

## Arlington Multifamily Zoning – Recommendations

December 11, 2018

**Open space:** Eliminate the usable open space requirement for multifamily and mixed-use development, and instead increase the landscaped open space requirement from 10% to 20% of gross floor area.

- Allow up to 25% of landscaped open space to occur on balconies and/or roof deck. This would involve an amendment to the landscaped open space definition.

Rationale: There were several comments at the last working group meeting that large, programmed usable open space is not necessarily what's needed along main corridors. However, there was also acknowledgement that community members are interested in ensuring that developments have sufficient ground-level greenery. Shifting the entire open space requirement to landscaped open space eliminates the confusion resulting from the different kinds of open spaces, offers more flexibility in how the space is distributed across the site (landscaped open space does not require the 25x25' minimum dimensions), and reduces the overall open space requirement (from 30% total to 20% total) while still maintaining sufficient green space.

### **Townhouses:**

- Clarify (in definition and in dimensional charts) that dimensional requirements are for the entire townhouse structure, not an individual townhouse unit.
- Amend the maximum size of one townhouse structure from 6 units/150' length to 8 units/200' length

Rationale: 200' is roughly the length of Arlington's smaller blocks, and is approximately half the length of a larger block.

**Apartment conversions:** Generally eliminate dimensional requirements.

Rationale: Because apartment conversions deal exclusively with existing structures, many dimensional requirements can be an undue constraint, especially when the structures are often historic and nonconforming.

### **Density and lot area**

- In the B2 district, decrease the density requirement for mixed use >20,000 sq. ft. from 1450 sq. ft./unit to 1,000 sq. ft./unit
- For R districts – reduce minimum lot areas, min lot area per unit, and minimum lot frontage:

	Use	Min Lot Area		Min Lot Area per Unit		Min Lot Frontage	
		Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
R4	Three-family dwelling	7,500	<b>5,000</b>	0	no change	70	<b>50</b>
R4	Townhouse	30,000	<b>5,000</b>	2,500	<b>1,500</b>	100	<b>50</b>
R4	Apt conversion	12,500	<b>0</b>	2,500	<b>1,000</b>	80	<b>0</b>
R5	Townhouse/apartment	20,000	<b>5,000</b>	1,450	<b>1,000</b>	100	<b>50</b>
R6	Townhouse/apartment	20,000	<b>5,000</b>	700	no change	100	<b>50</b>
R7	Any permitted structure	20,000	<b>5,000</b>	550	no change	100	<b>50</b>

Lot size rationale: Per the parcel analysis, there are a substantial number of lots above 5,000 square feet on Arlington's main corridors, a size which could comfortably accommodate four- or six-plex apartment buildings. Density and other dimensional requirements still apply, so lowering the minimum lot size would not result in disproportionately large buildings being constructed on small lots.

Density rationale: When reviewing the density study, the working group gravitated towards the 1,000 sq. ft. of lot area per unit as an appropriate baseline for Mass Ave and other main corridors.

#### Yards:

- In the B1 district, change front yard requirement for mixed use from 20' to 10', and the side yard requirement from 10' to 0 (bringing it closer to the front and side yard requirements for other B districts, which are both 0' for mixed use).
- For corner lots, change from minimum street yard depth shall be equal to the required front yard of the adjoining lots to minimum street yard depth shall be equal to the front yard depth required for the district in which the parcel is located as in Section 5.3.8.
- In R districts – reduce front yards and side yards:

	Use	Front Yard		Side Yard		Rear Yard	
		Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
R4	Three-family dwelling	25	<b>15</b>	10	no change	20	no change
R4	Townhouse	25	<b>15</b>	15	<b>10</b>	25	<b>20</b>
R4	Apt conversion	25	<b>0</b>	10	<b>0</b>	20	<b>0</b>
R5	Townhouse/apartment	15	<b>10</b>	$10+(L/10)$	<b>15</b>	25	<b>20</b>
R6	Townhouse/apartment	$15+(H/10)$	<b>10</b>	$(H+L)/6$	<b>10**</b>	$(H+L)/6$	<b>20</b>
R7	Any permitted structure	$15+(H/10)$	<b>10</b>	$(H+L)/6$	<b>10**</b>	$(H+L)/6$	<b>20</b>
** Where R6 and R7 parcels abut a business district, no side yard setback is required adjacent to the business-zoned parcel.							

