

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Peyton Oliver** <[peyton.oliver@como.gov](mailto:peyton.oliver@como.gov)>

Date: Mon, Oct 6, 2025 at 9:37 AM

Subject: Re: Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance Tweaks - asking P&Z commission to review?

To: City of Columbia Ward 1 <[ward1@como.gov](mailto:ward1@como.gov)>

Cc: Council Inquiry <[council-inquiry@como.gov](mailto:council-inquiry@como.gov)>

Good morning Valerie,

This inquiry has been received and will be forwarded to the appropriate staff.

Thank you.

On Mon, Oct 6, 2025 at 8:01 AM City of Columbia Ward 1 <[ward1@como.gov](mailto:ward1@como.gov)> wrote:

Hello All,

I have reviewed Adrienne's recommendations. I do plan to request that the planning and zoning commission (PZC) consider another round of revisions to the ADU ordinances. Several of these suggestions were discussed during my time on PZC and we were expecting to take this back up for a second round of potential revisions at the time. After talking to commission members, I think the knowledge that another PZC work session was planned may have been lost when we had changes in staff.

Valerie

Valerie Carroll, PhD (She/Her)  
First Ward City Council Representative  
City of Columbia  
701 E. Broadway  
Columbia, MO 65201  
(573) 864-4978

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Adrienne Stolwyk** <[adrienne@monarch-architecture.com](mailto:adrienne@monarch-architecture.com)>

Date: Sun, Oct 5, 2025 at 4:39 PM

Subject: Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance Tweaks - asking P&Z commission to review?

To: <[ward6@como.gov](mailto:ward6@como.gov)>, Nick Knoth <[ward1@como.gov](mailto:ward1@como.gov)>, <[ward2@como.gov](mailto:ward2@como.gov)>, City of Columbia Ward 3 <[ward3@como.gov](mailto:ward3@como.gov)>, City of Columbia Ward4 <[Ward4@como.gov](mailto:Ward4@como.gov)>, <[ward5@como.gov](mailto:ward5@como.gov)>, Mayor Barbara Buffaloe <[mayor@como.gov](mailto:mayor@como.gov)>

Hello City Councilpersons and Mayor Buffaloe,

Because I have met or emailed with most of you about this topic, I thought it might be appropriate to formally request that City Council ask the Planning & Zoning Commission to review the following ADU ordinance adjustments at the earliest appropriate time. Valerie Carroll expressed particular interest in referring this work to P&Z, as she has lots of experience on the commission and with ADUs. Other City Councilpersons have also indicated support for P&Z looking at these things.

I know there are many serious issues the City Council is dealing with right now. However tedious ADU ordinance work may be, I am heartened to work on it because I see so much potential positive impact on affordable housing, intergenerational living, and sustainable growth. I have several clients who are planning to build an ADU imminently and would be impacted (for the better!) by movement on these ordinance tweaks.

Thanks for your service to our lovely town!  
Adrienne Stolwyk

#### **A) MOST EFFECTIVE ADU ORDINANCE TWEAK:**

It is becoming clear to me that **one single thing Columbia could do to realize more of the benefits of ADUs would be to allow ADUs by-right in R-1 zones, with the caveat that only one (1) rental licence be granted per property.**

- This would remove the requirement for R-1 homeowners to get a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to build an ADU, which is a significant regulatory barrier that scares many people away.
- If the homeowner wanted to move away after building an ADU, they would only be allowed to rent out one unit (primary residence or the ADU but not both).
- This approach would make ADU development in R-1 less attractive to outside investors who would want to rent out 2 units on a property, which could have detrimental impacts on neighborhood character.
- Limiting the rental license to only 1 would be **consistent with how the P&Z commission has granted CUPs for ADUs in R-1 lots in several cases.**

**B) ADDITIONAL ADU TWEAKS:**

1. **Allow an attached ADU to encroach in the rear yard (max 30%) and use 6' rear yard setback** - This would just make the attached ADU rules consistent with what is already allowed for a detached ADU. I have one client that has a shallow lot and would be directly impacted by this change. Currently, he could build a detached ADU that encroaches in the rear yard, but not an attached ADU that encroaches in the rear yard. It doesn't make sense for him to build a detached ADU because the ADU may be occupied by his mother-in-law and an attached ADU is more practical, so the family can more easily care for her.
2. **Formalize that ADU area can be calculated via the net area** (space inside the exterior walls; does not include exterior wall thickness or non-conditioned stairs accessing an ADU above a garage, for instance). I think this is how the City informally allows the calculation, but because it is not formalized in the zoning code, it is subject to interpretation and could change when, say, a plan reviewer retires and a new one takes his / her place. This would encourage thicker (more insulative) wall assemblies without "costing" a client habitable ADU area. For the purpose of calculating encroachment in the rear yard, however, the footprint (not net area) could be used.
3. **Allow detached ADU height to be 24' max** - Right now the ADU cannot be taller than the principal dwelling. Doug Kenney (City plan reviewer) has said he has seen this as an issue on a number of permit applications. I have had several projects for which this has been a significant limitation. There are many modest, single story existing primary houses that are forced to have short ADUs. I have several clients interested in building an ADU on piers because it is a more affordable foundation and lessens concrete (a material whose production emits a lot of carbon) usage. Because the piers would raise the ADU floor ~30" or so above grade, it would not be allowed because this modest increase in height would then cause the ADU to exceed the primary residence's height. Additionally, these short primary residences currently cannot have an ADU above a detached garage, because the ADU would be too tall. Detached garages with ADUs above are in the City's interest to encourage, as they allow more space on a lot for off-street parking than an ADU built at-grade. It is already legal for a detached Accessory Structure (say a detached garage with a "studio" above - NOT an ADU or residence) to be 24' tall. Allowing ADUs to be 24' tall would be consistent with the current height limit for Accessory Structures.
4. **Relax side yard setbacks for ADUs on corner lots** - The current sideyard setback on a corner lot is 25' (same as front yard) which really chews up a lot of the lot. I have worked on schematic ADU plans for clients where the existing principal dwelling was only about ~15' from the side property line, because it was built prior to the 25' sideyard zoning requirement. This is common in older neighborhoods. I **suggest that an ADU on a corner lot should match the existing primary residence's side yard actual setback or 25', whichever is less.** This would make building ADUs on corner lots much more viable.
5. **Allow ADUs by-right in M-N zones** - I know one landowner with a house on an M-N lot who would like to build an ADU, but currently would need a CUP to do so. There are very few M-N lots, so I don't think this change would have much effect other than for this particular landowner!

Adrienne Stolwyk, R.A., LEED AP  
(she/her)  
816-694-1439  
[www.monarch-architecture.com](http://www.monarch-architecture.com)

