

SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF REPORT #1

DATE: July 28, 2020

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Dan Cardwell, Long-Range Planning Supervisor

BY: Jessica Gwilt, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Updated Staff Recommendation for amendments to Title 18J, Pierce County Code related to Residential Fire Protection (for Community Plan Updates).

NOTICE: Notice of the Planning Commission public hearing was published in the News Tribune on July 15, 2020.

SEPA: A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was issued on April 5, 2019 and a Final EIS was issued on May 27, 2020.

ATTACHMENTS:

- [Attachment A](#) Updated Staff Recommendation
- [Attachment B](#) Updated Draft Planning Commission Letter to Council with Recommendation

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff supports approval of a modified proposal, as shown in Attachment A to this staff report.

PURPOSE

On July 21, 2020 staff released a staff report to the Pierce County Planning Commission for their July 28 meeting related to amendments to Pierce County Code, Title 18J for Residential Fire Protection per a request from Central Pierce Fire & Rescue. This supplemental staff report updates the language proposed in the staff recommendation to make clarifications to the applicability of the standards. An updated draft letter is also included in Attachment B.

UPDATED STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR CENTRAL PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE PROPOSAL

Central Pierce Fire & Rescue (CPFR) have requested amendments to address residential fire protection that would apply to Pierce County Code (PCC) Chapters 18J.30 (Parkland-Spanaway-Midland), 18J.50 (South Hill), 18J.60 (Frederickson), and 18J.70 (Mid-County), as shown in Attachment A and B to the original staff report.

The original staff recommendation related to the proposal is found in Attachment C to the original staff report. This supplemental staff report updates the staff recommendation as shown in Attachment A to this document. The update includes text changes to clarify when standards apply. In general, the updated language:

- Adds a sunset clause to the applicability section to address if the standards are included in PCC Title 17C (Building and Fire Codes).
- Clarifies that the setback is measured from the concrete foundation wall to the property line, which was included in CPFR's request.
- Clarifies that sprinkler systems are only required for those buildings *impacted* by County road deviations, not all buildings in a project.

STAFF ANALYSIS

After further review, staff finds that the requirement for sprinklers when deviating from County road standards reaches beyond the intent of the requirement and should only apply to those buildings that are impacted. Otherwise, all buildings would be held to the standard even if the deviation does not affect access for fire and emergency services, adding extra cost to the development.

The text related to setbacks was included at the request of CPFR and is consistent with setback measurement. The text was added back in for clarification.

The sunset clause is necessary to avoid duplication and potential inconsistencies within code since it is assumed that the standards will be included in the Fire Code in the future.

ATTACHMENT A: UPDATED STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The following shows an updated version of the staff recommendation. Only portions of Pierce County Code (PCC), Title 18J that are proposed to change are shown.

- Gray highlighted text indicates new language that was included in the previous staff recommendation in the original staff report.
- Yellow highlighted text indicates new language proposed in the updated staff recommendation.
- Text with ~~strikeout and no highlight~~ is language that was in the original staff recommendation that is removed from the updated staff recommendation.

Title 18J: Development Regulations – Design Standards and Guidelines

Chapter 18.30 PARKLAND-SPANAWAY-MIDLAND COMMUNITIES PLAN AREA DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES.

18J.30.070 Residential Building Design and Placement.

A. Residential Fire Protection Standards

1. Applicability

a. New residential development.

b. All standards within this section shall sunset when they have been adopted into Pierce County Code, Title 17C.

2. Design Objective – Single-Family Detached and Duplex. Design residential developments to allow fire and rescue equipment and personnel adequate access to conduct operations in order to confine fire spread to the occupancy of origin to minimize the loss of life and protect homes.

a. Standards for Single-Family Detached and Duplex.

(1) For buildings with two or more stories with setbacks 5 to 10 feet as measured from the concrete foundation wall to the property line, bedroom egress/rescue windows shall not be located on the side of the building.

(2) For buildings with a setback distance less than 5 feet as measured from the concrete foundation wall to the property line:

(a) Walls facing the side yard shall have a minimum of a one-hour fire resistive rating meeting all the requirements of IRC Table R302.1(2).

(b) Sprinkler systems must be installed that, at minimum, meet NFPA 13D or 13R specifications.

(c) Roofs shall be fire resistive materials (Class A or B or better rating), not wood or shake shingles.

(d) The only allowable projection or penetration into the 5-foot setback:

(i) Up to 12-inch eaves.

(ii) Gas fireplace not to exceed 2 feet, including direct vents and gas piping when the fireplace is black iron or copper.

(e) Propane tanks are not allowed in the 5-foot setback.

(3) Fire sprinkler systems are required in all impacted buildings when deviating from County road standards related to width, grade, turnaround or other access requirements that impact fire department access/ingress and operations.

