

## 4.0 TOWN PLANS, POLICIES & REGULATIONS

The town of Barrington recently updated the Master Plan (2004), Zoning Ordinance and Site Plan Review Regulations (2005), and Subdivision (2005). These new and updated planning instruments established the Village District as an integral part of the community's future by creating a center of activity through mixed uses such as commercial, civic, and residential development. A review of these plans and regulations as well as other recent reports, policies, and related materials relevant to the Village District is made below along with recommendations for proposed changes to improve the potential or implementation of the Town Center Conceptual Plan as illustrated in Section 3.

### 4.1 Town Master Plan

In March 2004, the Barrington Planning Board adopted the most recent version of the town's master plan entitled *Barrington Strategic Master Plan Update 2004*. This strategic plan represented the culmination of more than 12 months of work by the Planning Board and the Master Plan Advisory Committee. The planning process involved an extensive inventory and analysis of existing conditions and historical changes within the town related to population, housing, transportation, natural resources, and land use. It also included a public involvement process wherein numerous public sessions were conducted with residents and business proprietors for the purpose of identifying issues and concerns, as well as a vision for the future development of the community. The *Vision for Barrington* policy document evolved from this process and included over 40 strategic objectives that provided the basis for an implementation strategy containing recommendations for community action over the coming decade.

The implementation strategy presented comprehensive recommendations for dealing with almost all aspects of growth in Barrington. Many of these recommendations were specifically related, in varying degrees, to the future use of land within the community and, therefore, to the town's zoning ordinance and other land use regulations. One important conclusion of the land use analysis is that certain parts of the town are displaying development patterns that have begun to set them apart from other areas.

The master plan recognizes that due to the evolution of its land use patterns, roadway network, and existing natural constraints, Barrington has been able to attract only a small amount of commercial uses along the Route 125 and Route 9 corridors. Although land areas along other roadways are zoned for commercial development, these are the only two areas (Routes 125 and 9) that are likely to support any significant concentration of nonresidential development. Furthermore, encroachment by residential uses along these roadways has considerably reduced the available supply of suitably zoned land to a relatively small number of parcels. The plan concludes that unless a concerted effort is made to retain the remaining undeveloped land or identify other potential locations, it will be very difficult for the town to expand the nonresidential portion of its tax base to any great degree.

These and other conclusions presented in the master plan formed the basis for establishing the Village District on the zoning map and creating a Town Center as a focal point for community activities and mixed use development. The strategic objectives grouped community development issues into categories. Of the five major planning categories, several specific recommendations pertain to establishing the Village District and developing a town center.

#### Land Planning and Design Standards

- Establish a town center zone that permits a mix of residential and nonresidential land uses
- Establish standards (e.g., smaller unit size) for the construction of elderly housing.
- Encourage new land development activities, through density incentives, to set aside more open space that is potentially usable for multiple purposes.
- Promote an awareness of historic properties and sites throughout Barrington.
- Adopt design review guidelines for significant developments throughout the community. The purpose of design review guidelines is to preserve and enhance the town's cultural, economic, and historical resources by providing for a detailed review of changes in land use as well as the

---

---

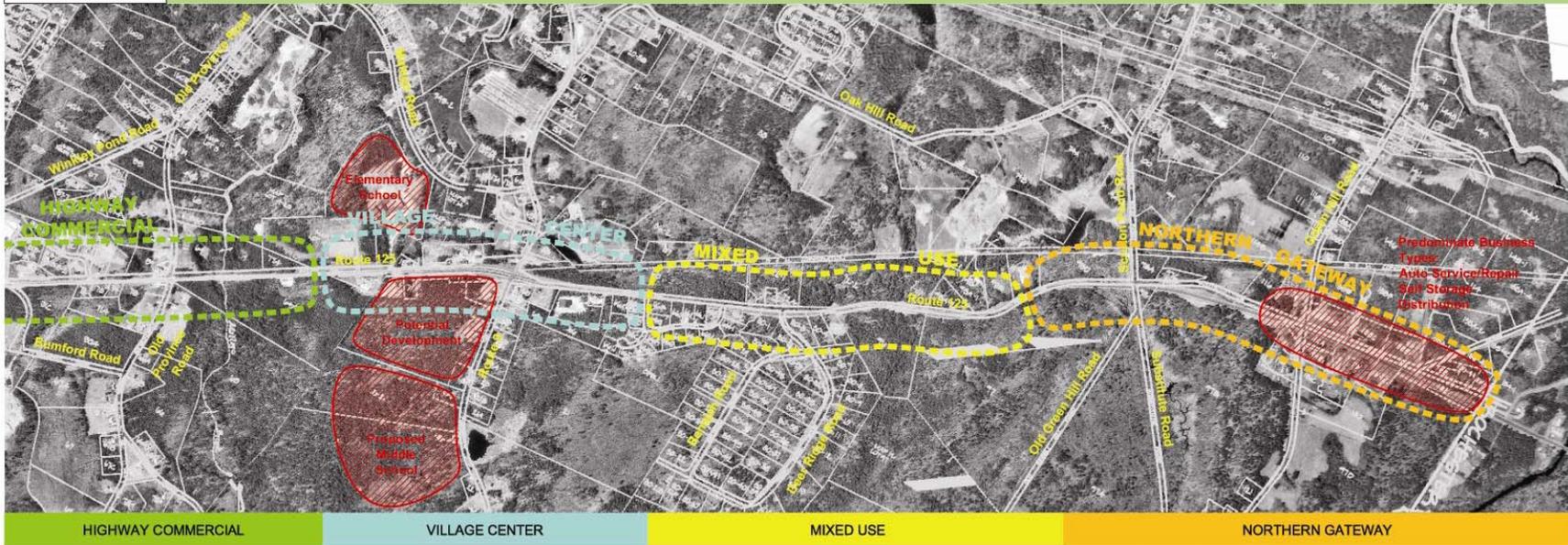
appearance of structures and sites which may affect these resources. The review process is intended to:

- Enhance the social and economic viability of the town by preserving property values and promoting the attractiveness of the town as a place to live, visit, and shop;
  - Encourage the conservation of buildings and groups of buildings that have aesthetic or historic significance;
  - Prevent alterations that are incompatible with the existing environment or that are of inferior quality or appearance; and
  - Encourage flexibility and variety in future development.
- Use the concept of a Design Overlay District for the Route 125 corridor.
  - Offer incentives, such as density bonuses, to encourage cluster residential development.
  - Establish performance and design standards, under the revised zoning ordinance and site plan review regulations, to guide decision making about commercial and industrial development proposals. Specific attention should focus on requirements for parking lot layout and landscaping. The design guidelines should include illustrations in order to more effectively communicate practical design alternatives.
  - Create alternative development and improvement standards for different portions of the town. For example, the design and width of streets in rural areas should be different than standards established for the town center.
  - Authorize the creation of industrial and business parks on land adjacent to the Route 125 corridor to avoid numerous strips of commercial development adjacent to roadways. This approach should also encourage connections between adjacent parking lots and the construction of interior roadways to connect commercial lots.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BARRINGTON MASTER PLAN

**FIGURE**  
**3B**

*Strategic Master Plan Update* **Barrington, New Hampshire**  
ROUTE 125 CORRIDOR PLANNING ISSUES - SECTION II



This section of the corridor is a well-established auto-oriented commercial district. There are several issues related to traffic congestion, vehicle speed, curb-cut controls, bicycle and pedestrian safety, signage and streetscape enhancements that need to be addressed through design guidelines and access management strategies outlined in the plan.

This section of the corridor is the heart of Barrington and centered on the Route 125 & 9 intersection. It serves of the center of well-established public institutions and private businesses. It is also the site of the new public middle school. There are several development and redevelopment opportunities in this area. It is the targeted area for a new Village Center, which is to include a traditional development pattern of mixed uses, public spaces, pedestrian amenities, and attractive streetscapes.

