



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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Proposed Amendments to the Northborough Zoning Map & Zoning Bylaw 2024 Annual Town Meeting

ARTICLE 49: Zoning Map – Multi-family Development Overlay District

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Northborough Zoning Map to create the “Multifamily Development Overlay District (MDOD)” consisting of subdistricts “Southwest Connector Multifamily Development Sub-District” and “Downtown Multifamily Development Sub-District” shown on the map entitled “Multifamily Development Overlay District Map” placed on file with the Town Clerk and Planning Department, or take any action relative thereto.

(INSERT MAP)

ARTICLE 50: Zoning Bylaw Section 7-04-010 Classification of districts and Section 7-07-050, Multifamily Development Overlay District

To see if the Town will vote to amend Part 7 of the Northborough Town Code, the Northborough Zoning Bylaw Section 7-04-010 and add a new Section 7-07-050 as set forth in the underlined text below, or take any action relative thereto.

1: Amend Section 7-04-010 Classification of districts.

B. Overlay districts. There are hereby established the following overlay districts:

- (1) Groundwater Protection Overlay District (GPOD).
- (2) Floodplain Overlay District (FOD).
- (3) Major Commercial Development Overlay District (MCDOD).
- (4) Residential- Open Space Planning Overlay District (ROPOD).
- (5) Multifamily Development Overlay District (MDOD).

2: Add Section 7-07-050 Multifamily Development Overlay District.

7-07-050 Multifamily Development Overlay District.

A. Purposes. The purposes of the Multifamily Development Overlay District, hereinafter referred to as the “MDOD”, are:

- (1) To comply with the requirements for MBTA communities as set forth in MGL c. 40A, § 3A;

- (2) To diversify the Northborough housing stock and create pedestrian-friendly development by promoting the creation of multi-family housing within close proximity to shopping, eateries, local services, and major transportation corridors;
- (3) To encourage the adaptive reuse, development and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized buildings and properties;
- (4) To support local businesses and promote the revitalization of downtown Northborough by increasing the size of the customer base;
- (5) To respond to the local and regional need for affordable housing by requiring housing options that are affordable and add to the Northborough SHI (Subsidized Housing Inventory);
- (6) To meet the housing and economic development goals articulated in the 2020 Master Plan.

- B. Applicability. The MDOD is an overlay district superimposed over the underlying zoning districts as set forth on the map entitled “Multifamily Development Overlay District Map”. This map is hereby made part of the Zoning Map – Town of Northborough, and is on file in the Office of the Town Clerk.

The MDOD contains the following sub-districts:

- (1) Southwest Connector Multifamily Development Sub-District
- (2) Downtown Multifamily Development Sub-District

- C. Relationship to existing zoning. In the MDOD, all requirements of the underlying district shall remain in effect except where these regulations provide an alternative to such requirements, in which case these regulations shall supersede. Where the provisions of the MDOD are silent on a zoning regulation that applies in the underlying district, the requirements of the underlying district shall apply.

Permitted Uses in the MDOD as set forth in Section E, herein, are exempt from the requirements of the Groundwater Protection Overlay District provided that the proponent shall demonstrate and certify that: a) runoff waters leaving the site via surface flow will not violate Class B water quality standards (314 CMR 4.00) and that runoff waters leaving the site via groundwater recharge will not violate Class I groundwater quality standards (314 CMR 6.00); b) the increase in post-development net runoff volume shall not exceed existing conditions by more than fifteen percent (15%); and c) any on-site sewage disposal is less than or equal to one hundred ten (110) gallons per day per ten thousand (10,000) square feet of lot area, such determinations to be made by the Building Inspector in conjunction with a staff/consulting civil engineer and other relevant Town staff.

- D. Procedures and Regulations. Development under this section requires Site Plan Review by the Planning Board under Section 7-03-050 and design review by the Design Review Committee under Section 7-03-060. The Planning Board may adopt design guidelines for the MDOD that are not inconsistent with this Section or other applicable sections of the Northborough Zoning Bylaws.

