MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING & GIS SERVICES

PLANNING
GIS & MAPPING

755 ROANOKE STREET, SUITE 2A, CHRISTIANSBURG, VIRGINIA 24073-3177

MEMORANDUM

TO: Bill Brown, Chair
Montgomery Co. Board of Supervisors

FROM: Robert Miller, Chair
Montgomery Co. Planning Commission

DATE: July 21, 2015

SUBJ: **Zoning Ordinance Amendment: Compact Development Lot Width Reduction**

An ordinance amending chapter 10, entitled zoning of the code of the County of Montgomery, Virginia, by amending section 10-25 (8) and 10-26 (8) respectively by allowing a minimum lot width of seventy feet (70') and a minimum lot width of sixty feet (60') when curb and gutter in accordance with VDOT standards is used for subdivisions utilizing the compact development option in Residential (R-2) and Residential (R-3) zoning districts.

During our meeting on July 15, 2015, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and reviewed the proposed ordinance amendment described above, and detailed in the attached document.

Commission members discussed the lot width reduction that would be allowed if curb and gutter is used for compact development. They noted lot width reduction is allowed in other Residential districts when the compact development option is utilized.

Upon a motion duly seconded and carried by a vote of 7 to 0 (Katz and Hirt absent), the Planning Commission recommended **approval** of the ordinance amendment allowing a minimum lot width of seventy feet (70') and a minimum lot width of sixty feet (60') when curb and gutter in accordance with VDOT standards is used for subdivisions utilizing the compact development option in Residential (R-2) and Residential (R-3) zoning districts.

One comment in support of the amendment was received during the public comment portion of the public hearing.

Attachments: Memorandum to Planning Commission dated 7/10/15 with original draft ordinance amendment

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 10, ENTITLED ZONING
OF THE CODE OF THE COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY, VIRGINIA,
BY AMENDING SECTION 10-25 (8) AND 10-26 (8) RESPECTIVELY
BY ALLOWING A MINIMUM LOT WIDTH OF NINETY FEET (90') AND
A MINIMUM LOT WIDTH OF SEVENTY FEET (70') IN R-2
WHEN CURB AND GUTTER IN ACCORDANCE WITH
VDOT STANDARDS IS USED AND
A MINIMUM LOT WIDTH OF EIGHTY FEET (80') AND
A MINIMUM LOT WIDTH OF SIXTY FEET (60') IN R-3
WHEN CURB AND GUTTER IN ACCORDANCE WITH VDOT STANDARDS
IS USED FOR SUBDIVISIONS
UTILIZING THE COMPACT DEVELOPMENT OPTION IN
RESIDENTIAL (R-2) AND RESIDENTIAL (R-3) ZONING DISTRICTS

BE IT ORDAINED, By the Board of Supervisors of the County of Montgomery, Virginia that Chapter 10, entitled Zoning of the Code of the County of Montgomery, Virginia, Section 10-25(8) and 10-26(8) respectively shall be amended and reordained as follows:

Sec. 10-25. - R-2 Residential District.

(8) *Compact development option.* The purpose of the compact development option is to provide flexibility in site design in order to encourage:

- Natural resource preservation.
- Pedestrian-friendly streetscapes.
- Cost-efficiency in providing infrastructure.
- Appropriate design solutions for unique site conditions.
- Transit-supportive design.

Use of the compact development option is voluntary on the part of applicants.

The compact development option permits smaller lot sizes in return for providing permanent open space within the development, and a more compact, cost-effective network of streets and utilities.

(a) *Lot requirements for compact option.*

1. *Minimum lot size.* eight thousand (8,000) square feet, provided that no less than twenty-five (25) percent of the gross area parent tract is preserved in permanent open space, as defined herein.

2. Minimum lot width ninety (90) feet. Lot width may be reduced to seventy (70) feet if the following is provided:

a. Curb and gutter shall be required in R-2 Compact Subdivision containing lots with less than ninety (90) feet in width. Curb and gutter design shall be in accordance with Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Standards.

