



RESIDENTIAL EXPANSION REVISING THE PROCESS

TANTAMOUNT -> FAR

Informational Presentation to the Planning Commission

June 1, 2017



**San Francisco
Planning**

Background **Process To-Date**

Outreach To-Date:

August 31, 2016: First informal meeting with community members

September 22, 2016: Informational presentation to the Planning Commission

September – October 2016: Community Conversation on Proposed Changes

October 4, 2016: Meeting with architects (open to the public)

October 12, 2016: Community Meeting

October 27, 2016: Informational presentation and update to the Planning Commission

May 3rd, 2017: Community Meeting

May 8th, 2017: Community Meeting

Key Questions



QUESTIONS FOR COMMISSION

1. Goals
2. Approach and Trigger
3. Process (LHA vs. DRM vs. CU)?
4. Details – Triggers, Parking, non-conforming buildings, ADUs
5. Commission Criteria

Remove a regulation that doesn't achieve it's initial goals, lacks clarity, and increases uncertainty.

ELIMINATE TANTAMOUNT TO DEMO



Challenges **What is happening now?**

Tantamount to Demolition *doesn't* work.

Challenges **What is happening now?**

It hasn't preserved relatively affordable housing

&

It hasn't preserved neighborhood character

Challenges **What is happening now?**

It's a regulation that *few understand*

It adds *significant time* to the process

It results in an *uncertain* process

It often results in *awkward* designs

Revisions **How can we help the process?**

Eliminate Tantamount to Demolition.

Replace it with a new results-oriented policy.

Define Goals of Replacement Policy. New regulation should be clear, incentivize use of permitted density, and require quality design

DEFINE GOALS



Key Goals

AFFORDABLE

BY DESIGN

Incentivizes smaller units



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+ HOUSING

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Promotes proportionality
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Big project = excellent design

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CLEAR

REGULATIONS

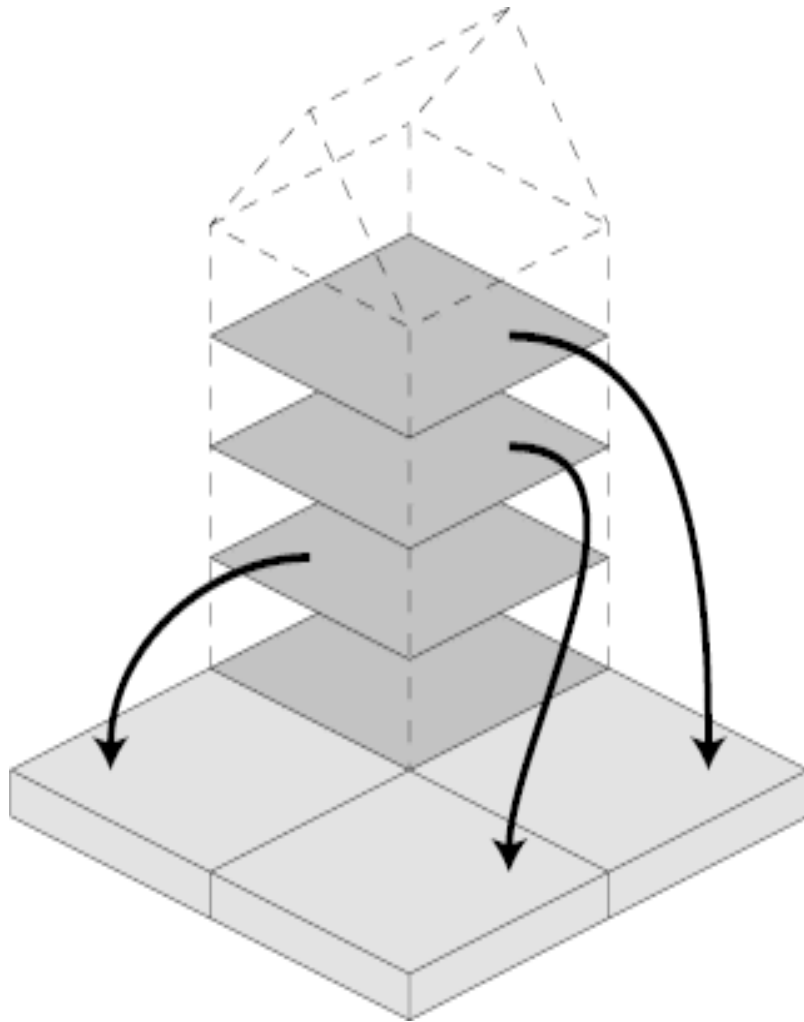
Rules can be explained at PIC

Current proposal is site-specific, simple to understand, and focuses additional public process on the largest projects.

