



# OVERVIEW OF POCD / ZONING PROVISIONS IN SUFFIELD

## Overview

The Town of Suffield is preparing a housing plan for the community. This housing plan is required by the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS Section 8-30j).

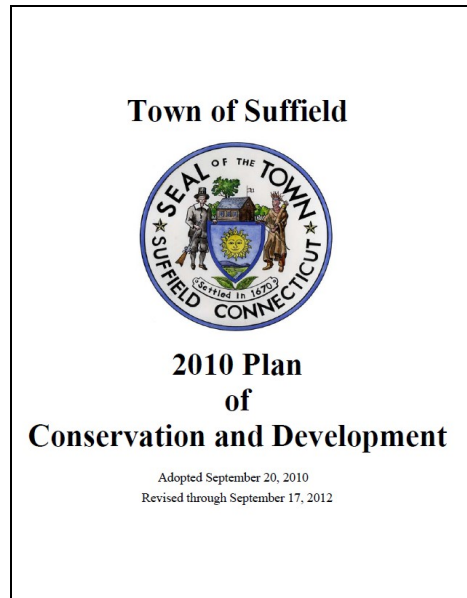
The information in this booklet is intended to provide an overview of housing-related provisions within the:

- 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and the update currently being prepared, and
- Zoning Regulations.

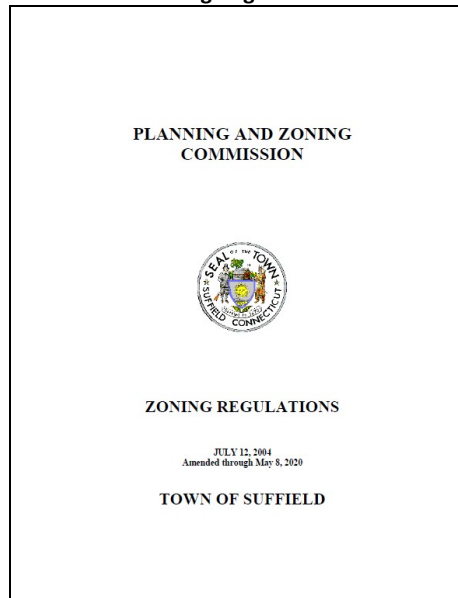
*“Planning and zoning regulations ... are elements that are developed as a result of local community pressure to balance interests.*

Earl Blumenauer  
US Congressman

### 2010 POCD



### Zoning Regulations



## POCD - Housing Discussion

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Suffield is currently in the process of updating its 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development. **Excerpts from the 2021 DRAFT UPDATE of “Chapter 5 – Residential Development” are presented below:**

*Suffield is predominantly residentially zoned containing mostly single-family, owner occupied homes. Approximately 88% of the town’s land area is zoned for single-family development. The 2010 POCD recognized the need to encourage a more diverse housing stock including housing for all ages and economic circumstances. In recognition of this goal, the town created accessory dwelling unit regulations so that qualifying parcels with a single-family house can also have a second dwelling unit for family members.*

*This plan recognizes that Suffield’s rural-suburban residential development patterns, housing type, form, and density is likely continue as it is today. However, the goal to create a diverse housing stock from the 2010 POCD carries over and the town should take strides toward creating more affordable (workforce) housing.*

### **Housing That Is Affordable**

*The States affordable housing statute, Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-30g considers housing affordable if persons or families spend 30 percent or less of their income on housing and related costs where such income is less than or equal to 80 percent of the area median income. Over the last decade, Suffield has seen an increase in the number of affordable units in the community.*

*Effective December 11, 2019, the town received a certificate of affordable housing completion from the Department of Housing. This is also known as a moratorium that exempts the town from Connecticut General Statutes 8-30g. The moratorium is effective through December 10, 2023. Having the moratorium in place will allow the town four years to study the impacts, if any, from the “Brook Hill Village” affordable housing development located off East Street South. The moratorium will also provide Suffield the opportunity to study affordable housing and better plan for its development in Suffield.*

*Guiding appropriate residential development is important because it is imperative that Suffield maintain and enhance the quality of existing neighborhoods while allowing for new growth. The balance will be providing for ways to encourage more affordable workforce housing at a scale that is compatible with existing land use patterns.*

