

1 **2009-2010 Development Code Docket**
2 **A-13: Cottage Housing (Titles 20 and 21)**

Date: September 21, 2011

Public Hearing Date: October 19, 2011

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Associate Planner

Proponent/Applicant: Thurston County

Action Requested: Amend Development Code to
allow Cottage Housing
Development within the Lacey
and Ground Mound Urban
Growth Areas (Title 20 and 21).

3 **UPDATE:**

4 At the September 7, 2011 work session, the Planning Commission requested staff to provide
5 additional information regarding density bonuses, maximum square footage, setbacks, garages,
6 accessory dwelling units, and accessory building size and height.
7

8 **Density Bonuses:**

9 The density bonus would only be applied to a cottage development if the proposal is in complete
10 compliance with all standards of the cottage chapter i.e. all dwellings built to a green building
11 certificate program, setbacks are maintained, compliance with all open space and parking
12 requirements. In many instances based upon lot size and configuration, the development will not
13 be able to achieve the maximum allowable density bonus, as a result to lot configurations, the
14 cottage footprint requirements, setbacks, open space, and parking area requirements. Section
15 xx.xx.030(B)(1) requires compliance with all standards of the cottage chapter to receive a density
16 bonus. All cottage development would occur within the urban growth areas which provide
17 public water and sewer utilities and the density bonus will maximize the infill opportunity and
18 give incentive to build energy efficient dwellings.
19

20 **Maximum Square Footage:**

21 The maximum total allowed square footage has been changed to 900 square feet (xx.xx.030(D)).
22 The total square footage will include the main floor and 2nd floor, but will not include covered
23 porches and garages.
24

25 **Setbacks:**

26 As drafted, the minimum setbacks would be 10 feet (front), 5 feet (rear), and 5 feet (side)
27 (xx.xx.030(J)). The setbacks are consistent with urban zones and other jurisdictions setbacks for
28 cottages. The cottage setbacks are minimum, so the developer could design the cottage lots to be
29 larger with greater setbacks to accompany accessory buildings.
30

1 Smaller front yard setbacks could potentially encourage driveway parking into sidewalks or other
2 pedestrian pathways. Larger setbacks could impede the character of the pocket neighborhoods.

3
4 **Garages:**

5 The Planning Commission believed that the code should include a limitation to the size of the
6 garage. Other jurisdictions have the following language pertaining to the maximum size of a
7 garage:

8 City of Lacey: *“Garages may be attached to individual cottages provided all other design
9 standards have been met and the footprint of the ground floor, including the garage, does not
10 exceed 1,000 square feet.”*

11
12 City of Port Townsend: *Does not allow attached garages and or carports and requires cluster
13 parking to the side or rear of the cottage project site. This means a dedicated parking tract for
14 the entire cottage development.*

15
16 City of Redmond: *The total floor area of each cottage shall not exceed either 1.5 times the area
17 of the main floor or 1,000 square feet, whichever is less. Attached garages shall be included in
18 the calculation of total floor area.*

19
20 Federal Way: *Dwelling units shall not include attached garages unless the garage abuts an alley
21 or shared parking lot. The first 200 square feet of attached garage space shall not be counted
22 towards maximum dwelling unit size allowance. Detached garages and carports associated with
23 individual dwelling units shall not exceed 500 square feet in size (detached garages or carports
24 shall not count towards maximum cottage or CSF unit size allowance).*

25
26 Mukilteo: *One-story cottages shall not exceed a maximum of 1,000 square feet on the main
27 floor, excluding garages. Single-car garages are allowed to be attached to the cottage if the
28 garage is accessed from the side or rear of the unit; no garage may be accessed from the front
29 façade of the building. Note: Single-car garage is not defined.*

30
31 Seattle: *No language pertaining to garages for cottages.*

32
33 Langley: *No language pertaining to garages for cottages.*

34
35 Marysville: *The total floor area of each cottage shall not exceed either 1.5 times the area of the
36 main level or 1,200 square feet, whichever is less. Attached garages shall be included in the
37 calculation of total floor area.*

38
39 The International Building Code does not provide a definition of a single-family one car garage.
40 There is no Thurston County code that defines a garage that includes size. TCC 21.06.620
41 defines “Parking space” means an unobstructed space or area other than a street or alley which is
42 permanently reserved and maintained for the parking of one motor vehicle.” Table 21T.18
43 provides standards for a typical standard parking space as being 9’ x 18’ (162 Square Feet).

