

# CODE CREATE VIENNA - Lot Coverage Opinion Poll

## Option 2 Comments *as of 09.20.2021 at 12 pm*

- 1 I've seen houses recently built where the lot coverage seems to well exceed 30-35%. Do u even enforce existing construction?
- 2 I believe this is implicit, but the 5% outdoor living space should be allowable as a deck as well as covered structures. I would rephrase to "10% of lot coverage for outdoor living, no more than half of which can be covered and none of which can be converted to indoor living space." Does this preclude all weather covered porches? (I.e. able to be glassed in but not heated in the winter?)
- 3 This is a great option, although I know the concern from the Town is that this will allow for even bigger homes (interior). Perhaps modifying this to make it 22.5% instead of 25% for interior, plus 5% for deck coverage, and that last 5% for either outdoor + 5% for either outdoor or indoor?
- 4 If this is the path of least resistance where a passing majority of town council members can move forward with a compromise between not too much lot coverage and providing an alternative to residents like me who are stuck with zero options for a covered porch, then please lets move forward with option 2.
- 5 Good compromise for more space that cannot be gamed by developers
- 6 I worry about run off and appearances. Many large houses already look oversized on lots currently. It's hard to believe the 25% coverage is being followed. Certainly don't support bigger houses and less green space . Where are the birds, bees and butterflies supposed to exist?
- 7 We will lose outdoor space and important tree canopy if lot coverage increases.
- 8 Doesn't let the house get crazy big but provides options for non-roof space - seems like it would be a good balance of the three options
- 9 Any additional allowed coverage should not be over 1 story.
- 10 My permit, although approved by the county of Fairfax, was denied by the city of Vienna earlier this year. It's ridiculous that I can't add a screened-in porch on an already existing deck. My backyard backs up to a wooded lot. The difference between a screened-in porch and deck does not impact on does not infringe on anyone - it should be my choice. I look at some of the other construction going on in the area, including 4 story townhomes, and wonder why I can't put a screened-in porch on an already existing deck (no change to the overall "infrastructure" of my home/lot).
- 11 It's 2021. Build.
- 12 See above. I only put "somewhat oppose" because 5% seems like such a small amount.
- 13 Depends on who will be monitoring and what the penalties will be. Will the person have to take down any buildings not within the code, or is it a simple fine?

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- 14 If this option is selected, the Town should allow exceptions to lot coverage for driveways that are certified by the Town as properly designed and constructed to allow drainage, i.e., are not impervious surfaces, e.g., using gravel or specially designed pavers.
- 15 Being able to add a screened porch to my lot would greatly increase my ability to spend time outdoors in a number of ways.
- 16 My overall preference is that the Town of Vienna maximize our green space & minimize the potential for rainwater runoff, flooding, noise & light pollution in our neighborhoods.
- 17 See reasons given in answer #7.
- 18 The Town of Vienna can and should be more flexible in what is allowed..
- 19 This seems like the easiest and quickest option to alleviate the hardship referred to above.
- 20 No more impervious ground than current
- 21 Rewards people who are trying to game the system.
- 22 this is not a good option if driveway is too long
- 23 This is straightforward, provides greater flexibility to build more unique and enjoyable living environments and still seems to satisfy the previously stated goal for limiting lot coverage - which was storm water management.
- 24 Would give homeowner more opportunity to improve and utilize outdoor spaces and make Vienna a more livable town. Would enhance home values.
- 25 Allowing an expansion will enable the massive McMansion home builders in our town to build even bigger because they won't have to calculate a smaller foundation for a home in order to ensure adding a porch or hardscaping will stay within limits. Expanding the coverage limit will affect the water run off and drainage plans that have been completely disturbed and harmed by the continued recent development of giant homes. Do not give builders permission to continue chopping down trees and taking out plants and landscaping in favor of enormous eye-sore homes. If McMansion owners want a porch, they should have bought a smaller home. Increasing the lot coverage allowance is just capitulating to the greed and demands of predatory home builders.
- 26 I would like this option if permeable driveways were added to the outdoor living.
- 27 See above rational
- 28 This gives a good balance between the existing rules and option 3.
- 29 Outdoor living is more desirable and healthy and breeds community

