Council Meeting: November 16, 2010

SUBJECT: 2010-7126 Increasing Minimum Dimensions for Usable Open Space (Study Issue)

REPORT IN BRIEF
The purpose of this study is to determine whether the City's minimum dimension requirements for usable open space in multi-family projects should be increased. The City requires a certain amount of usable open space in each multi-family residential zoning district and a minimum dimension and size for an outdoor space (ground level/side or rear yard, balcony, porch, patio) to be considered usable. In addition to Code requirements, there are existing design guidelines to ensure that minimum dimensions for usable open space are met. Decision makers have rarely granted deviations from the minimum dimension standards.

A comparison of Sunnyvale's requirements with neighboring cities’ shows that the City’s standards generally exceed neighboring cities’ minimum dimensions for ground level space, balconies and porches/patios.

Increasing the minimum dimension requirements would result in larger private outdoor spaces and could further enhance the quality of life. It could also improve the aesthetics of a building, and reduce bulk and mass. However, it may make it more difficult for developers to meet other development standards, including minimum density requirements. This could result in more deviation requests, and possibly less successful projects. Given Sunnyvale’s stricter open space requirements, detailed design guidelines pertaining to usable open space and the impact that could occur to project density and design, staff and the Planning Commission recommend making no changes to the Zoning Code.

BACKGROUND
This study was initiated by the Planning Commission to examine whether the required minimum dimensions of usable open space areas in multi-family residential zoning districts should be increased (see Attachment A for Study Issue paper). The concern is primarily about the dimensions of private open space when provided in multi-family development.

The City first established minimum dimensions and minimum area requirements for usable open space in 1975 as part of a major overhaul of zoning regulations. In 1992, the City-Wide Design Guidelines were adopted,
which contained more specific provisions regarding open space. The Zoning Code was then amended in 1999 to require an additional 80 square feet per unit of usable open space for private use in the R-4 and R-5 Zoning Districts.

**EXISTING POLICY**

**LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT**

Policy C1.2: Encourage nodes of interest and activity, such as parks, public open spaces, well planned development, mixed use projects, and other desirable uses, locations and physical attractions.

*Action Statement C1.2.4:* Maintain public open space areas and require private open space to be maintained.

Policy N1.4: Preserve and enhance the high quality character of residential neighborhoods.

Policy N2.5: Require amenities with new development that serve the needs of residents.

**OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION SUB-ELEMENT**

**Goal A:** The City strives to provide and maintain adequate and balanced open space and recreation facilities for the benefit of maintaining a healthy community based on community needs and the ability of the city to finance, construct, maintain, and operate these facilities now and in the future.

**DISCUSSION**

**Current Zoning Code Requirements and Design Guidelines**

Usable open space is defined in Sunnyvale Municipal Code Section 19.12.160 as “an outdoor or unenclosed area on the ground, or on a roof, balcony, deck, porch, pool area, patio or terrace or recreation building, when designed and accessible for outdoor living, recreation, pedestrian access or landscaping, but excluding parking facilities, driveways, utility, service or storage areas.” Usable open space is required for all duplex and multi-family properties. Attachment B provides a summary of the City’s requirements. This study does not address open space requirements in the Downtown Specific Plan area which has different requirements.

In order to be counted towards the usable open space area requirement for a proposed development, an area must meet the minimum dimension and size requirements, and must meet location requirements as described below.
• If the space provided is ground level space, such as a side or rear yard for an individual unit, or a shared courtyard area, it must be 12 feet in any direction and a minimum of 200 square feet;
• If the space provided is a rooftop space, deck or porch, it must be 10 feet in any direction and a minimum of 120 square feet;
• If the space provided is a balcony, it must be 7 feet in any direction and a minimum of 80 square feet; and
• Any area within a required front yard cannot be considered usable open space.

Usable open space area requirements can be met by providing all common/shared open space, all private open space, or a combination of both private and common space in the R-2 and R-3 Zoning Districts. In higher density multi-family developments, it is more common to provide common/shared usable open space because of site constraints. A project may meet the total minimum usable open space area requirements in the form of common space, which could then limit the need for private spaces (porches or balconies), if provided, to meet the required minimum dimensions. To address this implication, a 1999 Code amendment increased the required minimum by 80 square feet to include private usable open space per unit in the R-4 and R-5 Zoning Districts (derived from the minimum size for a balcony to be considered usable).

