



Joint Committee of the Planning Board and Planning, Licenses & Development Committee

Monday, April 14, 2025

6:30 PM

City Hall, 2nd Floor Council Chambers

A. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 9, 2024
3. Public Workshops:
 - a. **Ordinance – O-2025-07** – Relating to Zone Change. Petitioner, Keene Marlboro Group, LLC, proposes to amend the Zoning Map of the City of Keene by changing the zoning designation of the property located at 425 Marlboro St (TMP #596-017-000) from Neighborhood Business to Low Density. The area of land that would be affected by this request is 0.92 acres.
 - b. **Ordinance – O-2025-08** – Relating to amendments to the Sign Code. Petitioner, City of Keene Community Development Department, proposes to amend Table 10-2 of the Land Development Code to create an exception under the category of Animated Signs to allow temporary Feather Signs in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts.
 - c. **Ordinance – O-2025-09** – Relating to Single Family Parking Requirements. Petitioner, City of Keene Community Development Department, proposes to amend Table 9.1 of the Land Development Code to require one parking space for “Dwelling, Single Family.”
4. New Business
5. Next Meeting – May 12, 2025

B. MORE TIME ITEMS

1. Private Roads
2. Neighborhood / Activity Core areas (“Neighborhood Nodes”)
3. Short Term Rental Properties

A. ADJOURNMENT

1 333City of Keene
2 New Hampshire

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5 JOINT PLANNING BOARD/
6 PLANNING, LICENSES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
7 MEETING MINUTES
8

Monday, December 9, 2024

6:30 PM

Council Chambers,
City Hall

Planning Board

Members Present:

Harold Farrington, Chair
Roberta Mastrogiovanni, Vice Chair
Armando Rangel
Kenneth Kost
Michael Hoefler, Alternate

Planning, Licenses &
Development Committee

Members Present:

Kate M. Bosley, Chair
Philip M. Jones, Vice Chair
Robert C. Williams
Edward J. Haas
Andrew Madison

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner
Evan Clements, Planner

Planning Board

Members Not Present:

Mayor Jay V. Kahn
Councilor Michael Remy
Sarah Vezzani
Ryan Clancy
Randyn Markelon, Alternate
Tammy Adams, Alternate
Stephon Mehu, Alternate

Planning, Licenses &
Development Committee

Members Not Present:

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11 **I) Roll Call**

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13 Chair Farrington called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and a roll call was taken. Mr. Hoefler
14 was invited to join the committee as a voting member.

15
16 **II) Approval of Meeting Minuets – November 12, 2024**

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18 A motion was made by Councilor Madison to approve the November 12, 2024 meeting minutes.
19 The motion was seconded by Chair Bosley and was unanimously approved.
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III) Public Workshop:

a. Ordinance – O-2024-24 – Relative to Interior Side Setback Requirements in the Downtown Edge District. Petitioner, Jared Goodell, proposes to amend Section 4.4.1 of the Land Development Code to remove the 20’ minimum interior side setback requirement for parcels in the Downtown Edge District that directly abut a parcel located in the Downtown Transition District.

Mr. George Hansel addressed the Committee on behalf of Jared Goodell. He indicated they are working on a property on Marlboro Street, which is one of four parcels in the Downtown Edge District that would have this issue. The Downtown Edge District requires a 20-foot setback when a parcel is up against the Residential District.

Mr. Hansel noted when the city put in place the land use code update a couple years ago, it was with the understanding that these types of adjustments would need to be made going forward. He stated he sees this petition as making a change to make the development process fair for everybody and putting in place a code that will work for everybody going forward.

What is being done in this instance really doesn’t impact the public very much at all, because it is not on a street. The only parcels that are affected by this change are right up against Keene State’s parking lot, where two zoning districts come together and the rear of the lots are facing Marlborough Street. What is being requested is to take that 20-foot setback and make it 0.

Mr. Hansel noted with the downtown edge zoning district, one of the things the city wanted to do was to encourage development along Marlborough Street. One of the techniques that was put in place with the land use code was actually not a setback on the frontage, but a built-to on the frontage. Encouraging people to build to the street but on the back of their lots requires large setbacks. This concluded Mr. Hansel’s statement.

Councilor Haas noted to the lot on the corner, which is not owned by Mr. Goodell. The lot borders up against the circle, which he felt could have some issues if it is constructed according to what is permitted on the side. Mr. Hansel stated he knows four lots that would be affected by this standard, two of which are owned by Mr. Goodell and the other two are currently non-conforming. Councilor Haas stated he would like to hear Staff comments on this issue.

Staff comments were next.

Ms. Brunner addressed the Board and stated this ordinance proposes modifying the minimum interior side setback for the Downtown Edge District to be 0 feet when abutting the Downtown Transition District, instead of 20 feet. In rezoning decisions, the Board should consider existing and proposed zoning requirements, surrounding land use and zoning patterns, possible resulting impacts, and the consistency of the proposed rezoning request with the Master Plan.

She noted as the petitioner explained, both the Downtown Edge, Downtown Transition and Downtown Limited Districts are intended to be buffer districts or transition districts from the

69 high intensity downtown districts of Downtown Growth and Downtown Core to the surrounding
70 areas.

71
72 Ms. Brunner went on to say that Downtown Edge are zones are areas that transition from
73 Downtown Core or Downtown Growth to more commercial areas or commercial corridors.
74 Downtown Limited is to the north of Central Square, a unique area with only one spot that is
75 Downtown Limited, where the fire station and other institutional buildings are located.
76 Downtown Transition is largely what used to be the office district, which goes to surrounding
77 residential areas. Ms. Brunner noted this petition would affect Downtown Edge and Downtown
78 Transition.

79
80 She noted the intent statement for the Downtown Edge District states the following: *is to provide*
81 *for a heterogeneous mix of commercial and residential uses and varied development forms,*
82 *including areas of both walkable development as well as more auto oriented development at the*
83 *edges of downtown Keene, this district accommodates this rich mixture while providing for a*
84 *transition into lower intensity commercial or residential development outside of the delineated*
85 *downtown area.*

86
87 The Downtown Transition District is intended to accommodate a variety of residential open
88 spaces, other low intensity uses, and a mixed-use environment of attached and detached
89 structures. Development within the Downtown Transition District is intended to complement and
90 transition into existing residential neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown Keene. The Downtown
91 Edge District allows for a wider variety of uses, 38 in total, most of which are allowed by right.
92 There are three uses that require a conditional use permit and one that requires a special
93 exception. This district allows for more of a mix of uses.

94
95 Ms. Brunner went on to say that the Downtown Transition District allows for a total of 15 uses,
96 over a third of which require a special exception or a conditional use permit. With respect to the
97 dimensional requirements, the minimum lot area for downtown edge is 10,000 square feet,
98 whereas for Downtown Transition it is 8,000 square feet. Ms. Brunner noted where the districts
99 really differ is, as the petitioner mentioned, the Downtown Edge District has more form-based-
100 code elements to it than the Downtown Transition District does. Downtown Edge has the built-to
101 zone. It is a 0 to 20 feet built-to zone for the front set back and corner side setbacks. The interior
102 side setback and the minimum rear set back are 0 feet, unless you are abutting a residential
103 district or Downtown Transition District. Whereas the Downtown Transition has your more
104 traditional setbacks.

105
106 She added it is common to have instances where increased setbacks are required for specific uses
107 that are adjacent to a residential zoning district. In some instances, Downtown Transition is
108 mixed in with other residential zoning districts. She added, as the Petitioner noted, there are only
109 four parcels of land in the City where the Downtown Transition and Downtown Edge actually
110 touch each other. Every other instance where those zoning districts are adjacent to each other,
111 there is a road that separates them.

112
113 Ms. Brunner stated the master plan is a pretty high-level document. It does not get into the
114 granular detail, for instance, of what setback should be in specific areas. However,, looking at the

115 future land use map, this area of the city would be impacted. The location in which these four
116 parcels directly touch each other is called out in the future land use map as traditional
117 neighborhood mixed-use areas and TDR receding zone. It states the following: *these areas of the*
118 *community are the most developed and the best able to accommodate carefully planned growth*
119 *and density. These areas can be the target of the vast majority of new smart growth, residential*
120 *and mixed-use development, but only with design standards to ensure that it: Maintains the*
121 *quality of existing neighborhoods, blends seamlessly and transitions into the existing downtown.*
122 *Mitigates traffic and parking issues and provides for a healthy diversity of the built form that*
123 *respects Keene’s aesthetic appeal. More focus on design details, compatibility with historic*
124 *areas. Provision of green space and quality of life within these areas are key elements for*
125 *encouraging a population density consistent with the principles of smart growth. Opportunities*
126 *exist to transfer development rights from residential conservation development regions into these*
127 *areas.*

128
129 Ms. Brunner noted to the area Councilor Haas was referring to and noted there is an existing
130 building on that parcel, which goes up to the property line. The parcel is already non-
131 conforming. Councilor Haas asked what would govern filling in this area. Ms. Brunner felt if
132 something was built, it would probably be an addition to the existing building, and it could
133 potentially go right up to the property line. She added another thing to note is that there is also an
134 increased setback for the rear when adjacent to a Downtown Transition parcel, and the Petitioner
135 did not request to change that. The petition would just affect the side set back, not the rear set
136 back.

137
138 Ms. Mastrogiovanni asked if the rendering Ms. Brunner was referring to outlined the new
139 buildings on that property now. Ms. Brunner answered in the negative and indicated this is a base
140 map from 2020.

141
142 Councilor Bosley referred to the group of properties that is zoned Downtown Transition on Main
143 Street, which are Keene State College institutional buildings. These buildings are not residential
144 or mixed-use residential buildings and the Downtown Institution should have encompassed all of
145 the Keene State properties. If that was the case, this would have been a non-issue. Ms. Brunner
146 agreed and added the downtown form-based districts focus less on the use and more on the built
147 form of the property. She indicated the reason this cluster of buildings are downtown transition is
148 because even though the use is not residential, the structures when they were originally built
149 were residential. The character of the buildings fits more with the built form of the transition
150 district. She agreed the uses in this little pocket of downtown transition are very different from
151 the other pockets of downtown transition.

152
153 Councilor Bosley stated Downtown Limited, Downtown Growth and Downtown Transition
154 don’t have consistency with reference to setbacks in the code when they abut Downtown
155 Transition and asked why that decision was made. Ms. Brunner stated in many instances, when
156 there is a proposal to have an increased setback when adjacent to a residential district, it is
157 because it was transitioning to more residential areas. Councilor Bosley noted Downtown
158 Limited, which is to the north of the square and has a 15-foot rear setback requirement.
159 Downtown Limited abuts high density neighborhoods. It also has a 10-foot side setback when it
160 abuts Downtown Transition. She stated she does not understand why the City would require

161 Downtown Edge, which is similar to Downtown Core, to have such an extended setback when it
162 abuts Downtown Transition. Ms. Brunner agreed this is a good point. The Councilor stated she
163 was open to creating more consistency.

