

Urban Edge Focus Group Notes

October 19, 2022, 4- 6:30 p.m.

Takeaways

- Story limitation on lots without alleys needs more discussion.
- Focus group members agreed that on lots with alleys, there isn't much more shadow impact from 2 stories than from 1.5.

Notes

- Rosemary wants to follow up about short-term rentals
- Rosemary: concerned over the AC meeting presentation, how did the 24' height become the norm for the ADU?
 - Abe: not sure we 100% know- primary structures are allowed to be between 30-35' high when ADUs are allowed 24'. Sense is that in neighborhoods where it's common for first floor to be elevated, 24' is acknowledging that and allow for modern construction in two stories.
 - Josh: accommodating a second level, allows for pitched use to match character of neighborhood. Garage allowance is single story and 17'.
- Rosemary: could we bring height down to bring down massing? Wants to see modeling with height lowered.
 - Josh: if we limit height to 16', there's no way you could also fit parking and living space.
 - Patrick: 24' works with current bulk plane and setbacks. Could be different if setbacks are different.
- Modeling
 - Image of brown house going from 1.5 stories to 2 is very helpful. There might be less impact going from 1.5 stories to 2 after seeing the image - Rosemary
 - Privacy doesn't seem different – Patrick
 - Window placement is important

Accommodating the Current ADU Allowance: what does it look like in practice?

- Concerns about shadow impacts from ADUs
- Would allowing for 2-story ADUs increase these issues?
- This is the existing ADU allowance



- Talked about incentivizing one-story ADUs by reducing rear setback, would open area between ADU and house to create more open space. Why is the setback 5' in the rear – Rosemary

- Abe: maybe we could treat one-story ADUs the same as one-story garages, meaning they can be built on the property line abutting an alley if there's not a garage door.
- Flyover
 - No difference between 1.5 stories and 2 in terms of impact. Almost better because windows could be higher with 2 stories. – Rosemary
 - A lot of shadow is driven a lot by where the ADU is.
 - Setbacks need to be accommodated. Increased setbacks could make ADUs less imposing – Patrick
 - Putting the ADU in the middle of the lot provides most separation between structures and helps most shadow go on your own property. Setbacks are the most impactful point for shadows. – Patrick
 - Need to factor in the “subordinate” nature of ADUs. Is a two-story structure subordinate in a neighborhood with one-story garages? – Patrick
 - Whole ADU discussion should be a part of the missing middle discussion in the City. – Rosemary
 - Should emphasize that an ADU is accessory and subordinate to primary structure and there are limits. That's as important as eliminating barriers when messaging the project to the wider public. – Rosemary
 - When going through BOA process, they suggested that instead of making the footprint larger to accommodate 75% barrier for second floor, we should've asked for a full two story ADU. Benefits in allowing both pathways based on what works for people. Half story on our lot was so limiting, ADU investment was potentially not even worth it because it limited the living space. There are a lot of periods of time where neighborhoods can provide input and hopefully people do that as they consider building an ADU. Depending on their lots, families will decide what works best for them size wise. Just because you can build a two-story doesn't mean that you will. It does cost more. – Shawn
 - From these models, I'm fine with going to 2 stories. That leads to the question – the design of the ADUs is going to be very important. There was a discussion of a design contest. Is that something that would happen after the project is over? - Rosemary
 - Josh: design contest options would be part of the implementation phase.
 - Brent: when talking about 2 stories, are we talking about with and without alleys?
 - Rosemary: I meant with alleys.
 - I went through airbnbs, most are ADUs, in my area- none of them were ADA. All of them had the external stairway to accommodate living space you get on the half story. Limitations of trying to get in all the living space you can in the half story is not leaving people the option to have an enclosed stairway with a chairway or make the ADU more accessible.
 - Without an alley- 17' seems critical. - Rosemary

Requests for follow-up:

- Further discussion about short-term rental- Rosemary
- Modeling with a height maximum lower than 24' - Rosemary