

Blount County

Planning and Development Services

1221 McArthur Road

Maryville, TN 37804

Phone: 865-681-9301 Fax: 865-681-9502



MEMORANDUM

TO: Blount County Board of Commissioners

FROM: Thomas A. Lloyd, AICP
Director
Blount County Planning & Development Services

DATE: November 13, 2025

SUBJECT: Call for a public hearing on draft resolution to amend Section 7.20.C of the zoning regulations specific to the open space requirement of cluster developments

Attachments

- (1) Draft Resolution
- (2) Selection of minutes from March 27, 2025 Planning Commission
- (3) Resolution from Alcoa Regional Planning Commission (adopted 5/15/25)
- (4) Selection of minutes from October 23, 2025 Planning Commission
- (5) Resolution from Alcoa Regional Planning Commission (adopted 9/18/25)

Discussion:

In 2023, the Blount County Zoning Regulations were amended to incorporate comprehensive regulations for cluster developments. At that time, it was recognized that such types of development could serve as a possible means to achieve some balance between growth and preservation of open space in rural and suburban settings by clustering homes on a smaller proportion of land than a traditional subdivision while protecting the balance as common open space.

At the March 2025 meeting, Commissioner David Wells brought discussion of the cluster development regulations back before the Planning Commission. He noted that, to date, there have been no cluster subdivisions considered under the new regulations. He suggested that was likely because the minimum open space requirements in the current regulations were too onerous, and recommended that they be reduced from 40% to 30%, with no other changes to the regulations proposed. After deliberation, the Commission voted 5-3 to recommend that the County Commission amend the regulations accordingly.

At their May 15, 2025 meeting, the Alcoa Regional Planning Commission similarly considered and recommended for approval (Attachment 3).

In July, following their public hearing, the County Commission voted on an amended version of the resolution, changing the open space percentages instead to 35% in the Suburbanizing District, and 40% (no change) in the R-1 and R-2 Districts. Rather than approving the amendment at that meeting, the County Commission voted to refer it back to the Regional Planning Commissions for further consideration.

At their September 18, 2025 meeting, the Alcoa Regional Planning Commission considered and recommended for approval (Attachment 5).

Following discussion at their August, September, and October meetings, and a workshop in September, the Planning Commission ultimately voted on the proposed amendment on October 23. A motion was made to approve the change which failed 2-7. The Commission took no further action on the item.

Amendments to the Zoning Regulations: Amendments to the Zoning Regulations require approval from the Legislative Body (County Commission), but also require submittal to the “Regional Planning Commission of the region in which the territory covered by the ordinance is located” for “approval, disapproval, or suggestions”. Since the Alcoa Regional Planning Commission’s region extends beyond the city’s corporate limits into area over which the County’s zoning is applicable, then review is required from both the Blount County and the Alcoa Regional Planning Commissions prior to consideration by the County Commission. As noted above, both Regional Planning Commissions have considered the proposed. The County Commission must now call for and hold a public hearing with due notice prior to taking action on this amendment.