E. Use regulations.

(1) Permitted uses. The following uses shall be permitted by-right in the MDOD, subject to site plan approval under Section 7-03-050. Uses are as defined in Section 7-05-020 unless otherwise specified below:

- (a) Attached single-family dwelling or townhouse.
- (b) Multifamily dwelling, defined as a building with three (3) or more residential dwelling units or two (2) or more buildings on the same lot with more than one (1) residential dwelling in each building.
- (c) Mixed-Use Development containing a mix of residential uses and non-residential uses. Developments in the MDOD may include the following non-residential uses within a vertical or horizontal mixed-use development provided that non-residential uses are located on the first floor and, when combined, do not exceed 8,000 square feet within the Southwest Connector Multifamily Development Sub-District. Non-residential uses that require a special permit or are otherwise not permitted in the underlying district shall require a special permit by the Planning Board in the MDOD.
 - 1. Retail store.
 - 2. Personal service establishment.
 - 3. Professional, medical and dental, or business office.
 - 4. Bank or automated teller machine.
 - 5. Deli, sandwich shop, pizza shop, or take-out food service.
 - 6. Restaurant, excluding alcoholic beverages.
 - 7. Restaurant, including alcoholic beverages.
 - 8. Brew pub.
 - 9. Commercial recreation, indoor.
 - 10. Cultural use.
 - 11. Co-Working space.
 - 12. Artist studio or gallery.
 - 13. Catering services.
 - 14. Educational uses, nonexempt.
 - 15. Exempt uses in accordance with MGL C. 40A, § 3.

(2) The following accessory uses are permitted by-right in the MDOD:

- (a) Clubhouse for residents of the development.
- (b) Home professional office with no employees and who do not have regular customers/clients come to the office.
- (c) Parking.
- (d) Garage or carport.
- (e) Solar photovoltaic installation, roof-mounted.
- (f) Solar photovoltaic installation, canopy-mounted.
- (g) Passive recreation, open space or conservation.

F. Density and dimensional regulations. The density and dimensional regulations of the underlying zoning districts are to be adhered to within the MDOD, except as follows:

Southwest Connector Multifamily Development Sub-District:

<u>Use</u>	<u>Maximum Height (stories)</u>	<u>Maximum Height (feet)</u>	<u>Maximum Density (dwelling units per acre)</u>
<u>Attached single-family or townhouse</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Multi-family dwelling</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Vertical mixed-use development</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Horizontal mixed-use development</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Clubhouse</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>N/A</u>

Downtown Multifamily Development Sub-District:

<u>Use</u>	<u>Maximum Height (stories)</u>	<u>Maximum Height (feet)</u>	<u>Maximum Density (units per acre)**</u>
<u>Attached single-family or townhouse</u>	<u>2.5</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Multi-family dwelling</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>35*</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Vertical mixed-use development</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Horizontal mixed-use development</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Clubhouse</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>N/A</u>

*Where parking is to be provided on the first floor of a multi-family dwelling, the maximum height may increase to 45 feet.

G. Affordable housing.

- (1) Number of Affordable Dwelling Units. For all MDOD Projects containing a minimum of 10 dwelling units, not less than 15% of dwelling units constructed shall be permanently restricted to households who qualify as low income, as that term is defined for the area by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Liveable Communities (EOHLC), or successor agency. For purposes of calculating the number of units of Affordable Dwelling Units required within the Project, any fractional unit shall be deemed to constitute a whole unit.
- (2) Affordable Dwelling Units shall be constructed on the same site as market rate units and shall be indistinguishably interspersed throughout the MDOD Project. The Affordable Dwelling Units shall be equal in quality, layout, construction materials, fixtures, and interior and exterior finishes to the base level market rate units in the MDOD.

- (3) Occupants of Affordable Dwelling Units shall have the same access to common areas, facilities and services as occupants of market rate units in the MDOD.
- (4) The total number of bedrooms in Affordable Dwelling Units shall be proportionate to the total number of bedrooms in all units of the MDOD Project.
- (5) In Projects that are constructed in phases, Affordable Dwelling Units shall be constructed and occupied in proportion to the number of units in each phase of the Project.
- (6) To the extent permitted by applicable law, otherwise qualified Northborough residents shall have a first opportunity and preference for the Affordable Housing Dwelling Units in the MDOD. For the purposes of this requirement, "Northborough residents" shall be defined as a current Town of Northborough resident (as established through certification by the Northborough Town Clerk based on census, voting registration, or other acceptable evidence), or a current employee of the Town of Northborough or business establishment located in Northborough, or household with children attending the Northborough/Southborough Regional Public School District.
- (7) Affordable Housing Restriction. Affordable Dwelling Units shall be Local Action Units developed in compliance with the requirements for the same as specified by Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Liveable Communities (EOHLC), or successor agency as part of the Local Initiative Program, 760 CMR 56.00, or otherwise. All such affordable dwelling units shall qualify for inclusion of the Subsided Housing Inventory (SHI) maintained by the EOHLC, and shall be subject to an affordable housing restriction, consistent with the universal deed rider used in the Local Initiative Program, 760 CMR 56.00, which shall be recorded with the Worcester Registry of Deeds or district registry of the Land Court. The term of the Affordable Housing Restriction shall be in perpetuity. Each Affordable Dwelling Unit shall comply with MA Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities' Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing and Resident Selection Plan Guidelines. No certificate of occupancy for a dwelling unit in a MDOD Project shall be issued until the Affordable Housing Restriction is recorded.

