

# **ORDINANCES, LAWS, AND REGULATIONS FOR THE TOWN OF AMHERST**



## **MARCH 2010**

**ZONING ORDINANCE  
SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS  
NON-RESIDENTIAL SITE PLAN REVIEW REGULATIONS  
HISTORIC DISTRICT REGULATIONS / RULES OF PROCEDURE  
SCENIC ROADS  
ROAD SPECIFICATIONS 1971  
WATER POLLUTION CONTROL REGULATIONS  
BUILDING CODE  
STORM WATER REGULATIONS  
APPLICABLE STATUTES**

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**SECTION A**  
**ZONING ORDINANCE**

**ARTICLE I**

**PREAMBLE**

**Section 1.1 Purpose and Authority**

The zoning and building regulations and districts as set down in this Ordinance are for the purpose of promoting the public health, safety, and general welfare of the Town of Amherst as provided for by Chapter 672, New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated, as may be amended. Town properties and Town political subdivisions including but not limited to Fire, Police, and Public Works, shall be subject to the Town's Zoning Ordinance, Site plan and Subdivision regulations and any building, code, health, fire or safety regulation of the Town, except for any use regulation which may be contained within. (3-14-67/3-14-89) 3-13-90, 3-9-99

The purpose of the Zoning Ordinance of the Town of Amherst is to implement the goals of the orderly development and growth of the Town as set forth in the Master Plan adopted in November 1980 and future revisions of the Master Plan as the needs of the Town dictate. 11-2-82

**ARTICLE II**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF DISTRICTS**

**Section 2.1 Division of Town into Districts**

For the purpose of this Ordinance, the Town of Amherst is divided into the following districts as shown on the official tax map overlays. 3-12-63

AC	Aquifer Conservation district	3-13-84
C	Commercial zone	3-12-63
FP	Flood Plain Conservation District	3-10-70
GO	General Office	3-12-85
HD	Historic District	3-11-86
I	Industrial Zone	3-2-76
LC	Limited Commercial Zone	3-2-76
NR	Northern Rural Zone	3-2-76
NTR	Northern Transitional Zone	3-8-88
RR	Residential / Rural Zone	3-11-93
W	Wetland Conservation District	3-6-73
WP	Watershed Protection District	3-2-76

## **Section 2.2 Zoning Map**

The several districts provided for in Section 2-1 above, shall be bounded as shown on tax map overlays of the Town of Amherst, New Hampshire and by the Flood Plain Conservation District overlay and the Wetlands Conservation District overlay, the Aquifer Conservation District, together with the Historic District overlay, and all amendments and explanatory matter thereon, which is hereby declared to be a part of the Zoning Ordinance. As amended (3-11-80/3-13-84) 3-14-89

## **Section 2.3 Interpretation of Zoning District Boundary Lines**

The zoning district boundary lines, as shown on tax map overlays are the center lines of streets and other public ways, the middle of the channel of waterways, or the center line of main tracts of railroad lines, unless otherwise indicated. Where the zoning district boundaries are so indicated that they parallel the center lines of streets and other public rights-of-way, such boundaries shall be interpreted as parallel thereto. Where an uncertainty exists as to the location of a boundary, the Board of Adjustment shall determine the exact line. 3-12-63

# **ARTICLE III**

## **GENERAL ZONING PROVISIONS**

### **Section 3.1 Nuisance Provision**

Any use or other establishment that may be injurious or obnoxious because of the production or emission of smoke, fumes, dust, odor, refuse material, noise, vibration, radiation or like condition, or that endangers the health, safety, peace or enjoyment of the community, or tending to its disturbance or annoyance is prohibited. 3-11-63

### **Section 3.2 Non-conforming Uses and Non complying Setbacks**

**3.2.1** A pre-existing non-conforming use of land or structures may be continued although such use does not conform to the provisions of this Ordinance. Structures containing preexisting non-conforming uses may be enlarged or extended subject to the following:

**3.2.1.1** If the conduct of the property owner is such that it will not substantially change the nature and the purpose of the original use and,

**3.2.1.2** The proposed change would involve no substantially different impact on the neighborhood. (3-6-73) (3-9-82) (3-14-89) 3-11-93

**3.2.2** A non-conforming use may be changed only to a use permitted in the district in which it is located. A permit is required for any change of use. (See Use Groups, Section 3-10) (3-6-73) 3-14-89

