

ATTENDANCE

Planning Commission

Brian Rater, Chair- via zoom
Richard Schmidt, Vice-Chair- in person
William Burnett, Secretary- via zoom
Jim Payne, Alt. Secretary- via zoom
Robert Prosek- via zoom
Sharon Collins- in person
Ellen Foreman- in person

Township Staff

Douglas Erickson, Township Manager- in person
Alexandra Castrechini, Township Engineer- in person
Nicole Harter, Zoning Officer- via Zoom
Nicole Pollock, CRPA- via Zoom

Audience

C-Net- via zoom
Walter Schneider III, Ph.D., P.E- via zoom
Steven Bodnar- via zoom
Kate Domico- via zoom
Anthony Buda- via zoom
Barry Fineberg- in person

****Meeting was Hybrid****

1. CALL TO ORDER – REGULAR MEETING

The April 4, 2022, Work Session meeting was called to order at 4:31 PM by Chair, Mr. Brian Rater.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments at this point in the meeting.

3. REGULATIONS TO PERMIT ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)

The [2021 Patton Township Housing Task Force Report](#) recommends adding definitions to existing zoning code for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). ADUs are an additional dwelling unit on a property that is subordinate to the primary dwelling unit.

In continuation of the discussion started on March 21, tonight we will discuss definition, eligibility, quantity, occupancy and use, and size. Attachment 3.2 outlines the overall regulations to be discussed and will track our progress.

First, as there was a lengthy discussion about rental units at the last meeting, Centre Region Code Agency (CRCA) Director Walt Schneider was present to talk with the Planning Commission (PC).

Ms. Pollock summarized the focus of the meeting topics: size, definition, occupancy limits, eligibility: where, quantity.

Design Standards: Size:

The PC inquired about a size restriction on ADUs. There is no definition of efficiency in the International Residential Code (IRC). The minimum size would be determined by CRCA based on the 2018 IRC. The Township would be able to establish a maximum size limit.

Discussion: How should the size be regulated? By maximum square feet?

Mr. Schneider gave an overview of square footage requirements and configuration of space. If ADU is built as a single bedroom or a multi bedroom dwelling unit, minimum bedroom size is 70 sq ft. If the goal is to build something that would then be rented, that comes under the Centre Region Building Safety and Property Maintenance Code, which is how a rental permit is issued and has square footage limitations, regarding the number of occupants. Habitable square footage is a minimum of 50 square feet for a one-bedroom unit, the combination of the living room, dining room and kitchen need to give a minimum of 50 square feet for one occupant. Another 50 square feet for a second occupant. Bedroom size for one occupant is 70 square feet. Two occupants in one bedroom, is 100 square feet.

If an efficiency unit is built, to acquire a rental housing permit, the combination area, kitchen, dining, living, and bedroom is 220 sq. ft for two occupants; three occupants 320 sq. ft.

The Planning Commission discussed whether the ADU will be within the building envelope or outside the building envelope. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

Mr. Schneider also provided other requirements: need to be able to cook, Bathroom must have toilet, sink, shower at minimum. Shower size must be 30"x30" 21 in. spacing between toilet. Effectively, the minimum bathroom size would need to be 6 ½ x 5 ½.

Mr. Fineberg inquired about ADA requirements, fire codes and separate utilities. Mr. Schneider noted that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania doesn't have ADA requirements or fire code for a single-family home. This only applies to Commercial Rental Code. Separate utility bills are not required but must have access to a shutoff in the panel box.

Parking will be discussed later throughout the process

Mr. Payne noted that fire safety is in the rental requirements such as smoke alarms and two egresses.

Sprinkler systems are not required, but are optional in a single-family home

Definition: Accessory Dwelling Unit:

At the March 21, 2022 meeting the PC talked about adding a specific definition for an ADU. It is staff’s recommendation that the Commission continue its discussion on standards for ADUs and then revisit whether a specific definition is needed, or if existing definitions are sufficient. Patton Township code already includes definitions for “dwelling unit” and “accessory use”:

DWELLING UNIT: Consists of one or more rooms for living purposes together with separate cooking and sanitary facilities and is accessible from the outdoors either directly or through an entrance hall shared with other dwelling units and is used or intended to be used by one or more persons living together and maintaining a common household.