164
165 Chair Farrington referred to page 16 and noted this change would be to Downtown Edge
166 minimum interior side set back. You would just strike the Downtown Transition district from
167 this sentence.

168
169 Ms. Brunner agreed and stated it would read *0 feet, unless abutting a residential district, then 20*
170 *feet*. The Chair asked why the City would have this setback requirement for the minimum rear
171 setback. Ms. Brunner stated if the committee was interested in having more consistency, it would
172 make sense to remove the Downtown Transition from the rear set back as well. Ms. Brunner also
173 added if the committee wanted to make any changes, it should be done at the workshop phase,
174 that way, members of the public will have an opportunity at the public hearing to weigh in on the
175 version of the ordinance that City Council ultimately votes on.

176
177 Mr. Hoefler clarified the project in question sounds like variances have been granted and is
178 moving ahead. What is before the committee would solve hypothetical issues in the future, if
179 other property owners of these four parcels wanted to make similar changes. He asked whether it
180 was worth making a change here or can it be handled through the variance process in the future.
181 Councilor Haas felt the changed would increase the value of the lots and create opportunity for
182 the corner lot.

183
184 Councilor Williams felt Mr. Hoefler makes a good point with the variance, but felt one of the
185 ways this provides value is giving people certainty about what they get with their land. Hence,
186 including it in the code is probably the better way to go.

187
188 Mr. Kost stated it also adds to the idea that the city is trying to encourage infill development and
189 will make it easier for people to develop properties.

190
191 The Chair asked for public comment next.

192
193 Mr. Pete Moran of Myrtle Street addressed the committee. Mr. Moran felt this was a good
194 project that was done, fits in nicely with the neighborhood and adds housing.

195
196 Mr. Moran stated some of the descriptions used were curious, such as the following:

197
198 *obstructed view from the TPI building* – he noted the landscaping from Marlboro Street, looking
199 down at the property, creates sort of an obstructed view.

200
201 *Quite a bit of vegetation* – Behind the Historic Society, which Mr. Moran stated was debatable,
202 was mostly weeds.

203
204 *Heavily vegetated* – between the Historic Society and these new buildings.

205
206 *Blocks the view from Main Street* – is questionable again.

207
208 He stated this was a good project but did not feel these descriptions quite explain the project.
209 Mr. Moran noted privacy was an issue that was raised and felt when you increase density, it
210 reduces privacy.
211
212 *No border to regulate* – Mr. Moran felt there must be a border, so it can be taxed as some sort of
213 a lot and felt that phrase did not make sense.
214
215 *Substantial justice to the neighborhood* – it adds value because it is new property, but Mr. Moran
216 felt this, too, was subjective.
217
218 Mr. Moran noted after the foundation was placed, the Petitioner realized the setbacks were not
219 met. An official survey was not done until after the fact. He felt the Petitioner is asking for
220 forgiveness instead of permission.
221
222 He indicated the Petitioner has been granted the variances and questioned why this item is being
223 presented to the Joint Committee. He felt it should be left to the Planning Department to present
224 to the City Council.
225
226 Mr. Moran asked if the Committee voted in favor of zero setbacks. However, later, if the City
227 decided not to do 0 setbacks in these zones, would that mean this Petitioner would be
228 grandfathered for any other projects they may bring forward.
229
230 Mr. Moran went on to say this item is being presented as workforce housing, but nowhere in the
231 information did it say anything about rents.
232
233 *3000 square feet of lawn* – He questioned where cars are going to park. He asked whether the
234 lawn is going to be fenced. The reason parking on the lawn is prohibited is because, eventually,
235 all the dirt will wash into the storm drains.
236
237 He questioned where the dumpster is going to be located and if the dumpster will be enclosed.
238
239 He stressed, again, as to why the Petitioner was asking for another variance. This concluded Mr.
240 Moran’s presentation.
241
242 Councilor Bosley provided some clarification regarding the questions Mr. Moran raised. She
243 indicated this committee is not the Zoning Board and the variances that were requested were
244 granted to a different applicant. What is discussed at the Joint Committee is never project
245 specific; but rather it is about underlying conditions of zoning areas. She stated that her
246 understanding is the Petitioner raised this issue because they found inconsistencies in the land
247 development code.
248
249 She noted when she read through the Land Development Code, and, as she had mentioned earlier
250 to staff, she also found additional inconsistencies in the Code. She felt it was appropriate, at
251 times, for individuals in the Community to realize certain things and bring them to the City’s
252 attention.

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Chair Farrington stated this is a workshop for an ordinance. From this Body, it gets moved up to Council for approval and, if necessary, sent back to this venue to restart the process.

Ms. Brunner thanked Mr. Moran for his comments and stated what Mr. Moran raised today would be comments that would be appropriate for a ZBA public hearing on the variances. She added no final decisions are being made tonight. This item is being forwarded to City Council for them to decide. With respect to city staff involvement, in New Hampshire there is the ability for a resident to petition changes to the zoning code. That petition goes through a specific process, depending on whether you are a city or a town. In the City of Keene, we have staff that will review the request and provide a staff report, which is what has been done tonight.

With respect to whether the Petitioner will be able to do more projects similar to this, Ms. Brunner stated the variance gave them relief for that one property. This request tonight would change the whole zoning district. If this ordinance gets approved, any parcels in Downtown Edge would be able to go up to a 0-foot side setback when they abut the Downtown Transition District. She added this is a Downtown District, so there is 0-foot setbacks throughout the downtown. She noted this is a little bit tricky because, again, it is a transition district, so it is transitioning from the downtown to the neighboring areas. In general, there is a 0-foot setback unless it is abutting a residential or downtown transition.

With no further comments, the Chair closed the public hearing.

Councilor Bosley stated she has seen these parcels and doesn't see a reason why the setbacks could not be reduced to be consistent with the other setbacks in the land development code. She stated she sees other inconsistencies this issue has brought up for her. She felt at the bare minimum, if the Committee did not wish to go to 0-foot setback, the side setbacks should be reduced. She stated she was in favor of what the Petitioner is asking for.

Chair Farrington noted staff had indicated in some of the other instances where these zones meet, they are separated by a road and asked whether that is considered abutting. Ms. Brunner stated it is, but the need for setbacks is mitigated by being located across the road.

Ms. Mastrogiovanni stated in the Edge District there could be cases where there are mixed-use buildings and asked for clarification on whether 0-foot setback be appropriate. She felt, as Councilor Bosley said, perhaps reducing the setback might be a better solution.

Mr. Kost noted by having the side setbacks be zero, it is possible this could be one big building at some point, or someone could perhaps expand and houses could at that point be right next to each other. Planner Evan Clements pointed out all the buildings on Main Street, which are 0 lot line and are right next to each other. Mr. Kost felt this change could create some development potential in this area. Ms. Brunner added there is already a 0-foot setback between Downtown Edge and Downtown Edge. What is likely going to be seen with these parcels, because they have that 0-to-20-foot build-to zone, is any new buildings are supposed to be placed up against Marlboro Street, so you are more likely to have them be immediately adjacent to each other along Marlborough Street.

299
300 Councilor Bosley clarified the buildings shown as 47 and 53 could be torn down and constructed
301 as one building right next to Marlboro Street and touching each other on each side right now and
302 this change would not have an impact on that.

303
304 Mr. Kost clarified the Petitioner is referring to interior, which is side setback not the rear. Ms.
305 Brunner agreed, as proposed, the petition only talks about the side setback, not the rear setback.

306
307 Chair Farrington asked what the appetite is for amending this proposed ordinance to include 0
308 setback for the rear.

309
310 Councilor Haas felt this was straightforward and felt the rear setback should be included as well.

311
312 Councilor Madison stated he, too, agrees with the 0 rear setback, which would address the
313 housing crisis the city has. There is buildable land in the center of town, and this is where people
314 want to develop housing. He felt loosening restrictive zoning or inconsistent zoning, such as this,
315 is the way to do it, and the committee should move forward with it.

316
317 A motion was made by Councilor Madison to create an A version of the ordinance to remove the
318 rear setback requirement where Downtown Edge abuts Downtown Transition. The motion was
319 seconded by Councilor Williams and was unanimously approved.

320
321 A motion was made by Chair Farrington that the Planning Board finds that this proposed change
322 to Ordinance – O-2024-24A is consistent with the 2010 Master Plan. The motion was seconded
323 by Armando Rangel and carried on a 4-1 vote with Roberta Mastrogiovanni voting in opposition.

324
325 A motion was made by Councilor Bosley that the Mayor be requested to set a public hearing for
326 Ordinance – O-2024-24A. The motion was seconded by Councilor Madison and was
327 unanimously approved.

328
329 **b. Ordinance – O-2024-20 – Relative to Residential Parking Requirements.**

330 Petitioner, City of Keene Community Development Department, proposes to amend Table 9-2
331 and Section 9.2.5.A.1 of the Land Development Code to modify the required number of parking
332 spaces for residential uses and specify parking requirements for elderly and workforce housing in
333 all zoning districts.

334
335 Ms. Brunner stated this item is in reference to the residential parking requirement, and the reason
336 it is being brought forward is due to a change to State Law. HB 1400 was adopted, which has
337 multiple provisions, and one of those was a limit to parking requirements that municipalities
338 might require.

339
340 Ms. Brunner stated the city recently received a couple of Invest NH Planning and Zoning Grants
341 to develop regulations to increase housing supply. The city uses that funding for two projects,
342 one of which was the Cottage Court Ordinance and the other was to develop a neighborhood
343 parking study. In addition to this, there was a request from a City Councilor to eliminate the
344 winter parking ban. The parking study consultants also provided recommendations related to on-

345 site parking requirements for housing for the city to consider. Staff took the recent change in
346 state law and the recommendations from the consultant to craft this ordinance.

347
348 Ms. Brunner stated what this change does is that it changes the calculation from a per-unit to a
349 per-bedroom requirement. At the present time, with a few exceptions, the city's requirement is
350 every dwelling unit requires two parking spaces. However, there are some exceptions; for
351 example, in the Downtown Core District, there is no parking required across the board. Only one
352 parking space per dwelling unit is required in the Downtown Growth and Downtown Limited,
353 and only one parking space is required for an accessory dwelling unit. The recently adopted
354 Cottage Court has its own parking requirements that differ slightly.

