



CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

Committee of the Whole Agenda Communication

Meeting Date: March 16, 2022

Prepared By: Jon Oliphant, AICP, Planning & Development Director
Dennis Carr, PE, City Engineer

Agenda Item: Chapters 53 and 152 Possible Amendment Discussion

Explanation: Following direction from the City Council at the February Committee of the Whole meeting, there was interest in having a discussion at the March Committee of the Whole meeting to see if any parts of Chapters 53 (Storm Water Runoff Control) and 152 (Subdivision Code) should be amended to address the handling of any future developments. This was previously discussed at the October meeting. While there are possible regulatory changes that could be considered, there are potential downsides associated with some of them. Such modifications could include:

- **Adopt an impact fee or that land be set aside in cases where a revised preliminary plat is desired that would be an increase in density from the previously approved preliminary plat:** Developers strongly desire certainty with municipal code regulations and any increases in cost, and therefore, impacts on profit margins, would impact the desire to undertake projects in Washington. Please note that this would require further legal review to ensure conformance with state statute.
- **Only allow for minimal changes to a previously approved preliminary plat within an existing subdivision:** A new preliminary plat would be allowed for a maximum set percentage of the lots to be changed to other permitted uses within a subdivision where substantial build-out has previously occurred. Please note that this would require further legal review to ensure conformance with state statute.
- **Adopt a partial form-based code:** Most traditional zoning codes, particularly in suburban or rural cities, strictly regiment land uses without much, if any, consideration given to the built environment. Many cities have begun focusing less on land uses and paying more attention to the visual appearance of any structures. While the City has a minimal building design requirement for commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings, residential dwellings do not have the same standard. This would require at least minimal involvement by an architect or someone with a design background to create an allowable template from which builders can choose from for acceptable building facades and forms. This is an approach that is advocated by the consulting team that is currently assisting with the drafting of a new comprehensive plan.
- **Be flexible to cluster developments:** The City's subdivision and zoning codes, like most such codes, regiments development on a lot-by-lot basis to ensure conformity with the regulations. This does not account for properties that may have environmental sensitivity or poorly draining soils. In such cases, the codes could allow for an overall maximum density for the whole property instead of for each individual lot. Such developments allow for more suitable areas to be utilized for buildings and paved surfaces while less suitable areas are set aside for stormwater detention and open space. While more common in rural environments and with larger properties, this approach could be considered to allow for more flexible designs with a roughly equivalent lot yield as with more conventional subdivisions.
- **All stormwater detention calculations can only include volumes contained in specified detention easements:** This would require that no volume for piping in the roadway can be included unless oversized pipes are used as in-line storage.

Fiscal Impact: TBD depending on whether any code amendments impact the cost of development or its maintenance.

Action Requested: Staff requests feedback on the consideration of amendments to either of these parts of the City Code. Any proposed amendments to the subdivision and/or zoning codes requires a public hearing and recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) and because the subdivision code references Chapter 53, any amendments to that part of the City Code may also require a PZC public hearing before an ordinance could be brought to the Council for consideration.