Terminology Updates

Land Use Committee and Planning Board Joint Hearing

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[Planning Division]

Amendment Introduction

This amendment proposes 2 changes to terminology in the SZO:

1. **ADU → PRDU**

Replaces all uses of the term “Affordable Dwelling Unit” in the SZO with “Price Restricted Dwelling Unit”

- Prevent confusion between Affordable Dwelling Unit and “Accessory Dwelling Unit”
- Align with how the State and other communities use the term “ADU”

2. **Commercial Space → Commercial Unit(s)**

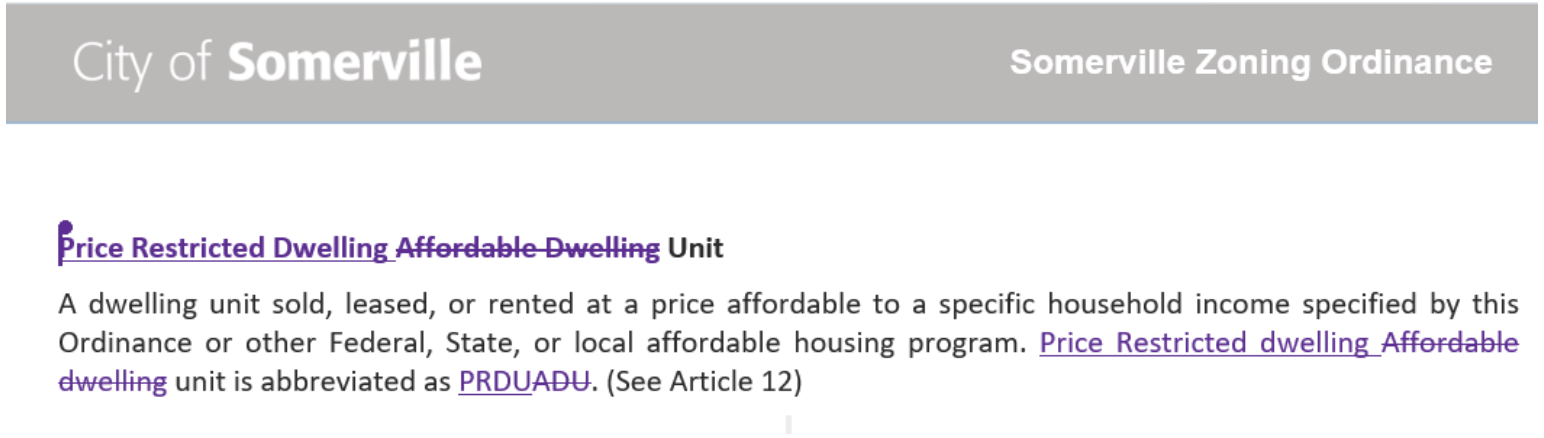
Replaces all uses of the term “Commercial Space” in the SZO with “Commercial Unit(s)”

- Make standards related to commercial space more clear by aligning with how other communities use the term Commercial Unit(s)

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Rebrand

ADU → PRDU

Through this proposed amendment to the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, the term ***'Affordable Dwelling Unit' (ADU)*** is replaced with ***'Price Restricted Dwelling Unit' (PRDU)***.


City of **Somerville** Somerville Zoning Ordinance

Price Restricted Dwelling ~~Affordable Dwelling~~ Unit

A dwelling unit sold, leased, or rented at a price affordable to a specific household income specified by this Ordinance or other Federal, State, or local affordable housing program. Price Restricted dwelling ~~Affordable dwelling~~ unit is abbreviated as PRDU~~ADU~~. (See Article 12)

Clarification:

- This amendment does not, in any way, change affordability standards or requirements. It is only a terminology update.

PRDU Terminology Breakdown

Price-Restricted: The cost of these units are kept within specific limits (qualifying units are only made available to eligible/certified individuals)

Dwelling Unit: Residential unit for people to live in

Why do Housing & Planning Division staff agree on PRDU as the best option?

