



TOWN OF GRAFTON
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
30 PROVIDENCE ROAD
GRAFTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01519
(508) 839-5335 ext. 1400 • FAX (508)-839-4602
www.town.grafton.ma.us

PLANNING BOARD

**PLANNING BOARD REPORT
FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
MAY 8, 2023
ZONING WARRANT ARTICLES**

The following information pertains to the Planning Board's report on Spring Annual Town Meeting Articles 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29. For any questions or information, contact the Planning Department at (508) 839-5335 ext. 1400.

**Planning Board Report for Article 25:
Amendments to the Grafton Zoning Bylaws (Section 3.3.3.1 Special Cases) –to Define
Requirements for Two or More Principal Structures Erected on the Same Lot**

At its meeting on May 5, 2023, the Grafton Planning Board conducted a public hearing to consider the proposed amendments to the Grafton Zoning Bylaw (ZBL) to define the language for principal structures erected on the same lot. The modification ensures adequacy of access to utility service and drainage serving each individual structure, reinforces that access is equivalent to that required for structures on separate lots, and confirms the minimum lot area, width, and frontage shall be the sum of the requirements for each individual structure. Lastly, the modification reinforces the minimum distance between structures shall be the height of the higher building.

Board members present were Chairman Justin Wood, Vice Chairman Robert Hassinger, Clerk David Robbins, and Members Linda Hassinger and Prabhu Venkataraman. No public comment on the article was received.

The Article was recommended by the Building Inspector to provide clarity to those interpreting the ZBL and prevent ongoing issues with its current interpretation.

Based on the Board's deliberations on the merits of the proposed amendment, the Planning Board voted unanimously, 5-0, **TO RECOMMEND** Article 25.

**Planning Board Report for Article 26:
Amendments to the Grafton Zoning Bylaws (Section 12.6.2 Development Types) –
Pertaining to Renumbering the Table for Accuracy**

At its meeting on May 5, 2023, the Grafton Planning Board conducted a public hearing to consider the proposed amendments to the Grafton Zoning Bylaw (ZBL) pertaining to updating the

numbering for *Section 12.6.2 Development Types* to *Section 12.6.3 Development Types* for the Village Mixed Use District.

Board members present were Chairman Justin Wood, Vice Chairman Robert Hassinger, Clerk David Robbins, and Members Linda Hassinger and Prabhu Venkataraman. No public comment on the article was received.

The Article was predicated upon the need for the Zoning Bylaw to reflect accurate lettering, numbering, and pagination.

Based on the Board's deliberations on the merits of the proposed amendment, the Planning Board voted unanimously, 5-0, **TO RECOMMEND** Article 26.

**Planning Board Report for Article 27:
Amendments to the Grafton Zoning Bylaws (Section 4.2.1) – Off Street Parking and Loading Requirements Exemption for Grafton Common Historic District; (Section 4.2.2) - Off-Street Parking Schedule to Allow Updated Parking Units of Measure, Separate Various Uses, Include Village Mixed Use Multifamily Parking, and Change Village Mixed Use Multifamily Minimum Parking Requirements**

At its meeting on May 5, 2023, the Grafton Planning Board conducted a public hearing to consider the proposed amendments to the Grafton Zoning Bylaw (ZBL) to allow exemption from Off Street Parking and Loading requirements in the Grafton Common Historic District and modify the Off-Street Parking Schedule's units of measure for various land uses, include Village Mixed-Use parking requirements for multifamily dwellings, and update the minimum parking requirements for Village Mixed Use multifamily dwellings. Warehouse uses will be separated and based on parking on 750 sq. ft. of gross floor area. Industrial uses will be separated and based on 750 sq. ft. of gross floor area. The unit of measure for Transportation and Utility uses will be changed to one parking space for every 750 sq. ft. Parking spaces per unit for multifamily dwellings in the Village Mixed Use District will change from 1 to 1.25 for a Studio/1 bedroom, from 1.5 to 2.25 for a 2 bedroom, and from 2 to 2.25 for a 3/3+ bedroom.

Board members present were Chairman Justin Wood, Vice Chairman Robert Hassinger, Clerk David Robbins, and Members Linda Hassinger and Prabhu Venkataraman. No public comment on the article was received.

