

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
WORKSHOP MINUTES  
COEUR D'ALENE CITY HALL  
CONFERENCE ROOM #6, UPSTAIRS  
710 E. MULLAN AVENUE**

**December 10, 2024**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Tom Messina, Chairman  
Peter Luttrupp  
Jon Ingalls, Vice-Chair  
Lynn Fleming  
Sarah McCracken  
Phil Ward

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Hilary Patterson, Community Planning Director  
Sean Holm, Senior Planner  
Mike Behary, Associate Planner  
Tami Stroud, Associate Planner  
Randy Adams, City Attorney  
Traci Clark, Administrative Assistant

**Commissioners Absent:**

Mark Coppess

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Messina at 12:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion by Commissioner McCracken, seconded by Commissioner Luttrupp, to approve the minutes from the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on November 12, 2024. Motion approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**STAFF COMMENTS:**

Hilary Patterson, Community Planning Director, provided the following comments:

- There will not be any public hearings for the month of January. She would like to schedule a workshop again with The Commission to further discuss possible code amendments. Staff will reach out to The Commission and pick a date and time.

**COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

None.

## **WORKSHOP DISCUSSION:**

### **Code Consideration - Twin Homes**

**Presented by Mike Behary – Associate Planner**

#### **Introduction:**

- Recently, the Planning & Zoning Commission asked staff to bring forward twin homes as a discussion item for a possible code amendment to help provide more for-sale house options available in Coeur d'Alene.
- Currently, there are two ways that a twin home can be built in the city. The First, is utilizing the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process on sites that are over one and half (1 ½) acres in size. The second, is on properties zoned R-17, which allows single-family attached housing by right.
- Staff is seeking guidance and direction from the Planning & Zoning Commission on twin home development and it should be allowed by right or as a special use permit, or if there should be other factors considered in where they can be located by right.

#### **Twin Home - Basics**

##### **Definition:**

A Twin home is a residential property with two separate living spaces that share a common wall but are located on two separate lots.








##### **Ownership:**

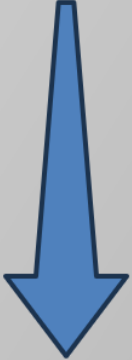
Each unit in a twin home is considered a single-family home, and the owners are responsible for maintaining and insuring their own side of the property. The property line runs down the middle of the building, and each property has its own description.

##### **Differences:**

Twin homes are similar to duplex in that they have a wall and look like two identical houses, but the ownership structure is different. In a duplex, both units are on the same lot, while in a twin home, each unit is on its own private lot.

## What zoning districts should it be allowed in?

R-1	Low Density	 Duplex Not Allowed
R-3		 Duplex Not Allowed
R-5		 Duplex Not Allowed
R-8		 Duplex Allowed
MH-8		 Duplex Not Allowed
R-12		 Duplex Allowed
R-17	High Density	 Duplex Allowed



**Recommendation:** Allow by right in R-12 and R-17 zoning districts

### Special Use Permit Requirement?

- **Pros:** A Special Use Permit (SUP) requirement could allow flexibility in allowing twin homes in areas not traditionally zoned for them. This could be useful for mitigating community concerns and ensuring that developments align with the neighborhood character.
- **Cons:** SUP process can be time-consuming and unpredictable, which may discourage developers and homeowners.

**Recommendation:** No Special Use Permit Process. Allow twin homes to be built by right in R-12 and R-17 zoning districts and associated commercial districts.

### Should transect Planning/Zones radiating out from the city center be applied?

### Should an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) be allowed?

- **Pros:** Allowing ADUs within twin homes can provide additional housing options, such as rental units or spaces for extended families.
- **Cons:** ADUs could increase density further, leading to concerns about parking and potential overpopulation in the area.

**Recommendation:** Keep the code as is, which only allows ADUs on lots with single family detached housing.

### Should Twin Homes be allowed in other zoning districts (besides R-17)?

### What should be the minimum lot size required?

- **Pros:** Setting a minimum lot size can ensure that twin homes provide adequate space for both dwellings and maintain community character.
- **Cons:** Too large a minimum lot size could defeat the purpose of providing more affordable housing by increasing the cost of development.

