

## **CHESTER SELECTBOARD**

### **PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

#### **PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS**

The Chester Selectboard will convene a public hearing on a proposed amendment to the Town of Chester Unified Development Bylaws on **Wednesday, May 3, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.** at the Chester Town Hall at 556 Elm Street in Chester, Vermont. The proposed development bylaws amendment has been approved by the Planning Commission and submitted to the Selectboard pursuant to 24 V.S.A. § 4441(g).

The principal purpose of the proposed development bylaws amendment is to encourage workforce housing in the village districts, clarify uses that are exempt from zoning, define primitive camps and short-term rentals, require new private roads to conform to Chester's Road and Bridge Standards, streamline the subdivision review process, and allow more non-resident employees in home occupations and home businesses. The proposed amendment will affect every geographical area of Chester. The amended Sections of the Bylaws include 2.14-Flood Prevention Overlay District, 3.1-Accessory Dwelling Unit, 3.11-Home Occupation, 3.12-Home Business, 3.14-Lot and Yard Requirements, 3.19-Non-Conformities, 3.20-Off-Street Parking, 3.22-Renewable Energy Facilities, 3.30-Short Term Rentals, 4.3-Exemptions, 4.9-Performance Standards, 4.10-Planned Unit Development, 4.12-Subdivision Review Procedures, 5.2-Road Design, 7.16-Waivers, and 8.2-Definitions.

The full text of the proposed amendment to the Town of Chester Unified Development Bylaws may be viewed at the Town Clerk's office and on the home page of the Town's website at [www.chestervt.gov](http://www.chestervt.gov).

A link to participate in this hearing via Zoom videoconference may be found on the Town of Chester website home page at [www.chestervt.gov](http://www.chestervt.gov) under Zoom Meetings: Select Board Meeting.

Dated at Chester, Vermont this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of April 2023.

Julie Hance, Town Manager, Town of Chester, Vermont



**Summary of Proposed Unified Development Bylaws Amendments  
as approved by the Planning Commission on March 20, 2023  
and recommended to the Selectboard for adoption**

- 2.14 Clarify Flood Damage Prevention (FDP) District is an Overlay district
- 2.14.B Ability of DRB to approve exempt structures in “approximate” Zone A floodplain where the map is incorrect by observation (due to knoll, mound, ridge or hummock)
- 3.1 Ability of DRB to approve a second ADU on residential properties
- 3.11 Allow up to 2 non-resident employees in a Home Occupation (now zero); clarify that remote work is not a home occupation and does not need a home occupation permit
- 3.12 Allow up to 5 non-resident employees in a Home Business (now 4)
- 3.14.C.10 Allow exempt fences on boundary; non-exempt fences reviewed by DRB
- 3.19.A.1 Ability of DRB to reduce the required setbacks on small nonconforming lots
- 3.19.B.5 Allow additions to nonconforming structures that do not increase the degree of nonconformity
- 3.20 Update off-street parking requirements to those recommended in *Enabling Better Places: A Zoning Guide for Vermont Neighborhoods*
- 3.22 Note that Renewable Energy Facilities approved by Vermont Public Utilities Commission are exempt
- 3.30 Clarify that Short-Term Rentals are regulated by separate Ordinance and that they are not allowed a sign
- 4.3.B Identify 29 exempt uses that do not need a zoning permit
- 4.9.B Clarify that smoke and odor are included under the performance standards on air pollution
- 4.10 Provide clearer guidance on purpose and uses of Planned Unit Development (PUD) provisions
- 4.11 Add reference to Flood Damage Prevention (FDP) Overlay District
- 4.12 Reduce required steps in subdivision review
- 4.12.G Ability of DRB to waive requirements for minor subdivisions
- 5.2 Clarify that roads serving more than one dwelling must meet Chester’s Road Standards and remove ability for DRB to modify these road standards (Chester’s Road and Bridge Specifications can be found on the town website under Government, Ordinances and Regulations)
- 7.16 Ability of DRB to waive subdivision and setback requirements for subsidized or nonprofit housing for low- and moderate-income residents
- 8.2 Increase maximum size of ADU from 900 to 1000 square feet; define Primitive Camp and Short-Term Rental; delete definition of “Extent of Nonconformity”





# UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS TOWN OF CHESTER, VERMONT



ADOPTED MARCH 15, 2017      EFFECTIVE APRIL 5, 2017

AMENDED JUNE 1, 2022 – ADD VILLAGE GREEN ZONING DISTRICT

AMENDED SEPTEMBER 21, 2022 – ADD ADAPTIVE RE-USE

AMENDED OCTOBER 5, 2022 – ADD LEGACY USES

**SUBMITTAL COPY OF PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENT TO SELECTBOARD**

**AS APPROVED BY PLANNING COMMISSION ON MARCH 20, 2023**



## CHESTER UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS

### 2.14 FDP – Flood Damage Prevention Overlay District

#### A. Development Permit Required

A permit is required, to the extent authorized by State law, for all proposed construction or other development, including the placement of manufactured homes, in areas of special flood hazard. Conditional use approval (see Section 4.8) by the Development Review Board (DRB) is required for:

1. New buildings,
2. Substantial improvement of existing buildings, and
3. Development in a floodway;

prior to being permitted by the Zoning Administrator. All development and subdivisions shall be reviewed to assure that such proposals minimize potential flood damage, public facilities and utilities such as sewer, gas, electrical, and water systems are constructed so as to minimize flood damage, and adequate drainage is provided to reduce exposure to flood hazards.

Note: All development in SFHAs needs a permit and thus notice to the state NFIP Coordinator (Section 7.1.B.2.k) even if not subject to conditional use review.

#### B. Lands to Which These Bylaws Apply

These Bylaws shall apply to all areas in the Town of Chester, Vermont identified as areas of special flood hazard, also referred to as Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA), in and on the most current flood insurance studies and maps published by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), as provided by the Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 753, which are hereby adopted by reference and declared to be part of these Bylaws.

The Flood Insurance Study and maps are on file in the Chester Town Offices.

The Development Review Board is empowered to determine that an area shown on the flood insurance maps as being in an SFHA approximate A Zone is incorrect (due to a knoll, mound, ridge, hummock or other high ground that is clearly above the risk of flooding) and therefore not within the FDP – Flood Damage Prevention Overlay District, however, this determination will apply only to exempt structures and will have no effect on any requirements by lenders to purchase flood insurance, nor will it result in any official change to the flood insurance maps.

#### C. Warning of Disclaimer of Liability

These Bylaws do not imply that land outside of the areas of special flood hazard or land use permitted within such districts will be free from flooding or flood damages. These Bylaws shall





## ARTICLE 3 – General Use Standards

The following zoning standards apply to all uses and structures as specified within the Town of Chester.

### 3.1 Accessory Dwelling Unit

A single accessory dwelling unit, as defined in these Bylaws, shall be a permitted use. A second accessory dwelling unit may be approved by the Development Review Board following review under the conditional use criteria of these regulations.

### 3.2 Broadcast Facilities

Broadcast facilities, as defined by these Bylaws, shall conform to the following provisions:

A. All broadcast facilities shall be licensed by the Federal Communications Commission.

B. Commercial Broadcast Facilities:

1. Shall be allowed in all districts upon receiving Conditional Use approval from the Development Review Board and issuance of a Zoning Permit.
2. Any installation or construction of, or significant addition or modification to, such facilities requires approval under Section 4.8, unless determined to be of de minimis impact under Subsection F below.
3. Commercial broadcast facilities are exempt from the height standards listed in Article 2. The facility will not project more than 20 feet above the average elevation of the tree line measured within 50 feet of the highest vertical element of the facility, unless the proposed elevation is reasonably necessary to provide adequate wireless telecommunication service capacity or coverage or to facilitate collocation of facilities.
4. Antennae and towers shall meet a setback distance from the property lines equal to the height of the antennae or tower. Setbacks are measured from the base of the structure, not guy wires.
5. Landscaping may be required around the base of all antennae and towers.

C. Private Broadcast Facilities (e.g. ham radio facilities):

1. Shall be allowed in any district upon issuance of a Zoning Permit.
2. Antennae and towers shall be located in back yards and shall meet a setback distance equal to the height of the antennae or tower.

