

Burlington Planning Commission & City Council Ordinance Committee Collaborative Working Group on Inclusionary Zoning

Tuesday, June 6, 2026, 6:30 P.M.

Hybrid Meeting via Zoom and in City Hall's Bushor Conference Room

Draft Minutes

Planning Commissioners Present:

- ☒ Andy Montroll, Chair
- ☒ Erin Malone
- ☒ Michael Gaughan
- ☒ Julia Randall
- ☒ Alexander Friend
- ☒ Ryan Nick
- ☒ Erhard Mahnke

City Council Ordinance Committee Members Present:

- ☒ Councilor Gene Bergman, Chair
- ☒ Councilor Mark Barlow
- ☒ Councilor Sarah Carpenter

City Staff Present:

- ☒ Charles Dillard, Director, City Planning
- ☒ Kara Alnasrawi, Director, CEDO
- ☒ Kimberlee Sturtevant, Assistant City Attorney
- ☒ Scott Gustin, Zoning Division Manager, DPI
- ☒ Sarah Morgan, Principal Planner, City Planning
- ☒ Nancy Stetson, Senior Policy & Data Analyst, DFA
- ☒ Maggie Callaghan, Housing Program Manager, CEDO

Public Attendance: Eric Farrell, Jak Tiano, Liz Curry, Sharon Bushor, Amy Wright

1. Agenda

Call to Order: 6:30pm

Changes to Agenda: Agenda adopted by both City Council Ord. Committee & Planning Commission

2. Adopt Minutes & Accept Communications

Planning Commission Action: No minutes posted to adopt, motion to accept communications

Motion by: J. Randall

Seconded by: A. Friend

Vote: Unanimous

Notes or Corrections: N/A

City Council Ordinance Committee Action: Already adopted minutes at prior meeting.

Motion by: N/A

Seconded by: N/A

Vote: N/A

Notes or Corrections: N/A

3. Director's Report

C. Dillard shared updates on the Plan BTV New North End. The Planning Commission reviewed the transportation components and the upcoming review of placemaking design frameworks will take place on June 23.

4. Public Forum #1

Amy Wright: Amy provided general comments on the Inclusionary Zoning amendment, emphasizing the need for more data on affordability and suggesting that changes to the housing trust fund should be considered alongside IZ modifications to ensure deeper affordability. In addition to more data, she would like to see more about how this amendment relates to changes being proposed to the Housing Trust Fund.

Sharon Sharon expressed concerns about the proposed increase in the housing unit threshold from five to 16 units, suggesting that 10 units might be more appropriate and requesting more detailed information on why 16 became the chosen number. Also concerned about the tiering argument and is concerned about the flat 15%. Related felt that eliminating the waterfront housing tier contradicts Burlington's value of reducing inequity.

5. 5/12 Meeting Follow-Up

Staff outlined the format for the meeting discussion on the proposed changes. Staff presented data comparing Burlington's IZ program to surrounding towns, including housing units built, land costs, and impact fees.

Discussion Notes:

- Working Group members expressed a desire to hear from experts on IZ in future meetings on these various topics. Staff will coordinate this.
- E. Malone asked how effective the IZ policy has been in achieving its intended goal of increasing socioeconomic and racial integration in the neighborhoods.

6. Discussion on Proposal #1: Increasing the IZ Project Size Threshold

Staff presented a proposal to increase the Inclusionary Zoning threshold from 5 to 17 units, sharing research comparing Burlington to neighboring cities, one of which has a threshold of 20.

