

## SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

### ZONING CODE REWRITE

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#### Community conversations

February 8, 2022

Central bench

Library! at Hillcrest

Attendance: 25

#### IN PERSON NOTES

##### DISCUSSION #1

- Balance residents' needs with developers' needs
  - Keep residents the top priority
  - Lines between residents and developers can be blurred so seek input from small developers, too
- Instead of "maintaining" quality of life we should be "improving"
- Improve community outreach and give the community more heads up about these meetings, also offer more varied meeting times

##### DISCUSSION #2

- We really need to consider our aquifer
- How does density improve quality of life?
- Not exceeding 75% of neighbor size is confusing – Page 11, Note 1 has confusing language
- How does this impact single family home neighborhoods where developers are infilling with apartment-style housing?
- Central bench is impacted by proximity to BSU
- Consider the design of the rear of buildings, encourage landscaping and windows
- Bullet 3 – additional setback, but they can still build L-O next to a single family home

##### DISCUSSION #3

- Post the study that finds that 41% of households have one car or less
  - That is not believable stat
- Should reduced parking really come before improved transit and bike lanes?
- Boats and RVs need parking, too
- Can we get partner agencies on board? Like ACHD
- What spurred or inspired the new maintenance enforcement code
- Page 129 – alerting neighbors – we should call that out more

##### DISCUSSION #4

- The specific examples are very helpful for residents to understand and visualize changes
- Are changes/skyrocketing prices pricing out small developers/ local developers/ owner-occupied housing?
- Ensuring homes are accessible to all – consider no stairs or ground floor bedrooms
- Storage units are not ideal in neighborhoods, can we restrict where they can be built?
- Morris Hill example – you should include vehicles in that picture. Cars are an issue, parking is an issue
- In favor of reduced parking to increase quality of life

- What percentage of houses have RVs
- Parking is different with student housing – tends to be more cars

**Community conversations**  
**February 16, 2022**  
**West bench**  
**Library! At Cole & Ustick**

Attendance: 28

IN PERSON NOTES:

- West Bench is unique and desirable because of its mid-century style homes
- Collaboration is needed between zoning and public transportation
- Parking is an issue in West Bench
  - This change seems to benefit developers more than residents
  - Could the code adjust the minimum parking based on the # of bedrooms?
  - Unit on top of hill on Glenwood caused major parking issues
  - Questioning data behind the 41% statistic
  - Street parking rapidly decreases when density increases (driveways near each other)
  - Does maintenance code address abandoned vehicles?
  - Concerned about parking for apartments
  - Questions about parking and mailboxes being blocked
- Example image of development at Fairview & Mitchell is great
  - Residents want more walkability, which is needed in West Bench especially
  - Walkability attracts residents to the area
  - Younger generations prefer density and walkability
- We need better public transit

**Community conversations**  
**March 1, 2022**  
**Southwest**  
**West Junior High School library**

Attendance: 34

IN PERSON NOTES

Discussion #1: Process

- Concern about the amount of housing needed for current growth
- Southwest values green space, pathways, and access to the outdoors
- Southwest needs better public transportation and access to amenities/services
- Balance growth with infrastructure and public transit
- Desire for neighborhoods with amenities like grocery stores, parks, shops, and services
  - More mixed use areas in Southwest would be good

- Bridge the gap between our livability goals and the zoning code
- Sometimes what is zoned is not what happens in practice
- What happens when vacant lots and open space gets rezoned?
  - i.e. dense residential development next to the school or industrial zone next to golf course

#### Discussion #2: Changes 1-4

- Density requirements are more difficult to visualize with the complicated formula
- Being able to predict how a property will be developed would be helpful
- What other cities have had success with similar Zoning Code changes?
- Density is incompatible with Southwest
- Wells are drying up in the Southwest
- Existing infrastructure will be overburdened by density
  - Do not want increased taxes for infrastructure upgrades/expansion
- New zoning code is good for developers, not good for existing properties/single family homes
- Need an assessment of the state of our current infrastructure
- Want better outreach about opportunities to give feedback (I.e. mailers)
- Concern about housing prices that are unattainable, and the lack of supply
- Density will help with transportation, access, open space, and increasing quality of life

#### Discussion #3: Changes 5-8

- How will design standard maintenance be monitored and enforced?
- Concern about the reduced parking requirements
  - The # of cars per household changes throughout different parts of the city
  - Some lower income areas have more cars

