

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CAROLINE COUNTY, MARYLAND

LEGISLATIVE BILL #2026-003

INTRODUCED BY: COMMISSIONERS BREEDING, PORTER, AND BARTZ

INTRODUCED ON: FEBRUARY 10, 2026

ATTEST:

J. TRAVIS BREEDING, PRESIDENT

PUBLIC HEARING: _____, 2026, BEGINNING AT ___ A.M.
COURTHOUSE, 109 MARKET STREET, ROOM 106
DENTON, MARYLAND

THIRD READING: _____

ENACTED: _____

EFFECTIVE: _____

**CHAPTER 175 – ZONING
CREATION OF R-3, MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT AND
ADDITION OF TOWNHOUSE SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS**

AN Act to establish the R-3, Multiple-Family Residential District and addition of townhouse supplementary regulations by: (1) amending Section 175-8 (“Word usage”) in Article II (“Definitions”) of Chapter 175 - Zoning of the Code of Public Local Laws of Caroline County, Maryland (the “Code”) to add the definition of Townhouse dwelling under the term “Dwelling”; (2) amending by interlineation § 175-12 A of the Code to add “R-3, Multiple-family Residential District” as a primary zoning district of Caroline County; (3) amending by interlineation § 175-12 B (“Residential districts”) of the Code to add the definition of “R-3, Multiple-Family Residential District”; (4) creating a new § 175-21 “Townhouses” in Article V “Supplementary Regulations” of the Code; (5) amending by interlineation the Caroline County Table of Uses 175 Attachment 3:1 to add “Townhomes” as a Permitted Use in the R-3 District and subject to Site Plan Approval in the V-C District; and amending by interlineation the Caroline County Table of General Design Regulations 175 Attachment 4:1 to add the Design Regulations for the R-3

District.

WHEREAS, the County Commissioners of Caroline County, Maryland (the "County Commissioners") are authorized under Article XI-F of the Maryland Constitution and § 9-308 of the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the "Local Government Article") to adopt public local laws in general;

WHEREAS, the County Commissioners are authorized under the Land Use Article, Title 4, of the Annotated Code of Maryland to enact and administer zoning and land use Bills;

WHEREAS, the County Commissioners desire to provide for Townhouse Dwellings to be a permitted use in a R-3, Multiple-family Residential District and subject to Site Plan Approval in the V-C District;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 197.B of Chapter 175, the County Commissioners have received the positive recommendation of the Planning Commission and the staff of the Caroline County Department of Planning and Codes regarding enactment of the provisions proposed in this Bill; and

WHEREAS, this Bill may also be known by its short title "An Act to Establish the R-3, Multiple-Family Residential District and Addition of Townhouse Supplementary Regulations in Chapter 175 – Zoning".

NOW, THEREFORE, in an exercise of the County's police power as a Code Home Rule County, **BE IT ENACTED** by the County Commissioners of Caroline County, Maryland that:

SECTION 1. § 175-8 OF ARTICLE II "DEFINITIONS" OF CHAPTER 175 - ZONING IS HEREBY AMENDED BY INTERLINEATION to read:

ARTICLE I

General Provisions

§ 175-8. Word usage; terms defined.

B. Terms defined. As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

DWELLING

Any building or portion thereof designed and used for residential purposes.

- (4) **TOWNHOUSE DWELLING – ONE OF A SERIES OF THREE OR MORE ATTACHED DWELLING UNITS SEPARATED FROM ONE ANOTHER BY CONTINUOUS VERTICAL PARTY WALLS WHICH ARE WITHOUT OPENINGS FROM THE LOWEST FLOOR LEVEL TO THE HIGHEST POINT OF THE ROOF.**

SECTION 2. § 175-9 OF ARTICLE III “ZONING DISTRICTS; ZONING MAP” OF CHAPTER 175 - ZONING IS HEREBY AMENDED BY INTERLINEATION to read:

ARTICLE III
Zoning Districts; Zoning Map

§ 175-9. Zoning districts established.

The following zoning districts are hereby established for Caroline County, Maryland;

- A. Primary zoning districts shall be as follows:

R-3, MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

SECTION 3. § 175-12 OF ARTICLE III OF CHAPTER 175 - ZONING IS HEREBY AMENDED BY INTERLINEATION to read:

§ 175-12. Purpose and intent of zoning districts.