D. In accordance with §4412(8) of the Act, the following facilities are exempt from these Bylaws:



### 3.10 Family Child Care

**A. Family Child Care Home:** A family childcare home, as defined herein in these Bylaws, serving six or fewer children shall be considered to constitute a permitted single-family residential use of property. A family child care home, as defined in these Bylaws, serving no more than six full-time children and four part-time children, shall be considered to constitute a permitted use of property but requires site plan approval based on local zoning requirements.

**B. Family Child Care Facility:** A family child care facility, as defined in these Bylaws, shall be considered to be a conditional use and be subject to all applicable municipal bylaws for conditional uses.

### 3.11 Home Occupation

No regulation herein shall infringe upon the right of any resident to use a minor portion of a dwelling for an occupation which is customary in residential areas and which does not have an undue adverse effect on the character of the neighborhood. The primary use of the premises shall be that of a private residence, and the home occupation shall be carried on by members of the family in a minor portion of the dwelling or in an accessory building. Two (2) full time equivalent on-premises employees who are not part of the family are permitted. ~~in the residence or in a typical accessory building.~~ Disturbances such as noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, and electrical interference or line voltage variations shall not be produced. On-street parking is not permitted, nor shall the exterior of the building be altered to take on a commercial aspect. The above limitations shall not apply to agricultural uses. Home occupations are allowed as permitted; accessory uses in all districts where residential uses are permitted.

A remote worker working at their home as an employment arrangement for an organization not based or located at the home, and where there is no sign and no work-related visits from the general public, is not a home occupation and does not require a home occupation permit.



## CHESTER UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS

### 3.12 Home Business

No regulation herein shall infringe upon the right of any resident to use a minor portion of a dwelling for a Home Business which is customary in residential areas and which does not have an undue adverse effect on the character of the neighborhood. The Home Business shall be carried on by members of the family in a minor portion of the dwelling or in an accessory building. ~~Four (4)~~ **Five (5)** full time equivalent on-premises employees who are not part of the family are permitted. Disturbances such as noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, glare, and electrical interference or line voltage variations shall not be produced at a level which is seriously objectionable or out of character with the neighborhood.

Home Business is allowed as an accessory use, subject to conditional use review, in all districts where residential uses are permitted subject to the following provisions:

1. The home business shall be clearly incidental and secondary to the residential use of the property, and shall be conducted wholly within the principal or accessory structures;
2. The home business shall be carried on by members of the family residing in the dwelling unit. Four additional full-time equivalent employees who are not members of the family are permitted;
3. No traffic shall be generated which would be uncharacteristic of the neighborhood;
4. Exterior displays, exterior storage of materials, and exterior indications of the home business or variation from the residential character of the principal or accessory structures may be prohibited. (See Section 3.26 for home business/industry sign standards.)

### 3.13 Landscaping and Screening Requirements

**A.** Landscaping is required in all districts, except for one or two-family dwellings, to be installed and maintained in yards and shall take the form of shade trees, deciduous shrubs, evergreens, grassed areas and ground cover. No landscaping shall create a traffic hazard.

**B.** A three-year landscaping maintenance plan and/or a bond or other surety to ensure installation and maintenance may be required by the Development Review Board and incorporated as a condition of approval under conditional use review.

### 3.14 Lot and Yard Requirements

Each lot shall have an area, frontage, and front yard, side yard and rear yard setbacks as required by these Bylaws. Buildings and/or structures shall not occupy in the aggregate a greater percentage of the lot area, nor be greater in height, than is provided herein.

- A. Required Lot and Yard Areas:** In calculating the required area, width or depth of a lot, the area of existing and proposed road rights-of-way shall be excluded. Space required



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under these Bylaws to satisfy yard, area or other open space requirements in relation to one building shall not be counted as part of any required lot, yard or other open spaces for any other building.

- B. **Corner Lots:** Lots at an intersection of streets shall have the required frontage on both streets. Any yard adjoining a street shall be considered a front yard for the purposes of these Bylaws. All front yards shall meet the setback requirements of these Bylaws.
- C. **Setbacks:**
1. Shall apply to the principle building and all accessory buildings and structures.
  2. Will be measured from the edge of the front roadway or neighboring lot line, in a straight line from a right angle to the nearest point of the building or structure.
  3. In the event of a corner lot, all sides facing the roadway(s) will be considered front yards.
  4. In the event there is no discernible edge of roadway, the boundary line recorded in town records will be used.
  5. Nothing herein will prevent the projection of eaves, chimneys, cornices, uncovered steps, unroofed porches less than 32 square feet, window sills and other such projections into any required yard or open space, provided that such projection does not extend more than four feet into such yard or open space.
  6. Any type of covering – including but not limited to retractable awnings or wooden, metal, fiberglass lattice work that requires support of any kind – over a deck, steps or porch is considered part of the structure and will be included in the minimum setback measurement.
  7. Driveways are allowed within side and rear yard setbacks, and not included in the boundary measurements.
  8. Structures, regardless of material, which are intended to cover over and shield any type of vehicle shall be included in the boundary measurements.
  9. In the event of a cul-de-sac, the front yard setback shall be measured from the target line used to measure frontage.
  10. Fences and walls ~~that are exempt under section 4.3.B.14 provided they are no higher than six (6) feet~~ are not considered in the setback measurement. Fences and walls that are not exempt require approval by the Development Review Board, must meet a demonstrable screening, safety or security purpose, and may be required to meet setbacks.
- D. **Lots:** A lot shall be of sufficient size to meet minimum zoning requirements for use, coverage and area, and to provide such yards and other open spaces as are herein required. Such lots shall have frontage on a street, or other means of permanent access approved by the Development Review Board. In no case shall the division or combination of any lands result in the creation of a parcel which does not meet the requirement of these Bylaws.
- E. **Frontage:** All new subdivided lots shall have the required contiguous road frontage or right-of-way frontage for the district in which located. Lot frontage on a cul-de-sac may be reduced by the Development Review Board under conditional use review if the opinion of the Development Review Board the reduction of the lot frontage will result in

### 3.19 Non-Conformities, Legacy Uses and Adaptive Re-Use

A. **Existing Nonconformities.** Nothing in this section shall be construed to restrict the authority of the Town of Chester to abate public nuisances or to abate or remove public health risks or hazards. Any lawful lot, building or use in existence at the time of adoption or amendment of these Bylaws may be continued. Such lot, building or use shall meet all other requirements of these Bylaws, and is subject to the following provisions.

1. **Nonconforming Lots.** Any existing lawful lot that does not meet the specified dimensional requirements in these Bylaws, may be maintained and developed for the purposes permitted in that district ~~as long as all other requirements for that district are met.~~ By decision of the Development Review Board, structures on a Nonconforming Lot or Existing Small Lot may have the front, side, and/or rear yard setback reduced to a ratio of the size of the Nonconforming Lot or Existing Small Lot to the Minimum Lot Size for the District (that is, a 3 acre lot in a 5 acre district may have its setbacks reduced to 3/5ths or 60% of the required setback for the District). In no instance shall a structure be permitted closer than 20 feet from a road shoulder or impair sight distances along a road or be permitted less than 10 feet from any lot line, except in districts where a lesser front, side or rear yard setback is permitted.
2. **Existing Small Lots.** In accordance with the Act [§ 4412], any lot that is legally subdivided, is in individual and separate and nonaffiliated ownership from surrounding properties, and is in existence on the date of enactment of this bylaw, may be developed for the purposes permitted in the district in which it is located, even though the lot does not conform to minimum lot size requirements of the district in which the lot is located, provided such lot is not less than one eighth acre or has a minimum width or depth dimension of at least 40 feet.

a. If an existing small lot subsequently comes under common ownership with one or more contiguous lots, the nonconforming lot may be separately conveyed if the lots are conveyed in their preexisting, nonconforming configuration, provided such lot is not less than one eighth acre or has a minimum width or depth dimension of at least 40 feet.