LARGE HOME AUTHORIZATION



New Process



FAR of 1:1

FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)

- Use FAR as trigger for determining process:
 - Staff vs. Commission level review
- What is FAR?
 - FAR is the ratio of a building's total floor area to the size of the lot upon which it is built.
- Why use FAR?
 - Common zoning tool
 - FAR already exists in the Planning Code (Section 124)
 - It's used to control residential development in other jurisdictions
 - Enables a size threshold that relates to lot size and thereby, context

New Process



DETAILS OF NEW PROCESS

- **Applicability:**
 - **RH Districts only**
- **Permit Type:**
 - **Alterations**
 - **Demolitions of Non-Rent Controlled Units**
- **Exceptions:**
 - **Eliminates current hearing exceptions for unsound or demonstrably unaffordable units**
- **Design Review & Preservation:**
 - **No change to current environmental, historic preservation or design review processes**
- **Process:**
 - **Requires hearing (LHA) if projects exceeds FAR trigger**

New Process



COMMISSION REVIEW PROCESS

- Exceeding FAR triggers hearing, regardless of alteration vs. demo
- Process similar to LPA (Section 329)
 1. Requires filing of an entitlement application
 2. 20 Day Notification:
 - newspaper ad, poster and mailed
 - 300-ft to owners and 150-ft to occupants
 3. Publication of Staff Report one week prior to hearing
 4. Commission takes action based on:
 - LHA criteria,
 - General Plan
 - Planning Code compliance
 5. Majority vote required to approve project
 6. Appealable to Board of Permit Appeals

NOT A MAX; JUST A *TRIGGER*



FAR Proposal Typical Lots

**FAR
Triggers:**

Zoning	FAR Trigger/Unit			Total Lot FAR
RH-1(D)	1.4			1.4
RH-1	1.2			1.2
RH-2	.9 (1 unit)	1.8 (2 units)		1.8
RH-3	.7 (1 unit)	1.4 (2 units)	2.1 (3 units)	2.1

**RH-1(D)
3,000 sf Lot
Example:**

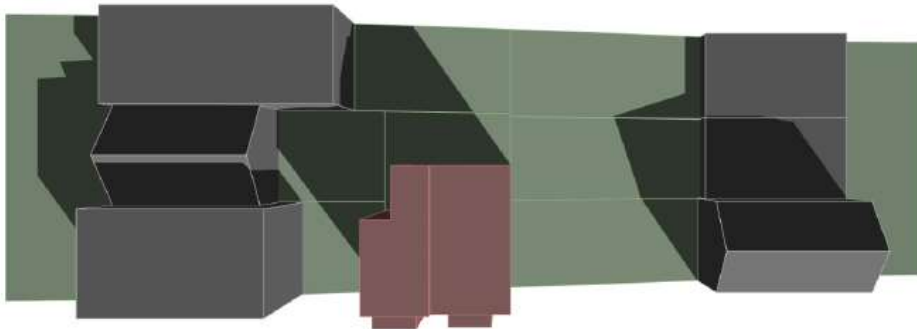
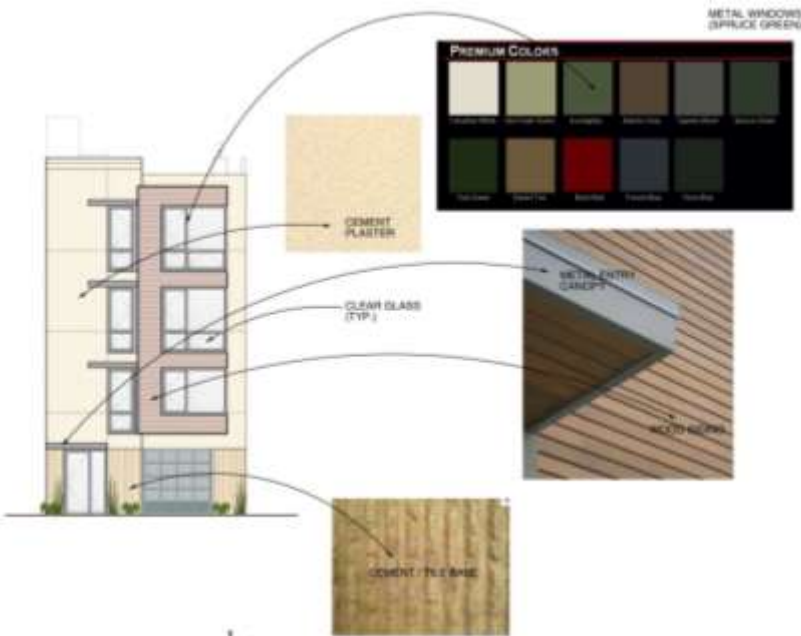
Zoning	SF based on 3,000 lot	Total Lot	Min. Unit Size*
RH-1(D)	4,200	4,200	N/A