## **Housing**

*As mentioned above, the majority of Suffield's land area is single family residential. As a result, 91% of occupied homes are single-family and 9% are multifamily which is defined as two or more units in a structure. In addition, renters live in 80% of Suffield's 424 multifamily homes, and owners occupy 93% of the town's 4,246 single-family homes (American Community Survey).*

*It is important that Suffield maintain the existing neighborhoods that make it a great place to live. It is equally important to create new neighborhoods that enhance the appeal of town through proper design. Several subdivisions were approved in the last 10 years through use of the flexible residential development regulations. These regulations require at least half of the development site to be set aside as open space while allowing more flexibility with lot sizes and building setbacks. In a town with a strong desire to preserve open space and farmland, these regulations have provided an effective means of guiding residential development that maintains rural character.*

*However, there is a need for more affordable starter homes and housing for elderly residents looking to downsize from their large single-family homes. This type of housing may take the form of condominiums, apartments, or other multi-family housing.*

## **Strategies**

### **A. Guide/Manage Residential Development**

- 1. Guide the scale and pattern of future residential growth in ways that will provide compatible uses of land.*
- 2. Continue to use the flexible residential development regulations to cluster residential development.*
- 3. Carefully manage non-residential uses in residential zones including special permit uses.*
- 4. Continue to guide development in relation to infrastructure capacity.*
- 5. Continue to update land use regulations as needed to address housing needs and provide appropriate housing options.*

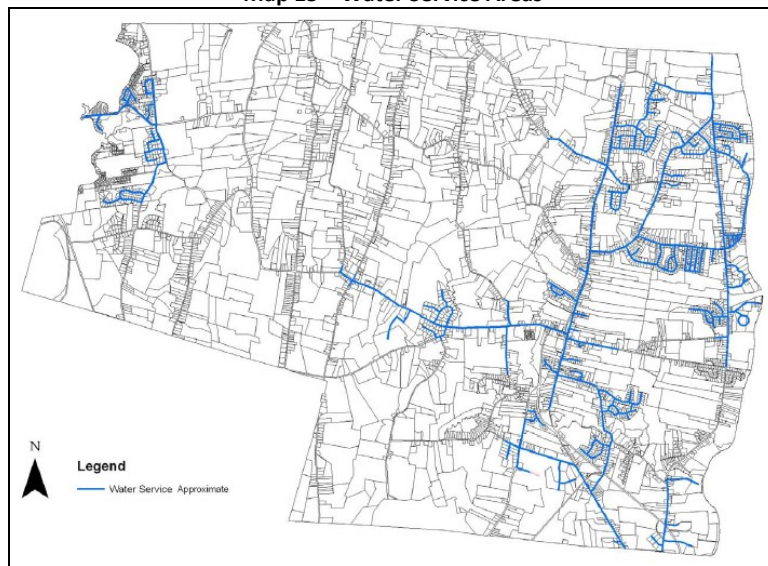
### **B. Provide For A Variety Of Housing Types While Retaining The Overall Character Of Suffield**

- 1. Review the Planned Development Apartment multifamily zoning regulations to determine if revisions are appropriate.*
- 2. Consider creating transition zones that would encourage multifamily development as land uses transition from commercial to single family residential.*
- 3. Consider expanding accessory apartment regulations on single-family residential properties to those other than family members or employees.*
- 4. Consider revisions to the regulations for converting a single-family house into a multi-family house.*