H. Design Standards. In addition to the Site Design Standards set forth in Section 7-09-020 and the Off-street parking and loading requirements set forth in Section 7-09-030, the following standards shall apply to any use or activity approved under this Section.

(1) Buildings

- (a) Multiple buildings are allowed on one lot.
- (b) The front façade of new building(s) shall be oriented parallel to the public street that provides the lot with frontage. For a MDOD Project with buildings set back from the public street, buildings shall face the access way that serves them or a courtyard.
- (c) New building(s) parallel to the public street shall be compatible with the height and architecture of noteworthy buildings that share a functional or visual relationship to the proposed buildings. For a MDOD Project with multiple buildings, taller buildings shall be set back from the public street. To create a unified and defined street, consistent alignment of buildings is encouraged.

- (d) Stucco, metal or fiberglass as a primary building finish material shall not be used.
- (e) Front building facades shall be modulated with horizontal offsets, recessed entries, or protrusions, where applicable. Vertical articulation may include colonnades, bay windows, porches or balconies, architectural detailing, and fenestration patterns.
- (f) Buildings with multiple non-residential tenants on the first floor shall articulate the façade in a manner that distinguishes the location of tenants through the use of decorative raised or depressed vertical surfaces, variations in signage, awnings, marquees, colonnades or arcades.
- (g) Blank walls adjacent to streets, parking lots or open spaces shall not be permitted. Where windows are not possible or appropriate given the intended use, vertical articulation in the form of raised or recessed surfaces, shall be used to break up blank walls.
- (h) Flat roofs shall only be allowed if they are capped by an architectural parapet or cornice that acts as a structural expression of the building façade and materials.
- (i) Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be screened so it is not visible from the pedestrian level. It can be integrated into the overall design of the building by use of materials, placement, roof shape or form, or other means.
- (j) The placement of gas meters, electric meters, compressors, transformers, etc. along the street-facing façade should be avoided unless there are compelling reasons to do so, and they are screened from view.

(2) Site Design

- (a) Clearly delineated pedestrian walkways or pathways shall be provided between buildings on the same lot and between buildings and parking areas, recreation facilities, and adjacent lots to ensure a continuous pedestrian pathway throughout the district. All new sidewalks and pedestrian walkways shall be designed and constructed to be accessible in accordance with applicable laws, including the Rules and Regulations of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (AAB).
- (b) No use other than landscaping, pedestrian amenities, outdoor dining, sidewalks, and signs shall be permitted within the minimum required front yard of any lot.
- (c) Outdoor lighting for streets, parking areas, walkways, and gathering spaces shall be decorative and of a scale that is appropriate for a multi-family or mixed-use development. Light poles and fixtures shall not exceed 20 feet in height measured from the base to the highest point of the fixture.

(3) Off-Street Parking

- (a) Parking requirements shall be consistent with Section 7-09-030 except MDOD Projects approved under this section may provide fewer parking spaces where, in the determination of the Planning Board, proposed parking is found to be sufficient to meet the needs of the Project. The Planning Board may consider proximity to municipal and on-street parking, mixed uses, as well as the existence of a reciprocal agreement for shared parking that is consistent with Section 7-09-030C.(3). The Applicant shall demonstrate that parking will meet demand by

using accepted methodologies (e.g. the Urban Land Institute Shared Parking Report, ITE Shared Parking Guidelines, or other approved studies).

- (b) Parking areas shall be located to the side and rear of buildings, underground, within a parking garage, or on the first floor of multifamily structures.
- (c) Abutting property owners are encouraged to coordinate parking layouts, including combining and connecting with adjacent parking lots, and coordinating access to their parking lots, including utilizing common curb-cuts and driveways under reciprocal agreements. The Planning Board may permit such shared driveways, curb cuts and combined parking lots if the applicant can demonstrate that the proposed design improves on-site and off-site circulation and/or results in a small parking area.