#### B. Nonconforming Structures

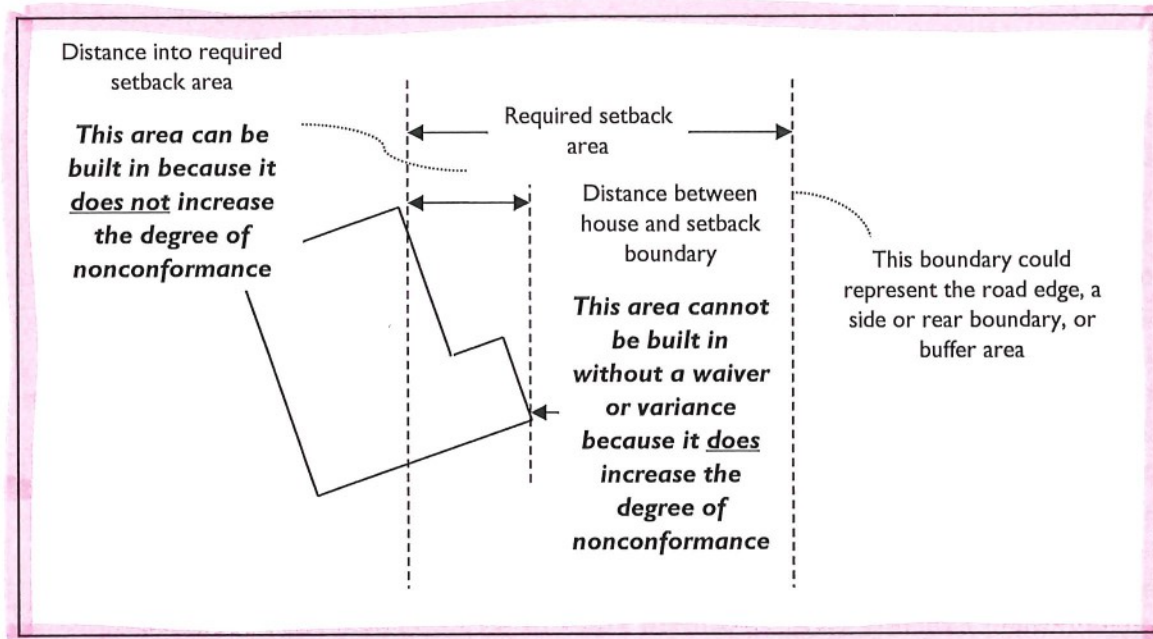
1. Any legal structure or part thereof, which is not in conformance with the provisions of these bylaws concerning setback, height, size, or other structural requirements (including such things as parking, lighting, buffers, and lowest floor elevation in floodplain zoning) shall be deemed a nonconforming structure. Legal nonconforming structures exist as a result of construction prior to adoption of bylaws, or construction under an earlier set of less restrictive bylaws. Any nonconforming structure may be allowed to exist indefinitely, but shall be subject to the following provisions:



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2. Subject to conditional use approval by the DRB, a nonconforming structure may be restored or reconstructed after unintentional loss provided the reconstruction is commenced within two years and does not increase the degree of non-conformance that existed prior to the damage.
3. A nonconforming structure which has been demolished shall not be reconstructed except in conformance with these bylaws. The DRB may grant a waiver from this provision if a hardship would be created by rebuilding in strict conformance with the requirements of these bylaws. In considering a waiver from these provisions, the DRB shall take into consideration the ability of the applicant to use remaining features of the property such as foundation, water supply, sewage disposal system, underground utilities, etc.
4. A nonconforming structure shall not be moved, altered, extended, or enlarged in a manner which will increase the existing degree of non-conformance.
5. The phrase 'shall not increase the degree of non-conformance' shall be interpreted to mean that additions to nonconforming structures which enlarge a portion of a nonconforming structure within a setback area but do not extend the structure any closer to a roadway or property line are not to be considered as an increase in the degree of non-conformity (see illustration below). Additionally, the development may not create a greater nuisance, detriment to the public health, safety or welfare than the original nonconforming structure. In no instance shall a structure be extended closer than 20 feet from a road shoulder or impair sight distances along a road or be extended less than 10 feet from any lot line, except in districts where a lesser front, side or rear yard setback is permitted. the portion of the structure which is nonconforming shall not increase in size (or decrease in the event of failing to meet minimum standards such as parking and lighting). Therefore, portions of a structure within a setback area cannot be enlarged, portions above the maximum height cannot be expanded where parking is deficient the number or size of spaces cannot be reduced, etc. This phrase is not intended to prevent existing unfinished space from being finished or other similar scenarios provided there is no increase in size.

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6. Nothing in this section shall be deemed to prevent normal maintenance and repair of a nonconforming structure provided that such action does not increase the degree of non-conformance.
7. The DRB shall permit the alteration or expansion of a nonconforming structure for the sole purpose of conformance with mandated environmental, safety, health, or energy codes.

### C. Nonconforming Uses, Legacy Uses and Adaptive Re-use

1. **Nonconforming Uses.** Any use, which does not conform to uses allowed in the district in which it is located or is otherwise not in conformance with the provisions of these bylaws, shall be deemed a nonconforming use. Nonconforming uses are those that exist legally as a result of existing prior to adoption of bylaws, or permitted under an earlier set of less restrictive bylaws. Any nonconforming use may be continued indefinitely, but shall be subject to the following provisions:
  - a) The nonconforming use shall not be changed to another nonconforming use without approval by the DRB, and then only to a use that, in the opinion of the DRB, is of the same or of a more conforming nature.
  - b) The nonconforming use shall not be re-established if such use has been discontinued for a period of two-years or has been changed to, or replaced by, a conforming use. Intent to resume a nonconforming use shall not confer the right to do so.
  - c) The nonconforming use shall not be expanded, extended, moved or enlarged unless the DRB finds that such expansion, extension, movement, or enlargement does not increase the degree of non-conformance. Examples of enlarged or expanded uses can include increased hours of operation, increased numbers of tables, number of employees or an increase in the size of the operation through the expansion of a conforming structure.



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### 3.21 Parcels in Two Or More Districts

When a parcel is located in two or more districts, the dimensional standards and uses of the district in which the structure is physically located will apply.

### 3.22 Renewable Energy Facilities

(Note: Development associated with utility, energy or telecommunications infrastructure that receives a Certificate of Public Good from the Vermont Public Utilities Commission is exempt from these bylaws. See Section 4.3.)

**A. Purpose.** The purpose of these standards is to promote energy efficient development, and to direct the siting and development of renewable energy facilities in the Town of Chester, as necessary to ensure that:

1. New development conforms to *Chester Town Plan* goals, policies and objectives specific to energy conservation, increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy development.
2. New development is planned and designed for energy efficiency, and to accommodate the future installation of renewable energy systems.
3. Renewable energy facilities subject to municipal review meet minimum standards intended to protect public health, safety and welfare, public facilities and services, neighboring properties and uses, and the Town's most significant natural, historic and scenic resources

**B. Conditional Uses.** For purposes of these Bylaws, a single proposed small-scale renewable solar or wind energy facility – including a solar thermal system, a solar photovoltaic (PV) or a wind system with a nameplate capacity of 15 kW or less – that is intended to serve the principal use of the property and meets the following standards, shall be considered an allowed accessory structure in all zoning districts [in which structures are allowed], subject to conditional use review by the Development Review Board and the issuance of a zoning permit. (See Exemptions in Section 4.3.) These systems include:

1. Solar or wind facilities to be mounted on buildings or structures (with the exception of historic structures) which, as mounted, do not exceed maximum district height requirements by more than 30 feet. Facilities mounted on non-conforming structures will not be considered to increase the degree or amount of nonconformance.
2. Individual ground-mounted solar and wind facilities that meet the following requirements:
  - a) A ground-mounted solar facility must meet minimum district setback requirements from property lines and rights-of-way, unless waived by the Development Review Board

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### 3.20 Off-Street Parking

Off-street parking spaces shall be provided in accordance with this section in all districts for every building hereafter erected or enlarged, or for any expansion or change of use.

#### A. Minimum Parking Standards

Land Use Category	Minimum Parking Standard
Residential	2/unit
Accessory Dwelling Unit	1/unit
Lodging	1/unit
Office	2/1,000-sq-ft
Retail	3/1,000-sq-ft
Restaurant/Bar	1/3 seats
Civic	As required by the DRB under conditional use review
Other	

Uses	Minimum Parking Spaces Required
All Residential Uses	1 space per household unit
All Lodging Uses	1 space per sleeping unit
All Assembly Uses	1 per 4 installed seats
All Retail Uses	1 space per 300 sq. ft. of display floor area
Medical Offices	1 space per 400 sq. ft. of gross floor area
All Other Offices	1 space per 500 sq. ft. of gross floor area
Restaurants/Taverns	1 space per 4 indoor seats

**B. Non-residential Uses: Unless no reasonable alternative exists, on-site parking shall be located to the rear or side of the building.** The Development Review Board may require additional off-street parking for any non-residential use if they find that minimum spaces are not sufficient.

