



**The Council of Neighborhood Associations of South Pinellas County, Inc.  
P.O. Box 13693 St. Petersburg, Florida 33733**

October 16, 2021

City Council  
City Hall Council Chambers  
175 Fifth Street North  
Saint Petersburg, Florida 33701

Dear Council Members:

It is well documented that there is a need for affordable housing in St. Petersburg. The Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA) is fully supportive of efforts to meet this need and recognizes that important steps have already been taken by the City.

Presently pending before the City Council are a range of proposals understood to be directed at increasing affordable housing (housing for households earning 80% or less of Area Mean Income or “AMI”) by changing zoning in neighborhoods throughout the City. These proposals include:

- the introduction of duplexes, fourplexes, and other forms of multi-family housing
- expansion of Auxiliary Dwelling Units into neighborhoods which do not now have them
- expansion of Economic Activity Centers into adjacent neighborhoods
- and other measures.

CONA reached out to the City and devoted its September Membership meeting to a City Zoom Presentation on these proposals. The proposals are complex with a range of options as outlined in the City’s 60 screen PowerPoint. CONA is now disseminating information on these proposals to its member neighborhoods throughout the City, and plans to undertake a survey of member associations.

A particular concern is how the introduction of multi-family housing and auxiliary dwelling units will affect the character of our neighborhoods. In the City presentation made to CONA, there was but one reference to the importance of respecting neighborhood character. We believe the absence of even a definition of neighborhood character, and specification of the criteria for assessing impact on neighborhood character (such as architectural style, setbacks, height, mass

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and scale of buildings, parking requirements, and shared green space) is critical information for neighborhoods to have.

The density expansion options under consideration for neighborhoods beyond transit routes and future major streets (some of which are still only two-lanes) range from one lot to 1/2 mile. Even a 1/8th mile expansion would essentially cover most or all of some existing neighborhoods with the potential to radically change neighborhood character. This is a difficult concept to convey and much more direct communication to individual neighborhoods must be undertaken by both the City and CONA. This will take time.

The City previously passed an NTM ordinance which was never implemented. Perhaps consideration should be given to implementing that ordinance on a test basis before expanding to other areas of the City.

We request City staff present information regarding these proposals directly to each interested and affected neighborhood to inform them of exactly how their specific neighborhood would be impacted. CONA would like to discuss ways to work with City staff to accomplish this. We are also asking that final action on these proposals be deferred until CONA has had the opportunity to poll its members regarding them. Ideally, these far-reaching proposals should be deferred until after the new Administration takes office in January so that they also may review them.

Again, CONA is most supportive of effective measures to increase the supply of affordable housing in our city. We remain hopeful that the pending zoning change proposals can accomplish that, together with other City initiatives, in a manner which respects neighborhood character.

We ask that the City delay implementation of these zoning changes to allow CONA time to educate our member neighborhoods and obtain and share their informed views.

Sincerely,

*Tom Lally*

President

cc: Mayor Rick Kriseman  
CONA Executive Committee  
CONA Member Neighborhoods

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