


**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Town Council

FROM: Andrew Warren, Director, Planning and Building 

DATE: November 5, 2024

SUBJECT: Small Lot Residential Zoning Ordinance Amendment

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The attached public comments have been received since the Planning Commission public hearing through comments posted on the Let's Talk page, emails sent to staff, and comments received from attendees at the Community Meeting held on September 26, 2024 at the Blacksburg Community Center. Please find a summary of the comments below:

- The proposed small lot option should require a public hearing instead of a by-right process.
- More flexibility in the standards is needed to allow for a greater range of housing types and less development standards.
- R-4, Low Density Residentially zoned neighborhoods may be vulnerable to redevelopment if individual properties are purchased and assembled together. Also, new developments may negatively impact adjacent existing neighborhoods.
- Additional standards should address environmental sustainability and aging-in-place.
- Concerns raised about affordability, over-occupancy, non-owner-occupied housing, and the impact on public utilities and traffic.

As a reminder, Planning Commission recommended approval of the Small Lot Residential Zoning Ordinance Amendment on July 2, 2024 by a vote of 6 to 0 with one abstention.

**From:** [Andrew F. Warren](#)  
**To:** [Kinsey O'Shea](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Small Lot Ordinance for Blacksburg  
**Date:** Sunday, September 22, 2024 6:37:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [SEP2224 REV Small Lot Zoning Ordinance Proposal.pdf](#)

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FYI

**From:** Marc Verniel <[MVerniel@blacksburg.gov](mailto:MVerniel@blacksburg.gov)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 22, 2024 1:57 PM  
**To:** Matt Hanratty <[mhanratty@blacksburg.gov](mailto:mhanratty@blacksburg.gov)>; Andrew F. Warren <[AFWarren@blacksburg.gov](mailto:AFWarren@blacksburg.gov)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Proposed Small Lot Ordinance for Blacksburg

FYI

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**From:** Robert Miller <[rcmiller.psych@gmail.com](mailto:rcmiller.psych@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 22, 2024 1:36:18 PM  
**To:** Town Council <[TownCouncil@blacksburg.gov](mailto:TownCouncil@blacksburg.gov)>; Marc Verniel <[MVerniel@blacksburg.gov](mailto:MVerniel@blacksburg.gov)>  
**Cc:** Airport Acres listserv <[airport-acres@googlegroups.com](mailto:airport-acres@googlegroups.com)>; Javad Torabinejad <[jtorabinejad@yahoo.com](mailto:jtorabinejad@yahoo.com)>  
**Subject:** Proposed Small Lot Ordinance for Blacksburg

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Blacksburg Town Council: I read with interest today's [Roanoke Times](#) article (More Homes, Smaller Lots, 9/24/2024), which overviewed the proposed small lot ordinance under discussion by Blacksburg Town Council. The article makes reference to Council members high praise for the ordinance but does not discuss possible negative consequences of such an ordinance; therefore, I'm contributing some thoughts about how such an ordinance could have undesirable consequences. I also include several suggestions that may be helpful in your deliberations. My thoughts are provided in the attached PDF.

I am unable to attend the community discussion of this matter on September 26th referenced in the article, but would appreciate you including my attached comments in the record for that meeting if possible. Thank you for your consideration.

Bob Miller  
610 Rose Avenue

Problems and suggestions regarding the "Small Lot Residential Development" ordinance under consideration by Blacksburg Town Council:

