

MEMORANDUM

TO: Councilmember Briere

FROM: Wendy L. Rampson, Planning Manager
Jeff Kahan, City Planner

DATE: September 23, 2010

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendments to Chapters 55 (Zoning) and 59 (Off-street Parking) regarding Area, Height and Placement Standards (10-0750): Additional Information.

This memorandum is in response to your request for visual depiction of impacts of future commercial development on surrounding neighborhoods as a result of proposed Area, Height, and Placement (AHP) amendments. The proposed amendments are scheduled for public hearing and second reading at the October 4, 2010 Council meeting.

Attached are three pairs of cross-sections that depict elevations of how the proposed amendments might affect development adjacent to a neighboring residence. A written summary of each image is provided below. Also included here is a summary of anticipated community benefits that were presented in the public meetings during the summer of 2009 and summarized in the staff report to the Planning Commission.

CROSS-SECTION IMAGES

Side Setback Requirements for O (Office District) – Figure 1 shows how the City's current minimum side setback standard for Office affects the side yard placement of a new office building that meets the maximum height limitation and abuts residential. Figure 2 shows how the proposed side setback standard would affect the side yard placement of a new office building that would meet the proposed maximum height limitation. Although the maximum height in the Office zoning district is proposed to increase by 15-feet, the minimum side setback would increase by 35-feet for those Office properties that maximize height and abut residential.

Side and Rear Setback Requirements for C2B (Business Service District) – Figure 3 shows how the City's current minimum side and rear setback standards for C2B affect the side and rear yard placement of a new commercial building that meets the maximum height limitation and abuts residential. Since no setback is currently required for new buildings in the C2B next to residential zoning, the only buffer is the Conflicting Land Use Buffer (CLUB, a 15-foot wide landscaped buffer). Figure 4 shows how the proposed side and rear setback of a new commercial building, which meets the proposed maximum height limitation,

would affect the side and rear yard placement of a new commercial building that meets the maximum height limitation and abuts residential. The maximum height is proposed to be reduced by 5-feet and the side and rear setbacks that abut residential are proposed to increase from 15-feet (Conflicting Land Use Buffer) to a 55-foot setback for those commercial projects that maximize height and abut residential.

Side and Rear Setback Requirements for C3 (Fringe Commercial District) –

Figure 5 shows how the City’s current minimum side and rear setback standards for C3 affect the side and rear yard placement of a new commercial building that meets the maximum height limitation and abuts residential. Figure 6 shows how the proposed side and rear setback of a new commercial building, which meets the proposed maximum height limitation, would affect the side and rear yard placement of a new commercial building that meets the maximum height limitation and abuts residential. Although the maximum height is proposed to increase by 20-feet, the minimum side and rear setback is proposed to increase by 25-feet for those commercial projects that maximize height and abut residential.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

1. Business and Job Retention and Expansion – The proposed amendments will allow the expansion of existing employment and retail uses that will encourage businesses to remain and expand in Ann Arbor.
2. Revitalization of older Retail and Employment Centers – Many retail and employment centers in Ann Arbor were built more than 30 years ago and have become dated and underutilized. These proposed amendments will encourage these sites to redevelop and be revitalized.
3. Environmental Benefits – Redeveloping sites will trigger a number of code requirements that will result in substantial environmental gains such as: a) storm water management (buildings constructed prior to 1978 typically do not detain storm water), b) landscaping, which will result in additional open space being provided as well as new trees and shrubs, and c) new energy efficiency standards for new buildings.
4. Improved Non-motorized Access – The revisions will result in new buildings being constructed closer to public streets and sidewalks which will improve access for transit riders, cyclists, and pedestrians, including those with limited access abilities.
5. Improved Efficiency of Land Use, Mass Transit and Infrastructure – The proposed revisions will allow existing non-residential zoning districts to be used more efficiently and compactly. This will better support transit service, encourage development in existing urban areas instead of greenfields (and other sites without access to transit), and uses existing infrastructure more efficiently.

