

## MEREDITH PLANNING BOARD NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

### PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENTS

The Meredith Planning Board will conduct a public hearing on **Tuesday, December 23, 2025** beginning at 7:00 PM. The hearing will be held at the Meredith Community Center Meeting Room B, 1 Circle Drive. The purpose of the hearing is to solicit public input on the amendments to the Zoning Ordinance proposed by the Planning Board. The following is a summary of the proposed amendments:

1. Amend Article XXI Conservation Subdivision Design Ordinance to provide more flexibility of lot sizes, increased density for workforce housing, and a streamlined approval process.
2. Adopt a Cottage Court Ordinance to allow the development of small, detached cottages (single family dwellings) clustered together, sharing a courtyard and having higher density.
3. Adopt a Workforce Housing Ordinance to comply with the requirements mandated by the State of New Hampshire found in NH RSA 674:58-61
4. Amend the Accessory Apartment Ordinance Article III General Provisions, N-Accessory Apartments to permit standalone accessory dwelling units and eliminate the requirement for the primary dwelling or accessory apartment to be owner occupied to be consistent with state mandate for detached accessory apartments RSA674:31 71-73.
5. Amend Article V Table of Dimensional Regulations and Article V D-3 Residential District & D-7 Central Business District to 1. change the setback requirements for lots having municipal utilities to match abutting parcel down to 0 feet in the front, 10 feet in the rear, and 5 feet on the sides AND 2. increase the lot coverage in the Central Business District to 75% and Residential District for multi-family to 60%.
6. Amend Article VIII-Definitions-
  - Accessory Apartment- A residential living unit that provides independent living facilities with provisions for sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation, located on the same property as a principal single-family dwelling and can be within, attached to, or detached from the main house. (definition obtained from NH Housing and consistent with RSA 674:71)
  - Maximum Lot Coverage-The percentage of the total lot area which may be covered by pervious and impervious surfaces, not to include best management practices for stormwater as identified in the NHDES Homeowner's Guide to Stormwater Management provided those methods do not include pervious pavers, or other hardscape systems and do not function as parking areas, patios, driveways, or walkways.
  - Pervious Surfaces-Surfaces that are porous and allow the transmission of water through them into the underlying soil similar to the rate it entered in natural conditions prior to the development.
  - Impervious Surfaces-Those surfaces which prevent or impede the infiltration of stormwater into the soil as it entered in natural conditions prior to development. Examples include, but are to limited to structures, walkways, parking areas, roads and driveways whether paved or gravel, porches, exterior stairways, roof overhangs, etc.
7. Amend Article V-Establishment of Districts and District Regulations to establish an Overlay District D-11 Pre-Existing Non-Conforming Subdivisions to have setbacks of 15 feet front, 10 feet

sides, and 15 feet rear. The overlay district areas are shown on the overlay map and commonly known as Patrician Shores, Sands of Brookhurst, Colony Club, and Circle Drive.

The full text of the proposed amendments is on file for public inspection at the Town Hall Annex, 5 Highland Street Meredith and on the town website. Copies may be obtained by contacting the Community Development Department at 677-4216. Questions may be directed to Angela LaBrecque, Town Planner at 677-4228 or [alabrecque@meredithnh.org](mailto:alabrecque@meredithnh.org)

## ARTICLE XXI - CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION DESIGN ORDINANCE

~~Adopted March 11, 2008~~

### ~~SECTION 1. ENABLING AUTHORITY~~

~~Pursuant to RSA 674:21, the Planning Board is hereby authorized to grant a conditional Use Permit to allow for Conservation Subdivision Design (CSD), in accordance with the requirements and standards set forth in this Ordinance.~~

### SECTION ~~21~~. APPLICABILITY

Conservation Subdivision Design is optional at the discretion of the applicant.

Conservation Subdivision Design is allowed ~~by Conditional Use Permit in the zoning districts specified in Table 1. Area Requirements~~

### SECTION ~~32~~. PURPOSES

Purposes of the Conservation Subdivision Design Ordinance are to:

1. Encourage the permanent protection of open space including but not limited to unique natural features, wildlife habitat, prime agricultural land, ~~green~~ meadows, ponds, wetlands, scenic views, connected corridors of open space and other natural and cultural resource elements. Encourage the preservation of substantial greenbelts, wetland and farmlands around the perimeter of the subdivision.
2. Create attractive living environments through careful location of dwelling units, the preservation of open spaces and by providing opportunities for passive recreation. Promote residential development that is in balance with the natural and cultural landscape, avoids over manipulation of the landscape in relation to road and driveway design and house site development. Locate buildings/house sites on

those portions of the site that are most appropriate for development considering both development suitability and inherent conservation values.