44
45 Staff believes a 225 square foot garage limitation would give adequate garage space for parking
46 and maneuvering a vehicle within a cottage dwelling. Staff drafted the following language to
47 xx.xx.030(D):

1
2 The maximum allowed gross square footage of the garage shall be limited to 250 square
3 feet.

4
5 The code could be written to include a total cottage size limitation, which would include the size
6 of the garage. But, this could result in a cottage being constructed that is dominated by an
7 appearance of a garage and impact the character of the cottage development.

8
9 **Accessory Dwelling Units:**

10 Accessory dwelling units (ADU) are permitted in all the urban growth areas. As a result to scale
11 of a cottage development, the code has been drafted to allow one accessory dwelling unit per
12 every five cottage lots. It's likely the developer would need to designate and design the cottage
13 lots that could occupy an ADU to be larger lots within the subdivision, so the private open space
14 and setbacks are maintained.

15
16 **Accessory Buildings:**

17 A detached accessory building is considered a normal appurtenance to a single-family residence,
18 which allows the residence to store gardening tools, toys, vehicle parking, etc. As proposed, the
19 maximum height of an accessory building would be 18 feet. The height of 18 feet should give an
20 incidental appearance to the cottage, which has a height limitation of 25 feet. In designing the
21 cottage development, the developer will need to take into consideration to the placement of the
22 accessory buildings to ensure the plated lot will be in compliance with all other cottage design
23 standards, such as setbacks and private open space.

24
25 Staff believes the 18-foot height limitation would give the cottage resident adequate space to
26 park and maneuver a vehicle and necessary area for storage within the rafters (xx.xx.030(I)(2)).
27 The previously presented drafted cottage code did not provide a maximum square footage for
28 accessory buildings. Staff has added the following language to Section xx.xx.030(D)(1), which
29 would maintain consistency with the garage size limitation:

30
31 1. Accessory structures floor area. The maximum allowed gross floor area is 225
32 square feet. Accessory structures shall include detached garages, carports, and
33 storage buildings located on the individual cottage lot. This does not include
34 common parking garages or carports.

35
36 **ALTERNATIVES:**

37 **Option 1)** Amend Titles 20 and 21 by allowing cottage housing development within the
38 Lacey and Ground Mound Urban Growth Areas.

39
40 **Option 2)** Make no change to Title 20 and 21 with regard to cottage housing.

41
42 **SEPA:**

43 A SEPA determination has not been made at this time.

44
45 **NOTIFICATION:**

46 Written notice of the public hearing will be published in The Nisqually Valley News at least
47 twenty (20) days prior to the public hearing.

1
2 **DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS:**

3 The Resource Stewardship Department recommends the Planning Commission move forward
4 Development Code Docket item A-13, Amend Development Code to allow Cottage Housing
5 Development within the Lacey and Ground Mound Urban Growth Areas (Title 20 and 21) with a
6 recommendation of approval to the Board of County Commissioners as follows:
7
8

9 **Title 20 and 21 Zoning would be amended as follows:**

10 Deleted Text: ~~Strikethrough~~ Proposed Changes: Underlined

11 Staff Comments: *Italics* Unaffected Omitted Text: (...)

12 Deleted Draft Text: ~~Strikethrough / Underlined~~
13
14

15 **Chapter XX.XX - COTTAGE HOUSING**

16
17 **Sections:**

18 XX.XX.010 Intent

19 XX.XX.020 Where permitted

20 XX.XX.030 Development Standards

21
22 **XX.XX.010 Intent.**

23 It is the intent of this chapter to:

24 A. Provide an opportunity for small, detached housing types, clustered around an
25 open space.

26 B. Provide traditional cottage amenities and proportions to ensure that cottage housing
27 developments contribute to the overall community character.

28 C. Provide centrally located and functional common open space that fosters a sense of
29 community.

30 D. Provide semi-private area around the individual dwellings to enable diversity in
31 landscape design and foster a sense of ownership.