6. Enhanced Housing Diversity – By creating a new small lot single-family district (R1E), encouraging parking to be located under new residential buildings, and allowing residential uses in Research (RE) districts (by special exception), these proposed amendments will help expand the continuum of housing choices in Ann Arbor.

Attachments: Office District Cross-section
 C2B District Cross-section
 C3 District Cross-section



Figure 1

EXISTING SIDE AND REAR SETBACK REQUIREMENT FOR OFFICE (O)

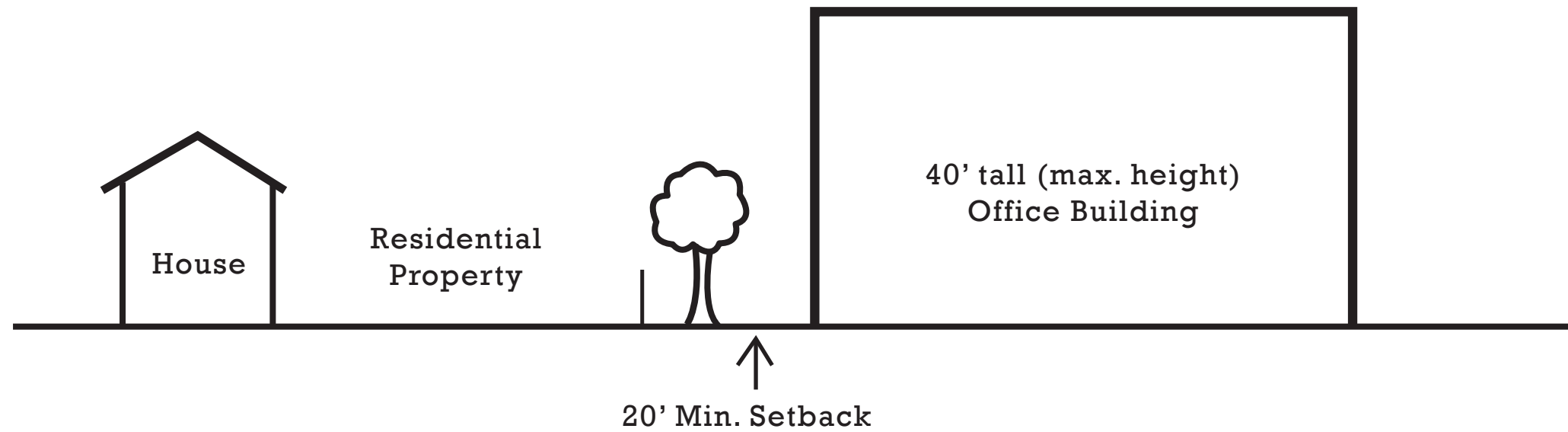


Figure 2

PROPOSED SIDE AND REAR SETBACK REQUIREMENT FOR OFFICE (O)

