



Winston-Salem/Forsyth County
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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Memorandum

TO: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore and Members of the City Council
FROM: Aaron King, Director of Planning and Development Services
DATE: July 29, 2020
SUBJECT: Follow-Up on Accessory Dwelling Units

In September 2017, City Council adopted revised regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) requiring all new ADUs to be approved by Council through the Special-Use District rezoning process. Prior to this time, attached ADUs were approved by Planning and Development Services staff and detached ADUs received approval from the Board of Adjustment. The 2017 regulations were the end result of a multi-year review of the City's ADU standards that was triggered by a court case in Wilmington which called into question the occupancy requirements that were a key component of Winston-Salem's ADU regulations at the time.

As part of the approval motion for the 2017 standards, former Council Member Derwin Montgomery (the chair of the Community Development/Housing/General Government Committee at the time) asked staff to bring a report to Committee in 18 months detailing the number of ADUs approved in that time compared to historical data. When this 18-month period ended in spring 2019, no ADUs had yet to be permitted under the revised ordinance, so staff determined it would be best to hold off on briefing the Committee until Council had reviewed at least one application via the new process.

In 2018, the City established the Affordable Housing Coalition. Recognizing the value of accessory units in providing options for affordable housing, the Coalition recently requested more information from Planning staff on current trends, best management practices, and local regulations for ADUs. Part of this request included an accounting of how many ADUs had been approved in the City since the revised ordinance standards were adopted in 2017 (this number still stands at zero).

For comparison purposes, staff also researched historical ADU approval trends for the 18 months preceding adoption of the current regulations, per Representative Montgomery's September 2017 request: From March 2016 to August 2017, eight detached ADUs were approved in the City. Staff does not have any way of determining how many attached ADUs were approved during this time period, as such units did not require a unique permit type or review process, but were instead reviewed using the same process as other remodels/expansions of existing dwellings. Anecdotally, staff would estimate twice the number of attached accessory units were approved during this period as detached units.

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City Council: Mayor Allen Joines; Denise D. Adams, Mayor Pro Tempore, North Ward; Dan Besse, Southwest Ward; Robert C. Clark, West Ward; John C. Larson, South Ward; Jeff MacIntosh, Northwest Ward; Morticia "Tee-Tee" Parmon, Northeast Ward; Annette Scippio, East Ward; James Taylor, Jr., Southeast Ward; City Manager: Lee D. Garrity

County Commissioners: David R. Plyler, Chairman; Don Martin, Vice Chair, Fleming El-Amin; Ted Kaplan; Richard V. Linville; Tonya McDaniel; Gloria D. Whisenhunt; County Manager: Dudley Watts, Jr.

City-County Planning Board: Chris Leak, Chair; Melynda Dunigan, Vice Chair; George M. Bryan, Jr.; Jason Grubbs; Tommy Hicks; Clarence R. Lambe, Jr.; Brenda J. Smith; Jack Steelman

Staff wanted to make this information available to Council as a related item from the Affordable Housing Coalition that is scheduled to be presented to the CD/H/GG Committee in August. Please let me know if you have further questions related to this matter.