(4) Common Open Space

Within the Southwest Connector Multifamily Development Sub-District, common open space requirements shall be as follows:

- (a) Common open space shall comprise a minimum of 40% of the tract.
- (b) Common open space shall be large, contiguous and of a location suitable to assure its use for conservation, park and recreation purposes.
- (c) Common open space shall not include parking lots, driveways, roads, or ways necessary for access and egress to the site.
- (d) Common open space shall be left in its natural state, landscaped or developed for outdoor recreational facilities. Outdoor recreational facilities may include features and incidental recreational structures such as courtyards, boardwalks, walkways, trails, a clubhouse, swimming pools, decks, patio areas, grill stations, fire pits, seating and tables, playgrounds, basketball courts, tennis courts and/or bocce courts, dog parks, gardens, boat launch and fishing areas, and other similar features.
- (e) MDOD Projects containing 40 or more dwelling units shall include an appropriate outdoor amenity.

Within the Downtown Multifamily Development Sub-District, common open space requirements shall be as follows:

- (a) Common open space shall comprise a minimum of 20% of the tract.
- (b) Common open space should be visible to the public wherever possible.
- (c) Common open space shall not include parking lots, driveways, roads, or ways necessary for access and egress to the site.
- (d) Common open space shall be left in its natural state, landscaped, or developed for outdoor recreation purposes. Outdoor recreation amenities may include features and incidental recreational structures such as courtyards, gardens, walkways, trails, decks, patio areas, seating, pocket parks, and similar amenities. MDOD Projects containing 40 or more dwelling units shall include an appropriate outdoor amenity such as boardwalks, grill stations, tables, fire pits, playgrounds, boat launch and fishing areas, dog parks, community gardens, and similar amenities.

- I. Waivers. The Planning Board is authorized to waive any requirements of this Section for compelling reasons of safety, aesthetics, site design, or to lessen environmental, neighborhood or public service impacts.

MOTION: Zoning Bylaw Section 7-04-010 Classification of districts and Section 7-07-050, Multifamily Development Overlay District

I move the Town will vote to amend Part 7 of the Northborough Town Code, the Northborough Zoning Bylaw Section 7-04-010 by adding the underlined text and a new Section 7-07-050, as set forth in the Warrant.

ARTICLE: Zoning Bylaw Section 7-05-020, Classification of uses and Section 7-05-030, Table 1. Table of Uses. Part B. Commercial and Industrial Districts

To see if the Town will vote to amend Part 7 of the Northborough Town Code, the Northborough Zoning Bylaw, Sections 7-05-020 and 7-05-030 by adding the text shown below as underlined, or take any action relative thereto.

1: Amend Section 7-05-020 Classification of Uses, as follows:

Section 7-05-020G.(4)(e) Co-working space: A building or part thereof consisting of a shared office environment, which contains desks or other workspaces and facilities, including but not limited to, dedicated workstations, office suites, meeting rooms, event space, resource libraries, and business or administrative support services, and is used by a recognized membership who share the site to interact and collaborate with each other as part of a community. Rules for membership and participation in the co-working space are explicit, transparent, and available to the public. Co-working spaces may host classes or networking events which are open either to the public or to current and prospective members.

7-05-020 I.(1)(a) Maker space: A building or part thereof used for the on-site production of parts or finished products by individual or shared use of hand-tools, mechanical tools, and electronic tools. Maker Spaces may include space for design and prototyping of new materials, fabrication methodologies, and products, as well as space for packaging, incidental storage, sales, and distribution of such projects. Typical uses include but are not limited to: electronic goods; printmaking; leather products; jewelry and clothing/apparel; metal work; furniture; woodworking and cabinet shops; glass or ceramic production; and paper manufacturing. Maker Spaces may host classes or networking events which are open to the public. Maker Spaces may also include a membership component.

2: Amend Section 7-05-030, Table 1. Table of Uses. Part B. Commercial and Industrial Districts, as follows:

Financial or Professional Services							
	DB	BE	BW	BS	HB	<u>HBSW</u>	I

<u>Co-working space</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>Y</u>
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INDUSTRIAL USES							
	DB	BE	BW	BS	HB	<u>HBSW</u>	I
<u>Maker space</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>PB</u>

MOTION: Zoning Bylaw Section 7-05-020, Classification of uses and Section 7-05-030, Table 1. Table of Uses. Part B. Commercial and Industrial Districts

I move the Town will vote to amend Part 7 of the Northborough Town Code, the Northborough Zoning Bylaw Sections 7-05-020 and 7-05-030 by adding the text shown below as underlined, as set forth in the Warrant.

ARTICLE: Zoning Bylaw – Section 7-09-040, Signs

To see if the Town will vote to amend Part 7 of the Northborough Town Code, the Northborough Zoning Bylaw, Section 7-09-040 Signs, by adding the text shown below as underlined and deleting the text shown below in strikethrough, or take any action relative thereto.

