

TO: Richmond Selectboard

FROM: Ravi Venkataraman, Town Planner

DATE: April 3, 2020

SUBJECT: Jolina Court Draft Zoning Regulations and Affordable Housing Bonuses

For your consideration, enclosed are:

- The draft regulations for the Jolina Court Zoning District and other pertinent sections of the Zoning Regulations – I have made changes to this document based on the discussions during the March 9, 2020 Selectboard Special Meeting. The changes are redlined.
- Draft regulations for affordable housing bonuses – The draft regulations are also redlined. The language in the draft regulations is based on the language in the South Burlington Land Development Regulations. Selectboard member Bard Hill and I consulted with CCRPC to improve the language. I had discussed elements of the draft regulations with Hinesburg Director of Planning Alex Weinhagen, as well as VLCT. Members of the Planning Commission received copies of an earlier iteration of these draft regulations on March 13, 2020, and copies of the draft regulations before you on April 1, 2020.
- Table outlining price points from South Burlington Planning and Zoning Office– The price points shown are based on data for the entire Burlington-South Burlington MSA (Richmond is in the Burlington-South Burlington MSA). If enacted, the pricing of the affordable housing units in Richmond would be the same as the prices shown in this document. However, since rates are variable and subject to many factors, this document is not a regulatory document and should not be interpreted as regulatory.

In addition, regarding the latter document, provided are additional reference points

- The median primary home sale price in Richmond, based on data from the Department of Taxes in 2018 was **\$312,000**
- The Fair-Market Rent (a calculation used by HUD to determine rental voucher amounts that estimates the amount in rent and essential utilities one would pay per month) in the Burlington-South Burlington MSA for a one-bedroom apartment is **\$1,223** and for a two-bedroom apartment is **\$1,573**.

Regarding the Affordable Housing Bonuses draft regulations, based on conversations I have had, I have listed items that may warrant further discussion:

- The density bonus amount – In the draft regulations, a project could obtain a bonus of up to 20 percent of the number of units in the development. For example, for a project with 45 market-rate units, the project could gain an additional 9 units if it is in compliance with the draft regulations.
- The allocation of the bonus gained – In the draft regulations, all of the units gained in the bonus must be set aside as affordable housing units. For example, for a project with 45

market-rate units, the project could gain an additional 9 units and all of these 9 units must be affordable housing units. CCRPC suggested allocating at least half the units gained in the bonus as affordable housing units; this is how South Burlington's regulations are set up. For example, for a project with 45 market-rate units, the project could gain an additional 9 units and only 5 of the units gained would need to be affordable housing units.

- Minimum floor area of the affordable housing units – In the draft regulations, the minimum floor area of affordable housing units cannot be less than comparable market-rate units (i.e. if the smallest market-rate efficiency unit in a PUD is 400 square feet, any affordable housing-allocated efficiency unit in the PUD cannot be smaller than 400 square feet). I recommend having this regulation, or minimum floor area requirements for affordable housing units, in place as a safeguard to promote the equity of all of the units.
- The Affordable Housing Committee – This was an item mentioned in previous iterations of the draft regulations and in previous Selectboard meetings. I envisioned the possibility of an affordable housing committee to monitor and evaluate the affordable housing units, and to provide policy advice to the Selectboard and Planning Commission. Under 24 V.S.A. 4433, advisory committees can advise appropriate municipal panels and the Zoning Administrator on development review and enforcement matters. In the short term, I understand that Planning and Zoning will have to take on the responsibilities of maintaining and enforcing these regulations if enacted. However, in the long term, I do not think staff has the time and bandwidth to maintain and enforce these regulations and the covenants that would be in place. I strongly recommend the creation of a housing subcommittee to assist the Zoning Administrator on permit review and enforcement, and to inform the Planning Commission and Selectboard on housing policy related matters. But to create such a committee will take additional time and consultation with the Town Attorney.

Going forward on these zoning amendments, the Selectboard would need to:

1. Receive the proposal through a motion; and then,
2. Agree by motion to conduct a public hearing on each proposal, with the date of the hearing be at least 15 days after the publication of a legal notice.

When the Selectboard chooses to take action, having reviewed the enclosed documents and any amendments, and either adopts or rejects the proposal, changes shall be effective 21 days after adoption.

Do feel free to let me know if you have any questions.