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- 30 Option 2 is not as good as option 1 with respect to protecting the environment, reducing stormwater runoff, and trees are more aesthetically pleasing than cement. Also, option 2 encourages more noise, hoarding stuff, and more people inhabiting a residence than Option 1. Finally, property values will be lower than option 1 because there will be less green space between lots.
- 31 Outdoor living space with proper SWM does not make a structure seem bigger.
- 32 Seems reasonable, as long as previous definitions of what is considered lot coverage remain the same.
- 33 It's not clear why the need for change, unless its to financially benefit developers.
- 34 This is probably the simplest change, which would lead to the fewest instances of existing properties becoming nonconforming (as could happen under Option 3) and would also likely bring into conformance a large number of properties that are currently – perhaps unintentionally – nonconforming such as because they have installed hardscapes like patios, which often occurs without permitting, and/or because they have prefabricated sheds installed (which are allowed without a permit but still count against lot coverage). This option also gives the most flexibility for homeowners who seek to have sheltered outdoor-living spaces that protect against weather, mosquitos, etc. ("single-story screened porches that cannot be converted to interior living space").
- 35 Who don't we just have an overall of 35% and not split out between house vs exterior options? Some lots are more conducive to a larger building structure and others look better with decks/other exterior items. Leave it up to the individual based on overall lot coverage restriction. Will support this option over option 3 if option 3 is not 35%.
- 36 The extra five percent will most likely be at the back of the house and not affect the streets cape while giving homeowners the flexibility to add extra outdoor spaces
- 37 Code should make more allowances for outdoor space, so this option appeals to me.
- 38 I like the idea of encouraging/allowing more outdoor options
- 39 It should actually go even higher if runoff is appropriately remediated. Perhaps sign-off from a civil engineer on coverage above X%?
- 40 Need to cover space under deck with concrete that can be screened in for a spa and exercise area.
- 41 Seems good compromise to allow for more outdoor living space
- 42 More flexibility, but the fact is that driveways and parking spaces consume a large percentage of lot coverage. This is still an arbitrary formula.
- 43 Please see comment above regarding the removal of mature trees. Removal of trees will destroy the current good air quality we enjoy.

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- 44 see above
- 45 This is my choice by far
- 46 The last thing we need is larger, more expensive, and more sprawling houses in Vienna. Given the inability of the Town to write clear and enforceable rules during the previous MAC process, I can not trust the Town to write any expansion of lot coverage in a way that won't just create bigger houses, less trees, and more water run-off problems.
- 47 does not solve the problem of allowing those of us with existing outdoor living space to add a shed or storage unit. Unfair option
- 48 Doesn't seem to be needed.
- 49 This increases options to the point that I fear that backyards big enough to play in, room for shade trees and space for gardens (ornamental, vegetable or pollinator) will become less common in Vienna, affecting all of us in town, not just those houses using the new rules.
- 50 It's middle ground. I could live with it.
- 51 You want outdoor living space? Build a smaller house.
- 52 I'm stuck because builders are looking to maximize sq ft when then build, leaving me with limited options when I buy. Outdoor living is essentially different from indoor square feet and should be trawled differently in the code. This option gives us the ability to enhance our property with more outdoor spaces.
- 53 To me, this is the minimum increase that seems reasonable, but will at least allow for some additional flexibility in open space utility.
- 54 This will allow extra patio/deck space where families can spend time outdoors especially during COVID where the high risk population is forced to stay at home.
- 55 If we have to yield here, then homeowners, in return for relaxing the coverage requirements, should be obliged to install a rain barrel at each downspout and plant trees.
- 56 Many of the new houses being built on lots in the Vienna Woods subdivision are already too massive for their lots. This effect would only be magnified by allowing them to occupy an additional 5%. If people feel they have to have a covered outdoor area of 5%, let them tell the builder to design a house for them that will not exceed 25% of the lot. That will mean a less expensive house, which is a plus.
- 57 Will allow homeowners to customize outdoor spaves
- 58 My biggest concern with increasing lot coverage is the impact to town trees. It would be ideal to ideal to somehow tie number of trees taken down to minimize impact.