**C. Size of Parking Space:** A parking space shall be at least nine (9) feet in width and eighteen (18) feet in length.

**D. ADA Accessible Parking:** Any public building must provide for handicap parking, and each handicap parking space must be at least thirteen (13) feet in width and eighteen (18) feet in length, with a minimum 3-foot-wide accessible route connecting to the building in accordance with the ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Handicap parking spaces will be so designated by appropriate signs.

**E. Setbacks:** Parking lot setbacks shall be a minimum of 5 feet.



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### F. Loading and Service Areas.

In all zoning districts, other than the VC and VG Districts, off-street loading space shall be provided for commercial, industrial or institutional uses which will receive shipments in vehicles too large for a standard parking space. Space provided shall be specifically for off-street loading and shall be large enough to fully accommodate the maximum number of such vehicles expected to be on the premises at any one time. Service areas may also be required for development subject to conditional use review to accommodate emergency vehicles, waste collection and disposal areas, transit service, or other purposes as may be necessitated by the proposed use. All loading and service areas shall be clearly marked and located in such a manner that parked vehicles will not block or obstruct access or sight visibility at intersections.

### G. Modification of parking requirements.

On-site parking requirements may be reduced by the Development Review Board under conditional use review, based upon a determination that special conditions exist which warrant reducing the minimum parking standard. The DRB may approve up to a 50% reduction of off-street parking spaces in Subsection A above. In the VC District, the parking may be reduced beyond 50%, if warranted. When approving a modification of the parking standards, the DRB shall consider the following:

1. Is the site located on or within 1,000 feet of a transit route?
2. Are there shared parking facilities with abutting businesses which are sufficient to meet parking demand?
3. For mixed-use projects, do the proposed uses have staggered business hours with minimal overlap?
4. Does the type of business proposed generate substantial pedestrian traffic, and are adequate pedestrian facilities present?
5. Is a reduced number of parking spaces adequate due to mitigation efforts such as bicycle parking, ridesharing or innovative measures (e.g. the provision of transit passes or sponsoring car sharing for tenants/employees)?
6. Is safe and adequate on-street parking available? (On-street spaces may count for 2 off-street spaces because on-street spaces turn over, are available more frequently, and have higher overall occupancy rates.)
7. Are green areas to be set aside for future conversion to parking in the event that the amount of space initially permitted is deemed inadequate to meet demonstrated need?
8. Can the minimum standards not be met for the redevelopment of an existing building?
9. Is there adequate off-street nighttime parking (either private or public) to comply with Chester's snow parking ban?

### 3.29 Surface Water Protections

A. To prevent soil erosion and sedimentation of surface waters, development shall be setback away from the high-water mark of all streams and rivers and public ponds. A minimum 25-foot setback is required for streams and rivers that are between two- to six-feet wide, measured from the high-water mark on each bank. A minimum 50- foot setback is required for ponds, as well as streams and rivers that are wider than six feet, measured from the high-water mark on each bank. No development, excavation, filling, clearing or grading shall occur within the setback area, with the exception of clearing and associated site development necessary to accommodate the following, approved as a conditional use by the Development Review Board:

1. Road, driveway and utility crossings.
2. Stream bank stabilization and restoration projects, in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations.
3. Bicycles and pedestrian paths and trails.
4. Recreation facilities, including structures, and improved lake or pond accesses.
5. Micro-hydro (i.e., run of the river) energy systems.

B. This provision applies to all streams and rivers that are not protected under the Flood Damage Prevention Overlay District (see Section 2.14).

### 3.30 Short-Term Rentals

The short-term rental of all or part of a permitted dwelling unit, as defined in these Bylaws, is an allowed use in all districts where residential uses are permitted without a zoning permit, but may be regulated by the Selectboard of the Town of Chester by civil ordinance under authority granted in 24 V.S.A. § 2291(29) and 24 V.S.A. § 1971 et seq. A short-term rental is only allowed residential signs, as defined in these Bylaws, which do not require a sign permit. Any sign requiring a permit under these Bylaws is prohibited to advertise or call attention to or direct a person to a short-term rental.



### 4.3 Limitations and Exemptions

A. In accordance with §4413(a) of the Act, the following uses may be regulated only with respect to location, size, height, building bulk, yards, courts, setbacks, density of buildings, off-street parking, loading facilities, traffic, noise, lighting, landscaping, and screening requirements, and only to the extent that regulations do not have the effect of interfering with the intended functional use<sup>1</sup>:

1. State- or community-owned and operated institutions and facilities;
2. Public and private schools and other educational institutions certified by the state department of education;
3. Churches and other places of worship, convents, and parish houses;
4. Public and private hospitals;
5. Regional solid waste management facilities certified under 10 V.S.A. chapter 159;
6. Hazardous waste management facilities for which a notice of intent to construct has been received under 10 V.S.A. § 6606a.

B. Except within the Flood Damage Prevention Overlay District, landowners do not need to obtain a zoning permit for the land use and development activities listed below. For land use and development activities within the Flood Damage Prevention Overlay District see Article 6.

1. Structures 144 square feet or less in footprint and twelve (12) feet or less in height that meet the applicable setback requirements for the zoning district.
2. Unenclosed play structures for personal use (such as jungle gyms, swing sets and trampolines).
3. Normal maintenance and repair of an existing structure which does not result in exterior alterations in dimension, or an expansion or change of use.
4. Interior alterations or repairs to a structure which do not result in an increase in the number of bedrooms or a change in use.
5. Fuel or propane storage tanks used for residential purposes that are sited, installed and secured in accordance with state and federal regulations and meet the applicable setback requirements for the zoning district.
6. Ground-mounted HVAC systems or back-up generators that have a footprint or are placed on a pad that does not exceed 60 ~~120~~ square feet and meet the applicable setback requirements for the zoning district.
7. Public auctions, garage sales or yard sales not exceeding four (4) consecutive days or more than ten (10) days in a calendar year.
8. Sales of vehicles, equipment or similar used personal or business goods owned by the landowner or tenant that do not occur on the lot for more than 30 days in any calendar year and that are limited to not more than 3 items at any given time if displayed outside.



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9. Development associated with utility, energy or telecommunications infrastructure that receives a Certificate of Public Good from the Vermont Public Utilities Commission.
10. An unroofed patio installed at grade or ground level.
11. Outdoor light fixtures that are downward directed and shielded as necessary to prevent glare or light trespass beyond the property line.
12. Creation of a pond that meets applicable setback requirements for the zoning district and constructed in accordance with state and federal regulations.
13. An above-ground swimming pool that does not exceed 20 feet in width or a depth of 5 feet and meets the applicable setback requirements for the zoning district.
14. Fences and walls that are:
  - a) not more than 4 feet tall if functioning as a retaining wall,
  - b) not more than 4½ feet tall if located in the front yard (that is, in or along any portion of the yard area in front of the principal structure) in the Village Center or Village Green Districts or not more than 8 feet tall if located elsewhere,
  - c) installed so that any support posts are inside and the “finished” or “good” side faces out,
  - d) not in a public road right-of-way unless approved by the Selectboard, and
  - e) not a sight obstruction at road intersections.
15. Satellite receiving dishes and other antennae located on existing structures that are not more than 15 square feet in surface and no more than 12 feet in height.
16. Work incidental to the development and maintenance of non-commercial trails.
17. Minor grading and excavation associated with road and driveway maintenance (e.g., including culvert replacement and resurfacing), clearing for lawn and yard maintenance (e.g., for gardening or landscaping), or which is otherwise incidental to an approved use. This specifically does not include sitework incidental to construction, or extraction operations regulated under Section 3.9.
18. Hunting, fishing, and trapping (as specified under 24 V.S.A. Section 2295) on private or public land. This permit exemption does not include the development of hunting, fishing, and trapping facilities such as firing ranges or rod and gun clubs.
19. Self-contained travel or camper trailers may be stored on a lot year-round, but occupancy of a self-contained travel or camper trailer is limited to not more than 180 days total in any calendar year. The storage or occupancy of more than 2 travel or camper trailers on a lot will be considered a campground under Section 3.3. Within the Village Center and Village Green Districts, travel or camper trailers must be located behind the frontline of the principal building or within an enclosed structure.
20. Septic installation, modification, or removal if a State Wastewater Permit has been issued and is in effect, or maintenance exempt from state permitting.
21. Accepted agricultural and forestry practices, including the construction of farm structures, operation of riding stables, and processing or sale of agricultural or forestry products primarily produced on the premises provided setback requirements are met and notice of construction is given to the Zoning Administrator.
22. Amateur radio towers less than 50 feet in height and set back at least 150% of their height from lot lines or rights-of-way.



