

ARTICLE ___ AMEND ZONING BYLAW – Accessory Apartments
(Two-thirds vote)

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw as set forth herein:

A. In Section 3.8 - Accessory Use Regulations, amend Subsection 3.8.1.6 - Accessory Apartments as follows:

1. Delete paragraphs l) and m) and replace them with the following new paragraphs l) and m):
 - l) The apartment may be located within a detached BUILDING that is located on the same LOT as the BUILDING with the Principal DWELLING UNIT.
 - m) If a detached BUILDING on a LOT has been continuously in existence since before 2016 and has not been expanded or enlarged thereafter, an apartment in such a detached BUILDING may have a GROSS FLOOR AREA of up to 2000 square feet, not including attic or basement areas, and up to three bedrooms.
2. Insert new paragraphs n) and o) as follows:
 - n) A LOT containing a BUILDING with a Principal Unit and an Apartment within a detached BUILDING shall not be further divided resulting in the separation of the Principal Unit and the Apartment, unless both resulting LOTS and the BUILDINGS thereon meet all minimum area, FRONTAGE, width and yard requirements of the applicable zoning district.
 - o) The apartment in a detached BUILDING shall be installed on a permanent foundation.And renumber existing paragraph n) to become paragraph p)

[Note – Subsection 3.8.1.6 paragraphs l) and m) currently read:

l) The apartment may be located within a detached BUILDING that is located on the same LOT as the BUILDING with the Principal DWELLING UNIT, if the detached BUILDING has been continuously in existence since before 2010 and has not been expanded or enlarged thereafter. An apartment in such a detached BUILDING may have a GROSS FLOOR AREA of up to 2000 square feet, not including attic or basement areas, and up to three bedrooms. A LOT containing a BUILDING with a Principal Unit and an Apartment within a detached BUILDING shall not be further divided resulting in the separation of the Principal Unit and the Apartment, unless both resulting LOTS and the BUILDINGS thereon meet all minimum area, FRONTAGE, width and yard requirements of the applicable zoning district.

m) However, in the R-2, R-4, R-8, R8/4, R-10, and R-10/8 Districts an apartment in such a detached BUILDING shall only be allowed with a Special Permit from the Board of Appeals.]

B. In Section 3.3 - Residential Uses (beginning of section), paragraph b), insert after “19D;” the following phrase:

“Accessory apartment in a detached BUILDING as provided under Section 3.8.1.6; “;

And in paragraph c) delete the phrase “a single FAMILY dwelling with one Apartment in a detached BUILDING under Section 3.3.2.10 of this Bylaw;”.

[Note – Section 3.3. currently reads 3.3 Residential USES – Not more than one BUILDING for dwelling purposes shall be located upon a LOT, except:

- a) *in the following Districts: Village Districts (EAV, NAV, SAV, WAV); Residence A District (R-A); Residence AA District (R-AA);*
- b) *for the following USES: Nursing Home; Full Service Retirement Community; Assisted Living Residence as defined in this Bylaw or in MGL Ch. 19D; and*
- c) *where a special permit has been granted for the following: a Planned Conservation Residential Community (PCRC) under Section 9 of this Bylaw; an Independent SENIOR Residence under Section 9B of this Bylaw; an AFFORDABLE Housing Development under Section 4.4 of this Bylaw; a single FAMILY dwelling with one Apartment in a detached BUILDING under Section 3.3.2.10 of this Bylaw; a golf course under Section 3.5.17 of this bylaw.]*

, or take any other action relative thereto.

SUMMARY

This article would amend the Zoning Bylaw to allow Accessory Apartments as a by-right use in pre-existing and newly constructed detached buildings in all single-family residential zoning districts and on all lots with single-family use, subject to the existing standards for Accessory Apartments. As demonstrated by Acton 2020 Objective 7.4 and Action Items 5.1.1.1 and 7.4.1 and the Housing Production Plan Strategy 5.3, there is a need for a diverse range of affordable housing options and a desire to support the financial ability of all residents to stay in Acton for a lifetime. This amendment addresses that need by removing barriers to increasing the range of housing options available to residents.