**Recommendation:** The minimum lot size should be flexible, with a focus on achieving density without overcrowding. A suggested range could be between 3,000 to 5,000 square feet, with 3,500 square feet being the optimal recommendation. *Duplex Lots = 7,000SF (3,500SF per unit)*

#### **What should be the minimum lot width required?**

- **Pros:** A minimum lot width helps to maintain a sense of openness and separation between homes while ensuring that each dwelling has adequate access to light, air, and privacy.
- **Cons:** If set too wide, this requirement could reduce the feasibility of twin homes on smaller or irregular lots.

**Recommendation:** A minimum lot width of 25-30 feet would balance the need for adequate space while keeping housing affordable. (25 feet for alley lots and 30 feet for lots without alley access).

*\* R-8 and R-12 Lots have a minimum of 50 feet of frontage for duplex lots*

#### **What should be the minimum setbacks required?**

- **Pros:** Setbacks regulate how far the buildings are from property lines, ensuring adequate space for privacy, outdoor areas, and safe movement around buildings.
- **Cons:** Too large a setback could reduce the overall density and impact the economic viability of twin homes.

**Recommendation:** Consider minimum front setbacks of 20 feet, side setbacks of 5 feet (alley Lots) and 7 feet (with no alley), and rear setbacks of at least 25 feet, depending on the lot size and zoning.

*Duplex Lots = Side 5' and 10' and corner lots 10'*

#### **Twin Home parking requirement?**

- **Pros:** Parking requirements ensure that residents have access to transportation without relying on street parking, reducing congestion.
- **Cons:** Excessive parking requirements may reduce the land available for development or add unnecessary costs.

**Recommendation:** Require two parking spaces per unit, with the option to include garage or driveway parking.

#### **Alley Lots and Driveway Access?**

- **Pros:** Allowing access via alleys or shared driveways can reduce curb cuts, maintain streetscape aesthetics, and preserve front yard space for landscaping or green areas.
- **Cons:** It can create confusion regarding property access and potentially lead to disputes over

maintenance and responsibilities.

**Recommendation** Require alley access for alley lots.

**Should existing Single Family and Duplexes be allowed to be converted to twin homes? Or should they only be allowed as a new build option?**

**Recommendation:** Only should be allowed as a new build option.

Mike Behary concluded his presentation.

**Commission Discussion:**

One of the suggestions from a commission member would be to have a pamphlet that has some suggestions or ideas on twin homes.

They suggested the minimum lot width of 25 so that it would be consistent with the duplex lot with a 50-foot frontage and 25 feet per unit.

They would like the twin home parking to have two parking spaces per unit, which is consistent with other code requirements.

The Commission was supportive of a minimum front setback of 20 feet, side setbacks of 5 feet (for lots with an alley) and 7 feet (for lots with no alley), and rear setbacks of at least 25 feet, depending on the lot size and zoning.

The Commission was in consensus that if duplexes are allowed, then twin homes should be allowed by right too and have standards that mirror those for duplexes (with a few exceptions).

If there was an existing duplex or single-family home and someone wanted to convert it into a twin home, they agreed that existing duplexes and single-family homes could not be converted. Twin homes would only be allowed as a new build.

One commissioner thought that they should be built to look like one structure. No ADUs should be allowed for twin homes.

ADUs should only be allowed for single-family detached homes. Twin homes should look like duplexes, which do not have ADUs.

The Commission asked if it would possible for staff to do a GIS query to evaluate how many possible duplex lots exist in the City to help understand where twin homes may be located. Mr. Behary said he would do a GIS query.

Staff noted that in the R-8 zoning district with the larger duplex lots, that they wouldn't anticipate twin homes because it is the same lot size requirement for a single-family detached home that could also accommodate an ADU. It would be more likely in the R-8 district for someone to opt to split the lot and do two single-family detached homes with ADUs instead.

The Commission reiterated that they would like to see twin homes mirror the frontage and setback requirements for duplexes. Exceptions to duplex standards would be:

- Only garden sheds (under 200 square feet) would be allowed and would need to be setback at least 5 feet from the property lines. No other accessory structures would be permitted on twin home lots.