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- 59 I want to add a front porch but don't currently have the lot space available. This will allow us to have one built and enjoy spending time out in front of the house and socialize more with our wonderful neighbors.
- 60 There needs to be more flexibility on the 5% for deck, a home with 1/4 acre is unlikely to use all that space on an uncovered deck, better outdoor living wd be if it could also have a screened in porch. Option 3 provides more flexibility.
- 61 When consolidated for all Town properties threatens to yield a a reduction in Town's green space and tree coverage
- 62 Allowing additional covered patios or decks is visually not that different than allowing additional structures built on the yard, cluttering up the visual space of our town.
- 63 This option seems the best approach to directly support a screened in porch. Another way to offer it would be that the existing 5% deck allowance would allow covering portions of a deck with a screened in porch as long as at least two sides are not solid walls.
- 64 I support allowing more flexibility for additional outdoor spaces.
- 65 This is a good start. The bottom line is that Vienna has a reputation for being dictatorial on these regulations. While I strongly support this rule, the Town needs more flexibility on when to approve variances.
- 66 Seems to allow for more outdoor living space, which people want/need more now due to Pandemic.
- 67 This is the simplest and most reasonable answer of the three options.
- 68 I just want to cover my now existing deck with a roof.
- 69 Increased coverage of lot, bigger houses
- 70 Great way to accommodate new construction and big families.
- 71 This is a benefit to one element of the town and one element only - the million + homes that were built to capacity with no thought to outdoor living space. This initiative is sponsored by a member of town council who would personally benefit from this change. It is wrong and should not happen. It will change the single-family town that Vienna has prided itself on for many decades.
- 72 The middle ground of allowing people to perform more extensive renovations while also preserving the character of the neighborhood.
- 73 The category of definition is the difficult part in just adding outdoor space. If the goal is to offer addition to houses, this does not solve for the goal. Driveway and sheds are still in the calculation but not livable space therefore not helping with being able to add a garage or addition to the house. Just allows more deck patio space.
- 74 Seems least restrictive and the best opportunity to have the house we want in Vienna.

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- 75 This allows for more usable outdoor space
- 76 A bit more reasonable, but look at then inconsistencies. The new Sekas townhomes being built on Park Street have no front yard, yet that is acceptable.
- 77 Oppose EVERYTHING about this option.
- 78 I find it hard to believe some huge homes in the town only cover this percentage as it is. Let people who want acres of add ons buy outside town limits.
- 79 The enormous newer homes have been built to maximize what is available. It seems this option is for them to be able to make their spaces bigger since there was no room for outside space. An example is on Nutley street where an enormous home was just built very close to the property lines and has significantly impeded the enjoyment of existing properties. The placement of the home is such that no decks, patios etc are allowed as they have maximized space. If this were the option a deck or patio would be allowed I think and it would be right next to neighboring properties. Too dense and overbearing.
- 80 To protect the Chesapeake Bay watershed, we need to limit impervious surfaces. Are we allowed to increase the amount of impervious surfaces under our current MS4 permit?
- 81 Like the ability to have the flexibilty of additional front or back yard covered seating area.
- 82 Allowing for incremental property utilization is a no brainer.
- 83 We would prefer this option because we would like to be able to add a patio to our home. Also, I am wondering - what is the difference between a screened in porch that is under a second story, or a covered deck under a second story in terms of water runoff and soil permeability? I do not think these newly allowed outdoor living spaces should be limited to one story.
- 84 Provides some flexibility for homeowners to utilize their outdoor space, adding value and curb appeal to their home. However, this does not address restrictive driveways that contribute to an increase in the cars parked on the street.
- 85 The Town code has already enabled these massive houses to be built. They are a mere 10 feet from the property line and tower over other houses. I do not want to see bigger houses or more lot coverage. We need more pervious surfaces for rainwater, not more impervious surfaces. The Town of Vienna always talks about how we are the "4th Best Small Town in the US" but then is pushing more lot coverage as well as more traffic that comes with the commercial development. So the town touts the benefits of a small town while pushing it to become a not-small town.

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- 86 Already seeing storm water issues I my neighborhood with climate change, I see new builds covering more of the lots already and adding outdoor living space in addition to what is already overbuilt. The storm water has no where to go when new building homeowners add outdoor space and fill in the ridiculous retention ponds/moats that are installed by the builders as required when the lots coverage is maxed out. It's all very ugly too.
- 87 I prefer to have more open space in Vienna, not more lot coverage.
- 88 Strongly in favor of the additional percentage for patio and screened porch while maintaining the percentage for uncovered deck. Would like to see an option where a shed does not count toward the main lot coverage percentage.
- 89 This should be done at the very least but should including driveway space.
- 90 Lot coverage limits already allow "McMansions" that, in my opinion, cover too much of the lot. There is little need for larger allowances.
- 91 Additional outdoor space will create additional noise and impede the peaceful character of the town we enjoy. I also oppose the building upon more and more of the green space in town.
- 92 More lot coverage means more water runoff, more erosion. We already have a problem with larger and larger storms creating huge streams of water. Keep the lot coverages the same!
- 93 We love our town and think that same houses can use this option to enhance their house and allow for more living space without hurting the environment and make the lots look nicer.
- 94 This proposal would provide some relief from arbitrary restrictions without changing the basic footprint of a house. As someone who would like to enjoy my outdoor space without having to go through a costly and lengthy appeal process, I welcome this change. The town would still need to require properties that are contributing to drainage issues and erosion— like swimming pools draining onto sidewalks, or homes built next to watersheds with marked erosion— to mitigate for their impact. But we shouldn't all be treated the same because of some offenders.
- 95 I feel for existing homeowners that can not add a deck and screened in porch yet the builders seem to always get their way.
- 96 This would allow more homeowners to make outdoor space improvements to their yard.
- 97 Would love to be able to add a front porch and a backyard patio
- 98 As long as drainage is not highly impacted, I am for an increase in the outdoor living space.