This segment of the corridor includes a variety of existing uses including residential, religious, professional office, and commercial operations. There are well-established neighborhoods accessing the highway in this section as well as new medical office buildings. There are significant development opportunities along both sides of the corridor, which need to be carefully managed to control aesthetic and access safety concerns. This segment could also serve as a residential district supporting the Village Center and tied together by frontage roads and sidewalks.

This section of the corridor predominately includes auto-oriented, storage, and industrial operation. Vehicle speeds are high in this area and there are considerable safety issues with intersecting local roads including Scruton Pond Road and Green Hill Road, which are major local connectors. These intersections need to be improved to provide safer access to the corridor by local traffic.

RECOMMENDED TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE TOWN CENTER FROM THE MASTER PLAN

FIGURE 4

*Strategic Master Plan Update* **Barrington, New Hampshire**  
 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS IN POTENTIAL TOWN CENTER (INTERSECTION OF ROUTE 125 AND ROUTE 9)



**Transportation and Circulation**

- Support and enhance the establishment of a town center through multiple transportation modes, streetscape improvements, and adequate parking facilities.
- Encourage the town, as well as regional and state agencies, to address transportation planning in a coordinated manner, especially the use and access on the Route 125 corridor.
- Encourage opportunities for alternate transportation modes, such as walking, biking, and public transportation, through regional public/private cooperation in transportation planning
- Encourage the creation of service roadways in existing and commercial areas on the Route 125 corridor along with provisions for mass transit and park and ride facilities.
- Enhance existing and future targeted business development areas.

**4.2 Zoning Ordinance**

Land use regulations pertaining to the Town Center are contained the document entitled *Town of Barrington Zoning Ordinance*, which was completely rewritten and adopted in March 2005. This new zoning ordinance replaced the town’s previous ordinance which was adopted in 1997 and originally in 1972.

The new zoning ordinance established the Village District. This zoning district was created out of the former Highway District and General District and is centered on the Route 125 and Route 9 intersection.

**Previous Zoning Classification of the Village District Area**

Acreeage Previously Zoned Highway District	1,157 acres	(56%)	110 parcels
Acreeage Previously Zoned General District	903 acres	(44%)	154 parcels
<b>Total Acreeage in Village District</b>	<b>2,060 acres</b>		<b>264 parcels</b>

Almost 60 percent of the Village District parcels were zoned for development based on the town’s existing Highway District. The HD required a 40,000-square-foot minimum lot size and maximum lot coverage of 50 percent. The new Village District requires a 30,000-square-foot lot and maximum lot coverage of 50 percent. Therefore, the only significant change in development standards is a reduction of 10,000 square feet in the minimum lot size. However, minimum lot size will still be regulated by the soil capacity to accommodate on-site septic, which is likely to result in larger lot sizes.

The Village District is much larger than necessary to create a Town Center as envisioned by the community and illustrated in Section 3. Only a few hundred acres of land is needed to create a traditional town center for a community the size of Barrington. The town should consider creating a **Town Center District** with the Village District to facilitate a concentrated mixed-use area centered on the Routes 125 and 9 intersection.

**Village District Purpose Statement**

Section 2.2.3 of the zoning ordinance defines the purpose of the new Village District which is

“to promote mixed-use development at higher densities in order to provide a centralized location for regular community interaction as well as convenient opportunities for the purchase of goods and services by town residents. The regulations are intended to allow opportunities for creating apartments above commercial establishments and multifamily senior housing developments that would be in close proximity to municipal and school facilities and provide a base of consumer support for small-scale commercial establishments in the district. The site design and landscaping standards applied to development in this district should reflect the guidelines recommended in the 2004 master plan as well as other land use regulations adopted by the town. Development in this district should promote an environment that facilitates pedestrian access both within the Village District as well as into adjoining zoning districts.”

**Allowable Uses**

Section 3.3.4 defines the allowable uses in the Village District. The district generally allows for a good mix of agricultural, residential, commercial, public, and accessory uses. This section of the ordinance also allows new or expanded development in the Village District to combine any uses otherwise permitted in this district as part of a ***mixed use development***.

There are some uses that are not permitted in the Village District that should be reconsidered:

- Conservation Subdivisions
- Multifamily Housing
- Commercial Recreational Facilities
- Funeral Homes
- Gas and Service Stations
- Hotels and Motels
- Service and Body Shops
- Landscape Nurseries and Greenhouses
- Light Manufacturing Facilities
- Research and Development Facilities

These types of uses, in and of themselves, are not conflicting with the purpose of the Village District. For example, ***Conservation Subdivisions*** could be an invaluable tool in controlling residential sprawl on several large tracks of undeveloped land that exist in the district. This alternative development pattern would allow for a more traditional neighborhood layout while providing for valuable open space.

Another use that is typically allowed in town centers is multifamily housing which is only permitted in the Village District in the form of ***Retirement Housing***. Retirement housing is also set at 62+ years, which is a limiting factor to creating a broader mix of incomes and ages sought in the Village District where public schools are located. The reasoning is that retirement housing is likely to be predominantly one-bedroom units, occupied by an average of two people or less per unit, and is likely to keep septic loading at lower levels than single-family housing.

The general concern with these prohibited uses is that they may not fit the vision of the Village District in terms of scale, aesthetics, pedestrian orientation, and potential impact on surrounding land uses. However, these uses provide essential services and employment opportunities to the community and can be part of the mix that creates an attraction to the Village District. Potential impacts can be controlled by conditional use permits and carefully thought-out performance standards.

**Dimensional Requirements**

Section 4.2 of the zoning ordinance established dimensional requirements for uses in different zoning districts including minimum lot sizes, frontages, yard setbacks, building height, and lot coverage. The table below identifies the dimensional standards as they pertain to the Village District.

Dimensional Standards for the Village District (a)							
Min. Lot Area (SF) (b)	Min. Lot Frontage (SF) (b)	Min. Yard Setbacks (ft.)			Max. Bldg. Height		Max. Lot Coverage (c)
		Front	Side	Rear	Feet	Stories	
30,000(d)	75	20	15	15	40	3	50%
<b>Footnotes:</b> (a) All development is subject to the additional and supplemental dimensional standards prescribed in Article 4 of this ordinance. (b) Refer to Article 4 for calculating the minimum lot size per dwelling unit. (c) Maximum lot coverage means the area of the lot covered by an impervious surface. All development is also subject to the provisions of Article 12, Groundwater Protection, with regard to the creation of impermeable surfaces. (d) The minimum lot size for single-family dwelling units must comply with the provisions of Subsection 4.2.1 of this ordinance, which are the same requirements for constructing a single-family dwelling in the GR and NR districts, as well as all other applicable provisions.							

**Minimum Lot Sizes** – Section 4.2.2.1 established the minimum lot size for nonresidential uses in the Village District at 30,000 square feet. Subsection 3 further allows for commercial buildings to contain an accessory apartment where the minimum lot size is increased in accordance with New Hampshire Department of

---

Environmental Services (NHDES) requirements based on the number of bedrooms contained in the apartment(s). Establishing the lot size based on the soil capabilities for on-site water supply and septic treatment is the most reasonable method of ensuring public health and safety. However, the 30,000-square-foot minimum lot size for nonresidential uses is excessive when establishing a traditional Town Center layout and pattern of development.

For residential uses in the Village District, Table 2 (Dimensional Standards) references Section 4.2.1.1, which requires a minimum of 80,000 square feet for a single-family home of which 60,000 square feet must be free of Hydric A soils, open water, bogs, marshes, rivers, streams, or exposed ledge, and contain at least 35,000 square feet of contiguous upland soils. (These are the same requirements for the General Residential and Neighborhood Residential Zoning Districts.) With each additional one-bedroom dwelling unit, the minimum lot size increases by at least 40,000 square feet, and with each additional two-bedroom (or more) dwelling unit, the minimum lot size increases by at least 80,000 square feet. In addition to these minimum lot size requirements, each must also be of adequate size, as specified by NHDES regulations, to safely accommodate an on-site septic system and/or water supply system.