- 1) Developers could buy up contiguous properties in Blacksburg's most fragile neighborhoods in order to meet the 2-acre requirement, and then by right scrape the properties to infill as they see fit. The new ordinance might be destructive to neighborhoods deserving preservation.
- 2) Developers will be able to play the "long game" by buying up neighborhood properties over many years and waiting until they have adequate acreage to develop by right.
- 3) Developers will buy properties in neighborhoods having lower home prices (i.e. "affordable neighborhoods"). The new ordinance would paradoxically destroy affordable neighborhoods while marketing more expensive housing.
- 4) I'm somewhat familiar with the Charlottesville housing market because I have multiple family members living there. When lots are subdivided in Charlottesville it does not necessarily result in more affordable housing but just more pricey houses on smaller lots. The new ordinance would increase density in Blacksburg but may not contribute to affordability.
- 5) Some Blacksburg neighborhoods are already on smaller lots and are a model for increased density; yet, the new ordinance does nothing to protect these neighborhoods from re-development. For example, Airport Acres properties are a model for housing density and affordability; however, the ordinance could result in the destruction of the character and affordability of the neighborhood. The ordinance should have provisions to protect neighborhoods that are already housing dense.
- 6) It appears that as long as a developer has 2 contiguous acres, they would qualify under the ordinance to develop by right. The ordinance provides developers way too many advantages over neighborhood homeowners to have a voice in development.
- 7) If the Town is going to have a "Small Lot Residential Ordinance", the code should also reflect the Town having first right of refusal to purchase properties of a 2-acre size or larger prior to the property going on the market. This would allow citizens greater voice in how the town is developed by following the traditional course of neighborhood meetings, zoning meetings, and Town Council meetings.

Bob Miller  
September 22, 2024



Small Lot Zoning Ordinance Amendment #61/Ordinance #2053  
Community Feedback Meeting  
September 26, 2024

Comments were received via community feedback forms:

- An attendee wrote that the area behind Kennedy Avenue which was once zoned for housing would be an excellent area for small lots since it is near Margaret Beeks Elementary and walkable to Kroger grocery store.
- An attendee wrote that any ordinance that gives people more freedom to build what they want on their land is a good step but it falls short of being impactful. Removing the two-acre development minimum would dramatically improve the ordinance. Finally, removing the setback restriction would make building easier and give land owners more freedom.
- Tom Roberts of 312 Landsdowne Street wrote that they are opposed to changing all of R-4 and believed through a news article that it was just the yellow blocks.
- Chris Marin wrote that the Town of Blacksburg should build dense to stay up to date with the times. Their neighborhood has some old homes that should be demolished and this amendment would help with smaller/appropriate size homes for smaller families and they support it.
- An attendee wrote that the only thing we (Blacksburg) need is the proposed occupancy standards. With those, the rest will fall in place. Additionally, the attendee wrote that by-right use is a big mistake. We are better off with PRD if we really care about the planning process.
- An attendee voiced their concern that having an existing property next to a development could result in the unforeseen outcome of an alley adjacent to their backyard.

**From:** [Alan Asbeck](#)  
**To:** [Kinsey O'Shea](#)  
**Cc:** [Nikki Asbeck](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding Proposed Ordinance 2053  
**Date:** Thursday, September 26, 2024 5:18:08 PM

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Dear Kinsey,

We wanted to write to the Town Council about the Proposed Ordinance 2053 about the changes to Zone R-4. It appears that you are the point of contact and it would be wonderful if you could pass along the following message to the Town Council.

Thanks so much,  
Alan and Nikki Asbeck

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Dear Town Council,

We wanted to write with respect to the Proposed Ordinance 2053. In short, we feel this is extremely unfair to the current town residents as currently written.

We first want to establish a principle that we think should be a guiding principle: the Town Council should have as its \*first\* priority to take care of the needs of the Town's \*current\* residents. That is, the Town Council should put the interests of the current residents--- those who elected the town council and who currently own land here---over the needs of others: future potential residents of the town, developers, and so on.

Now, as for the Proposed Ordinance 2053. Currently, Zone R-4 is entitled "Low Density Residential District." The Town Code currently says the following about Zone R-4:

"The low density residential district is intended to define and protect residential areas of low density from the intrusion of uses not performing a function appropriate to the residential environment. Attractiveness, order and efficiency is encouraged by the requirement of adequate space for individual homes with adequate light, air and space, and maintaining an appropriate density of residential development."

There are other Zones intended for higher density than R-4; these are named as such, and with regulations that permit higher density. If the Proposed Ordinance would pass, Zone R-4 would no longer be Low Density. The proposed regulations are actually very high density, with very small lot sizes. Zone R-4 was created to have more space between buildings.