**3.2.3** If a structure contains a non-conforming use or does not comply with Zoning setbacks and it is damaged by fire, flood, wind, or act of God, such structure may be reconstructed and used as before, provided such reconstruction is commenced within eighteen (18) months. (3-6-73) 3-14-89 3.9.10

**3.2.4** A structure which does not comply with zoning setbacks may be repaired or structurally altered provided the repairs or alterations do not increase the degree of non-compliance. (3-6-73) 3-14-89

**3.2.5** Structures which do not comply with zoning setbacks, when demolished for new construction, may be reconstructed where located before, providing there is no increase in non-compliance. 3-14-89

**3.2.6** Existing conforming lots shall not be made non-conforming and existing non-conforming lots shall not be made more non-conforming by altering lot lines. 3-14-89

**3.2.7** A non-conforming use which has been abandoned, vacated or discontinued for a period of 18 consecutive months, said non-conforming use shall be discontinued.

### **Section 3.3 Water Pollution Control Regulations**

**3.3.1** Water pollution control requirements shall be those required by laws and regulations of the State of New Hampshire as well as local ordinances.

(3-6-73) 3-14-89

NOTE: See Section G for Water Pollution Control Regulations

### **Section 3.4 Signs** 3-12-91

#### **3.4.1 DEFINITIONS:**

**Awning** Any visual message incorporated into an awning attached to a building.

**Banner** Any sign, painted, printed or otherwise displayed on cloth, plastic film or similar material. 3-8-94

**Business Sign District** Shall include the Industrial, Commercial, and Limited Commercial Zones in the Town of Amherst and shall include those lots in the General Office Zone with frontage on NH Route 101A. 3-10-92 (3.13.07)

**Copy-Change Sign** A sign on which the visual message be periodically changed.

**Directional Sign** A sign limited to providing directional or guide information, on the most direct or simple route, on the location of an activity, business or event.

**Event-Specific Sign** A temporary sign used to announce an event such as a festival, parade, dance, meeting, church or club-sponsored event or tournament, or appearance by a political candidate or other speaker. 3.9.10

**Free-Standing** Any sign not attached or part of any building, but separate and affixed in or upon the ground. Included are pole signs, pylon signs and masonry wall-type signs.

**General Sign District** Shall include the General Office (except for those lots included in the Business Sign District). Residential/Rural, Northern Transitional and Northern Rural zones in the Town of Amherst. 3-10-92

**Illuminated Sign** Any sign illuminated by electricity, gas or other artificial light either from the interior or exterior of the sign and which includes reflective and phosphorescent light.

**Information Sign** A sign, without advertising, designed and intended to convey information about a permitted use to the general public, to convey regulations or restrictions or to otherwise provide needed guidance.

**Lineal Building Frontage** The length of a ground level straight line or lines parallel to and equaling the length of the building front that fronts on the principal public roadway. In the case of a multi-unit development, the frontage of each separate building is additive for the purpose of determining permissible sign area. (3.13.07)

**Off -Premises Sign** A sign unrelated to a business or a profession conducted, or to a commodity or service sold or offered, upon the premises where such sign is located.

**Portable Sign** A sign, whether on its own trailer, wheels, motor vehicle, or otherwise, designed to be movable and not attached to the ground, a building, a structure or another sign. (3.13.07)

**Prohibited Signs** No banners, pennants, ribbons, streamers, spinners of similar moving, fluttering or revolving devices shall be permissible for display as signs, except as exempted above as New Hampshire or United States flags.

**Projecting Sign** That which is attached to the building wall or structure and which extends horizontally more than fifteen (15) inches from the plane of such wall, or a sign which is perpendicular to the face of such wall or structure.

**Representational Sign** A three-dimensional sign built so as to physically represent the object advertised.

**Sign** Any material, structure or device, or part thereof, composed of lettered or pictorial matter that is located out-of-doors, or on the exterior of any building, or indoors as a window sign, displaying an advertisement, announcement, notice or name, and shall include any declaration, demonstration, display, representation, illustration or insignia used to advertise or promote the interests of any person or business or cause when such

is placed in view of the general public. Signs shall include: Any sign defined in this section or otherwise regulated under this ordinance; flags, banners, pennants, streamers, balloons, spinners or similar devices; and any other fixed or portable device or vehicle placed on a parcel of land and used as a sign to convey information to the public. 3-10-98