355
356 What HB 1400 says is that in certain situations, *when you have 10 units or more in a multifamily*
357 *development, you cannot require more than 1.5 parking spaces per unit.* It also says that *you*
358 *can't require more than 1.5 parking spaces per unit per studio, and one bedroom workforce*
359 *units that are less than 1,000 square feet.* They use the definition from state statute for
360 workforce, which is *100% of the area median income for a family of four for owner occupied*
361 *units and 60% of AMI for a family of three for rental units.* It also requires municipalities to
362 consider alternative parking solutions and approve them if the applicant can demonstrate that the
363 alternative parking solution will meet the parking demand created by the proposed residential
364 use.

365
366 Ms. Brunner stated what staff is proposing is for residential uses dwelling, above ground floor
367 dwelling, manufactured housing dwelling, multifamily and dwelling, and 2 family or duplex, the
368 city would require one space per studio and one bedroom, and then 1.5 spaces per two-bedroom
369 or more in all zoning districts, with the exception of Downtown Growth and Downtown Limited,
370 which would be a slightly less. These districts would be 0.9 for a studio, one bedroom, or one
371 space per two bedroom or more.

372
373 Ms. Brunner stated that they also include a *housing for older persons* category, which is defined
374 in state statute. This would be the one instance where it would be done by unit rather than
375 number of bedrooms. The proposal is .9 spaces per unit in general, or .75 spaces per unit in
376 Downtown Growth and Downtown Limited. For workforce housing, the proposal is .9 spaces per
377 studio or .75 spaces per studio in Downtown Growth or Downtown Limited, one space per
378 bedroom or .9 if in Downtown Growth or Downtown Limited, 1.25 spaces per two-bedroom, one
379 space if in Downtown Growth or Downtown Limited, 1.5 space per 3 bedroom or more.

380
381 Ms. Brunner noted Staff felt it would be simpler to have the same standard citywide, no matter
382 what type of use it is, except for the downtown area where the city requires less parking across
383 the board. Staff tried to craft this so that it would comply with the State Statute, no matter how
384 many units there are in a development.

385
386 The overall impact is that it would require less parking throughout the City for new housing
387 projects. She added what is being proposed are minimum requirements, and there is nothing that
388 will prevent someone from providing more parking than the requirement.

389

390 As far as consistency with the master plan, there is a goal to rewrite the City's land use and
391 zoning code to align with the intent of the future land use map. The plan states that *as the*
392 *community moves forward with this revision, other types of land use regulations should be*
393 *considered that will incorporate walkability, green infrastructure, sustainable building a smart*
394 *growth principal and other features outlined in this plan.* Ms. Brunner stated reduced parking
395 requirements are generally considered to be one of the smart growth tools. They are generally
396 considered to be a way to improve or increase walkability and promote alternative forms of
397 transportation.

398
399 Councilor Bosley stated this proposal makes sense if you are building a new home but asked
400 what the plan is for someone who is renovating an older home. She asked whether the city has a
401 definition for bedroom. Ms. Brunner stated neither the City nor the State has a definition for
402 bedroom. With reference to an existing home, in the current parking regulations, there is
403 something called a parking credit. If it is a legally existing use, such as legally nonconforming,
404 or it is legal today and this change goes through, any deficit in parking that it creates will be
405 credited moving forward. This is something that was added to the land development code and
406 has been helpful for those trying to redevelop properties.

407
408 Councilor Bosley stated her question is really more about someone who would interpret their
409 three-bedroom unit to be a one-bedroom unit with an office and a dining room, because they
410 only want to offer one parking space versus the additional parking that would be required for a
411 three-bedroom unit. She felt, at some point, it would make sense to add some sort of definition.
412 Ms. Brunner stated this is something Staff could discuss with building code Staff because there
413 are additional requirements for bedrooms, with respect to egress.

414
415 Councilor Madison stated his understanding is fire code does offer a definition of what
416 constitutes a bedroom.

417
418 Mr. Kost noted certain areas in Keene have streets that could accommodate parking for certain
419 developments. He asked why the city is requiring this minimum. He felt it should be up to a
420 developer to decide what they need. He asked whether state law requires a minimum. Ms.
421 Brunner stated it is up to each individual municipality. What the state law did is put a cap on
422 what can be required. She agreed Mr. Kost does bring up some good points and this is why the
423 city does not require any parking in the downtown core district, because that is a very historic
424 area where there is plenty of public parking to accommodate all of those needs. However,
425 outside the downtown area, there isn't much public parking. Neighborhood areas do have
426 neighborhood parking, but in the commerce areas outside of the downtown, there is no public
427 parking. She agreed it is up to a developer, but the city also needs to make sure they are not
428 offloading the parking burden onto other uses or on to adjacent neighborhood streets.

429
430 Councilor Jones went back to the definition regarding bedrooms and noted one of the
431 requirements for an area to be considered a bedroom is that it must have a window big enough
432 for a fireman wearing a safety pack to get through, and the area also needs to have a closet to be
433 defined as a bedroom. He noted this, however, does not answer the question raised by Councilor
434 Bosley. You could have three of those units that qualify as a bedroom and use two of them as an
435 office. Councilor Jones felt the definition needs to be clarified; is it the use or is it the structure?

436

437 Ms. Brunner stated, in her opinion, it should be the structure. She added the City is proposing to
438 move to the bedroom model, because it helps figure out parking for the type of development
439 proposed.

440

441 Councilor Haas referred to the senior housing building at the corner of 93rd Street and Railroad
442 Street and asked whether this development is in compliance with parking. Councilor Haas
443 questioned what the parking would look like under these new rules.

444

445 Mr. Hoefler felt simplifying and requiring less parking is good; he questioned the requirement of
446 .9 versus one space. Ms. Brunner, in response, stated when there is a project that is proposing 50
447 units or 90 units, the number does add up. This is meant mostly for larger projects

448

449 Mr. Kost stated having this requirement is a concern for him as he feels a developer would know
450 how much parking they would need to make their development marketable. He noted there is
451 also the process through which a developer could ask for reduced parking and move forward
452 through that process. Ms. Brunner agreed and added to obtain the 50% reduction in parking, it is
453 done through a special exception and at that point the applicant would be required to complete a
454 parking study to show that they are able to meet demand on their site for the use being proposed.
455 Mr. Kost asked whether street parking could not be considered as part of the requirement. Ms.
456 Brunner stated there isn't because the city doesn't have an on-street parking program, but she
457 added that the council recently eliminated the six-month winter parking ban, which opens up the
458 possibility for year round on street parking.

459

460 Ms. Brunner further stated another set of recommendations the city received from the consultants
461 is a suggestion to create a residential parking program.

462

463 The Chair asked for public comments next.

464

465 Mr. George Hansel of 84 Elm Street Keene addressed the committee. Mr. Hansel felt overall this
466 was a good proposal and felt anything the city can do to reduce the parking requirements is
467 helpful. He noted he has never met a developer who constructed a development they could not
468 rent or sell.

469

470 Mr. Hansel questioned how the workforce housing requirement and elderly housing requirement
471 would be enforced. Mr. Clements stated it would be by deed restriction. Mr. Hansel stated he is
472 against this strategy; this would be something beneficial to Housing Authority and/or a non-
473 profit housing developer, mostly because they are foreseeing that property being in this use
474 forever. However, for a for-profit developer, it would not be a good option. He stated he is
475 integrating workforce units into some of his projects, but there is a timeline associated with it. He
476 suggested focusing more on size of the unit themselves to be attractive to workforce.

477

478 Mr. Andy Holt of Forest Street Keene addressed the committee next. Mr. Holt thanked the city
479 for improving the code to make housing easier to add. He felt this ordinance is a step in the right
480 direction, but it does not go far enough. He stated he suggests amending the ordinance to remove

481 the parking space minimums entirely and, in the future, consider expanding that to all zones and
482 building types in the city. He felt removing the mandates reduces complexity in the code.

483
484 Mr. Holt noted the consultant's report, which focuses on reducing the requirements from where it
485 is now. He added, as staff pointed out, this isn't saying you can't have parking spots, it talks
486 about removing the mandate that says you have to have an arbitrary number of spaces to build
487 housing. Mr. Holt stated this is not a new or extreme idea. There are many cities that have
488 removed parking minimums entirely. Cities such as Minneapolis, Austin, Buffalo, St. Louis and
489 in New England, Cambridge, Burlington, Somerville and Boston. He indicated the benefits of
490 removing parking minimums, benefits of the individual projects and the city overall.
491 Developments will be less expensive and faster to complete. It will allow for more spaces per lot
492 per living space.

493
494 Mr. Holt went on to say not having to obtain variances reduces costs to the developer. For the
495 city, this will reduce administrative costs. He felt if the city did not have these minimums, adding
496 them right now would be difficult.

497
498 Mr. Chris Freeman of 390 Court Street stated he does share the perspective that we should
499 consider going all the way and removing parking minimums entirely. Mr. Freeman stated he has
500 a business in Keene for rentals and he rents out by the bedroom, which is one adult per bedroom
501 which often translates to one car per bedroom, which makes parking needs more intensive. He
502 encouraged the city to look at the on-street parking program.

503
504 He stated, when they look at properties that have higher bedroom count, those are great
505 candidates for conversion into the co-living model and indicated one of the things that holds him
506 back currently is the need to be able to provide a parking spot for each person in the building.
507 That is what is marketable. He stated the removal of the winter parking ban potentially opens us
508 up more options where we can let tenants know that this option exists for off street parking.

509
510 Mr. Freeman stated they have increased the number of bedrooms in order to maximize the co-
511 living potential. But, when the requirement might be based on the number of bedrooms, does this
512 mean next time he would need to draw up a site plan to install a partition wall to close up a
513 dining room. Now a project where they could add an entire new residential unit to Keene's
514 housing market, and free up one bedroom for somebody else, it now is potentially going to cost
515 thousands of dollars in surveying and site plan development fees.

516
517 With no further public comment the Chair closed the public hearing.

518
519 Councilor Haas suggested opening this up to a market-based process and let the market decide
520 how many parking spaces are required. He felt any reduction in parking would help with the
521 housing needs.

522
523 Mr. Hofer reiterated his comments about simplification overall, but stated he was not ready to
524 vote for zero requirements. Also, getting rid of differentiating between workforce and 55 plus
525 feels like there might be some ways to simplify and perhaps move more aggressively towards no
526 requirements.

