



March 11, 2022

To: Mayor Aftab Pureval
City of Cincinnati Council Members
Clerk of Council
801 Plum Street
Cincinnati, OH 45202

mayor.aftab@cincinnati-oh.gov
CityCouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov
clerkofcouncil@cincinnati-oh.gov

Re: Proposed Removal of Density Restrictions from the Cincinnati Zoning Code

Dear Mayor Pureval, City Council members, and Clerk of Council,

Beginning in roughly June 2021, members of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Council (HPNC) and our Zoning Committee began following the ***Proposed Removal of Density Restrictions from the Cincinnati Zoning Code***.

Over the past 9 months, we have participated in many of the public hearings and supplemental meetings on this topic. We have carefully listened to everyone who has spoken at these meetings and reviewed all available materials.

On January 30th, the HPNC Zoning Committee approved and sent a letter to the Cincinnati Planning Commission (see attached) opposing the proposed change. In February and March, we continued to listen, learn, research, and share information with the trustees of the HPNC about the proposal.

On Tuesday March 8, during our regular meeting, the HPNC trustees extensively discussed the proposal and its possible impacts on Hyde Park and the City. Based on that discussion, the following motion was introduced, seconded, and **passed unanimously**:

"The Hyde Park Neighborhood Council opposes the zoning text changes as currently written."

In accordance with the HPNC's voted position, we ask that you vote **against** the proposed changes.

Sincerely,

Scott Hassell
President
Hyde Park Neighborhood Council

Hon. Planning Commission Members
Cincinnati Planning Commission
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

January 30, 2022

Re: Feb 4 Agenda-Item 5 (Multifamily Density)



Dear Planning Commission;

Thank you for the opportunity to see the proposed text changes and make comments. While not considered by the Hyde Park Neighborhood Council (HPNC) Trustees, the proposed changes were considered by the HPNC Zoning Committee and the following are our comments.

More housing units and more affordable housing units may be the goal, but we are uncertain this approach will accomplish both goals. We fear that allowing more density will encourage tear down of existing multi-family structures because the existing two family in RM2.0 on a 6,000 sq ft lot can be replaced with a six family. Each new unit may be smaller sq. ft. than existing but will be able to attract higher rent. The residents of the former two family are forced out and may not be able to pay the higher rent in the new building. We now have more housing units but less affordable housing. We see the same thing taking place in the single family housing market encouraged by the property tax abatement program. Hyde Park "starter homes", the \$250,000 to 300,000 price range have mostly disappeared replaced by re-habbed or teardown/new construction homes with sales prices 3 to 4 times higher. If the tax abatement applies to multi-family, this may be the gasoline that starts the bon-fire.

In the documents distributed for Staff Conference #3, Portland, Seattle and Minneapolis were cited as examples of cities that have implemented similar changes. Is there any evidence from those cities or any others that the multi-family density text changes they have made resulted in the desired outcome? More specifically, is there evidence that the Portland, Seattle and Minneapolis zoning density changes achieved any or all of the four goals cited on the Benefits of Density (document for Staff Conference #3)? Were there any undesired outcomes or unintended consequences?

Furthermore, we don't believe the simplistic linear formula that assumes constant total construction costs and divides the potential single unit(@\$10,000/month rent) into four units(@\$2500/month rent) and nine units (@\$1111/month rent) is appropriate. The only fair rent/income comparison would be if the single unit is assumed to have nine kitchens, nine full bathrooms, nine HVAC systems, nine electrical distribution panels and 14 parking spaces (@ 1.5 per unit) the same as the nine unit would require. We think the evidence will show the small home have increased cost per sq. ft. due to the cost of the electrical and mechanical systems.

There are other items that increasing density seems to be forgotten about by the promoters of this.

One is sewer and storm water piping. More density means more waste in the line. Tearing down small houses and increasing the coverage increases the hard surface runoff water to the sewers. Many of these areas still have combined sewer overflow piping which MSD is mandated to reduce. It has been our observation that the cost of increasing the sewer pipes and managing the storm water runoff is at the cost to the taxpayer, not the developer.

Second, it seems that increased traffic is not considered. HP experienced this with the recent Wasson Tower presentation at 3660 Michigan. More units, more traffic, more hard surface parking. Not many six families have underground or multilevel parking. This in turn can make for more run off as well as less green space. All things that don't seem to be considered in the increased density discussions.

Lastly, we worry about the people who bought in an area because of the lesser density. Why are their rights and desires any less important than a developer or the renter?

Should you or anyone with the City have any questions, please call me on 513-243-8719/513-608-3342.

Yours truly,

Gary Wollenweber, Chair
HPNC Zoning Committee

cc: President HPNC; HPNC Zoning Committee