32 E. Ensure minimal visual impact from vehicular use and storage areas for residents of the
33 cottage housing development as well as adjacent properties, and to maintain a single-family
34 character along public streets.

35 F. Take advantage of existing natural features on the site including topography and
36 vegetation, where desirable.

37 G. Provide the opportunity for more affordable housing units.

38 H. Promote conservation of natural resources by clustering smaller dwelling units on
39 lots.

40 I. Provide energy efficient dwelling units.

41 J. Provide more opportunity for infill development.

42 K. Provide incentives for green certified building and low-impact development.

43 **XX.XX.020 Where permitted.** Cottage housing development shall be permitted in the
44 following land use districts, consistent with the development standards in this chapter:

1 *Lacey Urban Growth Area:*

- 2 A. Low Density Residential 3-6 District.
3 B. Moderate Density Residential District.
4 C. High Density Residential District.

5
6 *Ground Mound Urban Growth Area:*

- 7 A. Residential – 3-6 Units Per 1 Acre.
8 B. Residential – 4-16 Units Per 1 Acre.
9

10
11 **XX.XX.030 Development standards.**

12 A. Conflicts. In instances where the development standards of this chapter conflict with
13 other County Zoning requirements, the requirements within this chapter shall prevail.
14

15 BA. Density. The density of the underlying zone governs unless a density increase is
16 granted as provided in this chapter. Other density bonuses found in the underlying zone shall not
17 apply to cottage developments.

18 1. B Density increases. in the Low Density Residential (3-6) and Moderate
19 Density Residential Districts. The County may allow Cottage housing developments may
20 exceed to increase the density of the underlining zone by 50 percent when the development is
21 in compliance with all standards of this chapter and if all dwellings are constructed in
22 accordance with a green building certificate program such as LEED (Leadership in Energy
23 and Environmental Design), Passive House, and Four Star Built Green.

24 C. Cottage Clusters. Developments shall contain a minimum of two and a maximum of
25 twelve dwellings located in a cluster to encourage a sense of community among the residents. A
26 development site may contain more than one cluster. The density bonus for clustering found in
27 the underlying zone districts shall not apply to cottage developments.

28 D. C. Maximum Gross Cottage Floor Area. The maximum allowed gross floor area is
29 900 ~~1,200~~ 1,500 square feet per dwelling. The maximum gross floor area for the ground floor or
30 main floor is 1,000 square feet per dwelling. Floor area does not include covered porches. Floor
31 area does not include covered porches or garages, or accessory structures. The maximum
32 allowed gross square footage of the garage shall be limited to 225 square feet.

33 1. Accessory structures floor area. The maximum allowed gross floor area is 225
34 square feet. Accessory structures shall include detached garages, carports, and storage buildings
35 located on the individual cottage lot. This does not include common parking garages or carports.

36 E. D. Platting. A cottage development may be completed through a land division,
37 subdivision plat, short plat, or condominium provided the county has adopted an ordinance
38 providing this option.

39 1. Covenants, conditions and restrictions (CC&Rs) shall be submitted at the same
40 time and in the same manner as required of any land division. In addition, CC&Rs for cottage
41 developments shall address ownership and maintenance responsibilities, including but not
42 limited to the following: the common open space areas, common drainage facilities, parking
43 areas, and private roads. They shall also reflect the regulatory requirements regarding the
44 minimum spacing requirements between structures (both primary and accessory) in effect at the

1 time of final approval of the land division. The CC&R's shall also reflect the building design
2 standards within the cottage development.

3
4 F. E. Design. ~~Cottages are subject to the design criteria in this Chapter 21.70.~~ Where
5 there are conflicts between zoning Chapter 21.70 and the standards, in this chapter, the standards
6 herein shall apply. Cottage housing developments are subject to the following design review
7 requirements:

8 1. Variety in Building Design. A variety of building elements and treatments of
9 cottages and accessory structures must be incorporated. Variety in building design may include
10 any of the following: change in materials or texture, windows, façade, colors, or other
11 architectural feature as shown in the codes design standards of Chapter 21.70. No blank walls
12 are allowed.

13 2. Five-foot-wide pedestrian pathways (sidewalks) must be included to provide for
14 movement of residents and guests from parking areas to homes and other amenities.