Rationale: Decreased front and side yards are more consistent with traditional main street building patterns and create a stronger and more consistent street wall, which enhances pedestrian experience. The front yard setbacks proposed here are still sufficient to allow room for a bench, landscaping, or other pedestrian amenity. The side yard setbacks allow for a continuous streetwall in business areas, while providing relief where apartment districts abut residential districts.

**Setback:** Require the setback above the third story (rather than above the second story if the building is greater than three stories as in Section 5.3.17).

Rationale: A three-story façade before a setback creates a stronger street wall and is more proportionally appropriate for wide main streets with buildings 4-5 stories tall.



### Height buffer:

- Reduce buffer distances to 25-50' depending on orientation (rather than 100-200').

Rationale: These dimensions retain a reasonable degree of relief for adjacent residential parcels, particularly for the lowest-intensity R0 and R1 districts, while not effectively lowering height limits across entire parcels.

### Height and FAR in R districts:

- Increase heights in R5 and R6, and FARs in all multifamily residential districts:

	Use	Max Height (ft.)		Max Height (stories)		Max FAR	
		Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
R4	Townhouse	35	No change	3	No change	.7	<b>1.5</b>
R4	Apt conversion	40	<b>n/a</b>	3	<b>n/a</b>	--	No change
R5	Townhouse/apartment	35	<b>45</b>	3	<b>4</b>	.8	<b>1.5</b>
R6	Townhouse/apartment	40	<b>55</b>	4	<b>5</b>	1.2	<b>1.8</b>
		35	<b>45</b>	3	<b>4</b>		
R7	Any permitted structure	60	<b>60</b>	5	No change	1.5	<b>2.0</b>
		40	<b>45</b>				

### Height and FAR in B districts:

- Increase FARs in all B districts:

	Use	Max Height (ft.)		Max Height (stories)		Max FAR	
		Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
B1	Mixed Use	35	<b>45</b>	3	<b>4</b>	.75	<b>1.5</b>
B2	Mixed Use <20,000 sq. ft.	50		4		1.5	<b>1.8</b>
B2	Mixed Use >20,000 sq. ft.	40		3		1.0	<b>1.5</b>
B2A	Mixed Use <20,000 sq. ft.	60		5		1.5	<b>1.8</b>
		50		4			
B2A	Mixed Use >20,000 sq. ft.	50		4		1.0	<b>1.5</b>
		40		3			
B3	Mixed Use <20,000 sq. ft.	60		5		1.5	<b>1.8</b>
		50		4			

	Use	Max Height (ft.)		Max Height (stories)		Max FAR	
		Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
B3	Mixed Use >20,000 sq. ft.	50 40	<b>60</b> <b>50</b>	5 3	<b>4</b>	1.4	<b>1.5</b>
B4	Mixed Use <20,000 sq. ft.	60 50		5 4		1.5	<b>2.0</b>
B4	Mixed Use >20,000 sq. ft.	50 40		4 3		1.0	<b>1.8</b>
B5	Mixed Use <20,000 sq. ft.	60 50		5 4		1.8	<b>2.2</b>
B5	Mixed Use >20,000 sq. ft.	60 40	<b>50</b>	5 3	<b>5</b> <b>4</b>	1.4	<b>1.8</b>

**Parking:**

- Change Apartment Building requirements from 1.0/1.15/1.5/2.0 spaces per unit to 1.0 space per unit. Project would still be eligible for TDM and affordable housing reductions.
- Add R7 to the districts eligible for TDM parking reduction as in Section 6.1.5.

Rationale: Reducing the parking requirements for apartments to one space per unit is consistent with the current parking requirements for single family, duplex, and triplex housing.

**Special permit triggers:** Allow up to 6 units by right in the R5-7 districts, and up to 6 units mixed use by right in all B districts.

Rationale: This allows a reasonable number of residential units by-right in districts where development at this scale is appropriate. Six units is the threshold for the inclusionary zoning ordinance.