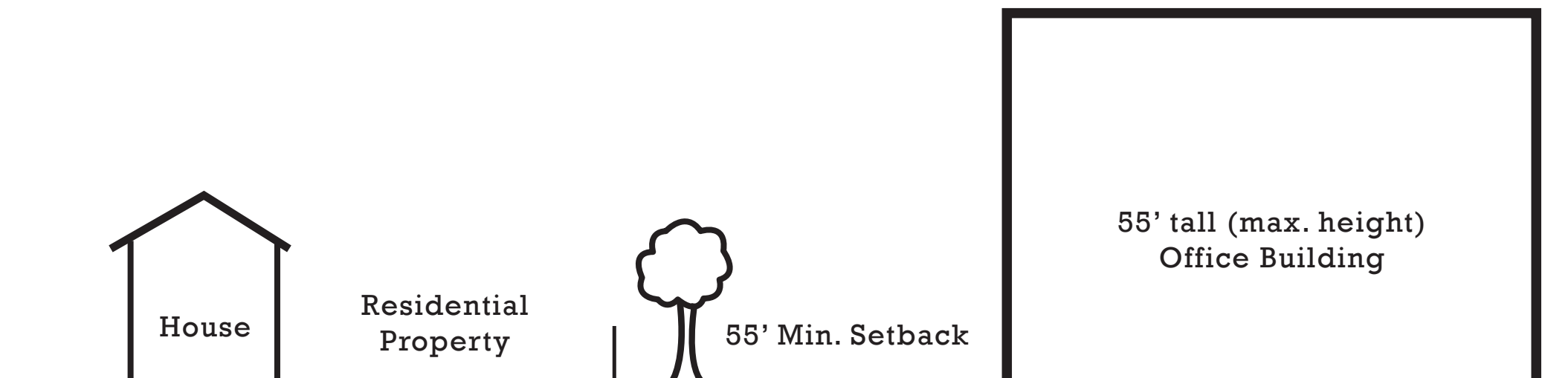




Figure 3

EXISTING SIDE AND REAR SETBACK REQUIREMENT FOR C2B

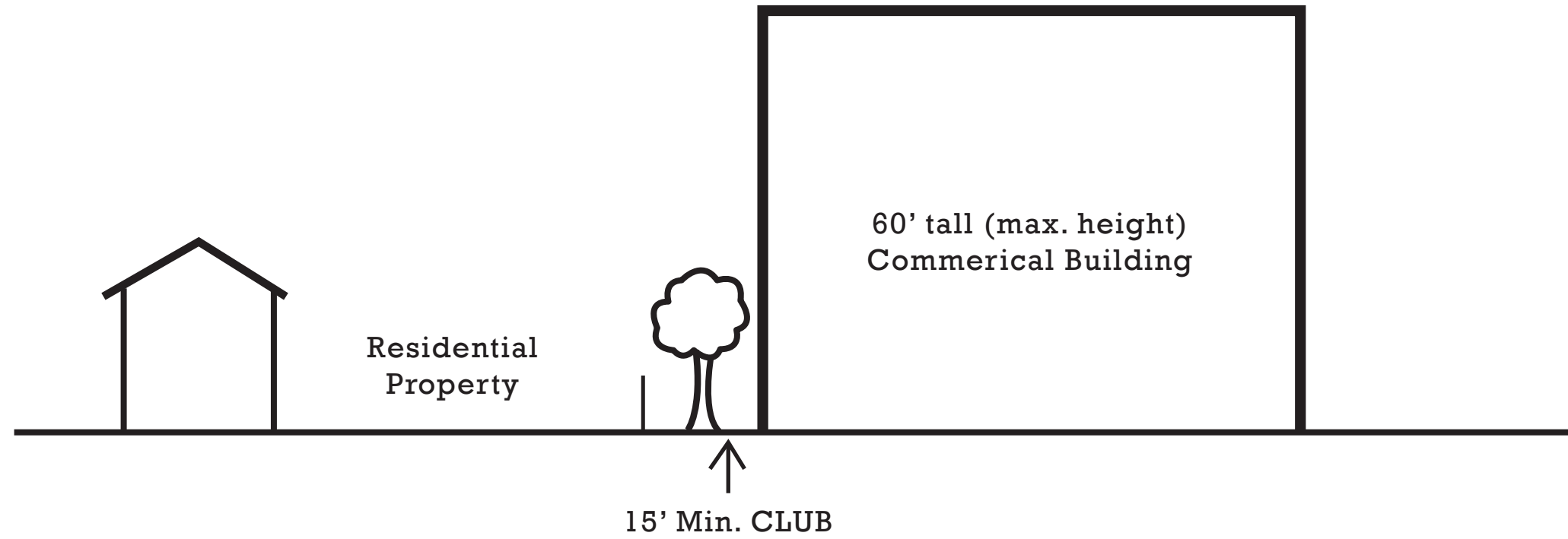


Figure 4

PROPOSED SIDE AND REAR SETBACK REQUIREMENT FOR C2B