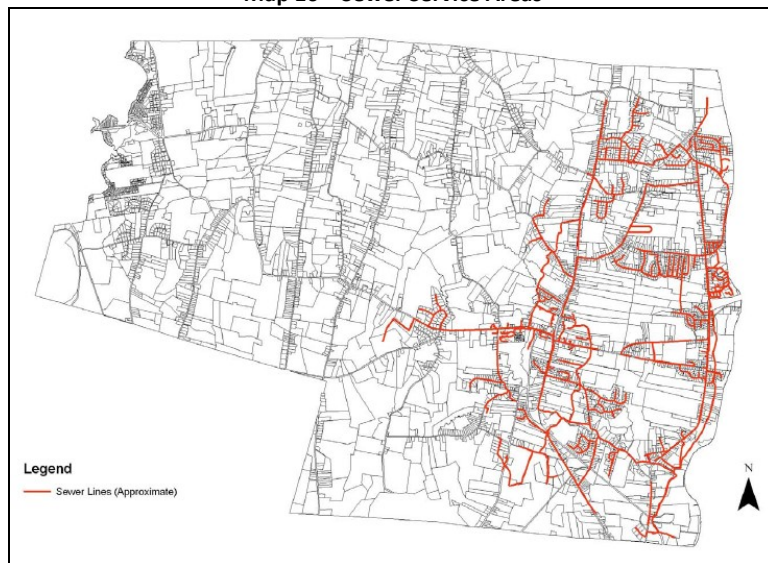
**C. Provide For Housing That Is Affordable**

1. *Prepare an affordable housing plan for the town as required under CGS 8-30j.*
2. *Consider ways to address the need for housing for the growing elderly population and for housing that is more affordable for local workers and first-time homebuyers.*
3. *Carefully consider inclusionary zoning provisions that would require a certain percentage of housing in any development to be affordable under the requirements of CGS 8-30g.*
4. *Consider revisions to Section V.C. Affordable Housing of the Zoning Regulations to make them more pragmatic.*