527
528 Councilor Williams felt parking is something the City subsidizes heavily and wished it would
529 pay for itself. He felt market-based parking is a better way to go in the long run but did not want
530 to be too radical. He stated he would be interested in looking at what the experience is removing
531 parking requirement in a city like Keene's size.
532

533 Councilor Jones stated he likes the idea of reducing parking requirements but would not want to
534 use the overnight parking ban as the city could potentially have a parking ban for two weeks in a
535 row. These individuals would still need a place to park.
536

537 Councilor Bosley stated for 20 years she has been investing in real estate in this community and
538 the only properties she looks at are those that have a certain amount of parking. She felt there
539 could be a further reduction in parking in this ordinance but perhaps not go to 0 just yet, which
540 could create quite a bit of confusion with street parking. She felt the city needs to figure out what
541 needs to be included in neighborhood parking programs but would be comfortable reducing
542 some of the parking requirements to one space per unit. If it is one space per unit as a minimum,
543 the developer is going to make decisions based on the market. She stated she has some comfort
544 in letting the market decide.
545

546 Mr. Kost stated perhaps not going to zero. He asked whether there is an understanding of what
547 the capacity is for on street parking in the City. If investors are made aware of this, they can
548 make better decisions. Ms. Brunner stated the neighborhood parking study that was done earlier
549 this year looked at specific areas of the city. It looked at areas that are zoned for multifamily
550 within walking distance of downtown. For this project area they calculated the number of spaces
551 that they think the city could get on street. Based on the number of units the city had today and
552 the amount of off-street parking that is available today, there really isn't that big of a need for
553 on-street parking. If the City Council was inclined, in certain areas of the city, maybe in areas
554 where there is a residential permit district in place, you would get rid of the onsite parking
555 requirements. There might be the ability to meet some of that parking need with on-street
556 parking. She added, however, Staff is not ready today to make that recommendation because
557 they were not looking at it from that angle. Staff were looking at coming into compliance with
558 the state law, which goes into effect on January 1st.
559

560 Councilor Madison stated he is happy with the market settling this issue. He talked about living
561 in Concord in a 5-unit building, which had three parking spaces. He stated he parked on the
562 street most of the time, snow emergencies were sometimes a bit difficult, but they figured it out
563 and made it work. He felt the city can reduce the amount of parking and it won't cause a
564 catastrophe. People who are renting are going to know what they are getting into.
565

566 He felt the city could do away with parking requirements but didn't feel this was the right time to
567 do that. He added the good thing about ordinances is that you can amend them as is being done
568 now. The Councilor felt what is before the committee could be further reduced.
569

570 Ms. Brunner referred to what she had previously stated. The number that was calculated that the
571 City could get with on street parking is 133 spaces on the low end and 165 on the high end. This
572 would require some redesigning of streets and is not something that is available today.

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A motion was made by Councilor Bosley to amend Ordinance O-2024-20 to an A version reducing the parking requirement across the board to a maximum of one space and leaving the lower allotment for spaces where Staff has already indicated. The motion was seconded by Councilor Madison.

Ms. Brunner clarified that the Councilor was not proposing a parking maximum but proposing a parking minimum of one space per unit, unless it is lower. Councilor Bosley agreed and added unless it is indicated an instance where it would be lower as relating to workforce housing or older persons' housing, etc. Mr. Clements noted this will keep it under what the state is trying to force municipalities to do.

The amendment carried on a 9-1 vote with Kenneth Kost voting in opposition.

A motion was made by Chair Farrington that the Planning Board find O-2024-20-A consistent with the Master Plan. The motion was seconded by Armando Rangel and was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilor Bosley that Planning, Licenses and Development request the Mayor set a public hearing for Ordinance O-2024-20A. The motion was seconded by Councilor Jones and was unanimously approved.

IV) New Business

None

V) Next Meeting – January 13, 2025

B. MORE TIME ITEMS

1. Short Term Rental Properties
2. Neighborhood / Activity Core areas (“Neighborhood Nodes”)
3. Private Roads

A. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Farrington adjourned the meeting at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Krishni Pahl, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Emily Duseau, Planning Technician

Staff Report – Ordinance O-2025-07

The Ordinance

This Ordinance proposes to amend the official Zoning Map of the City of Keene by changing the zoning of one specific parcel of land from the Neighborhood Business District to the Low-Density District. The total land area that would be impacted by this request is 0.92 acres.

The parcel that is the subject of this request is located at 425 Marlboro Street (TMP# 596-017-000) and is owned by Keene Marlboro Group LLC. The Applicant for this proposed zoning amendment is Keene Marlboro Group LLC with Jeb R. Thurmond as the managing representative.

In rezoning decisions, the Petitioner's intended use of the property should not be considered. Rather, the permitted uses allowed in the proposed district should be evaluated for their suitability on the site. Additionally, the Board should consider and review:

- Surrounding land use and zoning patterns;
- The consistency of the proposed rezoning request with the Master Plan;
- Existing and proposed zoning requirements; and,
- Possible resulting impacts.

Background / Surrounding Land Use and Zoning Patterns

The subject parcel is located on the south side of Marlboro St, approximately 160' west of the Optical Ave, Marlboro St intersection and directly across the street from the Police Station. The property contains an existing single-family residence, detached garage, and associated site improvements. The property has site access from Marlboro St. Adjacent uses include single-family residential to the west, utility infrastructure to the east, precision manufacturing to the south, and governmental to the north.

The proposed Ordinance would create an area of Low-Density (LD) that would be bordered by Neighborhood Business (NB) to the east, Low-Density (LD) and Neighborhood Business (NB) to the west, Business Growth and Reuse (BGR) to the north, and Industrial Park (IP) to the south. The map on the next page shows the location of the subject parcel in relation to the boundaries of nearby zoning districts.

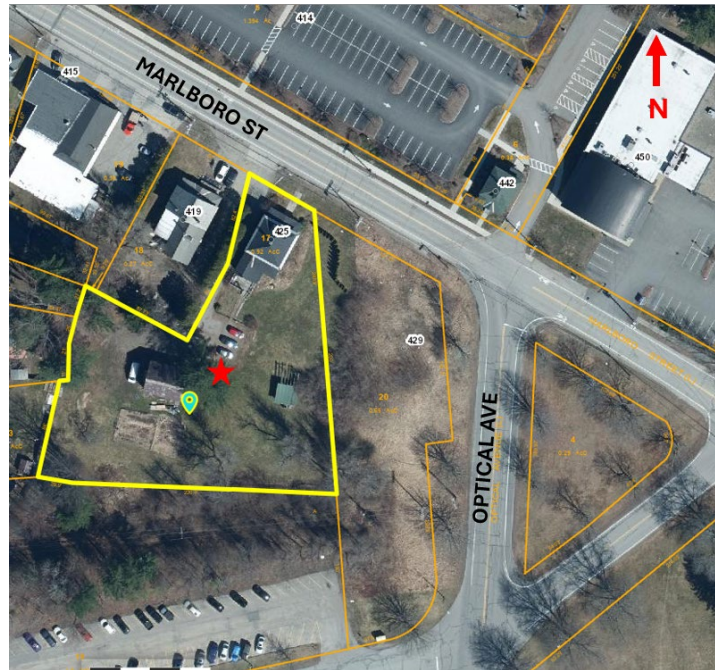


Figure 1. Aerial image showing the 425 Marlboro Street property that is the subject of this proposal, highlighted in yellow.

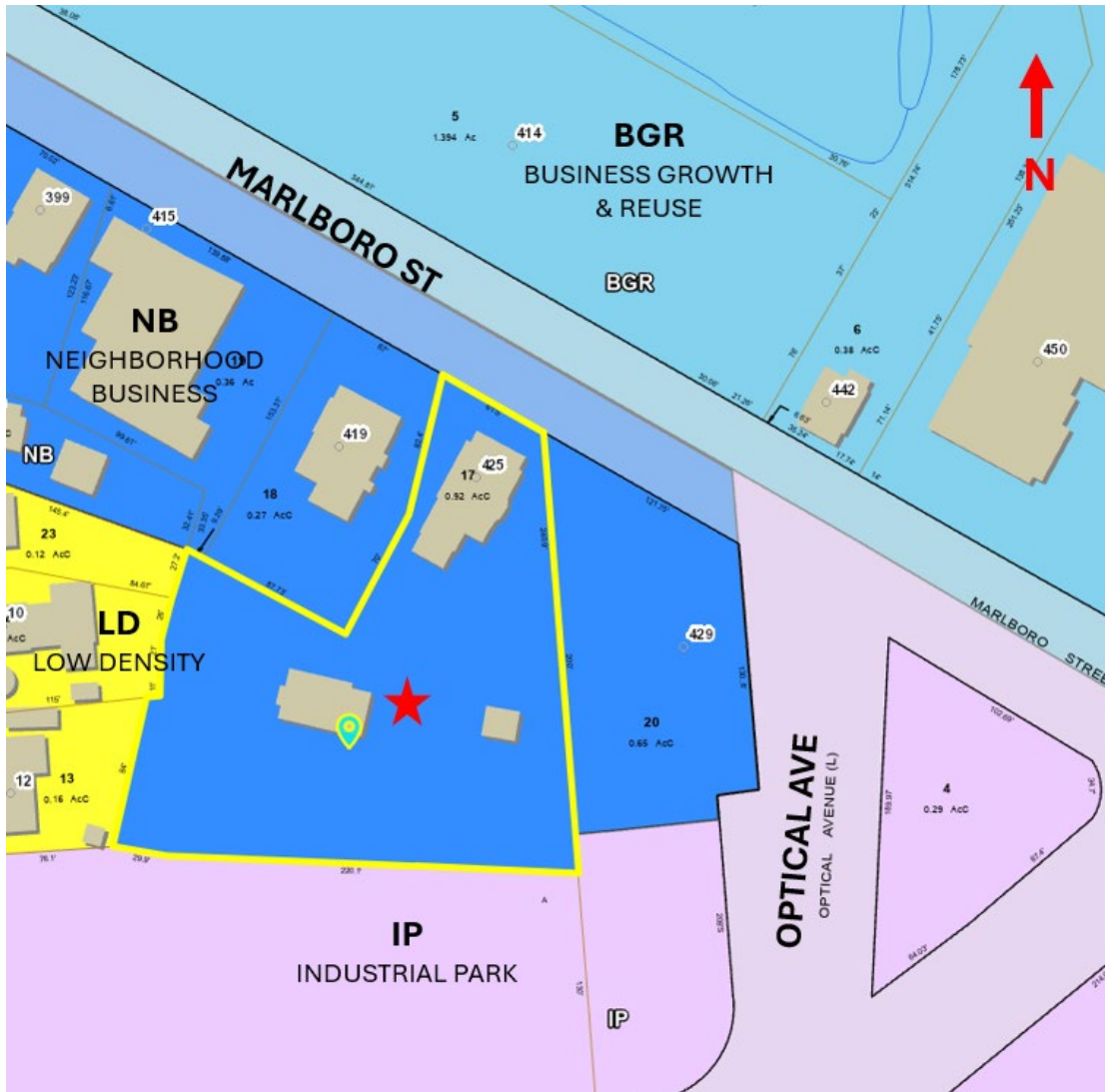


Figure 2. Map that shows the location of the property at 425 Marlboro Street in relation to the boundaries of nearby zoning districts.