In addition to the standards established in the Zoning Code, the City-Wide Design Guidelines contain more specific provisions regarding usable open space (see Attachment C). The guidelines strongly encourage private open space, and specify that minimum dimensions shall be 12 feet by 17 feet (204 square feet); except that balconies may not be smaller than 7 feet by 12 feet (84 square feet) and porches and decks shall be at least 10 feet by 12 feet (120 square feet). Although there is no Code requirement for private open space in the R-2 and R-3 Zoning Districts as there are in the R-4 and R-5 Zoning Districts, the City-Wide Design Guidelines have been used to strongly encourage the provision of private spaces on R-2 and R-3 property.

During the last 10 years, the City experienced an increase in large multi-family residential projects, especially in the Industrial-to-Residential areas. It has been a rare occurrence for developers to request deviations or be granted deviations from the minimum dimension standards. Most projects are able to meet the minimum dimensions. The few projects where deviations were requested and granted were on properties zoned for higher density (R-4 Zoning District), where it has been more of a challenge to meet the City’s development standards and still meet density requirements. Those projects that were not
able to meet minimum dimensions for private spaces (such as balconies or porches) provided more usable open space in the common areas.

**Comparison to Other Cities**

Staff has surveyed neighboring cities for comparison to the City’s requirements for minimum dimensions for usable open space. Attachment D contains a summary of the requirements of neighboring cities. Included are the minimum dimensions and size required by each city to consider a type of space usable. Also included is the minimum amount of usable open space required in each city.

Many of the cities surveyed require a minimum size in order to consider a space usable but have no specific standard for minimum dimensions of usable open space, either by ordinance or by design guideline/policy. These cities evaluate projects on a case by case basis to assess the usability of a proposed open space area.

Those cities that do have minimum dimension standards for usable open space have requirements that are generally similar to, or less stringent than Sunnyvale’s (other cities require a smaller minimum dimension and minimum size to consider a space usable). The exceptions are Campbell and Mountain View. Campbell’s Zoning Code calls out only one standard (10 feet), which is applied to ground level space, porch or patio. Mountain View design guidelines for townhome developments recommend 15 feet for ground level open space; however, the Mountain View Zoning Code does not specify minimum dimensions for usable open space.

**Options to Address Minimum Dimensions for Usable Open Space**

There are two main options in considering this issue. One is to increase the minimum dimensions, and the other is to make no changes to the City’s current requirements.

Based on the discussion at the study session with the Planning Commission, a third option identified is to maintain the dimensions and minimum average space per unit and require a portion as private usable open space in the R-2 and R-3 Zoning Districts, as the Code currently does for the R-4 and R-5 Zoning Districts. This option would address the concern that each unit have some space unique to it.

**Increase Minimum Dimensions**

As stated in the Open Space and Recreation Sub-Element, open space is a vital component of a balanced, attractive and desirable urban environment. City policy is to maintain public open spaces, require private open space, and
preserve and enhance the high quality character of residential neighborhoods. Increasing the City’s minimum dimension requirements may further enhance the quality of a living environment and will result in larger private outdoor spaces for residents. Larger outdoor spaces may also enhance the appearance of a site, reduce building bulk and mass, and add architectural interest.

Staff researched Planning literature and looked at other cities’ codes, and was unable to find a standard or “good” minimum dimension to use if minimum dimensions were to be increased. Each city uses a different approach, and most neighboring cities have standards that are less than Sunnyvale’s.

If these standards were increased, it may become more difficult for developers to meet other development standards such as parking, setbacks or lot coverage. This could result in more deviations from development standards requested for new developments. Projects may result in smaller units, or possibly fewer units. Developers may not be able to meet the City’s density requirements (minimum 75% of maximum density allowed in a Zoning District). The provision of larger private usable open spaces may also result in a reduction of common or shared open space, which could decrease the potential to create a sense of community amongst residents.

**Make No Changes**

As stated above, staff was not able to find standard measures of usable open space that were larger than the City’s current requirements. Complaints regarding the City’s usable open space requirements have come mostly from developers who have thought the minimums too large, as they can make meeting the standard difficult while meeting other development standards. Policies and Design Guidelines are in place to ensure that private usable open spaces are provided and meet certain dimensions. Decision makers have regarded the importance of usable open space and have not granted many deviations from the minimum dimensions or average area per unit requirements. Those projects proposed with deviation requests have been approved with strict conditions to redesign the project to meet usable open space requirements.