**Map 15 – Water Service Areas**



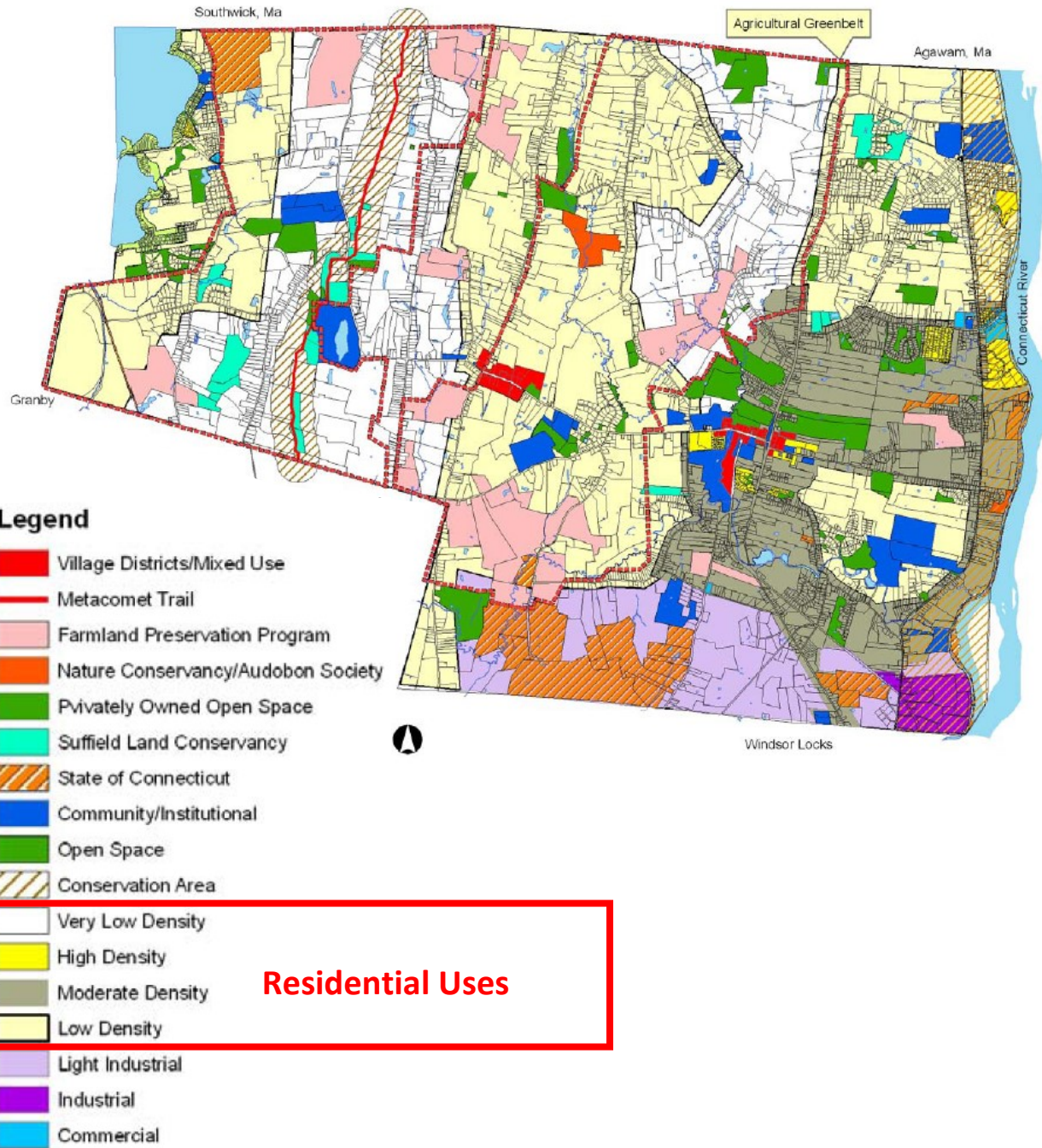
**Map 16 – Sewer Service Areas**





## 2010 POCD – Future Land Use Plan

Map 17. Future Land Use - Town of Suffield



## Zoning Regulations

Excerpts from the Zoning Regulations with provisions relevant to housing are presented below:

<b>Section I: PURPOSE AND INTENT</b>	
1.	Purposes may not align with Statutes
<b>Section II: DEFINITIONS</b>	
2.	Define: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Active adult housing</li> <li>b. Affordable housing</li> <li>c. Apartment (Special Permit required – allows accessory apartment?)</li> <li>d. Apartment house (Special Permit required)</li> <li>e. Boarding or rooming house</li> <li>f. Boarding house, farm</li> <li>g. Cluster development</li> <li>h. Condominium, residential or office</li> <li>i. Dwelling</li> <li>j. Dwelling, attached</li> <li>k. Dwelling, detached</li> <li>l. Dwelling, multi-family: (Special Permit required)</li> <li>m. Dwelling, single-family</li> <li>n. Dwelling, unit</li> <li>o. Family</li> <li>p. Flexible Residential Development</li> <li>q. Town house</li> </ul>
<b>Section III: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS</b>	
<b>A. General Conditions</b>	
3.	No building containing a residential use shall be erected, altered, enlarged, or maintained in the rear of any building on the same lot
4.	No building or zoning permit shall be issued for any structures or land use unless the lot for which the permit is sought has the required frontage on a public street
<b>F. Accessory Buildings</b>	
5.	No accessory building on the same lot with a main residence building other than a farm boarding house or school dormitory shall be used for residence purposes, except for immediate family of the owner, or for domestic employees or caregivers of the owners or family members, and who are employed on the premises
6.	Rental of the [accessory building] to anyone other than the owner's family members, employees or caregivers of the owner is prohibited
<b>O. Mobile Homes, Trailers, and Recreation Vehicles</b>	
7.	Only allowed when rebuilding residence from casualty loss

## Section IV: ZONING DISTRICTS AND USE REGULATIONS

### B. Use Table (excerpted residential uses)

#### Legend

<b>P</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>SP</b>	<b>SPA</b>	<b>x</b>
Zoning Permit (Staff)	Site Plan (PZC)	Special Permit (PZC)	Special Permit "Accessory" (PZC)	Not Permitted

#### Residential Zones

	R-90	R-45	R-25	R-20	R-15	R-11	PDA	HOD
Dwelling, Single-Family	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Dwelling, Two-Family	SP	SP	SP	x	x	x	x	x
Conversion of Single Family to Two Family	SP	SP	SP	x	x	x	x	x
Dwelling, Multi-Family	x	x	x	x	x	x	SP	Site
Apartments or Condominiums	x	x	x	x	x	x	SP	x
Active-Adult Housing	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Assisted Living / Convalescent Home	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP

#### Non-Residential Zones

	Town Cntr. Village	W. Suffield Village	Nbrhd. Commercial	Industrial	Planned Industrial
Dwelling, Single-Family	x	x	x	x	x
Dwelling, Two-Family	x	x	x	x	x
Conversion of Single Family to Two Family	x	x	x	x	x
Dwelling, Multi-Family	SP	x	x	x	x
Apartments or Condominiums	SPA	SPA	SPA	SPA	SP
Active-Adult Housing	x	x	SP	x	x
Assisted Living / Convalescent Home	SP	SP	SP	x	x

