

HARDWICK BYLAW COMPARISON WITH ZONING FOR GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS RECOMMENDATIONS

Compact Residential District Analysis

1. Dimensional Requirements

"Bylaws establish dimensional standards that restrict the physical size and spacing of buildings. Sometimes these standards are overly restrictive—inadvertently blocking some of the most desirable types of new housing in walkable places such as the construction of new infill buildings, even in areas where water and sewer service are available. Minor changes to dimensional standards can enable additional housing opportunities

	Hardwick	Z4GN	Notes
Minimum Lot Size Matches Local Pattern	N	Y	46% of existing Class 2 parcels are non-conforming (under minimum lot size). 28% of Class 3 are under the required minimum lot size.
Building and Lot Coverage	Y	Y	No specific artificial percentage limits - the setbacks and parcel size are the limiting factors and of standard dimensions.
Remove Density Caps	Y	Y	No density caps in this district
Setbacks and Building Heights	Y	Y	Exceeding district zoning height limits must be allowable for affordable housing per revised state statute.
Second Building on Lot	Some	Y	Discussed at previous meeting. The bylaw section in question addresses all districts. Planning Commission provided guidance on the approach.
Unnecessary Architectural Requirements	N	N	There are not any readily apparent.
Non-Conforming Provisions	Y	Limited	A significant number of parcels qualify as non-conforming - this indicates that changes are needed to better reflect the historic settlement patterns.
Consider Setting Maximum Setbacks	N	Y	This can prevent a "gap-toothed" or inconsistent appearance

Character-Based Frontage Requirements	Some	Y	p. 56 addresses some issues for conditional uses - Main door access from sidewalk, building oriented to street. Consider adding glazing requirements to prohibit blank wall on street.
2. Parking			
<i>"Smaller multi-family dwellings can be nearly impossible to construct affordably when excessive parking is required. Minimum parking requirements for housing should rarely be higher than one on-site space per dwelling. If on-street or other sources of shared parking are available, even less parking can</i>			
Reduce the number of on-site parking spaces required	1.5-2/unit	1/unit	The HOME Act requires that this is no more than 1/unit in districts served by municipal water and sewer (Class 1 in this district). The planning commission may opt to expand this to Class 2 and/or 3.
Allow On-street Parking Spaces to Count	N/A	Y	Very limited on-street parking spaces are available in this district.
Require Parking to be Placed Behind Buildings	N	Y	p. 56 prohibits parking from being in front yard unless no practical alternative exists.
Eliminate Parking Minimums	N	Y	This is an option presented under the reduction in parking spaces alternatives.
Allow More On-Street Parking	N	Y	Creating more on-street parking spaces could be considered in the future, however the HOME Act reductions in parking requirements may be sufficient. Monitor for future need?
3. Allowable Uses			
<i>"Bylaws determine exactly which types of housing and other uses of land can be provided in each zoning district. Downtowns and adjoining walkable neighborhoods have historically contained a greater variety of uses and more types of housing than other parts of the community, and can be ideal locations for expanding housing opportunities. Over time, bylaws have often restricted housing choices, such as not allowing additional housing in larger existing buildings, or forbidding small new multi-family buildings that are compatible with the neighborhood and which could provide more variety in size and price. Zoning can make it easy, difficult, or even impossible to continue historic housing patterns and to build mixed use and multi-family homes where they are needed. Suggestions are provided here for several simple ways to reduce unnecessary barriers to more housing." Z4GN</i>			
Eliminate Unnecessary Use Restrictions on Housing	N	Y	Multi-family housing up to 4 units must be a permitted use for Class 1 parcels in this district per the HOME Act. The planning commission may opt to add multi-family as an allowable use on Class 2 and/or 3 parcels.
Avoid Artificial Determinations of Family Composition	N	N	No readily apparent determinations of family composition

Unnecessary Subdivision of Land Requirements	?	N	We will examine this fully at our October discussion of the Development Permitting Process
4. Street Standards (continue reviewing)			
<i>"Streets should be designed according to the intensity of land use through which the street passes. The capital and maintenance costs of streets can increase the cost of housing and create a long-term drain on municipal budgets. Disconnected street networks hinder walking, biking, and transit, increasing individual household transportation costs. A variety of departments and regulatory mechanisms impact street design; for guidance, please refer to Complete Streets: A Guide for Vermont Communities." -Z4GN</i>			
Add On-Street Parking Wherever Possible	N/A	Y	Possible in some areas.
Context Appropriate Public Realm Standards	Some	Y	
Stormwater Management Options	Y	Y	Not overly onerous - aligned with state regs, options are not specified
Reduce Travel Lane Width	Y	Y	Travel lanes are currently appropriate scale.
Right-Size Number of Travel Lanes	Y	Y	Already two-lane roads
Implement Complete Streets Standards	N	Y	This district could benefit from a complete streets approach. This should be approached incrementally in Hardwick, focused on the CBD first.
Provide Connections Where Possible	Y	Y	Ensure that zoning requires this. Multiple disconnected cul-de-sacs should not be encouraged.
5. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)			
<i>"Accessory dwellings can reduce the cost of housing for the property owner as well as potential renters. An additional option for aging in place would be for the owner to move into the smaller dwelling over time. All of the suggestions below increase the effectiveness of existing ADU bylaws and are appropriate in village centers and neighborhoods adjacent to town and village centers." - Z4GN</i>			
Allow Owner-Occupied ADUs	Y	Y	No prohibition
Increase Allowable Size of ADUs	Possible	Y	Meets VT Statutory requirements - could be increased if desired
Minimize or Eliminate Parking Minimums	Possible	Y	Requirements meet the HOME Act at 1/unit.
6. Development Review Process			
<i>"The development review process can raise housing costs by increasing permitting costs, extending the time it takes to construct a building, and creating uncertainty over whether a successful outcome is even likely. This lowers the total number of housing units that can be produced and discourages smaller and less experienced developers and potential landlords from providing more housing. Most municipalities can find</i>			
Reduce Requirements for Conditional-Use Approval and Site Plan Review	N	Y	More by-right allowable uses as required by the HOME Act will assist with this.

Simplify Application Requirements for Small-Scale Development	N	Y	Reduce the number of conditional uses as appropriate to district, implement a small-scale development application?
Consider Limited Deviations from Certain Standards	Y	Y	
Avoid Overly Complicated PUD Approval Process	Y	Y	We will examine this more fully at the October meeting where we will examine the Development Review Process overall.
Where Practical Use Administrative Approval Process	N	Y	By-right uses will allow this.