Direct inquiries to: Roland Bartl, Planning Director: planning@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6631
Selectman assigned:

Recommendations: Board of Selectmen Finance Committee Planning Board

ARTICLE #
(Two-thirds vote)

**AMEND ZONING BYLAW – ADDITIONS AND REPLACEMENTS
ON NON CONFORMING LOTS**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw as follows:

A. Non-Conforming Lots

1. In Section 8.1.3, delete the existing section and replace it with the following:

Reconstruction of Single- and Two-Family Dwellings on Nonconforming Lots – A STRUCTURE in single family residential USE on a nonconforming LOT may be razed and rebuilt for single family residential USE; and a STRUCTURE in two-family residential USE on a nonconforming LOT may be razed and rebuilt for two-family residential USE; in both cases subject to the following conditions and limitations:

- 8.1.3.1 The replacement STRUCTURE shall not exceed the FLOOR AREA RATIO on the LOT of the STRUCTURE that existed on the LOT before it was razed or damaged.
- 8.1.3.2 The replacement STRUCTURE shall meet all minimum yard and maximum height requirements of this Bylaw.
- 8.1.3.3 In the absence of architectural and plot plans for the existing structure to be razed, the FLOOR AREA RATIO shall be determined by using the information on record at the Town of Acton Assessor's office.
- 8.1.3.4 Additions to the replacement STRUCTURE may be made after two years following the date of initial occupancy of the replacement STRUCTURE, if otherwise permissible.

[Note Section 8.1.3 currently reads:

Replacement of Single- and Two-Family Dwellings on Nonconforming Lots – A STRUCTURE in single family residential USE on a nonconforming LOT may be razed and rebuilt for single family residential USE; and a STRUCTURE in two-family residential USE on a nonconforming LOT may be razed and rebuilt for two-family residential USE; in both cases subject to the following conditions and limitations:

- 8.1.3.1 *The replacement STRUCTURE shall not exceed the FLOOR AREA RATIO on the LOT of the STRUCTURE that existed on the LOT before it was razed or damaged.*
- 8.1.3.2 *The replacement STRUCTURE shall meet all minimum yard and maximum height requirements of this Bylaw.*
- 8.1.3.3 *In the absence of architectural and plot plans for the existing structure to be razed, the FLOOR AREA RATIO shall be determined by using the information on record at the Town of Acton Assessor's office.*

8.1.3.4 Additions to the replacement STRUCTURE may be made after two years following the date of initial occupancy of the replacement STRUCTURE, if otherwise permissible and subject to any permits and special permits that may be required.]

2. In Section 8.1.4 – Extensions, alterations, or changes of Single and Two-Family Dwellings on Nonconforming Lots, delete the existing section and subsections in its entirety and replace it with the following:

One or more extensions, alterations or changes to a single or two-family residential STRUCTURE on a nonconforming LOT shall be deemed not to increase any nonconformity and shall not require special permits under Section 8.1.5, provided that such extensions, alterations or changes comply with all applicable yard requirements.

[Note Section 8.1.4 currently reads:

One or more extensions, alterations or changes to a single or two-family residential STRUCTURE on a nonconforming LOT shall be deemed not to increase any nonconformity and shall not require special permits under Section 8.1.5, provided that such extensions, alterations or changes comply with all applicable yard requirements and in total do not increase the size of the STRUCTURE by more than 15% of the GROSS FLOOR AREA in existence on April 1, 2012 or the date that the LOT became nonconforming, whichever is later.]

3. In Section 8.1.5, delete the existing section and replace it with the following:

In all other cases, the Board of Appeals may, by special permit, allow such reconstruction of a larger structure than otherwise allow under Section 8.1.3, where it determines either that the proposed modification does not increase the nonconformity or, if the proposed modification does increase the nonconformity, it will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing STRUCTURE on the nonconforming LOT.

[Note Section 8.1.5 currently reads:

In all other cases, the Board of Appeals may, by special permit, allow such reconstruction of, or extension, alteration or change to a single or two-family residential STRUCTURE on a nonconforming LOT, where it determines either that the proposed modification does not increase the nonconformity or, if the proposed modification does increase the nonconformity, it will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing STRUCTURE on the nonconforming LOT.]

, or take any other action relative thereto.

SUMMARY

The intent of this article is to streamline permitting processes for existing and proposed uses that are historically approved without much, if any public concern during the special permitting process, and to address those concerns through bylaw amendments as shown above. Uses requiring a special permit are more discretionary than uses allowed by-right. Special permits require a public hearing which involves additional time, cost and uncertainty to the applicant as well as considerable bureaucratic cost and effort to the Town. This article allows all extensions, alterations or changes to a single or two-family dwelling on a non-conforming lot by-right. There are many lots in Acton that are non-conforming with respect to minimum frontage or area. Without some accommodation in the zoning bylaw, State statute would require that every extension, alteration, or change to a dwelling on a non-conforming lot is subject to a special permit. Currently, the zoning bylaw provides that a by-right extension, alteration or change to a single or two-family dwelling on a non-conforming lot is limited to a 15% increase to the size of the existing structure. Any increase above 15% requires a special permit. Since the adoption of the 15% threshold in April 2012 there have been 14 special permit applications under this bylaw section, and all were granted. This change would reduce regulatory burden on homeowners and allow for more effective allocation of Town resources.