There are many people who live in houses abutting Zone R-4 parcels of more than two acres. These people purchased their houses with the understanding that they would live in a Low-Density area, as Zone R-4 currently is and was intended to be. If this regulation is changed, high density housing will be constructed right next to many people's houses. This will lower property values, will negatively impact people's views, and will clog up the streets with cars. This is not what the current residents signed up for when they originally purchased those houses; in essence, if this Ordinance is passed, it would be like changing the rules of a game part-way through the game. The Town Council would be putting the interests of future residents and developers over the interests of the current residents. This is not acceptable.

We do recognize that higher-density housing is desirable within Blacksburg. But, this is not the way to go about it, because it will harm the current residents of Blacksburg. Instead, there are several possibilities:

1. Allow for higher density in R-4, but only in places more than 100 yards away from other properties. We think very few people will care if, for example, there are densely-packed houses next to the freeway. Many people have bought homes recently with the understanding that they would not live next to dense housing; ensuring that the high-density housing is far away from existing houses will maintain the interests of the current residents.
2. Encourage developers to create planned communities away from existing houses. For example, there are large tracts of undeveloped land in the Northwest side of town across the freeway. There is plenty of space to put houses there and still maintain a large buffer from existing residences. There are similarly other tracts of land further from town that can be developed without harming current residents.

Ultimately, changing the zoning \*primarily\* benefits the developers who will build there. It is not the Town Council's job to create incentives for the developers to build; there are many people who are holding onto tracts of land who could build at the present time, even with the current zoning regulations. They choose not to for a variety of reasons, and still may not develop those properties even if the Proposed Ordinance is passed-- so the Proposed Ordinance would still not solve the problem.

Housing is a supply-and-demand problem; people want to live in Blacksburg because there are jobs in Blacksburg. Even if the Proposed Ordinance 2053 is passed as currently written, this will not create a long term low-cost supply of housing in Blacksburg. It is only a short-term bandaid that will hurt the current residents. Instead, the only long-term solution is to have housing further away from town, where there is much more land. The housing prices further from town will also naturally be lower, because they will have slightly longer

commute times. There may need to be improvements in infrastructure to facilitate this (e.g. changing bus routes, making traffic lights timed to improve traffic flow, possibly additional exits from US-460, etc.), but ultimately this will be the only solution.

In summary, Ordinance 2053 is currently not fair to the current residents who have property near Zone R-4. Please do not pass it as currently written. Your job is to serve the current residents, not the developers.

Sincerely,  
Alan and Nikki Asbeck

Town Council and Staff,

While at the 9/26/24 community meeting pertaining to the proposed zoning ordinance 2053, I had chance to talk with Kinsey O'Shea, Paul Patterson and Liam Watson.

In our discussion, I referenced the article - **More Homes, Smaller Lots (Roanoke Times, 9/22/2024)** and pointed out that In it, Council members gave high praise for SLRD, but voiced no concerns about possible negative consequences of the ordinance.

I then proceeded to present the following five possible negative consequences on behalf of neighbors and myself, that Blacksburg Town Council should consider.

- 1) Developers could buy up contiguous properties in Blacksburg's most fragile neighborhoods to meet the 2-acre requirement, and then by-right scrape the properties to infill as they see fit. The new ordinance; therefore, might be destructive to neighborhoods deserving preservation.
- 2) Developers can play the "long game" by buying up neighborhood properties over many years, then wait and rent the properties until they have adequate acreage to develop by-right. As a result, the number of rental properties would increase thereby reducing the number of available purchasable homes.
- 3) Contiguous properties could be bought in neighborhoods having lower home prices (i.e. "affordable neighborhoods") and then developed into less affordable homes thereby paradoxically reducing housing affordability in Blacksburg.
- 4) Neighborhoods such as Airport Acres, which for many years has been a model for housing density and affordability, are provided no protection in the proposed ordinance. Such neighborhoods could be re-developed thereby destroying the original character of the neighborhood – a key part of what makes Blacksburg a special place to live.
- 5) SLRD bypasses citizen input into development and provides developers with unfair advantages over neighborhood homeowners to have a voice in development.

Thank you for your time, consideration and service. Dawn Gietzen

# More homes, smaller lots?

## Blacksburg considers shrinking lot sizes to increase housing

**PAYTON WILLIAMS**  
The Roanoke Times

**BLACKSBURG** — In November, the town council is scheduled to consider a measure that could triple housing density in some parts of Blacksburg.