Under the general residential lot size requirements, a four-unit condominium complex containing two-bedroom units would require at least 320,000 square feet (over 7 acres of land) assuming the lot could also meet the upland area and NHDES requirements. The minimum lot size for **multifamily retirement housing developments** is reduced at 30,000 square feet per dwelling. However, a retirement apartment complex containing eight dwelling units would still require at least 5 acres of land.

The minimum lot size requirements for residential uses far exceed the existing average single-family lot in the district and the typical residential lot size for a traditional neighborhood development. Additionally, requiring large lot sizes causes the cost of housing to increase while the mix of housing decreases. Owners of large tracts of undeveloped land in the Village District are likely to propose large-lot conversion subdivisions under these standards because that pattern and type of development has proven successful in Barrington over the past several years.

**Frontage** – The frontage requirement for residential and nonresidential uses in the Village District is 75 feet on a public roadway. This is adequate for a traditional village neighborhood development pattern. However, it is slightly higher than traditional Town Centers, which have narrow lots ranging between 20 and 50 feet.

**Setbacks** – There is a 20-foot front and 15-foot side and rear yard setback requirement for residential and nonresidential lot uses. These standards are adequate to establish a traditional village neighborhood development pattern. However, they are excessive when creating a traditional Town Center where buildings are brought up to the sidewalk to create a pedestrian environment and some buildings have common walls or narrow alleys separating them. Additionally, side setbacks do not allow for the creation of common parking lots. Provisions should be made (at least in the Town Center District) to create a **build-to-line** or **maximum setback** for nonresidential buildings typical in Town Centers.

A greenbelt is required along the frontage of parcels on Route 125 in accordance with Subsection 4.2.3.4, which requires a setback of 50 feet from the right-of-way. However, this requirement has been amended and no longer applies in the Village District, which is now 20 feet. It only in the general residential and nonresidential districts

**Building Height** – The maximum building height permitted in the Village District is three stories of 40 feet. This is adequate to create a traditional Town Center.

**Lot Coverage** – The maximum lot coverage permitted in the Village District is 50 percent, which includes all impervious surfaces such as building, parking areas, terraces, and sidewalks. This is much lower than found in traditional Town Centers and downtowns throughout New England. In order to facilitate the desired pattern of development for the new Town Center, lot coverage would have to be set at 80 percent or greater. In many cases, no such requirement exists due to other provisions designed to create a pedestrian environment such as formal streetscapes including landscaped areas that fit into the context of a Town Center.

**Nonresidential Building Size** – According to Section 4.2.2.3, nonresidential structures may not exceed more than 10,000 square feet of gross floor area. While this is a reasonable standard for most uses and the desired scale of the Town Center, it also prohibits some uses that the community would like to have and that could serve as anchors for the district such as grocery stores and pharmacies. It also constrains the development of light

---

---

industrial and corporate office uses that may also be desired in the Village District. This standard should be revised to allow for buildings up to 40,000 gross square feet by conditional use permit with performance and building design standards that would address potential impacts such as traffic, parking, access, and aesthetics.

### **Other Zoning Regulations Applicable to Village District**

**Performance Standards for Development** – There are several town-wide performance standards under Section 12.4.1 that pertain to the storage and containment of certain regulated substances. Additionally, all nonresidential land uses located within the boundaries of the stratified drift aquifer are subject to additional performance standards, in addition to those listed in Subsection 12.4.1. For example, any use that will render impervious more than 15 percent or more than 2,500 square feet of any lot, whichever is greater, a stormwater management plan must be prepared based on the standards of the Rockingham County Conservation District and NHDES. Businesses located in the stratified drift aquifer area may also be required to perform additional studies, and/or provide additional information, as required by the Planning Board.

**Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment Systems** – Section 3.1.5 states that all water supply and wastewater treatment systems, whether they are intended for use as a single-user system, a community system, or any other type of user or usage, shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with the standards established by NHDES. According to the definitions, “Community Water Supply System” means a community water system as defined in RSA 485:1-a, I, as amended, namely “a public water system which serves at least 15 service connections used by year-round residents or regularly serves at least 25 year-round residents.” Community water supply and wastewater treatment systems are a key to developing a traditional Town Center and should be strongly encouraged in the Village District.

**Groundwater Protection Overlay District (GPO)** – Article 12 defines the Groundwater Protection Overlay District, which covers nearly all of the lands in the Village District.

## **4.3 Subdivision Regulations**

The new Town of Barrington Subdivision Regulations were adopted in June 2005. There are several provisions that apply directly to the Village District, particularly for residential development.

### **Road Design and Construction Standards**

**Road Classification and Design** – Section 15.3 defines three types of roads which are further defined in Table 15.2 of the subdivision regulations:

- **Arterial Road** - A street intended to move through traffic to and from major collectors. In the Village District, Route 9 and Route 125 would be classified as arterials.
- **Collector Road** - Collector roads or streets generally collect and distribute traffic in minor traffic-generating areas. In the Village District, an example would include Mallego Road.
- **Local Access Road** - Streets used primarily for access to abutting properties, designed and intended to carry through-traffic.

Public and private roadways in Barrington must be designed according to the requirements in Table 15-1 and Figure 15-2: Road Design Standards and Guidelines of the subdivision regulations. These road standards vary in the Village District based on accepted methods of design, number of lanes, the need for bike lanes, on-street parking, and other special conditions and needs.

Town of Barrington Road Design Standards (Table 15-1 from the Subdivision Regulations)					
Description	Arterial	Collector	Major Access	Minor Access/Private	VILLAGE DISTRICT
Vehicles Per Day (VPD) - General Standard	> 5,000	1,000 - 5,000	< 1,000	< 200	NA
Maximum Dwelling Units Served if Dead-End	NA	NA	35	4	NA
Right-of-Way (feet)	80	60	50	30	60
Pavement Width (feet)	40	24	22	20	40
Shoulder Width/Curb Plateau	8	6 (cut); 3 (fill)	6 (cut) 3 (fill)	6 (cut) 3 (fill)	8 (parking lane) 10 (including tree pits)
Sidewalk Width	6	6	5	5	
Minimum Grade	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Maximum Grade	4%	7%	7%	9%	4%
Cross-Slope	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Maximum Length (1)	NA	NA	1,000	1,000	NA
Minimum Tangent Length between Reverse Curves (feet)	800	200	100	100	200
Minimum Centerline Radius	300	200	150	150	150
Design Speed	55	45	25	20	20
Alternative Dead-End Treatments	See Figure 15-2				
Driveways	See Section 15.4 and Figure 15-2				
Type of Curb	See Subsection 15.9.10				

(1) Roadway with one point of access measured along the centerline from the farthest point of the street to the centerline of the nearest multiple-access approved street. See Figure 15-2 for required cul-de-sac and other dead-end terminus layouts

This table establishes very large road design standards for the Village District. According to Figure 15-2C, these road standards include a boulevard collector and a Town Center arterial. The boulevard collector requires a 60-foot right-of-way with a center planting median, and the Village Center arterial requires a 60-foot right-of-way with on-street parking and an 8-foot sidewalk.

These regulations need to be clarified as the intention of the design standards in the Village District was that the general road standards would apply except for specific applications. The boulevard collector was intended to apply to entrance areas of larger new commercial and residential developments accessing major arterials (Route 9 and Route 125 in the district). The boulevard was also seen as a desired treatment on Routes 9 and 125 in the area of the intersection. The Village Center arterial was intended to apply to the core area of a new mixed-use center. The "Village District" category should be removed from Table 15-1 and a new table added to the subdivision regulations that defines the specific applications of the roadway design standards in the Village District.

### Sidewalks, Bikeways and Trails

Under Section 15.6 sidewalks are required in Barrington. This is a new provision in the subdivision regulations and the town currently has no public sidewalks. However, in creating a Town Center it is critical to have basic pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks. The determination for appropriateness is made by the Planning Board based on the following criteria:

- Proximity to schools.
- Availability of recreational facilities and land within the subdivision.

- 
- Proximity to commercial destinations, including restaurants, stores, shops, etc.
  - Proximity to other pedestrian paths or bikeways, including “abandoned” ways or sidewalks.

In commercial districts, such as the Village District, sidewalks may be required on both sides of the street. In residential districts, sidewalks may be required on one side of the street.

