

Providence City Plan Commission

September 19, 2023



AGENDA ITEM 2 ■ ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

OVERVIEW

PROPONENT: Department of Planning and Development (DPD)

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend approval of the proposed amendment

CASE NO./ PROJECT TYPE: CPC Referral 3555
Amendment of zoning ordinance based on changes to state law

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Amendment of zoning ordinance

PROJECT PLANNER: Robert Azar

Discussion

The Rhode Island General Assembly has passed bills that have amended sections of state law pertaining to zoning and development review, which have necessitated changes to the zoning ordinance and development review regulations. The zoning changes are being presented this month, details of which are provided in a separate memo. Changes to the Development Review Regulations will be discussed and presented for action at a subsequent meeting.

Findings

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The amendment would be in character with the following objectives of the Comprehensive Plan:

- LU 1 which encourages protecting and enhancing stable neighborhoods
- LU3 which encourages the maintenance and enhancement of residential areas
- BE 2 which calls for adapting Providence's traditional urban design character to new needs, expectations and technologies
- BE3 which encourages compact urban development and new development to complement traditional character.

The changes are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan as they clarify guidelines for new development, specify technical and dimensional regulations and aim to improve the built environment and create new housing.

Consistency with the Zoning Ordinance

The amendment is consistent with Article 1 of the Zoning Ordinance as it conforms to the following Objectives:

- Promoting the public health, safety and general welfare
- Promoting a balance of housing choices, for all income levels and groups, to assure the health, safety, and welfare of all citizens and their rights to affordable, accessible, safe, and sanitary housing.
- Providing for a range of uses and intensities of use appropriate to the character of the City and reflecting current and expected future needs.
- Providing for orderly growth and development which recognizes:
 - i. The goals and patterns of land use contained in the Comprehensive Plan as defined
 - ii. The availability and capacity of existing and planned public and/or private services and facilities
 - iii. The need to shape urban development; and
 - iv. The use of innovative development regulations and techniques.
- Promoting a high level of quality of design in the development of private and public facilities.
- Providing for efficient review of development proposals, to clarify and expedite the zoning approval process.
- Providing for procedures for the administration of the zoning ordinance, including, but not limited to, variances, special use permits, and where adopted, procedures for modifications.

Recommendation

Based on the foregoing discussion, the DPD recommends that the CPC advise the City Council to approve the changes to the zoning ordinance.