



**STAFF REPORT**

DATE: July 8, 2019

**PUBLIC HEARING**

ITEM #: 4b

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

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**BACKGROUND:**

The Planning Commission has reviewed drafted language for exterior storage and screening requirements on two occasions. The first being June 10<sup>th</sup> and the second on June 24<sup>th</sup> of 2019. At this point City Staff is looking for final amendments, if any and then a recommendation to bring forward to City Council.

**ISSUE BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

Would the Planning Commission like to recommend approval of the proposed ordinance amendments?

**REVIEW AND ANALYSIS:**

With previous reports focusing in on vehicle storage and firewood, this report will incorporate the final drafted language of the entire section (154.407). If the discussed section is amended, Staff will be recommending the removal of Section 150.001 because each residential district has its own section to address screening and leaving it in place will continue to cause conflicts. Going forward Staff will also look at the language for the other zoning districts to see if there needs to be corrections.

**Lake Elmo:**

Each residential district, Rural, Urban and Village Mixed use has their own screening requirements. Those sections are 154.407, 154.456, and 154.507. Realizing that each district might have different expectations Staff has chosen to specifically focus in on the rural district (154.407). Below are the two sections of Code that would have influence over the rural district for screening requirements in the City. Staff has merged the two existing sections and combined aspects of other communities to create new language for the City (*see 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 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.

Other communities do allow trailers to be stored on the driveway, side, and rear yard. Since number 4. Of section 154.407 says “Off-street parking and storage of vehicles and accessory equipment...” Staff is under the impression that trailers could be stored in the front yard as long as they were on an improved surface. A very brief explanation of other Community codes are provided below.

Forest Lake: The location of the vehicles is limited to the setback requirements of accessory structures. Generally this means storage would not be allowed between the front of the home and the street. They allow firewood without screening in the side and rear yards.

Mounds View: Mounds View has a simple code in that it restricts recreational vehicles and equipment from being stored closer than 15 ft. to a paved surface of a public roadway.

Orono: They do allow for boats to be stored in the front yard (on the driveway) if it is on a trailer. However, they only allow utility trailers to be stored for a duration of 24 hours.  
*Staff Comment: Staff understands there is a visual difference between boat trailers and utility trailers (or other) but does not necessarily believe there needs to be different standards for different trailers.*

Woodbury: One trailer may be stored in the front yard as long as there is 15ft. of separation between the trailer and the curb. Firewood is allowed without screening only on the side and rear yard of the property.

**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.

**OPTIONS:**

Staff is recommending approval of the drafted ordinance. However, the Commission may:

- Recommend approval of the drafted amendment.
- Recommend approval with amendments to the drafted language.
- Recommend denial to the proposed amendments.

**COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION**

Staff is looking for final comments on the following amended code language. As proposed, the items listed below would be allowed without screening in the rural zoning districts (A, RR, RT, RS, and RE). The proposed Code amendments (below) are in red. No parking of commercial trailers (semi) is covered in Section 154.210 H. The attached ordinance provides a comprehensive look at what is proposed for removal and for addition to the City Code.

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 7, Section 154.210, are licensed (when applicable) and kept in operable condition.
  - a. Trailers shall be licensed to a resident of the property.
  - b. Residential properties are allowed to store one trailer (boat trailer, snowmobile trailer, utility trailer, recreational vehicle, etc.) within the front yard. All other trailers must be stored either in the side or rear yard, and must be at least 5 ft. from all property lines.
  - c. All trailers must be stored on a durable surface with suitable drainage that is not subject to rutting and/or erosion.
  - d. Trailers must not be used as temporary or permanent storage of items as described in Chapter 96 of the City Code.
5. Firewood storage, for personal use only.
  - a. Firewood must be stacked in a stable manner, cannot exceed 5 feet in height, and stored only in the side or rear yards. In the case of properties with multiple street frontages, fire wood shall not be stored on a side that abuts a public street.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Draft Ordinance 08-XXX
- 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