



To: Property owners along or near the riverfront
From: Andrea Lavin Kossis, Department of City Planning
Date: January 18, 2018
Re: Zone Change

Dear Property Owner(s):

You are receiving this notice because you own property within the boundary of a proposed zoning change. Attached maps show current and proposed zoning districts.

No development proposal is associated with the zone change at this time, nor does it have to do with property assessments.

The proposed changes to the Zoning Code were developed over the last two years through the Pittsburgh Riverfront Zoning process which included public events and focus groups. Please visit our website (below) to access a separate height map as well as the official draft for public comment, which was developed based on feedback from three public meetings and a series of focus group meetings in December of 2017:

<http://www.pghriverfrontzoning.com/documents-presentations/>

The proposed zoning will be the subject of a public hearing before the Pittsburgh City Planning Commission on February 20, 2018 starting at 2:00 PM. Based on the proposal and citizen input, Planning Commission will take action on the proposed zoning changes and make a recommendation to City Council. The Planning Commission requests citizen testimony, either in the form of oral testimony at the hearing or in writing using the enclosed response form.

The **public hearing** will be:

**2:00 pm Tuesday, February 20, 2018
Civic Building, First Floor Hearing Room
200 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 (Downtown)**

If you have any questions or would like to further discuss the proposed zoning changes, please contact the project manager, Andrea Lavin Kossis, at 412.255.2223 or andrea.lavinkossis@pittsburghpa.gov.

To request interpreters for the hearing impaired, please contact Richard Meritzer at 412.255.2102 no later than Wednesday, February 14th.

Why do we need zoning amendments?

The new zoning will allow the City to proactively address the diverse needs of existing users and stakeholders, and so that new development is responsive to the varied characters of Pittsburgh's riverfront neighborhoods.

The Riverfront Zoning districts will be a vital tool in implementing previous and ongoing riverfront planning efforts, such as the Allegheny Riverfront Vision Plan. These documents contain specific guidance as to how land should be managed and how development should occur within the City of Pittsburgh. Throughout the process, we have worked to incorporate policies established through these previous and ongoing planning efforts and to establish specific development regulations that are key to implementing those policies.

What are the Riverfront Zoning subdistricts?

The new code creates five new zoning districts. The boundaries drawn for these subdistricts are based on existing activities and building forms, neighboring zoning districts, topography, and infrastructure.

RIV-RM Mixed Residential Subdistrict: The RIV-RM Mixed Residential Subdistrict is intended for areas of higher density, single-unit attached and multi-family residential development.

RIV-MU Mixed-Use Subdistrict: The RIV-MU Mixed-Use Subdistrict is intended to foster a vibrant, connected mixed-use environment that may be designed either vertically within a single development or horizontally within a larger area.

RIV-NS North Shore Subdistrict: The RIV-NS North Shore Subdistrict is intended specifically to address the North Shore and its unique mix of large-scale sports, entertainment, and cultural uses. As a mixed-use district, high density residential development is also allowed.

RIV-GI General Industrial Subdistrict: The RIV-GI Industrial Subdistrict is intended to address a variety of industrial uses. The district accommodates both general industrial uses, as well as heavier industrial uses that may produce external impacts such as smoke, noise, glare, or vibration. Outdoor storage and related outdoor activities may also be included in the operation of such uses. The subdistrict is structured to prevent encroachment of non-industrial uses and to accommodate site design elements related to public safety and maintain compatibility with surrounding uses.

RIV-IMU Industrial Mixed-Use Subdistrict: The RIV-IMU Industrial Mixed-Use Subdistrict is intended to address areas of the riverfront that are diversifying from their original, strictly industrial nature. It accommodates a variety of higher intensity uses, including light industrial, commercial, and high density residential development. The RIV-IMU Subdistrict is also intended for industrial areas that are focused on research and development and technology-oriented industries.

What is the Performance Points System?

As part of the new zoning classifications, the RIV subdistricts will be able to utilize the Performance Points Bonus system to receive height or riparian buffer reductions if they meet goals as identified during this process. Projects can meet existing goals as provided in the current Performance Points Bonus system and amendments are proposed that add riverfront specific goals, such as providing public riverfront access. Overall, the bonus may include:

- Reducing energy consumption through efficient building design
- Generating electricity on-site renewably or connecting to district energy systems
- Creating new affordable housing units in mixed income projects
- Treating stormwater through green infrastructure
- Providing riverfront public access easements, trails and amenities,
- Improving neighborhood ecology by decreasing urban heat island impact and improving air quality; and
- Providing public art.

