



OFFICE OF THE  
**PLANNING BOARD**  
TOWN HALL, 511 MAIN STREET  
DUNSTABLE, MA 01827-1313  
(978) 649-4514 FAX (978) 649-8893  
planning@dunstable-ma.gov

## **Planning Board Minutes Monday, February 3, 2020**

Approved: February 10, 2020

Chair Joan Simmons at 7:30pm, called the meeting to order.  
Members present: Jeff Pallis, Henry Fontaine and Joe VLcek  
Member absent: George Basbanes  
Meeting held: At the Dunstable Town Hall, 511 Main Street, lower level

### **Meeting Minutes – January 6, 2020**

Henry made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 6 meeting, as submitted. Joe 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

### **Town Center District Overlay**

Carol Bacon and Sue Psaledakis attended for the discussion. Joan explained that the Town Center District overlay did not pass at the 2017 Town Meeting for a number of reasons.

Since then, the town approved the petitioning to the General Court for the enactment of special legislation that would allow for the issuance of alcoholic beverage licenses in Town.

In addition, the Master Plan was completed with one of the recommendations is to *“Establish a Town Center Overlay District to accommodate small-scale retail, restaurants and cafes, a bank, artisan/artist shops galleries, museums and studio space, and personal services”*.

The 2018 Route 113 Corridor Market Analyses stated that *“First, the Town could consider rezoning a small, well-defined portion of Route 113 around the Town Center to allow for small-scale adaptive reuse of existing buildings...”* *“The addition of residential units in this area could create additional patrons for businesses and provide housing options for residents in Dunstable looking for an alternative to the single-family home. This could help the Town create a small village center with some amenities for residents within a reasonable walking distance.”* *“The Town could also consider developing a niche market for restaurants, farm-to-table dining, bed and breakfasts, antique stores, and businesses producing products sourced locally from Dunstable farms and vendors.”* *The Town could consider, with limitations, making liquor licenses available to restaurants that wish to open in the Town Center.”*

Members agreed that it is the right time to bring forth a revised bylaw to the voters. There was discussion on whether the bylaw would be ready in time for spring or fall Town Meeting with everyone agreeing to complete it in time for the May Annual Town Meeting. Members then spent most of the meeting updating the “2017 proposed Town Center District Overlay”. The Board asked the Administrative Assistant to mail letters to the residents affected by the overlay informing them about the February 10 meeting and the March 16 hearing.

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Article \_\_\_\_ **Town Center District:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaws by making the following additions and deletions (deletions in ~~striketrough~~ and insertions underlined), or take any action in relation thereto:



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1. Inserting under Section 3a Overlay Districts:  
Town Center

An overlay district known as the Town Center District is hereby established. The Town Center District shall consist of those areas bounded and shown on a map entitled "Town Center District (TCD)" dated November 2017, incorporated in these Zoning Bylaws. The Town Center District will overlay and be supplementary to the underlying zoning districts.

2. Amending the first sentence of Section 6.2.1(b)i. as follows:

Except as otherwise provided in these Zoning Bylaws, nNot more than one accessory dwelling unit may be established on a lot.

3. Adding a new Section 22 as follows:

Section 22. Town Center District.

A. Introduction: The Town Center District (TCD) is an overlay district established to provide a comprehensive set of criteria to be applied in Dunstable's town center to distinguish its unique qualities from other business areas within the town. These criteria are established for the continuance and enhancement of the historic town center area as the functional and symbolic center of Dunstable. The intent of this district is to allow owners of existing historical home sites to incorporate additional uses within principal or accessory buildings while maintaining the historic integrity of the structures, the site, and the town center area.

B. Purposes: The TCD is established to achieve the following objectives for the town: to maintain continuance and enhancement of the historical town center area; to generate a sense of pride and confidence in the preservation of history in the town center; to create and maintain an attractive and aesthetic cultural and business environment throughout the area; to maintain a consistently high level of design quality; to encourage pedestrian activity by creating a positive pedestrian experience; to protect property values through quality and design control; and to provide incentives for new and existing businesses in the town center area. Encourage the adaptive reuse of historic properties to maintain and increase property values.