Staff and decision makers can use the discretionary review process to urge developers to redesign usable open space areas or increase their size if a proposal does not seem to meet the intent of the provision for usable open space, even if minimum dimensions are met.

Furthermore, the City recently increased the public park dedication acreage requirement for new residential developments to further ensure adequate recreational opportunities for residents.
Require Private Usable Open Space in the R-2 and R-3 Zoning Districts
When a project meets the total minimum usable open space area requirements in the common space provided, the need for private spaces (porches or balconies) to meet minimum dimensions and sizes could become less important for a developer since those spaces do not need to be counted towards the project’s total minimum usable open space requirement. This was the reason why the Zoning Code was amended in 1999 to require 80 square feet per unit be designed as private usable open space in the R-4 and R-5 Zoning Districts. Requiring the inclusion of private usable open space in the R-2 and R-3 Zoning Districts would require developers to meet minimum dimensions in order to count those areas as usable open space. The Code could be amended to require a minimum of 80 square feet, which is what is already required in R-4 and R-5 Zoning Districts; OR require a similar percentage as is required in the R-4 and R-5, which is about 20% (80 square feet of the 380 square feet/unit required for total minimum usable open space).

Multi-family developments proposed on R-2 and R-3 property are typically duplex and townhome prototypes, and will typically include private usable open space. Because of the lesser density requirement, projects often are able to meet or exceed the dimension standards for ground level space. Staff and decision makers can continue to use the City-Wide Design Guidelines and the discretionary review process to urge developers to include private usable open space on R-2 and R-3 property that meet or exceed existing dimension and size requirements.

**FISCAL IMPACT**
No fiscal impact is expected.

**PUBLIC CONTACT**
Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, at the Sunnyvale Senior Center, Community Center and Department of Public Safety; and by making the agenda and report available at the Sunnyvale Public Library, the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's Web site. Public hearing notices were sent to neighborhood associations and other interested parties, as well as advertised in the *Sun* newspaper. No comments have been received.

Staff held an outreach meeting for local multi-family residential developers regarding this study and the study on centralized trash enclosure requirements for attached housing (Planning Project 2010-7125). There was one attendee from a local civil engineering and planning firm. It was expressed that the City’s standards are sufficient, and more stringent than neighboring cities. One issue that was suggested to be addressed was that since developers will look at
the most efficient way space can be used, space in an area that may not always be desirable or an area that is less user-friendly (e.g. fronting a street) may be offered as usable open space. The Zoning Code requires that any required front yard area (space fronting a street) cannot count towards a project’s usable open space requirements.

During the study session with the Planning Commission on this issue, there was a request for more detail regarding usable open space design for high-rise residential development. The City’s highest density residential zoning districts (R-4 and R-5) are limited to four stories and a height of 55 feet. Properties within the Nodes delineated in the Precise Plan for El Camino Real could allow a building height of up to 75 feet (approximately five or six stories). Specific design guidelines, including open space area, will be determined in the Council Study Issue, Toolkit for Commercial/Residential Mixed Use Development.

ALTERNATIVES
1. Give direction to return with an ordinance to amend the Zoning Code to increase the minimum dimension requirements for usable open space, as specified by City Council.
2. Give direction to return with an ordinance to amend the Zoning Code to require a minimum amount of the required usable open space be designed for private use in the R-2 and R-3 Zoning Districts.
3. Make no changes to the Zoning Code.

RECOMMENDATION
The Planning Commission considered this item at the public hearing held on October 25, 2010 (see Attachment E, Minutes for Planning Commission Public Hearing of October 25, 2010), and voted unanimously to recommend the Council make no changes to the Zoning Code. The Commission requested the City-Wide Design Guidelines pertaining to usable open space be strongly enforced and for staff to indicate to decision makers if a proposed project is not in full compliance with those guidelines during the discretionary review process.

Staff recommends Alternative 3. Although larger dimensions for usable open space can increase the accessibility of a space for residents, it may make it more difficult for developers to meet other development standards, resulting in smaller units or more requests for deviations.

