

Subdivision Rules & Regulations

Summary of 2021 Changes

General Editorial Changes

- Corrected punctuation, spelling, formatting, and similar nits.
- Revised to resolve issues with inconsistent, outdated, or unclear terminology.
- Made clarifications where the wording did not clearly say what was intended.

Administrative Details (§§ 3, 4, Schedule D)

- Replaced outdated language specifying the number, size, format, and material of copies to be submitted to the Planning Board with language referring to forms provided by the Board, as was done in the Zoning By-Law, or material acceptable to the Board (§§ 3.1.1, 3.2.1.1, 3.2.2, 3.3.1.1, 3.3.11.2, 3.3.12.3) or to quantity and format acceptable to the receiving Board (for other Boards) (§§ 3.3.5.3, 4.7.2.5, Schedule D).
- Added language to § 3.3.6 (public hearing for definitive subdivision plan), § 3.3.11.2 (determination of completeness), and § 3.3.12.3 (inspection in preparation for road acceptance) to require the notice to be published on the “Town of Grafton website” in addition to publication in a “newspaper of general circulation in the Town of Grafton.”
- Include sidewalks and curbs as details to be reviewed by Superintendent of Streets. (§ 3.3.5.4b(3))
- Revised to allow an extension of up to three years, rather than requiring extensions one year at a time. (§ 3.3.13)

Alignment with Zoning By-Law and regulations of other boards (§§ 3, 4)

- Revised to align with current stormwater management standards and regulations. (§§ 3.3.19, 3.3.5.3b(2), 4.7.8)
- Revised traffic study requirements to be consistent with the Zoning By-Law. (§ 3.3.4.7)
- Revised street light requirements to align with the Select Board’s role in determining street light placement. (§ 4.7.6)

Alignment with current MassDOT Highway Division (MHD) standards and guidelines (§§ 2, 4, 5)

- Standard Specifications: references updated to align with current section names and terminology (most notably, MHD now uses “hot mix asphalt” to refer to what is traditionally known as “bituminous concrete”). (§§ 2.1.1.27, 5.1.2, 5.2.2.1, 5.2.2.2j), 5.7.2, 5.9.2)
- Construction Standard Details: updated references that were to the 1966 version. (§§ 5.1.2, 5.7.2)
- Added a reference to the Massachusetts Highway Department Project Development & Design Guide (PDDG) for design criteria not specified in the SRR. (§ 4.1.1.2).
- Revised minor street sag vertical curve minimum K from 35 to 37, for consistency with PDDG. (§ 4.1.5.3)

Subdivision Rules & Regulations — Summary of 2021 Changes

Design Speed (§ 4.1.2.1)

- Added a requirement to use a minimum design speed of 30 mph in general, with a 25 mph design speed for flexible development roads classified as Minor B and Minor C, reflecting one of the recommendations in ZBL § 5.3.14.

Intersection Corner Radius (§ 4.1.3.5)

- Added a requirement that the radius at the edge of pavement be 30' or greater, for intersections involving a major street, or exactly 30', for intersections involving only minor streets, to make it clear that a pavement edge radius of less than 30' is prohibited and that a radius of greater than 30' is acceptable for an intersection involving a major street.

Intersection Separation (§ 4.1.3.6)

- For streets entering a minor street on opposite sides, require them to be directly opposite or else offset at the centerlines by at least 150 feet. The purpose is to avoid traffic conflicts between vehicles entering a street from opposite sides.
- For streets entering a minor street on the same side, require the distance between their rights of way to be 250 feet or twice the minimum frontage for the zoning district, whichever is greater. The purpose is to ensure traffic safety and to ensure that there is sufficient space for at least two lots of minimum frontage between any two streets.
- Require a minimum separation of 500' between the centerlines of intersections on a Major Street. The purpose is to limit congestion on busy streets.
- Added language to explain conditions under which the Planning Board can consider a waiver of the minimum separation distances.
- Added a diagram illustrating intersection separations.

Pavement Edge and Edge of Right of Way (§ 4.1.3.7)

- Removed the requirement that the distance between edge of pavement and edge of right of way be constant. The requirement is unnecessary, because the requirement that centerlines of the roadway and the right of way be colinear has the desired effect anyway, and in some cases, such as at intersections where the pavement and right of way both have a 30' radius, a constant distance cannot be achieved.

Street Width (§ 4.1.4.2 and Schedule A)

- Changed minimum width of Minor Street A from 30' 4" to 30', there being no discernible reason for that 4".
- Increased minimum width of Minor Street C to 24 feet, to meet Fire Department requirements.

Dead End Streets (§§ 2, 4)

- To reduce potential confusion about dead end streets, added a definition for *cul-de-sac* (§ 2.1.1.6) to mean a single road with an intersection at one end and a turnaround at the other end, and used that term in rules that apply only to that configuration.

Subdivision Rules & Regulations — Summary of 2021 Changes

- Expanded the rule for measuring the length of dead end streets, to explicitly state the rule that the Board has consistently, but informally, used over the years. (§ 4.1.6.2)
- Revised the rule for reserving an easement to extend a dead end street to adjacent property, making it conditional on access to adjacent property being required per § 4.1.2.1d, expressing a preference for connecting from a cul-de-sac as opposed to some other part of a dead end street system, and making it conditional on it being possible to create such an easement (recognizing that site conditions such as wetlands may make such an easement impossible).

Additional Fire Department requirements

- Required sufficient pavement radius and obstruction-free area to ensure fire apparatus access to cul-de-sac turnarounds. (§ 4.1.6.7)
- Required hydrants to be no more than 10' from the edge of pavement, and to be approved by the Fire Department. (§§ 4.7.7.4, 4.7.7.5)

Curb Requirements (§§ 4.2, 5.7)

- Allow both vertical and sloped granite curbing.
- Allow granite where formerly only bituminous was allowed.
- Allow bituminous curbing only in the form of modified Cape Cod berm.
- Change from 2% to 5% the grade at which granite curbing is required (consistent with most other municipalities that have such a requirement).

Changed or added detail regarding the placement of underground utilities (§ 4.7)

- Added language requiring underground utilities to be placed under the grass plot and not under a sidewalk (to avoid digging up a sidewalk for utility repairs), except for those whose placement is covered by more specific regulations (e.g., sewer). (§ 4.7.1.5)
- Deleted language allowing gas main under sidewalk. (§ 4.7.4)

Spelled out requirements that were shown only in the cross-section illustrations (§ 5)

- Subdrain on a 6" bed of crushed stone, reflecting the opinion of DPW. (§ 5.4.3.1)
- A 6" gravel base under the grass plot, reflecting the opinion of DPW. (§ 5.9.3.2)

Modernized requirements for underground utilities (e.g., telephone, cable television, Internet service) (§§ 5.3.6, 5.3.7)

Schedules A & B

- Separated the combined "Schedules A and B" section into two sections: Schedule A with the four typical street cross sections and Schedule B with the two drainage detail drawings.
- Re-drafted street cross-section and drainage detail drawings.
- Changed title of street cross sections from "Standard Cross Section" to "Typical Cross Section" to make it clear that the diagrams are illustrative and not prescriptive.
- Updated Major Street cross section to show the required sidewalks on both sides.
- Updated street cross sections to show the required 8" gravel base under the sidewalk.

Subdivision Rules & Regulations — Summary of 2021 Changes

- Added references in the text to drainage layer and subdrain detail diagrams. (§§ 5.2.1.5, 5.4.3.1)

Schedule D

- Removed pear trees from the list of recommended street trees, as they are especially susceptible to winter damage.

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