

## **VILLAGE OF DOBBS FERRY**

The Village of Dobbs Ferry has not adopted the County model zoning ordinance for affordable housing, although the Village's zoning code does incorporate some aspects of the model ordinance: The zoning code defines affordable housing in the same manner as the model ordinance and mandates that at least 10 percent of any new development of more than ten units be affordable. The Village also has few restrictions on multifamily development, which is widely permitted. Dobbs Ferry has nevertheless made no progress in providing affordable housing; none of the more than 100 units assigned to the Village under the unadopted Affordable Housing Allocation Plan have been built. This is mainly because of the built-out quality of the Village, plus a lack of incentives to promote redevelopment.

### **Model Zoning and County Benchmark**

- The Village of Dobbs Ferry has not adopted the model zoning ordinance, but it does require that at least 10 percent of all residential developments of more than ten units be "affordable," as defined in the model ordinance, and regulates the administration of affordable units.
- The Affordable Housing Allocation Plan produced in 2005 by the County's planning department calls for slightly more than 100 affordable housing units in Dobbs Ferry, of which none have been built in the interim.

### **Zoning Ordinance**

- The Village Code requires that at least 10 percent of all residential developments of more than ten units be affordable.
- Multifamily residences are permitted as-of-right in 13 of the Village's 24 zoning districts, mapped in areas distributed throughout the Village. Except in one district, the minimum lot size per unit ranges from a low of 800 square feet (in two zoning districts) to a high of 6,000 square feet, and the minimum lot area is 5,000 square feet. The exception is the DG district, which contains no maximum density regulations.
- Residences above stores are permitted as-of-right in six zoning districts, representing all of the non-residential districts except manufacturing.
- Two- and/or three-family dwellings are permitted as-of-right in 13 zoning districts.

### **Restrictive Practices**

- Accessory dwelling units are not permitted anywhere in the Village. Section 300-39 of the Village Code explicitly states that accessory dwelling units are illegal in the Village.

### **Incentives and Mandates**

- The Village Code requires that at least 10 percent of all residential developments of more than ten units be affordable.
- No incentives are provided for the development of affordable housing.

### **Zoning Map, Development Pattern and Development Potential**

- Zoning districts allowing multifamily housing development are mapped in 29 areas within the Village, covering 17 percent of the Village's area (an unusually high percentage for municipalities covered by the Settlement), but most of these areas are built out.
- Multifamily housing occupies 5.4 percent of the total land area. Another 2.5 percent of the total land area is occupied by two- and three-family development.
- There are 55 available development sites where multifamily housing is permitted, encompassing a total of nine acres. The individual sites are quite small, however, averaging only 0.1 acres. In total, the sites can accommodate up to 273 housing units, but mainly in small developments averaging five units each, to which the Village's affordable housing mandate does not apply.
- Some large sites located in multifamily districts may someday become available in connection with the sale or reuse of campuses and buildings used for group homes, medical care, education, and the like.
- Many of the zoning districts that permit multifamily development already have relatively high percentages of Black and/or Hispanic residents. Approximately half (134 out of 273) of the estimated housing units that can be accommodated on available sites would be in the DB and DG districts, which have existing populations that are 24 and 17 percent minority respectively. In order to comply with the Settlement, a racial analysis must be conducted at the census block level. High concentrations of people of color will disqualify some sites for additional affordable housing development.

### **Master Plan**

- The master plan calls for a 10 percent affordable housing mandate in connection with all residential development of four or more units. It also calls for a modest incentive, in which the unit count (but not the square footage) can be increased in connection with the provision of affordable housing.
- The plan calls for reducing parking requirements for housing units above stores, removing one of the major impediments to this type of development.
- The plan also calls for allowing accessory housing units of sufficient size to accommodate families.

