development to . . . Residential and Mixed-Use Corridors;" and that "zoning standards and districts will be used to support the prevailing character of Established Neighborhoods and to allow higher density development in . . . Residential and Mixed Use Corridors;" and

WHEREAS, while RM2 zoning is consistent with the density of existing multi-family uses along Grand Avenue, the height and impact of new large (4-bedroom) unit apartment buildings along Grand Avenue in the study area has been identified as a concern for the residents of one-family dwellings immediately across the alleys north and south of Grand; and

moved by Oliver  
seconded by \_\_\_\_\_  
in favor Unanimous  
against \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has drafted zoning text and map amendments pertaining to the West Grand Zoning Study Area both to further the Comprehensive Plan's land use objectives and to address concerns expressed by residents of one-family dwellings immediately across the alleys north and south of Grand due to unique circumstances in the study area regarding the potential impact of and high demand for new student-oriented large-unit apartment buildings across an alley from one-family zoning districts; and

WHEREAS, a 40 foot maximum building height with a 9 foot minimum side setback requirement would be consistent with the height and setbacks of existing development on Grand Avenue, consistent with the 18 foot separation requirement for apartment buildings on the same parcel, and consistent with the 40 foot maximum height/9 foot minimum side setback for duplexes and townhouses in the RT1 two-family and RT2 townhouse districts that are compatible with adjacent one-family zoning districts; and

WHEREAS, the Macalester Groveland Community Council, consistent with a recent Corridor Development Initiative report, supports proposed rezoning to T2 at the commercial nodes at Cleveland and Fairview, and recommends providing design standards in the study area consistent with T2 design standards that provide for transitions from higher density uses to adjacent lower-density districts; and

WHEREAS, on April 19, 2013, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the West Grand Zoning Study, including draft zoning code text and map amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission referred the draft West Grand Zoning Study to the Neighborhood Planning Committee for consideration, review of the public hearing testimony, and recommendation; and

WHEREAS, the Neighborhood Planning Committee forwarded its recommendations and rationale for Zoning Code text and map amendments pertaining to the West Grand Zoning Study Area in a May 14, 2013, memorandum to the Planning Commission;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, under the provisions of Minnesota Statutes § 462.357 and § 61.801 of the Legislative Code, that the Planning Commission hereby recommends to the Mayor and City Council the following amendments to Chapter 66 of the Zoning Code pertaining to development standards for RM2 districts along Grand Avenue between Fairview Avenue and Cretin Avenue; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission recommends rezoning of property at the intersection of Grand and Cleveland from B2, BC, and RM2 to T2, and rezoning of property at the intersection of Grand and Fairview from B2 to T2, as shown on Attachment 2, Proposed Zoning Changes.

NOTE: New language to be added shown by underlining.

**Sec. 66.231. Density and dimensional standards table.**

Table 66.231, residential district dimensional standards, sets forth density and dimensional standards to residential districts. These standards are in addition to the provisions of chapter 63, regulations that are specific of general applicability.

**Table 66.231. Residential District Dimensional Standards**

Zoning District	Lot Size Minimum (per unit)		Height Maximum		Yard Setbacks Minimum (feet)		
	Area (sq. ft.)(b)	Width (ft.)	Stories	Feet	Front	Side	Rear
<b>RL</b> One-Family Large Lot	21,780 (d)	80	3	30	30 (g),(h)	10 (h)	25 (h)
<b>R1</b> One-Family	9,600 (e)	80	3	30	30 (g),(h)	10 (h)	25 (h)
<b>R2</b> One-Family	7,200	60	3	30	25 (g),(h)	8 (h)	25 (h)
<b>R3</b> One-Family	6,000	50	3	30	25 (g),(h)	6 (h)	25 (h)
<b>R4</b> One-Family	5,000	40	3	30	25 (g),(h)	4 (h)	25 (h)
<b>RT1</b> Two-Family	3,000 (f)	25	3	40	25 (g),(h)	9 (h)	25 (h)
<b>RT2</b> Townhouse	2,500 (c),(f)	20	3	40	25 (g),(h)	9 (h),(i)	25 (h)
<b>RM1</b> Multiple-Family	2,000 (c),(f)	n/a	3	40	25 (g),(h)	½ height (h),(i)	25 (h),(i)
<b>RM2</b> Multiple-Family	1,500 (c),(f),(k)	n/a	5 (k)	50 (k)	25 (g),(h)	½ height (h),(i),(k)	25 (h),(i)
<b>RM3</b> Multiple-Family	800 (c)	n/a	no max.	no max.	(g),(h),(j)	(h),(i),(j)	(h),(i),(j)

n/a - not applicable

Notes to table 66.231, residential district dimensional standards:

