

I. Executive Summary – Review of Findings and Recommendations

At its meeting of April 17, 2001 the Lake Oswego City Council adopted a charge statement and appointed the Infill Development Ad Hoc Task Force. The Committee was charged with *“evaluating Lake Oswego development issues and providing recommendations to improve the manner in which residential infill development occurs. It is the intent of this effort to develop processes and a menu of standards which, with consideration of specific neighborhoods and circumstances, could be applied throughout Lake Oswego.”* The Task Force was directed to develop a written and graphic report for the Planning Commission and Development Review Commission (DRC) review (See Charge Statement, Appendix A). The Council appointed neighborhood representatives, a remodeler, builder, architect, urban planner, developer, representative of a financial institution, Planning Commissioner, Development Review Commissioner, citizen at large and a LONAC representative. The Task Force was given six months to complete and present its report to the Development Review and Planning Commissions, although the entire process took somewhat longer.

The Task Force first met on May 10, 2001 and selected a Chair and Vice Chair. The Committee has met a total of 13 times to review the Council’s charge statement, identify the problem, review options to address the problem, identify stakeholders, gain public input, review examples of infill in two test neighborhoods, and make recommendations. Task Force agendas and meeting minutes are available upon request.

The Task Force makes the following conclusions and recommendations:

- House sizes have increased greatly over the past 20 years resulting in greater discrepancies in size between older, existing houses and abutting new development.
- Single family infill development is becoming more and more of a concern in many Lake Oswego neighborhoods according to survey results.
- A handful of neighborhoods will likely experience redevelopment sooner than others, given the age of the housing stock, supply of undeveloped land and building-to-land values. These neighborhoods are primarily zoned R-5, R-6, R-7.5, R-10 and R-15.



- The Task Force reviewed examples of infill and found that those characterized as “less compatible” with existing neighborhood development, actually met all zoning standards. Therefore, additional regulations addressing other aspects of development review are needed to address infill issues.
- The primary issues identified by the Task Force that affect compatibility of infill development with existing neighborhoods include:
 - 1) Overall house size/lot size relationship,
 - 2) The volume of a house as perceived both from the street and from neighbors,
 - 3) Perceived height and location of height on a lot,
 - 4) Garage openings to the street, and
 - 5) Large, simple planes oriented toward smaller neighbors.
- For any new or revised standards to be successful, educational materials for the public and training for City staff will be necessary components of the change.
- There are several issues that the Task Force identified later in the process, or that citizens or Planning Commissioners or Development Review Board Members identified, that are related to infill and for which further study is recommended, including:
 - 1) The allowed height of new housing on flag lots,
 - 2) The compatibility of development on adjoining lots at different topographic elevations,
 - 3) Applicability of regulatory strategies to additions/remodels, and
 - 4) The impacts on neighborhood character of allowing lot consolidations to accommodate larger homes.
- On the issue of flag lots, the Task Force recommends the City pursue a “quick fix” to allow a greater variety in roof form and height, while the issue is being studied.
- The Task Force recommends that the Council move forward at this time by accepting this report and requesting that the Planning Commission open a dialog with neighborhoods to discuss the regulatory strategies outlined in the chart on the following page and illustrated in Appendix B. It should be noted that the chart is a summary of identified issues, objectives, strategies, existing standards and examples of potential standards. These do not represent the final recommendations

***“Building
volume is
not the
issue—
it’s how
the
volume is
shaped
within the
lot.”***

-Ron Kellett



that should be adopted since more extensive analysis needs to be done for various lot types in R-5, R-7.5 and R-15.

- While the Task Force has made some specific suggestions for code changes within the two “test” neighborhoods, these standards need refinement and additional testing. Further study and community discussion is also needed to develop standards for all lot types in each zone so that appropriate regulatory tools are developed for all areas.
- The Task Force recommends that the Council pursue the following tasks which would result in adoption of standards for the zones outlined above in a timely fashion. The Task Force recommends that the City dedicate the necessary funds to amend the consulting contract that is now in effect to continue the remaining tasks including:
 1. Refine standards for test neighborhoods (garages, lot coverage, etc.)
 2. Analyzing “lot character” in each zone for remaining neighborhoods.
 3. Crafting standards for lot types within each zone, working with Planning Commission, using the methodology developed by the Task Force for analyzing compatibility issues.
 4. Developing application materials and explanatory drawings.
 5. Planning Commission and Council hearings.
- The Task Force recommends that the Council continue the full Task Force or a subset of the Task Force to complete Tasks 1-3, above. Following these tasks, it is recommended that a subset of the Task Force continue to work with Planning Commission until the process is completed.