#### 4.4 Site Plan Review Regulations

The Town of Barrington Site Plan Review Regulations were adopted in April 2005. The general purpose of a site plan review is to control development, change, or expansion of nonresidential uses or multifamily dwelling units, which are defined as any structures containing more than two dwelling units. There are several provisions that are key to the development of the Town Center.

##### Community Water Systems and Disposal Systems

Section 4.5 provides for private community water and wastewater systems. When these systems are used, plans similar to those for municipal water supply and wastewater systems must be submitted indicating the source of water, details of locations of treatment facilities and pumping stations, distribution networks, and proposed maintenance and repair programs. Certification from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services must be submitted, and water and wastewater systems must be designed and constructed in accordance with the NHDES. Additionally, proposed ownership and operation must be acceptable to the town, including all necessary easements, agreements, and licenses. Community water and wastewater systems are crucial to the design and development of a traditional Town Center.

##### Access Management

Various methods of improved access are permitted in the regulations under section 4.8.3. Where the existing configuration of properties and driveways in the vicinity of the site precludes spacing of a driveway in accordance with normal standards, the Planning Board may require that one, or a combination of, the following methods be utilized:

- **Joint Use Driveways** – Wherever feasible, the Planning Board may require a joint-use driveway serving two abutting properties, with appropriate cross-access easements provided.
- **Driveway Closings** – The property owner may be required to close and eliminate any pre-existing driveways on a project site after approval of a new driveway.
- **Side Street Access** – The board may allow properties with frontage on Route 125 and another public street to provide a secondary access point from the side street to reduce turning movements on Route 125.
- **Frontage Roads** – The board may allow abutting properties with frontage on Route 125 to construct a frontage road for the purpose of accessing properties and reducing the total number of access points directly to the highway.

All of these access management methods are important to the development of the Town Center and transitioning auto-oriented highway development patterns to a more traditional shared pedestrians and vehicle environment.

##### Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Under Section 4.8.4 the board may require the construction of sidewalks or pathways for pedestrian and bicycle access to schools, parks, shopping areas, and transit stops. In the Village District, sidewalks may be required on both sides of the street.

##### Off-Street Parking and Loading Standards

Parking and loading standards under Section 4.9 are designed to provide for maximum pedestrian safety, ease in traffic flow, and access/egress on the property, while minimizing the need for impervious surfaces and maintaining

the visual character of the property and adjacent areas. Some general standards under Section 4.9.2. that pertain to the desired traditional pattern of development in the Town Center are as follows:

- All multifamily dwellings and **nonresidential parking** areas shall be located behind the front-yard setback.
- A **standard space size** shall be 9 feet wide by 18 feet long for off-street parking spaces. On-street or parallel parking spaces shall be 8 feet wide by 20 feet long. When possible, off-street parking spaces should be laid out on a 90-degree angle with a standard aisle width of 24 feet.
- **Dimensional standards** for driveways and access to public roads shall be as listed below.

<b>Dimensional Standards for Driveways (Table 4 from Site Plan Review Regulations)</b>			
<b>Land Use Type</b>	<b>Parking Spaces Served</b>	<b>Driveway Width</b>	<b>Curb Radius</b>
Residential	All Parking Spaces	9 Feet Min.	NA
		18 Feet Max.	
Commercial*	Less than 100	18 Feet Min.	60 Feet Maximum
		30 Feet Max.	
	100 and More	18 Feet Min.	
		40 Feet Max (Including Center Islands)	

\* For commercial and industrial driveways, single-lane width minimum is 11 feet, maximum 16 feet.

- The board may require **pedestrian refuge islands** on driveways depending on the width of curbcuts and the location of the sidewalk. Pedestrian crosswalks must be striped.
- **Internal sidewalk connections** to an existing public sidewalk or street may be required by the Planning Board. Internal sidewalks must be a minimum of 4 feet wide excluding vehicle overhang and located in a safe, convenient, and unobstructed area for pedestrian access.
- **Internal vehicle access** between two or more abutting commercial properties is generally encouraged by the Planning Board. Driveway and frontage roads shall must the dimensional standards for commercial uses in the table above.

Section 4.9.13 establishes the **Parking Standards by Use** which are reasonable for various types of commercial, residential, and mixed uses desired in the Town Center. The standards are based on the gross square footage of buildings in use; a maximum off-street parking standard is set at 10 percent above the required amount based on the Planning Board’s determination that more parking is needed. This prevents excessive parking often seen in highway commercial districts, which are undesirable in the Town Center.

Section 4.9.9 provides for **Parking Reduction Methods** which the Planning Board may grant for the number and/or size of spaces if the applicant can demonstrate good cause for such reduction. Parking reductions are typically allowed under the following conditions:

- If there is **accessible municipal parking** within 300 feet of the property and practical pedestrian access.
- Nonresidential parking areas with at least 50 percent of the **spaces located on the side or rear** of the primary structure may be permitted a partial reduction from the parking standards.
- **Shared parking** is strongly encouraged and the required number of spaces may be reduced if adjoining uses are compatible and can demonstrate that such a reduction would still provide adequate parking.
- For **abutting nonresidential uses** where shared parking is used, no side or rear setback is required.
- Developments that provide for **alternative modes of transportation** may be allowed a reduction in the parking standard. These may include bus stops, satellite parking for public transit, or alternative travel accommodations such as biking and hiking trails.

---

Section 4.9.12 provides for **Satellite Parking** when the number of off-street parking spaces required cannot reasonably be provided on the same lot where the principle use is located. In this case, adjacent or nearby lots may be used if such satellite parking spaces (except those intended for employee use) are unobstructed and located within 300 feet of a public entrance of a principle building housing the use associated with such parking. The applicant wishing to use satellite parking must present satisfactory written evidence that he has permission of the owner or other person in charge of the satellite parking spaces to use such spaces.

The parking standards provide the flexibility needed in creating a Town Center. However, certain key provisions such as the optional side and rear parking areas for nonresidential buildings and access between developments should be considered as mandatory requirements in the Town Center.

### Landscaping Design and Screening Standards

These standards are laid out in Sections 4.9 and 4.10 including the following subsections: Landscaping in Parking Lots, Purpose Statement, General Requirements, Preservation of Existing Vegetation, Screening, and General Maintenance. The purpose statement declares that the existing landscape of Barrington is diverse with natural wooded environments, orchards, open fields, wetlands, and streams, and that new development should be respectful and sensitive to the dominant landscape character of Barrington as a whole. To guide the landscaping process for new development, a list of known invasive plants and **recommended native trees and shrubs** and their use in landscaping is included in the appendices of the site plan review regulations.

Section 4.9.7 addresses **Landscaping in Parking Lots** which are required to provide visual and climatic relief from broad expanses of pavement and designed to channel and define logical areas for pedestrian and vehicular circulation. This is accomplished by requiring a minimum percentage of the overall interior area of a parking lot to be dedicated to landscaped areas with appropriate ground cover, shrubbery, and trees as follows:

- 10 percent on parking lots located in front of the principal building or on otherwise vacant lots; 8 percent on parking lots located on the side; and 5 percent on parking lots located at the rear of the principal building and largely obscured from the road.
- Internal parking lot landscaping must contain one deciduous shade tree for every 15 parking spaces distributed throughout the parking lot as evenly as possible.
- Shade trees must be provided around the perimeter of all parking areas at a minimum ratio of one tree per 20 feet of parking lot perimeter. In portions of parking areas where screening is required, shade trees must be provided along the perimeter at a minimum ratio of one tree per 50 feet of parking lot perimeter in addition to the required screening.
- All off-street parking areas located at the front or side of principal buildings or on vacant lots must be screened from the public right-of-way with appropriate screening of at least 50 percent vertical opacity on average up to a height of 3 ½ feet above grade, excluding sight distance areas at vehicular entrances and exits.
- All off-street parking areas must be screened from abutting residences or vacant lots in residential zoning districts located at the side or rear of the property with a wall, fence, vegetation, or other means which provides at least 75 percent vertical opacity up to a height of 6 feet above grade.