**Sign Directory** A listing of two or more business enterprises, consisting of a matrix and sign components.

**Sign Structure** The supports, uprights, bracing and framework for the sign.

**Sign Surface Area** The entire area within a single, continuous perimeter enclosing all elements which form an integral part of the sign. The structure supporting a sign and pole covers or architectural embellishments shall be excluded unless the structure is designed in a way to form an integral background for the display. Only one face of a double-faced, free-standing sign shall be included as surface or area of such a sign. In the case of a sign consisting of two (2) or more sides where the angle formed between any two (2) or more sides or the projections thereof exceeds thirty (30) degrees, each side shall be considered a separate sign area . 3-10-92

**Temporary Sign** A sign having a continuous display duration of no more than thirty (30) days. (3.13.07)

**Wall Sign** A sign that is painted on or attached to the outside wall of a building with the face of the sign in the plane parallel to such wall, and not extending more than fifteen (15) inches from the face of such wall.

**Window Sign** A sign visible from a sidewalk, street or other public place, painted or affixed on glass or other window material, or located inside within two (2) feet of the window, but not including graphics in connection with customary window display of products.

**Zoning Official** The Planning Director, Building Inspector, or Code Enforcement Officer, whichever is responsible for the administration of these provisions. (3.13.07)

### **3.4.2 PURPOSE OF THE SIGN ORDINANCE**

The purpose of this section of the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance is to provide for reasonable uniformity in the size, treatment and presentation of signs used to call attention to the existence of a business the existence of a business, activity, product or service. This section recognizes the need to protect public health and safety and welfare by reducing conflicting, ambiguous and unnecessary information presented through sign messages and structures, while understanding the need for adequate business identification and advertising. The Town does not want signs in any district to detract from the rural character which the Town, through its adopted Master plan, has expressed a strong desire to maintain.

### **3.4.3 GENERAL REGULATION**

Except as otherwise provided, no person shall erect, alter, or relocate any sign without first obtaining a permit from the Zoning Office. Subsequent to this initial application, no permit shall be required for a sign to be repainted or repaired provided that the sign is returned to its original design, condition, placement or presentation. (3.13.07)

#### **3.4.3.1 Application Procedure**

Applications shall be made in writing to the Zoning Office on forms prescribed and provided by the Town and shall contain the applicable information requested on that form and accompanying sign specification sheet. (3.13.07)

#### **3.4.3.2 Permit**

Upon the filing of a completed application for a sign permit and the payment of the required fee, the Zoning Official shall examine the plans, specifications and other data submitted and the premises on which the sign is to be erected. If it shall appear that the sign will be in compliance with all the requirements of this local ordinance, he shall then, within thirty (30) days, issue a permit for the erection of the proposed sign. The issuance of a permit shall not excuse the applicant from conforming to the other laws and ordinances of the Town or sign master planning provisions. (3.13.07)

If the erection of the sign authorized under any such permit has not been completed within two (2) years from the date of issuance, the permit shall become null and void, but may be renewed upon filing of a subsequent completed application and compliance with current requirements.

### **3.4.3.3 Exempt Signs (require no permit)**

The following types of signs may be erected and maintained without permits or fees, providing such signs comply with the general requirements of this local ordinance and other conditions specifically imposed by all other regulations. No two permitted signs may be combined to create a larger sign.

**3.4.3.3.1** Historical markers, tablets and statues, memorial signs and plaques; names of buildings and dates of erection when cut into any masonry surface or when constructed of bronze, stainless steel or similar material; and emblems installed by governmental agencies, religious or non profit organizations; not exceeding six (6) square feet. Such signs may fall under the regulation of the Historic District Commission and these provisions shall not supersede such requirements.

**3.4.3.3.2** Flags and insignia of any government, except when displayed in connection with commercial promotion.

**3.4.3.3.3** On-premise directional signs for the convenience of the general public, identifying public parking areas, fire zones, entrances and exits and similar signs, not exceeding six (6) square feet per face and three (3) feet in height. Not to include any names or logos. (3-14-00)

**3.4.3.3.4** Non-illuminated warning, private drive, posted or no trespassing signs, not exceeding two (2) square feet per face.

**3.4.3.3.5** Omitted. (3-11-03)

**3.4.3.3.6** Number and name plates identifying residents, mounted on house, apartment or mailbox, not exceeding two (2) square feet in area.

**3.4.3.3.7** Lawn signs identifying residents, with no more than two faces and not exceeding two (2) square feet per face. Such signs are to be non-illuminated except by a light which is an integral part of a lamp post if used as a support, with no advertising message thereon.

