

**Proposed Change in Zoning Regulations to Allow
Accessory Dwelling Units in the West End**
September 12, 2007

Hi All-

See the zoning change proposal, below. Learn more and express your opinion at the:

WECA Zoning Committee Meeting,
Tuesday, 9/25/07
6 PM
WE Community Center
461 Farmington Ave.

Based on below, the change would:

Allow a family to occupy a full apartment (with kitchen), in addition to the two roomers currently allowed for R-7, and in addition to the unrelated tenant allowed for a single individual owner.

The apartment could be created in:

- Self-contained unit in the house, or
- An addition to the house, or
- In a new or existing accessory structure on the property (garage, shed, etc.)

It would apply to:

- Owner-occupied, single-family homes
- West End

Carolyn

David Barrett <dbarrett@hartsem.edu> wrote:
Subject: Zoning Meeting on Accessory Dwelling Units
Date: Wed, 12 Sep 2007 13:45:55 -0400
From: "David Barrett" <dbarrett@hartsem.edu>
To: <U12311@snet.net>

Greetings,

Toni Gold, a resident of Kenyon Street and long-time urban planner, has a proposal to permit Accessory Dwelling Units in the West End.

She would like the city to amend the zoning laws to allow these units, which are self-contained apartments in owner occupied single-family homes that are either attached to the principal dwelling or in a separate structure on the same property. Sometimes these are called “in-law” apartments.

There will be a meeting of the WECA Zoning Committee to discuss her proposal. The meeting will be on Tuesday, September 25 at 6 p.m. at the West End Community Center at 461 Farmington Avenue .

There potentially are many ramifications to this change and diversity of opinion across the West End . We encourage you to attend this important committee meeting to hear the proposal and provide feedback.

Here is some further background from Toni:

Homeowners are often forced to sell a house that is too big for their needs, especially for fixed income residents. This issue further exacerbates the already existing scarcity of affordable housing options, and the land consumption and new infrastructure required for a standard single family subdivision are significant. ADU's can provide owners the additional income necessary to maintain a home when the structure becomes more than they need or can afford.

If the resident does sell, their options to re-purchase within the community may then be severely limited by price and size. Do they have to move into a congregate living community, or is there some way they can stay within their town and even within their neighborhood?

A household may wish to provide a new self-contained unit within their property to receive additional income, provide social and personal support to a family member, or obtain greater security. However, this practice is often unlawful because of basic zoning restrictions.

New, young workers in a community may decide that home ownership is a longer-term goal, and a smaller rental apartment is more appropriate now. When apartments become harder to find in a community, these workers may have to live outside of the community and away from their families. What can be done to house the single, independent worker?

Advocates believe that a mechanism is needed that enables homeowners to provide separate units that fit in the neighborhoods and to increase options and affordability for both homeowner and renter or family member, and not affect the quality and physical character of the neighborhood.

Accessory units (also known as accessory apartments, guest apartments, in-law apartments, family apartments or secondary units) provide supplementary housing that can be integrated into existing single family neighborhoods to provide a typically lower priced housing alternative. Because the units are usually small, they are more affordable than full-size rentals.

There are three types of accessory units:

- 1) Interior - using an interior part of a dwelling;
- 2) Interior with modifications where the outside of the dwelling is modified to accommodate a separate unit (this could include a unit over the garage if the garage is attached)
- 3) Detached - a structure on a residential lot that is separate from the main dwelling, yet by definition still "accessory" and so smaller than the main unit (this would include a unit over the garage if the garage is detached).

Thanks. Please join us at 6 p.m. on September 25 at the community center to consider the pro's and con's of this proposed zoning change.

David Barrett
President, WECA