Direct inquiries to: Roland Bartl, Planning Director: planning@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6631
Selectman assigned:

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>	<u>Planning Board</u> Recommended
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ARTICLE ___ AMEND ZONING BYLAW –OUTDOOR LIGHTING
(Two-thirds vote)

To see if the Town will vote to amend changes throughout Subsection 10.6 (Outdoor Lighting Regulations for Site Plan Special Permit) in the Zoning Bylaw.

Parts of Subsection 10.6 would be replaced or modified.

, or take any other action relative thereto.

SUMMARY
(This is a place-holder item)

The existing zoning regulations concerning outdoor lighting do not specifically address the use of light-emitting diode (LED) lights. At the time of adoption, LED lights were not widely used; today, they are the primary choice for outdoor lighting due to their energy efficiency and durability. This article seeks to update the Zoning Bylaw to address and better regulate the use of LED lighting.

Direct inquiries to: Roland Bartl, Planning Director: planning@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6631
Selectman assigned

Recommendations: Board of Selectmen Finance Committee Planning Board

ARTICLE #
(Two-thirds vote)

AMEND ZONING BYLAW –RESTAURANT SEATING

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw, Section 3 – TABLE OF PRINCIPAL USES by deleting footnote number (8) and replacing it with the following:

(8) “No Special Permit shall be required for a Restaurant with 65 seats or less.”

[Note – footnote (8) currently reads as follows: “No Special Permit shall be required for a Restaurant with 10 seats or less.”]

MOTION (if on consent)

Move that the Town adopt the zoning bylaw amendments as set forth in the Article.

SUMMARY

Currently the Zoning Bylaw allows restaurants with 10 or fewer seats by right. Restaurants with more require special permits. Since 2011, there have been 11 special permit requests from restaurants seeking more than 10 seats. All of these Special Permits were granted. The requests ranged from 18 to 200 seats, with an overall average of 67 seats. Based on this average, this article proposes to increase the by-right restaurant seat limit from 10 to 65. Under this rule, six of the previous 11 Special Permit requests would have been approved by right, leaving less than half the original amount to be granted by special permit. This change would reduce regulatory burden on applicants and allow for more effective allocation of Town resources. The passage of this amendment would further support the Key Implementation Strategies outlined in the Acton 2020 Comprehensive Plan, which detail Acton residents’ desire for increased dining options in vibrant community centers.

Direct inquiries to: Roland Bartl, AICP, Planning Director – (978) 929-6631
Selectman assigned:

Recommendations: Board of Selectmen Finance Committee Planning Board

ARTICLE #
(Two-thirds vote)

**AMEND ZONING BYLAW – SIGNS AND
ADVERTISING DEVICES**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw as follows:

A. Section 7.7: EXTERIOR SIGNS

Delete the existing Section 7.7.4.2 and replace it with the following:

- 7.7.4.2 The height of a WALL SIGN shall not exceed 4.5 feet in the Business, Industrial, and Office Districts, 3 feet in the EAV and EAV 2 Districts, and 2 feet in all other Village Districts.

*[Note Section 7.7.4.2 currently reads:
The height of a WALL SIGN shall not exceed 3 feet in the Business, Industrial and Office Districts, and 2 feet in the Village Districts.]*

B. Section 7.8: FREESTANDING SIGNS

1. Delete existing Section 7.8.1 and replace it with the following:

- 7.8.1 One FREESTANDING SIGN shall be permitted on a LOT identifying a business located on the same LOT.