- (a) R4 one-family district dimensional standards shall apply when one-family dwellings are erected in less restrictive residential districts. RT1 two-family district dimensional standards shall apply when two-family dwellings are erected in less restrictive residential districts. RM2 multiple-family district dimensional standards shall apply when multiple-family residential dwellings five (5) stories or less in height are constructed in an RM3 multiple-family district.
- (b) In calculating the area of a lot that adjoins a dedicated public alley, for the purpose of applying lot area and density requirements, one-half the width of such alley adjoining the lot shall be considered as part of the lot.
- (c) In calculating the area of a lot for the purpose of applying the minimum lot area per unit requirement, the lot area figure may be increased by three hundred (300) square feet for each parking space (up to two (2) parking spaces per unit) within a multiple-family structure or otherwise completely underground. Parking spaces within an above-ground parking structure, except for the top level, may also be used for this lot area bonus. The maximum number of units possible on a lot using this lot area bonus can be calculated using the formula  $X = L \div (A - 600)$ , where X = maximum units allowed, L = lot area in square feet, and A = required lot area per unit in square feet. A site plan showing parking layout and dimensions shall be required when applying for this lot area bonus. No multiple-family dwelling shall be built, nor shall any existing structure be converted to a multiple-family dwelling, on a lot that is less than nine thousand (9,000) square feet in area.

- (d) A larger lot may be required depending on how much square footage is actually needed to properly site and install an individual sewage treatment system.
- (e) Where over half of the lot has slopes of twelve (12) percent or greater, the minimum lot size shall be fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet. When determining lot size, the slope shall be that in existence prior to any grading or filling. Alterations shall not be allowed that will lower the slope from twelve (12) percent or greater to less than twelve (12) percent prior to the creation of new lots.
- (f) If townhouses are developed on parcels where only the land immediately beneath each dwelling unit constitutes an individually described lot and all other land required for yards, other open space, parking, and other necessary land as required by this code constitutes "common" properties, jointly owned by the owners of the described lots beneath each dwelling unit, the minimum size lot per unit shall be applied to the entire parcel.
- (g) Where at least fifty (50) percent of the front footage of any block is built up with principal structures, the minimum front yard setback for new structures shall be the average setback of the existing structures, or the normal setback requirement in the district plus half the amount the average setback is greater than the normal setback requirement, whichever is less. Existing structures set back twenty (20) percent more or less than the average shall be discounted from the formula.
- (h) For permitted and conditional principal uses allowed in residential districts other than residential uses, the front yard shall be equal to the front yard required for residential use and the side and rear yards shall be equal to one-half the height of the building but in no instance less than the minimum requirements of the district in which said use is located.
- (i) Side yards are required only for dwelling units on the ends of townhouse structures. When two (2) or more one-family, two-family, or townhouse structures are constructed on a single parcel, there shall be a distance of at least twelve (12) feet between principal buildings. When two (2) or more multifamily buildings are constructed on a single parcel, there shall be a distance of at least eighteen (18) feet between principal buildings.
- (j) Minimum front, side and rear setbacks shall be fifty (50) feet or one-half the building height, whichever is less.
- (k) For property along Grand Avenue between Fairview Avenue and Cretin Avenue, between lines defined by the parallel alleys immediately north and south of Grand Avenue:
  - (1) Building height shall be limited to four (4) stories and forty (40) feet;
  - (2) The minimum lot size for units with three (3) bedrooms shall be one thousand seven hundred (1700) square feet per unit, and the minimum lot size for units with four (4) or more bedrooms shall be one thousand nine hundred (1900) square feet per unit;
  - (3) Minimum side setbacks for multiple-family residential dwellings shall be nine (9) feet;
  - (4) The T2 design standards in Sec. 66.343 shall apply.