3. Provide ~~where appropriate and by mutual agreement,~~ open spaces accessible to the general public.

4. Provide guidance to the Planning Board in the administration of the Ordinance.

### SECTION 43. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

**Permitted Uses.** Any residential use as permitted by right or by Special Exception in the applicable zoning district may be considered under the Conservation Subdivision Ordinance.

Accessory uses shall be compatible with the primary residential land use and minimum lot sizes.

**Maximum Density/Yield Plan.** The maximum number of lots or dwelling units allowed in a Conservation Subdivision (i.e. dwelling unit density) shall not exceed the number of lots or units that would likely yield from a conventional single-family subdivision, notwithstanding any density bonuses that may be granted under Section 7. The determination of the number of lots or units that would yield from a conventional subdivision shall be determined by the Planning Board based on its review of a Yield Plan prepared pursuant to Section 5. ~~Under no circumstances shall the number of lots or units, including incentive bonuses, resulting from a Conservation Subdivision exceed the maximum number of lots or units permitted by the district density restrictions.~~

**Tract Size.** Minimum tract size ~~requirements are set forth in Table 1. Area Requirements is 10 acres.~~

~~Lot Size. Minimum lot size requirements are set forth in Table 1. Area Requirements.~~

## TABLE 1

Zoning District

Area Requirements

Minimum Tract Size (ac.) Minimum Lot Size (ac.)

~~FC 20 .10~~

~~FR 12 .5~~

~~MN 12 .5~~

~~SH 10 .25~~

~~R 10 .25~~

~~R3S 10 .25~~

**Lot Configuration.** Lots shall be configured according to the setting and visibility of the subdivision. Compact groupings of lots/units may or may not be desirable. Private, shared driveways serving no more than (3) lots per driveway are permitted. Driveways in excess of 500 feet shall not be permitted, except for good cause shown. Lots shall be grouped and configured to maximize the preservation of large segments of open space and existing vegetation rather than isolated pockets of such.

**Buffer Area.** Except as hereinafter set forth, Conservation Subdivisions shall include a 50'-100' buffer along the perimeter-entire road frontage of the entire tract or parcel. Side and rear buffers shall be 50'. When deemed appropriate by the Planning Board to accomplish the objectives of this section, a larger or smaller buffer width may be required. Encroachments into or thru the buffer shall be limited to points of access to the subdivision. The buffer area shall not include individual lots or limited common areas. The buffer area, exclusive of encroachments, shall be

considered part of the dedicated open space requirement as set forth in Section 6.

Where a proposed Conservation Subdivision is distinctly different than the surrounding land use pattern, the buffer is to provide a transition area where the subdivision does not detract from adjoining uses including public roads. Where a proposed Conservation

Subdivision is similar in nature to the surrounding pattern and for good cause shown, the Planning Board may reduce the perimeter buffer requirement.

~~**Building Envelope.** It is a goal of this Ordinance to minimize the visual appearance of building envelopes within a Conservation Subdivision Plan. Lots depicted on the Conservation Subdivision Plan shall designate a building envelope that complies with lot line setbacks and wetland setbacks. The building envelope shall be sufficient in size to accommodate a house substantially similar in size to that presented in the approved Yield Plan including related features (septic, well, garage, drive, etc.). Proposed building envelopes shall not be dependent upon zoning relief for house site development.~~

~~Building envelope areas shall be reflected on both the Yield Plan and the Conservation Subdivision Plan.~~

**Designated Buildable Areas.** In order to minimize potential negative impacts associated with site development, building development shall not occur on slopes 25% or greater. ~~At least one buildable area meeting this requirement shall be designated within the building envelope of each lot. A lot may designate more than one buildable area however no more than one house per lot shall be permitted.~~

**Lot Line Setbacks.** Lot line setbacks within a Conservation Subdivision shall be as required in the district. The Planning Board may reduce the setback requirements based on its finding that such a reduction reasonably facilitates better design, achieves demonstrably greater open space and preservation of the tract and its existing conditions, and is consistent with the purposes of this ordinance. Additionally, minimum building separation and setbacks shall be accordance with State of New Hampshire fire codes.

