



Kate Harrison
Councilmember District 4

ACTION CALENDAR
February 19th, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Kate Harrison, Rigel Robinson, and Sophie Hahn

Subject: Refer to the Planning Commission an amendment to BMC Chapter 23C.12.020 (Inclusionary Housing Requirements - Applicability of Regulations) and the Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee Resolution to Close a Loophole for Avoiding the Mitigation Fee through Property Line Manipulation

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to the Planning Commission an amendment to BMC Section 23C.12.020 (Inclusionary Housing Requirements - Applicability of Regulations) to close a loophole allowing prospective project applicants to avoid inclusionary affordable housing requirements for owner occupied projects by modifying property lines so that no lot is large enough to construct five or more units. Adopt an updated resolution pursuant to BMC 22.20.065 (Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee) addressing the same issue for rental projects.

BACKGROUND

A key strategy in Berkeley's effort to develop affordable housing requires that new housing construction include a portion of below market rate units. This requirement can be found in BMC Chapter 23C.12 (Inclusionary Housing Requirements) and BMC Section 22.20.065 (the Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee, or AHMF, Ordinance). The Inclusionary Housing Requirements section covers owner-occupied housing, while the AHMF Ordinance covers rented housing. The AHMF Ordinance for rental housing also provides for the Council to enact an enabling resolution to set the level of the fee and "additional limitations" on the application of the fee.

The Inclusionary Housing Requirements section mandates inclusionary affordable housing in owner-occupied projects if they either 1) result in the construction of five or more new dwelling units, 2) result in the construction of fewer than five new units if they are added to an existing one- to four-unit property developed after August 14, 1986, and increase the total number of units to more than five, or 3) are built on lots whose size and zoning designation would allow construction of five or more dwelling units. Developers have exploited the ability to modify lot lines on contiguous properties they own so that no lot is big enough to include five or more units, thus avoiding any affordability requirement under condition 3.

The AHMF Enabling Resolution, meanwhile, covers only those projects that result in the construction of 5 or more new units of rental housing, regardless of whether the lot could fit more units or if the project is adding units to an existing building.

This item:

- Amends the Inclusionary Housing Requirements section to cover owner-occupied projects built on any part of a contiguous property under common ownership and control whose size and zoning designation is such to allow construction of five or more Dwelling Units, regardless of how the property is divided.
- Amends the AHMF Enabling Resolution for rental housing to mirror the provisions of the Inclusionary Housing Requirements section regarding projects that add units to existing projects or are on property that could accommodate more than five units, including the amended language discussed above.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

May increase revenues to the Housing Trust Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Increasing the supply of affordable housing in Berkeley may limit commute times and thus greenhouse gas emissions, in line with Berkeley's environmental goals.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments:

- 1: Ordinance
- 2: Resolution
- 3: Track Changes from Resolution No. 68,074-N.S

ORDINANCE NO. -N.S.

CLOSING MODIFIED PROPERTY LINE LOOPHOLE IN INCLUSIONARY
HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Berkeley as follows:

Section 1. That Berkeley Municipal Code Section 23C.12.020 is amended to read as follows:

23C.12.020 Applicability of Regulations

A. The following types of projects must comply with the inclusionary housing requirements of this chapter:

1. Residential housing projects for the construction of five or more Dwelling Units;
2. Residential housing projects for the construction of one to four new Dwelling Units, when such Units are added to an existing one to four unit property, which has been developed after August 14, 1986, and the resulting number of units totals five or more. All Units in such a property are subject to the requirements of this chapter;
3. Residential housing projects proposed on any part of a single property or two or more contiguous properties under common ownership and control whose size and zoning designation is such to allow construction of five or more Dwelling Units.

B. This chapter does not apply to Dormitories, Fraternity and Sorority Houses, Boarding Houses, Residential Hotels or Live/Work Units, which are not considered Dwelling Units. Live/Work Units are subject to low income inclusionary provisions set forth in Section 23E.20.080.

C. This chapter sets forth specific inclusionary housing requirements for the Avenues Plan Area, which prevails over any inconsistent requirements set forth elsewhere in this chapter.

Section 2. Copies of this Ordinance shall be posted for two days prior to adoption in the display case located near the walkway in front of Council Chambers, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Within 15 days of adoption, copies of this Ordinance shall be filed at each branch of the Berkeley Public Library and the title shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation.

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CHANGING THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING MITIGATION FEE PURSUANT TO BERKELEY MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 22.20.065; AND RESCINDING RESOLUTION NO. 68,074-N.S.

WHEREAS, on June 28, 2011, the City adopted the Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee Ordinance No. 7,192-N.S., adopting Berkeley Municipal Code Section 22.20.065, which would require developers of market rate housing to pay an mitigation fee to address the resulting need for below market rate housing, and offered the alternative to provide units in lieu of the fee; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley Municipal Code Section 22.20.065 did not establish the fee, but authorized the City Council to adopt such fee by resolution; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley Municipal Code Section 22.20.065 authorizes the City Council to specify by resolution additional limitations not inconsistent-with section 22.20.065; and

WHEREAS, on June 27, 2017 the City adopted Resolution NO. 68,074, establishing the fee at \$37,000 per new unit of rental housing; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley Municipal Code Section 22.20.065 and the Affordable Housing Mitigation fee both aim to address the need for below market rate housing and therefore should have parity in applicability;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley as follows:

