



CITY OF BELFAST, MAINE 04915

131 Church Street

CODE & PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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September 23, 2020

**NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL
AMENDMENT TO CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES**

The City of Belfast City Council, at its meeting of Tuesday, October 6, 2020, beginning at 7:00 pm or as soon as practical thereafter, shall conduct a public hearing and Second Reading on proposed amendments to the City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 66, General Provisions (Definitions), Chapter 90, Site Plan, and Chapter 94, Subdivisions. The proposed amendments would revise City procedures identified in the Site Plan Ordinance associated with the review of all multi-family housing projects, including establishing a specific process for the review of an affordable housing project. The proposed amendments are outlined more fully below, and can be read in their entirety on the City website. It is specifically noted that none of the proposed amendments will apply to the Developers Collaborative proposal to develop 48 multi-family housing units at 115 Congress Street that is now being considered by the Belfast Planning Board.

The City Council will conduct the October 6 meeting and public hearing electronically via a ZOOM webinar. The Council will not physically be meeting in City Hall and there will be no access to City Hall during the meeting. Persons who want to offer public comment to the Council for the October 6 hearing can do so in any of the following ways:

- 1) Submit comment via email in advance of the meeting/hearing to wmarshall@cityofbelfast.org. Comment should be received no later than 2:00 pm on October 6 so it can be provided to the Council in advance of the meeting/hearing. This is the preferred way to submit comment.
- 2) Submit a letter by 2:00 pm on October 6 to: City of Belfast, Code & Planning Department, 131 Church St, Belfast, ME, 04915.
- 3) Submit a comment to the Council during the October 6 meeting/hearing via email to public@cityofbelfast.org. Comment will be presented to the Council at the meeting/hearing.
- 4) Submit oral comment during the public hearing via the ZOOM webinar. Information regarding how to access the ZOOM webinar can be found on the City website, cityofbelfast.org, several days in advance of the Council meeting.

The City Council equally considers all forms of public comment that is received.

The Belfast Planning Board first considered the amendments identified in this proposal. The Board, at its meeting of August 12, voted to recommend the amendments for adoption by the City Council. The amendments focus on the City process to review a proposal for a multi-family

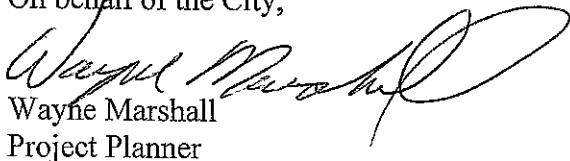
housing project (three or more dwelling units in one building), and many are prompted by amendments to State Statutes that were adopted in 2018. The City Council conducted the formal First Reading of the amendments at its meeting of September 1, and voted to schedule the amendments for Second Reading and public hearing at the Council meeting of October 6. The Council, at the Second Reading, has the authority to adopt the amendments as presented, to reject the proposed amendments, to make changes to the amendments, or to table action on the amendments.

The main provisions in the Ordinance amendments include the following:

- 1) The City will use the provisions of its Site Plan Ordinance, Chapter 90, rather than its Subdivision Ordinance, Chapter 94, to conduct the review of an application for a multi-family housing project. This change is consistent with State Statutes adopted in 2018.
- 2) The amendments identify how the Planning Board will apply the steps in the Site Plan process to review a multi-family housing project. This includes creating an opportunity for an applicant for an affordable housing project to submit an application pursuant to a consolidated/merged Preliminary Plan and Final Plan process (a single step review process), provided the Planning Board conducts at least 2 public hearings on the application.
- 3) Incorporating provisions regarding net residential density that are now only in the Subdivision Ordinance into the Site Plan Ordinance. Net residential density involves deducting certain lands, such as but not limited to wetlands, floodplains, and steep slopes, from the total size of the lot to determine how many multi-family dwelling units could be developed on a property. For example, if a lot is 3 acres in size, but 1 acre of the lot consists of wetlands, the total amount of lot area that could be used to determine the maximum number of dwelling units that could be constructed would be 2 acres.
- 4) Establishing a date by which any Site Plan Permit (not only a multi-family housing project) issued by the City would become void if an applicant does not begin project construction. The time period recommended is 5 years. This provision also would apply to permits issued prior to the adoption of these amendments.
- 5) The amendments include a definition for an affordable housing project.
- 6) The amendments update the Subdivision Ordinance to include all exemptions from the Subdivision process that are now identified in State Statute.

The complete language for the proposed amendments can be viewed on the City website, cityofbelfast.org, reference Planning and Codes, Housing Amendments link. They also can be inspected at the Code and Planning Department offices in Belfast City Hall during normal business hours, Monday - Thursday, 7:00 am - 6:00 pm. Questions regarding the proposed amendments should be directed to Wayne Marshall, Project Planner, Code & Planning, at 338-1417 x 125, or at wmarshall@cityofbelfast.org.

On behalf of the City,


Wayne Marshall
Project Planner