

**Town of Chevy Chase**  
**Land Use Committee**

**Minutes**

October 18, 2007

The Land Use Committee met at 7:00 p.m. on October 18, 2007. The meeting was attended by Council Liaison, Mayor Linna Barnes, Committee Chair, Julia Miller, and Committee Members, Lees Hartman, Jon Hiatt, Dedun Ingram, Steve McConnell, Joseph Rubin, and Sue Hill. Donna Kirk was absent. Sarah Franklin of Jakubiak & Assocs. and Jim Spearman of Studio 27 Architecture were also present.

At the meeting, Sarah Franklin and Jim Spearman presented a list of items to be resolved by the Committee. These items pertained primarily to FAR, building height, wall plate height, garages and the checklist.

Consensus was obtained on the following:

**1. FAR Calculations**

A majority of the Committee agreed to the consultant's recommendations that gross floor area include the following:

Sum of gross horizontal areas of floors measured from exterior faces of walls. It includes:

- basements, but not cellars; and
- attic space with structural headroom of 6 feet, 6 inches or more, whether or not a floor has been laid

FAR should not include front and side, one-story, open (not screened) covered porches

**2. Base and Maximum FAR**

A majority of the Committee agreed with the consultant's recommendations of establishing a base FAR of .35 for additions and .3 for all other construction with a maximum FAR of .5 for additions and .45 for new construction.

A majority of the Committee agreed with the consultant's recommendations that for purposes of FAR:

- All properties on lots in excess of 10,000 square feet would be subject to the same restrictions as those for lots of 10,000 square feet.
- All properties on lots less than 5,000 square feet would be treated as if they had an additional 1,000 square feet
- All properties on lots with square footage between 5,000 and 6,000 would be treated as if they are 6,000 square feet.

The Committee further decided that in all cases, a property owner could build or add onto an existing house up to 2,500 square feet *by right*.

### **3. Maximum Building Height of House**

A majority of the Committee agreed with the consultants that maximum building height of the main structure to 28 feet, measured from the average pre-development grade in front of the structure to the mean height between the eaves and ridge of a gable, hip, mansard, or gambrel roof or 33 feet to the highest point of the roof, regardless of roof type. Maximum height may be extended to the established building height, if greater, up to 30 feet to the mean or 35 feet total.

### **4. Maximum Wall Plate Height**

A majority of the Committee agreed with the consultants' recommendation to adopt a maximum wall plate height restriction of 36 feet, to be measured from the pre-development or finished grade, whichever is lower.

### **5. Garages, Recess of Front Loading Garage**

A majority of the Committee agreed that a front loading attached garage must be offset by 3 feet, forward or back.

### **6. Checklist Tiers**

The Committee agreed to the consultants' revised recommendation that additional FAR would be earned on a credit by credit basis. Each credit would be worth .01 FAR and the maximum credits that may be awarded is .15.

### **7. Weight of Checklist Items**

The Committee agreed with the consultant's recommendation that all items on the checklist should be of equal weight.

### **8. Recycling Existing House**

The Committee agreed with the consultants' recommendation to remove "recycling of house" from the proposed checklist because of the administrative difficulty in measuring and verifying what and how much of a house has been recycled.

### **9. Height of Front Entry Level**

The Committee agreed with the consultants that the height of the front entry level of a house should not be regulated because of variations in grade between lots.

### **10. LEED Certified Projects**

The Committee agreed with the consultants to remove LEED projects from the proposed regulations because certification is not obtained until post construction by a third party. It was further agreed that the Committee would recommend that the Town revisit the issue of how to promote green building practices at a later date.

The following items remained unresolved:

1. Whether to exclude from FAR all or up to 240 square feet of a detached garage as an incentive to encourage detached garages
2. Whether to exclude from FAR *all* roofed or covered, one story porches rather than those only on the front and side
3. The maximum height and size of detached garages.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30.