Bonus points are awarded when a project meets a goal, with more points awarded for projects that have bigger impacts in the district. The bonus system is highly flexible and can be utilized by a wide variety of development projects. For larger projects, community members will still have their opportunity to comment on projects when they are reviewed by the Planning Commission.

How will height be addressed?

Building height standards are indicated in an additional height map, which is available online. Proposed heights are determined by previous planning efforts, surrounding built form, community input and topography and may vary within the subdistrict. Throughout the riverfront area, the minimum height of new buildings is 24 feet and the “base” allowable height is 45 feet. In various parts of the riverfront, the maximum allowable height increases to 85 feet or 150 feet if the performance system is used. You can access the riverfront height map at:

<http://www.pghriverfrontzoning.com/documents-presentations/>

Will a setback from the river be required?

Yes. In response to previous planning efforts that identify the riverfronts as places of ecological and scenic importance, the new zoning creates a Riparian Buffer based on the pre-existing Riverfront Overlay District that has been in place since 2005.

The Riparian Buffer measures 125 feet from the river. No development is permitted in this buffer, however the buffer zone may be reduced to no less than 95 feet from the river provided it utilizes the bonus system described above. Water-dependent and water-enhanced facilities or uses are exempt from this buffer, as are accessory uses that are open space amenities (such as bike rental stations, kayak launches, or fishing areas).

Guidelines for Testifying at City Planning Commission

Testimony presented by individuals will be limited to three minutes per person. Testimony presented by a spokesperson representing an organization or a group of people will be limited to five minutes per person. Those intending to testify on behalf of an organization/group shall provide a "letter of authorization" from the appropriate duly appointed officers before testifying. Prepared comments or reports in printed form may be presented to the commission to support testimony or in lieu of testimony. Testimony should not be read from a prepared statement, but may be generalized or summarized as testimony with the prepared statement handed to the commission for their review.

Access to the current Zoning Code

View a copy of the zoning ordinance on the City of Pittsburgh official website: <http://pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/zoning/code.html>. A copy of the zoning ordinance is also available for inspection at the Department of City Planning, Land Use Control Division, 200 Ross Street, 3rd Floor.

If the zoning change will result in a more restrictive zoning designation for my property, can I maintain the existing use of my property?

Yes. If you currently have a Certificate of Occupancy on file for the current use of your property, you do not need to do anything as a result of the zoning change. For example, a two dwelling-unit building presently located in a zone that allows a two-unit occupancy, but is being rezoned to a single-unit classification would not need a new certificate. That two-unit building becomes non-conforming and can remain two units.

A Certificate of Occupancy is not required for single-family homes.

Do I need a Certificate of Occupancy?

All uses other than single-family residential must have a Certificate of Occupancy.

How do I know if I have a Certificate of Occupancy?

To determine whether there is an occupancy permit on file for your property, complete the Department of Permits, Licenses, and Inspection (PLI) request form. The form is available by visiting <http://pittsburghpa.gov/pli/> and clicking "Applications & Forms" and then "Record Requests". The form is also available at PLI's permit counter (200 Ross Street, 3rd Floor) weekdays 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Request forms may be emailed to plirecords@pittsburghpa.gov, mailed, or hand delivered to PLI's permit counter.

What if I do not have a Certificate of Occupancy?

You must file for a Certificate of Occupancy at the Department of City Planning, Zoning and Development Review Division (200 Ross Street, 3rd Floor). This will then allow the continuation of your use of the property, which will be known as a "legal non-conforming use" if the zoning changes.

Can't attend the hearing? Please send us your comments.

RIVERFRONT ZONING

RESPONSE FORM

Name: _____

Your Mailing Address: _____

Parcel Number: _____

Parcel Address: _____

I am / We are

- in favor of this proposal
- opposed to this proposal

I am / We are

- tenant of
- owner of
- agent having power of attorney over

Comments Regarding the Zoning Proposal:

Signature _____ Date _____

Please mail to:

**Andrea Lavin Kossis, Department of City Planning
200 Ross Street, 4th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15219**

The form may be **faxed** to 412.255.2838, attn.: Andrea Lavin Kossis

We will accept **e-mail** responses. Send e-mail containing the information requested on this form to:

andrea.lavinkossis@pittsburghpa.gov.