#### Discussion #4: Southwest Neighborhood

- Detached sidewalks are good, helpful for safety on high speed roads
- Are high density developments benefitting current residents?
  - Give flexibility to single family homes to become multi-family homes – good option for making housing affordable (like for multi-generational living)
  - Keep/allow minor land divisions
- The draw to the Southwest is the larger lot sizes
- Standards are a barrier for homeowners (not developers) developing their own property

**Community conversations**  
**March 9, 2022**  
**Foothills**  
**Hillside Junior High School library**

Attendance: 38

#### IN PERSON NOTES

#### Discussion #1: Process

- What is the role/future of the foothills plan (part of the comprehensive plan)

- How are we balancing preserving the foothills with the need for density and affordability
- What advice should we give neighbors who are concerned that density is a higher priority than preserving quality of life in Boise
- We should better align Blueprint Boise with the Zoning Code, to ensure Blueprint Boise isn't a "throw away document"
- How does the Zoning Code impact HOA CC&R's?

#### Discussion #2 & 3: Sections 1-8

- What other cities have used similar dimensional standards, and have they seen success?
- What does the shift from R1A to R1B look like in practice
- What happens to existing lots that are downsized/rezoned to a lot that can be subdivided
- Concerns about how infrastructure is impacted or strained by increased density
- Will Sycamore's Agricultural Overlay remain?
- What will happen to someone's irrigation access if property near them is developed?
- Appreciation for considering quality access & connectivity in neighborhoods
- Appreciation for design standards in zoning code
- Request to keep, and where possible, strengthen, the WUI/Firewise standards – including the ability to actually monitor and enforce these standards
- Quality of life is a shared concern across the city
- Concern over smaller lot sizes/setbacks
- Will ADU's keep their current parking space minimums?
- Does the city regulate/track short term rentals and Airbnbs
- Can a conservation easement protect larger lot sizes?
- Environmental protection and protection of (existing) trees is important
- Will taxes go up for properties that are rezoned such that they could be used for du/triplexes?

#### Discussion #4: Foothills Neighborhood

- Gary Lane at Old Hill Road – what are the dimensions of that new development?
- The visual examples look good on main roads, but concerned about how they will look and impact neighborhood streets
- We need to limit sprawl but does a blanket zoning code across the entire city mean we risk losing Boise's uniqueness and the diversity between different neighborhoods
  - The zoning code shouldn't be homogenous since our neighborhoods have different needs
- Lighting is a particular issue for the terrain of the Foothills
- Single car garages don't feel appropriate for large houses (i.e. 5 bedroom house)
- Public transportation also needs to be improved to alleviate Boise's reliance on cars
- Is there a vision for the existing railroad infrastructure in Boise?
- Giving flexibility to developers is dangerous
- Is the city listening to the feedback of citizens, and how can citizens provide feedback in a way that makes an impact on these decisions?

**Community conversations**  
**March 9, 2022**  
**Northwest**  
**Riverglen Junior High**

Attendance: 43

IN PERSON NOTES

PROCESS

- Explain the overlay?
- Too drastic of changes in neighborhoods that don't have an overlay
- Substandard lots of record are a lost opportunity
- What is the difference between R1A and R1B
- Please keep the R1A
- To improve bike connectivity we need disconnected bike paths that aren't on streets and don't intersect with roads
- We need more pathways that connect the Northwest neighborhood
- New developments on Hill Road are at fire risk
- Add bike paths to canals

DISCUSSION #1

- Level of trust with the city is an all time low because what happens in practice doesn't match the goals in Blueprint Boise
- Developing without infrastructure is a recipe for disaster
- Already seeing loss of what we value/treasure about Boise
- Don't build apartments right next to single family homes
- Will schools get overcrowded by growth and increased density?
- Want more streetlights for safety
- Is the city relying on donated land to build more schools? Not a viable strategy
- Desire to maintain ability and power to negotiate development
- How do we preserve site specific, unique areas within the Northwest neighborhood
- Northwest neighborhood is geographically very large and diverse and includes a lot of rural/farming land

DISCUSSION #2

- How does reduced size actually create affordable housing?
- Define affordable housing?
- The "affordable" housing being built today is not affordable
- Northwest neighborhood association received a grant to preserve the historical significance of the area and the environmental value
  - Desire to not have ZCR impede those goals and that vision
- Sustainability and quality of life have different definitions to different people
- Areas of Northwest were forcibly annexed
- Read the wildland urban interface
- Lesson was learned from the 2017 fight to preserve affordable housing downtown – it is difficult to fight something that is zoned/planned correctly
- How does new development interface with water infrastructure, specifically surface irrigation
- Developers are currently hooking up water in a wasteful way – need policy
- Boise is a car centric city

