



PREPARED FOR THE PLAN COMMISSION

Proposal: Zoning Text Amendment

Legistar File ID #: [88004](#) (Updates to Lakefront Setback Requirements)

Prepared By: Zoning and Planning Staff

[88004](#) –This code change adds a 75’ minimum lakefront yard setback in cases where there is no other principal structure within 300’. It also removes using lot depth as a method to determine the minimum required lakefront yard setback.

The lakefront yard setback establishes the minimum distance structures and improvements must be from the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM). The purpose of lakefront yard setbacks is to align buildings along lakefronts, preventing blocking of views and a “race to the lake.” Therefore, the code includes several ways to set the required minimum setback from the lake for a particular property, primarily based on the lakefront setback of buildings on surrounding properties, whether on adjoining lots or on lots on either side within 300’ or five lots, whichever is less. The last method is based on lot depth.

It is rare that a lakefront property would have no buildings within 300 feet. However, there are a few larger institutionally owned properties where this is the case. Because these properties are so large, the existing lot depth method in the code would lead to a requirement for a very large required lakefront yard setback. Staff believes that in these cases requiring a 75’ lakefront yard setback would result in a reasonable lakefront yard setback. Seventy-five feet also matches the non-residential standard that is currently in the code, that in no case a new principal building shall be located closer to the OHWM than 75 feet.

Additionally, the lot depth method is proposed to be removed from the code because staff has found that this unfairly penalizes deep lots. The purpose of the lakefront yard setback is to have consistent setbacks along the lake, and other buildings’ placement, rather than lot depth, is the best method to achieve this.

Staff supports this amendment.