For Conservation Subdivisions located within the Shoreline District, the following additional setbacks standards shall apply:

- o Minimum building setbacks from the water shall be 200'.
- o The minimum perimeter setback around the tract or parcel shall be 100'.
- o Minimum shoreline frontage of 300'

**Condominium form of ownership.** Proposed Conservation Subdivisions having a condominium form of ownership shall, except for the form of ownership, be physically identical to the Conservation Subdivision if it were under a conventional form of ownership. Limited common areas shall be treated as lots for purposes of minimum lot size and setback determinations. Roadway rights-of-ways shall be indicated whether in common ownership or not.

#### **SECTION 54. YIELD PLAN REQUIREMENTS/DENSITY**

The Yield Plan shall be prepared in accordance with this section. The Yield Plan shall demonstrate a level of potential conventional ~~single-family~~ single-family subdivision that is feasible and would have a reasonable likelihood of Planning Board approval. The Board shall review the Yield Plan under Preliminary Design Review. The conventional yield as determined by the Planning Board shall represent a baseline density for conservation subdivisions. The baseline density shall be used for purposes of calculating any density bonuses as provided for in Section 7.

The Board shall act to approve, reject or require modification of the Yield Plan. Should the Board reject the Yield Plan as not being feasible or having a reasonable likelihood of subdivision approval, the Planning Board shall provide a written explanation to the applicant identifying the objectionable features which contributed to this determination.

The Yield Plan shall include the following existing conditions information:

- a. Property survey prepared by a NH Licensed Land Surveyor
- b. Topographic survey prepared by a NH Licensed Land Surveyor
- c. Wetlands delineated by a NH Certified Wetland Scientist
- d. Stone walls, cellar holes, dug wells
- e. Cemeteries
- f. Existing Structures
- g. Existing tree lines, fields
- h. Easements of record
- i. NRCS soils information
- j. Rare or endangered species as recorded by the NH Natural Heritage Program, or New Hampshire Fish and Game

The Yield Plan shall be prepared by a licensed Land Surveyor or Landscape Architect. Lots depicted on the Yield Plan shall demonstrate compliance with lot size, frontage, lot line setbacks and wetland setback requirements as set forth in the zoning ordinance. The Yield Plan shall demonstrate that the resulting building envelopes can adequately accommodate a house and related features (septic, well, garage, drive etc.) and shall not be dependent upon zoning relief for house site development.

Direct wetland impacts and associated buffer impacts associated with tract or lot access (roadways and driveways) shall be indicated on the Yield Plan and calculated in square feet. Cumulative direct wetland impacts shall not exceed 20,000 SF. Impacts to intermittent or perennial streams shall not disturb more than 200 feet of stream bank. Evidence of permits issued by state and local jurisdictions is not required.

Soils Based Lot Sizing analysis shall be provided demonstrating that each individual lot

meets or exceeds soils based lot sizing requirements.

Potential roadways shall be indicated. The Applicant shall demonstrate that the potential roadway is feasible and has a reasonable likelihood of meeting minimum road standards and driveway permitting without relying upon waivers. ~~Single access roads shall not exceed 1000' in length.~~ Potential road centerline shall be located within a 50' right of way. Full road engineering including plans, profiles, cross sections storm water analysis is not required.

In circumstances deemed to further the objectives of the ordinance, the Planning Board may recommend waiving road width requirements to achieve compatibility with the existing rural roads and layouts.

#### **SECTION 65. DESIGNATED OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENTS**

A minimum of 50 % of the total area of the parcel shall be permanently protected as Designated Open Space.

No more than 50% of the minimum Designated Open Space requirement shall consist of wetlands, or slopes 25% or greater.

**Excluded Areas.** Portions of the parcel that comprise individual house lots, limited common areas, roadways, roadway right-of-way, driveways, utilities, slope and drainage easements, septic systems, drainage improvements, lot line setbacks, common recreational amenities such as pools, tennis courts, golf courses, clubhouses, developed shoreline, areas reserved for future development, or areas subject to exclusive use easements, shall not count toward the calculation of, or be included in Designated Open Space. Excluded areas may be held in common and designated as common area, but shall be distinct from the Designated Open Space in terms of calculation and plan description.

**Permitted Uses** within the Designated Open Space may include:

- o Passive recreation or leisure activities such as hiking, cross country skiing, picnicking
- o Snowmobiling
- o Wellhead protection
- o Wildlife habitat protection, wildlife management
- o Agriculture that is compatible with the residential use of the subdivision
- o Logging
- o Forest management in accordance with a plan prepared by a New Hampshire Licensed Forester consistent with the specific open space purposes benefits or functions.
- o Hunting

**Prohibited Uses** within the Designated Open Space shall include:

- o The erection of structures
- o Further subdivision
- o Motorized vehicles, except snowmobiles, and equipment used in conjunction with on-site forestry or agriculture
- o Mining, excavation, filling
- o Other activities that would diminish the open space benefits or function

**Designated Open Space Layout.** The Designated Open Space shall be arranged, to the extent feasible, to achieve larger contiguous blocks of open space.