Discussion Notes:

- R. Nick asked why not increase the threshold to 20. C. Dillard responded that this is largely based on building typologies that could be achieved through Planned Unit Developments.
- J. Randall spoke in support of this change, and noted that she doesn't see a huge difference between a 17-unit threshold over 20 units. Would also be in favor of the Commission adjusting the threshold every three years depending on market conditions.
- M. Gaughan is in favor of a rounded number, and that around 17 – 20 is a good number. Does see a lot of value in IZ as a program and feels that it was less about housing production and more about inclusion. None of the comparison cities go lower than 15 units. Would be concerned that if we went lower, there would be implications on the Neighborhood Code.
- A. Montroll shared that, while he's not sure what the right number is, he thinks this proposal does take the Neighborhood Code into account.
- E. Mahnke stated the need to consider the City's goals of the program when having this discussion. Inclusivity and affordability are provided mainly by the non-profit partners, the changes must support the nonprofits to create this housing. Doesn't want to rely overly on supply side solutions. Feels more comfortable with 8 units being the threshold.
- G. Bergman is comfortable with 10 units instead of 17.
- M. Gaughan responded that the threshold needs to consider the debt capacity a developer may lose when going from AMI percentages for 3-person households. The numbers at this scale really matter and comparisons between other cities are not apples to apples.
- When discussing whether Burlington should be more aligned with South Burlington's threshold of 10, R. Nick stated that it's tough to develop in and doesn't feel it's a model to duplicate. Would like to have data around how many developers have looked at the standards of Burlington and decided to pass on developing at all. Also stated that he disagrees that all market-rate housing is rich people housing, and that some are relatively affordable to the average Burlingtonian.
- A. Montroll asked how much the cost of the IZ unit impacts the costs of the other market rate units being built.
- S. Carpenter notes that by increasing the threshold, you might get less units, but they may get more units targeted to the most low income. Not bothered by the 17-unit threshold, given that it matches the state policy.

- E. Mahnke spoke in favor of using bonuses to subsidize the costs of these IZ units. Requested a more in-depth affordability analysis.
- A. Montroll felt that bonuses may not be the best approach and might not align with the work done over the last few years of setting massing standards. C. Dillard shared challenges that come with increasing heights through bonuses, which add to construction costs. A. Friend asked if there were other ways of providing bonuses, like streamlining permits.
- Discussion concluded with staff committing to provide more information on the impact of different project size thresholds (10, 12, 16, 20 units) on the number of affordable units produced, for the next meeting.

7. Discussion on Proposal #2: Eliminate IZ tiering & replace w/ uniform approach

Staff presented a proposal to simplify the inclusionary zoning (IZ) tiering system by eliminating current tiered requirements and instead requiring 15% of all units to be affordable at 65% AMI or below.

Discussion Notes:

- There was confusion related to AMI requirements. Staff will reframe this proposal for next meeting and provide more clarity about how AMI is used in this context.
- J. Randall is in favor of this change and notes that a dynamic that occurs in affordable housing developments is the stratification in the units that are provided, and middle income is often excluded.
- M. Gaughan shares that by keeping the AMI low, we will continue to see more studio and one bedroom units as opposed to family-size units. We see production occur because it aligns with LIHTC requirements. Would like to discuss raising AMI levels because 65% to 100% is not being served, and that's a lot of the workforce. Thinks 15% is good and it aligns with the current market, but would like to discuss the AMI levels and lack of incentives to providing family type units.
- M. Barlow shares that he's generally supportive of this change but reserves the right to change his thinking as the conversation progresses.
- S. Carpenter asked about home ownership. Asked the same question as M. Gaughan about how we're reaching the 65-100% AMI group. She likes the simplicity of the proposal but is worried that it won't address that huge gap in the marketplace. Would be in favor of another tier to solve that.
- E. Mahnke likes the simplicity of eliminating tiers but questions whether or not we aren't producing some luxury housing that should be responsible for creating more inclusion. Is strongly against the idea of the 25% waterfront affordability requirement.
- G. Bergman is fine with the 15% except for the waterfront.

8. Public Forum #2

Jak Tiano: Jak shared research on residual land value and development feasibility, suggesting that policies like inclusionary zoning and impact fees act as capture mechanisms for land value, particularly relevant in a built-out city like Burlington.

9. Adjournment (8:44pm)

Action: Joint motion to adjourn

Motion by: A. Montroll

Seconded by: n/a

Vote: Unanimous