

SUBJECT: PROPOSED ZONE TEXT AMENDMENT: REDUCED TOP FLOOR IN MULTI-FAMILY DISTRICTS

PREPARED BY: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT
(Rachel Dimond, AICP, Senior Planner)

STATEMENT ON THE SUBJECT

On January 16, 2018, the City Council approved amendments to the R3 and R4 Zone Districts including the following:

- Eliminated the R3 and R4 90% minimum density requirement (which required building at least 90% of the allowable dwelling units), and replaced it with a provision requiring no net loss of dwelling units
- Required all projects requesting a height increase or other concessions not listed as part of a density bonus to have Planning Commission review
- Increased the threshold for Planning Commission review to 7 units in R3 and 11 units in R4 Districts
- Allowed Subdivision Permits to be reviewed separately from Development Permits

The City Council expressed concern regarding height increases allowed by state density bonuses that result in taller buildings that may impact neighborhood compatibility. As a result, the Council directed staff to return with a zone text amendment that would reduce the impacts of the top floor by requiring an additional stepback of 15 feet on the top floor. Staff researched this concept and recommends the zone text amendment require an additional stepback of 15 feet on the top floor in the R3C and R4B Districts.

The front setback in the R3 District is 15 feet or the average of the two neighboring properties up to 30 feet maximum. The front setback in the R4 District is 7 feet or the average of the two neighboring properties. There is an additional stepback of 6 feet for the second floor and above, as shown in Figure 1.

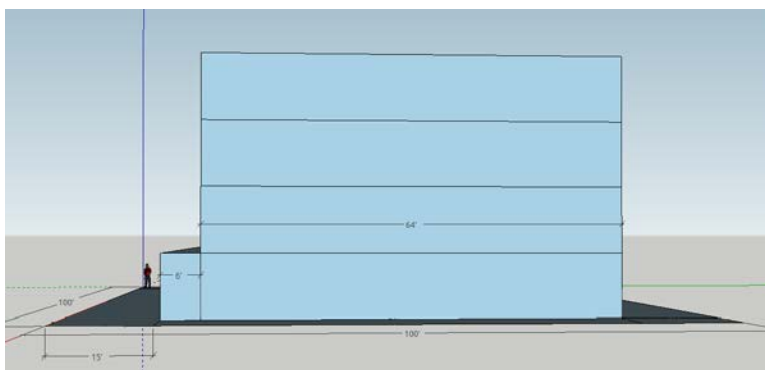


Figure 1: R3C- 4 story building: Existing Regulations

If this provision applied to three story buildings, there would be an additional stepback on every story, as shown in Figures 2 & 3. This would result in an obviously stepped building that limits creativity in design.

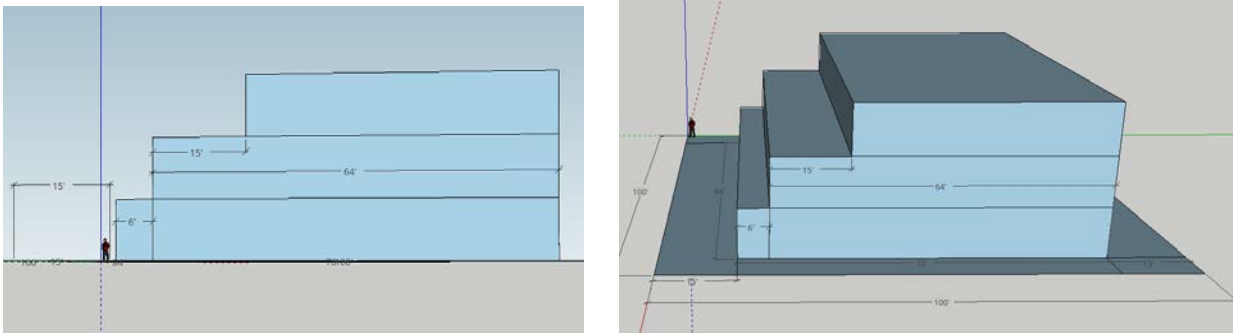


Figure 2&3: Example of 15 stepback on top floor in 3 story building

The reason staff proposes to only require this additional stepback on the top floor to R3C and R4B Districts is because these districts allow up to 4 stories in height. This means the 6 foot stepback would apply to the second and third floors, while the 15 foot stepback would apply to the fourth floor (or fifth floor if height bonus is requested), as shown in Figure 4. This provides much more flexibility in design while also minimizing the visual impact of the fourth (or fifth) floor from the street.

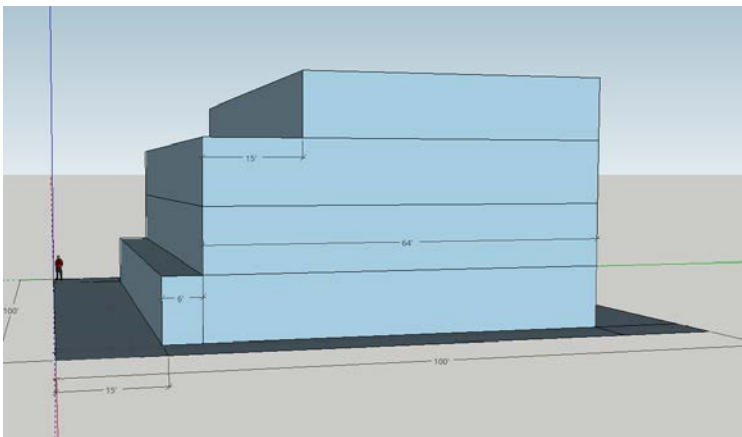


Figure 4: R3C- 4 story building: Proposed Top Floor 15 foot stepback

Staff anticipates review by the Planning Commission in August, 2018 with City Council review complete by the end of the 3rd quarter in 2018.

DRAFT ZONE TEXT AMENDMENT LANGUAGE

Additional language shown in underline. Deleted language in ~~strikethrough~~.

19.06.040 Residential Zoning District General Development Standards. (in part)

Development Feature	Requirement by Zoning District		
	R1, R2	R3	R4
Setbacks required	<i>Minimum setbacks required. See Section 19.20.150 for setback measurement.</i>		
Front, 1st story	Average of front setbacks of the 2 structures closest to the front property lines on the 2 adjacent parcels, with the following minimums/maximums. ³		
	10 ft. min. in Norma Triangle, 15 ft. min. elsewhere; 30 ft. max.	15 ft. minimum, 30 ft. maximum; No minimum setback for R3C-C.	7.5 ft. minimum, no maximum; R4B-C: No 1st story front setback if commercial on the ground floor.
Front, 2nd & upper stories	An additional 6 ft. for 2nd and upper stories in addition to the 1st story setback. ⁴ For R3C-C, no additional 2nd or upper stories setback. <u>For R3C and R4B, the top story must be stepped back an additional 15ft (in addition to 1st story setback and 2nd and upper stories setback) or be a maximum floor area equal to 75% of the floor directly below the top floor.</u>		

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