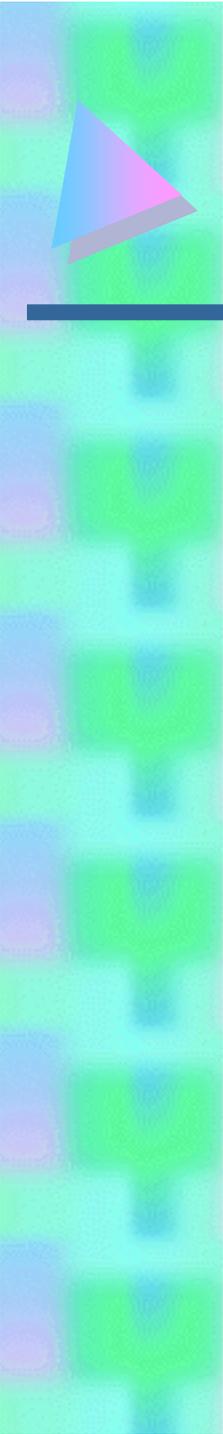


Accessory Dwelling Proposal of the Housing Commission

Susan Retz, Member
Accessory Dwelling Subcommittee
Community Forum, March 2008

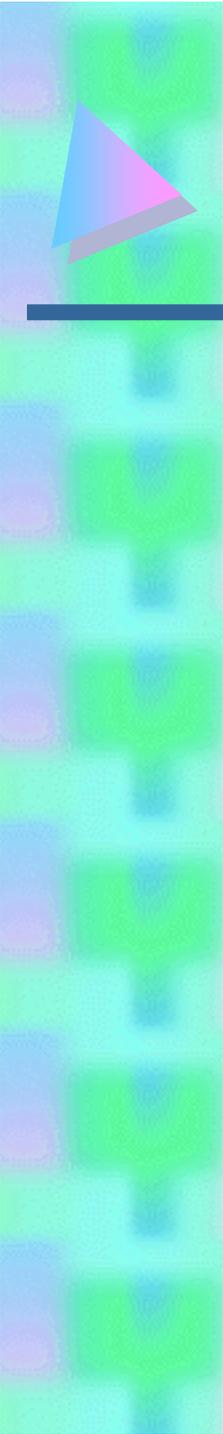




Definition

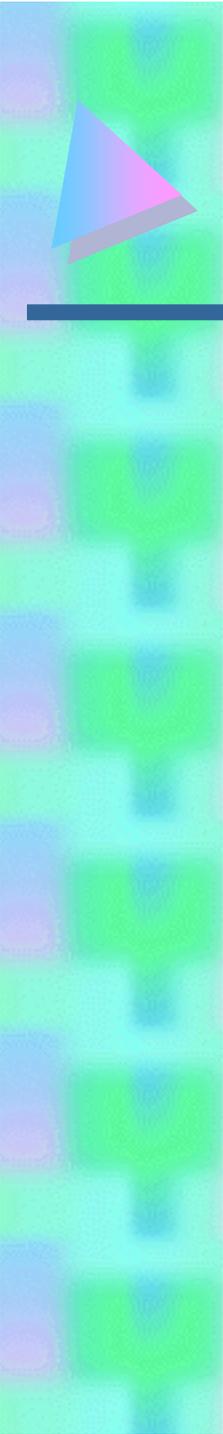
- ❑ An accessory dwelling is:
 - ❑ a second dwelling
 - ❑ with kitchen and bath
 - ❑ on a single family lot