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23. Wind turbines less than 100 feet in height, with a blade diameter no greater than 20 feet and set back at least 150% of their height from lot lines or rights-of-way.
  24. The granting of utility rights-of-way or easements.
  25. Special temporary events lasting less than 4 consecutive days and that are not the principal use of land or structures such as weddings, church suppers, fairs, concerts, festivals, cultural events, trade and antique shows, etc. provided that adequate off-street parking and circulation, sanitary and trash collection facilities are provided.
  26. Mobile food service that is not located on a parcel for longer than 3 consecutive days and for more than 12 days in any calendar year.
  27. Temporary structures used for office or storage space, construction, or for special events, provided that such structures shall not be used for dwelling purposes, are placed outside of setbacks and are on site for a period not to exceed one (1) year.
  28. De minimus structures or uses not specifically mentioned in this bylaw that are incidental and customary to the use on the lot, are consistent with policies of the Town Plan, and so temporary or minimal in their impact on the public that regulation of them is not required to protect health, safety, welfare or environment. Such uses or structures include but are not limited to mailboxes, flag poles, clotheslines, cisterns, objects of art, and seasonal decorations. The Zoning Administrator is empowered to make such determinations when needed and appeals of these decisions shall be made to the Development Review Board.
  29. Railroad operations that are preempted by federal regulations.
- ~~B. In accordance with the Act [§4446], no zoning permit shall be required for the following, which have been determined by the Town to impose no impact, or merely a de minimis impact on the surrounding land area and overall pattern of land development, or which are by law otherwise exempted from municipal review:~~
- ~~1. Any structure for which construction began prior to the effective date of these regulations, providing such construction complied with all applicable local regulations in effect when construction commenced.~~
  - ~~2. Accepted agricultural practices (AAPs), including silvicultural practices and farm structures, as defined by the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets in accordance with the Act [§4413(d)]; however written notification, including a sketch plan of the structure showing setback distances from road rights-of-way, property lines, and surface waters, shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator prior to any construction, as required under the AAPs (see Section 3.27).~~
  - ~~3. Public utility power generation and transmission facilities regulated by the Vermont Public Service Board under 30 V.S.A. §248.~~
  - ~~4. Hunting, fishing and trapping activities as defined by the state [24 V.S.A. §2295].~~
  - ~~5. Ancillary telecommunication facility improvements [as defined in 30 V.S.A. §248a(b)] that do not exceed a footprint of 300 square feet and a height of 10 feet in accordance with §4413(h)(1)(A) of the Act.~~
  - ~~6. In accordance with §4413(h)(1)(B) of the Act, communications line improvements including:
    - a. The attachment of a new or replacement cable or wire to an existing electrical distribution or communications distribution pole;~~

## CHESTER UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS

- ~~b. The replacement of an existing electrical distribution or communications distribution pole with a new pole, so long as the new pole is not more than 10 feet taller than the pole it replaces.~~
- ~~7. Normal maintenance, repair or replacement of legally existing structures that does not result in any change to the footprint, roof plane, height of the structure, or a change in use.~~
- ~~8. Minor grading and excavation associated with road and driveway maintenance (including culvert replacement and re-surfacing) and yard improvements.~~



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### 4.9 Performance Standards

#### Decibel (dB) Levels:

10 dB = normal breathing  
30 dB = soft whisper  
40 dB = quiet residential area, library  
60 dB = normal conversation  
70 dB = TV audio, human voice at 10 feet  
80 dB = doorbell, machine tools, car at 10 feet  
90 dB = lawn mower, tractor, blender  
100 dB = snowmobile, factory machinery,  
110 dB = leaf blower, power saw, nightclub band  
120 dB = chain saw, rock concert, pain threshold  
130 dB = stock car race, jackhammer  
150 dB = jet engine taking off

In accordance with §4414(5) of the Act, the following standards must be met and maintained by all uses in all districts that are subject to a permit under these Bylaws.

**A. Noise:** noise volume shall be limited to the specified decibel levels listed below measured at the property line. (The sidebar is shown only as a reference to illustrate the decibel levels of typical activities.) Noise levels or frequencies which are not customary in the district or neighborhood or which represent a repeated disturbance to others shall not be permitted. Limited exceptions are allowed for incidental and customary activities, such as the occasional use of lawn mowers and snow blowers for regular property maintenance.

1. Noise shall not exceed 60 dB between 8:00 p.m. and 7 a.m.;
2. Noise shall not exceed 70 dB during the day between 7 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

**B. Air Pollution, Smoke and Odor:** no use shall create emissions, such as dust, fly ash, fumes, vapors, gases, odors, and other forms of air pollution, which:

1. Constitute a nuisance to other landowners, businesses or residents;
2. Endanger or adversely affect public health, safety or welfare;
3. Cause damage to property or vegetation; or,
4. Are offensive or uncharacteristic of the area.

Outdoor wood-fired boilers are exempt from this provision.

**C. Glare, Light or Reflection:** illumination from lighting fixtures or other light sources shall be shielded or of such low intensity as not to cause undue glare, reflected glare, sky glow or a nuisance to traffic or abutting properties. Lights used to illuminate parking areas and drives shall be so arranged and designed as to deflect light downward and away from adjacent residential areas and public highways. Lights shall be of a "down shield luminaire" type where the light source is not visible from any public highway or from adjacent properties. Only fixtures which are shielded to not expose a light source, and which do not allow light to "flood" the

#### 4.10 Planned Unit Development

**A. Purpose.** In accordance with the Act [§4417], Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) are allowed in the Town of Chester to permit flexibility in the application of land development regulations for the purposes of Section 4302 of this title and in conformance with the municipal plan. The purposes of the Planned Unit Development in Chester are:

1. To encourage compact, pedestrian-oriented development and redevelopment, and to promote a mix of residential uses or nonresidential uses, or both, especially in downtowns, village centers, new town centers, and associated neighborhoods.
2. To implement the policies of the *Chester Town Plan*, such as the provision of affordable housing.
3. To encourage any development in the countryside to be compatible with the use and character of surrounding rural lands.
4. To provide for flexibility in site and lot layout, building design, placement and clustering of buildings, use of open areas, provision of circulation facilities, including pedestrian facilities and parking, and related site and design considerations that will best achieve the goals for the area as articulated in the municipal plan and bylaws within the particular character of the site and its surroundings. Examples may include, but are not limited to, townhouses, rowhouses, cottage courts, multiple accessory dwelling units, and multiple tiny homes, but not a Mobile Home Park (for Mobile Home Park see Section 3.16).
5. To provide for the conservation of open space features recognized as worthy of conservation in the municipal plan and bylaws, such as the preservation of agricultural land, forest land, trails, and other recreational resources, critical and sensitive natural areas, scenic resources, and protection from natural hazards.
6. To provide for efficient use of public facilities and infrastructure.
7. To encourage and preserve opportunities for energy-efficient development and redevelopment.

**B. Review Procedure.** A PUD shall be reviewed by the Development Review Board (DRB) concurrently with subdivision and conditional use review in this Article 4. In addition to the conditional use, subdivision and site plan application requirements, an application for PUD approval shall include a statement describing all proposed modifications, changes or supplements to existing bylaw requirements. Modifications of this bylaw approved by the DRB shall be noted in writing and appended to a plat depicting the project to be filed in the Chester Land Records. All other provisions of this bylaw not specifically modified shall remain in effect and be applicable to the project.

**C. Coordination with Conditional Use Review.** Review and approval of a PUD involving the development of one or more conditional uses under this Section shall not exempt the proposed development from conditional use review. The DRB may review and approve one or more conditional uses concurrently with granting PUD approval, or may require the submission of a



## CHESTER UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS

conditional use application, to include the terms and conditions of the PUD approval, including any modifications of this bylaw granted in accordance with this Section, at a later date.