15
16 G. Open Space. Cottage developments shall provide “common open space” and “private
17 open space”. These two types of open space shall count towards the 10-percent open space
18 required of land divisions in Title 18. All open space areas shall be landscaped.

19 1. F. ~~Minimum~~ Common Space. The minimum common space required is three
20 hundred square feet per dwelling. The common open space shall be configured so that, at a
21 minimum:

22 a.-1. The common open space abuts at least 50 ~~fifty~~ percent of the
23 cottages in a cottage housing development.

24 b.-2. Cottage clusters must abut at least two sides of the common open
25 space.

26 c.-3. Cottages that are oriented around the open space with must provide
27 an entry facing the common open space.

28 d.-4. Cottages should be within 60 ~~sixty~~ feet walking distance of the
29 common open space as measured along accessible pathways as specified in subsection (F)(2).

30 e. 5. Area required to meet minimum private open space, setback, and
31 parking requirements may not be used in the calculations for common open space.

32 f.-6. Common open space shall be accessible to all cottage residents in
33 the applicable cluster and maintained by the development's homeowners association.

34 g. Common open space shall be usable (not within a critical area or
35 critical area buffer per Title 17.15 the Thurston County Critical Areas Ordinance.

36
37 2.-G. ~~Minimum~~ Private Open Space. The minimum private open space required
38 is 200 ~~two hundred~~ square feet per dwelling. The private ~~Required~~ open space shall be adjacent
39 to each dwelling unit and for the exclusive use of this unit ~~the cottage resident(s)~~. The private
40 space shall be:

41 a. 1. Usable (not within a critical area or critical area buffer per Title
42 17.15 the Thurston County Critical Areas Ordinance, on a steep slope).

43 b. 2. Oriented toward the common open space as much as possible.

1 c. 3. No less than eight feet in dimension on any side. ~~A desirable~~
2 configuration for this private open space is an area between the dwelling unit and the common
3 open space, similar to what's shown in the examples in *Table ?*

4 d. 4. Front yard porch area may be included as private open space area.

5
6 H. Facades and Porches.

7 1. Cottages facing the common open space or common pathway must feature a
8 roofed porch at least eighty square feet in size with a minimum dimension of eight feet on any
9 side.

10 2. Cottages ~~abutting~~ ~~fronting on~~ a street shall provide a covered entry feature
11 with a minimum dimension of six feet by six feet facing the street. This is in addition to the
12 porch requirement; where the cottage is adjacent to a common open space or pathway.

13 3. ~~All facades facing common open space, pathways, and streets shall comply~~
14 ~~with Architectural Details and Windows and Transparency design criteria specified in Section~~
15 ~~14.23.072(C) and (I), respectively.~~

16 I. Maximum Height for Cottages.

17 1. The maximum height for cottages is 25 ~~twenty five~~ feet. ~~All parts of the roof~~
18 ~~above eighteen feet shall be pitched.~~

19 2. The maximum height for all accessory structures is 18 ~~eighteen~~ feet.

20
21 J. Setbacks.

22 1. Front Yards. The minimum front yard shall be ~~ten~~ (10) feet.

23 a. Cottage housing developments shall be exempt from the front yard
24 driveway length requirement found in underlying zone districts.

25 2. Rear yards. The minimum rear yard shall be 5 ~~ten~~ (10) feet.

26 3. Side yards. The minimum required side yard shall be ~~five~~ (5) feet.

27 K. Minimum Distance Separating Structures. The minimum required distance separating
28 structures (including accessory structures) is 10 ~~ten~~ feet.

29
30 L. Parking Requirements.

31 1. The minimum required number of parking spaces is one and one-half spaces
32 per dwelling.

33 a. Mixed use developments shall provide no less than one parking space
34 per dwelling.

35 2. Parking shall be located on the same property as the cottage development.

36 3. Parking and vehicular areas shall be screened from public streets and adjacent
37 residential uses by landscaping or architectural screens.

38 4. ~~Parking shall be located in clusters of not more than five adjoining uncovered~~
39 ~~spaces (except where parking areas are adjacent to an alley).~~

40 4.5. Parking is prohibited in the front yard setback area.