The small lot ordinance the town is considering would reduce square footage requirements for areas of town zoned as “R-4” districts, changing the size from 10,000 square feet minimum to 3,000.

The proposed ordinance was praised by members of council during a work session on Tuesday, with member Jerry Ford describing it as a major step toward addressing Blacksburg’s lack of housing.

“A density increase like this would be huge for our housing crunch,” Ford said.

The ordinance has a few caveats attached to the development of properties, including a provision that residents be limited to “family plus one,” or single-family occupancy plus one unrelated person. Ford said that in recent public discussions, people who live in R-4 districts were particularly concerned about seeing this

point emphasized.

Councilman Liam Watson said that he hoped the ordinance would lead to further zoning changes in the future.

“This is a promising first step, and I hope we’ll be able to consider further measures to address things like infill housing in the future,” Watson said.

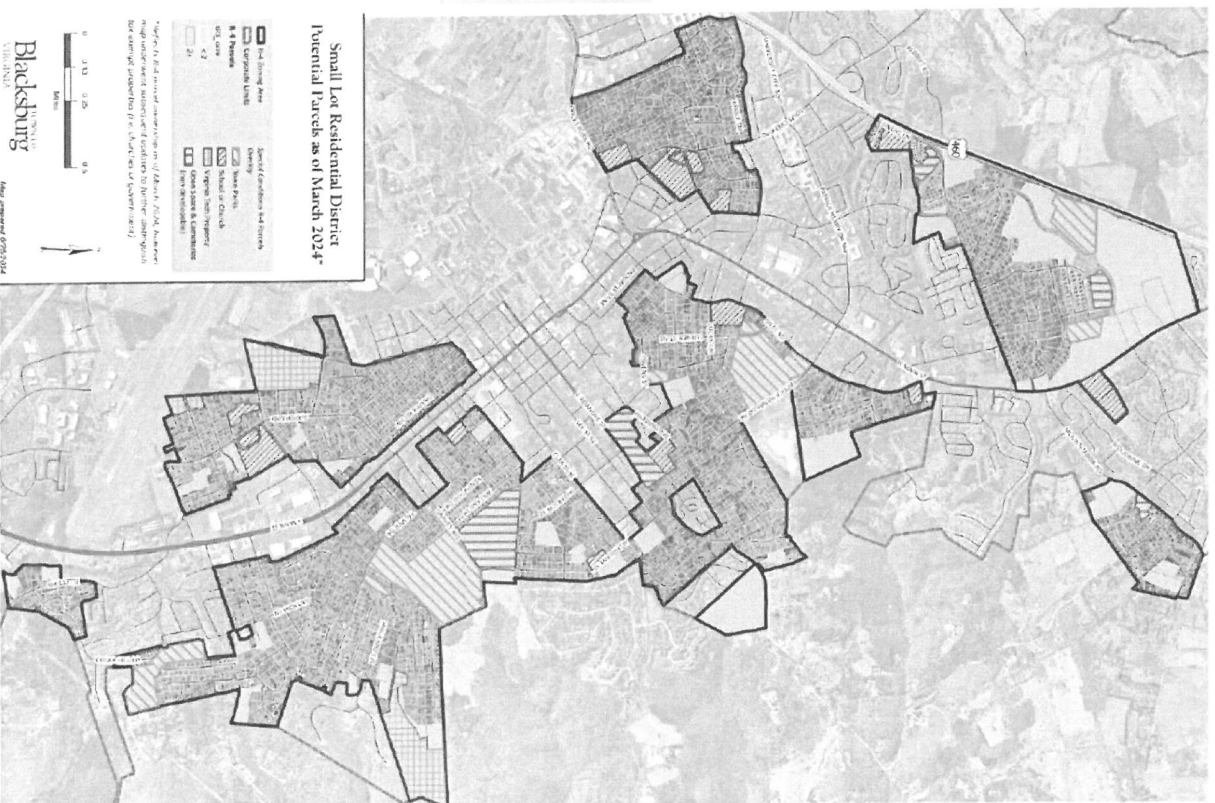
Ford said that the council was waiting to see how the small-lot ordinance was received, but said it may be a “proof of concept,” for further zoning changes.

