

Residential/Commercial ZD – uses and density discussion points for 12.2.20

Goals from Town Plan

- **increased central density** (smart growth, forest protection, climate change)
- **increased housing**, including **affordable housing** (Chittenden Co housing crisis)
- **flexible use of buildings** (more options for property owners, fluctuating commercial market, new models of live/work)
- **commercial opportunities on the main arteries** (keep the downtown dynamic and provide walkable services for the increased residential density).

- This does **not** mean that we will **not** be encouraging more housing density and commercial opportunities elsewhere in Richmond (clustered housing, ag commerce, recreation). We will be trying to spread out the impacts to all areas as appropriate.

Residential / Commercial ZD Purpose – The purpose of this district is to allow residential and residential-compatible commercial uses to coexist in a traditional village center, surrounding a compact downtown area, village neighborhoods and several small commercial islands.

Goals for this district include:

- commercial uses allowed on the higher-visibility main arteries, to improve economic vitality,
- increased and varied housing opportunities throughout the district, to help relieve the housing shortage in Richmond and Chittenden County,
- “mixed use” structures that will allow more flexibility in use of property, to meet changing needs in commercial real estate and live/work strategies
- higher density allowed to meet “smart growth” goals, including potential public transit options
- increased walking and biking options both within and into the village area,
- street trees, landscaping and green space to keep the village attractive for residents and visitors,
- plentiful public institutions, gathering spaces and recreational opportunities,
- protection for architectural integrity of village-area homes and historic structures.

Consider adding **allowed uses** to currently allowed

- Multifamily dwelling, up to 4 units
- Mixed use building with up to 4 **allowed** uses, or mix of up to 4 **allowed** commercial and dwelling units
- Personal services
- Office, professional or medical
- Center-based childcare
- Artist-craft studio

[currently allowed: 1 or 2-family dwelling, family childcare home, group home, accessory dwelling, bed and breakfast, home occupation, accessory uses or structures]

Additional possible strategies (FOR DISCUSSION ONLY)

- Allow more than one use per lot (allows for mixed use buildings or expanded accessory uses)
- Allow more than one structure per lot (would allow for cottage colony or additional dwelling)
- Loosen restrictions on accessory dwellings (could retain smaller size and single ownership as only criteria)
- Loosen “home occupation” and/or “cottage industry” regulations
- Consider multiple ownership on one lot (like condos, or ½ of a duplex) as a conditional use – (lowers barrier to home ownership)
- Consider increasing the density – (6 U/A/ 8 U/A? these likely would not be able to be achieved on most of the small lots in this district due to other restrictions) – currently 3U/A
- Consider reducing the minimum lot size
- Consider density bonuses for community goals
- Clarify site plan review criteria (“**standards**” in the RZR so site plan review can be carried out by ZA for expanded allowed uses (currently must be by DRB – streamlining permitting process may make development, especially housing, less costly)
- Regulate short-term rentals (like airb&b) (to protect long-term rental housing)

In order to even consider increasing the density of dwelling units, we need to protect the amenities that give the village its “village look” by looking at standards for:

- Lot coverage and building placement
- Front, back and side setbacks
- Lot frontage
- Landscaping and screening
- Open/green space
- Parking and driveways
- Sidewalks and bike lanes
- Compatibility (Development standards / “character of the neighborhood”)
 - a. Front of building must have door and windows, and no features that compromise architectural integrity
 - b. Sides visible from neighboring properties must have windows
 - c. Building facades broken up if >50’
 - d. Buildings residential in appearance (style, massing and placement on lot) as in current R/C ZD
 - e. Visual representation required (as with JCZD)?
 - f. Other?
- Noise, odors, lighting
- signs

Consider adding **conditional uses** (to existing)

- Pharmacy
- Health services
- Fitness facility
- Catering services
- Veterinary clinics
- Mixed use building with up to 4 **conditional** uses, or mix of **conditional** uses and dwelling units

[and consider removing: extraction of earth resources]