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- 99 While I don't like this option because I think lot coverage should stay the same, I do wonder what does single-story deck mean? Can it be off the ground if the main level is above a walk out basement? This needs to be clear.
- 100 This option is dumb. Better than the status quo, but seriously...in an age of limited land for housing in metro areas how is this actually considered to be a sufficient choice that encourages density?
- 101 If the lot truly allows without negatively impacting adjacent properties.
- 102 Ability to increase driveway is great. Could alleviate issues with neighbors etc. Adding deck/patio can be very helpful.
- 103 This option allows for expansion of older homes where lot coverage issues preclude owners from making any exterior improvements. This can come with requirements for water mitigation or tree coverage, if necessary.
- 104 Increased outdoor living space is highly desirable. I purchased a new home at the upper limit of lot coverage with approx. 50 sq/ft of space for a patio allowed under current regulations. This seems like the most straightforward option that provides additional coverage.
- 105 If the actual house footprint is not changing more than 25% plus covered porches, I think many of the current complaints can be solved without introducing a new wave of even larger homes.
- 106 It's an improvement from the current requirements, but not enough for lots like mine.
- 107 If you are going to make changes, this is the best option that doesn't give developers and everyone carte-blanche. But, you should make the targets 25% plus 5% more for a total of 30%.
- 108 I feel additional allowance for patio or covered deck should be permissible but the house zoning requirements should remain
- 109 This would allow home values to significantly increase by permitting patios while still allowing 65% of unaffected spaces - a significant amount
- 110 This provides the necessary relief for new construction, while still preserves a neighborhood feel.
- 111 too restrictive
- 112 I am concerned that screened-in porches and covered decks will visually appear as part of a house - this option would effectively (visually) allow houses to occupy 30% of the footprint of a lot, up from the current 25%. This will decrease the green space that makes Vienna so wonderful, and change our streetscape for the worse.
- 113 This is a very reasonable change that will allow residents to build the outdoor living space that will improve their quality of life.



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- 114 I want to build additional outdoor space but I am already at the maximum lot coverage. This change will allow me to build the outdoor space that I will enjoy.
- 115 This is a great improvement to our zoning as it will allow residents to build the outdoor space that they can enjoy with their family.
- 116 This is a great option that will allow residents to build additional patio space that they can enjoy with family and friends.
- 117 Please just let people have more covered outdoor living space.
- 118 With the pandemic, residents should be able to sit outside with covered areas on their deck to enjoy the outdoors in the rain, etc.
- 119 I oppose any additional lot coverage. The builders always find a way around the new definitions and a larger home is built, hence more impervious surface.
- 120 I like this option, but don't agree that actual houses should be able to be bigger.
- 121 It would allow for a more crowded urban landscape and further concentrate runoff at the expense of natural infiltration.
- 122 Additional flexibility is great.
- 123 This gives our residents options to expand how they use their outdoor spaces to be outside. This pandemic has shown that we need to be able to use our outdoor spaces, without having to go to parks and other areas where we have to interact with others. This option best suits existing residents.
- 124 does not conform to county code being they do inspections...
- 125 There are too many issues in town with storm runoff to have all of our lots full of pavement and buildings.
- 126 Paving over grass, trees, and shrubs will be horrible for our environment. We need to carefully protect our planet and the average family does not need 6,000+ sq ft for a residence. We must control our appetites. We only have one planet.
- 127 Better than nothing but still not enough. We have a newer home that takes up a good chunk of the lot coverage so we have been limited with what we could do in our large backyard.
- 128 Allows more options for reasonable additions. Still needs to allow for permeable stone/pavers, etc., and not have those count isn't he lot coverage.
- 129 Would love to enjoy the yard Vienna offers
- 130 Outdoor living space is good, yet I believe we need to maintain as much tree coverage in our town for climate change also.
- 131 Uncovered deck should treated separately since it is pervious; I don't understand how the screened porch can fall into two columns?
- 132 This would be an improvement over the current coverage allowance
- 133 On face, this seems like a small adjustment and less risky. But, I would like to understand this some more. We have many tear downs and build news, would this lead to more exploitation?