3. **Design Objective –Three- or More Dwelling Units (R Occupancy).** Design residential occupancies in commercial buildings to allow fire and rescue equipment and personnel adequate access to conduct operations and confine fire spread to the occupancy of origin to minimize the loss of life and protect buildings up to 75 feet.

a. Standards.

(1) Provide attics with at least one-hour draft stops that follow the party wall line unless fire sprinklered. If the International Building Code requires a higher rating for draft stops, the IBC standard shall be used.

(2) Design landscaping to prevent fire spread and limit vegetation to 4 feet in height within 10 feet of the building.

(3) Fire sprinkler systems are required in all impacted buildings when deviating from County road standards related to width, grade, turnaround or other access requirements that impact fire department access/ingress and operations.

18J.50 SOUTH HILL COMMUNITY PLAN AREA DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES.

18J.50.080 Building Design and Placement.

C. Residential Fire Protection Standards

1. Applicability

a. New residential development.

- b. All standards within this section shall sunset when they have been adopted into Pierce County Code, Title 17C.

2. **Design Objective – Single-Family Detached and Duplex.** Design residential developments to allow fire and rescue equipment and personnel adequate access to conduct operations in order to confine fire spread to the occupancy of origin to minimize the loss of life and protect homes.

a. **Standards for Single-Family Detached and Duplex.**

- (1) For buildings with two or more stories with setbacks 5 to 10 feet as measured from the concrete foundation wall to the property line, bedroom egress/rescue windows shall not be located on the side of the building.
- (2) For buildings with a setback distance less than 5 feet as measured from the concrete foundation wall to the property line:
 - (a) Walls facing the side yard shall have a minimum of a one-hour fire resistive rating meeting all the requirements of IRC Table R302.1(2).
 - (b) Sprinkler systems must be installed that, at minimum, meet NFPA 13D or 13R specifications.
 - (c) Roofs shall be fire resistive materials (Class A or B or better rating), not wood or shake shingles.
 - (d) The only allowable projection or penetration into the 5-foot setback:
 - (i) Up to 12-inch eaves.
 - (ii) Gas fireplace not to exceed 2 feet, including direct vents and gas piping when the fireplace is black iron or copper.
 - (e) Propane tanks are not allowed in the 5-foot setback.
- (3) Fire sprinkler systems are required in all impacted buildings when deviating from County road standards related to width, grade, turnaround or other access requirements that impact fire department access/ingress and operations.

3. **Design Objective –Three- or More Dwelling Units (R Occupancy).** Design residential occupancies in commercial buildings to allow fire and rescue equipment and personnel adequate access to conduct operations and confine fire spread to the occupancy of origin to minimize the loss of life and protect buildings up to 75 feet.

a. **Standards.**

- (1) Provide attics with at least one-hour draft stops that follow the party wall line unless fire sprinklered. If the International Building Code requires a higher rating for draft stops, the IBC standard shall be used.
- (2) Design landscaping to prevent fire spread and limit vegetation to 4 feet in height within 10 feet of the building.
- (3) Fire sprinkler systems are required in all impacted buildings when deviating from County road standards related to width, grade, turnaround or other access requirements that impact fire department access/ingress and operations.

18J.60 FREDERICKSON COMMUNITY PLAN AREA DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES.

18J.60.080 Building Design and Placement.

D. Residential Fire Protection Standards

1. Applicability

- a. New residential development.
- b. All standards within this section shall sunset when they have been adopted into Pierce County Code, Title 17C.

2. Design Objective – Single-Family Detached and Duplex. Design residential developments to allow fire and rescue equipment and personnel adequate access to conduct operations in order to confine fire spread to the occupancy of origin to minimize the loss of life and protect homes.

a. Standards for Single-Family Detached and Duplex.

- (1) For buildings with two or more stories with setbacks 5 to 10 feet as measured from the concrete foundation wall to the property line, bedroom egress/rescue windows shall not be located on the side of the building.
- (2) For buildings with a setback distance less than 5 feet as measured from the concrete foundation wall to the property line:
 - (a) Walls facing the side yard shall have a minimum of a one-hour fire resistive rating meeting all the requirements of IRC Table R302.1(2).
 - (b) Sprinkler systems must be installed that, at minimum, meet NFPA 13D or 13R specifications.

(c) Roofs shall be fire resistive materials (Class A or B or better rating), not wood or shake shingles.

(d) The only allowable projection or penetration into the 5-foot setback:

(i) Up to 12-inch eaves.

(ii) Gas fireplace not to exceed 2 feet, including direct vents and gas piping when the fireplace is black iron or copper.

(e) Propane tanks are not allowed in the 5-foot setback.

(3) Fire sprinkler systems are required in all impacted buildings when deviating from County road standards related to width, grade, turnaround or other access requirements that impact fire department access/ingress and operations.

