



City of Harbor Springs

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September 15, 2025

To: Planning Commission

From: Jeff Grimm
Zoning Administrator

Re: Open House feedback with recommendations

A series of open houses were held between September 3rd and September 11th. The purposes of the open houses were to both be informative to citizens of the community regarding the efforts of the Planning Commission to draft a new zoning code, and to receive feedback regarding their likes and concerns of its content.

Some aspects of the zoning code that the community looked upon favorably:

The updated format and usability of the new draft zoning code.
Addressing some of the deficiencies of the current zoning code.

There were some items presented in the draft zoning code that many members of the community shared common concerns and seemed to come to a clearer consensus:

Co-Living Use

Common concerns regarding co-living were affects on neighboring properties, traffic, parking, and density. The community was quite vocal that co-living not be permitted throughout all of the residential zoning districts.

I recommend the topic of co-living use be revisited, adding further supplemental regulations to better define them, and/or re-evaluating what zoning districts they be permitted in, possibly deciding to remove them as a potential special land use option.

Accessory Dwelling Units

Many people shared a concern that removing the special land use requirement may open things to dramatically causing a large increase in the number of applications, along with a



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strong desire to continue to receive mailings when neighbors submit applications. There seemed to be less concern regarding their use and availability to be rented (although Short Term Rental use was strongly opposed).

I recommend that the topic of ADUs and their approval process be revisited with a potential change to all districts being a special land use approval process.

Cluster Zoning and Planned Unit Development

The majority of our time at all five open houses was spent clarifying what cluster zoning and PUDs are, and how they could be used. There were a few people that spoke out noting how they could be used to the betterment of the city, but the majority of people shared concerns that these tools could be used in ways that would negatively impact the community by increasing density or bringing in uses otherwise not permitted within the zoning district it was utilized within.

Some specific concerns are:

- Lack of clarification on how much density could be increased with no hard caps or measurement for determining what criteria should be met to allow for increased density.
- Lack of clarification on the minimum size parcel where these tools could be used.
- Concern regarding the ability through these tools to bring in commercial uses such as hotels into residential neighborhoods.

I recommend that the topics of Cluster Zoning and Planned Unit Developments be revisited to review and address the above concerns with a potential outcome of temporary removal from the draft zoning code until some time in the future where these issues can be addressed through a broader discussion.