

# Supervisors Pass Affordable Second Housing Law In County

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Conceptual approval was given this morning by county supervisors to allow up to 30 units of "affordable second housing units" to be built in the unincorporated area in each of the next two years.

On a 4-1 vote with Supervisor Dan Forbus dissenting, the board approved the second homes on parcels that have a first home, as long as the units have low rents.

Also, the units, which are built with kitchens, can be no larger than 600 square feet.

While the board wanted to restrict the units to relatives of the family with the primary home, it was told that a state attorney general's opinion says it would be a violation of the law.

Prior to the board's approval, the new building provision will have to undergo an environmental review. That is expected to take six weeks.

Forbus disagreed, saying, "If we are going to double the zoning in this county then we should so designate it."

He said existing zoning allows for a guest house without a kitchen where relatives can be housed. He also said it's possible for families simply to build an addition to their homes and have the relatives eat with the family.

Supervisors' Chairman Gary Patton, who recommended the affordable second units, argued this was a pilot program and the county could assess its impact over the next two years.

He said if it appears the 60 units

are more than the environment can bear, he could vote against continuing the new-type units.

Supervisor Wayne Moore agreed to support Patton's recommendation, but said he was concerned the second unit must be kept in the affordable range of rentals for 30 years.

Moore said the low rents might prevent the builder from coming out economically with the cost of building.

Planning Director Kris Schenk said it could be economical since many people will be able to convert a garage or shop to the second unit.

The second units will require a building permit and those permits will be taken from the county's affordable unit permits which in past years have gone begging for takers.