Master Plan Consistency

Community Vision

The Vision Focus Area that is most relevant to the proposed rezoning is Focus Area 1: A Quality Built Environment. This focus area strives to promote quality housing stock, maintain neighborhoods, and balancing growth and the provision of infrastructure. This can include locating housing development in areas of the City that are supported by municipal infrastructure of a capacity to handle new development. Neighborhood context is also important when contemplating housing development to ensure compatibility and promote reinvestment in surrounding properties. Investment in one property can spur further investment into surrounding properties, resulting in new and/or improved housing stock. The proposed zoning change would expand a residential zoning district, thereby providing opportunity to invest in quality housing stock that may encourage further redevelopment in an area that is well-served by city infrastructure.

Future Land Use Plan

The subject parcel is located in the Winchester/Marlboro Street Strategic Planning Area of the Future Land Use Map. This area is described in the Master Plan as, *“To the east side of Main Street, along Marlboro Street, there are similar opportunities to balance higher density housing with the existing single and two-family residential neighborhoods.”* The proposed zoning change would allow for multiple attached and detached housing types through the Cottage Court Overlay District (CCOD). Only single-family residential would be allowed by right in addition to a few non-housing uses outside of CCOD. The neighborhood is also located in the “Business/ Industrial/ Live-Work” area of the Future Land Use Map. This area is identified to be best suited as a mix of low impact industrial and business uses in conjunction with ...“live/work and artists’ space...” where employees and business owners live in close proximity to their place of employment/business.

Housing Chapter

The Comprehensive Master Plan recognizes, *“The community’s ability to improve upon its existing housing stock, create new housing opportunities across all income and lifestyles, balance the mix of rental and owner-occupied units...will continue to be a determining factor in Keene’s – and the region’s- health and prosperity. Overall, housing must be conveniently located, healthy, safe, and affordable.”* The Housing Chapter discusses strategies that encourage a diverse housing stock that promotes good design and quality construction. This proposal would increase the opportunity for the creation of new, diverse housing options at an affordable price point in a location that is convenient for jobs, services, and downtown amenities.

Characteristics of Existing and Proposed Zoning Districts

Intent of the Zoning Districts:

The proposal is to convert the subject parcel at 425 Marlboro Street from the Neighborhood Business to the Low-Density District. A description of these districts from the Zoning Ordinance is included below.

- *Current Zoning – Neighborhood Business:* The Neighborhood Business (NB) District is intended to serve as an additional downtown zoning district that promotes smaller-sized business and professional uses, which support adjacent neighborhoods and workplaces, with an orientation toward pedestrian and bicycle access. Some uses are restricted in size to limit adverse impacts on nearby residences and to maintain a pedestrian scale of development. All uses in this district shall have city water and sewer service. (Section 5.3 of the Land Development Code)
- *Proposed Zoning – Low-Density:* The Low Density (LD) District is intended to provide for low-intensity single-family residential development. All uses in this district shall have city water and sewer service. (Section 3.3 of the Land Development Code)

Based on the intent statements, the proposed zoning for the subject parcel could be appropriate in that City water and sewer service is available via Marlboro Street and vehicular connection to Marlboro Street via Optical Avenue and Main Street allows for easy travel to the parcel.

District Uses:

The permitted uses of the Neighborhood Business (NB) (existing) and the Low-Density (LD) District (proposed) differ significantly. Neighborhood Business allows for Single, Two, Multi, and Above Ground Floor Dwelling, while Low-Density only allows for Single-Family Dwelling by right. These other dwelling uses are allowed by Conditional Use Permit (CUP) utilizing the Cottage Court Overlay District (CCOD) in LD. In NB, several commercial uses are also permitted by right but only by CUP in LD. Table 1 shows the permitted principal uses for the Neighborhood Business District, and Table 2 shows the permitted principal uses for the Low-Density District.

Table 1. Permitted Principal Uses for the Neighborhood Business District

5.3.5 Permitted Uses		
RESIDENTIAL USES		SECTION
Dwelling, Above Ground Floor	P	8.3.1.A
Dwelling, Multifamily	P	8.3.1.C
Dwelling, Single-Family	P	8.3.1.D
Dwelling, Two-Family / Duplex	P	8.3.1.E
COMMERCIAL USES		SECTION
Art Gallery	P	8.3.2.C
Art or Fitness Studio	P	8.3.2.D
Banking or Lending Institution	P	8.3.2.E
Bed and Breakfast	SE	8.3.2.G
Funeral Home	P	8.3.2.K
Neighborhood Grocery Store	P	8.3.2.U
Office	P ¹	8.3.2.V
Personal Service Establishment	P	8.3.2.W
Restaurant	P ¹	8.3.2.AB
Retail Establishment, Light	P ¹	8.3.2.AD
Specialty Food Service	P	8.3.2.AH
INSTITUTIONAL USES		SECTION
Day Care Center	SE	8.3.3.C
CONGREGATE LIVING / SOCIAL SERVICES USES		SECTION
Group Home, Small	CUP	8.3.4.F
Residential Care Facility	CUP	8.3.4.J
OPEN SPACE USES		SECTION
Community Garden	P	8.3.6.B
Conservation Area	P	8.3.6.C
INFRASTRUCTURE		SECTION
Telecommunications Facilities	P ¹	8.3.7.E

P = Permitted
P¹ = Permitted with limitations per Article 8.
SE = Permitted by Special Exception
CUP = Permitted by Conditional Use Permit

Table 2. Permitted Principal Uses for the Low-Density District

3.3.5 Permitted Uses		
RESIDENTIAL USES		SECTION
Dwelling, Single-Family	P	8.3.1.D
Dwelling, Two-Family	CRD, CUP	8.3.1.E
Dwelling, Multifamily	CRD, CUP	8.3.1.C
Dwelling, Above Ground Floor	CUP	8.3.1.A
COMMERCIAL USES		SECTION
Neighborhood Grocery Store	CUP	8.3.2.U
Office	CUP	8.3.2.V
Restaurant	CUP	8.3.2.AB
Retail Establishment, Light	CUP	8.3.2.AD
INSTITUTIONAL USES		SECTION
Day Care Center	CUP	8.3.3.C
CONGREGATE LIVING / SOCIAL SERVICES USES		SECTION
Group Home, Small	CUP	8.3.4.F
OPEN SPACE USES		SECTION
Community Garden	P	8.3.6.B
Conservation Area	P	8.3.6.C
INFRASTRUCTURE USES		SECTION
Telecommunications Facilities	P ¹	8.3.7.E

P = Permitted
 P¹ = Permitted with limitations per Article 8.
 CUP = Permitted by Conditional Use Permit
 CRD = Permitted by Conservation Residential Development

Dimensional Requirements:

Table 3 highlights the dimensional requirements for the Neighborhood Business and Low-Density Districts. The Road Frontage and Building Setback requirements for the two districts are similar but overall, the dimensional requirements of the two districts reflect their differences in allowed uses. The Low-Density District has a Minimum Lot Width at Building Line requirement that all residential districts have in the City of Keene and that the Neighborhood Business District does not require. The Neighborhood Business District requires a Build-to Zone instead of yard setbacks required by the Low-Density District. This will change the potential location of development on the property. Both districts allow for a max building height of 35 ft or two stories.

Table 3. Dimensional Regulations for Commerce and High-Density Districts		
Dimensional Standard	Neighborhood Business	Low-Density
Minimum Lot Area	8,000 sf	10,000 sf
Minimum Lot Width at Building Line	-	70 ft
Minimum Road Frontage	50 ft	60 ft
Minimum Front Setback	5-10 ft Build-to-Zone	15 ft
Minimum Rear Setback	20 ft	20 ft
Minimum Side Setback	-	10 ft
Maximum Building Coverage	55%	35%
Maximum Impervious Coverage	65%	45%
Minimum Green / Open Space	35%	55%
Maximum Stories Above Grade	2	2
Maximum Building Height	35 ft	35 ft

Implications of the Proposed Change

Density of Development

The proposed amendment would create a parcel of Low-Density along Marlboro Street with the abutting parcels to the east and west remaining Neighborhood Business. The proposed change would reduce the amount of allowed uses for the parcel. It would make the subject parcel qualify for the Cottage Court Overly District (CCOD). The allowed residential density by right would be reduced but if a property owner chose to utilize the CCOD, it has the potential of replicating the allowed residential density under the current zoning.

Provision of city water and sewer service

The parcel has existing City water and sewer service connections along Marlboro Street. Both the Neighborhood Business and Low-Density Districts require City water and sewer service. Any future development on the parcel will need to determine if the existing systems have sufficient capacity to serve the proposed use.

Recommendation:

If the Committee is inclined to approve this request, the following language is recommended for the motion for each board.

Planning Board motion:

To find proposed Ordinance 0-2025-07 consistent with the 2010 Comprehensive Master Plan.

Planning, License and Development Committee motion:

To recommend that the Mayor set a public hearing date.

KEENE MARLBORO GROUP, LLC

112 S Lincoln St | Keene, NH 03431 | 603-313-0617

To: The City of Keene

From: Keene Marlboro Group, LLC;

Jeb R. Thurmond, Manager

Leonard Weldon, Partner

Margaret Foxweldon, Partner

Nora Rozell, Partner

Re: Application to Amend the zoning map

Parcel ID: Map/Lot # 596//017/000 000/000

We, the members of Keene Marlboro Group, LLC are making an application to the City of Keene (Zoning committee) to change the zoning of 425 Marlboro Street from ***neighborhood/business to low density***, for the purpose of developing a Cottage Court Housing project on the property.

This property, while zoned neighborhood/business abuts a low density neighborhood on its western border.

It is our intention to create up to 8 new housing units that conform to the Cottage Court guidelines. The lack of adequate housing in Keene coupled with the Cottage Court Guidelines will provide sorely needed, competitively affordable housing for the City of Keene.

Sincerely,

Jeb R. Thurmond

Manager Keene Marlboro Group LLC





CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty Four

AN ORDINANCE To Amend the Zoning Map – 425 Marlboro Street –
Neighborhood Business to Low Density.