Watson also said that, to his mind, no one who has written to him about the ordinance has said anything negative about it, to which the rest of the council agreed that the feedback so far has been nearly all positive.

The ordinance provides for several different types of residences, including townhouses, though the language in the ordinance specifies that townhouses built on small lots can “only be serviced by alley access,” without entrances facing roadways.

A community discussion on the project will be at 6:30 p.m. on Sept. 26, at the Blacksburg Community Center. The measure could be voted on by the council in mid-November.

**Payton Williams**  
(540) 986-5635  
payton.williams@roanoke.com



A map of Blacksburg showing which areas would have new zoning rules allowing for small lots. The areas affected are indicated in yellow.

**From:** [Marc Verniel](#)  
**To:** [Andrew F. Warren](#); [Matt Hanratty](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Small Lots Zoning Amendment  
**Date:** Thursday, October 3, 2024 12:47:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)

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Must have sent the first one to your old email 😊

**Marc A Verniel ICMA-CM, AICP**  
**Town Manager**

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**From:** Marc Verniel  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 3, 2024 12:46 PM  
**To:** [Matt Hanratty](mailto:mhanratty@blacksburg.gov) <[mhanratty@blacksburg.gov](mailto:mhanratty@blacksburg.gov)>; [Andrew Warren](mailto:awarren@blacksburg.gov) <[awarren@blacksburg.gov](mailto:awarren@blacksburg.gov)>  
**Subject:** FW: Proposed Small Lots Zoning Amendment

FYI

**Marc A Verniel ICMA-CM, AICP**  
**Town Manager**

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**From:** Bob Radspinner <[radspin221@comcast.net](mailto:radspin221@comcast.net)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 3, 2024 12:44 PM  
**To:** Marc Verniel <[MVerniel@blacksburg.gov](mailto:MVerniel@blacksburg.gov)>  
**Subject:** Proposed Small Lots Zoning Amendment

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To whom it may concern,

I attended the community meeting regarding the Small Lot amendment on September 26, 2024. The meeting was not as I expected, as I had to seek out assistance to understand the maps showing the R-4 areas and understanding what the impact would be on my home.

Since feedback was not formally collected, I feel compelled to write a response to the zoning change proposal.

I have been associated with my home in McBryde village since 1989. My parents built the house and in 2014, my wife and I retired to Blacksburg.

During our time of living on McBryde Drive, we have seen a steady decline of the enforcement of ordinances designed to maintain a certain standard of property maintenance. Specifically violations of parking, yard maintenance (lawn mowing), vegetation impeding sidewalks, timely removal of trash and recycling containers after collection, and numbers of non-related individuals living together in excess of ordinance.

Because of the lack of enforcement of existing ordinances, I cannot believe that protections for those permanent residents living in R-4 zoning districts would occur with the proposed amendment.

Therefore I am not in favor of the Proposed Small Lots Zoning Amendment.

If the town decides to enforce current ordinances, I will reconsider my position.

Regards,

Robert Radspinner  
830 McBryde Drive



## QANDA

### Questions and Comments

Visitors <b>34</b>	Contributors <b>19</b>	CONTRIBUTIONS <b>19</b>
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#### Q echarlie

15 March 24

Some thoughts on the small lot residential proposal: - Building height limits should be pushed to 3 stories. This will allow for better layouts with more interior light, which is a major downside of existing moderate-density houses. - With house pricing in Blacksburg already being high, more stringent requirements for construction---ideally that of the highly-energy-efficient Passive House standard---should be incorporated into the project approval process; high density puts more strain on infrastructure and has environmental cost, and new construction should be planned in a way that manages that impact while ensuring high-quality dwellings that will last for a long time. The effective impact on prices should be low. - Private driveways should be prohibited to minimize paved surfaces - Alleys should be constructed from permeable surfaces. I'm opposed to alleys and back-paths in moderate-density single-family residential, as it reduces semi-private outdoor spaces that introverts like myself crave, especially when the yard from the alley to the house is paved with a single driveway. - streets should be designed more in keeping with e.g. College Avenue in downtown Blacksburg: no hard curbs and a more consistent grade promote cycling and lower speeds. Sidewalks are space-wasteful; if the neighborhood is walkable, it should feel safe to walk on the road. - provisions for future mixed-use in these neighborhoods should be considered. Walkable neighborhoods are of limited utility unless there is access to services. In the near term, this can be achieved by bus access, but longer-term there need to be broader zoning plans to support mixed zoning with light commercial (restaurants, cafes, small shops etc).

