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NOTE TO BELFAST PLANNING BOARD

FEBRUARY 21, 2024

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT WORKSHOP

**INSIDE THE BYPASS ZONING AMENDMENTS FOCUSED ON INCREASING
HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES AND LD 2003 COMPLIANCE
FROM BUB FOURNIER, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND CODES DEPARTMENT**

At the duly noticed public hearing on proposed Ordinance amendments held on January 24th, 2024, the Belfast Planning Board heard from several community members regarding the proposed amendments. At that time, the Board did not make a recommendation for adoption to City Council, but they did ask staff to bring the proposal to the City's Intown Design Review Committee for possible incorporation of voluntary design guidelines for "flex housing" and multifamily dwelling developments.

The Intown Design Review Committee conducted meetings on February 1st and February 20th to that end. The Committee worked through drafts of the existing Chapter 80 Intown Design Review section of the City Ordinances prepared by staff. There were several takeaways from these two meetings that may help the Board consider the draft language supported by the Committee as they determine what action to take next:

- 1) The Intown Design Committee voted 6-0 in favor of recommending the draft proposal for inclusion with the Board's other amendments in the current proposal for increasing housing opportunities Inside the Bypass areas.
- 2) The Committee incorporated the enhanced purpose statement crafted by Planning Board members with minor edits. The Committee expressed a desire to incorporate this into the ordinance so that Applicants, Committee members and other community members would know why these proposed standards were generated. I have reached out to the City Attorney for legal advice on any potential issues with this language.
- 3) The IDR Committee incorporated the idea of a possible pre-application meeting with members to better prepare Applicants for their actual Intown review.
- 4) The Committee discussed the scope of design review at length and at several points in the meetings. Many Committee members expressed support to incorporate design review for

single-family homes in Historic Districts and incorporate site layout into non-residential reviews, but in the end, these did not make it into the draft proposal for the Board's consideration.

- 5) The Committee added visually compatible site layout and historic district compatibility to the standards by which a "flex housing" or multifamily development would be subject to. These standards are not specifically part of the Intown standards for nonresidential developments at this time, and they do cross into Planning Board Site Plan review criteria territory, but the Code language may be considered flexible enough to accommodate this proposed change.

I would also like to call your attention to the significant number of written comments that staff will be forwarding to you as part of this upcoming workshop. Many community members offered written comments after the duly noticed public hearing, and this will be an opportunity for the Board to take these into consideration. It should also be noted that the Board has now conducted at least 6 meetings on this topic, almost all of which have invited public comments.

Moving forward, the Board may choose one of the following actions at the upcoming workshop on February 28th, 2024:

- Direct staff to generate additional drafts of the proposed Ordinance language to accommodate any substantive changes that the Board would like to incorporate or delete.
- Make a recommendation to the City Council to adopt the proposed Ordinance amendments with or without minor changes.

As a reminder, the proposal's goals are broken down into the following categories of changes for better understanding:

- 1) Increase housing development opportunities Inside the Rte. 1 Bypass area of Belfast.**
- 2) Adopt State Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) standards in compliance with LD2003.**
- 3) Incorporate density bonuses and maximum parking requirements in LD2003 for Affordable Housing as defined by the State.**
- 4) Accommodate standards in the State law requiring the City to allow 4 dwelling units on a vacant lot for any zoning districts that allow housing in "designated growth areas".**
- 5) Accommodate standards in the State law requiring the City to allow 3 dwelling units on a lot with an existing single-family home for any zoning districts that allow housing in "designated growth areas".**

- 6) **Consolidate Inside the Bypass zoning use and dimensional tables into City-wide format.**

- 7) **Minor cleanups including a front setback adjustment affecting 3 lots on Cottage Street.**

The draft language supported by the Intown Design Review Committee would be additional to the many code sections that the Board has been working on as part of this proposal to increase housing opportunities Inside the Bypass areas.

Typical format of Amendments

All text shown in black font is current text in the adopted City Code of Ordinances. All text shown in **red font** is new language that is proposed to be added. All text shown with **blue-strike through** is to be removed. All text shown in **green font** are notes for the Board and other readers.

** The draft Dimensional and Use Tables along with footnotes are color coded in the manner the Board is used to seeing for Ordinance Amendment language, however it's important to keep in mind that this is a complete overhaul of the existing tables and footnotes, so colors are used to highlight specific changes. However, these are essentially completely new tables that would replace the existing ones in the Ordinance.