#### E. Planned Development Apartment (PDA) Zone

8. Zone identifies both of the following but it is not clear what the distinction is:
  - a. Apartment or Residential Condominium, including town houses.
  - b. Multi-Family Dwelling, including apartments and townhouses.
9. Area, Yard, and Density Requirements.
  - a. Minimum lot size - **Ten (10) acres.**
  - b. Maximum density - Five (5) dwelling units per developable acre; seven (7) dwelling per developable acre if age-restricted to those 55 or over.
  - c. Minimum lot frontage: 500 feet.
  - d. Minimum building setbacks
  - e. Parking: **2.5 spaces per unit**

#### **F. Town Center Village (TCV) District Zone**

10. Residential Apartments or Condominiums permitted by Special Permit provided:
- This section shall not apply to parcels or lots that are located either in whole or part in the Historic District areas of the TCV Zone,
  - This section shall only apply to [existing] parcels or lots that are over three acres in size.
  - No more than 45 residential units shall be allowed on any parcel and no other uses shall be allowed on the parcel or lot.
  - Design standards ... shall apply
  - Maximum building height shall be fifty feet with no more than 50% of the building height exceeding forty feet.
  - There shall be a minimum of 2 parking spaces per dwelling unit (parking spaces in garages shall be included).

#### **L. Prohibited Uses**

11. The rental of separate quarters within a single family house.

#### **N. Housing Opportunity District (HOD) Zone**

12. The purpose of the Housing Opportunity District (HOD) is to permit and regulate the development of multi-family housing within a community that is well-planned and contains homes that are financially accessible to moderate and low income households
13. 30% affordability set-aside (half at 60% AMI and half at 80% AMI) for at least 40 years
14. Multifamily dwellings consisting of no more than 30 dwelling units per building
15. The parcel shall consist of at least 25 acres ... served by public water and sewer
16. Maximum Density - 7 dwelling units Per Gross Acre
17. Parking Space Requirement - 1.5 parking spaces per unit

### **Section V: SPECIAL REGULATIONS**

#### **A. Active-Adult Housing Development**

18. to permit variations in height, bulk, density, and residential use types which would not otherwise be possible in order to meet the special housing needs of those age fifty-five (55) years and older
19. Minimum lot size: Ten (10) acres.
20. Minimum lot frontage: ... on specific existing collector or arterial streets (only permitted on the following arterial and collector roads with public water and sewer: North and South Main Streets, East Street, East Street South, South Street, Thompsonville Road, Mapleton Avenue, Bridge Street, Thrall Avenue, Remington Street and Suffield Street)
21. Maximum density: Five (5) dwelling units per developable acre not to exceed fifty (50) dwelling units total per development unless in a PDA zone where seven (7) units per developable acre are permitted.
22. A minimum 50% of the site shall be preserved as open space, of which at least 25% must be suitable for active recreation
23. Single-family detached dwelling units and attached units of no more than three (3) units per structure shall be allowed.
24. The minimum living areas of residential units shall be as follows:
- One (1) bedroom unit: 1,000 square feet
  - Two(2) bedroom unit: 1,250 square feet



### **C. Affordable Housing**

25. Higher density zoning may be permitted on a limited basis to provide a greater variety of housing choices.
26. As an incentive to encourage development of affordable housing units, the Commission, upon petition and after public hearing, may grant a change of zone for a parcel of land, provided that fifty percent (50%) of the additional housing units allowed, shall be affordable.
27. Public water supply [and] public sewers shall be available to service the property in question.
28. A PDA development may be allowed an additional density bonus of forty (40) percent, provided that fifty (50) percent of the additional units are offered as affordable housing.
29. In order to absorb the impact on the town's infrastructure and its ability to provide services, consideration for zone changes will be limited to a total of fifty (50) bonus units (25 affordable) per year.
30. The commission may consider relaxation of the fifteen (15) percent limitation for multi-family housing as part of the town's housing stock when twenty-five (25) percent or more of the proposed units in a project are affordable.
31. A contract certifying the above shall be drawn by the developer, approved by the town attorney and entered into between the developer and the Town of Suffield. Such contract shall be drawn in accordance with CGS Sec. 8-2g(a).
32. Ongoing administration of affordable housing units established under these regulations shall be in accordance with CGS Sec. 8-2g(b).