- B. Residential districts. These primary zoning districts are intended to provide for residential development, together with such public buildings, schools, churches, public recreational facilities and accessory uses as may be necessary or are normally compatible with residential surroundings.

- (3) **R-3, MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT. THIS ZONING DISTRICT IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE FOR HIGH DENSITY SINGLE-FAMILY AND MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING APARTMENTS, TWO-FAMILY DWELLINGS, AND TOWNHOUSES, WHERE PUBLIC WATER AND SEWER FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE.**

SECTION 4. A NEW § 175-21 TOWNHOUSES IS ADDED TO ARTICLE V, SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS, OF CHAPTER 175-ZONING to read:

**ARTICLE V
Supplementary Regulations**

§ 175-21. TOWNHOUSES.

THE FOLLOWING REGULATIONS SHALL APPLY TO TOWNHOUSES:

- A. LENGTH. THERE SHALL BE NO MORE THAN 10 AND NO LESS THAN THREE ATTACHED TOWNHOUSES IN A ROW.**
- B. YARDS.**
 - (1) FRONT YARD. EACH TOWNHOUSE SHALL HAVE A FRONT YARD 25 FEET IN DEPTH. TOWNHOUSES MAY BE ARRANGED TO FACE ONTO A COMMON OPEN AREA OR PARKING LOT. WITH SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT, THE FRONT YARD REQUIREMENT MAY BE REDUCED TO 10 FEET.**
 - (2) SIDE YARDS. A SIDE YARD AT LEAST 10 FEET IN WIDTH SHALL BE PROVIDED AT EACH END OF EVERY ROW OF TOWNHOUSES. WHEN AN END UNIT ABUTS A STREET, THE SIDE YARD SHALL HAVE A MINIMUM WIDTH OF 25 FEET FROM THE ROAD PAVEMENT OR SURFACE.**
 - (3) REAR YARD. EACH TOWNHOUSE SHALL HAVE A REAR YARD AT LEAST 20 FEET IN DEPTH.**
- C. ACCESSORY BUILDINGS. ONE ACCESSORY BUILDING MAY BE LOCATED IN A REAR YARD AREA OF EACH TOWNHOUSE.**
- D. ACCESS DRIVES AND OFF-STREET PARKING. PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR ACCESS SHALL BE IMPROVED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CAROLINE COUNTY MANUAL OF SPECIFICATIONS AND DESIGN STANDARDS FOR COUNTY ROADS OR OTHER SPECIFICATIONS APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS. OFF-STREET PARKING FACILITIES SHALL BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE XII; HOWEVER, NO REQUIRED OFF-STREET PARKING AREA SHALL BE FURTHER THAN 100 FEET FROM THE PRINCIPAL ENTRY POINT OF THE TOWNHOUSE SERVED TO THE NEAREST POINT OF THE PARKING AREA. FOR NONPROFIT HOUSING**

CORPORATIONS, AS DEFINED IN THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (HCD) ARTICLE OF THE ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND, OR TOWNHOUSES DESIGNATED FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS (I.E., ELDERLY, HANDICAPPED), THE REQUIRED OFF-STREET PARKING SPACES MAY BE REDUCED TO NO LESS THAN ONE AND ONE-HALF (1 1/2) PER TOWNHOUSE, PROVIDED THAT THE DEVELOPER SUBMITS SUFFICIENT INFORMATION, ACCEPTABLE TO THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING DIRECTOR, THAT THE REDUCED NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES WILL ADEQUATELY ACCOMMODATE THE VEHICLES OF RESIDENTS AND GUESTS.

- E. MAINTENANCE OF COMMON LAND AND FACILITIES. IF THE TOWNHOUSE DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES FOR COMMON AREA, PROPERTY OR FACILITIES, THEY SHALL BE CONVEYED TO AN INCORPORATED NONPROFIT HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION CREATED UNDER RECORDED LAND AGREEMENTS THROUGH WHICH EACH LOT IS AUTOMATICALLY SUBJECT TO A CHARGE FOR A PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF COMMON PROPERTY MAINTENANCE. OTHER ARRANGEMENTS MAY BE ACCEPTABLE IF THEY PROVIDE FOR THE PROPER AND CONTINUOUS PAYMENT OF TAXES AND MAINTENANCE WITHOUT EXPENSE TO THE GENERAL TAXPAYERS.