### **Implications**

- The Village has so far not satisfied any portion of its affordable housing allotment; and although the current zoning regime provides the theoretical opportunity to develop the approximately 100 affordable units needed to meet the County's Affordable Housing Allocation plan benchmark, practical impediments make that number of affordable units unlikely, let alone the many hundreds of units that would be required in the case of mixed-income development (e.g., 1,000 units under a 90 percent market-rate / 10 percent affordable format, which represents the minimum affordable housing component under the Village's zoning ordinance).
- The available sites for new multifamily residential development are quite small, averaging only 0.1 acres. Although the sites are numerous enough to accommodate a total of an estimated 273 housing units, the small size of the

sites (each accommodating an average of five units) means (1) that the Village's affordable housing mandate (for developments of ten or more units) would generally not apply, (2) that the total number of potential multifamily units is not sufficiently greater than the 105-unit affordable housing benchmark for the benchmark to be achieved within mixed-income developments, and (3) that many of the sites are too small for mixed-income developments and that any mixed-income projects that do occur would not achieve economies of scale.

- High nearby concentrations of people of color may disqualify some of the identified sites for FAH development.
- The absence of incentives decreases the likelihood that any new multifamily units will be affordable. Given the high value of multifamily housing in the Village, such incentives would likely prove effective.
- At the right densities, housing values are sufficient to induce multifamily development and mixed-income housing without financial incentives. The very high value of apartments and condo units in the Village might be sufficient to promote 80/20 mixed-income housing, which would provide less development pressure than the 90/10 mixed-income development that represents the minimum affordable housing component under the Village's zoning ordinance, and which, unlike 90/10 development, would qualify for federal tax incentives.
- The Village contains large educational campuses and a hospital, located in multifamily housing districts. Redevelopment of any of these large sites for housing would allow the Village to make dramatic progress in meeting the benchmark.
- Although they are currently not allowed, accessory units could be considered as a means to create new development of affordable housing, given the predominantly built-out character of the Village, especially if allowed in accessory buildings (such as existing or "faux" garages), and especially if such units were listed on a Countywide registry of FAH units.

## DOBBS FERRY FACT SHEET

a. Total acreage of the Village	1,580 acres	100%
b. Total acreage in zoning districts where multifamily housing is permitted as-of-right	263.8 acres	16.7%
c. Undeveloped area in these zoning districts	13.4 acres	0.9%
d. Undeveloped area not subject to wetlands, floodplain and steep slopes	9.0 acres	0.6%
B	0.90 acres	
CP	4.82 acres	
DB	0.44 acres	
DT	0.95 acres	
MDR1	0.57 acres	
DG	1.36 acres	
e. Order of magnitude area available for development*	7.2 acres	0.46%
B	0.72 acres	
CP	3.86 acres	
DB	0.35 acres	
DT	0.76 acres	
MDR1	0.45 acres	
DG	1.09 acres	
f. Number of sites available for development	55 sites	
g. Average size of sites	0.1 acres	
h. Theoretical number of multifamily units that can be developed as-of-right	273 units	
B	26 units	
CP	62 units	
DB	36 units	
DT	44 units	
MDR1	7 units	
DG	98 units	
i. Average selling price for multifamily (condo) units	\$535,000**	
j. Order of magnitude value for land, per condo unit	\$135,000	
k. Order of magnitude total cost of development, per condo unit	\$375,000	
l. Percent minority population (7.4% Black, 7% Hispanic)	14%	
m. Percent minority population in the zoning districts permitting multifamily housing as-of-right and containing available development sites		

B	3.3% Black, 6.1% Hispanic	9%
CP	6.6% Black, 3.8% Hispanic	10%
DB	7.0% Black, 17.2% Hispanic	24%
DT	3.1% Black, 9.6% Hispanic	13%
MDR1	4.3% Black, 5.2% Hispanic	10%
DG	10.6% Black, 6.6% Hispanic	17%

n. Number of units needed to meet the 2000-2015 Allocation Plan benchmark		105 units
2015 Allocation	105 units	
Number of units created since 2000	0 units	

\* After applying a factor of 80 percent to account for irregular site configuration, setbacks, building form restrictions, and the like.

\*\* Regional value employed where data was not provided for the municipality, employing the County's definition of North, Central and South for what is meant as region. Weighted averages were calculated using available data for each region.