Projects proposed in the R-2 and R-3 Zoning Districts typically include private usable open space, even though private space is not required by Code. These spaces also tend to exceed minimum usable open space requirements because of the lower density requirements. The City-Wide Design Guidelines have been
used during the discretionary review process to strongly encourage private usable open space and to further define minimum dimension requirements.

As compared to neighboring cities, and from feedback staff has received from working with residential developers, it seems that Sunnyvale's requirements are on the high end. Still, the majority of projects have been able to meet or exceed current usable open space requirements.

Reviewed by:

Hanson Hom, Director, Community Development Department
Reviewed by: Trudi Ryan, Planning Officer
Prepared by: Rosemarie Zulueta, Assistant Planner

Approved by:

Gary M. Luebbers
City Manager

Attachments
A. 2010 Study Issue Paper  
B. Requirements for Usable Open Space in Multi-Family Residential Zoning Districts  
C. City-Wide Design Guidelines for Usable Open Space  
D. Other Cities’ Requirements for Usable Open Space  
E. Minutes for Planning Commission Public Hearing of October 25, 2010
Proposed 2010 Council Study Issue

CDD 09-03 Increasing Minimum Dimensions for Usable Open Space

Lead Department: Community Development
Element or Sub-element: Open Space Sub-Element
New or Previous: Previous
Status: Pending

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?

The City Zoning has a requirement for usable open space in residential developments. In order to be considered usable, a space must have a minimum dimension of 12 feet and minimum area of 200 square feet. The Sunnyvale Municipal Code defines usable open space as an outdoor or unenclosed area on the ground, roof, balcony, deck, porch, pool area, patio, terrace or recreation building, when designed to be accessible for outdoor living, recreation, pedestrian access or landscaping. There is a concern that the dimensions are too small to be effective.

This study would examine the advantages and disadvantages to increasing the minimum dimensions of usable open space areas in multi-family residential zoning districts (R-2, R-3, R-4 and R-5). Open Space is a vital component of a balanced, attractive, and desirable urban environment and its benefits are widespread in regards to the environment, as well as in that it allows its inhabitants to enjoy an aesthetically-pleasing community (Open Space Sub-Element).

2. How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Policy C1.2 Encourage nodes of interest and activity, such as parks, public open spaces, well planned development, mixed use projects, and other desirable uses, locations and physical attractions.

Action Statement C1.2.4 Maintain public open space areas and require private open space to be maintained.

Policy N1.4 Preserve and enhance the high quality character of residential neighborhoods.

Policy N2.5 Require amenities with new development that serve the needs of residents.

3. Origin of issue

Council Member(s)
General Plan
City Staff
Public
Board or Commission Planning Commission
4. Multiple Year Project? No Planned Completion Year 2010

5. Expected participation involved in the study issue process?

- Does Council need to approve a work plan? No
- Does this issue require review by a Board/Commission? Yes
- If so, which? Planning Commission
- Is a Council Study Session anticipated? No
- What is the public participation process? Outreach to residents as well as public hearings with Planning Commission and City Council.

6. Cost of Study

- Operating Budget Program covering costs
  242 Land Use Planning
- Project Budget covering costs
- Budget modification $ amount needed for study
- Explain below what the additional funding will be used for

7. Potential fiscal impact to implement recommendations in the Study approved by Council

- Capital expenditure range None
- Operating expenditure range None
- New revenues/savings range None
- Explain impact briefly

8. Staff Recommendation

- Staff Recommendation None
  If 'For Study' or 'Against Study', explain

9. Estimated consultant hours for completion of the study issue

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<th>Role</th>
<th>Manager</th>
<th>CY1 Hours</th>
<th>CY2 Hours</th>
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<td>Staff CY1: 150 Staff CY2: 0</td>
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Total Hours CY2:  0

Note: If staff's recommendation is 'For Study' or 'Against Study', the Director should note the relative importance of this Study to other major projects that the Department is currently working on or that are soon to begin, and the impact on existing services/priorities.

Reviewed by

Department Director  10/15/09

Approved by

City Manager  10/15/09
Addendum

A. Board / Commission Recommendation

☐ Issue Created Too Late for B/C Ranking

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<td>Parks and Recreation Commission</td>
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Board or Commission ranking comments

B. Council

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Requirements for Usable Open Space in Multi-Family Residential Zoning Districts

Sunnyvale Municipal Code Chapter 19.37 requires usable open space for all duplex and multifamily residential properties.

