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TO: Plan Commission
DATE: May 22nd, 2023
SUBJECT: Initial Review and Schedule Public Hearing – Text Amendments to Chapter 550 Zoning

A request for text amendments to the City of Watertown Zoning Code - Chapter 550.

BACKGROUND DESCRIPTION:

Amendment #1:

Current zoning code requires a minimum lot width of 85 ft for each side of a Twin Home. Since Twin Homes share a wall with a zero lot line, extra lot width to accommodate two side yards is not required. This text amendment reduces the lot width requirements for Twin Homes to 50 ft to recognize the zero lot line and the need for only one side yard.

Amendment #2:

Current zoning code allows Personal Storage Facilities as a Conditional Use in the General Business (GB) Zoning District. General Business Zoning is often located along high visibility commercial corridors within the City. This text amendment restricts how close Personal Storage Facilities can be located from one another within the General Business (GB) Zoning District.

Amendment #3:

Current zoning code requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to exceed the maximum width of curb openings for driveways. The CUP process creates an additional fee and public hearing, as well as increases the length of time for these approvals. This text amendment transfers the decision-making approval of these curb openings to the Public Works Director, with appeals of the Public Works Director's decision to be heard before the Plan Commission.

Amendment #4:

Auxiliary Freestanding Signs and Auxiliary Wall Signs were unintentionally omitted from a recent update of the City sign regulations. This text amendment adds those omitted sign types to Table 550-132A(3): Permanent Misc. Sign Group.

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT LANGUAGE:

Amendment #1 - § 550-25F(2)(b)

§ 550-25 Two-Family Residential-6 (TR-6) District.

F. Regulations applicable to residential uses.

(2) Residential bulk requirements.

- (a) Minimum lot area: 9,000 square feet (except for twin homes at 4,500 square feet per dwelling unit).
- (b) Minimum lot width: 85 feet unless Principal Land Use is a Twin Home. Twin Home Minimum Lot width: 50 feet.

Amendment #2 - § 550-53C(1)(d) & § 550-53C(1)(d)[1]

§ 550-53 Storage or disposal land uses.

C. Personal storage facility. Description: Personal storage facilities are land uses oriented to the indoor storage of items entirely within partitioned buildings having an individual access to each partitioned area. Such storage areas may be available on either a condominium or rental basis. Also known as "mini warehouses."

(1) Regulations.

(a) Facility shall be designed so as to minimize adverse visual impacts on nearby developments. The color, exterior materials, and orientation of proposed buildings and structures shall complement surrounding development.

(b) Facility shall provide a bufferyard with a minimum opacity of 0.80 along all property borders abutting residentially zoned property (see § 550-99).

(c) Shall comply with § 550-142, standards and procedures applicable to all conditional uses.

(d) Within the General Business (GB) Zoning District, no Personal Storage Facility shall be located within 3,500 feet of another Personal Storage Facility in any Zoning District.

[1] Standards of measurement. The distances identified in this subsection shall be measured in a straight line, from the closest point of the parcel of property proposed for use by a Personal Storage Facility to the nearest point of the parcel of property from which the proposed land use is to be separated.

Amendment #3 - § 550-105J(1)

§ 550-105 Access standards.

J. Width of driveways. All access drives shall have a minimum width of 10 feet for one- and two-family dwellings and 18 feet for all other land uses. All curb openings for access drives shall have a maximum width of 25 feet for a one- or two-car garage or 30 feet for a three-car garage for all residential uses and 35 feet for all nonresidential uses, as measured at the right-of-way line. Access drives may be flared between the right-of-way line and the roadway up to a maximum of five additional feet. [Amended 7-19-2016 by Ord. No. 16-8]

(1) ~~Conditional use permit required.~~ Exceeding Maximum Width of Driveways. Curb openings for access drives that exceed the maximum width, as measured at the right-of-way line, may be approved by the Public Works Director/City Engineer. Appeals of the Public Works Director/City Engineer's decision may be heard before the Plan Commission.

~~(a) All residential curb openings for access drives that exceed the maximum width, as measured at the right-of-way line, will require the granting of a conditional use permit which specifically states the maximum permitted width of the proposed driveway at the right-of-way line.~~

~~(b) All nonresidential curb openings for access drives that exceed the maximum width, as measured at the right-of-way line, will require the granting of a conditional use permit which specifically states the maximum permitted width of the proposed driveway at the right-of-way line.~~

Amendment #4 - § 550-132 Table 550-132A(3)

§ 550-132 Permitted sign rules.

A. Signs shall be allowed on private property in the City of Watertown in accordance with Tables 550-132A(1) through 550-132A(4), which addresses permitted signage as it relates to permits, quantity, area, location, lighting, and zoning districts. The requirements set forth in Tables 550-132A(1) through 550-132A(4) shall be declared to be part of this chapter. Figure 550-132A illustrates the specific sign types.

- (1) The rules for permanent signs are located in Table 550-132A(1).
- (2) The rules for temporary signs are located in Table 550-132A(2).
- (3) The rules for permanent miscellaneous signs are located in Table 550-132A(3).
- (4) The rules for temporary miscellaneous signs are located in Table 550-132A(4).

Table 550-132A(3): Permanent Misc. Sign Group ¹						Sign Area & Height Maximums for Zoning Districts		
Sign Categories & Sign Types	Sign Permit Needed	Number of Signs Allowed	Sign Area Formula (each side)	Sign Location Requirements	Sign Lighting Allowed	ER, CR, SR, TR, MR, SNR	RH, NO, NB	PO, PB, GB, CB, PI, GI, HI
B. Optional Miscellaneous Sign Category: *								
1. Plaque Sign	Sign Permit required for each new sign	Up to 3 per designated historic property, site, or district.	None needed. Use max area limit.	On-Building, within 10 ft of the main entrance.	Ambient only	6 sf max area per sign 8 ft max height per sign		
2. Permanent Plat Sign		Per Final Plat or Certified Survey Map		In Plat or Certified Survey Map Outlot		100 sf max area per sign 8 ft max height per sign		
3. Auxiliary Freestanding Sign		Not to exceed the total number of required parking stalls		3 ft from any street, side, or rear lot line		2 sf max area per sign 8 ft max height per sign		
4. Auxiliary Wall Sign				0 ft for parcels located within the CB Zoning District		6 sf max area per sign		
* = Refer to Section § 550-131C for definition and rules for each Sign Category (lettered) and each Sign Type (numbered).								
1: Available to all land uses.								
2: "Standard" means the following forms of sign lighting: ambient, backlit, internal character or cabinet, and gooseneck								

PLAN COMMISSION OPTIONS:

The following are possible options for the Plan Commission:

1. Set the public hearing date for June 20th, 2023.
2. Postpone public hearing to a later date or indefinitely.