The Article was recommended by the Building Inspector and the Town Planner to better facilitate existing and new businesses located on the Common that do not meet existing parking requirements, to align with current parking practices, to prevent public safety issues in the Village Mixed Use Districts, and to provide clarity to those interpreting the ZBL.

Based on the Board's deliberations on the merits of the proposed amendment, the Planning Board voted unanimously, 5-0, **TO RECOMMEND** Article 27.

**Planning Board Report for Article 28:
Amendments to the Grafton Zoning Bylaws (Section 12.7.4) – to Define Requirements for
Shared Parking in the Village Mixed Use Districts; (Section 12.7.6) – to Define Parking
Requirements for the Off-Street Parking Schedule in Village Mixed Use Districts**

At its meeting on May 5, 2023, the Grafton Planning Board conducted a public hearing to consider the proposed amendments to the Grafton Zoning Bylaw (ZBL) to remove text in Section 12.7.4 and replace with text referencing *Section 4.2.5.3 Shared Parking*, to remove text in Section 12.7.6 and replace with text referencing *Section 4.2.2 Off-Street Parking Schedule*, and include text to reference the option of a Special Permit for applicants that do not conform to *Section 4.2.2 Off-Street Parking Schedule* requirements for the Village Mixed Use District but can provide adequate off-street parking, including sufficient on-street parking, shared parking, or visitor parking.

Board members present were Chairman Justin Wood, Vice Chairman Robert Hassinger, Clerk David Robbins, and Members Linda Hassinger and Prabhu Venkataraman. No public comment on the article was received.

The Article will provide clarity to those interpreting the ZBL and prevent issues of repeated language in various sections of the ZBL and allow the Board discretion in their review of proposals in the Village Mixed Use District that do not conform to the modified minimum parking requirements.

Based on the Board’s deliberations on the merits of the proposed amendment, the Planning Board voted unanimously, 5-0, **TO RECOMMEND** Article 28.

**Planning Board Report for Article 29:
Amendments to the Grafton Zoning Bylaws (Appendix A 3.2.3.1 – Use Regulation
Schedule) – to Allow a New Accessory Use via Special Permit; (Section 5.12) – to Create a
New Section for Accessory Uses in Agricultural and Residential Districts for Seasonal,
Outdoor Eating and Drinking Establishments, including Banquet Facilities, Alcohol Sales,
and Live Entertainment with Provisions; (Section 1.5.5) - to Add a New Condition for
Granting Special Permits**

At its meeting on May 5, 2023, the Grafton Planning Board conducted a public hearing to consider the proposed amendments to the Grafton Zoning Bylaw (ZBL) to allow a new Accessory Use (#15) via Special Permit in all districts for “seasonal outdoor eating and drinking establishments, including banquet facilities, alcohol sales and live entertainment that relate to operations of the principal agricultural use in an amount of no more than 10 percent of the total agricultural acreage (limited to no more than 10 decibels above ambient noise levels at the property line) for agricultural/farm principal uses for properties over 20 acres.” The Board also considered adding a new Section 5.12 - *Accessory Uses in Agricultural and Residential Districts for Seasonal Outdoor Eating and Drinking Establishments, including Banquet Facilities, Alcohol Sales, and Live Entertainment* and adding a new condition for granting Special Permits (K.) “Uses and their

accessory uses will not have detrimental effects which outweigh their benefits to the neighborhood, Town, or zoning district in which it is located,” to align with changes to Appendix A 3.2.3.1.

Board members present were Chairman Justin Wood, Vice Chairman Robert Hassinger, Clerk David Robbins, and Members Linda Hassinger and Prabhu Venkataraman. Two emails of public comment were received. A member of the public made inquiries during the public hearing.

The Article was brought before the Board as a Citizen’s Petition and was revised and ultimately sponsored by the Board to bring the petition into legal compliance, allow the Board discretion in their review of proposals seeking to pursue such activities on agricultural property, and to prevent disturbance/minimize detrimental effects of such activities on their surroundings.

Based on the Board’s deliberations on the merits of the proposed amendment, the Planning Board voted unanimously, 5-0, **TO RECOMMEND** Article 29.