~~2~~3. *Minimum required open space.*

a. *Minimum required open space.* A minimum of twenty-five (25) percent of the gross area parent tract shall be set aside as open space. At least one (1) area of such required open space in any compact development shall be eight thousand (8,000) square feet. Open space may include active or passive recreational uses, and may be held in either public or

private ownership. If held in private ownership, the open space should be held by a homeowner's association or other form of common interest private ownership comparable to a homeowner's association acceptable to the zoning administration. Open space established for purposes of meeting the requirements of this provision shall be restricted from any future development by the establishment of permanent conservation easements held in perpetuity by a public or private entity acceptable to the county. Accessory structures such as picnic shelters, ball fields, nature trails and other similar recreational amenities shall be permitted within the open space and maintained by the appropriate owner.

For the purposes of this article, the following items shall qualify as open space: Natural areas including environmental corridors, greenways, protected natural areas and reserves; Parks, squares, greens and plazas; Streams, ponds, and other water bodies; Stormwater detention/retention facilities; Accessory parking areas or lots located within public parks or publicly accessible natural areas; Recreational facilities, such as ballfields, playgrounds.

The subdivision plat shall establish, where applicable, a buffer at least one hundred (100) feet wide from the center of all streams and a buffer of at least fifty (50) feet from all lakes, ponds, springs, and other surface waters. This shall be set aside as open space.

Lots, buildings, structures, streets, and parking areas shall be situated to minimize the alteration of natural features, natural vegetation, and topography.

The subdivision plat shall accommodate and preserve any features of historic, cultural, or archaeological value.

Floodplains, wetlands, and areas with slopes in excess of twenty-five (25) percent shall be protected from development.

(b) *Building requirements for compact option.*

Minimum yards:

1. *Front:*
    a. Minimum: Ten (10) feet
    b. Maximum: Twenty-five (25) feet
2. *Side:*
    a. Minimum: Ten (10) feet
    b. Maximum: None
3. *Rear:*
    a. Minimum: Twenty-five (25) feet
    b. Maximum: None
4. *Accessory buildings:* Not less than ten (10) feet to side or rear lot line.

(c) *Streets.*

1. *Public streets:* New streets as part of the compact development option shall be public and designed and constructed in accordance with the minimum standards of the Virginia Department of Transportation, except that the surface pavement layer shall be asphalt concrete.

2. *Private streets.* The board of supervisors may permit construction of private streets so long as such streets are not likely to inhibit future development of adjacent land consistent with the standards set forth in Section 8-152 .

3. Street patterns shall form a broadly rectilinear network, with variations as needed for topographic, environmental and other design considerations, in accordance with the minimum standards required by VDOT.

4. Streets shall be designed to:

a. Parallel and preserve existing fence lines, tree lines, hedgerows, stone walls and watercourses; and

b. Minimize alteration of natural, cultural or historic site features; and

c. Promote pedestrian movement.

5. All streets shall be designed to promote pedestrian circulation. Pedestrian circulation shall be designed with respect to topography, integration with surrounding streets, connection to existing or future pedestrian ways and transit stops, interior circulation and the separation of pedestrians from vehicles. Sidewalks, informal walkways and footpaths shall be no less than five (5) feet wide. Paths in open space shall be constructed using mulch or stone. The compact development option shall create a completely linked neighborhood of walkways connecting all uses with parks and other open space areas.

(d). *Maximum density*. The density of development under the compact development option shall be no greater than four (4) dwelling units per gross acre.

Sec. 10-26. - R-3 Residential District.

(8) *Compact development option*. The purpose of the compact development option is to provide flexibility in site design in order to encourage:

- Natural resource preservation.
- Pedestrian-friendly streetscapes.
- Cost-efficiency in providing infrastructure.
- Appropriate design solutions for unique site conditions.
- Transit-supportive design.

Use of the compact development option is voluntary on the part of applicants.

The compact development option permits smaller lot sizes in return for providing permanent open space within the development, and a more compact, cost-effective network of streets and utilities. Except for modifications to the lot and building requirements defined below, all other provisions of the R-3 district pertain to the compact development option.