### Building and General Appearance Design Standards

Section 4.11 provides requirements intended to encourage high-quality building design, which improves the aesthetic character of the community, to allow diversity of building design and architectural styles, to avoid monotonous and bland buildings typical of strip commercial development, and to minimize conflicts between residential and commercial uses. The Planning Board has designated a **Design Review Board** for the purposes of this section and **reviewable actions** include the following:

- **Site plans in the Village District** – All new structures, alterations, or additions to existing structures, changes in outdoor land use, or changes in site design that require site plan review and affect the exterior architectural appearance of a building or site are subject to review by the board.

- 
- **Exterior actions within 150 feet of the centerline of Routes 4, 125, 9, 126, and 202** – Any construction, alteration, demolition, or removal that affects the exterior architectural appearance of a building or site is subject to design review provided that the site is on or within 150 feet of the centerline of these roadway corridors.
  - **Large retail establishments** – Because of their mass and typical design characteristics, large-scale retail establishments of greater than 25,000 square feet are subject to review and additional design standards in this section.
  - **Actions by town government** – Any construction, alteration, demolition, or removal of a structure or site by the town is subject to design review except for routine maintenance of existing structures or sites.

The **Design Review Standards** allow the Planning Board to consider, at a minimum, the following characteristics of building and site design:

- Height
- Proportion
- Relation of Structures and Spaces
- Shape
- Landscape
- Scale
- Directional Expression
- Backs and Facades

**Supplemental Retail Design Standards** – For existing and proposed retail establishments that are 25,000 square feet or more, Section 4.11.3 applies the additional design review standards:

- Preserve historic and aesthetic resources.
- Avoid long unbroken expanses of walls.
- Use architectural features and details such as porches, awnings, columns, towers, turrets, skylights, and arches to create interesting buildings.
- Avoid long unbroken expanses of roofs using dormers, skylights, chimneys, and changes in ridge line.
- Make door and window openings proportional to facade length and height.
- Create a sense of entry into the site and into major businesses within the site through landscaping, facade treatment, and signage.
- Screen rooftop and ground-level mechanical equipment, outdoor storage, truck parking, trash collection, loading, and other such uses from public view.
- Harmonize the location, size, material, and lighting of signs with the building design.

While the building and general appearance design standards provide a good foundation for quality nonresidential construction in character with the community, more specific standards should be provided for the Town Center where good design is one of the most critical issues. Additionally, larger buildings (10,000 square feet or more) desired in the Town Center should be subject to more thorough design standards that address the potential impacts of all such buildings, and not just buildings used for retail purposes.

### **Outdoor Lighting Standards**

The new standards provide for adequate lighting levels and placement of fixtures in nonresidential applications. Specific design standards for building and street ornamental lighting fixtures should be considered for the Town Center.

**Traffic Impact Analysis and Mitigation Standards**

Section 4.14 requires all projects creating 5,000 square feet or more of new nonresidential floor space or creating 15 or more new multifamily dwelling units must provide a report meeting the requirements outlined for a short traffic impact analysis. If any of the following conditions apply, then a Full Traffic Impact Analysis must be completed:

- All applications creating 10,000 square feet or more of new nonresidential floor space or creating 20 or more new multifamily dwelling units.
- Trip generation exceeding 1,000 average daily trips or 100 peak hour trips.

**Sign Regulations**

Article 5 of the site plan review regulations establishes the private sign requirements for the Village District. These regulations allow for small ground signs, wall signs, and building projecting signs that fit the size, placement, material quality, and lighting source characteristics of the traditional Town Center.

**4.5 Recommended Changes to Enhance Village District Potential**

There are several existing regulations that should be modified as well as new regulations that should be adopted to enhance the potential of the Village District and facilitate the development of a traditional town center. These changes are summarized below.

<b>Village District Zoning Issues</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
Village District too large for traditional Town Center	Create Town Center District (TCD) for core area
Dimensional requirements such as MLS for single-family and retirement housing is too large for traditional Town Center development pattern	Create TCD with incentives for higher-density mixed use using reduced dimensional requirements for commercial and residential development
62+ minimum age requirement for elderly or retirement housing	Reduce to 55+ to create a broader mix of age and income groups in the Village District
30,000 s.f. MLS for commercial development is too large for a traditional Town Center	Create TCD and reduce to 10,000 s.f. or 5,000 per additional residential unit
10,000 s.f. maximum for commercial buildings	Create TCD allowing up to 40,000 s.f. for specific desired uses and applicable design and performance standards
Building and site design standards are general	Adopt specific design standards and guidelines for the TCD
Conservation subdivisions not allowed in Village District	Allow in Village District and create traditional neighborhood development bylaw to apply to Village District and TCD
Groundwater protection district	Provide incentives for use of package treatment plants
Large roadway standards being applied to all development in Village District	Clarify and revise standards so that hierarchy of roads (local to arterial) are applied in the property setting within the Village District

**Create a Town Center District**

The Village District is too large to support a traditional Town Center for a town the size of Barrington. To facilitate the establishment and development of a new Town Center as desired by the community, it is recommended that a Town Center District (TCD) be created in a portion of the Village District that has the greatest potential to serve as the civic and commercial center of Barrington. A map outlining the proposed TCD is included below.

Rural Town Centers are characterized by compacted and mixed use settlement patterns, a community focus (such as town common), traditional architectural design, and pedestrian (vs. auto) orientation. They offer basic employment, services, and shopping for their residents as well as for those living in surrounding lower-density rural areas. They also provide civic facilities and activities for social interactions. All of these village characteristics should be provided for within about a quarter mile of the “main street” (or commercial mixed use spine) of the center.

Some general design characteristics for a rural Town Center are as follows:

General Design Characteristics for Rural Town Centers <sup>1</sup>	
Characteristic	Guideline
Gross land area	100 to 500 acres
Dwelling units (DU)	100 to 600 DU
Net DU/acre	1.0 to 8.0 (or 5,445 to 43,560 s.f./DU)
Population	200 to 1,800 residents
Jobs: housing ratio (at 200-350 s.f. per Job)	0.75:1.0 to 1.75:1.0
Percentage of overall open space	45% to 70% district-wide
Percentage of public open space	3% to 8% district-wide
Local retail space	26 to 52 s.f./DU
Civic space	300 s.f./DU minimum
Town common or green space	200 s.f./DU minimum
Water treatment	Community or public wells
Sewage	Community or public wastewater treatment system

Proposed changes to the current zoning, subdivision, and site plan review regulations to create the TCD are described below.

### General Land Use Regulation Changes

**Expand the Mix of Allowable Uses in the Village District** – There are some uses that are not permitted in the district that should be reconsidered:

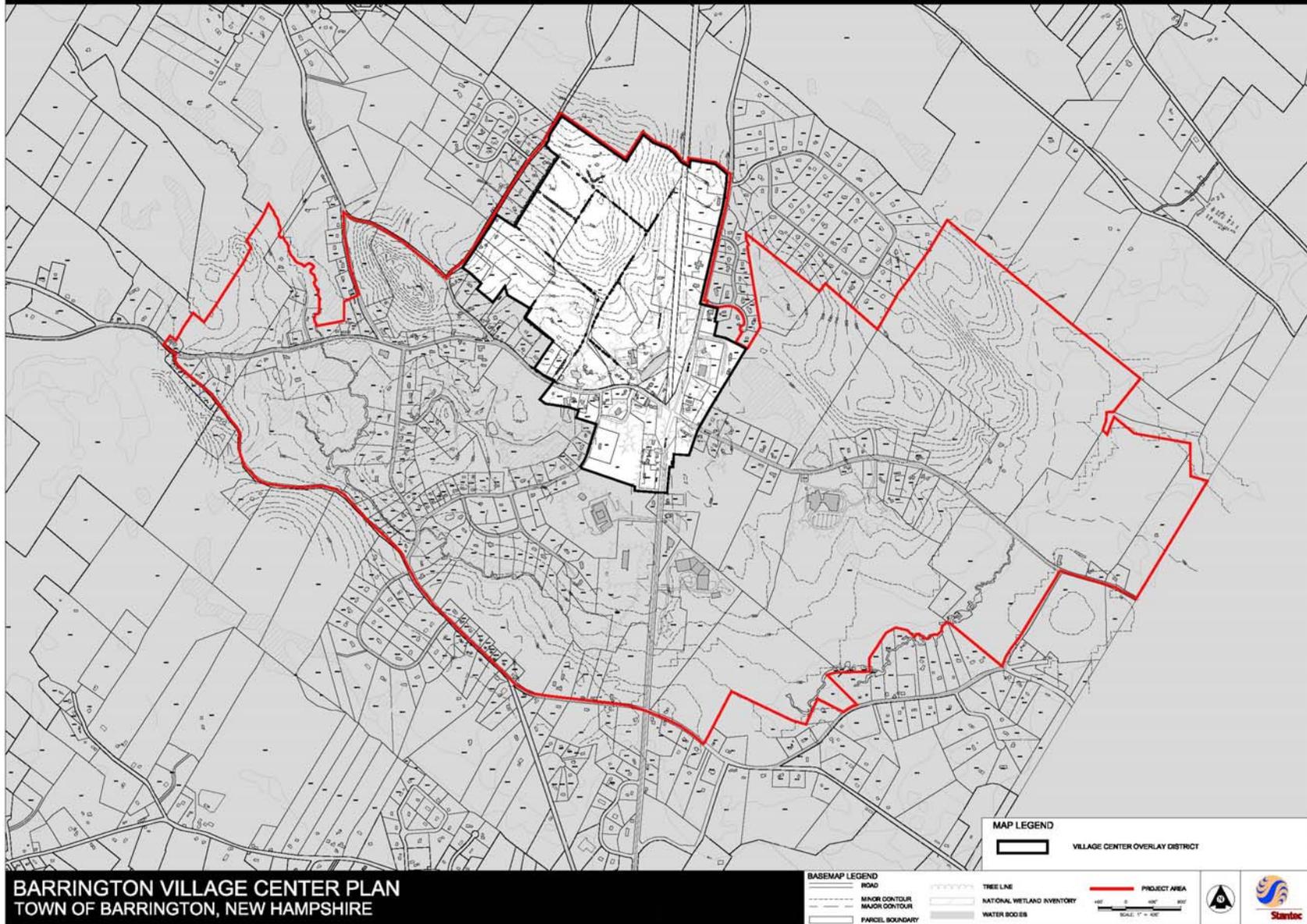
- Multifamily Housing
- Commercial Recreational Facilities
- Funeral Homes
- Gas and Service Stations
- Hotels and Motels
- Service and Body Shops
- Landscape Nurseries and Greenhouses
- Light Manufacturing Facilities
- Research and Development Facilities

These types of uses in and of themselves are not conflicting with the purpose of the Village District. The general concern with these prohibited uses is that they may not fit the vision of the Village District in terms of scale, aesthetics, pedestrian orientation, and potential impact on surrounding land uses. However, these uses provide essential services and employment opportunities to the community and can be part of the mix that creates an attraction to the Village District. Potential impacts can be controlled by conditional use permits and carefully thought out design and performance standards.

**Reduce Lot Size Requirements** – Lot size requirements of 30,000 square feet for commercial development and retirement housing, and 80,000 square feet for single-family housing units is too high to create a traditional Town Center development pattern. These standards work well for the Village District used in combination with the conservation subdivisions (see below). However, a Town Center District (see below) should be established within the Village District to allow for reduced commercial, mixed use, and residential lot sizes in keeping with a typical rural Town Center. The reduced lot size should be tied to performance standards that accomplish these objectives.

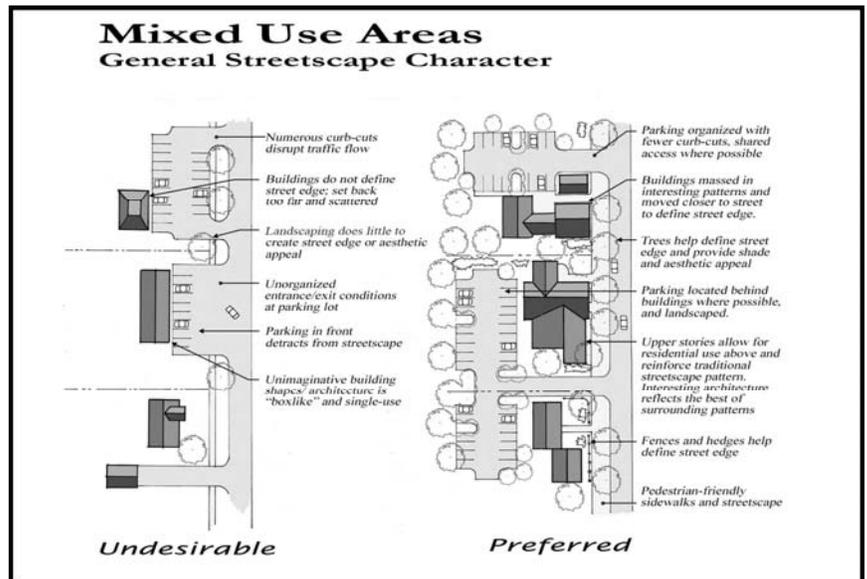
<sup>1</sup> From Visions for a New American Dream, Anton Clarence Nelessen, 1993.

### POTENTIAL VILLAGE CENTER OVERLAY DISTRICT (VCOD)



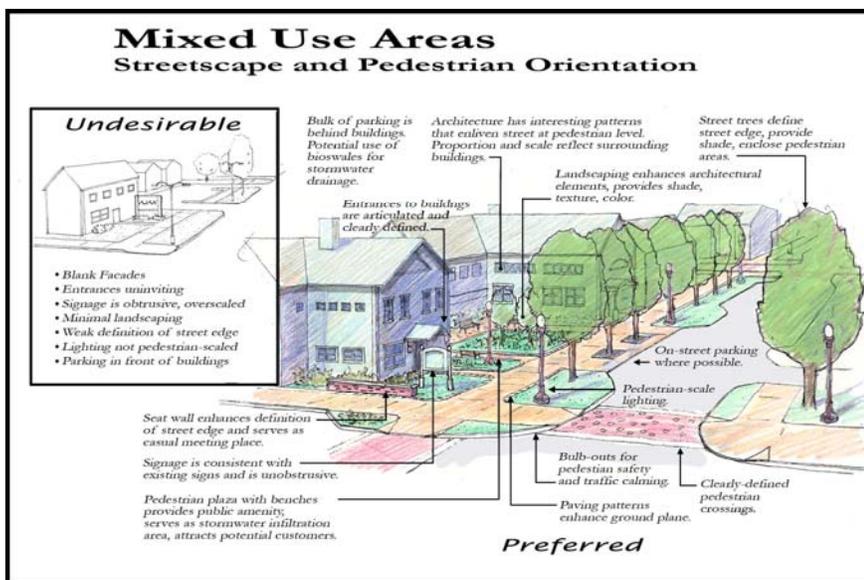
It is recommended that minimum lot size in the TCD be set at 20,000 square feet of upland area for both commercial and retirement housing uses with an additional 5,000 square feet per additional residential unit. Additionally, under a traditional village neighborhood development, lot sizes are recommended at 10,000 square feet for commercial and residential uses (retirement or otherwise) with an additional 5,000 square feet per additional residential unit. All new lots would still be subject to NHDES requirements for on-site water and wastewater systems, which would supersede the local zoning regulations. Therefore, lot size would be based more on the factors of soil suitability and desired village development patterns than the threat of density.

This reduced lot size establishes two important factors for the Town Center: first, it creates an incentive for new development that fits the dimension characteristics of a traditional Town



Center; and second, it creates an incentive for developers to install communal sewage (like package treatment plants) and water systems (or tie into future public systems) that allow for higher-density mixed use and protect the groundwater recharge areas. These systems should be strongly encouraged.

