

Cottage Court Housing

Cottage Court Housing Overlay

- 1) Pursuant to authority of RSA 674:21, the Planning Board may grant a Conditional Use (CU) permit, allowing for the development of Cottage Court housing in the Central Business, Commercial District: Meredith Center & Route 3 South and Residential Zoning Districts. Where conflicts arise between requirements of other zoning requirements detailed in the Meredith Zoning Ordinance and provisions contained in this Article, the requirements of the Cottage Court housing Overlay ordinance shall be followed.
- 2) The Planning Board may grant a Conditional Use permit under this sub-section upon reaching a determination that an applicant has successfully demonstrated that noted Purpose statements and Design Guidelines are being reasonably adhered to.
- 3) **Purpose:** A Cottage Court housing development is an alternative type of housing providing small residences for households. Cottage housing is provided as part of Meredith's overall housing strategy which intends to encourage innovation and variety in housing design and site development while ensuring compatibility with existing neighborhoods, and to promote a variety of housing choices to meet the needs of a diverse population in age, income, household composition and individual needs. To this end, cottage housing developments should:
 - a. Promote infill development and redevelopment within established neighborhoods that is built at a scale and character consistent with existing development patterns.
 - b. Encourage efficient use of land and cost-effective delivery of community services.
 - c. Provide property owners with flexibility to achieve high quality design and develop projects that strengthen existing neighborhoods.
 - d. Encourage compact development that is pedestrian-scaled, healthy, and safe.

4) Cottage Court Density

1. Properties with access to public water and sewer may be permitted a maximum of 12 units per acre.
2. Properties without access to both public water and/or sewer, site density shall be limited by the characteristics on the onsite soils as determined by NHDES standards. In no case shall the density exceed 12 ~~—16~~ units per acre.

5) Minimum Lot Area and Maximum Building Coverage

The minimum lot area for Cottage Court housing developments shall be 10,000 square feet while complying with the underlying Maximum Lot Coverage standards noted for the respective zoning district in the Table of Dimensional Regulations. In addition, Cottage Court housing shall also be allowed on existing grandfathered lots of record provided applicable District setbacks are adhered to, as well as Maximum Lot Coverage.

6) Allowable Uses

Single family and duplex units are permitted. [Short-term rentals are not permitted within a Cottage Court Development.](#)

7) Cottage Court Design Guidelines

The cottage housing development design standards contained in this section are intended to create a small community of cottages oriented around open space that is pedestrian-oriented and minimizes the visibility of off-street parking. These design standards are intended to ensure that cottage housing developments include pedestrian amenities and take advantage of existing natural features on the site including topography and vegetation. The cottage housing development design standards are intended to maintain traditional cottage amenities and proportions and ensure that cottage housing developments contribute to the overall community character.

a. Building height.

1. ~~In the majority of cases, e~~Cottage court housing developments shall be designed to be single story or 1 ½ story. The maximum building height permitted for structures in cottage court housing developments shall be 20 feet.

2. A full story second floor may be permitted only if the floor area is set back a minimum of 1/3 from the front face of the cottage. ~~No more than 30% of the units in a cluster shall have a full story second floor.~~

b. Covered main entry porch/private outdoor area.

All residences in cottage court housing developments shall be provided with a covered main entry porch to create a private outdoor space protected from the weather and provide a transition from the interior private residential space to the semi-private outdoor space. Covered porches shall be usable both in design and dimension.

Cottage court homes shall have a covered main entry porch with a floor area



measuring at least 60 square feet in size. The floor of the covered main entry porch shall have minimum dimensions of not less than five feet in any direction.

c. Common open space.

Open space that is commonly owned by all members of a cottage court housing development is an important feature of any site design. It is intended that the open space be adequately sized and centrally located.

1. Common Open Space. A minimum of 800 square feet per cottage unit of common open space is required. Parking areas, yard setbacks, spaces between buildings ~~of 10 feet or less in width~~, private open space, and driveways do not qualify as common open space.

2. Proximity to Common Open Space.

a. At least 90 percent of the cottage court housing units shall abut a common open space, all of the cottage units shall be within 60 feet walking distance measured from the nearest entrance of the cottage along the shortest safe walking route to the nearest point of the common open space. The common open space shall have cottages abutting at least two sides.



b. For the purposes of cottage court housing, "common open space" shall be the central space that may be used by all occupants of the cottage complex.

d. Private open space.

Each residential unit in a cottage court housing development shall be provided with an area of private open space. The private open space shall create a sense of privacy and shall be oriented to take advantage of solar orientation and other natural features to create a small but pleasant private yard area. The private open space may be separated from the common open space with a small hedge, picket fence, or other similar visual separation to create a sense of separate ownership.

1. Each cottage unit shall be provided with a minimum of 150 square feet of usable private open space.
2. No dimension of the private open space shall be less than eight feet.

e. Cottage Court housing floor area.

In most cases, structures in cottage court housing developments shall be designed to be single story or single story plus a loft. Maintaining the maximum square footage of residences in cottage housing developments is necessary to prevent overbuilding of the site and to not exceed available off-street parking.