Usable Open Space is defined as an outdoor or unenclosed area on the ground, or on a roof, balcony, deck, porch, pool area, patio or terrace or recreation building, when designed and accessible for outdoor living, recreation, pedestrian access or landscaping, but excluding parking facilities, driveways, utility, service or storage areas.

The following table describes the minimum usable open space area required in each multifamily zoning district. The values listed are the minimum average required for a development, and can be provided either as private or shared/common space. Only the R-4 and R-5 Zoning Districts have a requirement to provide a minimum amount of private usable open space per unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning District</th>
<th>Usable Open Space</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R-2</td>
<td>500 sq. ft. per unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-3</td>
<td>400 sq. ft. per unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-4, R-5</td>
<td>380 sq. ft. per unit (80 sq. ft. shall be provided as private usable open space per unit)</td>
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</table>

Minimum Dimensions for Usable Open Space

To be considered “usable” and count towards the area per unit requirement, the area must not be located in the required front yard, and must be:

- A minimum 12 feet in any direction and 200 square feet minimum total area (i.e. private side or rear yards, or common areas on the ground); except for
  - Roofs, decks, or porches must have a minimum 10 feet in any direction and 120 square feet minimum total area; and
  - Private balconies must have a minimum 7 feet in any direction and 80 square feet minimum total area.
B16. Consider energy efficiency in the siting of buildings. Shading of structures along the east, west, and south walls is recommended.

OPEN SPACE

C1. Design every project site for maximum utility of open space for ventilation, sunlight, recreation and views for both new and existing buildings.

C2. In business parks and strip shopping centers, open space areas may be part of the focal points.

C3. Open space areas may include benches, art, landscape, water, and hardscape features. Common open space areas shall be usable for employees' and visitors' various outdoor activities.

C4. Provide private usable open space areas for each unit and common usable open space for all units in attached single and multi-family residential developments.

C5. Provide an average of 300 to 500 sq. ft. of open space area per unit for every residential project. Private usable space is encouraged. Private open space includes: patios, porches, balconies, terraces, and decks. Minimum dimensions shall be 12 ft. x 17 ft. Balconies may not be smaller than 7 ft. x 12 ft., and porches and decks shall be at least 10 ft. x 12 ft.
C6. Provide direct access from the living unit to private open space.

C7. Private open space in one unit shall not be in the direct line of sight of other units. Privacy may be provided by means of grade changes and staggering of the balconies and patios, use of fences, walls, dense landscaping, and trellises.

C8. Provide direct access to common usable open space from all buildings. Common open spaces shall be usable for recreational purposes. Landscaping strips of less than 50 ft. in width between buildings do not constitute usable common open space.

II. BUILDING DESIGN

Buildings shall enhance the neighborhood and be harmonious in character, style, scale, color and materials with existing buildings in the neighborhood.