- For alley-loaded lots, twin homes would be required to utilize the alley for access and could not get driveways off of the street(s).

The Commission asked staff if they could amend the code to apply the alley-loaded requirement to duplexes too.

The question was asked can the roads be wide enough for on-street parking as well. The Commissioners were concerned with parking impacts with new projects and wanted to make sure that staff was evaluating current roadway widths and on-street parking opportunities.

Staff clarified that this was on their Code Amendments "To Do List" to address the minimum street standards to require that there would be on-street parking on at least one side of the street.

Chairman Messina said he appreciated hearing that and said it is helpful to hear what challenges staff is facing and what other code amendments we think would be beneficial.

There was some discussion about a new theoretical subdivision with just twin home lots and how that would work with the timing of construction and further lot splits. Randy Adams, City Attorney clarified that there are many lots that exist that can only support one type of use. That would be the same situation if someone did a twin home plat. This might lock them into doing only that type of development if they went forward with a twin home plat.

The Commission suggested that they work together with the Historic Preservation commission on the historic overlay zoning district concept.

The Commission asked when this item would come back to them. Staff said to plan on a public hearing on a Twin Home Code in March. They would get input from the other city departments prior to drafting the ordinance.

### **Code Evaluation - Special Use Permit for Single-Family Detached Only Housing Presented by Sean Holm – Senior Planner**

#### **Introduction:**

**Purpose:** Evaluate the code for Special Use Permits (SUP) restricting development to single-family detached housing.

**Objective:** Discuss whether to retain, amend, or eliminate this code.

**Context:** Address legal concerns, city goals, and community needs.

#### **Code Overview:**

- Allows 66% of property owners with 66% of the land to request single-family restrictions via SUP.
- Minimum area: 1.5 gross acres (R-8 & R-12 zones).

#### **History:**

- 3 cases Pinegrove (1994, approved), Ft. Grounds (2013-2014, approved), Thomas Park, denied).
- Threshold reduced from 75% to 66% in 2013.

#### **Pros of removing the code:**

- Promotes diverse, affordable housing options.
- Reduces conflicts and administrative burdens.
- Aligns better with comprehensive plan goals.
- Encourages market adaptability.

**Cons of removing the code:**

- Limits neighborhood input on development.
- Risk of altering neighborhood character.
- Requires zoning code updates.
- Removes a formal tool for neighborhood-led planning.

**Legal and Procedural Issues**

- Misalignment with SUP intent under Idaho Law?
- Potential legal challenges
- Perceived improper use of SUP authority.
- Reduced public input compared to zone changes.
- City Council would be the deciding factor.
- Could conflict with comprehensive plan goals.

**Considerations:**

**Clarify intent:** Consider zoning overlays or conservation districts.

**Align with State Code:** Amend SUP practices to meet statutory definitions?

**Shift to Zone Changes:** Require formal rezoning for single-family restrictions?

**Hurdle Percentage:** Raise thresholds back to 75% with notarized signatures?

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Should we retain, amend, or eliminate the current SUP process?
2. How can we balance neighborhood input with city-wide goals?
3. What tools can address concerns about changing neighborhood character?

Mr. Holm concluded his presentation.

**Commission Discussion:**

The Commission said they would like to eliminate the single-family detached only SUP option in the Zoning Code. There have only been three instances of this in the city and that other zoning tools exist that seem more appropriate. The Commission noted that they support the historic overlay tool and would like to workshop with the Historic Preservation Commission separately on that.

**Code Consideration - Multifamily Performance Standards & Design Guidelines  
Presented by Hilary Patterson – Community Planning Director**

Ms. Patterson noted that the current Commercial Design Guidelines and code requirements for multi-family projects do not specifically address the design characteristics of this type of development for apartments, townhouses and condominiums. Staff feels there is a need to have design and performance standards that are specific to apartments, condominium projects and townhouse projects to address design, access/circulation and livability components.

Design of proposed, approved and constructed projects do not consider design aesthetics for things such as mini splits or wall A/C units, connections to adjacent commercial uses and public open space areas, visitor parking, accessible units, zero entry units, and units with visit ability (accessibility for disabled visitors) performance standards on the first level (zero entry, wider doorways and restroom), ADA parking stalls, green space and buffering, etc.