- Need to improve transportation
- Question whether we need to provide affordable housing – the market will correct itself
- Affordable housing isn't a priority
  - "If people can't afford a home, they can move elsewhere"

**Zoning Code Rewrite Community Conversation  
March 31, 2022  
Southeast/Airport  
Les Bois Junior High**

Attendance: 11

IN PERSON NOTES

WHY

- Maintains quality of life
  - What does quality of life mean to the ZCR team?
  - Differs from person to person
  - Trying to balance rural and urban living
  - Being mindful of areas and protecting/maintaining character
- Ordinance has weaknesses and needs updating
- How do we protect quality of life while also taking into account growth
- Consensus is challenging
- Is the goal to encourage growth?
  - If you don't build they won't come
  - Hard to recognize what Boise once was (open space)
- Boise is becoming Portland because of growth
  - Public transportation failed in Portland
  - Parking difficulties in Portland

CHANGES 1-4

- Transitional phase
  - Is there a calculation?
  - Where does manufactured housing go?
  - For height: what is calculation for manufactured homes? Residential and industrial regulation for height?
- Height should be highly considered
- Is there a calculation for how many people?
  - Is this all of Boise?
  - How are developers considered/involved in this process?
- Is there "master math" regarding all of these changes?
- Quality of life should be outcome of ZCR
- Are there guidelines/arbitrary limit that can be forecasted?
- Is there any consideration for "dorm type" housing?
- Encourage to re-read through the eyes of mal intent
- Duplex issue is easy to point out but there are also other issues
- Neighborhood protection standards are important to keep in mind
  - Height, elevation, light

CHANGES 5-8

- Ordinance is bringing predictability
  - Ordinance doesn't consider behavior
- Builders are required to do things but don't
  - No recourse
  - Requiring consistent character should be governed and a standard should be set
- Blueprint Boise isn't being enforced
  - This is code enforcement not zoning ordinance
- Reducing setback going to be put as landfill standard?
  - Already developed will be redeveloped
- Is there another mechanism to consider/act on past events?
  - How do we improve our community in another way?
- Response of "how do we fix it" needs to be flexible
  - Hopes zoning code is flexible enough for unforeseen things
- More code enforcement is needed
- Is ZCR doing what Blueprint Boise set out to do initially?
  - Is Blueprint Boise still relevant in the ZCR efforts/decisions?
- What could happen?

**Zoning Code Rewrite Community Conversation**  
**April 6, 2022**  
**North End/East End**  
**Boise High Library**

Attendance: 49

IN PERSON NOTES

WHY

- Where does protecting investments apply to the why?
- How do we plan for scaling up without knowing how many people will come to Boise?
  - What does the middle component look like?
- How are you considering historic preservation?
- How do these changes influence/account for the Climate Action plan?
- How do you measure quality of life and what that means to residents?

CHANGES 1-4

- Do sustainable building choices change requirements? Ex: solar panels, parking
- As lots get smaller, does that include/increase density of R1C?
  - Are setback and common roads considered in the change?
- Are lot sizes going to be cut in half?
  - Preserve character of neighborhoods
- Multiuse buildings should be in the middle of the lot with parking all around it
- How do you make trade offs to prevent taking away another resident's choices, abilities when it comes to sustainability and environmental resilience (ex: solar panels blocked by permanent shadow of taller buildings)
- Permanent shadows of skyscrapers were the reason for the very first zoning ordinance in the U.S. and is a serious issue, impacts quality of life

CHANGES 5-7

- Is there a case study of successful model from another city?

- Getting rid of cars is a fallacy – people need their cars, there is inadequate public transit, low income housing/lack of parking impacts neighborhoods
- Are you considering incentivizing subterranean parking?
- How will Valley Transit help with transportation and reduced parking?
- Response to feedback is not adequately displayed on the website
- On street parking is dangerous to kids/residents
- When will the city and ACHD take on responsibility for sidewalks, and not individual residents?

#### NORTH END/EAST END NEIGHBORHOOD

- What is the distinction between subdivided lot vs planned unit development proposals?
- Are rezoning maps confirmed or just proposed?
- Concerned about housing with historical value being torn down and replaced with multi unit housing that ruins character/neighborhood
- Transportation is an issue, why is Valley Transit not here?
- What is the process getting VRT involved?