- ❑ It may be inside the main house or detached



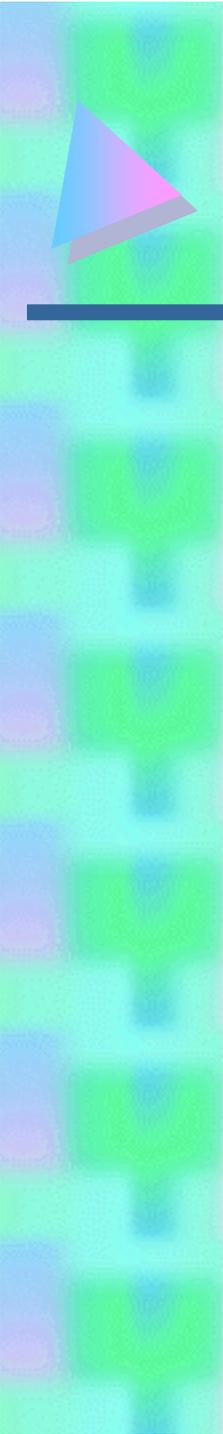
Why Legalize ADs?

- ❑ ADs provide many benefits with little County investment
- ❑ Can increase housing affordability for both owners and tenants
- ❑ *Key Benefit:* Will facilitate elders' ability to age in place
 - ❑ Recommended by Elder Readiness Plan



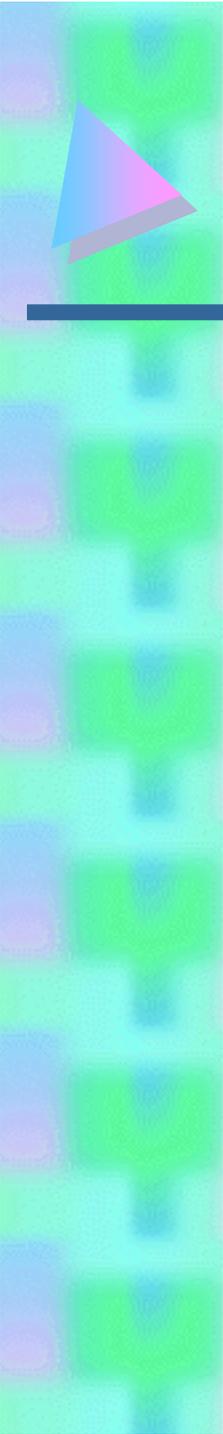
Why Legalize ADs?

- ❑ Studies have shown that rents are typically below market rates
- ❑ Illegal ADs often provide unsafe housing
- ❑ Legal ADs can make home ownership more affordable
 - ❑ May allow an up to 25% higher mortgage



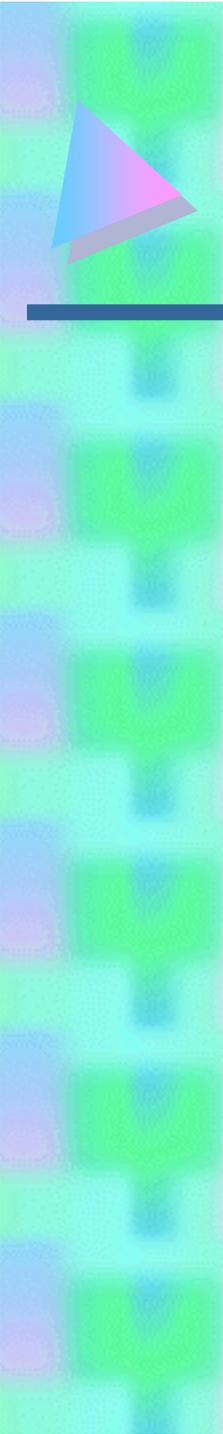
Why Legalize ADs?