SETBACK

A1. In non-residential areas, adjacent buildings shall have compatible front setbacks to maintain visual continuity of the streetscape. Setback infill projects in areas with different front setbacks at a distance equal to the average setbacks of buildings on either side but still meet the minimum setback requirements of the Zoning Code.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIES WITH MINIMUM DIMENSION STANDARDS</th>
<th>MINIMUM DIMENSIONS FOR USABLE OPEN SPACE</th>
<th>MINIMUM REQUIRED AMOUNT OF USABLE OPEN SPACE **</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ground Level (incl. Side or Rear Yards)</td>
<td>Balconies</td>
<td>Roofs, Decks, Porches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunnyvale</td>
<td>12 ft (min 200 sf to count)</td>
<td>7 ft (min 80 sf to count)</td>
<td>10 ft (min 120 sf to count)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>R-3: 400 sf/unit avg</td>
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<td>R-4/R-5: 380 sf/unit avg</td>
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<td>(80 sf must be private)</td>
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<td>Campbell</td>
<td>10 ft (min 300 sf to count)</td>
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<td>10 ft (min 300 sf to count)</td>
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<td>R-2/R-3: 300 sf/unit avg</td>
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<td>Milpitas</td>
<td>4.5 or 6 ft depending on zoning (min. 200 sf per unit for R-3, 100 sf for R-4, 50 sf for R-5 to count)</td>
<td>4.5 ft (min. 60 sf for R-4 and 40 sf for R-5 to count)</td>
<td>4.5 ft (min. 60 sf for R-4 and min. 40 sf for R-5 to count)</td>
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<td>R-4: 25% of total site and each unit shall have private space</td>
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<td>R-5: each unit shall have private space; 50 sf/unit for ground floor units and 40 sf/unit for units above ground level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain View</td>
<td>15 ft for private yard (no minimum size)</td>
<td>4 ft (min 40 sf to count)</td>
<td>6 ft (min 100 sf to count)</td>
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<td>• 20 ft for common space in projects ≤50 units</td>
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<td>• 30 ft for common space in projects 51-100 units</td>
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<td>• 40 ft for common space in projects &gt;100 units</td>
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<td>CITIES WITH MINIMUM DIMENSION STANDARDS</td>
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<td><strong>GRound Level (incl. Side or Rear Yards)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Balconies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Roofs, Decks, Porches</strong></td>
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<td>Palo Alto</td>
<td>6 or 8 ft depending on zoning (min. 80 or 100 sf to count) 10 ft for common space (min 200 sf to count)</td>
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<td>Redwood City</td>
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<td>San Mateo</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Note: Residential densities of Zoning Districts vary between cities.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIES WITHOUT MINIMUM DIMENSION STANDARDS</th>
<th>MINIMUM REQUIRED AMOUNT OF USABLE OPEN SPACE**</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cupertino</td>
<td>All multi-family zoning districts: 20% of each unit’s gross first floor area and 10% of gross floor area for units above the first story</td>
<td>Discretion used to assess “usability” of a proposed yard or balcony, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilroy</td>
<td>All multi-family zoning districts: 35% of required landscaped area shall be designed as open recreational area R-3: 80% of ground floor units shall have a private yard of 150 sf/unit min</td>
<td>Design guidelines state that a majority of units in any multi-family residential project will be required to provide private usable open space, but does not specify how much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Altos</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No specific standards; Left to the discretion of decision making body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Gatos</td>
<td>All multi-family zoning districts: 200 sf/unit avg</td>
<td>May be in form of balconies or decks, as determined by the deciding body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan Hill</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Special yards, open space, etc. required through conditions of approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Jose</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Subject to discretion of decision making body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Clara</td>
<td>All multi-family zoning districts: 40% of lot area for lot sizes ≤ 22,000 sf 45% of lot area for lot sizes &gt; 22,000 sf</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saratoga</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No specific standard, just a limit on impervious area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2010-7126: Increasing Minimum Dimensions for Usable Open Space (Study Issue) – RZ

Rosemarie Zulueta, Assistant Planner, presented the staff report. She said staff recommends Alternative 3, to make no changes to the zoning code.

Vice Chair Hendricks asked staff to comment about whether consideration was given to reducing the minimum dimension requirements for usable open space. Ms. Zulueta said staff did consider this; however the study was about increasing the space. She said staff felt that since developers seem to be able to meet or exceed the current requirements that reducing the dimensions did not require further exploration.

Comm. Sulser discussed with staff Alternative 2 regarding private usable open space and that the design guidelines for the requirements are more detailed than the Code.

Chair Travis opened and closed the public hearing.


Comm. Chang said that he thinks it was good to review the Zoning Code regarding usable open space and that the current requirements serve well to keep a good quality of life in Sunnyvale.

Comm. Larsson said that what staff has presented was persuasive and that he thinks this motion is a good decision for the City.

Comm. Sulser said he was leaning toward Alternative 2; however what convinced him to support Alternative 3 is that the design guidelines are much more detailed than the Code.

Comm. Hungerford said that the staff report was a clear way to explain usable open space, private open space and common open space. He said he was also considering Alternative 2, however staff provided good answers. He said he would ask staff to please enforce the guidelines and when the guidelines are not met on an application that this is pointed out to the Commission in the staff report.
Vice Chair Hendricks said he would be supporting the motion and clarified that his question about reducing open space was just to add to the completeness and clarity of the study.

**ACTION:** Comm. Chang made a motion on 2010-7126 to recommend to City Council to make no changes to the Zoning Code. Comm. Larsson seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

**APPEAL OPTIONS:** This item is scheduled to be considered by City Council at the November 16, 2010 meeting.