

Total Fees Due: \$ 450
Application Fee: \$450.00

Date Application & Fee Received: 10/18/18
Received by: THD

Application for Zoning Ordinance Amendment City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

www.harrisonburgva.gov/zoning-applications

Section 1. Description of Amendment

Zoning Ordinance Section: (New) R-8, Small Lot Residential

Proposed Text (if additional space needed, attached as separate sheet)

See attached

Section 2. Applicant's Information

Applicant's Name: Richard Blackwell
Street Address: 70 Peyton Randolph Court Email: dick@blackwellengineering.com
City: Harrisonburg State: VA Zip: 22801
Telephone: Work 540-432-9555 Fax _____ Mobile _____

Section 3: Applicant's Representative Information

Applicant's Representative: _____
Street Address: _____ Email: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone: Work _____ Fax _____ Mobile _____

Section 4: Certification

I certify that the information supplied on this application and on the attachments provided is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: Richard Blackwell
Applicant Signature

Section 5. Required Attachments

☒ Letter explaining reasons for seeking Ordinance Amendment

January 29, 2019

Ms. Thanh Dang
City Planner, City of Harrisonburg
409 S Main St
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

RE: Zoning Ordinance Amendment – R8- Small Lot Residential District

Dear Ms. Dang:

Having worked in the City for thirty (30) years, I have seen development costs continually increase. These increases along with the cost of land and building materials, have caused the cost of a single family or duplex dwelling to become more and more expensive.

In an effort to provide an affordable dwelling to a greater range of owner occupied and first home buyers, I am proposing the above referenced zoning ordinance amendment. In the present R-1 zoning, the minimum lot size is 10,000 sf.; 7,000 sf in R-2 and 6,000 sf. in R-3, for a single family detached lot. Duplex lots in R-3 require a minimum of 4,000 sf/unit. To enable smaller lot sizes, I am proposing that single family and duplex lots be allowed in a new R-8 zoning district. In this proposed new district, single family detached lots could be as small as 2,800 sf. and duplex lots 1,800 sf./unit. It is also proposed that townhouse lots be allowed by special use permit at a size of 1,800 sf/unit.

Regulations are continuing to become more restrictive and land costs, building materials and labor cost continue to increase. Therefore, this new district provides one of the only ways I know to reduce the cost of single family, duplex and townhouse dwellings.

It is understood that smaller lots do not provide the same recreational space as larger lots and dwellings are closer to one another, but ownership of a smaller home is more desirable for many than renting an apartment or townhouse. However, with the changes to requirements for townhouse lots, a townhouse unit could be slightly more affordable attracting first time home buyers and/or lowering rent payments for those renting.

In the past decade, the percentage of owner-occupied detached, duplex and townhouse dwellings compared to apartment rental has seen a reduction. This new district is a small step to provide more affordable owner-occupied housing in the City.

There are a number of concerns created by smaller lots: parking, block lengths and, alleys. However, these can be resolved by the City working with the developer and through proffers.

There are numerous undeveloped areas within the City that may be developed as single family detached housing if a greater density can be realized.

I am open to suggestions, revisions and adjustments by the staff and the Planning Commission. Let's make this work for many citizens of Harrisonburg.

Cordially,



Richard L. Blackwell, Jr., P.E.
Civil Engineer