- Allows family or four or more to have a caregiver, e.g. an Au Pair, live on-site
- The County's Zoning Ordinance definition of family includes:
 - Any number of people related by blood, marriage, adoption or foster care
 - No more than 4 unrelated persons
- Technically a family of 4 with an Au Pair counts as 5 persons who are not all related



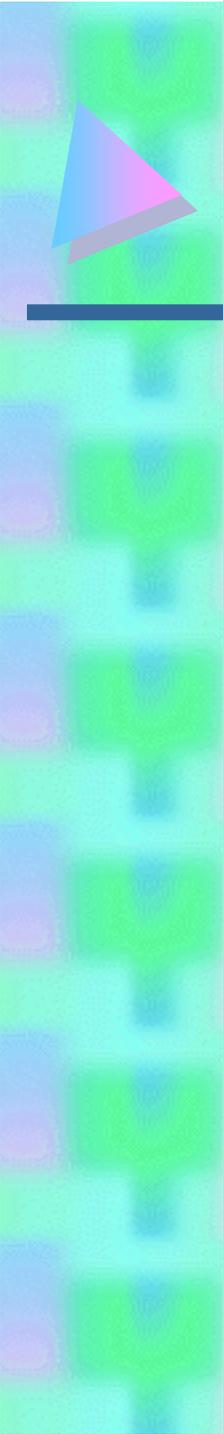
Types of ADs

- The Housing Commission recommends allowing ADs in:
 - Single-family houses and
 - Duplexes
- Parking was viewed as too big an issue to allow ADs in townhouses



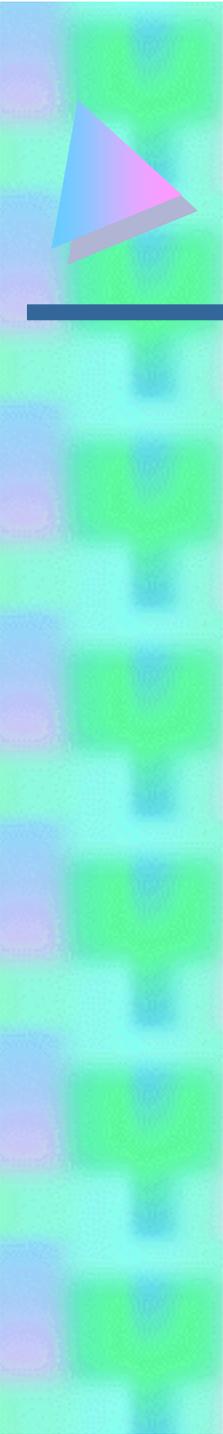
Types of ADs

- The Commission proposal allows:
 - *Interior ADs*, e.g. ADs in basements, on second floors, or in semi-detached structures; and
 - *Exterior ADs*, e.g. ADs in separate structures such as a converted garage.



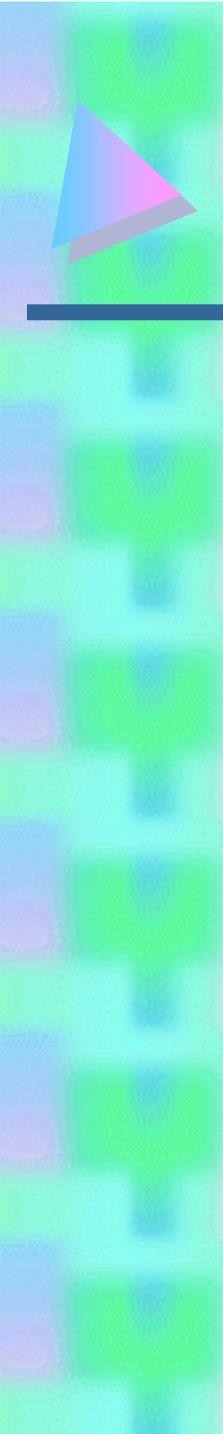
Approval Process

- Each AD would need an AD Permit approved by Zoning Administrator
 - *Interior ADs:* Use an administrative process
 - *Exterior ADs:* Require a use permit approved by the County Board
 - Allows conditions to ensure preserving the character of the neighborhood and protecting neighbors' privacy