#### A Privately Answered

We are sorry for the delay in our response, we had technical difficulties with the website interface and were not notified of your comments. Thank you for your comments!

## QANDA

### Questions and Comments

**Q** Scott Seebohm

16 March 24

I strongly support this effort and other efforts to create visually appealing, walkable, single family housing on smaller lots to increase options for families moving to Blacksburg. I recommend the commission or council to consider additional ways to restrict such properties from being used as investment properties by non-resident owners. Investment in short-term rental properties appears to be a factor in the real estate prices in Blacksburg and other small cities with significant college sports draws. Thank you. Scott Seebohm 5491 McCoy Rd Blacksburg

**A** Privately Answered

We are sorry for the delay in our response, we had technical difficulties with the website interface and were not notified of your comments. Thank you for your comments!

**Q** DeeMarie

27 March 24

Needed are one level homes for retirees. Duplexes, Triplexes, etc. Critical need here.

**A** Privately Answered

We are sorry for the delay in our response, we had technical difficulties with the website interface and were not notified of your comments. Thank you for your comments!

## QANDA

### Questions and Comments

**Q** BlacksburgJoe

27 March 24

I think this is an important step for the town to take. Here is a link to a Pew Trust article on the subject. <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2024/01/22/how-restrictive-zoning-in-virginia-has-hurt-housing-affordability>. I hope that the town can come up with a plan that provides this level of affordable housing and will also buck the trend of absentee owners and student rentals taking over what we would like to have as affordable housing family neighborhoods. Joe Merola 6104 Tall Oaks Dr. Blacksburger since 1987

**A** Privately Answered

We are sorry for the delay in our response, we had technical difficulties with the website interface and were not notified of your comments. Thank you for your comments, and for sharing the article.

## QANDA

### Questions and Comments

**Q** Bob Miller

27 March 24

My questions/concerns about this zoning ordinance change include: 1) What stops a developer from buying up contiguous properties to meet the 2-acre requirement then scraping the properties to jam in as many small homes as possible? This could actually be destructive to neighborhoods. I believe developers will play the "long game" buying up properties over many years and waiting until they have adequate acreage to develop. 2) Most likely if a developer were going to buy up properties, they would do so in neighborhoods that have lower home prices/values (i.e. "affordable neighborhoods"). The new ordinance would; therefore, paradoxically destroy affordable neighborhoods while marketing affordable housing. 2) I'm somewhat familiar with the Charlottesville housing market since both my sons live there and what I observe in that market is when lots are subdivided it does not result in more affordable housing but just more pricey houses on smaller lots. I doubt that this ordinance will have any significant impact on lowering home prices in Blacksburg. 3) In Airport Acres current qualifying properties include the church property on Porter Street, the Berry Court Properties, Beeks School, and a privately held lot. Does this mean that if Beeks School were someday closed it could be developed? Does this mean if the Berry Court developers do not sell all of their lots, they could combine properties and/or buy other properties to in-fill homes on smaller sub-divided properties? Could the church sell to a developer to subdivide that property? 4) The materials provided indicate that the map of eligible properties can change. In other words, developers are afforded a moving target of properties they can potentially develop, and as long as a developer has 2 contiguous acres they would qualify under the ordinance. Such an ordinance provides developers way too many advantages over homeowners. 5) Everyone can get behind affordable housing but time and time again the Town makes decisions that increase the density of housing in neighborhoods such as Airport Acres. The Town has done nothing to offset housing density in Airport Acres by protecting the limited remaining open spaces with parks and greenspace for the neighborhood. 6) If the Town is going to have an ordinance such as the "Small Lot Residential Ordinance" I believe it should also be written into the code that the Town has first right of refusal to purchase, at competitive real estate prices, any property of a 2 acre size or larger prior to it being put on the market for a developer to purchase. This process would go through an open process with neighborhood meetings, zoning meetings, and Town Council meetings like any other development process. Such a process might be rarely used but could be implemented to, for example, add to the Town's parkland space. Only by building in safe guards such as the above can citizens have some assurance Town governance is protecting their neighborhoods.