### **F. Assisted-Living and Personal-Care Facilities, Convalescent and Nursing Homes**

33. Minimum lot size:
  - a. Ten (10) acres in residential and commercial zones;
  - b. One (1) acre in the Town Center Village District Zone if the Commission determines that the smaller lot size is acceptable given abutting property uses, site characteristics, site design, and site access considerations.
34. Maximum density:
  - c. Five (5) units per acre in residential and commercial zones;
  - d. One (1) unit per two thousand (2000) square feet in a Town Center Village District Zone not to exceed thirty 30 units. (equals 21.78 units/acre)
35. The property shall be in the sewer service area and served by public water and sewers.
36. All units shall have minimum floor areas as follows: efficiency: 400 square feet; one-bedroom: 500 square feet; two-bedroom: 650 square feet
- 37.

### **I. Conversion of One-to-Two-Family Dwelling**

38. Only homes constructed prior to 1940 shall be eligible for conversion.
39. There shall be double the lot area required by the underlying zone.
40. The minimum floor area of each dwelling unit shall be 525 square feet. For each bedroom an additional 150 square feet shall be added to the minimum.
41. No structural alteration made to the exterior of the building shall detract from its single-family characteristics.
42. No stairs above the first floor shall be added outside the existing exterior walls except at the rear wall of the building, and on a corner lot any new stairs shall be added within the existing walls of the building or added in the form of a wing that will not detract from the building's single-family characteristics.
43. Permits shall be issued to the property owner.

**Q. Two-Family Dwelling**

- 44. Architectural plans shall be subject to approval by the Commission.
- 45. At least one dwelling unit shall qualify as affordable housing.
- 46. The minimum lot area shall be 45,000 SF, or 90,000 SF in an R-90 zone.
- 47. Not more than two (2) individual dwelling units shall result.
- 48. The building exterior appearance [and the lot design] shall be consistent with the single-family characteristics of the neighborhood.
- 49. The minimum floor area:
  - a. For the entire building shall be no less than 2,000 square feet.
  - b. of each dwelling unit shall be not less than 1,000 square feet.
- 50. The contract between the applicant and the town shall be prepared by the applicant modeled after the criteria set forth in CGS Sec. 8-2g(a). Any such contract shall be approved as to form by the Town Attorney.

**U. Adaptive Reuse**

- 51. Multi-family use allowed by Special Permit for rehabilitation or adaptive reuse of non-residential buildings which have been at least sixty [60] percent vacant for a period of not less than eighteen [18] months in the R-90, R-45, R-25, R-20, R-15, R-11 and NC zones provided:
  - a. Substantial benefit to the Town.
  - b. Compatibility with the surrounding area.
  - c. Substantial inability to develop the property in conformance with its' current zoning.
- 52. Dwelling units shall be limited to existing buildings only. No new buildings or additions to existing buildings shall be constructed on the site to house dwelling units.
- 53. All buildings shall be connected to public water and public sanitary sewer systems or to private systems that meet the minimum requirements of the Town and State Departments of Health

**Section VI: FLEXIBLE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Section VII: PARKING AND LOADING REGULATIONS**

- 54. Each off-street parking space shall be nine (9) by twenty (20) feet
- 55. At least two (2) spaces for each dwelling unit

