



**KETCHUM PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
ZONING CODE INTERPRETATION 22-001
NONCONFORMING BUILDING PADS IN MOUNTAIN OVERLAY**

INTERPRETATION QUESTION

This zoning code interpretation addresses redeveloping nonconforming properties within the Mountain Overlay. Current code requires new buildings to be constructed in areas that have less than 25% slope (Ketchum Municipal Code §16.04.020) and building envelopes on new parcels to be located outside of a 25% slope. Existing homes on hillsides that were developed prior to the City's establishment of the Mountain Overlay Zoning District in 1989 may not comply with current development standards. These homes are considered non-conforming buildings and may be maintained in their current condition. Nonconforming buildings and uses are governed under Chapter 17.136 of Ketchum Municipal Code. If a non-conforming structure is demolished, or a new parcel is created, then the new building and parcel must comply with all current development standards. Certain non-conforming building pads and properties can not be brought into compliance with code. The fundamental question before the Commission was whether these non-conforming properties may be developed with a new home or if these non-conforming properties would not be permitted to be redeveloped if the existing non-conforming home were to be demolished. If redevelopment was prohibited, property owners would only be able to repair, maintain, and enlarge their existing nonconforming homes in accordance with the standards specified in Chapter 17.136 of Ketchum Municipal Code.

MOUNTAIN OVERLAY PURPOSE

Hillside development standards protect the community character and health and safety by ensuring the adequate provision of public services and facilities, including fire protection. The Mountain Overlay standards prohibit the detrimental alteration of hillside that would adversely impact existing soils, drainage, and vegetation. The undeveloped hillsides surrounding Ketchum are one of Ketchum's character-defining features. The Mountain Overlay Zoning District ensures the preservation of these hills, ridgelines, and natural features. The standards minimize the visual impact of development by directing building sites away from higher elevations and keeping hillsides open and unobstructed.

ZONING NONCONFORMITIES

Nonconformities are existing uses, buildings, lots, or site features that were legally established at the time they were created but no longer comply with current zoning code regulations. When land use regulations change, existing developments may not comply with the amended zoning code standards. Requiring owners to immediately bring their non-conforming buildings and uses into compliance following land use regulation changes would be a hardship. To mitigate this hardship, zoning codes set specific standards to address nonconformities. These standards generally allow owners to maintain nonconformities in their current condition but prohibit or limit substantial modifications and expansions. This approach assumes all nonconformities will

be phased out over time. Standards regulating zoning nonconformities balance the community's interests in new land use objectives with private property interests in existing development.

ZONING CODE INTERPRETATION IMPLICATIONS: HILLSIDE DISTURBANCE

Redeveloping nonconforming building pads may result in even more disturbance to the hillside. New single-family homes in Ketchum have trended towards replacing existing, smaller buildings with larger structures, which would have a greater impact on the hillside. Redeveloping these nonconforming properties to comply with current City building, fire, zoning, and streets standards could result in more hillside disturbance. For example, widening an existing street that accesses a nonconforming property would result in significantly more disturbance to the hillside.

ZONING CODE INTERPRETATION IMPLICATIONS: VISIBILITY ON HILLSIDES

Many non-conforming buildings in the Mountain Overlay are sited on prominent ridgelines and hilltops and are highly visible. Allowing these non-conforming building pads to be redeveloped with new homes would perpetuate a condition that is no longer allowed.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION INTERPRETATION

The Commission determined that the redevelopment of existing non-conforming properties may be redeveloped under the following conditions:

- A. If the property configuration is proposed to be modified (lot line adjustment, lot consolidation etc.), then the new property configuration must establish a building envelope on the lowest portion of the property. Existing non-conforming building pads are not permitted to be redeveloped outright. If a more compliant alternative at a lower elevation on the hillside property exists, the new home must be sited in the more suitable area for redevelopment.
- B. If the property configuration is not being altered or changed, then a new home may be constructed at the Commission's discretion through Mountain Overlay Design Review provided that the project does not exceed the height or limits of disturbance of the existing non-conforming home. The building footprint shall conform as close as possible to the existing building.

This determination will apply to all existing non-conforming properties in hillside areas.

Zoning Code Interpretation adopted this 8th day of March 2022.

Neil Morrow, Chair
City of Ketchum
Planning and Zoning Commission