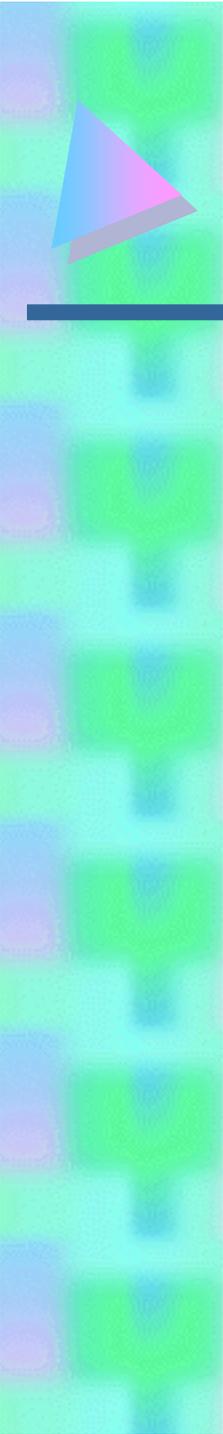
Size & Occupancy Limits

- The Commission recommends:
 - a cap on the number of occupants, possibly 2 persons;
 - a limit on the size of exterior ADs of 1,000 sq. ft.; and
 - a maximum footprint for an exterior AD of 650 sq. ft.



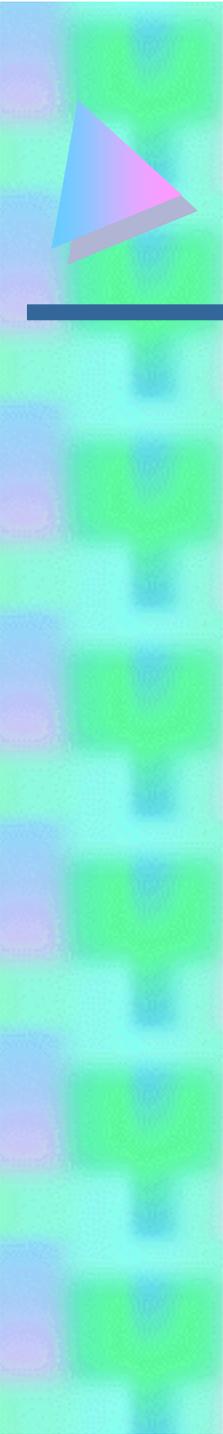
Avoiding Overcrowding

- Key requirements to ensure that there is no overcrowding are:
 - Requiring owner-occupancy;
 - Limiting the size of the AD; and
 - Requiring the owner to grant code enforcement staff access to the AD.



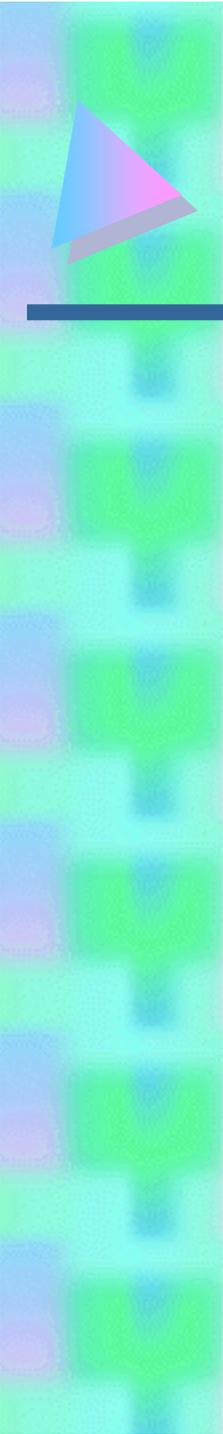
Parking Requirements

- ❑ Each AD Permit application would require a parking survey to determine if the street was over 65% parked
- ❑ Tighter standard than for residential permits (75%)



