

Watts Hospital-Hillandale Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 3115
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March 8th, 2019

Durham Planning Commission
Durham, NC

The Watts-Hospital Hillandale Neighborhood Association appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Expanding Housing Choice proposal. The WHHNA board has not taken a position on the merits of the EHC, but we believe that the following changes would enhance the initiative and the public's confidence in it.

1. Provide a sixty-day extension to allow Durham residents more time to study and respond to the proposed EHC text. This would also allow the planning staff and planning commission time to seek input from impacted residents and neighborhood stakeholder groups, especially marginalized neighborhoods that have not had an opportunity to learn about the initiative.
2. To build a duplex by right, the owner must ensure that one unit is affordable (at 60% AMI for a rental unit and 80% AMI for homeowners) for a period of 25 years. We recommend this to make sure that the EHC specifically addresses affordability.
3. Accessory dwelling units (ADU) that are located outside of base zoning minimum side and rear yards should have a maximum height of 25 feet.
4. In the case of small houses on small lots, an accessory dwelling unit of up to 800 square feet, attached or unattached, should be permissible when the small lot is occupied by one dwelling unit 1,200 square feet.
5. The EHC should not be applied in areas governed by a local historic district overlay, except for the provision concerning the size, location, and height of accessory dwelling units.
6. Strike point 6.8.3(C)(2) on building height limitations. ("The height limitations shall not apply to additions to existing primary structures and accessory structures located solely to the rear of the rear building line of the primary structure.") We believe this is important to make infill standards effective.
7. The EHC should provide for a sunset period of ten years and Durham residents should be provided with annual public reports detailing impacts of the EHC. We want this data collected and reported so that we can measure the success of the EHC and keep it or change it as need be.

We appreciate your consideration of these modifications to the EHC which we believe will enhance the initiative.

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