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That the Ordinances of the City of Keene, as amended, are hereby further amended by changing the zoning designation of a certain tract of land on the south side of Marlboro Street (Map/Lot# 596//017/000 000/000)

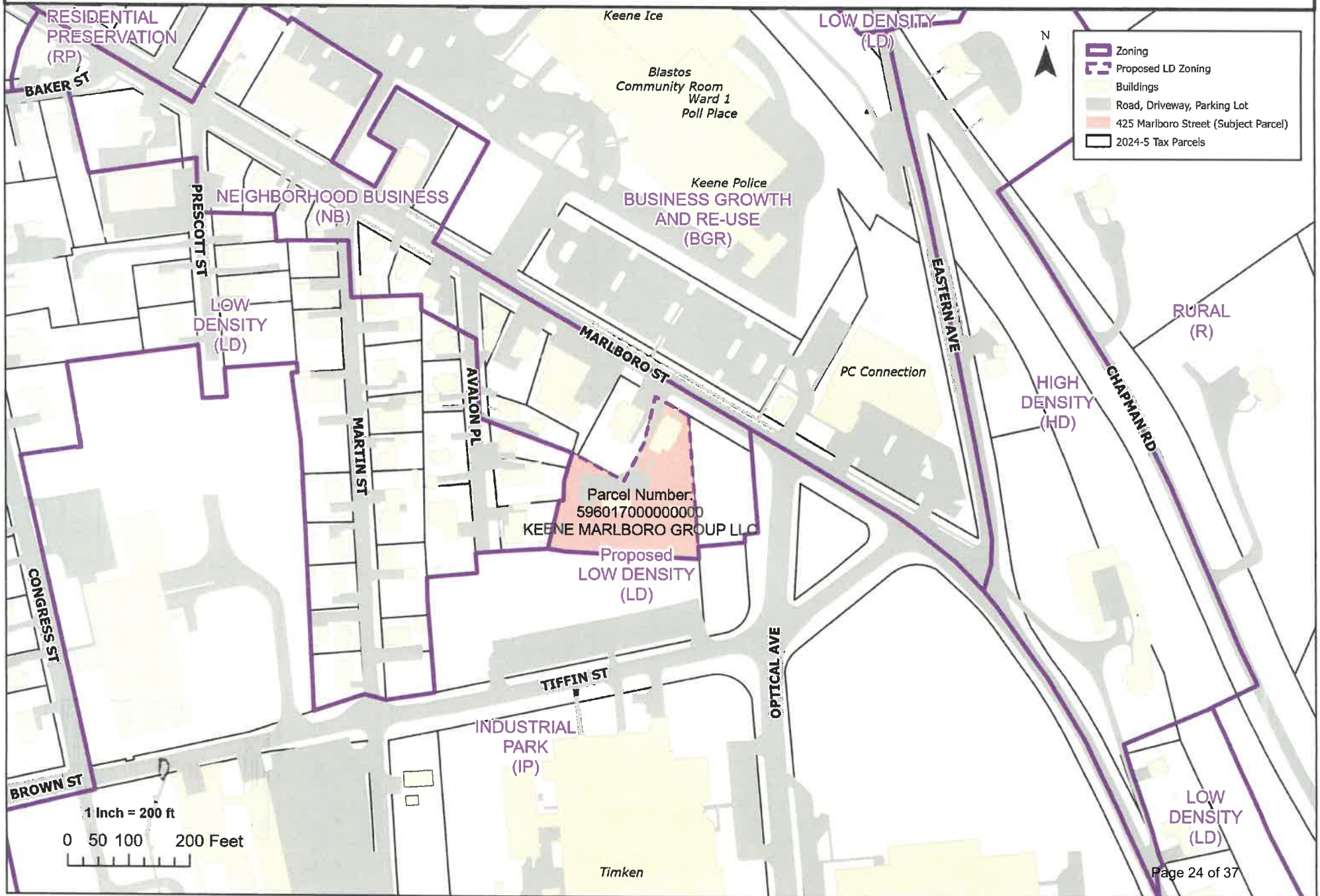
Jay Kahn, Mayor

0

Proposed Zoning Change 425 MARLBORO STREET Keene, NH

Prepared by KGIS
1/9/25
City of Keene Parcels:
CAI Inc
Basemapping:
KGIS2025

DISCLAIMER:
The City of Keene makes no warranty or representation as to the accuracy, timeliness or completeness of any of the data. The City of Keene shall have no liability for the date or lack thereof, or any decision made or action taken or not taken in reliance upon any of the data.



MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Committee of the Planning Board and PLD Committee

From: Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

Date: April 8, 2025

Subject: O-2025-08 Relative to Amendments to the Sign Code to Allow Feather Signs in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts

Overview

This Ordinance proposes to amend Table 10-2 "Prohibited Signs" to create an exception under Animated Signs for temporary Feather Signs on properties in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts. The intent of this change is to allow Feather Signs for up to 30 days at a time and no more than four times per year with appropriate spacing between signs and a reasonable setback from the property line. A sign permit is required to ensure Feather Signs are safely installed. The proposal also includes a definition for Feather Signs.

Background

Sign Code Overview

The City of Keene Sign Code is in Article 10 of the Land Development Code, which is part of the zoning regulations for the City. The purpose of the sign code is to:

"Establish a legal framework for a comprehensive and balanced system of signs in order to achieve the following objectives.

- 1. Help to allow the free flow of traffic and protect the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, which may be impacted by cluttered, distracting or illegible signage.*
- 2. Avoid excessive levels of visual clutter or distraction that are potentially harmful to property values, business opportunities and community appearance.*
- 3. Promote the use of signs that are aesthetically pleasing, of appropriate scale, and integrated with the surrounding buildings and landscape."*

The sign code is organized by permitted signs that are allowed with a sign permit (e.g., wall signs, projecting signs, marquee, freestanding, etc.), exempt signs that are permitted without a sign permit (e.g., government signs or flags, informational/directional signs, interior merchandise displays, etc.), and prohibited signs that are not allowed in the City. This last category is detailed in Table 10-2 of Article 10 and includes signs such as animated signs, electronic changeable copy signs, roof signs, fluorescent signs, etc.

In addition, signs are further split into permanent signs and temporary signs. Both categories of sign require a sign permit from the Community Development Department to ensure the sign is installed safely and does not constitute a hazard.

Industrial and Industrial Park District Overview

The Industrial District is located in several areas south of Route 101 as shown in Figure 1 and is intended to provide space for industrial activities (e.g. manufacturing, warehousing, distribution) not typically suited for commercial areas by virtue of operational characteristics and space needs. Retail sales and offices are allowed only as accessory uses.

The Industrial Park District is located in two areas in Keene, including the Optical Avenue area in southeast Keene (Figure 1) and along Maple Avenue near Route 12 (Figure 2). This district is intended to provide for relatively low-intensity manufacturing and research and development firms that are employee intensive, clean in nature, and promote an attractive industrial park environment. Service operations and sales activities are generally excluded from this district, except for minor sales that may be accessory to the primary use.

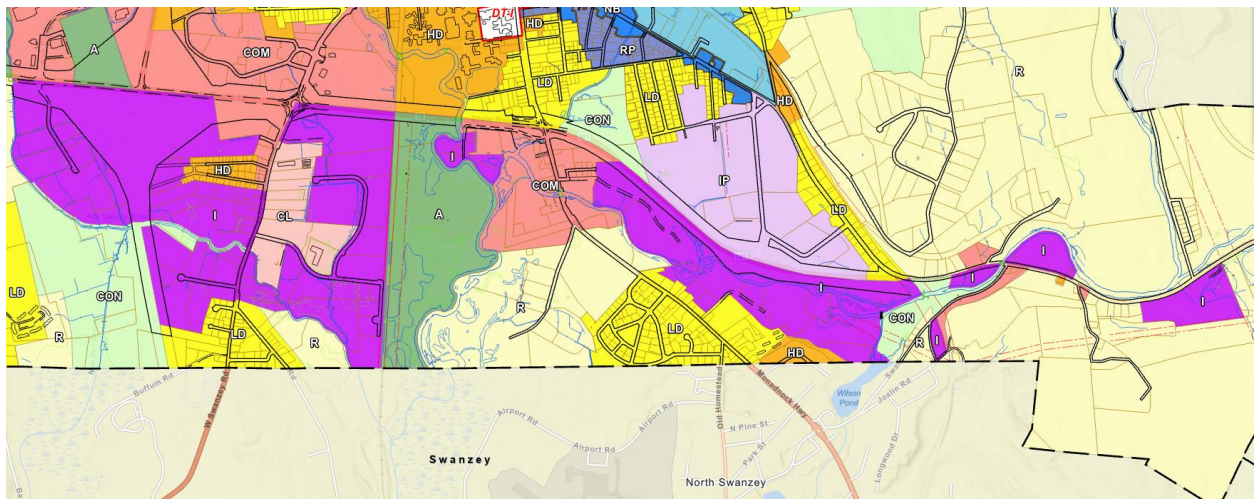


Figure 1. Image that shows areas zoning for Industrial (dark purple) and Industrial Park (light purple) in South Keene.

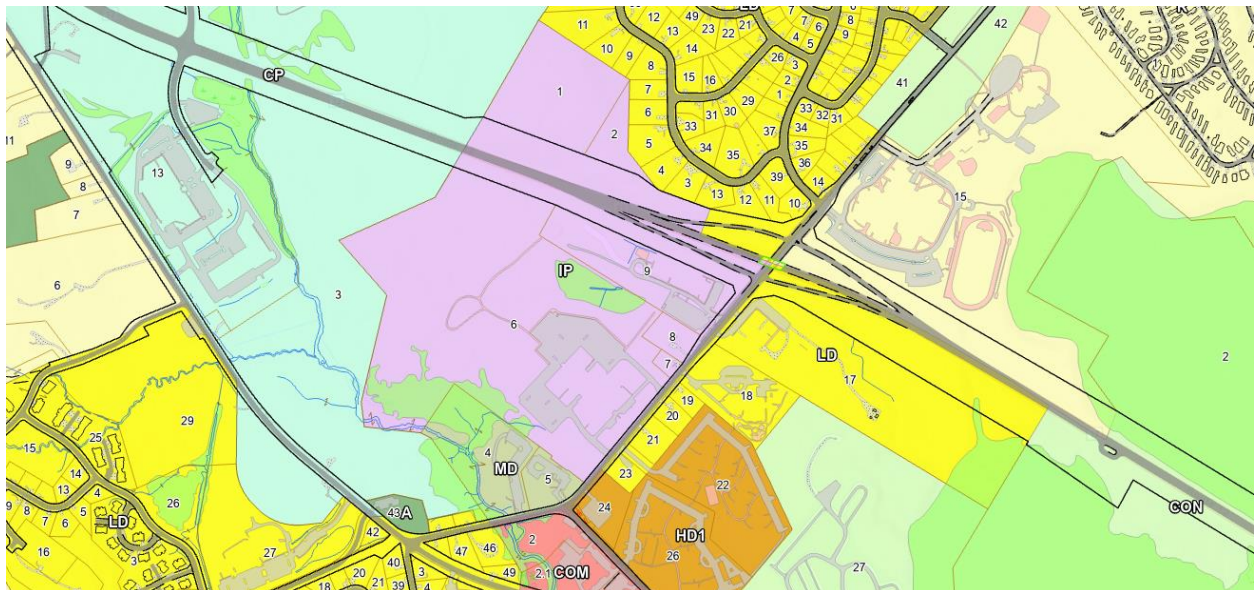


Figure 2. Image that shows the area zoned for Industrial Park along Maple Avenue and Route 12 in light purple.

