

Date: December 20, 2013

**To: John Cole, Interim Liaison, Southeast Neighborhoods
Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
Planning and Sustainability Commission
Mayor Charlie Hales**

From: Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

Subject: Request for Land Use Zone Change from R5 to R7 for areas within the Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association Boundary¹

The definition of the R5 zone, in effect in 2013, neither reflects the qualities of our neighborhood nor protects its historic character. For this reason, we are requesting a zone change to R7 and the elimination of recognition of substandard historic lots of record. Based upon the research of current lot sizes together with land use goals adopted by the Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association (ENA) documented below, we find that the current R7 designation more accurately represents the reality of existing conditions and desired future for the neighborhood.

Please consider the following supporting documentation²:

According to Chapter 33.611 of the Zoning Code, in the R7 zone, the minimum lot size permitted is 4,200 square feet – in fact, there were only 35 lots that were smaller, or 2 percent of the lots in the Eastmoreland neighborhood. The maximum lot area in the R7 zone is 12,000 square feet; there were 59 residential lots that were 12,000 square feet and greater, or 4 percent of the lots in Eastmoreland. In the R7 zone, the maximum density is 1 unit per 7,000 square feet. In the Eastmoreland neighborhood, the average lot size, in 2011, was 6,928 square feet. With one house per tax lot, this is just short of the maximum density permitted in the R7 zone.

In 2011, 37 percent of the lots in Eastmoreland were 7,000 square feet or more and 54 percent were 6,000 square feet or more. Thirty-eight percent were between approximately 5,000 and 6,000 square feet (due to the lack of precision in the GIS database, lots that are 4,990 and over are classified with the lots 5,000 square feet and over); 6 percent were between 4,200 and 4,989 square feet; and 2 percent were under 4,200 square feet (figure 1).

¹ See map on page 4.

² The statistics were generated from 2011 data prior to the recent upswing of lot divisions and new infill home construction but after a period of skinny house development in the southeast quadrant of the neighborhood. We believe that these statistics still reflect the conditions in the neighborhood but that current trends, if continued, will fundamentally alter them.

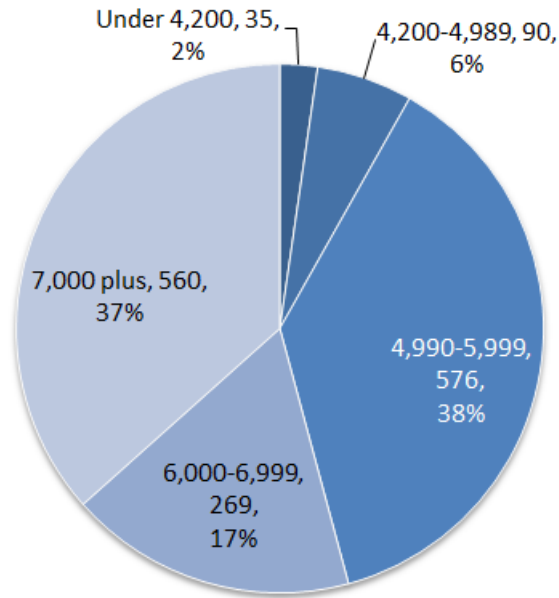


Figure 1. Distribution of lot sizes (in square feet) of Eastmoreland Tax Lots in 2011

Another way of looking at the lot sizes is the frequency with which they occur (figure 2). The histogram in figure 2 also indicates a clear tendency toward lots of 5,000 square feet and greater.

