

Philadelphia's New Zoning Code

Key Suggested Changes to Detailed Recommendations



New Zoning Code Structure

Initial Recommendation

21 Chapters Consolidated into 6

14-100 General Provisions

14-200 Administrative Procedures

14-300 Zone Districts

14-400 Use Regulations

14-500 Development Standards

14-600 Definitions

Appendices

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Change Memo

21 Chapters Consolidated into 9

14-100 General Provisions

14-200 Definitions

14-300 Administrative Procedures

14-400 Base Zone Districts

14-500 Overlay Zone Districts

14-600 Use Regulations

14-700 Development Standards

14-800 Parking

14-900 Signs

Appendices

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Summary of Changes

Section	Initial Recommendation	Change Memo
14-105	Connect New Zoning Code to plan documents adopted by the city	PCPC will prepare policy regarding plan adoption and list of adopted plans
14-110	Clarify that PCPC is authorized to issue written interpretations of zoning code upon request	Appeals of L&I decisions (that may include interpretations) will go to the ZBA. Requests for interpretation not related to a specific application will go to PCPC
14-203	Clarify what types of applications require pre-application conference or a neighborhood meeting prior to filing an application	ZCC has established a working group to review this issue and facilitate a dialogue among stakeholders

Summary of Changes

Section	Initial Recommendation	Change Memo
14-203(10)	Allow higher-level bodies to “call-up” a decision by lower-level bodies for review. Allow lower-level decision makers to “bump-up” decisions to higher-level bodies	Draft provisions in Module 1 and discuss further with the ZCC before deciding whether to pursue this change
14-204(2/3)	Special Use Permit: application of planning judgment based on location, size, and character of the use and the surrounding neighborhood Certificated Use: only land use decisions requiring planning judgment go to the ZBA	Two categories merged and sorted into different types of "conditional uses:" (1) uses subject to objective conditions to be reviewed/approved by L&I (2) those requiring exercise of judgment go to ZBA

Summary of Changes

Section	Initial Recommendation	Change Memo
14-205	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow nonconforming uses of equal or less impact to be resumed after discontinuance• Remove prohibition on increases in floor area• Remove prohibition on vertical wall extensions in side setback; require upper story additions in rear to comply with district setbacks• Extend minor deviation authority to nonconformities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ZCC working group to conduct further review/discussions• Clarify rules for different types of nonconformities• Allow expansion of buildings containing N/C use by up to 25% (currently 10%)• Require ZBA approval of N/C use re-establishment• Eliminate ZBA hearing requirement for use changes simply because lots do not comply with dimensional standards

Summary of Changes

Goal is to preserve the character of each district, whether preserved as is or consolidated with other districts.

Section	Initial Recommendation	Change Memo
14-301(1)	Consolidate R-1, R-1A	Do not consolidate
14-301(2)	Consolidate R-2, R-3	Do not consolidate
14-301(5)	Consolidate R-6, R-7, R-8	Consolidate R-8 with R-9 and R-10
14-301(11)	Consolidate R-18, R-19	Consolidate R-18 and R-19 with similar R-8 and R-9 districts
14-302	Consolidate RC-4, C-4	Review consolidation to ensure that character of each district will be preserved
14-501(1)	Reorganize lot and building (dimensional) standards into tables	Also, clarify where contextual standards (i.e., standards based on area context) may or must be used. Provisions to be drafted and discussed with ZCC before deciding whether to pursue

Summary of Changes

Section	Initial Recommendation	Change Memo
14-508(2)	Consolidate all residential design standards and incorporate information from the existing <i>Neighborhood Design Guidelines</i> and from the <i>Planning Standards for Neighborhood Transformation</i>	Also review and clarify current limits on front-loaded garages in townhouse districts to promote walkability and control loss of on-street parking
14-511	Consolidate all existing sign regulations, including those related to overlay districts	ZCC to establish working group to discuss the need for additional substantive changes

Additional Changes



The Consultant Team received many detailed suggestions for specific text changes and is planning to discuss them with city staff and include them, as appropriate, in the module drafting process. Many of these suggestions are not listed in this presentation—or in the Change Memo—because they address technical details that should be highlighted and reviewed in the context of specific zoning code sections.

Questions and Discussion

Change Memo Summary

