

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. (2)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, March 8, 2005

TITLE: WORKSESSION: Vernacular Architectural Standards

DEPARTMENT: PLANNING	PUBLIC HEARING: YES __ NO <u>X</u>
ATTACHMENTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. ResolutionB. Report from Vernacular Architectural Standards Review CommitteeC. Memorandum from Jay BryanD. Chronology of actions related to the NSA PlanE. Chronology of actions related to Vernacular Architectural StandardsF. Relevant Land Use Ordinance SectionsG. NSA Plan, Section 3, excerpts of Goals 4, 7, and 9	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Giles Blunden– 967-8505Jeff Kleaveland – 918-7332Patricia McGuire – 918-7327

PURPOSE

The Vernacular Architectural Standards (VAS) Review Committee has completed its work and has prepared a report that calls for site planning standards for residential development, modified vernacular provisions, and an alternative architectural standards requirement. Committee members will make a presentation on the proposal.

INFORMATION

Following adoption of ordinance provisions related to implementation of the Facilitated Small Area Plan for Carrboro’s Northern Study Area in May 1999, the Board of Aldermen established a review process for the Vernacular Architectural Standards (VAS). A committee made up of citizens, architects, realtors, and public officials was established. The committee has completed its work. A report outlining the committee’s recommendation is attached (*Attachment B*). A memorandum from committee member Jay Bryan is also attached (*Attachment C*). A chronology of actions related to the Facilitated Small Area Plan for Carrboro’s Northern Study Area (NSA Plan) is attached (*Attachment D*) as is a chronology of specific actions related to the VAS (*Attachment E*). In summary, the committee is recommending that the Town modify its existing vernacular architecture provisions by:

- 1) requiring major subdivisions to comply with architectural standards;
- 2) establishing an exemption for housing developed by nonprofit organizations intended for first-time homebuyers earning less than 80 percent of the area's median income;
- 3) adopting General Design Standards that address landscaping, context and building design;
- 4) modifying some of the particular Vernacular Architectural Standard requirements, including the porch, garage, and chimney provisions; and
- 5) allowing applicants to choose to submit a detailed narrative on compliance with the General Design Standards and plans to be reviewed using Alternative Design Standards.

The existing VAS are presented as recommendations for 50 percent of the dwelling units in all major subdivisions in Section 15-177 of the Land Use Ordinance and are illustrated in an attached document. The VAS are required per Section 15-141.2, Village Mixed-Use Development, and Section 15-182.4 Residential Density Bonus for Affordable Housing. Copies of these materials are attached (*Attachment F*). Section 3, goals 4, 7, and 9 of the NSA Plan include objectives that are related to site design and architecture of affordable housing units and site plan requirements for all new development in Town (*Attachment G*).

It should be noted that the Board of Aldermen considered adoption of the existing provisions as requirements in all circumstances when they were proposed and reviewed in 1998 and 1999. Based on community input received at that time, the Board of Aldermen adopted them as recommendations with which major residential subdivision could choose to comply, and as requirements for Village Mixed-use developments and the affordable units in projects using the density bonus for affordable housing. The Review Committee proposal to establish site design and architectural requirements for major subdivisions represents a significant change from the current requirements and practice. This change is expected to have cost implications for both applicants and the Town and, as such, deserves further consideration prior to proceeding with the preparation of draft ordinance provisions or other action.

FISCAL IMPACT

The VAS Review Committee requests that the Board of Aldermen proceed with amendments to the Land Use Ordinance that incorporates the proposal for site standards and alternative architectural standards. Staff recommends that the proposal be evaluated before a draft ordinance is prepared. No fiscal impact is expected in association with the staff recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Board adopt the attached resolution (*Attachment A*) that directs the staff to prepare a report that evaluates and provides recommendations on implementing the VAS Review Committee proposal.