**D. General Standards.** The modification of zoning regulations by the DRB may be permitted in accordance with the following standards:

1. The PUD shall meet all applicable conditional review standards, and shall be consistent with the *Chester Town Plan* and all other applicable municipal regulations and ordinances currently in effect, including all local and state regulations for sewage disposal and the protection of water quality.
2. The PUD shall represent an effective and unified treatment of the development site, including provisions as appropriate for the preservation or protection of surface and ground waters; wetland, stream bank, and floodplain areas; significant topographic features, including hilltops and ridgelines; areas of steep slope or shallow soil; significant resource lands, including agricultural and forest land; historic or archaeological sites and structures; natural and critical habitat areas; and open spaces, including scenic views and vistas.
3. ~~The applicant is required to submit a wastewater system and potable water supply permit for individual or shared on-site water and septic systems or, if accessible by municipal water and sewer, a letter from the municipal water and sewer department that sufficient capacity is available for the PUD. As a minimum requirement, each single-family dwelling unit and each commercial building shall be hooked into the Municipal water and wastewater system at the applicant's expense. The DRB may find and conclude that this requirement is not reasonable for the proposed PUD because of the distance to the Municipal systems and may be fulfilled by the requirement that each owner-occupied single-family dwelling have its own individual water well and septic system, which systems may be located in the common area. Each individual system shall be the responsibility of the owner of the individual unit or commercial building.~~
4. The DRB may allow for a greater concentration or intensity of development within some section(s) of the development than in others, on individual lots which are smaller than the minimum lot size for the district within which the PUD is located, provided that there is an offset by a lesser concentration in other sections, including the reservation of no less than 50% of the remaining land as open space.
5. The minimum front, side and rear yard setbacks at the periphery of the PUD shall be as dictated for the particular district unless otherwise specified by the DRB. The DRB may allow other setback standards, such as zero lot lines, as part of PUD approval.
6. Provision shall be made for the preservation of open space. Preserved open space shall be dedicated, either in fee or through a conservation easement to the Town, a community association comprising all of the present and future owners of lots or dwellings in the project, or a non-profit land conservation organization. The DRB shall approve such easement. Land held in common shall be subject to appropriate deed restrictions stipulating the permitted and restricted use of such lot and establishing the person or entity responsible for maintenance and long-term stewardship. The DRB shall

## 4.11 Flood Damage Prevention Review Procedures

### A. Applications and Hearings

1. All applications for permits for development in the Flood Damage Prevention (FDP) Overlay District FFA must be heard as a conditional use by the Development Review Board (DRB). Those hearings shall be scheduled, noticed and heard in accordance with 24 VSA Chapter 117, Subchapter 11, Sections 4465 et seq.

**2. Submission Requirements.** Applications for Flood Hazard Review shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator on the approved blank available from the Town office and shall be accompanied by:

- a. Two (2) copies of a map drawn to scale showing:
  1. The dimensions of the lot;
  2. The location of existing and proposed structures;
  3. The elevation of the lowest floor, including basement, either
    - a. in relation to mean sea level where base flood elevation data in relation to mean sea level is available, or
    - b. in relation to the elevation determined pursuant to Section 7B, or
    - c. if neither (a) or (b) apply for lack of a determined elevation, in relation to highest adjacent grade of all new or substantially improved structures and notations as to whether or not such structures contain a basement; and
  4. The relationship of the above to the streambank and, based upon the best information available (including Federal Insurance Administration data, if issued), the elevation and limits of the SFHA.
- b. If any portion of the proposed development is within a designated Floodway, the application must show that the development standards in Section 8 A. and B. are met.
- c. If the proposed development is in the Floodway Fringe Area(s), the application must show that the development standards in Section 8 A and C. are met.
- d. All permits required for the proposed development by municipal law.
- e. The applicant shall contact a permit specialist at ANR and request the specialist to complete a permit review for the project. The permit review sheet, which informs the applicant of all governmental agencies from which permit approval for the proposed development is required by federal or state law, shall be filed as a required attachment to the Town permit application.

**3. Review Procedure.** The DRB shall review the application, comments from the State National Floodplain Insurance Program Coordinator at the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation, River Management Section, if available, and other pertinent information available to insure compliance with the development standards set forth in Article 6 Development Standards, and:



## 4.12 Subdivision Review Procedures

Potential applicants for subdivision are encouraged to meet with the Zoning Administrator when beginning to consider their projects to avoid misunderstandings and to ensure a smooth application process once formal review is started.

Applicants may request a Pre-Application Meeting with the Development Review Board to discuss a sketch plan of the parcel drawn to adequate scale showing any existing structures and roads, a general layout of proposed roads, lots, building sites, and septic and water systems, the general locations of any water courses and other physical features, and names of the owners of abutting properties. This discussion shall be conducted at a public meeting held by the Development Review Board. No written findings, conclusions or decision shall be provided to the applicant and any comments by the DRB, the applicant and interested persons are non-binding.

### A. Preliminary Plat Review

**1. Application and Fee.** The Subdivider shall file an application for the consideration of a Preliminary Plat of the proposed subdivision in the form described in subsection F using the approved application blank available from the Zoning Administrator.

The Preliminary Plat shall, in all respects, comply with the requirements set forth in the provisions of these Bylaws. The application for review of the Preliminary Plat shall be accompanied by a fee, as established by the Legislative Body, payable by check to the Town of Chester, Vermont, seven (7) copies of the Preliminary Plat with a vicinity map as well as a pdf copy shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator at least twenty-one (21) days prior to a regular meeting of the Development Review Board.

~~**2. Study of Preliminary Plat.** The Development Review Board shall study the practicability of the Preliminary Plat in relation to the requirements of Section 4.12(F). Particular attention shall be given to the arrangement, location, and width of roads, their relation to the topography of the land, water supply, sewage disposal, drainage, lot sizes, and arrangement, the impact on adjoining lands, and the General Standards in Article 3. The Subdivider, or their duly authorized representative, shall attend meetings of the Development Review Board to discuss these issues. Notice of such subdivision shall be sent by the Development Review Board to all adjoining landowners.~~

**3. Public Hearing.** Within forty-five (45) days of the Official Submittal Date for the Preliminary Plat, the Development Review Board shall hold a public hearing at which time the Subdivider, or their duly authorized representative, shall discuss with the Development Review Board the details of their proposal and both shall respond to comment from the public. Notice of the hearing shall be given in accordance with §4447 of the Act, and a copy of the notice shall be sent to the Regional Planning Commission and to an adjacent municipality in accordance with §4414 of the Act.



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**4. Action on Preliminary Plat.** Within forty-five (45) days after the adjournment of the public hearing, the Development Review Board shall take action to approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the Preliminary Plat. Failure of the Development Review Board to act within forty-five (45) days shall constitute approval. Notice of the decision shall be sent to the Subdivider by certified mail along with a statement of the grounds for denial or conditions of approval supported by findings of fact, and specific changes required in the Final Plat. If no public hearing was held, the 45-day period shall begin with the Official Submittal Date for the Preliminary Plat. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the Legislative Body.

Approval of a Preliminary Plat shall not constitute approval of the subdivision, but rather it shall be deemed an expression of approval of the design submitted on the Preliminary Plat as a guide to the preparation of the Final Plat, which shall be submitted for approval of the Development Review Board and for recording upon fulfillment of the requirements of these Bylaws and the conditions of the Preliminary Plat approval. Prior to approval of the Final Plat, the Development Review Board may require additional changes as a result of further study of the subdivision in final form.

**5. Disclosure of Subsequent Development Plans.** Whenever an applicant submits a proposal for subdivision that has the potential for further subdivision, the Development Review Board will require a general indication of the intended uses or a master plan of the remaining portion of land. Such an indication or master plan shall include access, type of use, intensity of use and phasing.

### B. Final Plat Review

**1. Application and Fee.** The Subdivider shall, within six months after the approval of the Preliminary Plat, file with the Development Review Board an application for approval of the Final Plat in the form described in Section 4.12(A)(1), using the approved application blank available from the Zoning Administrator. If the Final Plat is not submitted to the Development Review Board within six (6) months after the approval of the Preliminary Plat, the Development Review Board may refuse without prejudice to act on the Final Plat and require resubmission of the Preliminary Plat. The application for Final Plat approval shall be accompanied by a fee, as established by the Legislative Body, payable by check to the Town of Chester, Vermont. One (1) original and seven (7) copies of the Final Plat, a pdf copy, and the original and one true copy of any offers of cession shall be presented to the Zoning Administrator at least twenty-one (21) days prior to a regular meeting of the Development Review Board.

