

March 24, 2026

To: The City of New Castle City Council

From: Margo Reign, Chair New Castle Planning Commission

RE: Accessory Dwelling Units

At the May 2024 meeting of the Planning Commission, we had a presentation on Affordable Housing from the Delaware Division of Housing. The speaker emphasized that we have an affordable housing problem in the State as well as the City of New Castle. One of the tools suggested to help address this problem was allowing Accessory Dwelling Units or ADUs. ADUs would allow for a relatively small structure to be either attached to a residence or detached on the same lot. There are many details that would need to be determined, including but not limited to size, setbacks, exterior appearance, whether the primary unit would be owner occupied, utilities, etc.

At the November 2024 meeting of the Planning Commission, City Planner Chris Rogers and his colleague provided a presentation to begin informing us of zoning rules and regulations for ADU's. At that time, the Planning Commission intended to pursue research into ADU's, but matters regarding the Comprehensive Plan and other zoning code matters took precedent. Now that those matters have been completed, the PC would like to resume our efforts to explore the possibility of allowing ADU's in the City of New Castle,.

Before we now begin determining any of the above items, the Planning Commission would like to prepare a short survey which will be disseminated to residents to allow the PC to gauge the level of interest, if any, of the community in the addition of ADU's. If there is sufficient interest, the Planning Commission will investigate the benefits and risks of allowing ADU's and make recommendations to Council for a path forward if found to be beneficial and desired. If there is no interest the project will not be pursued.

To that end the Planning Commission will be developing and sending out a survey via the Municipal Services Commission, the New Castle Weekly and the City website in the next month. Please advise if City Council has any opposition to this pursuit of gauging residents' interest.