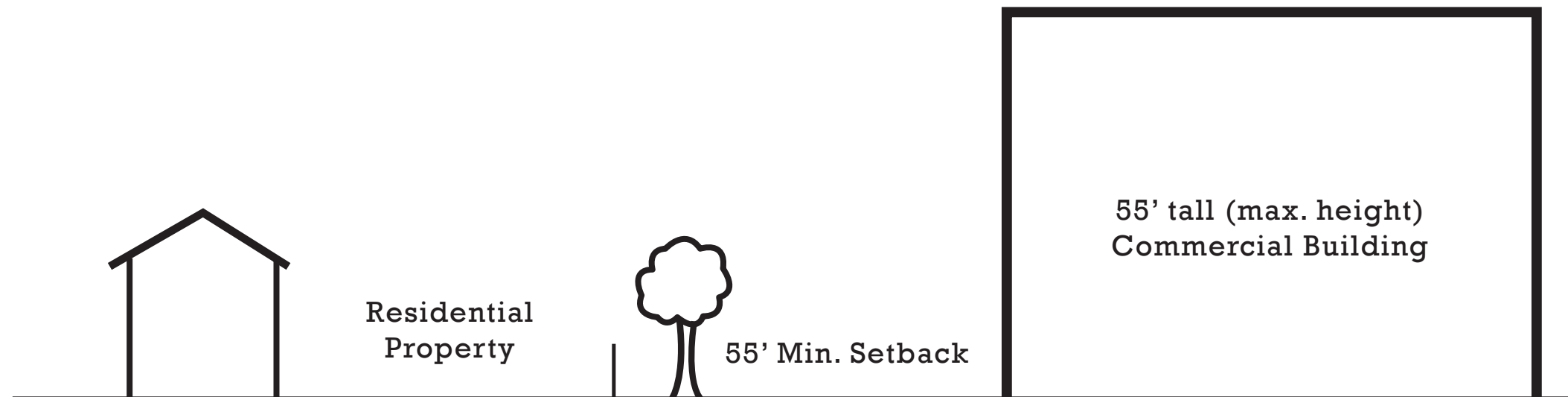




Figure 5

EXISTING SIDE AND REAR SETBACK REQUIREMENT FOR C3

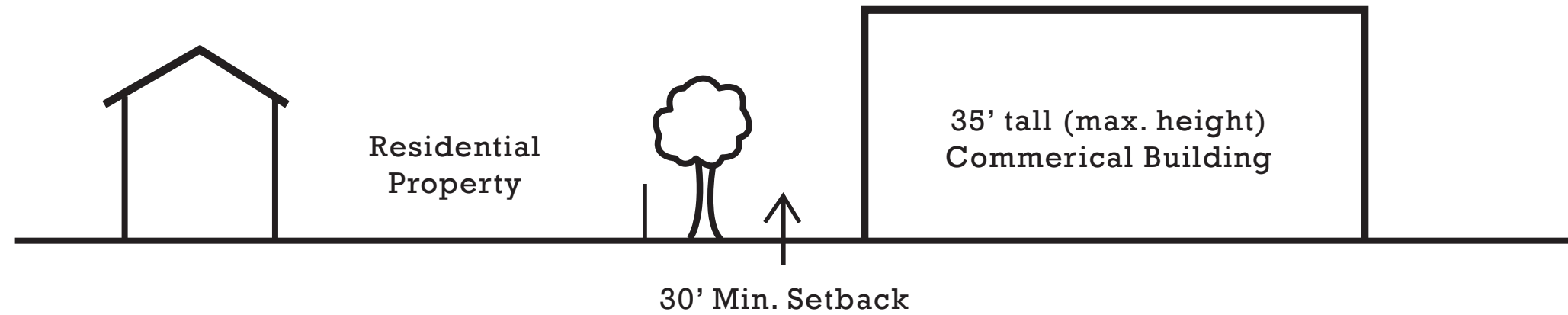


Figure 6

PROPOSED SIDE AND REAR SETBACK REQUIREMENT FOR C3