**Access to Designated Open Spaces.** ~~Practical and legal access to the Designated Open Space shall be provided to the owners within the subdivision, to designated steward(s) of the Open Space, and for other uses that may be anticipated, i.e., forestry,~~

~~agriculture, public access, etc.~~ Safe and convenient pedestrian access and access for maintenance shall be provided to common open space areas. Potential public access to open space and trails is an important aspect of existing and future trail connections.

### ~~Protection, Management~~Identification and Ownership of Dedicated Open Space.

#### **Identification.**

Areas of the Designated Open Space shall be clearly identified on the subdivision plan including metes and bounds sufficient to create a legal description.

Boundaries shall be clearly marked prior to commencing construction. Boundary markers shall be maintained throughout the construction phase.

Boundaries shall be permanently marked in the field prior to recording the subdivision plan.

**Ownership.** Prior to the sale of any lots, the Designated Open Space shall be owned and managed by one or more of the following methods subject to Planning Board approval:

1. Common ownership by the owners of the lots or units within the subdivision with an association and with permanent deed restrictions or conservation easement;
2. Transfer with permanent deed restrictions or conservation easement, to a land trust or other recognized conservation organization;
3. Transfer with permanent deed restrictions or conservation easement, to the Town of Meredith.

A prominent note shall be indicated on the subdivision plan identifying land ownership and land stewardship responsibilities.

~~The Designated Open Space may not be conveyed in whole or in part, or encumbered by exclusive use easements, except as provided above. Designated Open Space shall not be used to meet any regulatory requirements other than for purposes of the conservation subdivision itself.~~

**Stewardship.** ~~The purposes of the Designated Open Space specific to a proposed Conservation Subdivision shall be identified in a Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions approved by the Planning Board. Management provisions, reservations, restrictions, etc., shall be consistent with the stated open space purposes. The entity assuming responsibility for stewardship and management of the Designated Open Space shall be identified. The steward shall have the responsibility to perform regular inspections of the dedicated open space to confirm the status of compliance with the terms of the subdivision approval, covenants, restrictions and/or conservation easement. Frequency of inspections shall be not less than once per (3) years. The land steward shall report any non-compliance or violations to the owner(s) and the Town of Meredith.~~

**Enforcement.** ~~The land steward and individual lot or unit owners shall have the legal authority and responsibility to enforce the open space related terms and provisions. As provided for in RSA 674:21-a, the Designated Open Space which is part of the cluster development shall be deemed a conservation restriction as defined in RSA 477:45, I, which shall run with the land and shall be enforceable by the municipality or by the owner of any property which would be specially damaged by the violation of such restriction.~~

~~Designated open spaces and associated covenants and restrictions approved by the Planning Board as part of the subdivision approval shall be deemed conditions of subdivision approval and shall be enforceable by the municipality under RSA 676:17 and RSA 676: 4-a.~~

## **SECTION 76. INCENTIVE BONUSES**

The Planning Board, at its discretion, may award an additional number of lots or units based on the following:

1. To encourage the provision of public access, the Planning Board may award additional density bonus of 10% .(fraction rounded up).
2. To encourage the dedication of open space in amounts substantially greater than the minimum requirements set forth in Section 6, the Planning Board may award additional density bonus of 10%. (rounded up)
3. To encourage the protection of ridgelines or hilltops within Critical Viewed Areas or from Highly Significant Viewpoints as described in the town's Visual Resource Inventory and Assessment, latest edition or update, the Planning Board may award additional density bonus of 10%. (rounded up)
4. In order to encourage the protection of High Value, Co-occurrence Areas as described in the town's Natural Resources Inventory latest edition or update, the Planning Board may award additional density bonus of 10%. (rounded up)
5. In order to encourage the creation of Workforce Housing a 15% bonus (rounded up) will be provided for such units. The units may be added to the site without an increase in site area and may be as small as necessary to adhere to NHDES lot loading requirements related to onsite well and septic provisions. Frontage requirements to serve workforce housing lots may be reduced to 20 feet.

Individual density bonuses shall be based on the baseline density resulting from the Yield Plan as determined by the Planning Board.

The minimum density bonus shall be one lot or unit.

Where the final number of additional units or lots awarded under this section is .5 or greater, the density number shall be rounded up to the next whole number.