1. The maximum ground floor area for an individual principal structure in a cottage housing development shall be as follows:
 - a. The ground floor area may be up to 1,000 square feet.
 - b. The net total floor area of each cottage shall not exceed one and one-half times the area of the main level. *Note: Meredith may want to consider allowing a percentage of these units to be larger, up to a maximum of 1,800 square feet (1.8 times the main level area), to accommodate families.*

f. Yards – Building setbacks from exterior lot lines.

Minimum front/rear/side yard structure setbacks from exterior lot lines shall adhere to the underlying zoning requirements detailed in Table of Dimensional Regulations.

g. Cottage Court housing development building separation.

All buildings within a cottage court housing development shall maintain a minimum separation of 10-15 feet from cottages and other structures within a cottage housing development measured from the nearest point of the exterior walls. Accessory buildings shall comply with building code requirements for separation from non-cottage structures.

h. Tree conservation.

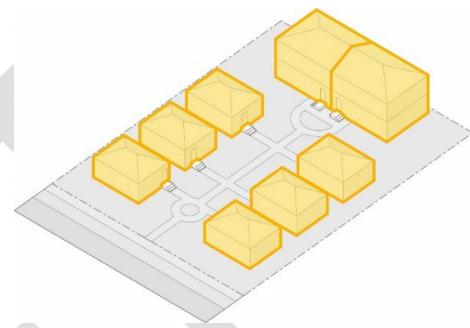
Cottage housing developments shall be designed to incorporate existing trees to the extent possible. New trees shall be located to create amenities in the common open space, private open space, provide shade where appropriate, to create separation

between buildings when desired, and to screen and soften the perimeter of parking areas and street facing sides of cottage housing developments.

Preservation of existing trees, and/or new trees, is encouraged Native trees and other vegetation shall be preserved to the extent possible and the overall site design shall take advantage of the location of existing trees as well as natural openings or clearings on forested sites.

i. Cottage Cluster Size

The clustering of cottages is an important design feature, with the goal of creating a sense of community. No more than 10 Cottage units shall be included in a cottage cluster that surrounds a common open space area.



j. Off-street parking

A minimum of 1.25 parking spaces shall be provided per unit. Generally off-street parking shall be located and designed to be less visible from frontage streets than the cottages themselves. Off-street parking shall be designed to maintain a pedestrian character for the overall cottage housing development. Clustering parking to the side or rear of a cottage project will most often best accomplish these goals. However, on a site-specific basis, design solutions other than clustering may be found to meet this objective through the alternative design process. Parking areas shall be attractively landscaped to screen parking from adjacent properties and street rights-of-way and shall meet applicable parking lot landscape standards. Off-street parking may be located in or under a cottage or a parking structure such as a single or multi-auto carport or garage.



Rear access, garage under parking increases open space

k. Storage Requirements

Purpose

To ensure adequate, accessible, and visually compatible storage options for residents of cottage court housing developments while maintaining the overall design character and

shared open space of the site. Each dwelling unit within a cottage court shall be provided with a minimum of **100 cubic feet of enclosed storage space** for bicycles, seasonal equipment, and other items not typically stored within living areas.

1. Location and Design

- a. Storage may be provided within:
 - i. A designated area within the dwelling unit, such as an attached or detached shed, or
 - ii. A shared, centrally located storage building accessible to all residents.
- b. Detached storage structures shall be:
 - i. Consistent in materials, roof form, and color with the principal cottages;
 - ii. Limited to a maximum height of **12 feet**; and
 - iii. Located to minimize visibility from public rights-of-way and to preserve shared open space.

2. Prohibited Uses

Storage structures shall not be used for habitation, commercial activity, or vehicle storage ~~unless otherwise permitted by the Planning Board~~.

3. Optional Shared Storage Features

Developments may include shared facilities (such as garden tool sheds or bicycle shelters) provided they meet the intent of this section and are integrated into the overall site design.

I. Waivers

In reviewing a Cottage Court application, the Planning Board is empowered to waive any requirements of this Section if the Board finds that goal Purpose statements of the Section are being met and the overall design of the proposed project provides a positive addition to the community.

k. Conditional Use Permit Application Procedure

All applications for a Cottage Court Conditional Use Permit under this Article shall be made to the Planning Board and submitted to the Community Development Department following the procedures set forth herein.

A. Concurrent Review

Applications for a Cottage Court development shall require Subdivision and/or Site Plan review. Applications will be considered concurrently with the Conditional Use permit application.

B. Submission Requirements

In addition to the submission materials noted above, an applicant for a Cottage Court Conditional Use Permit shall submit the following items as part of their application.

A written narrative describing the following:

- a.** The existing and proposed use(s) and development type.
- b.** The proposed development or redevelopment including, but not limited to, the construction of new buildings or structures or additions to buildings or structures; interior renovations; installation of parking areas or paved surfaces; open space areas and accessory structures; screening; and landscaping.
- c.** The physical and architectural characteristics of the site and the surrounding neighborhood. An explanation of how the proposed development adheres to the Article's Purpose.
- d.** The location of access points for the existing and proposed lots if new lots are proposed.