**A** Privately Answered

We are sorry for the delay in our response, we had technical difficulties with the website interface and were not notified of your comments. The ordinance allows for the development of more residential units than what is allowed today, through the use of smaller lot sizes. Parcel accumulation and use of the small lot option is a possibility; parcel accumulation and development is also possible under the existing R-4 regulations. With respect to potentially eligible properties such as schools, and churches, within Airport Acres and throughout Town, under the Small Lot option or the current regulations, these properties could be redeveloped. For example, the Midtown development is the redevelopment of the old Blacksburg Middle School. Thank you for your comments!

## QANDA

### Questions and Comments

**Q** jeffrancis

27 March 24

The example sites are relatively level. Some of the areas currently zoned R-4 Low-Density Residential have relief that make unsuitable for the Small Lot Development Ordinance proposed. How will this be corrected?

**A** Privately Answered

We are sorry for the delay in our response, we had technical difficulties with the website interface and were not notified of your comments. The ordinance does not specifically speak to topography because it is a factor in any development. The Town staff reviews lot layout and home siting taking into account topography as a regular part of the plan review process. This would be the same for use of the Small Lot development option. Thank you for your comments!

**Q** Ian

13 August 24

I support it overall, but I'm not a big fan of the restrictions like height, max # of attached units and who can live there (though maybe that depends on how the units are divided). Density is sorely needed. I'd be happy to see, say, bigger buildings that are split. I previously lived across the street from 3-4 story townhouses that were often split into two units. I understand if there's not demand for that here, but I don't like it being prohibited if people want to do it. And I get banning students, but I'd rather focus on there being dense apartment options for them near campus so they don't feel the need to live in family areas that are likely less desirable to them in the first place.

**A** Privately Answered

Thank you for your feedback. Please stay tuned for future updates on this proposed ordinance.

## QANDA

### Questions and Comments

Q RJ

11 September 24

While small lot development seems on its face to reduce the cost of housing, how does the town know that will actually happen? Are there affordability standards ie selling prices associated with the ordinance? In Nashville they have small lot zoning and the new homes built on the small lots are not affordable and the opposite is true, they are quite expensive, what rules are proposed to ensure affordability?

A Privately Answered

The Town of Blacksburg cannot prevent homes built through the Small Lot ordinance from reaching a particular price point. However, the ordinance includes limitations on height and lot coverage to keep the home size smaller relative to the lot. The total square footage of a home is often a major driver of a home's price and therefore smaller homes will likely remain more affordable.

Q hokieclassof98

13 September 24

I support this idea. good work. however, how will Blacksburg prevent this from becoming \$700K to \$1M townhomes like the 343 Eheart St and that entire development. this defeats the whole purpose of making affordable family housing.

A Privately Answered

The Town of Blacksburg cannot prevent homes built through the Small Lot ordinance from reaching a particular price point. However, the ordinance includes limitations on height and lot coverage to keep the home size smaller relative to the lot. The total square footage of a home is often a major driver of a home's price and therefore smaller homes will likely remain more affordable.

Q CEWILLS

13 September 24

Hello, thank you for the postal mailing with the date/time of the planned community meeting in September for the proposed Small Lot amendment. For those who may be unable to attend the meeting, are there additional ways to share feedback about the proposed amendment? I looked for this information in the Small Lot Residential Ordinance website but did not see a specific area for posting or other information about how to share feedback.

A Privately Answered

The best way to share your thoughts on the proposed amendment is to place it in the "Questions" box on this page. Thank you!