In no event shall the total density bonuses awarded exceed 20% ,except for Workforce Housing lots.

The award of any density bonus may only be given when the applicant has demonstrated exemplary design, ~~and~~ consistency with the objectives of this ordinance

for the preservation of valuable blocks of contiguous open space, [or the creation of workforce housing units](#).

#### **SECTION 87. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants shall provide copies of legal documents for Board review including proposed Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions, easements and specimen deeds/deed restrictions.

Said documents, where appropriate, shall note that no provision relating to the Designated Open Space shall be amended without prior Planning Board approval.

Said documents shall be recorded at the Registry of Deeds with the subdivision plan.

The conditions of subdivision approval, subdivision plan notes and legal documents for recording purposes shall be consistent with one another.

#### **SECTION 98. PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW**

The Planning Board is authorized to require Preliminary Design Review of all Conservation Subdivisions as provided for in 674:35, I and RSA 676:4 II (b). The purposes of Preliminary Design Review shall be to:

1. Review and finalize the Yield Plan, prepared in accordance with Section 5.
2. Review the applicant's inventory of existing on-site, and nearby natural and cultural resources (See Appendix A for reference).
3. Review of Preliminary Conservation Subdivision Plan including the layout and uses of open spaces, lot layout, lot setbacks, house sites, buffers and roads.
4. Determine whether any further ecological assessment and associated third party review is necessary.
5. Review of requested density bonuses, if any.
6. To provide direction to the applicant so that the applicant can make an informed decision whether to proceed with a Conservation Subdivision.

Applications for Preliminary Design Review of Conservation Subdivisions shall include an inventory of natural and cultural resources. The inventory shall include resources on-site and in the surrounding area. The inventory shall take the form of a completed, annotated Checklist of Natural, Cultural and Historical Features (See Appendix A for reference) and other appropriate supporting information including photographs, maps etc.

Applications for Preliminary Design Review shall include an Existing and Proposed Conditions plan to enable the Planning Board to determine the extent to which the proposed Conservation Subdivision results in preservation of open space and other unique features.

#### **~~SECTION 10. STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL~~**

~~In order to grant a Conditional Use Permit, the Planning Board shall make findings that each of the following criteria has been met to the satisfaction of the Planning Board.~~

- ~~1. The permit is consistent with the purposes of the ordinance; and~~
- ~~2. The Designated Open Space meets the quantitative and qualitative requirements of the ordinance; and~~
- ~~3. The proposed design does not unduly detract from the natural, cultural and historical features of the surrounding area. In making this finding the Planning Board shall consider the following:~~
  - ~~A. Relevant information applicable to the surrounding area contained in the town's Master Plan, latest edition or update;~~
  - ~~B. Relevant information contained in Purposes Statements of the applicable Zoning District;~~
  - ~~C. Relevant information contained in the town's Natural Resources Inventory, latest edition or update;~~

~~D. The Inventory of Natural, Cultural and Historic Features and appropriate supporting information submitted by the applicant;~~

~~E. An inspection of the site and surrounding area.~~

#### ~~APPENDIX A.~~

#### ~~CHECKLIST OF NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL FEATURES (for inclusion in the Conservation Subdivision Design analysis)~~

~~Tax Map/ Lot:~~

~~Street:~~

~~Zoning District:~~

~~Applicants shall indicate whether these resources are present, not present or unknown.~~

~~Applicant shall note whether resources present are on site, within the surrounding area or both.~~

~~o Surface water bodies~~

~~o Streams/upland buffers~~

~~o Wetlands/upland buffers~~

~~o Site location in a public water supply watershed, wellhead protection area~~

~~o Flood plains~~

~~o Slopes greater than 25% (high potential for erosion and sedimentation)~~

~~o Ridgelines and Hilltops located within designated Critical View Areas~~

~~o Designated Highly Significant View Points of Critical View Areas~~

~~o Proximity to High Value Co-occurrence Areas as described in the Natural Resource Inventory~~

~~o Woodlands (large and/or mature stands, unusual species, managed)~~

~~o Active agricultural land~~

~~o Designated Scenic Roads~~

~~o Existing recreation trails~~

~~o Stone walls~~

~~o Cellar holes~~

~~o Historic structures~~

~~o Cemeteries~~

~~o Adjacent or nearby conservation areas~~

~~o Street lighting~~

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~~o Rare or endangered species as recorded by the NH Natural Heritage Program,  
or New Hampshire Fish and Game~~

## 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, a~~ 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.**

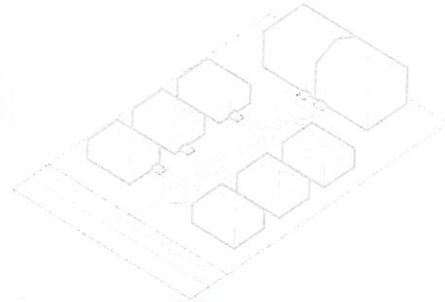
Cottage housing developments shall be designed to incorporate existing trees to the extent possible. New trees shall be located to create amenities in the common open space, private open space, provide shade where appropriate, to create separation

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.