Feather Sign Overview

Feather Signs are a type of advertising signage that are used to draw the attention of foot and/or street traffic (depending on location and size) to an event or business location. They get their name from their tall, thin, feather-like structure and come in many sizes, ranging from about 7 feet to 20 feet tall. These signs generally last between six months to a few years, depending on how often they are used, weather conditions, and how they are maintained. Example feather signs are shown in Figure 3.

Under the City of Keene Sign Code, feather signs are considered to be a type of Animated Sign due to their design to move in the wind and attract attention. They are currently prohibited in the City.



Figure 3. Image of Feather Signs advertising a store closing event. Attribution: ShareAlike 4.0 International. License link: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

Discussion

This ordinance proposes to allow feather signs that are 20sf or less on properties in the Industrial District and the Industrial Park District for a maximum duration of 30 days at a time, and no more than four times per year. In addition, this ordinance would require that the signs be spaced 10 feet apart from each other and set back 15 feet from the property line. The proposed definition for "Feather Sign" is as follows:

Feather Sign (also known as Blade Sail Sign) - A sign made of flexible material that is generally, but not always, rectangular in shape and attached to a pole on one side so the sign can move with the wind.

Potential impacts of this proposed change that should be considered include the following:

- **Enforcement** – this change, which would allow this type of sign on some properties within the City but not others, may make enforcement more challenging for staff due to potential confusion among property owners about what is and is not allowed in certain areas of the City.
- **Safety** – Feather signs are designed to catch the wind and can blow over in high wind conditions. To mitigate this concern, this ordinance proposes that the signs be installed at least 15 feet from the property line to reduce the chance of a sign blowing into the road or falling over onto a sidewalk. In addition, a sign permit will be required to ensure the signs are properly installed and affixed to the ground.
- **Aesthetics** – One of the purposes of the sign code is to "Avoid excessive levels of visual clutter or distraction that are potentially harmful to property values, business opportunities and community appearance" and "Promote the use of signs that are aesthetically pleasing, of appropriate scale, and integrated with the surrounding buildings and landscape." Feather

signs are designed to attract attention and can be distracting to drivers if they are installed close to the road or are too cluttered. This ordinance proposes that the signs be spaced at least 10 feet apart to prevent them from being installed right on top of each other, and also proposes that they be set back at least 15 feet from the property line.

- **Economic Benefits** – Feather signs are a popular and effective form of advertising that can be used to promote hiring events, sales, etc. and can have a positive economic impact on businesses that rely on pass-by food or vehicular traffic. However, used in excess, they can lower property values of nearby properties.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP)

The 2010 Comprehensive Master Plan recognizes that, for over a century, Keene has been a community mainly based on local manufacturing and agriculture. To that end, the plan includes a strategy to “encourage and recruit industries that are in line with building up local manufacturing and industrial economy.” In addition, the plan notes that “High quality jobs that pay a living wage are viewed as imperative to Keene’s long term economic sustainability, expansion of tax base and lessening the tax burden on homeowners. Growing the job base will require a multi-pronged approach including fostering local start-up companies, retaining and expanding existing firms, and new business recruitment. All of these need strong attention and new programs to succeed.”

Allowing feather signs for advertising in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts would help these businesses advertise events and job opportunities, which may help to retain these businesses and grow the local workforce.

CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

O-2025-08 Relating to Feather Signs in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts

This Ordinance proposes to amend Table 10-2 “Prohibited Signs” to create an exception under Animated Signs for temporary Feather Signs on properties in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts. The intent of this change is to allow Feather Signs for up to 30 days at a time and no more than four times per year with appropriate spacing between signs and a reasonable setback from the property line. A sign permit is required to ensure Feather Signs are safely installed. The proposal also includes a definition for Feather Signs.

The attached materials include the full text of Ordinance O-2025-08 and excerpted sections of the City of Keene Land Development Code that are proposed to be amended with Ordinance O-2025-08. Text that is highlighted in yellow and bolded is proposed to be added, and text that is stricken through is proposed to be deleted.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and _____ Twenty Five

AN ORDINANCE _____ Relating to Feather Signs in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That Chapter 100 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting the stricken text and adding the bolded and underlined text, as follows.

1. That Table 10-2, "Prohibited Signs," be amended to create an exception under Animated Signs for temporary Feather Signs on properties in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts. The intent of this change is to allow Feather Signs for up to 30 days at a time and no more than four times per year with appropriate spacing between signs and a reasonable setback from the property line. A sign permit is required to ensure Feather Signs are safely installed.

Feather Signs that are 20 sf or less in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts (sign permit required, max duration of 30 days at a time and no more than four times per year per property, spaced at least 10 ft apart and set back 15 feet from the property line).

2. That the following definition for "Feather Sign" be added to Article 29, "Defined Terms" of the Land Development Code:

Feather Sign (also known as Blade Sail Sign) - A sign made of flexible material that is generally, but not always, rectangular in shape and attached to a pole on one side so the sign can move with the wind.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

10.3 PROHIBITED SIGNS

The signs in Table 10-2 shall be prohibited in every zoning district, unless noted otherwise in this Article.

Table 10-2: Prohibited Signs

Prohibited Sign Types	Exceptions
Abandoned / Nonapplicable	Monument Signs are allowed
Sign with a sign face area > 200 sf	-
Sign erected or attached to Central Square common or Railroad Square	The temporary use of handheld signs is allowed.
Animated Sign	Revolving Barber Poles 4-ft high by 1-ft wide or less (may be internally illuminated & mounted on the business frontage) 1 flag / tenant frontage that is 15-sf or less, removed at closing, attached to a wall, and does not interfere with travel or maintenance of the public right of way. Feather Signs that are 20 sf or less in the Industrial and Industrial Park Districts (sign permit required, max duration of 30 days at a time and no more than four times per year per property, spaced at least 10 ft apart and set back 15 feet from the property line).
Channel Letter Signs & Reverse Channel Letter Sign	Allowed in BGR, DT-C, DT-G, DT-L, DT-E, CL, COM, CP, HC, I, IP, NB
Internally illuminated Sign	Allowed in BGR, DT-C, DT-G, DT-L, DT-E, CL, COM, CP, HC, I, IP, NB
Electrically Activated Changeable Copy Signs	-
Fluorescent Sign	-
Obscene Sign (per NH RSA 571-B:1)	-
Balloon Sign	Allowed as a Temporary Sign
Off-premises Sign	Allowed if permitted by state law
Reflectorized Sign	-

Roof Sign	May be mounted on architectural projections (e.g. canopies), eaves, or mansard facades
Snipe Sign	-

10.4 STANDARDS FOR ALL SIGNS

10.4.1 Placement and Location

- A. Each sign shall be located on the same site as the subject of the sign.
- B. No sign, other than signs placed by agencies of government with appropriate jurisdiction, shall encroach upon or over a public right-of-way without approval from City Council.
- C. No sign shall cover any portion of any building wall opening or project beyond the ends or top of the building wall to which it is affixed.

10.4.2 Construction and Maintenance

- A. No sign shall be erected, constructed, relocated, or otherwise maintained such that it does any of the following.
 - 1. Obstructs the free and clear vision of motorists or pedestrians in their travels.
 - 2. Causes distraction to motorists on adjacent public rights-of-way.
 - 3. Obstructs, interferes with, or may be confused with any government sign, restrictive sign, directional sign or other authorized traffic sign, signal, or device.
 - 4. Uses a revolving beacon.
 - 5. Obstructs any ingress/egress, inhibits light and ventilation, or constitutes a fire hazard.
- B. All signs and sign structures, including supports, braces, guys, and anchors, shall be kept in good repair and appearance in accordance with the provisions of this Article, and shall comply with all applicable construction standards, codes and regulations.

Event Venue - A facility that provides hosting and rental services of a banquet hall or similar facility for private events (e.g. wedding receptions, holiday parties, fundraisers, etc.) with on-site or catered food service to invited guests during intermittent dates and hours of operation. Live entertainment may occur as part of an event. An event venue is not operated as a restaurant with regular hours of operation.

Excavation Activity/Excavation Operations/Processing Activities - For the purposes of Article 24 - "Earth Excavation Regulations," excavation activity/excavation operations/processing activities shall mean the act of moving or removing earth, including but not limited to, all activities associated with the commercial taking of earth, production and processing of construction aggregate, transportation of earth and site restoration. Associated excavation and processing activities also include, but are not limited to: digging, drilling, blasting, bulldozing, crushing, washing, screening, sorting, scaling, weighing, stockpiling, loading, and transporting earth.

Excavation Area - For the purposes of Article 24 - "Earth Excavation Regulations," excavation area shall mean the surface area within an excavation site where excavation has occurred or is eligible to occur under the provisions of this LDC, and NH RSA 155-E. This area may be also referred to as the "pit surface area."

Excavation Perimeter - For the purposes of Article 24 - "Earth Excavation Regulations," excavation perimeter shall mean the land within an excavation site, which includes the excavation area, areas where excavation operations and processing activities are performed, stockpiling areas, and any areas where earth materials are or will be loaded or unloaded for purposes of transport.

Excavation Project - For the purposes of Article 24 - "Earth Excavation Regulations," excavation project shall mean a timeframe that includes all excavation activities to be conducted on an excavation site, including all excavation phases.

Excavation Site - For the purposes of Article 24 - "Earth Excavation Regulations," excavation site shall mean any area of contiguous land in common ownership upon which excavation takes place.

Façade - The front of a building or structure or any of its sides that faces a public right-of-way.

Fall Zone - The area within which there is a potential hazard from falling debris, such as ice, which encompasses a circle with a diameter equal to twice the height of a telecommunication facility as measured on the ground from the base of the facility.