**Reduce Frontage Requirements –** Reduce the frontage requirement for nonresidential lots to 40 feet minimum and 50 feet for residential flag lots, which allows dwelling units to be tucked behind homes facing the street, requiring less linear footage of public roadway and allowing for a rural neighborhood pattern.

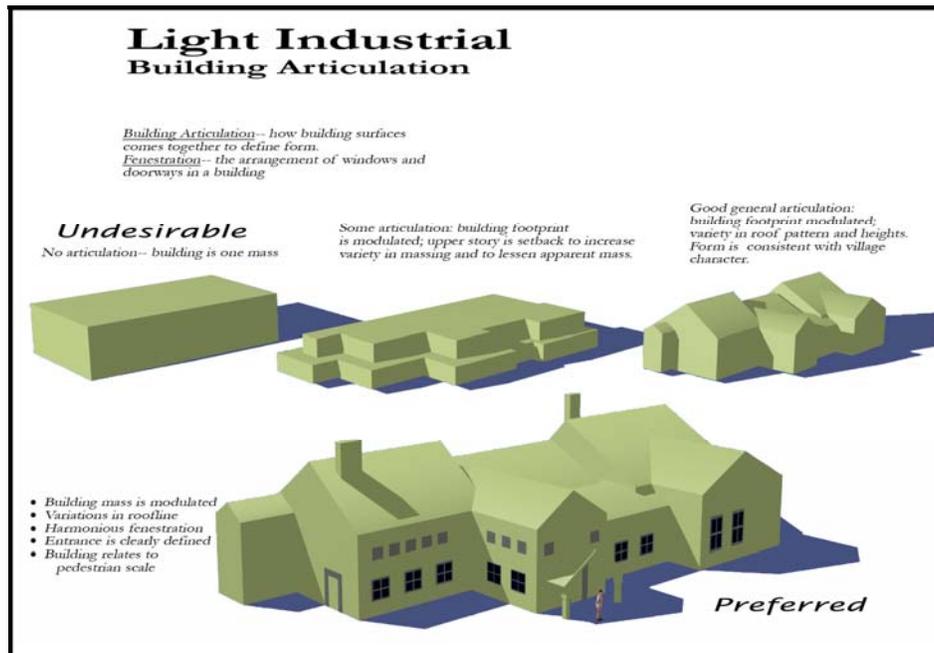


**Reduce Setback Requirements –** Coupled with the reduced lot size should be a front and side build-to-line (or maximum setback) requirement for nonresidential structures in the Town Center District. This creates a pedestrian environment by bringing buildings up to the sidewalk as is typical in traditional Town Centers. Any variation from the front or side setbacks should be to enhance the streetscape, such as small pocket parks and outdoor terraces, and should prohibit parking in front of the building.

**Increase Lot Coverage –** The maximum lot coverage permitted in the Village District is 50 percent, which includes all impervious surfaces such as buildings, parking areas, terraces, and sidewalks. This percentage is much lower than found in traditional Town Centers and downtowns throughout New England. In order to facilitate the desired pattern of development, the lot coverage standard should be set at 60 percent in the Village District and 80 percent (or greater) in the new Town Center District. In many cases, no such requirement exists due to other provisions designed to create a pedestrian environment, such as formal streetscapes including landscaped areas that fit into the context of a Town Center.

**Allow for More than One Primary Building on a Lot** – In the Village District and proposed TCD, more than one primary building should be allowed on a given lot as long as other site requirements (i.e., setbacks, coverage, parking, landscaping, etc.) are met as well as the NHDES requirements for on-site water and sewer systems. This will provide an opportunity for higher density typical of a traditional Town Center even if other dimensional requirements are too stringent.

**Increase Nonresidential Building Size for Desired Uses** – According to Section 4.2.2.3, nonresidential structures may not exceed more than 10,000 square feet of gross floor area. While this is a reasonable standard for most uses and the desired scale of the Town Center, it also prohibits some uses that the community would like to have and that could serve as anchors for the district, such as grocery stores and pharmacies. It also constrains the development of light industrial and corporate office uses that may also be desired in the Village District. This standard should be revised to allow for buildings up to 40,000 gross square feet by conditional use permit with performance and building design standards that would address potential impacts such as traffic, parking, access, and aesthetics.



**Allow for Conservation Subdivisions in the Village District** – Conservation subdivisions could be an invaluable tool in controlling residential sprawl on several large tracks of undeveloped land that exist in the district. This alternative development pattern would allow for a more traditional neighborhood layout while providing for valuable open space.

Conservation subdivisions should be allowed and even encouraged in the Village District. However, they should not be allowed in the proposed Town Center District (see below). A modified version should be adopted that provides for small-scale traditional neighborhoods centered on common areas as part of a larger mix of residential and commercial development. (See Traditional Village Neighborhood Developments below.)

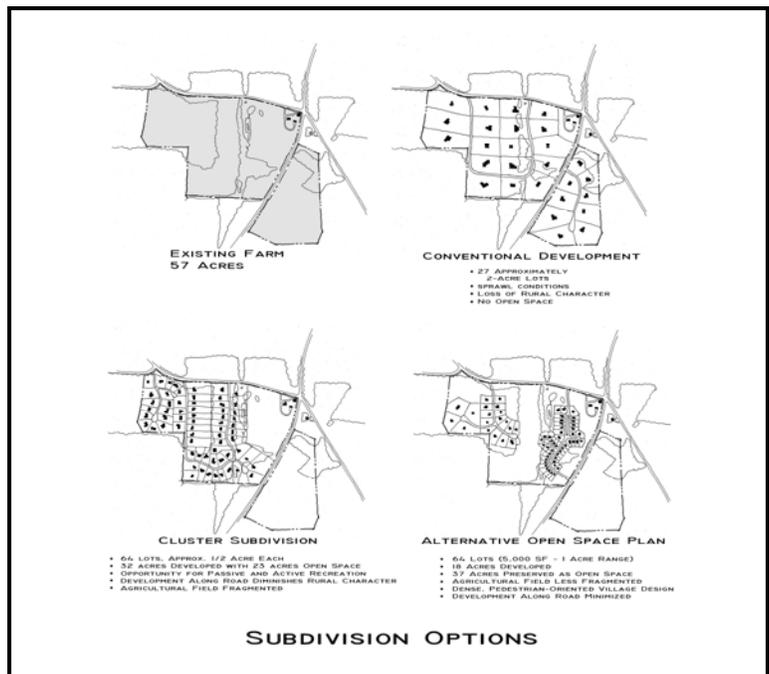
Proposed Use and Dimensional Regulation Changes to the Village District and New TCD			
Standard	Village District	TCD	Notes
Min. Lot Size	No change	20,000 sf for comm. and retirement units plus 5,000 sf for each add. res. unit.; 10,000 sf for all uses plus 5,000 sf for each additional DU under a TVND project	Lot sizes are still subject to NHDES requirements; use of communal water and wastewater systems is strongly encouraged
Frontage	No change	40' for nonresidential and mixed use; 50' for residential flag lots	Reduce frontage requirement to create more traditional pattern in TCD
Setbacks	No change	Maximum front setback of 25 ft for nonresidential buildings; maximum setback of 10 ft on side	Create performance standards that require streetscape enhancements and

Proposed Use and Dimensional Regulation Changes to the Village District and New TCD			
Standard	Village District	TCD	Notes
		unless area is used for access of pedestrian amenities	no parking in front of buildings where setbacks exist
Lot Coverage	60%	80%+	More typical lot coverage in traditional Town Centers
Height	40	40	No changes
Conservation Subd.	Permitted	No	Apply to Village District
TVND Subdivisions	Permitted	Permitted	Draft new bylaw
Maximum Building Size	40,000	40,000	Adopt new design and performance standards
Permitted Uses	Expand	Expand	See section above

**Site Design Standards Changes**

**Clarify and Modify Roadway Design Standards for Village District and Proposed TCD** – The intension of the new roadway design in the Village District was that regular standards would apply except for specific applications where higher-density mixed use occurred. The “boulevard collector” (Figure 15-2C of the subdivision regulations) was intended to apply to entrance areas of larger new commercial and residential developments accessing major arterials (i.e., Route 9 and Route 125 in the district). The boulevard was also seen as a desired treatment on Routes 9 and 125 in the area of the intersection. The “Village Center arterial” was intended to apply to the core area of a new mixed-use center.