~~**2. Study of Final Plat.** The Development Review Board shall study the Final Plat to see that it conforms in all respects to the requirements set forth during review of the Preliminary Plat and that it responds fully, in its final form, to the requirements of Section 7. The Subdivider, or their duly authorized representative, shall attend meetings of the Development Review Board to discuss these issues.~~

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**2. Final Plat.** The Final Subdivision Plat shall consist of one or more sheets of drawings which conform to the following requirements: All sheets shall be linen, mylar black or blue-lined duplicating paper and shall be 18 inches x 24 inches or a multiple thereof in size. Such sheets shall have a margin of one and a half (1- 1/2) inches outside of the border lines on the left side for binding, and a one quarter (1/4) inch margin outside the border along the remaining sides. Space shall be served thereon for endorsement by all appropriate agencies. The Final Plat shall be clearly and legibly drawn and shall provide all information required under Section 4.12(F), including the Endorsement and Construction Drawings for all capital improvements.

**3. Surety Forfeiture.** If any required public investments have not been installed or maintained, or have been incorrectly installed, within the term of surety contracts provided for herein, such surety shall be forfeited to the Town which, upon receipt of the proceeds thereof, shall install or maintain the improvements as provided for in the surety contract. Such action by the Town shall not be deemed to constitute any acceptance of the improvements.

### **G. Minor and Major Subdivisions.**

In accordance with Section 7.16, the Development Review Board may waive the requirement for an application and public hearing for Final Plat Review under Section 4.12(B) and may waive some or all of the standards under Article 5 for Minor Subdivisions. The Development Review Board shall review Major Subdivisions under the procedures of Section 4.12, the standards of Article 5 in their entirety, and the requirements of Section 7.16.



## 5.2 Road Design

### A. New Roads.

All new roads, bridges, culverts and drainage ditches ~~serving more than one lot proposed to be taken over by the Town of Chester~~ and any section of a road, bridge, culvert and drainage ditching located within the Town of Chester right of way shall conform to the requirements of the *Town of Chester Road and Bridge Specifications* as most recently amended by the Legislative Body, as well as all Vermont Agency of Transportation Design Specifications.

### B. Layout and Frontage.

1. The arrangements of roads in the subdivision shall provide for the continuation of existing roads in or between adjacent properties in order to create a logical system for convenient movement of traffic.
2. No land development shall be permitted on existing lots which do not either have frontage on a public road or public waters or, with the approval of the Development Review Board under subdivision review procedures, access to such a road or waters by a right-of-way of record at least 50 feet wide. The Development Review Board may approve a reduction in width to a minimum of 20feet provided that the drive serves only one lot and adequate, safe access will exist with such reduced width. (See Rights-of-Way in Subsection H.)
3. Lot frontage requirements apply to lots served by private development roads as well as lots served by public roads.

### C. Street Names.

All roads or streets shall be named subject to the approval of the Development Review Board. Street name signs shall be furnished and installed by the Subdivider. The type, size, and location shall be subject to the approval of the Development Review Board.

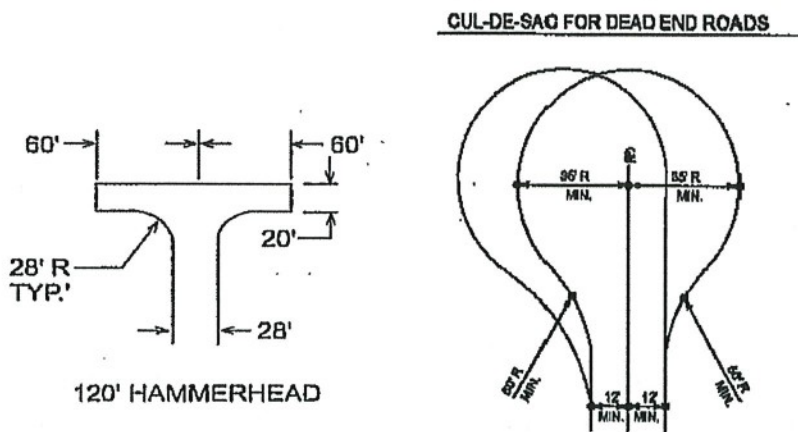
### D. Access Road.

1. All access roads that intersect with a town highway are subject to an Access Permit in accordance with the *Town of Chester Road and Bridge Specifications*.
2. Acceptance of private roads by the Town is subject to the approval of the Chester Select Board pursuant to state law for the laying out of public rights-of-way. Construction of roads to these standards in no way ensures such acceptance. In the event the Select Board agrees to accept a road associated with an approved subdivision, the terms of acceptance, including road construction standards, inspection, and maintenance, shall be prescribed in an agreement approved by the Select Board. Such agreement may be included as a condition of subdivision approval, and such approval may specify the timing of development on subdivided lots to ensure coordination with the terms of the agreement between the Select Board and subdivider.

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cannot be avoided due to site conditions. In such circumstances, turnarounds shall be provided at the termini of all dead ends, and the following standards shall apply:

1. "T" or "hammerhead" configurations:
  1. a) Minimum turning radius of 28 feet, measured along the edge of the street (i.e., curb line);
  2. b) Minimum length of each leg shall be 60 feet deep from the centerline and the same width as the roadway.
2. Cul-de-sac configurations are required for all roads 750 feet or longer in major subdivisions, and shall provide a minimum turn-around radius of 35 feet (travel portion of the roadway).



### J. Legal Requirements:

Every subdivision plat shall show all proposed road and pedestrian rights-of-way, as required under these Bylaws, regardless of whether the proposed right-of way is intended to be accepted by the town. In the event that the right-of-way is not intended for acceptance by the town, the mechanism by which the right-of-way is to be maintained, owned and/or conveyed shall be clearly documented under Section 5.5B.

### ~~K. Modification of Road Standards:~~

~~In the case of unusual topographic conditions or other circumstances which would make the strict adherence to these standards a substantial hardship, not created by the applicant, the applicant may request a waiver under Section 7.16. When considering such a waiver the Development Review Board may modify the strict application of one or more of these standards providing the applicant can demonstrate that the proposed road:~~

- ~~1. Is accessible by emergency response vehicles;~~
- ~~2. Does not pose any threat to the safety of motorists or pedestrians;~~
- ~~3. Will not result in unreasonable maintenance requirements for landowners; and~~
- ~~4. Is designed in a manner that is consistent with other applicable standards of these Bylaws.~~



## 7.16 Waivers

### A. Waivers for Subdivision Requirements.

In accordance with §4418(2)(A) of the Act, where the Development Review Board finds extraordinary and unnecessary hardship may result from strict compliance with these Bylaws and/or where there are special circumstances of a particular Plat, it may waive portions of these Bylaws so that substantial justice may be done and the public interest secured; provided that such waiver will not have the effect of nullifying the intent and purpose of the Chester Town Plan, or the municipal bylaws in effect.

In granting waivers, the Development Review Board may require such conditions as will, in its judgment, secure the objectives of the requirements so waived. Such action shall pertain to that particular subdivision and shall not set a precedent for similar action relative to any other subdivision.

To enhance or facilitate the provision of subsidized or non-profit housing for low- and moderate-income residents, the Development Review Board may waive subdivision requirements to permit multiple principal structures and/or multiple uses on a lot, or multiple ownership of a single structure.

### B. Waivers for Zoning Dimensional Standards.

As allowed under 24. V.S.A. 4414(8), a waiver of dimensional setbacks (front, rear and side yard requirements) from property lines may be granted by the Development Review Board for any existing building subject to the following provisions. Waiver requests are subject to the requirements and review procedures under Section 4.8 for Conditional Uses.

