

To: Everett Planning Commission
From: Dave Koenig
Subject: Accessory Dwelling Units Code Amendments
Date: December 6, 2022

I have the following comments regarding the proposed amendments to the Accessory Dwelling Units Code. The proposal before you eliminate from the code the design standards meant to have development which is compatible and maintain the character of the neighborhood. The proposal before you would result in development which would be harmful to the neighborhood and be incapable with the existing character. The proposal before you are not in conformance with Visioning Efforts, the Everett Housing Action Plan, and the Comprehensive Plan 2035. The adopted policy of the City of Everett is outlined below to highlight the policy commitment which has been made to design standards and neighborhood compatibility for new development.

Everett Visioning

Each of the visioning efforts has yielded consistent priorities for Everett. The following statement is from Everett visioning efforts over the years:

-Maintain and improve the quality of housing and neighborhoods. (Source: Everett Visioning Efforts in the Comprehensive Plan - Housing Element page 5)

Everett Housing Action Plan

1.4: Update design guidelines for new development to ensure that new infill projects align with the neighborhood. The City should also update design standards and guidelines for new development in R-1 and R-2 zones to reduce conflicts between old and new uses. This would require updates to the 2019 Everett Design Guidelines and would provide more guidance for these types of infill projects. Figure 4. Examples of Design Standards for Neighborhood Character. (Source: Everett Housing Action Plan page 16) Figure 4 is attached to this memo and shows recommended design standards.

Revise design guidelines and requirements. Several recommendations detail the need to provide revisions to design guidelines and requirements to ensure that new development is consistent with existing neighborhood character and does not present significant conflicts with existing uses. Efforts to make these revisions to design guidelines should be coordinated between different subject areas and implemented as part of changes to the Uniform Development Code where possible. (Source: Everett Housing Action Plan page 57)

Everett Comprehensive Plan 2035

Projected Housing Needs -

8. A projected 235 to 470 infill accessory dwelling units could be developed that would be able to serve a wide range of residents requiring affordable housing including senior citizens, special needs people and students. (Source: Housing Needs: Housing Element page 17)

Policy 4.1.5 Encourage housing that connects with and contributes to the vibrancy and livability of the local neighborhood and community. (Source: Housing Element page 19)

Policy 4.1.8 Encourage housing that is attractive and affordable with amenities for households with children. (Source: Housing Element page 19)

B. HOUSING PRESERVATION AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Objective 4.2 The City shall preserve and enhance the value and character of its neighborhoods by improving and extending the life of existing housing stock. (Source: Housing Element page 19)

Policy 4.2.1 Protect existing single-family neighborhoods from substantial changes such as rezoning to multiple family zones but consider measures to increase housing capacity through strategies that accommodate well designed infill housing that protect the character of the neighborhoods. (Source: Housing Element page 19-20)

E. RESIDENTIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT (Source: Housing Element page 21)

Objective 4.5 In order to maximize the public investment that has already been made in public infrastructure, the City shall support the compact land use strategy of the comprehensive plan with housing measures that increase the City's residential capacity and that maintain the quality and character of existing neighborhoods.

Policy 4.5.1 Update design standards for higher density housing types to protect and enhance the character of existing neighborhoods.

Policy 4.5.3 Allow attached and detached accessory dwelling units in single family neighborhoods subject to specific development, design, and locational standards.

Policy 4.5.4 Encourage infill development on underutilized sites that have adequate urban services and ensure that the infill housing enhances and is compatible with the nearby neighborhood and community.

The proposal before you do not meet the adopted policy of the City of Everett for infill development. The Planning Commission should request that staff come back with design standards which conform with city policy and are consistent with Visioning Efforts, the Everett Housing Action Plan, and the Everett Comprehensive Plan 2035.

Zoning Code and Design Standards

Number of Allowed Accessory Dwelling units and owner-occupied.

Staff provided the Planning Commission with a document from the Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish County (MBA) entitled "Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinances". This document summarizes how 40 cities in King and Snohomish County treat Accessory Dwelling units in their codes. On how many Accessory Dwelling units are allowed per lot: 36 cities allow 1 and 4 cities allow 2. The four which allow 2 require that one of the units be within the original home and one may be detached. The proposal above would allow 2 detached Accessory Dwelling Units. No city in the MBA study allows this. If two ADU units are allowed one should be required to be in the primary residence. Trying to put two detached accessory units would be difficult and cause frustration and requests for modification of the lot coverage standards. The owner-occupied requirement for one of the units is required in 36 cities and 4 cities do not require owner-occupation. Seattle is one of the cities which allows 2 ADUs but if you

put in a second ADU it must be for low-income residents which means rent restriction for the unit to be affordable.

Recommended Design and Code Standards (initial list)

-Keep the language in 19.08.100(A)(3) on the size of the ADU Table 8-6 and add no maximum size for an ADU located within one floor of a principal dwelling unit.

-Keep the standards in 19.08.100(B)(1) including:

-The appearance and character of the dwelling shall be maintained when viewed from the surrounding neighborhood.

-One entrance on any street side of the structure.

-Entrance be in conformance with front porch and entrance design requirements.

-Keep the language where the Planning Director shall promulgate a design manual of examples and best practices for the design of DADU and compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

-The DADU shall be designed to give the appearance that it is secondary to the principal building.

-Siding, roofing, windows and building trim materials shall visually match those used on the principal building.

-The roof pitch shall be like the predominant roof pitch on the principal dwelling.

-Do not change the Building Height standards in Table 22-2.

-Keep the modification of development standards for accessory units as review process II.

-Use Figure 4: Examples of Design Standards for Neighborhood Character from the Everett Housing Action Plan page 16 as a blueprint for the development of standards in residential neighborhoods.

-DADUs required to be in the backyard.

-No vehicle access, parking, or curb cuts off the street between the street and a structure when the lot is on an alley.

-When there is no alley and access is off the street create a standard which limits the amount of parking in the front set back and yard. The streetscape should include space for vegetation and not continual curb cuts and parking.

Summary

The city of Everett must develop design and zoning standards which comply with the adopted documents in the visioning efforts, the Everett Housing Action Plan, and the Everett Comprehensive Plan 2035. The Planning Commission should consider these documents and request staff to provide you with zoning and design standards which meet the adopted policy and studies the city has done. Citizens participated in these efforts and were under the understanding that the city would follow through with design standards to protect and enhance neighborhoods as density and development increased. Allowing 2 ADUs without design standards is a concern.