*[Note Section 7.8.1 currently reads:
One FREESTANDING SIGN shall be permitted on a LOT identifying a business located on the same LOT; and one FREESTANDING SIGN shall be permitted for a BUSINESS CENTER displaying an identification of the BUSINESS CENTER provided no other FREESTANDING SIGN shall be permitted within such BUSINESS CENTER, and provided further that in a Village District no other FREESTANDING or EXTERIOR SIGN shall be ERECTED to identify the BUSINESS CENTER.]*

2. Delete existing Section 7.8.5 (standards for freestanding signs in the Business, Industrial and Office Districts) and replace it with the following:

- 7.8.5 The following standards shall apply to FREESTANDING SIGNS in the Business, Industrial and Office Districts:

- 7.8.5.1 Where a FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a business, such FREESTANDING SIGN shall be permitted in addition to any EXTERIOR SIGN permitted on the same LOT. The DISPLAY AREA of the FREESTANDING SIGN shall not exceed 12 square feet and the height shall not exceed 7 feet. If such a FREESTANDING SIGN is a MONUMENT SIGN, its DISPLAY AREA may be increased to 16 square feet, provided however that the height of a MONUMENT SIGN shall not exceed 4 feet, or 6 feet if its width does not

exceed 3 feet. Where the FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a motor vehicle service station the maximum permitted DISPLAY AREA may be increased to 24 square feet if the additionally permitted DISPLAY AREA is used solely for the posting of current prices of fuel and gasoline.

- 7.8.5.2 One FREESTANDING SIGN shall be permitted for a BUSINESS CENTER, provided that no other FREESTANDING SIGN identifying an individual business shall be permitted in the BUSINESS CENTER.
- 7.8.5.3 A BUSINESS CENTER is eligible for two FREESTANDING SIGNS when the LOT or LOTS of the BUSINESS CENTER have more than 300 feet of combined FRONTAGE on one or more STREETS, provided that not more than one FREESTANDING SIGN for the BUSINESS CENTER shall be allowed along a continuous FRONTAGE on one STREET that measures less than 300 feet.
- 7.8.5.4 Where a FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a BUSINESS CENTER, each business located within such BUSINESS CENTER may display its identification on the FREESTANDING SIGN together with the identification of the BUSINESS CENTER, provided that such FREESTANDING SIGN remains of integrated and coherent design and complies with all applicable standards. The DISPLAY AREA of such a FREESTANDING SIGN shall not exceed a maximum DISPLAY AREA of 50 square feet, and its height shall not exceed 12.5 feet. If a FREESTANDING SIGN under this provision is a MONUMENT SIGN, its DISPLAY AREA may be increased to a maximum DISPLAY AREA of 62.5 square feet. The height of such a MONUMENT SIGN shall not exceed 10 feet.

[Note Section 7.8.5 currently reads:

7.8.5 The following standards shall apply to FREESTANDING SIGNS in the Business, Industrial and Office Districts:

7.8.5.1 Where a FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a business, such FREESTANDING SIGN shall be permitted in addition to any EXTERIOR SIGN permitted on the same LOT. The DISPLAY AREA of the FREESTANDING SIGN shall not exceed 12 square feet and the height shall not exceed 7 feet. If such a FREESTANDING SIGN is a MONUMENT SIGN, its DISPLAY AREA may be increased to 16 square feet, provided however that the height of a MONUMENT SIGN shall not exceed 4 feet, or 6 feet if its width does not exceed 3 feet. Where the FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a motor vehicle service station the maximum permitted DISPLAY AREA may be increased to 24 square feet if the additionally permitted DISPLAY AREA is used solely for the posting of current prices of fuel and gasoline.

7.8.5.2 Where a FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a BUSINESS CENTER, each business located within such BUSINESS CENTER may display its identification on the FREESTANDING SIGN together with the identification of the BUSINESS CENTER, provided that such FREESTANDING SIGN remains of integrated and coherent design and complies with all applicable standards. The DISPLAY AREA of such a FREESTANDING SIGN shall not exceed 20 square feet plus an additional 2

square feet per business name displayed, up to a maximum DISPLAY AREA of 24 square feet, and its height shall not exceed 10 feet. If a FREESTANDING SIGN under this provision is a MONUMENT SIGN, its DISPLAY AREA may be increased to 24 square feet plus an additional 2 square feet per business name displayed, up to a maximum DISPLAY AREA of 30 square feet. The height of such MONUMENT SIGN shall not exceed 6 feet, or 8 feet if its width does not exceed 4 feet.]

