

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

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SENATE BILL 25

Short Title: Zoning/Design & Aesthetic Controls. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Gunn, Apodaca, Tarte (Primary Sponsors); Brock, Clark, Daniel, Ford, Hise, B. Jackson, Krawiec, Lee, Pate, Randleman, Smith, Soucek, and Tucker.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

February 4, 2015

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO CLARIFY WHEN A COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY MAY ENACT ZONING
3 ORDINANCES RELATED TO DESIGN AND AESTHETIC CONTROLS.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 160A-381 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

6 "(h) Any zoning and development regulation ordinance relating to building design
7 elements adopted under this Part, under Part 2 of this Article, or under any recommendation
8 made under G.S. 160A-452(6)c. may not be applied to any structures subject to regulation
9 under the North Carolina Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings except under
10 one or more of the following circumstances:

- 11 (1) The structures are located in an area designated as a local historic district
12 pursuant to Part 3C of Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes.
13 (2) The structures are located in an area designated as a historic district on the
14 National Register of Historic Places.
15 (3) The structures are individually designated as local, State, or national historic
16 landmarks.
17 (4) The regulations are directly and substantially related to the requirements of
18 applicable safety codes adopted under G.S. 143-138.
19 (5) Where the regulations are applied to manufactured housing in a manner
20 consistent with G.S. 160A-383.1 and federal law.
21 (6) Where the regulations are adopted as a condition of participation in the
22 National Flood Insurance Program.

23 Regulations prohibited by this subsection may not be applied, directly or indirectly, in any
24 zoning district, special use district, conditional use district, or conditional district unless
25 voluntarily consented to by the owners of all the property to which those regulations may be
26 applied as part of and in the course of the process of seeking and obtaining a zoning
27 amendment or a zoning, subdivision, or development approval, nor may any such regulations
28 be applied indirectly as part of a review pursuant to G.S. 160A-383 of any proposed zoning
29 amendment for consistency with an adopted comprehensive plan or other applicable officially
30 adopted plan. For the purposes of this subsection, the phrase "building design elements" means
31 exterior building color; type or style of exterior cladding material; style or materials of roof
32 structures or porches; exterior nonstructural architectural ornamentation; location or
33 architectural styling of windows and doors, including garage doors; the number and types of
34 rooms; and the interior layout of rooms. The phrase "building design elements" does not
35 include any of the following: (i) the height, bulk, orientation, or location of a structure on a



1 zoning lot; (ii) the use of buffering or screening to minimize visual impacts, to mitigate the
2 impacts of light and noise, or to protect the privacy of neighbors; or (iii) regulations adopted
3 pursuant to this Article governing the permitted uses of land or structures subject to the North
4 Carolina Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings.

5 (i) Nothing in subsection (h) of this section shall affect the validity or enforceability of
6 private covenants or other contractual agreements among property owners relating to building
7 design elements."

8 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 153A-340 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

9 "(l) Any zoning and development regulation ordinance relating to building design
10 elements adopted under this Part, under Part 2 of this Article, or under any recommendation
11 made under G.S. 160A-452(6)c. may not be applied to any structures subject to regulation
12 under the North Carolina Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings except under
13 one or more of the following circumstances:

14 (1) The structures are located in an area designated as a local historic district
15 pursuant to Part 3C of Article 19 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes.

16 (2) The structures are located in an area designated as a historic district on the
17 National Register of Historic Places.

18 (3) The structures are individually designated as local, State, or national historic
19 landmarks.

20 (4) The regulations are directly and substantially related to the requirements of
21 applicable safety codes adopted under G.S. 143-138.

22 (5) Where the regulations are applied to manufactured housing in a manner
23 consistent with G.S. 153A-341.1 and federal law.

24 (6) Where the regulations are adopted as a condition of participation in the
25 National Flood Insurance Program.

26 Regulations prohibited by this subsection may not be applied, directly or indirectly, in any
27 zoning district, special use district, conditional use district, or conditional district unless
28 voluntarily consented to by the owners of all the property to which those regulations may be
29 applied as part of and in the course of the process of seeking and obtaining a zoning
30 amendment or a zoning, subdivision, or development approval, nor may any such regulations
31 be applied indirectly as part of a review pursuant to G.S. 153A-341 of any proposed zoning
32 amendment for consistency with an adopted comprehensive plan or other applicable officially
33 adopted plan. For the purposes of this subsection, the phrase "building design elements" means
34 exterior building color; type or style of exterior cladding material; style or materials of roof
35 structures or porches; exterior nonstructural architectural ornamentation; location or
36 architectural styling of windows and doors, including garage doors; the number and types of
37 rooms; and the interior layout of rooms. The phrase "building design elements" does not
38 include any of the following: (i) the height, bulk, orientation, or location of a structure on a
39 zoning lot; (ii) the use of buffering or screening to minimize visual impacts, to mitigate the
40 impacts of light and noise, or to protect the privacy of neighbors; or (iii) regulations adopted
41 pursuant to this Article governing the permitted uses of land or structures subject to the North
42 Carolina Residential Code for One- and Two-Family Dwellings.

43 (m) Nothing in subsection (l) of this section shall affect the validity or enforceability of
44 private covenants or other contractual agreements among property owners relating to building
45 design elements."

46 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law. The act clarifies and
47 restates the intent of existing law and applies to ordinances adopted before, on, and after the
48 effective date.