**FAR trigger in
square footage
for a 2,500 sf lot
by district and
unit count:**

Zoning	SF based on 2,500 lot (# of units)			Min. Unit Size for multiple units*
RH-1	3,000 (1 unit)			N/A
RH-2	2,250 (1 unit)	4,500 (2 units)		1,000
RH-3	1,750 (1 unit)	3,500 (2 units)	5,250 (3 units)	1,000

*Minimum unit size applies when more than one unit is proposed, and the square footage of at least one of the units exceeds the FAR Trigger for a single unit development.

Commission Hearing **New Criteria**



LARGE HOME REVIEW

Commission Criteria:

1. **High-quality architectural design.**
(Material boards required)
2. **Contextual and compatible building siting, orientation, massing, fenestration pattern, and scale.**
3. **Relationship to surrounding density.**
4. **Family Friendly Units: including bedroom count, size, and the unit's access to and quality of at-grade open space**
5. **Unit reconfigurations: If applicable, does the project result in a unit reconfiguration that is of equal or better quality than the existing units?**

Additional Details



ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- **Noncomplying Units:**
 - Projects that already exceed triggers become noncomplying structures
 - Allowed minor expansion up to 10 percent of the existing unit.
 - Cumulative additions up to 10 percent allowed every 5 years
- **ADUs:**
 - Allow addition of ADU beyond trigger.
 - ADU allowed up to the lesser of 25 percent of the largest unit or 750sf
- **Collaboration w/other Agencies:**
 - Rent Control – clarify of definition
 - Demolition – clarify of definition

OUTREACH FEEDBACK

■ *FAR Trigger and Volume of projects:*

- Triggers are too low and will result in increase volume of Commission cases.
 - **Parking:** Parking should be excluded from the FAR calculation; the current thresholds are too low when parking is included.
 - **Building Code Constraints:** For three-unit buildings, the Building Code requirements for additional egress results in less usable gross floor area. May disincentive density in RH-3.

■ *FAR Trigger and Neighborhood Context:*

- Current thresholds are too high for many neighborhoods. The FAR trigger should be neighborhood-based, using Assessor's data.
- Current proposal will result in loss of character and potential historic resources.
- Require retention of the front façade in order to preserve neighborhood character.

■ *Minimum Unit Size:*

- Should be a proportional percentage vs. minimum square footage.
- Should encourage creation of “missing middle”: 1200-1800 sf with 2-3 bedrooms.

OUTREACH FEEDBACK

■ *Criteria:*

- Design criteria too subjective
- Add criteria re: whether the project promotes housing affordability:
 - *increasing supply*
 - *maintains affordability of an existing housing unit*

■ *Nonconforming Units & Units @ FAR Trigger:*

- Increase timeframe for minor subsequent expansions from 5 to 10 years.
- Create procedures for dealing with unauthorized units, non-conforming units, and ADUs.

■ *Staff Alignment with Commission:*

- Greater certainty that the project will not be significantly reduced by the Commission should a public DR be filed, if under trigger.

■ *Grandfathering:*

- Include grandfathering provision for BPAs filed before the legislation is adopted.

OUTREACH FEEDBACK

■ *Public Notice/Hearing Process:*

- Continue to mail plans like with 311 Notification.
- Hearing format should follow DR format (additional time for opposition, rebuttal, voting, etc.)]
- If the project exceeds FAR limit, but meets criteria, it should be exempt from the hearing or placed on consent.

■ *Alternative proposals:*

- Rezone RH-1 to a higher density.
- Apply a form based code approach to the RH Districts
- Require hearing if existing unit is decreased by 25% while other existing unit is increased by more than 25 percent.
- Require hearing for all demolitions: existing bldgs are more affordable.

Why support **Residential Expansion Threshold**

One Definition of Demolition

Process Equality

Unit Equity

Family housing

Density

Rent Control Clarifications

Clear & Predictable Regulations

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THANK YOU



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Webpage: sf-planning.org/residential-expansion-threshold