Describes the Unit, not those inside

- Planning and Housing staff consciously put forward a term that would refer to a unit, rather than the household.
- The zoning ordinance impacts the unit itself, not the people within.
- Avoid any connotation with households or people.

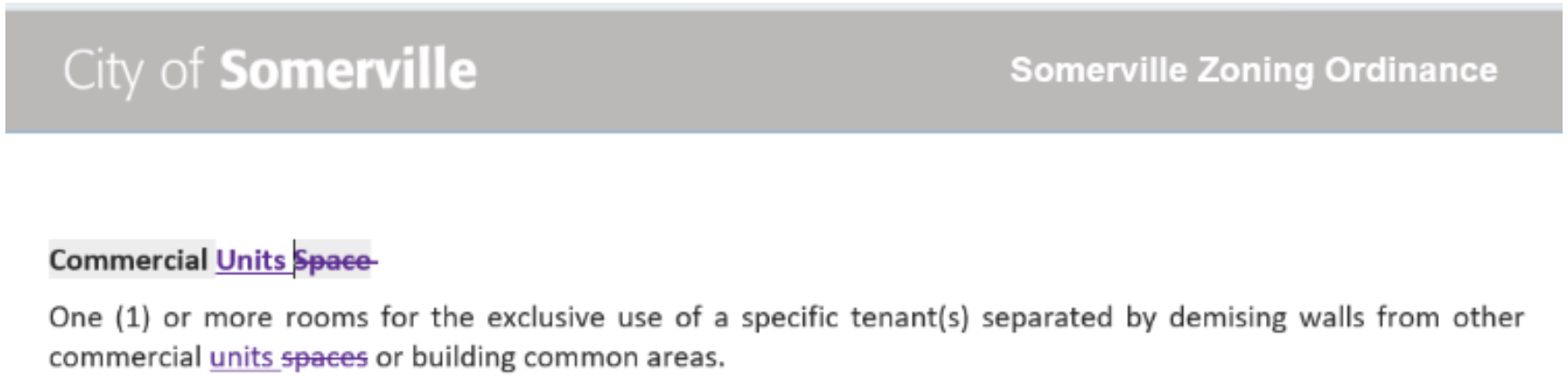
Accurate and Plain Language

- The use of the word 'restricted' accurately terms the designation of the units
  - *Restricted:* kept within specific limits, or made available only to a certain group of authorized people
- Language related to housing can be dense and complex- especially when translated. SZO terminology aims to use plain language and minimize opportunities for mistranslation.

Commercial Space Rebrand

Commercial Space → Commercial Unit(s)

Through this proposed amendment to the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, the term ***'Commercial Space'*** is replaced with ***'Commercial Unit.'***



Clarification:

- This amendment does not, in any way, change commercial space standards or requirements. It is only a terminology update.

Affected Sections of the SZO

Everywhere that uses the term “Affordable Dwelling Unit”:

- 2.1.1
- 3.2.8
- 3.2.9
- 3.2.10
- 3.2.11
- 4.1.7
- 4.1.8
- 7.4.11
- 8.1.1
- 8.1.2
- 8.1.4
- 8.1.5
- 8.1.6
- 8.4.16
- 12.1.1
- 12.1.2
- 12.1.4
- 12.1.5
- 12.1.6
- 12.1.7
- 12.3.6
- 12.3.7

Everywhere that uses the term “Commercial Space”:

- 2.1.1
- 2.2.1
- 2.4.5
- 3.1.16
- 3.2.15
- 4.1.3
- 4.1.8
- 4.1.9
- 4.1.10
- 4.1.13
- 4.2.10
- 6.1.8
- 6.2.3
- 6.2.7
- 6.2.9
- 6.2.12
- 6.3.3
- 6.3.8
- 6.4.11
- 6.4.3
- 6.5.3
- 6.5.7
- 6.5.8
- 6.5.11
- 7.2.7
- 7.2.10
- 7.4.3
- 7.4.6
- 7.4.7
- 7.4.8
- 8.2.2
- 8.2.4
- 8.2.5
- 8.4.16
- 8.4.17
- 8.4.19
- 9.1.7
- 12.3.5

Questions and Comments

Thank you!