41 6. ~~All detached parking structures shall have a pitched roof design.~~

42 5. 7. Garages or carports may be attached to individual cottages provided all other
43 design standards have been met. ~~and the footprint of the ground floor, including the garage, does~~

1 ~~not exceed 1,000 square feet. Such garages or carports (either attached or detached) shall be~~
2 ~~located away from common open spaces. to the extent possible.~~

3 ~~8. At least fifty percent of the required parking spaces shall be enclosed. Such structures~~
4 ~~shall be designed consistent with the cottage architecture. This includes similar building~~
5 ~~materials, rooflines, and detailing.~~

6 6. If covered parking is provided, such structures shall be designed consistent
7 with the cottage architecture. This includes similar building materials, rooflines, and detailing.

8 ~~7. 9. Parking between structures is only allowed when it is located toward the~~
9 ~~rear of the principal structure and is served by an alley or private driveway.~~

10 ~~8. ~~10. Impervious Ssurface for common~~ parking lots shall be broken into sub-~~
11 ~~lots of no more than eight 10 parking spaces. These rows may be garages or carports and shall~~
12 ~~be separated by landscape islands a minimum of 12 feet in width. These islands shall either be~~
13 ~~landscaped in accordance with a low-impact development design in accordance with the adopted~~
14 ~~Drainage Design and Erosion Control Manual. Sub-lots shall be separated by landscaped bulb-~~
15 ~~outs a minimum of 12 feet in width.~~

16 a. Pervious surface parking lots are not required to utilize landscape
17 islands.

18 ~~9. ~~11. Surface p~~Parking lots of more than two spaces, visible from a public right-~~
19 ~~of-way (not including alleys) or adjacent single-family uses or zones shall be screened by~~
20 ~~landscaping and/or architectural features. pursuant to the landscape requirements to separate~~
21 ~~conflicting uses.~~

22 M. Utility elements. Utility meters and heating/cooling/ventilation equipment shall be
23 located/designed to minimize visual impacts from the street and common areas.

24 N. Low impact development. Cottage developments shall utilize Low Impact
25 Development techniques to accommodate and treat stormwater as on-site conditions allow, as
26 determined by the director. Examples include the use of pervious pavement for walkways,
27 patios, and vehicle access areas, directing runoff from roofs and other impervious areas to
28 landscaped beds, green or living roofs, and the use of rain barrels.

29 O. Existing nonconforming structure and accessory dwelling units.

30 1. On a lot to be used for a cottage housing development, an existing detached
31 single-family residential structure, which may be nonconforming with respect to the standards of
32 this chapter, shall be permitted to remain, provided the house and any accessory structures are
33 not enlarged and the development meets the standards herein. The existing dwelling shall be
34 included in determining the allowable density for the site.

35 ~~2. For any cottage development containing an existing house and an accessory~~
36 ~~dwelling unit, the accessory dwelling unit shall be counted as a cottage for the purposes of~~
37 ~~determining allowable density f or the site.~~

38 ~~P. Clustering Groups. Developments shall contain a minimum of four and a maximum~~
39 ~~of twelve dwellings located in a cluster group to encourage a sense of community among the~~
40 ~~residents. A development site may contain more than one cluster. Moved to Sect .030(C)~~

41 P. Accessory dwelling units.

42 1. There shall be no more than one accessory dwelling unit for every five primary
43 dwelling units.

1 2. An accessory dwelling unit may be attached to or detached from a new or
2 existing primary single-family dwelling unit.

3 3. The accessory dwelling unit will require one parking space, which is in
4 addition to any off-street spaces required for the primary single-family dwelling unit.

5 4. The primary entrance to an accessory dwelling unit shall not be visible from
6 the yard on the same side of the lot on which the primary entrance to the primary single-family
7 dwelling unit is located.

8 5. To ensure that the accessory dwelling unit is clearly secondary to the primary
9 dwelling unit, the floor area for the accessory dwelling unit shall in no case exceed 500 square
10 feet, and the accessory dwelling unit shall contain no more than two bedrooms.

11 Q. Landscaping

12 1. The design of the cottage housing development shall be designed in
13 consideration to retain significant trees which will not constitute a safety hazard.

14 2. All required landscaping shall be in compliance with TCC 21.80.
15
16
17