3. **Design Objective –Three- or More Dwelling Units (R Occupancy).** Design residential occupancies in commercial buildings to allow fire and rescue equipment and personnel adequate access to conduct operations and confine fire spread to the occupancy of origin to minimize the loss of life and protect buildings up to 75 feet.

a. Standards.

(1) Provide attics with at least one-hour draft stops that follow the party wall line unless fire sprinklered. If the International Building Code requires a higher rating for draft stops, the IBC standard shall be used.

(2) Design landscaping to prevent fire spread and limit vegetation to 4 feet in height within 10 feet of the building.

(3) Fire sprinkler systems are required in all impacted buildings when deviating from County road standards related to width, grade, turnaround or other access requirements that impact fire department access/ingress and operations.

18J.70 MID-COUNTY COMMUNITY PLAN AREA DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES.

18J.70.080 Building Design and Placement.

C. Residential Fire Protection Standards

1. Applicability

a. New residential development.

- b. All standards within this section shall sunset when they have been adopted into Pierce County Code, Title 17C.

2. **Design Objective – Single-Family Detached and Duplex.** Design residential developments to allow fire and rescue equipment and personnel adequate access to conduct operations in order to confine fire spread to the occupancy of origin to minimize the loss of life and protect homes.

a. **Standards for Single-Family Detached and Duplex.**

- (1) For buildings with two or more stories with setbacks 5 to 10 feet as measured from the concrete foundation wall to the property line, bedroom egress/rescue windows shall not be located on the side of the building.
- (2) For buildings with a setback distance less than 5 feet as measured from the concrete foundation wall to the property line:
 - (a) Walls facing the side yard shall have a minimum of a one-hour fire resistive rating meeting all the requirements of IRC Table R302.1(2).
 - (b) Sprinkler systems must be installed that, at minimum, meet NFPA 13D or 13R specifications.
 - (c) Roofs shall be fire resistive materials (Class A or B or better rating), not wood or shake shingles.
 - (d) The only allowable projection or penetration into the 5-foot setback:
 - (i) Up to 12-inch eaves.
 - (ii) Gas fireplace not to exceed 2 feet, including direct vents and gas piping when the fireplace is black iron or copper.
 - (e) Propane tanks are not allowed in the 5-foot setback.
- (3) Fire sprinkler systems are required in all impacted buildings when deviating from County road standards related to width, grade, turnaround or other access requirements that impact fire department access/ingress and operations.

3. **Design Objective –Three- or More Dwelling Units (R Occupancy).** Design residential occupancies in commercial buildings to allow fire and rescue equipment and personnel adequate access to conduct operations and confine fire spread to the occupancy of origin to minimize the loss of life and protect buildings up to 75 feet.

a. **Standards.**

- (1) Provide attics with at least one-hour draft stops that follow the party wall line unless fire sprinklered. If the International Building Code requires a higher rating for draft stops, the IBC standard shall be used.
- (2) Design landscaping to prevent fire spread and limit vegetation to 4 feet in height within 10 feet of the building.
- (3) Fire sprinkler systems are required in all impacted buildings when deviating from County road standards related to width, grade, turnaround or other access requirements that impact fire department access/ingress and operations.

ATTACHMENT B: UPDATED DRAFT PLANNING COMMISSION LETTER TO COUNCIL WITH RECOMMENDATION

_____, 2020

Doug Richardson
Chair, Pierce County Council
930 Tacoma Avenue South, Room 1046
Tacoma, WA 98402

RE: Recommended Amendments to the Community Plan Updates Ordinance related to
Amendments to Pierce County Code

Dear Councilmember Richardson:

After making a recommendation to the Pierce County Council on March 12, 2020, the Pierce County Planning Commission requested to revisit a request from Central Pierce Fire & Rescue related to the Community Plan Updates amendments related to Pierce County Code (PCC), specifically Title 18J, Development Regulations – Design Standards and Guidelines. The standards include a sunset clause that would remove the standards from PCC Title 18J when they have been incorporated into Title 17C Construction and Infrastructure Regulations – Building and Fire Codes. This sunset supports the County’s efforts to remove duplicative standards and consolidate regulations for ease of use during application.

At a regular meeting held on July 28, 2020, the Commission voted _____ to recommend approval of _____ as attached. The Planning Commission requests that the Council consider amending the ordinance to adopt the attached amendments and findings of fact.

If I can provide further assistance or clarification, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Sharon Benson
Chair, Pierce County Planning Commission

c: Dave Morell, Councilmember, Community Development Committee Chair
Dennis Hanberg, Director, Planning & Public Works
Melanie Halsan, Assistant Director, Planning & Public Works
Dan Cardwell, Long Range Planning Supervisor, Planning & Public Works