

City of Beaufort Department of Planning and Development Services

MEMORANDUM

TO: Beaufort--Port Royal Metropolitan Planning Commission

FROM: Lauren Kelly, Project Development Planner

DATE: October 13, 2014

SUBJECT: Boundary Street Redevelopment District Ordinance Revisions

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City Council requested that Planning Staff review the Boundary Street Redevelopment District Ordinance and recommend changes to provide more flexibility and clarity within the code language and requirements. Staff is recommending revisions to accomplish these goals. In addition, staff has proposed a number of changes designed to facilitate and stimulate investment by reducing building costs while maintaining the goal and design intent of the ordinance. The Boundary Street Project is getting ready to begin construction within the next six months, so this is a good time to address any areas that could be improved to spur investment in this corridor. The building code and street sections are designed to work together, and now Phase I of the Boundary Street section is coming to fruition. The desire of the city is to see the private investment keep pace with the publicly-funded infrastructure and believe that these code adjustments can help accomplish that.

In the Metropolitan Planning Commission Special Meeting held on October 1, 2014, the proposed changes were discussed in more detail. The summary of changes below reflect the discussion from that meeting:

Section 6.8 of the UDO (attached), addresses building and development standards in the Boundary Street Redevelopment District. Staff is proposing a number of changes to this ordinance. Half of those are simple text clarifications. Eleven minor changes are proposed. A similar number of major changes are recommended, and address the following areas:

- **Appeal Process** – Staff is proposing changing the appeal body from the Planning Commission to the Design Review Board (DRB). The purpose of the DRB is to review plans for new construction, and so seems the appropriate board to consider appeals regarding design issues. (Section 6.8.C.5)
- **SC DOT Ownership** of the majority of the roads – Staff is proposing changes that give staff more flexibility to adjust the build-to lines and build-to zones to accommodate building frontages that are not currently be permitted in the SC DOT right-of-way. These include colonnades, arcades and balconies. (Section 6.8.H & 6.8.I.7)
- **Two-Story Building Heights** – Staff is proposing to eliminate the two-story building height requirement for non-residential buildings and apply a taller minimum first floor height for one-story buildings. This would apply in all areas EXCEPT in a new two-story overlay zone,

proposed to be located at the primary intersections of Ribaut Road & Boundary Street and Robert Smalls Parkway & Boundary Street. In the two-story overlay zone, two-story masses (buildings at least 24' tall, but that only have one habitable story), and mezzanines would be permitted to fulfill the two-story requirement in lieu of a full two-story building with two habitable floors, if desired. Specific mezzanine standards were added to the code. (Section 6.8.I.1)

- **Frontage Goal** –
 - A minimum frontage goal was added to regulate the percentage of building that needs to be built along the street frontage at the setback or build-to line. Generally it's 60% in the more urban areas, and 40% in the less urban areas. Staff felt that this was very important since the code is focusing on great urban places, rather than building height, and the amount of street frontage that is comprised of buildings is a key part of this. Projects, particularly on large parcels can be phased over time and would not have to be built to fulfill the frontage build-out all at once. These phased projects would be required to produce a conceptual/illustrative plan showing the general locations of site elements. (Section 6.8.I.5) Definitions of "Frontage," "Conceptual Plan" and "Illustrative Plan" were added. (Section 6.8.D)
 - Frontage elements (eg. arcades, colonnades, storefronts, porches, etc...) were consolidated and clarified to eliminate confusion between general glazing requirements, and glazing requirements for specific frontage types. (Section 6.8.I.6)
- **Glazing Requirements** - Glazing requirements were clarified to distinguish between general residential and commercial buildings. (Section 6.8.J.6)
- **Maximum Parking Requirement** – this standard was added to the code, so it now has minimum and maximum parking standards. This does not apply to infill projects where current parking exists – existing parking will not be required to be removed in infill situations even if the quantity of existing parking exceeds the maximum parking requirement after the infill project is complete. A definition of "Infill" was added as well.
- **Drive-Thru Special Exception** – these standards were updated and clarified. (Section 6.8.I.10)
- **Nonconforming Structures** - After a discussion regarding existing, nonconforming buildings and when they have to come into compliance with the Boundary Street Code standards, the staff clarified that the 50% compliance threshold (when the cost of the "structural or cosmetic modifications" exceeds 50% of the building value) does not include repairs, regardless of the cost of these repairs, as long as they are repairing exactly what was damaged. In addition, this paragraph was pulled out as a stand-alone section to make it easier to find. (Section 6.8.F)

In the attached ordinance revisions, ~~strikeout text~~ indicates wording to be deleted, and **highlighted text** indicates wording to be added. The amendments are also annotated to denote which type of modification is being proposed: **CLARIFICATION** – minor text change/addition; **CHANGE** – minor change; or **CHANGE** – major change.

Please contact me with any questions.

Thank you.