CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

STAFF REPORT

REQUEST FOR INITIATION OF A ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT

PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

DATE OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING: November 10, 2026

Staff Contact: Matt Alfele, Development Planning Manager
Date of Staff Report: October 23, 2026
Origin of Request: City staff request to Planning Commission for Zoning Text Amendments
Applicable City Code Provisions: Chapter 34 – Article 5, Division 5.2.5

Initiation Process

Whenever the public necessity, convenience, general welfare, or good zoning practice require, the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia ("City Council"), may, by Ordinance, amend, supplement, or change the City of Charlottesville, Virginia's ("City"), zoning district regulations, district boundaries, or zoning district classifications of property. A Zoning Text Amendment ("ZTA") may be initiated by: (1) City Council Resolution; or (2) Planning Commission ("PC") Motion (*See* City Development Code ("DC") Section 34-5.2.5.B.1.a, which is based on Virginia Code § 15.2-2286(A)(7)).

Discussion

On December 18, 2023, City Council adopted a new Development Code designed to facilitate a more form-based zoning ordinance, allowing for increased density throughout the City in alignment with the 2021 Comprehensive Plan. As with any evolving framework, staff has identified both minor and significant issues within the code that require amendments to better support the City's stated goals.

These proposed changes have been categorized into three tiers:

- Clarifications and Technical Fixes: Minor grammatical revisions and small adjustments to ensure the Code accurately reflects its intended purpose and state mandated changes due to legislative action.
- Refinements: Modifications, additions, or removals that address oversights or clarify existing provisions. This tier also includes suggested amendments to facilitate improvements to the Development Review process.

NDS Staff recommends advancing this level of amendments to a Public Hearing for review and formal adoption into the Development Code by initiating this Zoning Text Amendment. Any lager policy amendments will be considered within the context of prioritization in the broader future NDS workplan, given the time and resources for more in-depth analysis, community engagement.

Standard of Review

If initiated, the Planning Commission shall review and study each proposed amendment to determine:

1. Whether the proposed amendment conforms to the general guidelines and policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan;
2. Whether the proposed amendment will further the purposes of this Chapter and public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice require such amendment;
3. Whether there is a need and justification for the change;
4. When pertaining to a change in the zoning district classification of property, the effect of the proposed change, if any, on the property itself, on surrounding property, and on public services and facilities. In addition, the Planning Commission must consider the appropriateness of the property for inclusion within the proposed zoning district, relating to the purposes set forth at the beginning of the proposed district classification; and
5. Such other considerations as permitted by law.

Appropriate Motions

1. **For approval:** The PC may initiate the ZTAs, by making the following Motion:

   "In accordance with Virginia Code § 15.2-2285(A) and City Code Section 34-5.2.5.B.1.a, and as required by public necessity, convenience, general welfare, and good zoning practice, I move to initiate consideration of amendments to City Code Chapter 34 (Development Code) Articles 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7."

2. **For Denial**: No motion is needed; if the PC does not adopt a Motion to initiate, then the proposal will not proceed.

Attachments

A. Motion Initiating Amendment of the 2024 Development Code (Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances)