



Determination of Equivalence Request

Topic: Number of principal buildings on a lot

Code Requirement:

SMC 14.212.550.E

One principal building at the frontage and one outbuilding to the rear of the principal building may be built on each lot. Only one single-family dwelling is permitted on one lot except pursuant to the bungalow court exception in SMC 14.212.500.

Proposed Equivalent:

The project proposes to locate two principal buildings on the lot, one located on the frontage and one located to the rear of the principal building. The built form will be similar to what is permitted under SMC 14.212.550.E, the only exception will be that both the front and rear buildings will contain dwelling units.

Response to Determination of Equivalence Criteria (SMC 14.212.170.E):

The City Planner may approve a requested determination of equivalence when all of the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The request constitutes an equivalent and alternative method of achieving the purpose and intent of the subject development regulation.

The Pilchuck District Development Regulations were developed to be a form-based code, so this request will constitute an equivalent method of achieving the form of a front and rear building on a single lot.

2. The extent to which the proposed land development implements the purpose and intent of this chapter is not compromised or diminished.

This request allows the development to better implement many of the elements of the Pilchuck District Development Regulations. By placing one building on the frontage and one to the rear, the development is better able to create an interactive street edge, with two units and their entries facing onto Cedar Ave. The alternative to this request would be to place all units in a single structure facing south onto a shared access easement, which would minimize the street façade, and the property would necessarily become more auto-oriented.

3. No adverse environmental or land use impact would result.

There are no known impacts to environment or land use of the subject property or nearby properties.

4. The approved deviation is the minimum necessary to achieve the requested relief.

The requested deviation is the minimum necessary to achieve relief in order to provide the street-friendly facades and active lifestyles intended by the Pilchuck District Development Regulations.

Determination of Equivalence Request

Topic: Ground floor ceiling height

Code Requirement:

SMC 14.212.550 Table V-3

2 BUILDING HEIGHT		
C	Ground floor ceiling	12 ft min. clear

Proposed Equivalent:

There are four townhouse units proposed on the property. Because of the requirements for open space and driveway access, these townhouse units are limited in depth. Providing a minimum 12’ clear ground floor would require stair runs to be too long to fit within the available depth provided for each unit.

Ground floor ceilings are proposed to be 8’ in all four units, however, the front façade of Units 1 and 2 (the two street-facing units) has been enhanced with French doors and full height windows on the ground floor to maximize transparency and create an interactive and open street façade. Large windows are also proposed on upper floors to create added interest and articulation.

Response to Determination of Equivalence Criteria (SMC 14.212.170.E):

The City Planner may approve a requested determination of equivalence when all of the following criteria are satisfied:

1. *The request constitutes an equivalent and alternative method of achieving the purpose and intent of the subject development regulation.*

The project provides alternative design options by proposing large windows and French doors to create an open and inviting ground floor and interest and articulation for the full height of the street façade.

2. *The extent to which the proposed land development implements the purpose and intent of this chapter is not compromised or diminished.*

The requested determination of equivalence has no impact on the purpose or intent of the chapter.

3. *No adverse environmental or land use impact would result.*

The requested determination of equivalence has no impact on environment or land uses on or near the site.

4. *The approved deviation is the minimum necessary to achieve the requested relief.*

The requested deviation is the minimum necessary to accommodate the required elements onto the site.



Determination of Equivalence Request

Topic: Frontage coverage

Code Requirement:

SMC 14.212.550 Table V-3

7 FRONTAGE COVERAGE	80% min.
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Proposed Equivalent:

Proposed frontage coverage is 61.6%. It is not possible to reach 80% frontage coverage on the site while also providing the 20'-wide on-site vehicle access required by the fire department, as described in the pre-application review for this project dated March 16, 2020 and in the follow-up additional questions letter dated April 14, 2020. The frontage for the property is only 60.06', so 80% frontage coverage would dictate that the front building be at least 48' wide, leaving only 12' or less for an access from Cedar Avenue. Our understanding is that fire department access requirement would take precedence over development standards. The development proposal is to provide a 37'-wide front building, leaving adequate space for a 20' access, curbs, and a small 2' setback on the north side of the property. This would result in 61.6% frontage coverage.

Response to Determination of Equivalence Criteria (SMC 14.212.170.E):

The City Planner may approve a requested determination of equivalence when all of the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The request constitutes an equivalent and alternative method of achieving the purpose and intent of the subject development regulation.

Given the width of the lot, the request constitutes the closest to equivalent possible while also providing adequate fire department access.

2. The extent to which the proposed land development implements the purpose and intent of this chapter is not compromised or diminished.

The proposed land development still provides a front façade oriented to the street with engaging pedestrian features, and creates a visual building wall over most of the frontage. So the purpose and intent of this chapter are still being met.

3. No adverse environmental or land use impact would result.

There are no environmental or land use impacts likely as a result of this request.

4. The approved deviation is the minimum necessary to achieve the requested relief.

Given the width of the lot, the requested deviation is the minimum necessary to achieve relief.



Determination of Equivalence Request

Topic: Pedestrian access outside of vehicle lanes

Code Requirement:

SMC 14.212.610.D

Where access to parking facilities is provided from side or front streets, the maximum number of curb cuts associated with a single development shall be one two-lane curb cut or two one-lane curb cuts. The width of the vehicle access across the frontage shall be as narrow as practicable. Where vehicle access is provided from a street, pedestrian access outside of vehicle lanes shall be provided. Only one access point shall be permitted for a lot with a detached single-family dwelling.

Proposed Equivalent:

Because of the competing requirements for frontage coverage and emergency access, there is not adequate width at the property frontage to provide separated pedestrian access to the rear units. In lieu of a separated walkway, we are proposing to replace half of the asphalt at the front driveway entrance with grasscrete. This will allow the project to still provide a 20'-wide access for emergency vehicles, but only the 10' requirement for typical vehicle access will be paved with asphalt. The result is a more woonerf-like driveway access that will provide a more inviting pedestrian environment to access the rear units while also acting as a traffic calming device for vehicle leaving and entering the site.

Response to Determination of Equivalence Criteria (SMC 14.212.170.E):

The City Planner may approve a requested determination of equivalence when all of the following criteria are satisfied:

1. *The request constitutes an equivalent and alternative method of achieving the purpose and intent of the subject development regulation.*

The request provides an equivalent method of achieving the requirement for separated pedestrian walkways by providing a shared space that provides for both pedestrian access and vehicular access in a compact shared space, using changes in surface material to act as traffic calming.

2. *The extent to which the proposed land development implements the purpose and intent of this chapter is not compromised or diminished.*

The proposed request allows the project to balance various development requirements of multiple departments while also providing safe pedestrian access.

3. *No adverse environmental or land use impact would result.*

The request will have no impact on environment or land use.

4. *The approved deviation is the minimum necessary to achieve the requested relief.*

The request is an appropriate compromise and the minimum necessary to achieve relief.