The “Village District” category should be removed from Table 15-1 and a new table added to the subdivision regulations that defines the specific applications of the roadway design standards in the Village District.

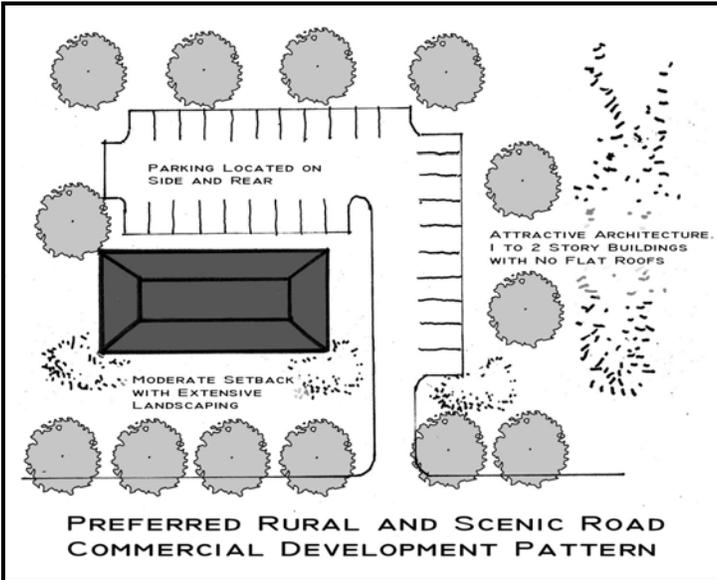


**Proposed Table 15-1A – Applications of Roadway Design Standards in the Village District and TCD**

Roadway Type	Village District	TCD
Minor Access Road	Same as Table 15-1	Same as Table 15-1
Major Access Road	Same as Table 15-1	Same as Table 15-1
Standard Collector Road	Same as Table 15-1	Same as Table 15-1
Boulevard Collector Road	Entrance areas of large subdivisions or office parks	Entrance areas of large subdivisions, office parks, and Rt. 9/125 intersection area.
Arterial Road	Same as Table 15-1	Same as Table 15-1
Village Center Arterial Road	Not applicable	Apply to core mixed use areas; modify diagram to illustrate 60-ft r-o-w with two 11–12-ft. travel lanes; 8-ft parking lanes on both sides; 4–6 ft. planting strip or tree pits on both sides; 6–8-ft sidewalks on both sides.

**Modify Parking Standards for Proposed TCD** – The parking standards provide the flexibility needed in creating a Town Center. However, certain key provisions such as the optional side and rear parking areas for

nonresidential buildings and access between developments should be considered as mandatory requirements in the Town Center.



**Create Supplemental Design Standards for the Proposed TCD** – While the building and general appearance design standards in Section 4.11 of the site plan review regulations provide a good foundation for quality nonresidential construction in character with the community, more specific standards should be provided for the Town Center where good design is one of the most critical issues. Additionally, larger buildings (10,000 square feet or more) desired in the Town Center should be subject to more thorough design standards that address the potential impacts of all such buildings, and not just buildings used for retail purposes (see below).

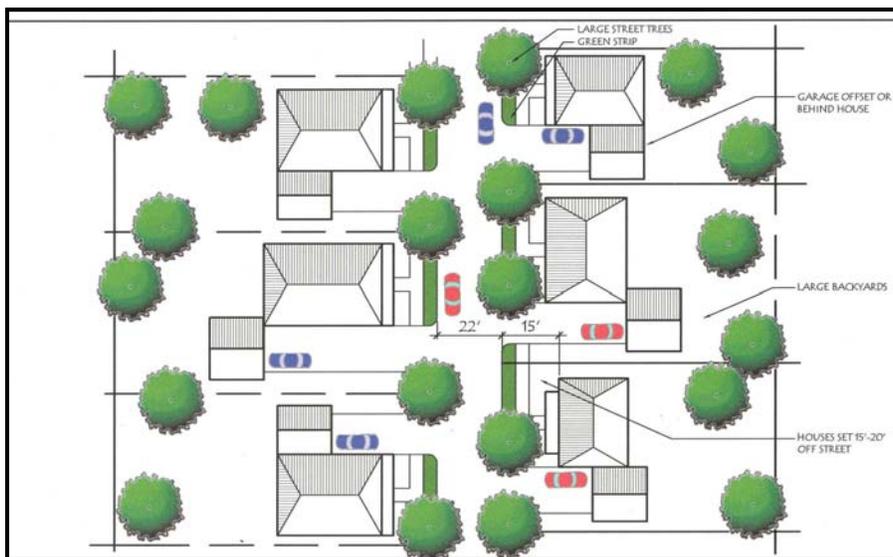
**Modify Outdoor Lighting Standards for Proposed TCD** – The new standards provide for adequate lighting levels and placement of fixtures

in nonresidential applications. Specific design standards for building and street ornamental lighting fixtures should be considered for the Town Center.

**Create a Traditional Village Neighborhood Development Bylaw (TVND)**

Traditional neighborhood design is a development approach that reflects historic settlement patterns and town planning concepts such as narrow and interconnected streets, reduced front and side setbacks, and an orientation of streets and neighborhoods around a pedestrian-oriented "town center." Traditional neighborhood development (TND) bylaws set standards and procedures for traditional neighborhood and mixed-use projects.

The TVND bylaw for the Village District and Town Center District would be similar to the conservation subdivision bylaw or a typical planned unit development district (PUD) in that it provides an alternative to conventional residential subdivisions and highway-oriented commercial development through a series of design and performance standards that facilitate high-quality design and mixed uses.



Traditional Village Neighborhood Characteristics

---

The key to the TVND bylaw is the set of principles and objectives that guide the content of the regulations. These principles will be a factor in determining local preference and should be used to assess proposed TVND projects. The principles and performance standards should address the following areas:

- **Sustainability** – The principles of smart growth and TVND are based on a sustainable development plan that includes environmental, land use, and market support for the long-term viability of the plan.
- **Compact Development** – For the land uses and infrastructure to effectively interact with each other and the people who frequent the TVND area, the project must have moderate density and at the same time, at a scale that makes a pedestrian feel comfortable.
- **Mix of Uses** – The typical mix of uses creates business and residential spaces, but it is also important to fully integrate civic uses and open spaces.
- **Accessibility and Transportation**– Within the project, easy pedestrian movement is very important, but the project must also be connected to adjoining areas by accommodations for public transit and safe road systems.
- **Cultural and Environmental Context** – A TVND should distinguish the Town Center from the rural countryside in Barrington by complementing and building off the historical architecture and development patterns that exist in the TCD.

TVND projects can vary significantly depending on the size, density and local context. If large tracts of open lands are available, projects can include major new construction. But smaller infill TVND projects may be more appropriate in many instances, particularly in the TCD. The TVND model bylaw differentiates between TVND on large open tracts and small infill sites within the Village District and TCD districts.

#### **Proposed TCD Building and General Appearance Design Standards and Guidelines**

This document (see Appendix D) establishes building and site design standards and guidelines for new construction and the adaptive reuse, alteration, expansion, or modification of existing buildings in Barrington's Town Center District. The overall objective is to foster a blend of the best of traditional and contemporary design. Design should represent the best match between the needs of human users, the architectural heritage and character of the town and region, and the natural and rural attributes of the landscape.

Site plans should reflect a comprehensive proposal integrating building design, site layout, lighting, landscaping, parking, access, and off-site amenities such as streetscape designs selected for the Town Center. Screening of utilities and services should also be incorporated. Where architectural design is based upon a theme, site development schemes should relate to the theme and be consistent regarding materials, colors, and other design elements.

Sensitivity to development demands, vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns, and the needs of residents, merchants, visitors, owners, and tourists alike are key considerations in these standards and guidelines.