Draft: Nov. 13, 2025

**Meredith Region 2025 Workforce Housing Purchase and Rent Limits**

Purchase: \$381,500

Rent: \$1,620/month including utilities

**Workforce Housing Ordinance**

**A. PURPOSE:** The purpose of this section is to define the requirements related to the development of workforce housing in compliance with RSA 674:58-61 (as amended) and to prevent the overcrowding of land while complying with all applicable state and federal laws with respect to such housing and at the same time, ensuring compliance with local planning standards, land use policies, good building design, and requirements for the health, safety, and general welfare of all the inhabitants of the Town.

**B. AUTHORITY:** This innovative land use control section is adopted under the authority of RSA 674:21, and is intended as an "Inclusionary Zoning" provision as defined in RSA 674:21(I) (k) and 674:21(IV)(a), as well as RSA 672:1, III-e. RSA 674:21 II provides the authority for Planning Boards to grant Conditional Use Permits. Any conflicts with other provisions of the Zoning ordinance that may arise as a result of provisions within this ordinance, shall be subjugated to the provisions of the Workforce housing ordinance.

**C. APPLICABILITY:**

1. Workforce Housing Developments, constructed in accordance with the provisions of this section, are permitted as a Conditional Use Permit within the following zoning districts as defined in this zoning ordinance: a. Central Business District, Commercial District: Meredith Center & Route 3 South, Forestry & Rural District, and Residential District.
2. Permitted Uses: Within the Forestry & Rural District, and Residential District: Single family & duplexes. Within the Central Business District, Commercial District: Meredith Center & Route 3 South, multi-family housing may be permitted.
3. Workforce housing units, owner occupied or rental, may not be used as short term rentals.

**D. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CRITERIA:** The Planning Board may issue a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) if it finds, based on the information and testimony submitted with respect to the Workforce Housing Application, that:

- a. The application is consistent with the stated Purpose of the Workforce Housing Ordinance.
- b. If completed, the development in its proposed location will comply with all requirements this Section and other applicable workforce housing provisions contained in other sections of the zoning ordinance.
- c. The applicant has demonstrated that the proposed use shall meet reasonable standards or conditions of approval related to environmental protection, water supply, sanitary disposal, traffic safety, and fire and life safety protection.
- d. Adequate provisions have been made to ensure that workforce housing units remain affordable consistent with Section G Assurance of Continued Affordability.

**E. DEFINITIONS (RSA 674:58 as amended):**

**Affordable:** Affordable means housing with combined rental and utility costs or combined mortgage loan debt services, property taxes, and required insurance that do not exceed 30 percent of a household's gross annual income.

**Workforce housing units/owner occupied:** Housing which is intended for sale and which is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 100 percent of the median income for a 4-person household for the metropolitan area or county in which the housing is located as published annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Housing developments that exclude minor children from more than 20 percent of the units, or in which more than 50 percent of the dwelling units have fewer than two bedrooms, shall not constitute Workforce housing units for the purposes of this subdivision.

**Workforce housing units/renter occupied:** Rental housing which is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 60 percent of the median income for a 3-person household for the metropolitan area or county in which the housing is located as published annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Housing developments that exclude minor children from more than 20 percent of the units, or in which more than 50 percent of the dwelling units have fewer than two bedrooms, shall not constitute Workforce housing units for the purposes of this subdivision.

**Market Rate Housing:** Any units or lots within a development, whether the unit is to be owner or renter occupied, that is intended to be available for sale or occupancy at the prevailing market value for the area similar to comparable real estate transactions.

**Multi-family:** A building or structure containing 5-3 or more dwelling units, each designed for occupancy by an individual household.

**F. WORKFORCE HOUSING INCENTIVES:** As noted in Section C, as well as specified in other sections of the zoning ordinance, workforce housing developments shall be a permitted use through a Planning Board approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process. Residential unit densities shall be permitted to increase so as to afford a reasonable and realistic opportunity for the development of workforce housing units.