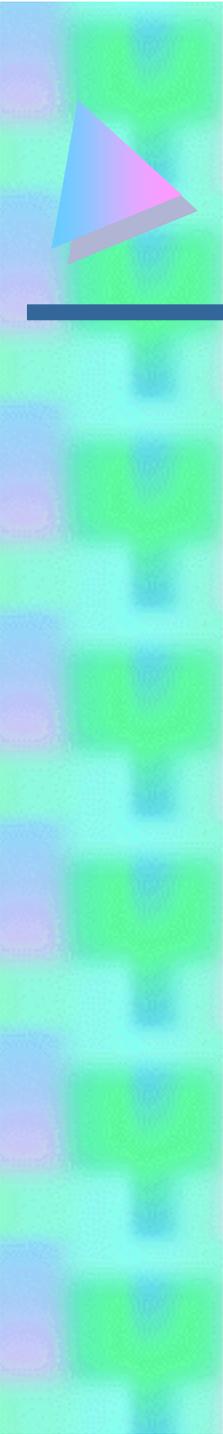
Parking Requirements

- If less than 65% parked, an AD can be added without a parking requirement
- If the block is more than 65% parked, the owner must:
 - Add an off-street space if there are none; or
 - Agree to preserve existing off-street parking.



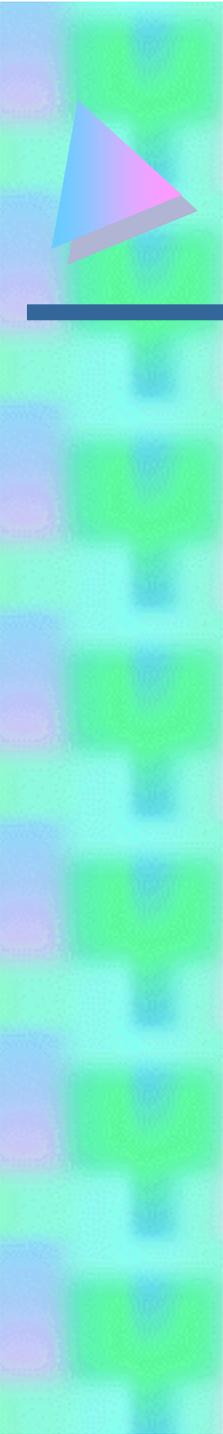
Height & Setback Limits

- Existing height and setback requirements would apply, **except** for:
 - Conversion of detached accessory structures, e.g. garages, that
 - Pre-date Board approval of ADs; and
 - Conformed to the Zoning Ordinance when built.