1. The Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee authorized and provided for by Section 22.20.065 shall be \$37,000 per new unit of rental housing, payable at the issuance of Certificate of Occupancy, but shall be subject to a \$3,000 discount if paid in its entirety no later than issuance of the building permit for the project on which the fee is due. The Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee shall only apply to market rate units.
2. The Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee will be automatically adjusted by the annual percentage shown in the California Construction Cost Index published by the California Department of General Services, every other year beginning in 2018, on July 1. The automatic adjustment tied to the California Construction Cost Index shall not cause the fee to exceed the maximum fee established by the most recent Nexus study, and shall apply to all projects that have not received final approval by the City of Berkeley prior to the date of the automatic adjustment.
3. For purposes of this resolution, "new rental housing" includes group living accommodations, except for those categories that are currently exempt pursuant to BMC Section 23C.12.020.B, at an equivalency rate of one new rental unit per two bedrooms in a group living accommodation, such that one-half the fee adopted by this resolution shall be imposed on each bedroom.
4. For purposes of this resolution, "new rental housing" shall not include developments of four units or fewer units unless they meet any of the following criteria:
 - a) Residential housing projects for the construction of one to four new units, when such units are added to an existing one to four unit property, which has been developed after August 14, 1986, and the resulting number of units totals five or more. All units in such a property are subject to the requirements of this resolution;

- b) Residential housing projects proposed on any part of a contiguous property under common ownership and control whose size and zoning designation is such to allow construction of five or more units, regardless of how said property may be divided.
5. For the purposes of this resolution, "new rental housing" shall not include cooperative student housing developed by the Berkeley Student Cooperative.
6. The definition of "new rental housing" excludes units which are offered at no cost to support nonprofit public benefit activities.
7. No fee shall be assessed under the following circumstances.
 - a) No fee shall be assessed when new rental housing is built to replace rental units that have been destroyed through no fault of the owner of those units, as long as the applicant files a complete permit application within two years after destruction of the pre-existing units. Staff shall determine on a case by case basis both whether rental units have been "destroyed" and whether such destruction was through the fault of the owner. The issuance of a permit to demolish all or part of a building containing rental units shall not be determinative. However fees shall be assessed on rental units in a replacement project in excess of the number destroyed.
 - b) No fee shall be assessed on rental units that have been expanded, renovated, or rehabilitated unless the units were vacant for more than two years before the applicant filed a complete permit application for such expansion, renovation or rehabilitation.
8. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, staff may waive all or part of the fee adopted by this resolution pursuant to Sections 22.20.070 and 22.20.080.
9. Except as set forth in section 2, this and future increases in the Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee shall apply only to projects whose applications for the required discretionary entitlements have not received final approval as of the effective date of the fee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Resolution No. 68,074-N.S. is hereby rescinded.

Track Changes from Resolution No. 68,074-N.S

1. The Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee authorized and provided for by Section 22.20.065 shall be \$37,000 per new unit of rental housing, payable at the issuance of Certificate of Occupancy, but shall be subject to a \$3,000 discount if paid in its entirety no later than issuance of the building permit for the project on which the fee is due. The Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee shall only apply to market rate units.

2. The Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee will be automatically adjusted by the annual percentage shown in the California Construction Cost Index published by the California Department of General Services, every other year beginning in 2018, on July 1. The automatic adjustment tied to the California Construction Cost Index shall not cause the fee to exceed the maximum fee established by the most recent Nexus study, and shall apply to all projects that have not received final approval by the City of Berkeley prior to the date of the automatic adjustment.

3. For purposes of this resolution, "new rental housing" includes group living accommodations, except for those categories that are currently exempt pursuant to BMC Section 23C.12.020.B, at an equivalency rate of one new rental unit per two bedrooms in a group living accommodation, such that one-half the fee adopted by this resolution shall be imposed on each bedroom.

4. For purposes of this resolution, "new rental housing" shall not include developments of four units or fewer units unless they meet any of the following criteria:

a) Residential housing projects for the construction of one to four new units, when such units are added to an existing one to four unit property or any part of two or more contiguous properties, which has been developed after August 14, 1986, and the resulting number of units totals five or more. All units on such a property are subject to the requirements of this resolution;

b) Residential housing projects proposed on any part of a property or two or more contiguous properties under common ownership and control whose size and zoning designation would cumulatively allow construction of five or more units.

4.5. For the purposes of this resolution, "new rental housing" shall not include cooperative student housing developed by the Berkeley Student Cooperative.

5.6. The definition of "new rental housing" excludes units which are offered at no cost to support nonprofit public benefit activities.

6.7. No fee shall be assessed under the following circumstances.

a) No fee shall be assessed when new rental housing is built to replace rental units that have been destroyed through no fault of the owner of those units, as long as the applicant files a complete permit application within two years after destruction of the pre-existing units. Staff shall determine on a case by case basis both whether rental units have been "destroyed" and whether such destruction was through the fault of the owner. The issuance of a permit to demolish all or part of a building containing rental units shall not be determinative. However fees shall be assessed on rental units in a replacement project in excess of the number destroyed.

b) No fee shall be assessed on rental units that have been expanded, renovated, or rehabilitated unless the units were vacant for more than two years before the applicant filed a complete permit application for such expansion, renovation or rehabilitation.

7.8. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, staff may waive all or part of the fee adopted by this resolution pursuant to Sections 22.20.070 and 22.20.080.

8.9. Except as set forth in section 2, this and future increases in the Affordable Housing Mitigation Fee shall apply only to projects whose applications for the required discretionary entitlements have not received final approval as of the effective date of the fee.