ACCESSORY USE OR ACCESSORY: A use conducted on the same lot as a principal use to which it is related; a use which is clearly incidental to and customarily found in connection with a particular principal use.

Ms. Pollock noted we will pause this conversation at this time and revisit later.

Mr. Rater requested at the next meeting to have the other local municipalities’ definitions

Occupancy Limits and Owner Occupancy Requirements:

As suggested by Mr. Erickson at the March 21 meeting, an area of Park Forest was selected to see how many homeowners are occupied and how many have rental housing permits to help decide if we want owner occupancy. Attachment 3.3 Rental Housing Sample map has been provided in addition to the following chart:

Owner-Occupied w/No Rental Permit	79
Owner-Occupied w/Rental Permit	1
Not Owner-Occupied w/No Rental Permit	6
Not Owner-Occupied w/Rental Permit	12
Not Owner-Occupied - **This property is owned by Strawberry Fields**	1
Total Properties	99

There was a question raised by the PC at the March 21 meeting about how we can control the amount of people living in an ADU:

Occupancy for dwelling units in Patton Township is limited by the definition of “family”. Occupancy in ADUs would be required to meet the same definition. From the Patton Township Zoning ordinance:

FAMILY: A person, or two or more persons, who are related by blood, marriage, parentage, adoption (including foster children) and living together. In addition to the family, two or fewer unrelated persons may reside within the dwelling unit. In the case where one or more of the unrelated persons is a family care client, the number of unrelated persons permitted to be within the dwelling unit shall be no more than three. For dwelling units in apartment buildings, the number of persons permitted to occupy a unit shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Patton Township Property Maintenance Code.

Discussion: The PC has decided there should be owner-occupancy. The PC should discuss if the regulations should contain any specific owner-occupancy requirements including which unit must be owner-occupied.

Majority of the PC agreed that the ADU be owner occupied with flexibility to occupy either unit.

Mr. Erickson noted that we can put conditions and limitations on an ADU and require it be owner occupied.

Ms. Harter stated to keep in mind that before we require owner occupancy that some residents go to Florida for the winter. Does that disqualify them from having an ADU?

Mr. Schneider noted currently we require to have a person in charge of the property with a rental housing permit. Currently Patton Township requires a permit, only after seven days of rental. There's potential for weekend rentals.

Ms. Foreman expressed concern about short term rentals. Mr. Erickson noted there are no current issues with short term rentals in Patton Township.

Mr. Fineberg inquired what happens when the property is sold. Mr. Burnett noted the new owner would step into the previous owners' shoes, same rules, and same regulations.

Eligibility: Where:

With owner-occupancy required, the number of parcels potentially eligible for an ADU could be restricted if the property already has a rental unit. Looking at five neighborhoods in the Township and within the Regional Growth Boundary (RGB), an attached map (attachment 3.4) shows the percentages of lots that already have a rental permit.

Discussion: Where should ADUs be permitted? Per zoning district or use type?

This will be discussed at the next meeting

Ms. Harter recommended a chart be created to include:

- zoning districts
- minimum lot size

- setbacks
- percentage of maximum coverage

Quantity:

Discussion: Should there be a limit to one ADU per lot?

Majority of PC agree that one ADU per property

Ms. Collins expressed that the ADU should be within the envelope of the existing home as people bought into a neighborhood for certain aesthetics

Mr. Payne noted we can regulate that the ADU's match what is currently within the neighborhood and there are setbacks in place

Additional Consideration(s):

The Planning Commission needs to be aware that adding an ADU will also increase water/sewage usage. To UAJA and SCBWA, these will be two (2) units and they will bill accordingly for it.

Ms. Pollock noted the next objectives should be:

- Configuration- attached, detached or interior
- Eligibility or where
- Quantity
- Parking

Mr. Erickson noted that if you have any questions before the next meeting regarding setbacks, zoning, etc., to send them to Nicole Pollock.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business

5. ADJOURN

This meeting was adjourned at 5:57p.m.