C. Uses Permitted by Special Permit: Uses permitted by Special Permit from the Planning Board in the TCD are:

1. Conversion of existing one-family dwellings to 2-family dwellings;
2. Authorization of multi-family dwellings existing at the time of adoption of this subsection;
3. Conversion of existing buildings to incorporate a multi-family arrangement on upper floors of commercial buildings, with the number of such dwelling units being limited to no more than two per floor; and provided that the primary use of the first floor (at least 51% of the gross floor area) must be commercial;
4. Conversion of existing buildings for use as gift or antique shops;
5. Conversion of existing buildings for use as Bed and Breakfast Establishments in accordance with the provisions of Section 6.7.8. thru 6.7.11 of these Bylaws;
6. Conversion of existing buildings for use as restaurants, cafés, taverns or pubs, serving alcohol on premises (with no drive-up or drive-through service);



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7. Conversion of existing buildings for use as government, educational, not-for-profit or religious facilities;

8. Conversion of existing buildings for use as professional offices;

9. With regards to home occupations in the TCD, the provisions of Section 6.1.(g)v. shall apply, but the referral shall be to the Planning Board, which shall serve as the special permit granting authority for such uses in the TCD;

10. Conversion of existing buildings for use as museums, art galleries, art studios, performing arts theaters, and other similar cultural uses;

11. Conversion of existing buildings for use as agricultural cooperatives.

**D. Requirements:**

1. Any new construction in the TCD, which is incidental to any Special Permit, shall conform to the density and dimensional requirements in Section 11 of these Bylaws.

2. Applicants shall comply with the requirements for Site Plans as set forth in Section 14 of these Zoning Bylaws, provided that specific requirements of such Section may be waived by the Planning Board at the request of the applicant as long as the Board deems that such waiver will not impair the due and proper interests of the Town or otherwise adversely affect the review process.

3. The burden shall be upon any applicant to demonstrate that the building or buildings, which are the subject of the Special Permit application, were in existence at the time of adoption of this Section.

4. Any required parking for additional uses shall be located to the side or rear of the building.

**E. Criteria for Approval:** In addition to the requirements of Section 14 of these Zoning Bylaws, Site Plans (as applicable), the Planning Board may issue a special permit in the TCD upon finding that:

1. The appearance of the exterior of any existing building which is the subject to a Special Permit application under this Section shall not be substantially changed as viewed from any street adjacent to the site in order to make possible the use applied for. The historic architectural character of each building shall be maintained or restored. Buildings shall be rehabilitated to reveal their historic materials and details. Missing architectural elements shall be recreated. Significant existing materials shall be retained by stabilizing, repairing or matching them with compatible new materials as required.

2. Any renovations shall be compatible with the historic architecture of the existing buildings in the TCD and shall be consistent with the guidelines set forth below.

Scale – Relationship to human size, form and perception.

Rhythm – The pattern of repeating elements such as windows, columns, arches and other façade elements, trees, other buildings, etc.

Form – Overall shapes, combinations or shapes as seen from different perspectives, skylines, and contours.

Massing – Height, setback of major building elements, roof panes.

Proportion – The relationship among the dimensions of various elements.



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Features – Building elements such as windows, doors, cornices, roofs, porches, widow walks, balconies, cupolas, and decorative trim.

Materials – The “skin” of each building, consisting traditionally of brick, cast iron, steel, sheet metal, wood, glass, terra cotta and slate.

Signs – Refer to Section 13 of the Zoning Bylaw.

Maintenance Advisory - Owners of all buildings should provide sufficient maintenance to keep such buildings from falling into a state of poor repair. Owners shall therefore be responsible for providing maintenance necessary to prevent the deterioration of the structure, which could cause either an unsafe condition or a detrimental effect upon the character of the Town Center District or which could lead to a later claim that deterioration has become so advanced that demolition or removal of the architectural features is necessary.

4. Amending Section 6.7. by adding the following:

6.7.12. Town Center Uses, as set forth in Section 22 of this Zoning Bylaw.

5. Amending the Zoning Map of Dunstable, Mass. by designating the new Town Center District, as shown on a map entitled “Town Center District (TCD)” dated November 2017, and on file with the Town Clerk and available for inspection during regular Town Hall business hours.

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**Bills and Payroll**

The Chair signed the payroll.

**Additional Topics Discussed Not Noted on the Agenda**

None

Jeff made a motion to close the meeting at 9:15pm. Joe seconded the motion. – Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A. Mann  
Administrative Assistant  
Dunstable Planning Board