#### 1. Applicability.

Waivers of dimensional setbacks are limited to:

a. Reduction to any required front, side or rear setback for legally existing primary structures in order to accommodate:

- i. ADA accessibility improvements;
- ii. Life safety improvements;
- iii. Unheated, open-sided additions (e.g. decks, stairways, entryways, etc.);
- iv. Building systems (e.g., air conditioning, generators); or,
- v. Renewable energy structures that could not be reasonably developed without a waiver.
- vi. To avoid encroaching into a seasonal stream buffer or to avoid building in the Special Flood Hazard Area.
- vii. To enhance or facilitate the provision of subsidized or non-profit housing for low- and moderate-income residents. In the event a property was rezoned in the October 8, 2014 Unified Development Bylaws, the setbacks were made more restrictive and the property has not changed ownership since the incorporation of said Bylaws, the Development Review Board may allow the encroachment of up to 10% of the setback dimension.

## ARTICLE 8 – Definitions

### 8.1 Terms and Uses

Except where specifically defined herein or in the Act, or unless otherwise clearly required by the context, all words, phrases and terms in this bylaw shall have their usual, customary meanings.

Unless the content clearly indicated to the contrary, words in the singular include the plural and those in the plural include the singular. The word "may" is permissive; the words "shall" and "will" are mandatory.

### 8.2 Definitions

**A ZONE:** That portion of the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) subject to a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. In the A Zone the base floodplain is mapped by approximate methods, i.e., BFEs are not determined. This is often called unnumbered A Zone or approximate A Zone.

**ACCEPTED AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (AAPS):** Accepted practices for agriculture, including farm structures other than dwellings, as currently defined by the Development Review Boarder of Vermont Department of Agriculture, Food and Markets in accordance with the Act [§4413 (d)]. See the AAP Appendix.

**ACCESSORY BUILDING:** A detached building or structure customarily incidental and subordinate to the principal building and located on the same lot and not intended for independent living. Examples include garages and storage sheds.

**ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT:** A distinct unit that is clearly subordinate to a single-family dwelling, and has facilities and provisions for independent living, including sleeping, food preparation, and sanitation, provided there is compliance with all the following:

- The property has sufficient wastewater capacity.
- The unit does not exceed 30 percent of the total habitable floor area of the single-family dwelling or does not exceed 1,000 ~~999~~ square feet, whichever is greater.

**ACCESSORY STRUCTURE:** See **ACCESSORY BUILDING**

**ACCESSORY USE:** A use of land or building or portion thereof customarily incidental and subordinate to the principal use of the land or building and located on the same lot with the



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**BUILDING ORIENTATION:** The location on a lot of a building or other structure in relation to roads, rights-of-way, parks, and building or street lines.

**BYLAWS:** These Town of Chester Unified Development Bylaws.

**CAMP, PRIMITIVE:** A cabin, hut, shelter, yurt/ger, or similar structure that has no interior plumbing consisting of more than a sink with water and is used no more than three consecutive weeks per year and no more than 60 days per year, as defined in Vermont's Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules.

**CAMPGROUND:** A parcel of land upon which campsites are located for occupancy by a tent, cabin, lean-to or similar structure as temporary living quarters for recreation, education or vacation purposes. (See 9 V.S.A. §44709(a).) "Primitive" campgrounds are further characterized as campgrounds which are limited to substantially unimproved camp sites intended for tenting use only.

**CENTER OF CHESTER:** The Center of Chester is comprised of the Village Center, Village Green, and the Stone Village Districts.

**CHESTER TOWN PLAN:** Comprehensive development plan adopted pursuant to Title 24 Vermont Statutes Annotated, Chapter 117, Subchapter 2.

**CIVIC OR INSTITUTIONAL USE:** A nonprofit, religious or public use, such as a religious building, library, cemetery, public or private school, hospital, or government- owned or -operated structure, or land used for public purpose.

**CIVIC RECOGNITION SIGNS:** Off-premises medallions to acknowledge beautification projects located on Town property. Signs must not exceed 6" x 18", be approved by the Select Board, and not be located so as to be hazardous to vehicles or pedestrians.

**COMMERCIAL STORAGE UNIT:** a commercial building or buildings, or parts thereof, used for rent as storage units.

**COMMUNITY SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM:** Any sewage disposal system, other than a municipal sewage disposal system, owned by the same person or persons, that disposes of sewage for domestic commercial, industrial or institutional uses to two (2) or more users or customers.

**COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEM:** any surface water or groundwater supply system used as a source of drinking water for a public water system as defined under 10 V.S.A. §1671(5).



## CHESTER UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS

or an unpierced ceiling and floor extending from exterior wall to exterior wall, except for a common stairwell exterior to both dwelling units.

**DWELLING UNIT:** A space consisting of one or more rooms designed, occupied or intended for occupancy as a separate living quarters, with cooking, sleeping, and sanitary facilities provided within that space for the exclusive use of one or more persons maintaining a household. See also Accessory Dwelling Unit, Single-Household Dwelling, Two-Household Dwelling and Multiple-Household Dwelling.

**EASEMENT:** The grant of one or more of the property rights by the property owner to and/or for use by the public, a corporation or another person or entity. This may include conservation, drainage, utility, scenic or viewshed easements.

~~**EXTENT OF NONCONFORMITY:** The extent to which a structure encroaches upon, or otherwise violates, one or more dimensional standard of these Bylaws. The extension of a structure which results in an additional encroachment of the non-complying feature/element, including the expansion of the volume or area of a structure within a building setback, would increase the degree of nonconformity.~~

**EXTERNALLY LIT SIGN:** A sign with a light source that originates from outside the materials of the sign.

**EXTRACTION OPERATIONS:** A use involving the on-site removal of surface and subsurface materials, including soil, sand, gravel, stone, rock or organic substances other than vegetation, from land or water. Customary extraction operations include sand and gravel pits, rock quarries, and accessory operations such as the crushing, screening, and temporary storage of materials excavated on-site.

**FAMILY CHILD CARE FACILITY:** A facility where the owner or operator is to be licensed or registered by the state for childcare and which provides care on a regular basis for more than six full-time and four part-time children.

**FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME:** A home where the owner or operator is to be licensed or registered by the state for child care, and which provides for care on a regular basis in the caregiver's own residence for not more than ten children at any one time. Of this number, up to six children may be provided care on a full-time basis and the remainder on a part-time basis. Care of a child on a part-time basis shall mean care of a school-age child for not more than four hours a day. These limits shall not include children who reside in the residence of the caregiver; except:

(a) these part-time school-age children may be cared for on a full-day basis during school closing days, snow days and vacation days which occur during the school year; and

## CHESTER UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT BYLAWS

**RETAIL STORE:** Premises where goods, services, or merchandise are offered for retail sale or rent to the general public for personal, business, or household consumption and services incidental to the sale of such goods are provided. This definition specifically excludes automotive sales, fuel and service defined herein.

**RIGHT-OF-WAY:** A strip of land permanently dedicated or otherwise legally established for a road or other transportation facility, usually affording the principal means of access to abutting property and/or for public travel.

**ROADS:** Any street, highway, avenue, land, or right-of-way commonly used by the public for vehicular traffic, regardless of its length that provides access to two or more lots, shall be deemed a road. An access driveway to a single lot shall not be considered a road.

**SAWMILL:** Facility where logs are cut into lumber for resale or commercial purposes.

**SCREENING:** The use of planted vegetation, fencing, walls, natural topography or earthen berms to visually shield or obscure a structure or use from neighboring structures, properties, rights-of-way and/or designated public vantage points.

**SETBACK, FRONT YARD:** The horizontal distance between the building area and the front lot line, as measured from the road shoulder.

**SETBACK, SIDE YARD & REAR YARD:** The horizontal distance between the building area and any lot line.

**SHORT-TERM RENTAL:** All or part of a dwelling unit rented to the transient, traveling, or vacationing public for a period of fewer than 30 consecutive days and for more than 14 days per calendar year. A short-term rental may be all or part of a furnished house, condominium, apartment, accessory dwelling unit, or cabin. See TOURIST LODGING for overnight accommodations in bed & breakfasts, boardinghouses, inns, hotels, and the like.

**SIGN:** Any structure, wall display, device or representation which is designed or used to advertise or call attention to or directs a person to a business, association, profession, commodity product, institution, service, entertainment, person, place or thing, or activity of any kind, and is visible or audible from a highway or other public right-of-way. Displaying of the commodities and products sold in your store are not considered a sign. Letters, numbers or symbols relating to the use of the business are considered a sign.

**SIGNS, FREESTANDING:** Fixed signs which are supported by the ground only. A sign supported by one or more poles, columns or supports placed in or on the ground and not attached to any building or structure.