



October 8, 2020

TO: Salt Lake City Planning Commission

FROM: Judi Short, Vice Chair and Land Use Chair  
Sugar House Community Council

RE: SPECIAL EXCEPTION CODE CHANGES PLPCM2020-00606

We are in favor of making the zoning code more simple and easier to understand. Special exceptions do not need to make the process more complicated, along with triggering another layer of process and notification to an application.

We think there should be some common sense applied. For example, if an apartment building is right up against a row of houses, and that building is going to be more than ten feet taller than the allowed height for the adjacent property (say 28' in a residential zone), then perhaps a fence that exceeds 6' in height makes sense in that situation. ( See #3 on Page 16) If something could potentially create noise, such as a home day care with more than five children in a neighborhood with small lots and small homes, or an accessory building to be used for band practice, the neighbors should be notified, and maybe an extra sound muffling product should be applied to muffle the noise of the music.

Other things should not be allowed, like parking in the front yard. Large ground mounted utility boxes belong in the back yard, uses should be only those allowed in the use table. Replacement of a nonconforming buildings should be allowed by right. Half the homes in Salt Lake City probably have something about them that are non-conforming because they were built before there was a zoning code.

Unit legalizations should be applied uniformly. We need a standard definition for "a unit", and that standard needs to be applied to everyone. No more, oh that isn't a unit because it doesn't have its own hot water heater. If someone is living in the space and it has a bathroom and a way to cook food, it is a "unit". There are hundreds of units in this town that are in theory not allowed, but we pretend they don't exist and give them a pass if they want to add another unit or ADU to the parcel. Figure out what it is and hold to that standard. Have the owner (landlord) apply for the Good Landlord Program, and then inspect all those buildings every couple of years, instead of letting things decay and ignoring the problem. Landlords tell me stories of paying fees for years and never seeing an inspector. I've been asked to look at a substandard unit and write a letter to the city that says it meets the standard when it clearly doesn't. I bet everyone in the room knows a building or a dozen buildings that fit that description.

What is the definition of legal conforming status? Spell it out clearly. You all can recite it, but the average person reading the statute doesn't.

Alterations to an existing single-family dwelling should be allowed as long as the use is allowed in the zone.

Vintage Signs should be allowed in the CSHBD2 zone.

I'm sure I have forgotten something. Thank you.

Enclosure: Comments Special Exception Ordinance

## **COMMENTS SPECIAL EXCEPTION ORDINANCE**

I'm supportive of the idea of dividing these topics/modifications/exceptions into outright approved or denied land use categories. I think this would be a big benefit to the City being able to focus its staff efforts toward growth-related issues. My only concern is public input - the public should be able to comment on projects if they will have large impact, but if the approved exceptions hardly ever receive feedback then I would support lessening staff time to process applications only for process' sake. I would like to know more about the accessory structure height with setbacks increase aspect. The other categories seem as though they can be addressed in other aspects of the Code. LIZ Jackson