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- 134 Too crowded
- 135 The additional outdoor space is not permanent or enclosed living space, so it can be larger without feeling like it occupies too much of the lot.
- 136 agree with these definitions, however there should be some guidance and favorable increases for porous outdoor spaces - esp for long driveways.
- 137 Simple easier to apply to existing home
- 138 I think the additional outdoor living space option offers home owners more flexibility to create an improved home environment.
- 139 breaks out options accordingly as many cities do today
- 140 Good
- 141 An extra 5% is really minimal for outdoors given the definition of what that extra 5% could entail so I think this proposal is something to consider
- 142 It has a good amount of increase for Outdoor Living. No need for Sport Courts.
- 143 We would love to put a front porch on our home, but we can only go out ~3 feet, because of the set back. My friends in Montgomery County, Md are allowed to encroach up to 8 feet for an open porch. Any chance for that in the new code?
- 144 What is the difference between a gazebo and a single story covered deck - really - both are single story and covered. If a gazebo doesn't have a floor than why is it listed at all?
- 145 See Option 1 comments
- 146 prevents builders from using all of the space, reserve for tax payer/homeowners..
- 147 A small amount of extra allowable outdoor space is a great compromise for everyone in town.
- 148 The town has embarked on the path of approving larger homes on exiting lots. Retaining the existing lot coverage does not support this approach. Homes with 6+ bedrooms need additional parking space especially on streets where there is no street parking.
- 149 This option appears to be reasonable. although, there are already plenty of new houses with more coverage than the ones proposed.
- 150 May accommodate pool and deck.
- 151 Same as above, but like additional outdoor living space, especially if it's towards the back of the house.
- 152 there is already too many homes being built out to the current 25% lot coverage. the the result is higher density and fewer trees.

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- 153 The additional 5% is often the difference between becoming a long-term renter or not (yes, plus the portable electric stove); for now: affordable housing and Vienna VA anything but equal each other. Please consider how the historic district can accommodate more multi-unit housing besides MAC and look into expanding transitional zoning beyond the current boundaries (there is plenty room for that). The Architectural Board should be looking into permitting/accommodating n makeshift home-based restaurants (teaching kids how to plan, cook, and entertain sustainable and save), n mini-museums (discovering the African American heritage of our town and other unique historic facts beyond the Amendments) n home-based kids camps (year round) n our "otherness" as a small town with a big foot-print, situated next to Tysons n many others (happy to discuss in detail with Mercury, Natalie and any other interested parties) Full disclosure – the below recommendations are through the eye of a working mother of three, 18-year Venetian, Historic District resident, and a fellow Optimist. There is no going back to pre-pandemic style of life-work balance. DC already authorized a default 2d employment permit, etc. Fortunately or unfortunately, preserving Vienna's "small town feel and lifestyle" by not changing our way of life isn't practical.
- 154 Not adequate for modern-day living style
- 155 great overall improvement and flexibility
- 156 It will further reduce our greenspace and adversely impact our small town feel
- 157 More impervious surface and with climate change additional flooding in some neighborhoods
- 158 Increases impermeable coverage.
- 159 I think if there is not a large water run-off concern, growing the non-building allotment to allow for patios, etc. would make sense.
- 160 more tree protections is needed!
- 161 This is just holding on to old ideas
- 162 If the building code was going to change, I'd go with this option because it allows people to do bit more with THEIR property.
- 163 This option addresses the concerns identified under option 1.
- 164 I don't think there is a need for more building space vs. green space
- 165 I do not want my driveway to be included with my house spaces. I love a long driveway.
- 166 Reasonable increase without risk of 'overbuilding'

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167 Screening an existing deck should not count against coverage

168 Although this option provides some relief to those who want to add the outdoor living space, it is still not helping with my plans or intentions. Flexibility is needed beyond this.

169 It does not allow enough optionality.