Family - Family shall mean one of the following:
1) two or more natural persons related by blood, marriage, civil union, adoption, or foster care, living together as a single housekeeping unit with or without customary household helpers in a dwelling unit; or 2) a group of four or fewer natural persons, who are not related by blood, marriage, civil union, adoption, or foster care, living together as a single housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit. This term shall not preclude one natural person from being the sole occupant of any dwelling unit.

Farming - Any land, buildings or structures on or in which agriculture and farming operations or activities are carried out or conducted as defined by NH RSA 21:34-A. Such operations include, but are not limited to, animal husbandry, the cultivation, production, harvesting and sale of any agricultural, floricultural, viticultural, forestry, or horticultural crops as well as ancillary activities integral to the operation of a farm.

Feather Sign (also known as Blade Sail Sign) - A sign made of flexible material that is generally, but not always, rectangular in shape and attached to a pole on one side so the sign can move with the wind.

Fenestration - The arrangement of windows, exterior doors and other exterior openings on a building.

Fire Line - Any pipe, including appurtenant valves or fittings, conveying water from a water main to private fire apparatus, and conveying water at no time for other purposes except as provided under

MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Committee of the Planning Board and PLD Committee

From: Evan J. Clements, AICP - Planner

Date: April 14, 2025

Subject: O-2025-09 Relating to Parking Requirements for Single Family Dwellings

Overview

This Ordinance proposes to modify the required amount of parking spaces for the Dwelling, Single-Family residential use category in the Zoning Ordinance. The proposal will bring the single-family use in alignment with other residential uses by requiring one parking space per single family residence.

Background

During the recently adopted Ordinance O-2024-20-A process, the single-family use was inadvertently omitted from table 9.1. This omission removed the requirement for a single-family use to have any minimum required parking. By reinserting "Dwelling, Single-Family" back into the table, all residential uses in the City will be aligned with one parking space per unit, or less.

Discussion

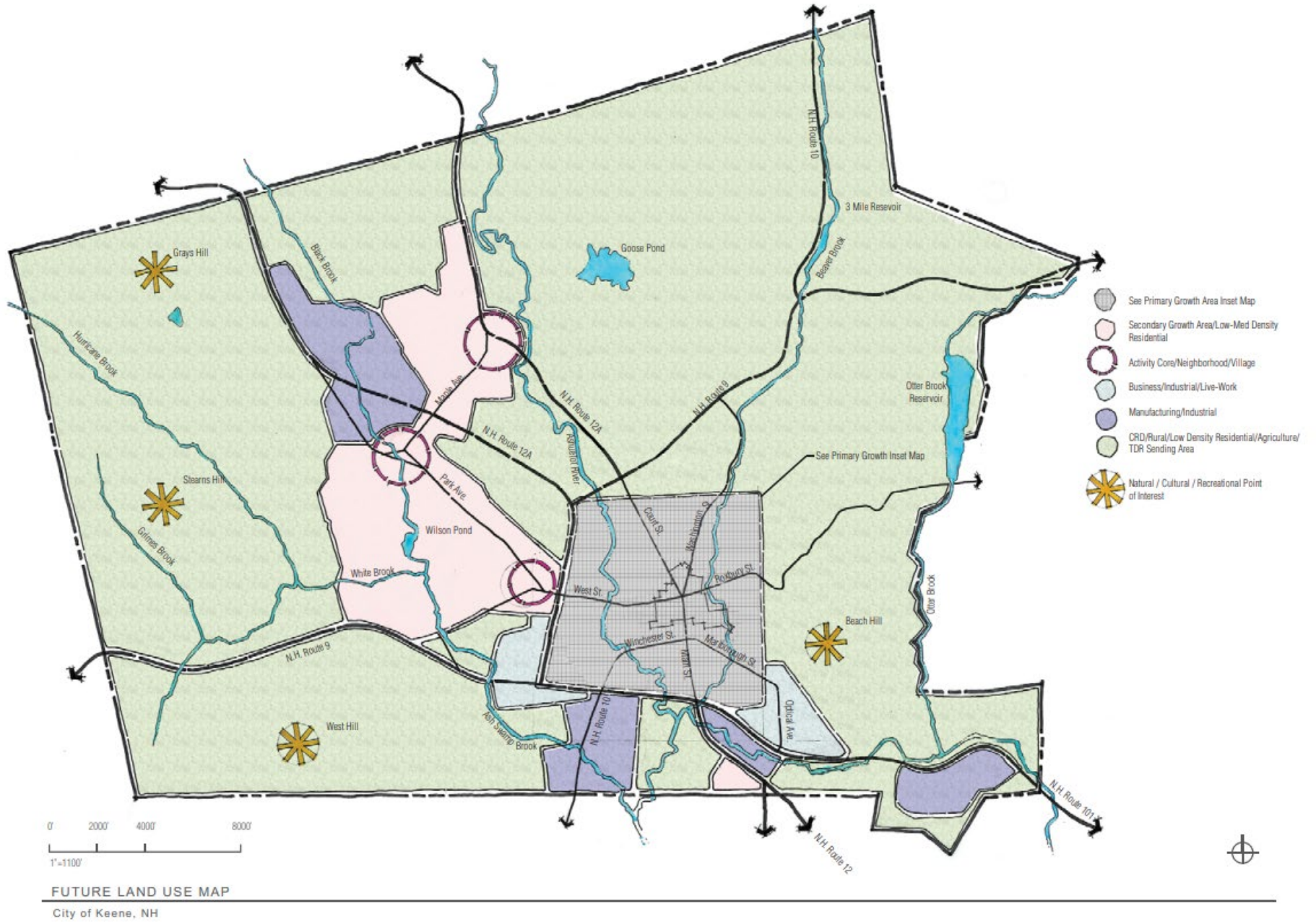
The intent of Ordinance O-2024-20-A was to reduce barriers to housing development by reducing the overall minimum parking requirement for residential uses within the City. The reduction would not limit an applicant from proposing more parking than is required to meet the estimated parking demand of a project. During the adoption of this Ordinance, it was discovered that the single-family use was unintentionally omitted from the revised table 9.1. This resulted in the elimination of the minimum parking requirement for single family residences.

Consistency with the 2010 Comprehensive Master Plan

The highest priority implementation recommendation from the 2010 Comprehensive Master Plan is to rewrite the land use and zoning code to align with the intent of the Future Land Use Map (Fig. 1). The plan states, *"As the community moves forward with this revision, other types of land-use regulations should be considered that will incorporate walkability, green infrastructure, sustainable building, a smart-growth principle and other features outlined in this plan."*

The plan recommends concentrating growth in the primary growth area and allowing for carefully planned growth and density in secondary growth areas, while prioritizing conservation of land in rural and agricultural areas. This proposal is aligned with the intent of Ordinance O-2024-20-A to reduce barriers to multifamily, senior, and workforce housing development and allow for more efficient use of land in the primary and secondary growth areas of the Future Land Use Map, where multifamily dwellings are typically allowed. It also reduced the parking requirement for single-family dwellings which are allowed outside the primary and secondary growth areas; however, density in these areas of the City are controlled by other factors such as lot size and maximum impervious coverage.

FIGURE 1. City of Keene Future Land Use Map.



CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE

O-2025-09 Relating to Parking Requirements for Single Family Dwellings

This Ordinance proposes to modify the required amount of parking spaces for the Dwelling, Single-Family residential use category in the Zoning Ordinance. The proposal will bring the single-family use in alignment with other residential uses by requiring one parking space per single family residence.

During the recently adopted Ordinance O-2024-20-A process, the single-family use was inadvertently omitted from table 9.1. This omission removed the requirement for a single-family use to have any minimum required parking. By reinserting “Dwelling, Single-Family” back into the table, all residential uses in the City will be aligned with one parking space per unit, or less.

The attached materials include the full text of Ordinance O-2025-09 and excerpted sections of the City of Keene Land Development Code that are proposed to be amended with Ordinance O-2025-09. Text that is highlighted in yellow and bolded is proposed to be added, and text that is stricken through is proposed to be deleted.



CITY OF KEENE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and _____ Twenty Five

AN ORDINANCE _____ Relating to Parking Requirements for Single Family Dwellings

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Keene, as follows:

That Chapter 100 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Keene, New Hampshire, as amended, is hereby further amended, as follows.

1. That Table 9-1 “Minimum On-Site Parking Requirements” of Article 9 “Residential Uses” be amended to display “Dwelling, Single-Family” under “Residential Uses” with a minimum parking requirement of 1 space per unit.

Jay V. Kahn, Mayor

TABLE 9-1: MINIMUM ON-SITE PARKING REQUIREMENTS

PRINCIPAL USE	MIN ON-SITE PARKING REQUIREMENT
RESIDENTIAL USES	
Dwelling, Above Ground Floor	1 space per unit (0.9 spaces per studio in DT-G, DT-L)
Dwelling, Manufactured Housing	
Dwelling, Multifamily	
Dwelling, Single-Family	
Dwelling, Two-Family / Duplex	
Housing for Older Persons (as defined by RSA 354-A:15)	0.9 spaces/unit (0.75 spaces/unit in DT-G, DT-L)
Workforce Housing (as defined by RSA 674:58, IV)	0.9 spaces per studio (0.75 spaces per studio in DT-G, DT-L) 1 space per one-bedroom or more (0.9 spaces per one-bedroom or more in DT-G, DT-L)
COMMERCIAL USES	
Agricultural-Related Educational & Recreational Activity as a Business	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Animal Care Facility	3 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Art Gallery	3 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Art or Fitness Studio	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Banking or Lending Institution	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Bar	1 space / 5 seats
Bed and Breakfast	1 space / guest room + 2 spaces / dwelling unit
Car Wash	1 space / car wash bay
Charitable Gaming Facility	0.75 spaces / gaming position
Clinic	5 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Event Venue	5 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Funeral Home	5 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Greenhouse / Nursery	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Health Center / Gym	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Heavy Rental & Service Establishment	3 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Hotel/Motel	1 space / guest room
Kennel	2 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Micro-Brewery/Micro-Distillery/Micro-Winery	2 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA of production area + 1 space / 4 seats
Motor Vehicle Dealership	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA of indoor sales and display area + 4 spaces / service bay
Neighborhood Grocery Store	3 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Office	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Personal Service Establishment	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Private Club / Lodge	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA or 1 space / 4 seats, whichever is greater
Recreation/Entertainment Facility - Indoor	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA or 1 space / 4 seats
Recreation/Entertainment Facility - Outdoor	2 spaces / 1,000 sf outdoor use area
Research and Development	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Restaurant	1 space / 5 seats
Retail Establishment, Heavy	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA
Retail Establishment, Light	4 spaces / 1,000 sf GFA