

Proposed Zoning Changes in West Hopkinton

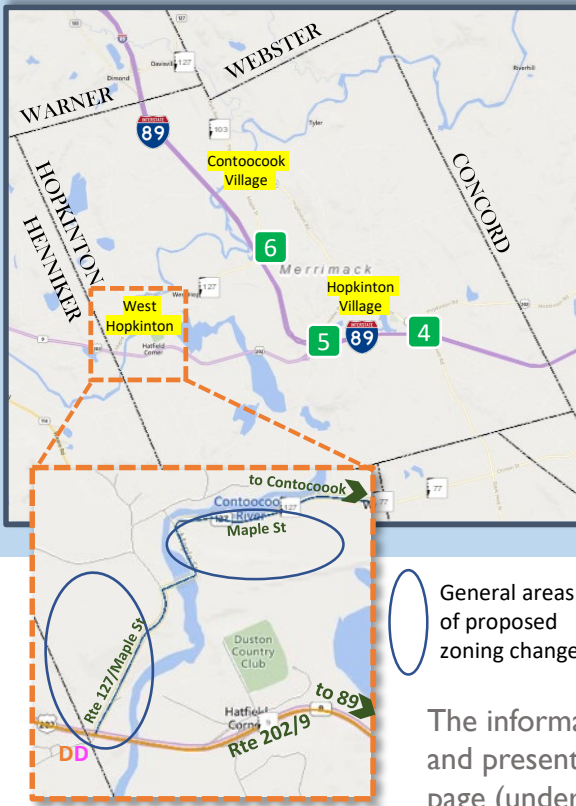
Background

In 2019, Hopkinton received a Municipal Technical Assistance Grant (MTAG) from Plan NH with the goal of changing land use regulations in order to **support a range of housing choices and increase the supply of affordable housing**.

The focus of the grant was **West Hopkinton**, where there is undeveloped and underutilized land along Route 127/Maple St, near the intersection Routes 202/9 (where a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District was set up in 2017 and where the State and Town have almost completed a land swap).

An MTAG Committee* was formed by the Economic Development Committee to implement the grant. Throughout 2019, the MTAG Committee **conducted more than 30 interviews across the community** in order to:

- 1) get a sense of the vision residents have for development in the West Hopkinton area and in Hopkinton in general;
- 2) identify potential concerns residents may have; and
- 3) develop an understanding of strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of Hopkinton's economy and home choices.



General areas of proposed zoning changes

**MTAG Committee:* Louise Carr Jeff Donohoe Cindy Garland
Anna Moskov Greg Sagris LeeAnne Vance
Julie Voisin Anna Wells Steven Whitley

The information collected was analyzed in the aggregate by UNH Cooperative Extension and presented back to the committee. A full report is available on the Town's MTAG web page (under the Town Government tab).

MTAG interview key findings

1. **Residents love:** the rural character and community feel; good regional access; good public services like schools, library, emergency services, and senior center.
2. **Diversity of housing choices is hard to find:** housing is expensive; not enough smaller homes and rental housing for the young starting out and seniors downsizing.
3. **Concerns for West Hopkinton:** safety of the dangerous/high-traffic intersection; develop retail carefully to protect/support businesses in Contoocook.
4. **Focus should be on** age-restricted housing or a retirement community to allow aging residents to remain in town.
5. **Mixed use** (i.e., residential, neighborhood-scale commercial, open space/recreation) was widely supported to diversify and increase the tax base.

Proposed zoning amendments

- 1) **Change the allowable uses in the Business District (B-1)** to discourage large-lot, single-family development and to allow multifamily and affordable housing and recreation, retail, and commercial-type uses.
- 2) **Change the underlying zoning from Industrial (M-1) to the newly modified B-1 zoning** in two areas: a) the land surrounding the intersection of Rtes 202/9 and Maple St/Rte 127 and b) the land along Maple Street across from the Rowell Covered Bridge (the old "bio-energy/papermill site").
- 3) **Adopt a "Commerce and Community Overlay District" (CCOD)**, which would allow for more dense residential development as well as provide an incentive (increased unit density) for developers who provide affordable and/or senior housing (as determined by HUD/NHHFA) and/or community amenities (for example, recreational spaces, community spaces).