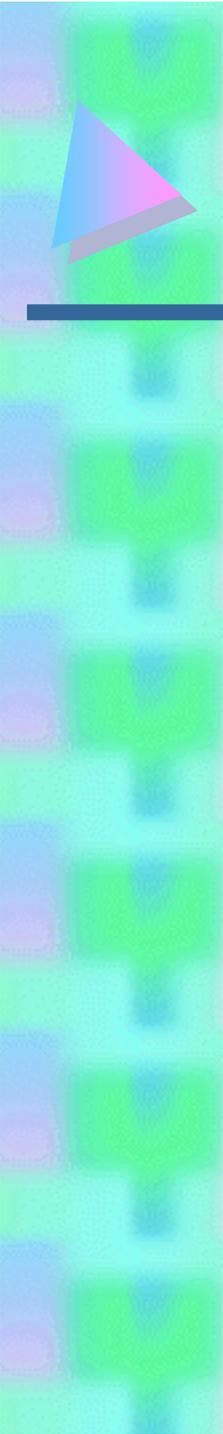
Lot Coverage

- ❑ Existing lot coverage requirements would apply



Code Enforcement

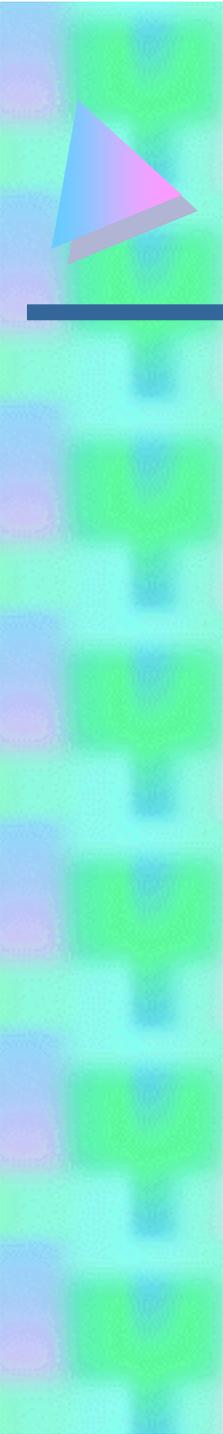
- ❑ Code Enforcement staff enforce maintenance and occupancy requirements
- ❑ AD Permit could be revoked by the Zoning Administrator for certain violations, e.g.
 - ❑ failure to maintain owner occupancy or enforce occupancy limits or
 - ❑ elimination of a required off-street parking space



Production Rate

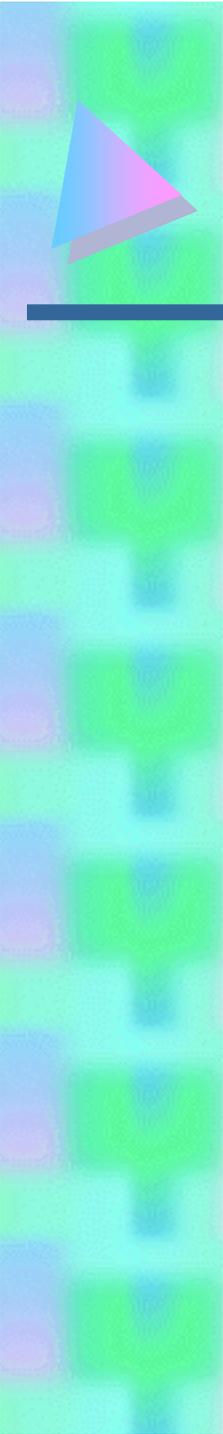
- ❑ How many ADs likely to be added?
- ❑ Typically, one new AD per 1,000 single-family homes
- ❑ For Arlington, that would be 28 ADs

Dozens – Not Thousands



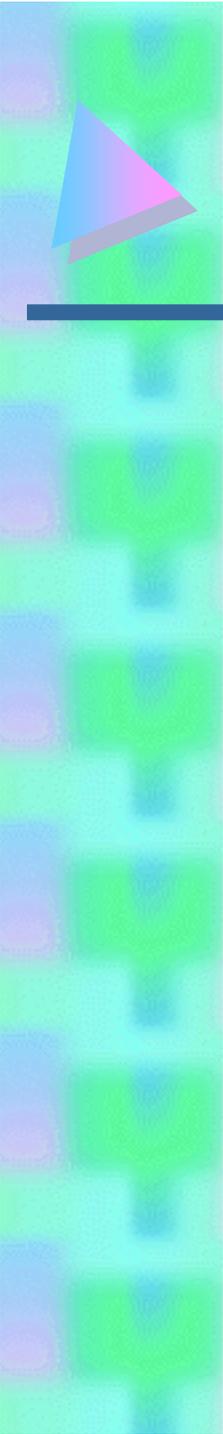
Illegal ADs

- ❑ Owners of illegal ADs must obtain an AD Permit
 - ❑ The Commission recommends that owners have a 6-month grace period to apply for an AD Permit
 - ❑ Owner-occupancy will be required
 - ❑ ADs must meet Building Code, Zoning Ordinance and Parking requirements



Annual Report

- Staff would provide an annual report on:
 - number of AD Permit applications
 - number of AD Permits approved
 - other details to be specified, such as pictures of exterior ADs and number of complaints by type of complaint



For More Information

- Please contact Fran Lunney,
Coordinator of Housing Planning, at:
 - Email: flunney@arlingtonva.us
 - Phone: 703-228-3785
 - Written comments will be shared with
the Housing Commission and the
County Board office