Drive aisles are frequently utilized which can skirt Zoning Code requirement for frontage, street trees, landscaping trees, landscaping and sidewalk performance standards.

There is a loophole in the code that is being used to reduce parking for townhouse projects that was designed for apartments where there is shared parking, rather than parking for individual units.

Other performance standards that are lacking from the code include: snow storage, on-site green space and amenities for residents (e.g., play areas for children or green space for pets, on-site trails, trash enclosures versus individual totes and placement of trash enclosures, dead-end streets without requirement for secondary access, and all buildings looking identical.

Ms. Patterson shared the City of Auburn, WA's design guidelines for multifamily residential and noted some of the components they included and how they separated projects into large and small for certain performance standards.

Ms. Patterson noted there is also a lack of accessible units in townhouse construction and an exemption in the Building Code for Type C dwelling units by exempting the accessible restroom on the first level if the floor space is too small. Because of the exemption in the Building Code, one consideration is to add something in the Zoning Code. Other communities have included visitability/zero entry performance standards, but staff needs to do additional research to see how that has been addressed.

Visitability is a design approach for housing that allows people who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices to visit. Visitability focuses on features that guests would use, such as the entrance, hallways, and bathroom on the main floor. Common features include:

- At least one accessible route into the dwelling
- Accessible entrance doors
- Hallway widths of at least 32 inches
- A wheelchair accessible bathroom on the main floor

#### **Feedback Requested:**

- Length Limitation for Driveways
- Driveway versus a private street
- Connectivity Requirement (Right-of-Way Circulation) – Vehicles and pedestrians
- Accessibility/Visitability for a certain percentage of units
- Parking requirements
  - Parking Ratio Based on Number of Bedrooms per Unit
  - Visitor Parking Requirements
    - Apartments
    - Townhomes
  - ADA Parking
- Landscaping Requirements for Front Yards of site and along private streets and drive aisles
- Green spaces and amenities for residents
- Snow storage requirement
- Trash enclosure versus individual totes
- Requirement for some variation in building design?
- Wall mounted and Rooftop Equipment
- Door/Front/Orientation of building(s) facing public streets (address blank walls)
  - Townhomes
  - Apartments
- Glazing requirement
  - Townhomes
  - Apartments

Should there be a consideration to allow for some exceptions to the standards if they deed restrict housing to 80-100% AMI, provide annual reports, and work with a local housing provider for management?



Ms. Patterson concluded her presentation:

**Commissioner Discussion:**

The Commission had questions on what number of multifamily units triggers ADA accessibility requirements and if it was greater than 5 units, or if a 4-plex triggered it. Staff didn't have the answer and said they would consult with the Building Official.

One suggestion was to require ground floors to be accessible or adaptable. The Commission urged staff to research and look at other examples where accessibility is incorporated into a zoning code instead of the building code.

There was a question on the appropriate length of a dead-end driveway or private road and if that number should be 150' based on the length of a fire hose, or some other number. But there was support for requiring secondary vehicular access as well as pedestrian access.

The Commission was supportive of the visitable units and said they would like to see some threshold, such as over 5 units.

The commission wanted the code to specify a % of parking that would be required for visitors and to clarify the parking per bedroom rather than averaging it for townhouse projects. They don't want to see the parking ratios increased, but do want to add visitor parking requirements. The Commission would like staff to evaluate the 8x18 parking stall size that doesn't fit standard vehicles.

The Commission was supportive of requiring street trees and landscaping, even along drive aisles and private streets.

They were supportive of considering some variation in building design for large projects that would be required by DRC, and they liked the standard Auburn had related to roofs over entries.

The Commission also said they were interested in how a multifamily project would be compatible and tie into existing neighborhood.

The Commission did not want to include an exception for design guidelines and development standards for projects and deed restrictions for affordable units, but rather offer density and FAR as incentives to help address affordability.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Commissioner Ingalls, seconded by Commissioner Fleming, to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Prepared by Traci Clark, Administrative Assistant