

OVERVIEW OF NORTH STONINGTON ZONING

This overview is intended to familiarize the public with land use zoning in North Stonington. This overview is NOT part of the Zoning Regulations or Subdivision Regulations and has no force of law. "Land Use Zoning" is the documented, orderly control of industrial, commercial, agricultural, public facility, and residential development within a town or community. In North Stonington, this control is authorized by the Connecticut General Statutes, and implemented by the North Stonington Plan of Development, and the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations contained herein as two separate documents.

Zoning Districts. The Town of North Stonington is divided into eight Zoning Districts. They are "1-acre" **High Density Residential (R40)**, "1.5-acre" **Medium-Density Residential (R60)**, "2-acre" **Rural Preservation Residential (R80)**, **Commercial (C)**, **Highway Commercial (HC)**, **Commercial Development (CD)**, **Office/Research (OR)**, and **Industrial (I)**. The locations of these zones are shown on the **Zoning Map** that accompanies the **Zoning Regulations**.

Overlay Areas. There are also three Overlay Areas in North Stonington. They are **Village Preservation (VP)**, **Aquifer Protection (AP)**, and **Seasonal Use (SU)**. The Overlay Areas are also shown on the Zoning Map. More than one Zoning District may exist in an Overlay Area; however the land use requirements of the Overlay Area always supersede those of the Zoning Districts within it.

Land Uses. Land uses in the zones are either "**permitted by right**" or require a "**Special Permit**" granted by the Planning and Zoning Commission. All uses are listed in **Table 403** of the Zoning Regulations. Uses that are not listed are prohibited. Residential uses that are permitted by right (**P**) may be approved by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. All other uses that are permitted by right must first receive approval of a Site Plan by the Planning and Zoning Commission. See **Section 800** of the Zoning Regulations.

A Special Permit (**S**) may be granted by the Planning and Zoning Commission only after all applicable requirements of **Section 700** of the Zoning Regulations have been met and after a Public Hearing has been conducted. Special Permits, also called "special exceptions," are issued when the Planning and Zoning Commission is convinced that public health, safety, convenience, and property values will be protected. To accomplish this, the Commission may impose requirements on the applicant as a condition of approval.

Only one use in one principal structure is allowed on a single lot. Apartments, lodging houses, and multiple dwellings are allowed in some zones, but only by Special Permit. No more than one commercial use such as a retail shop, restaurant, or professional office is allowed on a single lot, except in a **Planned Business Development or Consolidated Parcels**. See **Section 621 and Section 708** of the Zoning Regulations.

Zoning Permits. All construction, the establishment of a use, or a change in a use requires a Zoning Permit issued by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. This permit must be obtained before other required Town permits are granted.

Home Occupation. A "**Home Occupation Special Permit**" is required to conduct a business in any residence. This Special Permit may be issued by the Planning and Zoning Commission only after all requirements of **Sections 703 and 704** of the Zoning Regulations have been met

and a Public Hearing has been held. If the residence is sold, the Home Occupation Special Permit does NOT transfer to the new owner.

When issuing a Special Permit, the Planning and Zoning Commission may also impose conditions on the operation of the home occupation. As with other Special Permits, a Home Occupation Special Permit may be withdrawn at any time by the Commission if the zoning requirements or conditions of the permit are violated.

Signs. All signs including residence and temporary signs are controlled by the Zoning Regulations. Every sign other than a residence sign must be approved by the Zoning Enforcement Officer or Planning and Zoning Commission, and must receive a "**Sign Permit**" before it is erected. Such signs may be approved only after a written or illustrated description of the sign is submitted for review and verified for compliance with the Zoning Regulations. Although a residence sign does not need a Sign Permit, it must comply with the sign requirements of the Zoning Regulations. See **Section 900** of the Zoning Regulations.

Earth Excavation or Filling. Excavation, filling, stockpiling, or storage of any type of earthen materials is strictly controlled by **Section 709** of the Zoning Regulations. Such activities with materials in excess of 20 cubic yards require written approval of the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Similar activities with materials in excess of 500 cubic yards require a Special Permit. A Public Hearing is required for such permit and the Commission may impose special conditions on the operation.

Subdivision and Resubdivision. The division of land into parcels is controlled by the **Subdivision Regulations**, with some exceptions. The Subdivision Regulations must be consulted to determine if and how any division of land may occur. Any change to a property boundary line within the Town of North Stonington requires written approval of the Zoning Enforcement Officer at the least, and approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission in the case of subdivision or resubdivision of land.

Planning and Zoning Commission. Zoning in North Stonington is interpreted, implemented, and enforced by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the **Zoning Enforcement Officer**, who is an employee of the Town. The Commission consists of five Regular Members and three Alternate Members, all elected officials. An Administrative Assistant, who is also a Town employee, manages the Planning and Zoning Office. The Commission conducts its "**Regular Meeting**" on the first and second Thursday of every month except in July.

Individuals who contemplate applying to the Commission, for whatever reason, are encouraged to first seek assistance from the Administrative Assistant or Zoning Enforcement Officer.

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