- F. ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT. THE APPEARANCE OF TOWNHOUSES IN A ROW SHALL BE VARIED BY CHANGED FRONT YARDS OR VARIATION IN MATERIALS OR DESIGN SO THAT NO MORE THAN THREE ABUTTING TOWNHOUSES SHALL HAVE THE SAME FRONT YARD DEPTH AND THE SAME OR ESSENTIALLY THE SAME ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT OF FACADES AND ROOF LINES.

SECTION 5. THE CAROLINE COUNTY TABLE OF USE REGULATIONS 175 ATTACHMENT 3:1 AND TABLE OF GENERAL DESIGN REGULATIONS 175 ATTACHMENT 4:1 OF THE CODE are hereby amended by interlineation to include the following:

175 Attachment 3:1
Caroline County Table of Use Regulations

Zoning Districts			
Primary			
Use ³	VN	R-3	Additional Regulations ¹
RESIDENTIAL			

TOWNHOUSES ²	S	P	SEE 175-21
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175 Attachment 4:1
Caroline County Table of General Design Regulations

Zoning District	Minimum Depth of Front Yard (feet)	Minimum Width of Each Side Yard (feet)	Minimum Depth of Rear Yard (feet)	Maximum Height		Gross Density (lots or units per acre)	Minimum Lot Area (square feet per unit)	Minimum Width of Lot (feet)	Minimum Depth of Lot (feet)
				Feet	Stories				
R-3 MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	30	8	10	40	3	1 FAMILY: 5	8,000	70	100
		—	—		—	2 FAMILY: 5	4,000	40	100
		—	—		—	—			
		10	10	40	3	3+ FAMILY:10	2,000	20	100
	SEE §175-21.			40	3	TOWNHOUSE: 10	1,080	18	60

SECTION 6. Matter deleted is noted by ~~strike through~~. Matter added is noted by **BOLD CAPITALIZATION**.

SECTION 7. The Recitals to this Bill are incorporated herein and deemed a substantive part of this Bill.

SECTION 8. This ordinance is necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Caroline County, and covers matters of local concern.

SECTION 9. The provisions of this Bill are declared to be severable. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion of this Bill is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, the same shall be deemed separate, distinct, and independent from, and such holding shall not affect the validity of, the remaining portions of this Bill, it being the intent of the County that this Bill shall stand, notwithstanding the invalidity of any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion hereof.

SECTION 10. The Publishers of the Code of Public Local Laws of Caroline County, Maryland (the “Code”), the Caroline County Office of Law, or the Caroline County Department of Planning and Codes, in consultation with and subject to the approval

of the County Administrator, shall be authorized to make non-substantive corrections to codification, style, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, spelling, organization, and any internal or external reference or citations to the County Code or the State Code that is incorrect or obsolete, with no further action required by the County Commissioners. All such corrections shall be adequately referenced and described in the editor's note following the section affected.

SECTION 11. The title and summary of this Bill shall be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation in Caroline County three times, at weekly intervals, and within the 4-week period after passage of the Bill, in accordance with §9-311 (i) of the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The title of this Bill, or a condensed version thereof, shall be deemed to be, and is, a fair summary of this Bill for publication and all other purposes. The title is not a substantive part of this Bill for publication and all other purposes. If the Bill is amended, the title may be administratively revised to conform to the content of the Bill as finally enacted.

SECTION 12. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that upon enactment, this ordinance shall be retroactive and applicable, to the maximum extent permitted by law and subject to the severability clause above, to all pending or future applications or proceedings in Caroline County.

ENACTED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2026.

[Signature page follows]

ATTEST:

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
CAROLINE COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Jennifer F. Reibly
Public Information Officer

J. Travis Breeding, President

(SEAL)

Larry C. Porter, Vice-President

N. Franklin Bartz III, Member

**APPROVED AS TO FORM
AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:**

Stewart Barroll
County Attorney

