

Stratton Planning Commission Report for Municipal Bylaw Amendments

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 4441(c) which states:

“When considering an amendment to a bylaw, the planning commission shall prepare and approve a written report on the proposal. A single report may be prepared so as to satisfy the requirements of this subsection concerning bylaw amendments and subsection 4384(c) of this title concerning plan amendments..... The report shall provide(:)

(A) brief explanation of the proposed bylaw, amendment, or repeal andinclude a statement of purpose as required for notice under § 4444 of this title,

The Stratton Planning Commission, under the guidance of the Windham Regional Commission, has completed a revision of the Stratton Zoning Bylaws. The purpose of this revision is to bring the Zoning bylaws into compliance with current State Statutes, as well as to meet the goals of the Stratton Town Plan adopted in 2014. Additionally, this revision streamlines the previous bylaws and provides better clarification of zoning requirements and better direction in regard to compliance and enforcement.

Specific changes to the regulations include:

- 1) Procedural revisions for Site Plan Review that meet the requirements set forth in Chapter 117.
- 2) The creation of the Village District (CR3) centering on the Town Offices at the intersection of the Stratton-Arlington Rd. and West Jamaica Rd., extending approx. ½ mile along the roads out from this intersection. The creation of this district brings this area into conformance with much of the existing development within this area, including the Town Office, Town Hall, Meetinghouse and Schoolhouse, located at its center. It reduces minimum lot size to one acre and promotes the development of small businesses suitable for a village setting.
- 3) The relocation of the Green Belt District’s northern boundary southerly to Sunbowl Rd. This was adjusted because the area north of Sunbowl Rd. exists within CR1, the growth area of the Town, where much of the pre-existing development on the west side did not conform to Green Belt standards.
- 4) The reduction of construction setbacks from roadway centerlines from 75 ft. to 50 ft. This was reduced to allow property owners greater freedom to develop their property. Setbacks were defined as distances between driplines and property lines.
- 5) Fire Safety provisions were developed in coordination with the local Fire Dept. Changes include: a) requirements for Sprinkler Systems in structures of three or more dwelling units, as well as in all new projects within the Stratton Ski Resort. b) providing adequate space for ladder access to roofs. c) requiring visible labels for truss construction.

- 6) This bylaw distinguishes between decorative cupolas and accessible cupolas, allowing an extension of the height restriction to 45 feet for decorative cupolas over the Town's standard of 35 feet for height of the roof's ridge line above average grade. In general, the height restriction was better defined and details to allow for ladder access to roof driplines were included.
- 7) General Regulations were scrutinized and categorized in many instances to distinguish how various General Regulations are to be applied to single family homes, businesses and PUD development.
- 8) The Zoning Board of Adjustment was given the ability to consider and grant waivers for dimensional restrictions, on a case by case basis, thereby avoiding the strict statutory requirements which would apply to variances in these instances.
- 9) Detailed guidance was developed for construction of Private Roads.
- 10) A new Zoning Map was developed to comply with this document. The previous map was updated to better show the Conservation Districts within Town.
- 11) Permits are to be closed out by Certificates of Completion, instead of Certificates of Occupancy / Use, as "Completion" more accurately describes the intent of this process.

(A)nd shall include findings regarding how the proposal:

- 1. Conforms with or furthers the goals and policies contained in the municipal plan, including the effect of the proposal on the availability of safe and affordable housing:*
- 2. Is compatible with the proposed future land uses and densities of the municipal plan:*
- 3. Carries out, as applicable, any specific proposals for any planned community facilities."*

The revised Stratton Zoning Bylaws conform to all Goals and Policies of the current Stratton Town Plan of 2014, including stated densities and land uses of said plan.

The Stratton Zoning Bylaws continue to offer Affordable Housing and PUD development opportunities. These bylaw revisions reduce some setback and lot-size requirements and provide a path for consideration of dimensional waivers, all of which better promotes affordable development.

The Stratton Town Plan of 2014 contains no specific proposals for planned community facilities.

David Kent Young, Stratton Planning Commission Chairman