Workforce Housing shall be permitted in the following zoning districts as follows:

1. Forestry & Rural District, and Residential District: Workforce housing single family unit(s) or owner-occupied duplex unit(s) with one of the units designated as a Workforce housing unit shall be allowed on lots with 50 feet of frontage and lot size determined by New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) rules and regulations relative to minimal lot area requirements. Backlots shall also be permitted with a minimum of 20 feet of frontage with a maximum of two lots adjoining each other served by a single common access private driveway with the backlots shall also adhering to NHDES minimum lot size requirements. In addition, for subdivisions creating more than ten (10) lots, a 20% bonus (rounded up) density for Workforce housing lots shall be allowed within the same total lot area of

the proposed subdivision, no additional land area shall be required. Frontage and lot area requirements similar to those noted above. Front and side setbacks of the applicable Districts shall apply.

2. Central Business District, Commercial District: Meredith Center & Route 3 South: Multi-family uses shall be allowed for either owner-occupied or rental housing units that may include duplex units, townhomes, and garden style buildings with a maximum of 30 units, three story. Allowed density shall be up to 16 units an acre with access to municipal water and sewer. With a lot serviced with only municipal water, density shall be determined by New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) rules and regulations relative to lot loading and community water to a maximum of 16 units an acre. For owner occupied residential uses, 10% of the total units shall be designated as Workforce housing units; for rental properties 5% of the total units shall be designated as Workforce housing units (rounded up).

#### **G. WORKFORCE HOUSING GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:**

1. In order to be considered as a "completed" application eligible for "acceptance" under RSA 676:4.I, and application under this section must contain, at a minimum, the following information:
  - a. Calculation of the number of units provided under this section and how these units will be consistent with the Purpose of the Ordinance.
  - b. Description of each unit's size, type, estimated cost and other relevant data.
  - c. Documentation of affordable household eligibility as required in Section H.
  - d. The Planning Board may request additional information if, in their judgment, it is necessary to make a meaningful determination of affordability.
2. At the Planning Board's discretion, the applicant may be required to submit project cost estimates including land, development and construction costs; financing, profit, and sales costs; and other cost factors.

**H. ASSURANCE OF CONTINUED AFFORDABILITY:** In order to qualify as workforce housing under this section, the application shall make a binding commitment that the workforce housing units will remain affordable for a minimum period of 30 years. This shall be enforced through a deed restriction, restrictive covenant, or some other contractual arrangement through a local, state or federal housing authority or other non-profit housing trust or agency or through the town itself as selected by the Planning Board to administer this provision. No workforce housing unit shall be occupied until written confirmation of the income eligibility of the tenant or buyer of the unit has been documented and all required legal documents outlined in the administrative rules have been completed and recorded. The planning board shall adopt a set of administrative rules detailing the parameters to enforce this binding commitment. Income eligibility of the buyer shall be certified by a qualified third-party entity with expertise in determining the eligibility of the prospective owners to purchase Workforce Housing, and provided to the Town in the form of an affidavit of compliance prior to closing on the unit.

## **I. ADMINISTRATION, COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING:**

1. This article shall be administered by the Planning Board. Applications for the provisions provided under this section shall be made to the Planning Board and shall be part of the submission of an application for site plan or subdivision plan approval.
2. Where workforce housing applicants propose a development of single-family homes or multi-family homes, all provisions of the subdivision and site plan regulations shall apply unless waived.
3. The Planning Board shall not approve any workforce housing proposal unless it complies with all applicable standards of this ordinance including but not limited to environmental protection, water supply, sanitary disposal, traffic safety, and fire and life safety protection.