**Section VIII: LANDSCAPING AND BUFFERS**

**Section IX: SIGNAGE**

**Section X: RIDGELINE PROTECTION ZONE**

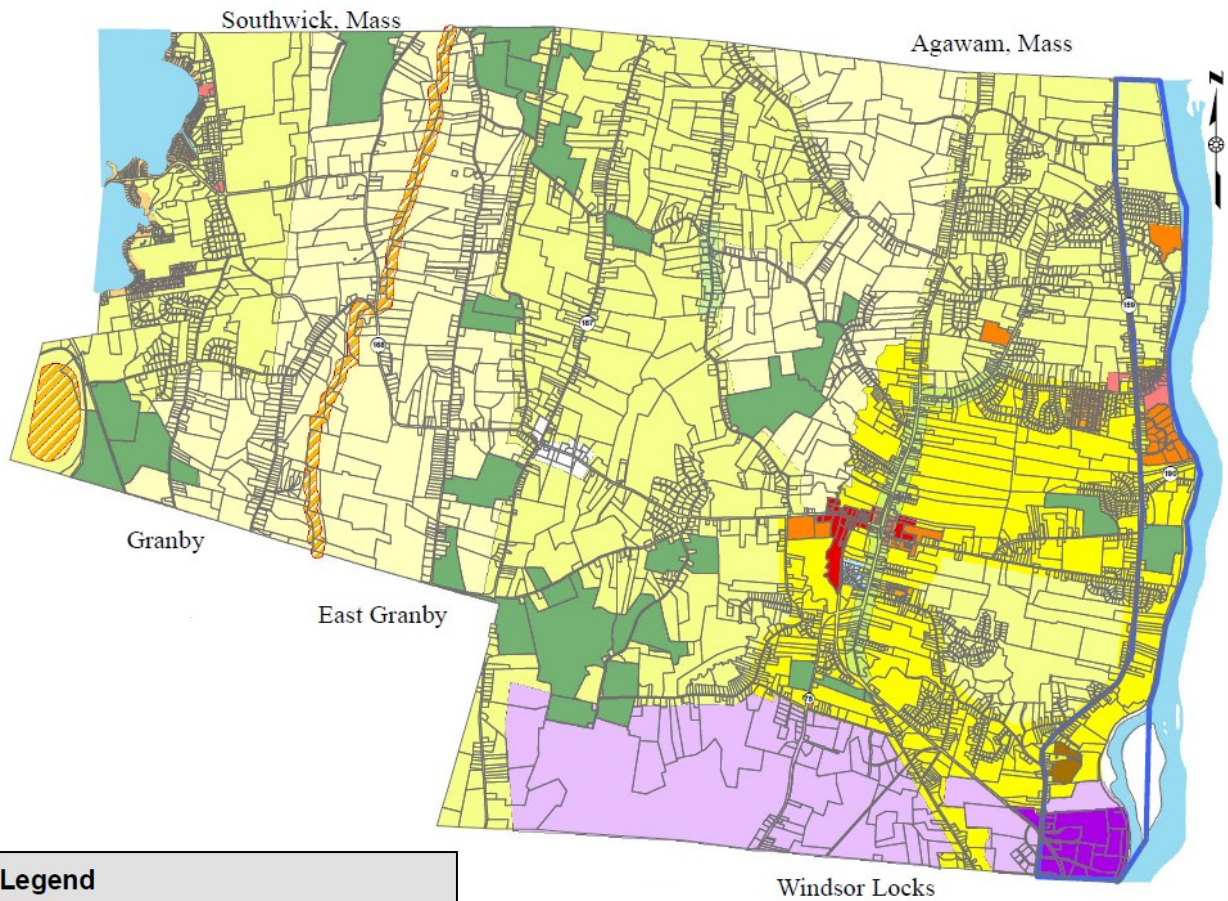
**Section XI: NONCONFORMING USES AND STRUCTURES**

**Section XII: SOIL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL**



















**Section XIII: ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

**Section XIV: ADMINISTRATION**

## 2015 Zoning Map



### Legend

-  Connecticut River Conservation Zone
-  Historic District
-  Ridgeline Protection Zone
-  Preserved Farmland
-  Housing Opportunity District (HOD) Zone
-  Farmland Preservation
-  Industrial (I)
-  Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
-  Planned Development Apartment (PDA)
-  Planned Development Industrial Park (PDIP)
-  Residential 11,000 SF (R-11)
-  Residential 15,000 SF (R-15)
-  Residential 20,000 SF (R-20)
-  Residential 25,000 SF (R-25)
-  Residential 45,000 SF (R-45)
-  Residential 90,000 SF (R-90)
-  Town Center Village District (TCVD)
-  West Suffield Center Village District (WSCV)

### Residential Zones

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