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## QANDA

### Questions and Comments

**Q** Ned

13 September 24

I am against any change to the R-4 district ordinance because I believe it will promote development of duplexes and one bedroom apartments/townhomes. Which brings more people, more traffic and less parking. This will not make anything more affordable just promote development, giving developers the opportunity they need. The problem is lack of housing for students, and VT accepting a larger number of students every year, then that drives up the cost of housing whether it's apartment rental or buying a single family home. Which is also why so many students end up renting single family homes. Is there a way to limit VT to less students? I think that would help the most. Then enforce noise ordinance and parking issues and anyone who is not neighborly. More density, means more people, which means more problems. Please do not turn these neighborhoods into "the projects" by promoting one bedroom apartments and duplexes. Please just leave it like it is and help people be more neighborly.

**A** Privately Answered

Thank you for your feedback!

**Q** H.Osmus

14 September 24

1.why are we changing the building ordinances that were put in place to preserve rural nature of Blacksburg? 2. Are bonds required of the builders to ensure that adequate sewer,water, gas/electric and road access is paid for without raising our taxes. 3. Is increased traffic assessment study included in this proposal. 4.where are the details of this (sliding scale) of building codes. I don't want to see shabby buildings like the ones recently build at the intersection of N.Main and Mt. Tabor. They look like tear downs, not modern buildings. 5. The plan calls for common or open space. That space should be specified as developed parkland( trees, shrubs, walking paths, play areas, dog park. Those improvements should be a part of any approved development. An HOA for developments should be assured and a per residential unit fee should be included in the building plan to maintain the infrastructure after the builder has sold the majority of the units.

**A** Privately Answered

Thank you for your feedback. Please stay tuned for updates to this proposed ordinance.

## QANDA

### Questions and Comments

**Q** Jonas

15 September 24

Is this a blanket approval for any development planned to bring built per the Small Lot Residential Ordinance?

**A** Privately Answered

As drafted, Ordinance 2053 will only apply to zoned R-4 Low-Density Residential properties with a minimum area of two contiguous acres.

**Q** Patrice Hart-Schubert

18 September 24

Comment: Of all the points mentioned above, by far the most important is #7. In a college town, this one point is the determining factor as to the make-up of occupants a dwelling. Work out this issue and the Town can stop going 'round and 'round as to how to deal with the affordable housing crisis.

**A** Privately Answered

Thank you for your feedback. Stay tuned for more updates on this project.

**Q** ToddH

19 September 24

Will the changes to R4 zoning rules be applied to existing properties or only to new constructions?

**A** Privately Answered

Thank you for your question. As drafted, Ordinance 2053 will only apply to zoned R-4 Low-Density Residential properties with a minimum area of two contiguous acres.



## QANDA

### Questions and Comments

#### Q What is this?

26 September 24

I understood that Hoge Pasture (currently a horse boarding facility) adjoining Graves Ave across from the Town golf course) was not developable. Am I correct that it's shown as yellow with brown stripes on the map, & if so, what does that mean for the proposal?

#### A Privately Answered

Thank you for your question. The striping indicates that while an area is greater than 2 acres, it is conserved open space.

#### Q Jack Hencke

26 September 24

What are the current prices of the homes used for illustrations ... Echols and Village at Tom's Creek? Do these "fit" a starting teacher or police officer income?

#### A Privately Answered

Thank you for your question. This depends on the home and the household. What we can determine is that homes developed as part of the small lot ordinance, on average, will be more affordable than the large single-family homes in the R-4 district that have been constructed in Blacksburg over the past 5-10 years.

#### Q R Radspinner

26 September 24

The concept is good however current ordinances in neighborhoods are not enforced ( trash cans left out, too many unrelated residents in a dwelling, lawns not mowed,etc.) How will this change?

#### A Privately Answered

Thank you for your feedback. If you have specific concerns about code enforcement, please contact Housing & Community Connections at 443-1612 with concerns about . Code enforcement will continue to be the way to manage these sorts of nuisance behaviors.

## QANDA

### Questions and Comments

**Q** Joel Goodhart

31 October 24

The link to the updated draft ordinance of the Small Lot ordinance is broken on the letstalkblacksburg page. I was wondering if the link could be fixed? Thanks so much!

**A** Privately Answered

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. The link has been fixed. Please let us know if you have additional questions/issues with the link.