3. Delete Section 7.8.6 (standards for freestanding signs in the Village Districts) and replace it with the following new sections:

7.8.6 The following standards shall apply to FREESTANDING SIGNS in all Village Districts:

7.8.6.1 The DISPLAY AREA of a FREESTANDING SIGN identifying an individual business shall not exceed 8 square feet and the height shall not exceed 5 feet. If such a FREESTANDING SIGN is a MONUMENT SIGN, its DISPLAY AREA may be increased to 12 square feet, provided however that the height shall not exceed 4 feet, or 5 feet if its width does not exceed 3 feet. Where the FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a motor vehicle service station, the maximum permitted DISPLAY AREA may be increased to 16 square feet if the additionally permitted DISPLAY AREA is used solely for the posting of current prices of fuel and gasoline.

7.8.6.2 Where a FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a BUSINESS CENTER, each business located within such BUSINESS CENTER may display its identification on the FREESTANDING SIGN together with the identification of the BUSINESS CENTER, provided that such FREESTANDING SIGN remains of integrated and coherent design and complies with all applicable standards.

7.8.7 The following standards shall apply to FREESTANDING SIGNS in the NAV, SAV, and WAV Districts:

7.8.7.1 One FREESTANDING SIGN may be ERECTED on a LOT provided that no BUILDING on the LOT is located within 30 feet of the sideline of the STREET nearest which the FREESTANDING SIGN is ERECTED.

7.8.7.2 Where a FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a business no EXTERIOR SIGN shall be ERECTED on the same LOT.

7.8.7.3 The DISPLAY AREA of a FREESTANDING SIGN for a BUSINESS CENTER shall not exceed a maximum DISPLAY AREA of 12 square feet, and its height shall not exceed 6 feet. If such a FREESTANDING SIGN under this provision is a MONUMENT SIGN, its DISPLAY AREA may be a maximum DISPLAY AREA of 20 square feet. The height of such MONUMENT SIGN shall not exceed 4 feet.

- 7.8.8 The following standards shall apply to FREESTANDING SIGNS in the EAV and EAV-2 Districts:
- 7.8.8.1 Where a FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a business in the EAV District, one EXTERIOR SIGN shall be permitted.
 - 7.8.8.2 One BUSINESS CENTER sign shall be permitted for a BUSINESS CENTER, provided no other FREESTANDING SIGN identifying an individual business shall be permitted in the BUSINESS CENTER.
 - 7.8.8.3 A BUSINESS CENTER is eligible for two FREESTANDING SIGNS when the LOT or LOTS have more than 300 feet of combined FRONTAGE on one or more STREETS, provided that not more than one FREESTANDING SIGN for the BUSINESS CENTER shall be allowed along a continuous FRONTAGE on one STREET that measures less than 300 feet.
 - 7.8.8.4 The DISPLAY AREA of a FREESTANDING SIGN identifying a BUSINESS CENTER shall not exceed a maximum DISPLAY AREA of 27 square feet, and its height shall not exceed 9 feet. If a FREESTANDING SIGN under this provision is a MONUMENT SIGN, its DISPLAY AREA may be a maximum DISPLAY AREA of 40 square feet. The height of such MONUMENT SIGN shall not exceed 8 feet.

And, renumber current Section 7.8.7 to become Section 7.8.9.

[Note Section 7.8.6 currently reads:

7.8.6 The following standards shall apply to FREESTANDING SIGNS in the Village Districts:

7.8.6.1 One FREESTANDING SIGN may be ERECTED on a LOT provided that no BUILDING on the LOT is located within 30 feet of the sideline of the STREET nearest which the FREESTANDING SIGN is ERECTED.

7.8.6.2 Where a FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a business in the NAV, SAV, or WAV Districts, no EXTERIOR SIGN shall be ERECTED on the same LOT. Where a FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a business in the EAV District, one EXTERIOR SIGN shall be permitted. The DISPLAY AREA of such a FREESTANDING SIGN shall not exceed 8 square feet and the height shall not exceed 5 feet. If such a FREESTANDING SIGN is a MONUMENT SIGN, its DISPLAY AREA may be increased to 12 square feet, provided however that the height shall not exceed 4 feet, or 5 feet if its width does not exceed 3 feet. Where the FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a motor vehicle service station, the maximum permitted DISPLAY AREA may be increased to 16 square feet if the additionally permitted DISPLAY AREA is used solely for the posting of current prices of fuel and gasoline.

