



STAFF REPORT

DATE: June 10, 2019

REGULAR

ITEM #:

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Ben Prchal, City Planner
AGENDA ITEM: Screening Requirements in the Rural Residential Zoning District
REVIEWED BY: Ken Roberts, Planning Director

BACKGROUND:

City Staff is starting the research process of addressing trailer/recreational vehicle storage on residential properties, as directed by the Planning Commission work plan. Staff has been dealing with code enforcement regarding boat/trailer storage on a regular basis.

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS:

Since the May 29th meeting Staff has drafted new language that would address the accessory vehicle storage as well as firewood storage. Because Staff had not taken a comprehensive look at firewood storage, this report will include that and bring forward with the accessory vehicle storage code amendments.

Lake Elmo:

Below are the two sections of Code that dictate the screening requirements for the City. Staff has merged the two existing sections and combined aspects of other communities to create new language for the City. This can be found in the recommendation section of the report.

§ 154.407 ACCESSORY USES.

A. *Exterior Storage in Residential Districts.* All materials and equipment shall be stored within a building or be fully screened so as not to be visible from adjoining properties, except for the following:

1. Laundry drying
2. Construction and landscaping materials and equipment currently being used on the premises. Materials kept on the premises for a period exceeding six (6) months shall be screened or stored out of view of the primary street on which the house fronts.
3. Agricultural equipment and materials, if they are used or intended for use on the premises.
4. Off-street parking and storage of vehicles and accessory equipment, as regulated in Article 5, Section 154.102.
(This reference does not make sense, it should be 210)
5. Storage of firewood shall be kept at least ten (10) feet from any habitable structure and screened from view from adjacent properties.
6. Outdoor parking

§ 150.001 PROHIBITED WITHOUT SCREENING.

(A) *Storage of property in Agricultural and Residential districts.* All personal property shall be stored within a building or fully screened so as not to be visible from adjoining properties and public streets, except for the following:

- (1) Laundry, drying;
- (2) Recreational equipment commonly used in residential yards;
- (3) Construction and landscaping materials, and equipment currently (within a period of 6 months) being used on the premises;
- (4) Off-street parking of licensed operable passenger automobiles and pick-up trucks;
- (5) Boats and trailers less than 25 feet in length, if stored in the rear yard more than 10 feet distant from any property line;
- (6) Merchandise being displayed for sale in accordance with the provisions of the zoning code;
- (7) Farm implements in the AG Zoning District; and/or
- (8) Firewood storage for personal use.

Firewood Storage Examples from Other Communities:

Mounds View:

Their code is attached and relatively short and to the point. What Staff liked about their code is that they provided some expectations about stacking and sizing of piles.

City of Orono:

The City of Orono requires firewood to maintain the same setbacks as their accessory structures. The setback requirements are different for each of their zoning districts. Staff was unable to determine if there were more specific standards for screening or stacking but it is interpreted that the storage would be kept to the side and rear yards.

City of Woodbury:

Woodbury as well as the other communities do allow a certain level of wood to be stored before it is expected for screening.

Forest Lake:

Forest Lake seems to be the most relaxed when it comes to the code. There is no sizing expectation, but staff appreciates that they do require the piles to be neat and orderly.

Maplewood:

Firewood may be stored in the backyard if it is neatly stacked at least six inches off the ground and piled no higher than 6 feet. It must be screened from view from adjacent properties if it is stored in the front yard, on the street side of a corner lot, or within 5 feet of an interior property line (Chapter 18-33(22)).

FISCAL IMPACT:

Staff does not directly foresee a fiscal impact. However, amending the code may decrease the number of complaints received which would reduce Staff time dedicated to code enforcement.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION

Staff is looking for comments on the following proposed language. Please know that these items would be allowed without screening if approved in the rural zoning districts (A, RR, RT, RS, and RE). The proposed amendments are in red. No parking of commercial trailers is captured in section 154.210 H.

1. Laundry drying
2. Construction and landscaping materials and equipment currently being used on the premises. Materials kept on the premises for a period exceeding six (6) months shall be screened or stored out of view of the primary street on which the house fronts.
3. Agricultural equipment and materials, if they are used or intended for use on the property.
4. Off-street parking and storage of trailers 25ft in length or less as regulated in Article 5, Section 154.210 that are licensed (when applicable) and kept in good and operable condition.
 - a. Trailers shall be licensed to a resident of the property, when applicable.
 - b. Residential properties are allowed to store one trailer (boat trailer, snowmobile trailer, utility trail, etc.) within the front yard. All other trailers must be stored either in the side or rear yard, must be at least 5 ft. from the side property line.
 - c. All trailers must be stored on a durable surface with suitable drainage.
 - d. Trailers must not be used as temporary or permanent storage of items described in Chapter 96 of the City Code.
5. Farm implements in the AG Zoning District; and/or
6. Firewood storage, for personal use only.
 - a. Piles must be neatly stacked in a stable manner and stored only in the side or rear yards. In the case of properties with multiple frontages, wood shall not be stored on a side that abuts a public street.

ATTACHMENTS

Parking Requirements

- Mounds View Code for Parking
- City of Orono Code for Parking
- Woodbury Code for Parking
- Forest Lake Code for Parking

Firewood Storage Requirements

- Forest Lake Code for Firewood storage
- Mounds View Code for Firewood storage
- Woodbury Code for Firewood storage
- Maplewood Code for Firewood storage
- Orono Code for Firewood storage