

## HIGHLIGHTS OF PROPOSED CHANGES

### Huntington Land Regulations

10 May 2017

#### Bylaws

- All bylaws have been updated to conform with the Huntington Town Plan (2014), current state statutes (the Vermont Planning & Development Act) and other municipal ordinances currently in effect.
- The town's existing zoning ordinances (2012), subdivision regulations (2012) and flood hazard area regulations (2011) have been combined into a single, reorganized and integrated set of land use regulations.
- Administrative requirements (e.g., notice, hearing, permit, appeal, notice of violations, enforcement and recording requirements) have been clarified in the regulations, rather than adopted by reference.
- Everything legally in existence as of the date of adoption would be grandfathered under the new regulations.
- They define the Development Review Board (DRB), which administers Conditional Use, Subdivision (formerly administered by the Planning Commission), Variances and appeals of an Administrative Officer permit. They also define the Administrative Officer grants permits (formerly the Zoning Administrator).

#### Zoning Regulations

- A list of exempted uses and practices has been added (Section 2.02). Accepted agricultural practices (including farm buildings) and accepted management practices for forestry, as defined by the state, remain exempt by statute.
- Zoning districts, district boundaries, and district dimensional requirements have been modified according to town plan recommendations under Article IV and related maps. The former Village District is now composed of the Neighborhood and Village Center Districts. The Zoning District map indicates the proposed increased in size of the Village Center District from the town plan map.
- The Village Center(s), Neighborhood, and Rural Residential Districts include an expanded list of allowed uses, especially in the Village Center, which are typical in a rural community, and are intended to support a rural economy. The Woodland District and Conservation District both protect forests, wildlife habitat and environmentally sensitive areas. Where a proposed development encroaches on a Groundwater Source Protection Area, the proposed development shall be subject to DRB Approval
- Uses that may have an impact on adjoining properties have been listed as 'conditional uses' subject to a public hearing and review by the DRB. All uses are defined.
- Under Article V, specific standards applying to all development (e.g., access, outdoor lighting and storage, parking, signs), and to regulate development within environmentally sensitive areas (e.g., steep slopes, surface waters and wetlands) have been added or expanded. A section on stormwater management and erosion control has been added to follow the state's Low Impact Development Standards.
- Home occupations (home offices) and home based business (includes retail) do not require a zoning permit in the Village and Neighborhood Districts, while the former requires a conditional use in the rural residential.

- Because of its potential impact on neighbors, commercial uses are subject to conditional use review by the DRB. Aside from commercial uses, Table 4.01.E and Section 4.02 B. list circumstances that require DRB approval as a conditional use.
- Provisions have been added for additional uses as "mixed uses" (e.g., an apartment over a storefront) to provide additional housing and development options. The section on adaptive reuse was eliminated.
- Public utilities, wind turbines, ham radio towers, and telecommunication facilities are conditional use in all districts, except the Conservation District where they are not allowed. Details can be found in the Telecommunication section in Article V.

### **Special Flood Hazard Areas, Floodways, and River Corridors**

The Special Flood Hazard Areas, Floodways, and River Corridors section has been written to follow state recommendations, but, in some cases, still allows for development with conditional use by the DRB. The River corridor is the land area adjacent to a river that is required to accommodate movement of the river over time. It includes the fluvial erosion hazard boundary. The river corridor follows the state established buffer for the Huntington River and larger streams and includes a 50-foot buffer on all other perennial streams. The River Corridor is new for this regulation, however, some of the larger streams previously had a 50-foot buffer and the Huntington River had a 100-foot buffer. This has been replaced by the River Corridor.

### **Subdivision Regulations**

- All subdivisions require both a sketch and final reviews by the DRB. The neighbors are notified for both reviews and the final is warned as a public hearing. The preliminary review has been eliminated as the final review can be continued, if necessary.
- Boundary adjustment between two adjoining parcels is allowed that doesn't result in the creation of additional lot or increase the amount of the non-conformity, but it still requires a permit by the Administrative Officer.
- The DRB may require the designation of "building envelopes" that are located to avoid environmentally sensitive areas, including, but not limited to, steep slopes, wetlands and surface waters, critical wildlife habitat, rare species and significant natural communities.
- Planned Unit Development provisions have been clarified and expanded (under Section 5.06) to allow for more creative, flexible and efficient subdivision design that protects environmentally sensitive areas and open space, maintains more traditional settlement patterns, and allows for higher densities for affordable housing.
- Road standards (applying to roads or accesses serving four or more lots) have been updated in relation to new state standards for rural roads, and the town's road policies and road naming and numbering ordinance.
- Administrative requirements, including plat recording requirements, have been clarified. The DRB may require that a "certificate of compliance" be obtained from the Administrative Officer to ensure that infrastructure improvements have been installed as required prior to the development of subdivided lots.