7.8.6.3 Where a FREESTANDING SIGN identifies a BUSINESS CENTER, each business located within such BUSINESS CENTER may display its identification on the FREESTANDING SIGN together with the identification of the BUSINESS CENTER, provided that such FREESTANDING SIGN remains of integrated and coherent design and complies with all applicable standards. The DISPLAY AREA of such a FREESTANDING SIGN shall not exceed 8 square feet plus an additional 2 square feet

per business name displayed, up to a maximum DISPLAY AREA of 12 square feet, and its height shall not exceed 6 feet. If a FREESTANDING SIGN under this provision is a MONUMENT SIGN, its DISPLAY AREA may be increased to 12 square feet plus an additional 2 square feet per business name displayed, up to a maximum DISPLAY AREA of 20 square feet. The height of such MONUMENT SIGN shall not exceed 4 feet, or 6 feet if its width does not exceed 3 feet.]

C. Section 7.13: SIGNS Requiring a Special Permit from the Planning Board

In Section 7.13.1, which defines the scope and limits of the Planning Board's special permit authority for signs, delete Section 7.13.1.2 and replace it with the following:

- 7.13.1.2 EXTERIOR SIGNS with dimensions in excess of those permitted under Sections 7.7 subject to the following limitations:
- a) no SIGN wider than one and one half times the maximum width otherwise permitted, and
 - b) no SIGN larger than twice the otherwise permitted maximum DISPLAY AREA, and
 - c) any such other limitation as the Planning Board may find appropriate to further the purpose of this Section as stated in Section 7.1.

[Note Section 7.13.1.2 currently reads:

7.13.1.2 SIGNS with dimensions in excess of those permitted under Sections 7.7 and 7.8, subject to the following limitations:

- a) no SIGN higher or wider than one and one half times the maximum height or width otherwise permitted, and*
- b) no SIGN larger than twice the otherwise permitted maximum DISPLAY AREA, and*
- c) no FREESTANDING SIGN larger than 40 square feet in DISPLAY AREA or higher than 10 feet, and*
- d) any such other limitation as the Planning Board may find appropriate to further the purpose of this Section as stated in Section 7.1.]*

, or take any other action relative thereto.

SUMMARY

This article is intended to streamline the existing sign permitting process so as to reduce the burden on applicants and to improve the allocation and effective use of Town resources. This article proposes changes to three sections of the existing Bylaw: Section 7.7 (EXTERIOR SIGNS); Section 7.8 FREESTANDING SIGNS; and Section 7.13 (SIGNS Requiring a Special Permit from the Planning Board).

Part I. EXTERIOR SIGNS

This article proposes an increase in the by-right height for wall signs from 3 feet to 4.5 feet in the Business, Industrial and Office Districts and from 2 feet to 3 feet in the East Acton Village Districts. Since 2011, 20 special permits for wall signs have been

requested and all were granted. Of these, 5 permits were granted to applicants seeking to erect wall signs higher than 2 or 3 feet, respectively. By increasing the by-right maximum allowable height, the number of special permit requests for signs could have been reduced by 25%.

Part II. FREESTANDING SIGNS

Since 2011, 6 special permits have been granted to applicants seeking to increase the dimensions or quantity of business center signage. This article proposes to increase the by-right display area and height of business center signs in the Business, Office, Industrial, EAV and EAV-2 Districts. For business centers in the aforementioned zoning districts, the number of by-right business center signs may be increased from 1 to 2 if the lot or lots' frontage meets the minimum requirements. The proposed changes encourage business centers to utilize cohesive business center signage for identification instead of multiple individual business signs.

Part III. SIGNS Requiring a Special Permit from the Planning Board

Increasing the maximum by-right sign display area and height can reduce the need for applicants to seek sign special permits. Savings in time and money benefit the business owner, while a reduction in the number of sign special permit applications allows the Planning Board to more effectively allocate its time and resources. This article seeks to eliminate the special permit option for freestanding signs; instead special permits are available for exterior signs no more than one and one half times the maximum allowable width and twice the maximum allowable display area. By eliminating special permits for freestanding signs that exceed the quantity and dimensions allowed by Section 7.8, the proposed changes favor streamlined business center signage over multiple individual business signs.

Since 2011, a total of 40 signs have been approved for 72 different waivers including display area, height, quantity, location, and other factors. These special permits are often granted without amendments, and hearings are very rarely attended by concerned abutters. Expanding the by-right options for business owners may decrease the quantity of special permit applications, thus reducing the financial and time-related burden on the applicant and making better use of Town resources.

Direct inquiries to: Roland Bartl, Planning Director: planning@acton-ma.gov / (978) 929-6631
Selectman assigned:

Recommendations:	<u>Board of Selectmen</u>	<u>Finance Committee</u>	<u>Planning Board</u> Recommended
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