(a) *Lot requirements for compact option.*

1. *Minimum lot size.* Five thousand (5,000) square feet, provided that no less than twenty-five (25) percent of the gross area parent tract is preserved in permanent open space, as defined herein.

<u>2. Minimum lot width eighty (80) feet. Lot width may be reduced to sixty (60) feet if the following is provided:</u>

<u>a. Curb and gutter shall be required in R-3 Compact Subdivision containing lots with less than eighty (80) feet in width. Curb and gutter design shall be in accordance with Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Standards.</u>

~~2~~3. *Minimum required open space.* A minimum of twenty-five (25) percent of the gross area parent tract shall be set aside as open space. At least one (1) area of such required open space in any compact development shall be five thousand (5,000) square feet. Open space may include active or passive recreational uses, and may be held in either public or private ownership. If held in private ownership the open space shall be held by a homeowner's association or other form of common interest private ownership comparable to a homeowner's association acceptable to the zoning administrator. Open space established for purposes of meeting the requirements of this provision shall be restricted from any future development by the establishment of permanent conservation easements held inperpetuity by a public or private entity acceptable to the county. Accessory structures such as picnic shelters, ball fields, nature trails and other similar recreational amenities shall be permitted within the open space and maintained by the appropriate owner.

For the purposes of this article, the following items shall qualify as open space: Natural areas including environmental corridors, greenways, protected natural areas and reserves; Parks, squares, greens and plazas; Streams, ponds, and other water bodies; Stormwater detention/retention facilities; Accessory parking areas or lots located within public parks or publicly accessible natural areas; Recreational facilities, such as ballfields, playgrounds.

The subdivision plat shall establish, where applicable, a buffer at least one hundred (100) feet wide from the center of all streams and a buffer of at least fifty (50) feet from all lakes, ponds, springs, and other surface waters. This shall be set aside as open space.

Lots, buildings, structures, streets, and parking areas shall be situated to minimize the alteration of natural features, natural vegetation, and topography.

The subdivision plat shall accommodate and preserve any features of historic, cultural, or archaeological value.

Floodplains, wetlands, and areas with slopes in excess of twenty-five (25) percent shall be protected from development.

(b) *Building requirements for compact option.* Minimum yards:

1. *Front:*
   a. Minimum: 10 feet
   b. Maximum: 25 feet
2. *Side:*
   a. Minimum: 10 feet
   b. Maximum: None
3. *Rear:*
   a. Minimum: 25 feet
   b. Maximum: None
4. Accessory buildings: Not less than 10 feet to side or rear lot line

(c) *Streets.*

1. Public streets: New streets as part of the compact development option shall be public and designed and constructed in accordance with the minimum standards of the Virginia Department of Transportation, except that the surface pavement layer shall be asphalt concrete.

2. Private streets. The board of supervisors may permit construction of private streets so long as such streets are not likely to inhibit future development of adjacent land consistent with the standards set forth in Section 8-152.

3. Street patterns shall form a broadly rectilinear network, with variations as needed for topographic, environmental and other design considerations, in accordance with the minimum standards required by VDOT.

4. Streets shall be designed to:

a. Parallel and preserve existing fence lines, tree lines, hedgerows, stone walls and watercourses; and

b. Minimize alteration of natural, cultural or historic site features; and

c. Promote pedestrian movement.

5. All streets shall be designed to promote pedestrian circulation. Pedestrian circulation shall be designed with respect to topography, integration with surrounding streets, connection to existing or future pedestrian ways and transit stops, interior circulation and the separation of pedestrians from vehicles. Sidewalks, informal walkways and footpaths shall be no less than five (5) feet wide. Paths in open space shall be constructed using mulch or stone. The compact development option shall create a completely linked neighborhood of walkways connecting all uses with parks and other open space areas.

(d). *Maximum density.* The density of development under the compact development option shall be no greater than 5 dwelling units per gross acre.