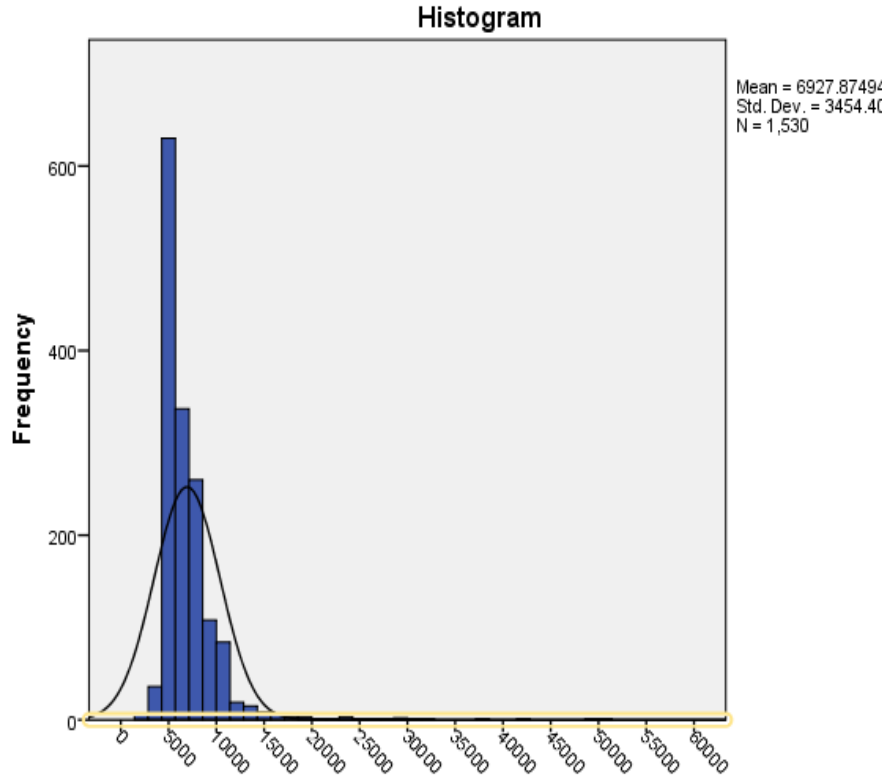


Figure 2. Frequency of lot sizes in Eastmoreland in 2011

Eastmoreland was developed to be a neighborhood with a diverse housing stock in terms of size and affordability and one characterized by larger lots and a garden feel. The neighborhood was originally zoned R5 meaning that the minimum lot size for the neighborhood was 5,000 square feet. While there are a few lots less than 4,200 square feet, these are primarily the result of development on 25' x 100' lots of record in the southeast quadrant of the neighborhood east of SE 36th that are clearly incompatible with the scale, streetscape, and character of the neighborhood and have replaced lower priced housing stock with higher priced housing. This anomaly is acknowledged in the Comprehensive Plan Map App's working map "Future Study" incorrectly labeled "Brentwood Darlington" (figure 3).

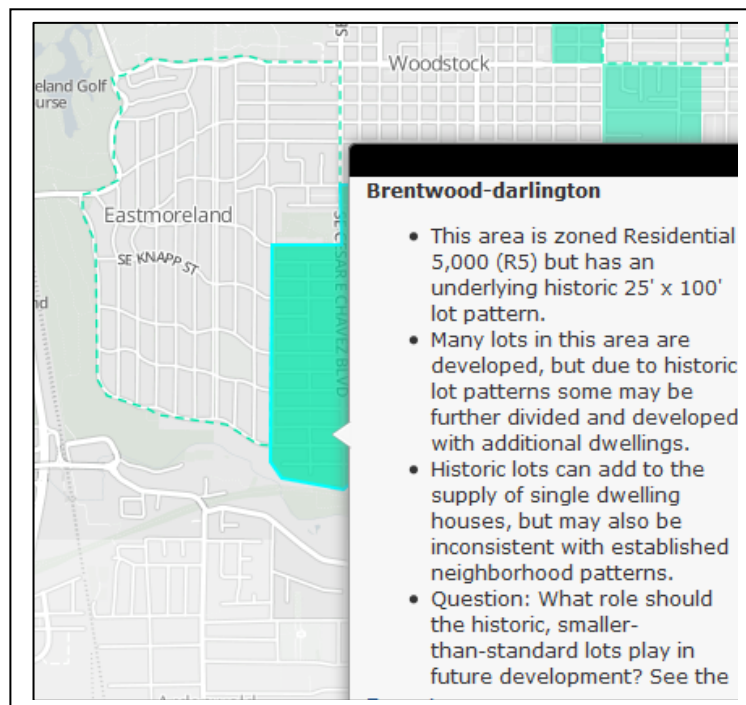


Figure 3. ENA SE Quadrant's underlying lots of record (Map App).

Note: the pop-up window misidentifies the area as Brendwood –Darlington.

Note also that the remaining area of the Eastmoreland neighborhood (outlined in the dashed green line) is identified, in the Map App, as having underlying lots of record of a "variable pattern."

Changes to the definition of the R5 zone to allow development on lots as small as 3,000 square feet, on historic lots of record of 2,500 square feet, and as small as 1,600 square feet on corner lots, have fundamentally changed what is permitted in our neighborhood. These changes, combined with the high interest speculative developers have shown in the inner eastside neighborhoods, and the upswing of the local economy, have resulted in an alarming number of lot subdivisions and demolitions in Eastmoreland. Single more modest homes are replaced with two overscaled, poorly designed, and far less affordable houses. And, while the original houses had generous gardens and green spaces surrounding them, the large replacement houses leave little room for either. Given the provisions of the

current R5 zone, the presence of numerous historic lots of record, as well as the abundance of corner lots in Eastmoreland, it is clear that the code encourages this type of undesirable redevelopment thereby destroying the affordability, quality, and character of the neighborhood.

Conclusion. The ENA Board of Directors has voted in its regular meeting of December 19, 2013 to request inclusion of the ENA Neighborhood as a study area for rezoning to R7 as part of the comprehensive plan update and simultaneous elimination of recognition of substandard historic lots of record. In addition, we request that two neighborhood commercial parcels³ be grand fathered as conditional uses that support convenience and vitality.

This zone change request is complementary to the proposed special Plan District described in a separate letter and consistent with adopted neighborhood land use goals.

Robert McCullough, President
Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

Eastmoreland Neighborhood Boundary



³ The historic neighborhood grocery store, at 3616 SE Knapp, that is currently vacant but has served the neighborhood for many years, and the service station at 7223 SE Cesar Chavez Boulevard.