**A. Accessory Apartments** - The criteria for an Accessory apartment shall include the following:

- a. The accessory apartment shall have a minimum of 300-750 square feet of net floor area and shall not exceed the lesser of (i) ~~forty~~ fifty percent (40%) of the sum of the net floor area of both the finished dwelling unit and the finished floor area of the primary dwelling ~~accessory apartment~~, or (ii) 1,200 square feet. ~~In addition to the foregoing area limitations, in the case of an accessory apartment in an accessory structure, the accessory structure shall have one or more accessory uses, not including guest quarters, other than the accessory apartment, and the net floor area of the accessory apartment shall not exceed the net floor area of the other accessory use or uses of the accessory structure. (11 Mar 08)~~
- b. The accessory apartment may be physically attached to or incorporated within a the principal single-family dwelling ~~principal residential structure~~ or incorporated in an accessory structure to such principal residence, or a standalone structure. There shall not be more than one accessory apartment on any lot. An accessory apartment shall not be a Short-Term Rental. The distance between ~~an accessory structure containing an~~ accessory apartment and the nearest point of the enclosed living space of the principal residential structure shall not exceed 150 feet. (13 Mar 25)
- c. Accessory apartments shall include no more than two (2) bedrooms.
- d. ~~Accessory apartments may be created through the internal conversion of existing housing unit or through the creation of a new principal dwelling unit / accessory apartment structure or thru the internal conversion or creation of a non-residential accessory structure such as a barn or garage. (11 Mar 08)~~
- e. ~~Either the principal dwelling unit or the accessory apartment shall be occupied by the owner of the property~~
- f. ~~The construction and occupancy of accessory apartments shall not be detrimental to the neighborhood in which the lot is located by virtue of overcrowding or traffic congestion.~~
- g. Means of egress for both the principal single-family dwelling residence and the accessory apartment shall meet all applicable codes.
- h. Off-street parking shall be provided as follows: include 2 spaces for the principal single-family dwelling residence and 1 space for the accessory apartment. ~~and be surfaced in a manner consistent with the~~

neighborhood.

- ~~1. 2 spaces—principal residence, 1 space—accessory apartment.~~
- ~~2. Parking spaces must be surfaced in a manner consistent with the neighborhood; and~~
- ~~3. Parking spaces required pursuant to this section shall not be constructed within the front setback required pursuant to the applicable zoning district.~~

i. All applications under this section shall demonstrate adequate provision for sewage disposal, water, and drainage generated by the future occupancy of an accessory apartment.

~~j. No exterior changes shall be made which do not conform to the single-family character of the neighborhood.~~

k. Any application filed under this section shall include the following:

1. Scaled ~~plot~~ site plan showing location of existing and proposed structures with dimensions, parking layout, and lot coverage.
2. Detailed floor plan with labeled rooms, square footage, and egress.
3. Structural details demonstrating compliance with all applicable building and fire codes.
- ~~4. Parking layout and yard area.~~
- ~~5. Sketch any proposed expansion or change to a structure showing overall dimensions.~~
- ~~6. Square footage of construction or alteration of floor area.~~
- ~~7. Location and number of exits.~~

~~Any additional information that will adequately describe the proposed work.~~

# **Proposed Dimensional Standard Zoning Changes**

## **1. Changes within the Central Business District and Residential District:**

To inform these changes we are completing GIS Analysis to understand the existing development pattern on lots along Main Street, High Street, Highland, and Waukegan. This includes lots in the Central Business and Residential District (with water/sewer).

- Central Business – suggested changes
  - Delete minimum lot size requirement
  - Front setback reduce from 30' to 0', Or match abutting parcels\*
  - Side setback reduce from 10' to 5'
  - Rear setback reduce from 20' to 10'
  - Increase lot coverage to 75%

\*Note – buildings within the Central Business district will not be permitted to attach awnings, flower boxes, or other items to their façade if they project over the sidewalk.

- Residential District – with water and sewer – reduce dimensional standards
  - Front setback reduce 20' to 10', Or match abutting parcels
  - Side setback reduce 10' to 5'
  - Rear setback reduce 40' to 10'
  - Increase lot coverage for Multi-family units to 60%

### **Amend Article VIII-Definitions-**

Accessory Apartment- A residential living unit that provides independent living facilities with provisions for sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation, located on the same property as a principal single-family dwelling and can be within, attached to, or detached from the main house. (definition obtained from NH Housing and consistent with RSA 674:71)

Maximum Lot Coverage-The percentage of the total lot area which may be covered by pervious and impervious surfaces, not to include best management practices for stormwater as identified in the NHDES Homeowner's Guide to Stormwater Management provided those methods do not include pervious pavers, or other hardscape systems and do not function as parking areas, patios, driveways, or walkways.

Pervious Surfaces-Surfaces that are porous and allow the transmission of water through them into the underlying soil similar to the rate it entered in natural conditions prior to the development.

Impervious Surfaces-Those surfaces which prevent or impede the infiltration of stormwater into the soil as it entered in natural conditions prior to development. Examples include, but are not limited to structures, walkways, parking areas, roads and driveways whether paved or gravel, porches, exterior stairways, roof overhangs, etc.

**Amend Article V-Establishment of Districts and District Regulations** to establish an Overlay District D-11 Pre-Existing Non-Conforming Subdivisions to have setbacks of 15 feet front, 10 feet sides, and 15 feet rear. The overlay district areas are shown on the overlay map and commonly known as Patrician Shores, Sands of Brookhurst, Colony Club, and Circle Drive.