

Google Groups

Abundant Housing LA comments on draft ADU ordinance CPC-2016-4345-CA

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Aug 19, 2019 4:23 PM

Posted in group: **Clerk-PLUM-Committee**

Dear Council Members on the PLUM Committee and city staff

We appreciate your work on the City's ADUs ordinance and exploration of additional options for hillside areas. To maintain the city's momentum of increased ADU conversions and construction, we recommend that you adopt a combination of the three new options. We also recommend amendments to strengthen the ordinance. Details are in the attached comment letter.

Thank you for considering our views.

mark

August 19, 2019

From: Abundant Housing LA

To: Los Angeles City Council, Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee,
Department of City Planning

Re: Comments on ADU ordinance (CPC-2016-4345-CA)

Abundant Housing LA writes in regards to comment on potential amendments to the draft city ordinance on accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as relates to hillside areas. We also reiterate our support for an ADU ordinance that continues momentum on ADU legalization, conversions and new construction.

Abundant Housing LA is a pro-housing organization. Our more than 2000 members and supporters are in favor of more homes of all types in Los Angeles. We supported and continue to support state bills that remove local barriers to ADUs. As the City of Los Angeles' draft ADU ordinance has worked its way through the legislative process, we have consistently advocated for rules that makes it easy to legalize existing un-permitted ADUs and to construct new ADUs.

We are pleased that since the passage of state laws in late 2016, legalization of ADUs in the City has expanded tremendously and construction of new ADUs has also accelerated. With ADUs as a bright spot in the housing crisis, Los Angeles needs to continue this momentum.

ADUs in hillside areas

We appreciate that the PLUM committee requested additional options for ADUs in hillsides, and that the Department of City Planning has provided options in its August 14, 2019 memo. We acknowledge that ADUs in hillside and high fire zones raise health and safety issues that deserve serious consideration. At the same time, we have recommended ways to balance the need for more homes and the intent of state ADU reforms with safety considerations. We are pleased that some of the issues that we raised, including looking to more objective conditions; and recognizing that Northeast LA hillside areas should not be swept up in a blanket ban advocated for by homeowners in other communities; are being considered.

Given the analysis in the memo, we recommend a combination of all three options. New ADU construction should be allowed where a property fronts a 24+ foot wide improved street, or a 20-24 foot wide improved street if the ADU has fire sprinklers and one parking space is provided; or where council chooses to exempt certain community plans from restrictions on hillside ADUs (such as the Northeast LA and Echo Park, Silverlake plan areas).

Other recommendations

We continue to support additional changes to the city's draft ordinance to remove barriers and to treat homeowners fairly:

- Allow ADUs of up to 1200 sf on each lot. Linking ADU size to the size of the main house allows those who are already 'house rich,' with large homes to add even more living space, while households with small main homes are limited.
- Exempt the first 800 sf of an ADU from FAR limits. Counting ADUs when calculating FAR will limit the ability of residents to add badly-needed ADUs or force them to decide between a modest expansion of their own living space or adding an ADU. We want to empower all Angelenos, not just wealthy homeowners with large lots, to add ADUs and help solve LA's housing crisis.
- Allow ADUs with multi-family dwellings. An ADU on a property with a single family home is great, but ADUs should also be allowed with multifamily dwellings. There is no reason why ADUs can not be a good addition to some properties with a duplex or a larger multi-family structure. We recommend allowing up to 2 ADU in R2 zones, up to 3 ADU per lot in RD zones and R3 zones, and up to 4 ADUs per lot on other properties with multi-family dwellings. !
- Allow ADUs in front of existing homes when exiting homes are on back of lot. While many existing homes in LA are located towards the front or middle of the lot, there are also homes that sit towards the rear of the lot. An ADUs should be allowed in front of an existing structure when at least 75% of the existing building foot print is in the rear half of the lot.

Movable Tiny Homes

We also support allowing movable tiny homes as ADUS, in line with the current draft.

We look forward to an ADU ordinance that continues progress to address Los Angeles' housing crisis.

Thank you for considering our views,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Vallianatos', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mark Vallianatos,
Policy Director, Abundant Housing LA