7-09-040 Signs.

A. Purpose. Signs are a necessary means of communicating information. Since signs are intended to be seen, they attract attention and are one (~~1~~) of the most visible and apparent aspects of a town's character. They tend to produce a lasting impression on residents and visitors, and they provide an indication of the commercial health of a business area and a town as a whole. Simplicity in design and restrained use of signs are necessary to prevent a sign overload, which creates clutter and is as confusing as no signs at all.

i. Basic Requirements.

(12) Window signs are allowed in business districts only. All combined window signage shall be limited to 10% of the total glass area on any one façade/side of a building.

E. Construction and maintenance of signs.

(1) All signs shall be constructed of durable and weatherproof material. They shall be maintained in safe structural condition and good visual appearance at all times, and no sign shall be left in a dangerous or defective state. The Building Inspector shall have the authority to inspect any sign and order the owner to paint, repair or remove a sign which constitutes a hazard or a nuisance due to improper or illegal installation, dilapidation, damage, or inadequate maintenance.

(3) Any sign, together with its structural elements, which advertises or calls attention to any business or services of owner or tenant which are no longer operational shall be removed by the owner within thirty (30) days of the date on which the operation ceased.

G. Signs in business districts.

(1) Type, size and number of signs. There shall not be more than the following on each lot:

(c) Highway Business District.

[1] Lot with one (1) or two (2) tenants.

[a] Freestanding sign. Not more than one (1) freestanding sign, size not to exceed one hundred (100) square feet, height not to exceed twenty (20) feet as measured from the ground to the highest point of the sign. The freestanding sign shall indicate the name(s) of the tenant(s) and address of the facility, in a fixed manner, and may have an additional fifty (50) square feet of space for changeable-copy message. Electronic message centers may be used as part of a freestanding sign.

[b] Wall sign: one (1) wall sign, size not to exceed 10% of the wall size to which the sign is affixed or two-one hundred fifty (250+100) square feet, whichever is smaller, for each tenant, or two (2) wall signs with a combined total area not to exceed two hundred fifty (250) one hundred (100) square feet for each tenant.

[2] Lot with three (3) or more tenants.

[a] Freestanding sign. Not more than one (1) freestanding sign for each ten (10) tenants located on the lot; size not to exceed one hundred (100) square feet, height not to exceed twenty (20) feet as measured from the ground to the highest point of the sign. The freestanding sign shall indicate the name and address of the facility in a fixed manner and may have space for listings of individual tenants and may have an additional fifty (50) square feet of space for changeable-copy message. When there is more than one (1) freestanding sign on a lot, there shall be not less than fifty (50) feet between signs, and no sign shall be located to obstruct the viewing of any other sign.

~~[3]~~[b] Wall sign: one (1) wall sign, size not to exceed 10% of the wall size to which the sign is affixed or two-one hundred fifty (250+100) square feet, whichever is smaller, for each tenant, or two (2) wall signs with a combined total area not to exceed two hundred fifty (250) one hundred (100) square feet for each tenant.

~~[4]~~[c] Directory sign. There may be not more than one (1) directory of the tenants of the building affixed to the exterior wall of the building. Such directory sign shall not exceed an area determined on the basis of one (1) square foot for each occupant or tenant of the building.

(3) Temporary signs. Signs for the purpose of announcing a special day or event and not to exist more than ~~fifty-six (56)~~ thirty (30) days per calendar year shall be permitted. The Board of Selectmen may grant an extension of this time period. One (1) exterior movable sign shall be limited to fifteen (15) square feet. One (1) temporary sign shall be permitted for each freestanding sign as permitted by this section. Temporary signs shall be placed a minimum distance of thirty (30) feet apart from each other. Temporary signs affixed to the inside of a window shall not exceed thirty percent (30%) of the window area of the storefront. To place a temporary sign on property other than that which is being advertised, the applicant must have written permission from the landowner and the Board of Selectmen.

K. Permit not required. The following types of signs do not require a permit from the Building Inspector:

(10) Historic Signs, markers and municipal plaques. Signs and markers signifying historical importance and municipal plaques shall not be subject to this Bylaw and shall be permitted in all use districts without permit.

MOTION: Zoning Bylaw – Section 7-09-040, Signs

To see if the Town will vote to amend Part 7 of the Northborough Town Code, the Northborough Zoning Bylaw Section 7-09-040 Signs, by adding the text shown as underlined and deleting the text shown in strikethrough, as shown on the Warrant.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Laurie Connors
Director