**3.4.3.3.8** Private owner merchandise sale signs for garage sales and auctions, not exceeding two (2) square feet per face for a period not exceeding fourteen (14) continuous days during any calendar year. Amended 3-8-94 (3.13.07)

### **3.4.3.3.9**

**3.4.3.3.9.1** One (1) off-premises directional sign for the purpose of directing the public to an "OPEN HOUSE." Such sign may not exceed four (4) square feet of sign surface area. Messages must include the words "Open House" and shall be otherwise limited to name/address or identification, arrow or direction, and distance. Off-premises directional signs may be erected no earlier than one (1) day prior to the "OPEN HOUSE" and must be removed by the end of the day the "OPEN HOUSE" ends. 3.9.10

**3.4.3.3.10** Up to two (2) temporary signs for a roadside stand selling agricultural produce in season, providing that such signs do not exceed a total of thirty-two (32) square feet and setback beyond the public right-of-way at least fifteen (15) feet from the edge of the roadway. Amended 3-8-94

**3.4.3.3.11** Temporary (for thirty (30) continuous days only), non-illuminated window signs and posters not exceeding twenty-five (25) percent, up to a maximum of four (4) square feet, of a single window surface of a single wall opening on which the sign(s) is displayed. Amended 3-8-94 (3.13.07)

**3.4.3.3.12** Holiday decorations, including lighting, are exempt from the provisions of this local and may be displayed in any district without a permit.

**3.4.3.3.13** Integral graphics or attached price signs on gasoline pumps at gasoline stations.

**3.4.3.3.14** Decals used to reference authorized services (e.g. credit or bank cards) when not exceeding 144 square inches in total display area per business.

**3.4.3.3.15** Political posters, banners, promotional devices and similar signs, not exceeding four (4) square feet in the General Sign District or sixteen (16) square feet in the Business Sign District, providing:

**3.4.3.3.15.1** Placement shall not exceed thirty (30) days, and all signs must be retrieved within three days following the election for which they were used.

**3.4.3.3.15.2** The names and addresses of the sponsor and the person responsible for removal are identified on the sign.

**3.4.3.3.15.3** No signs are attached to any trees, shrubs, bushes, traffic control devices, historical markers or placed on private property without the consent of the property owner.

**3.4.3.3.16** One "OPEN" sign may be displayed for each separate business unit. Open signs may be displayed during business hours only. Open signs, if illuminated, must be displayed in or in the building, except as provided for in an approved Sign Master Plan. Open signs shall be no more than thirteen (13) inches in height and thirty-two (32) inches in width. No name, logo, or lettering other than the word "OPEN" may be displayed on such signs. (3-14-00)

**3.4.3.3.17** In the Business Sign District, one non-illuminated "OPEN" flag may be displayed for each separate business unit. No name, logo, or lettering other than the word "OPEN" may be displayed on such flags. Open flags may be displayed at the building during business hours and must be displayed at the building entrance. Open flags shall be no more than three (3) feet in height and six (6) feet in length. Flag colors are limited to standard, non-fluorescent red, white, and blue. 3.9.10

#### **3.4.3.4 Prohibitions**

These prohibitions shall apply to all signs erected in the Town of Amherst, whether exempted or regulated under this section.

**3.4.3.4.1** No off-premises signs shall be allowed other than as permitted under the provision of an approved sign master plan.

**3.4.3.4.2** No sign shall be illuminated by or contain flashing, intermittent, rotating moving lights or lettering and graphics except to show time and temperature. (3.13.07)

**3.4.3.4.3** No sign shall impair or cause confusion of vehicular pedestrian traffic in its design, color, placement or display characteristics. No sign shall impair visibility for the motorist at a street corner or intersection by placement and location within twenty five (25) feet of the intersection of the street or highway lines.

**3.4.3.4.4** No sign shall consist of banners, pennants, ribbons, streamers, spinners or similar moving, fluttering or revolving devices. 3-10-92, 3-14-95 (3-14-00)

**3.4.3.4.5** No advertising message shall be extended over more than one sign placed along a street or highway unless included as an integral part of a sign master plan.

**3.4.3.4.6** No sign shall be placed within the road, street or intersection right-of-way of the Town or State, except as provided for under off-premise directional signs as part of an approved master plan.

**3.4.3.4.7** No sign consisting of the message 'sold', 'Under Contract ' or a similar message, denoting a closed or completed transaction, shall be permitted.

**3.4.3.4.8** No signs shall be attached to fences, trees, utility poles, rocks or other parts of a natural landscape, nor in a position that will obstruct or impair traffic or in any manner create a hazard or disturbance to the health, safety and welfare of the general public.

**3.4.3.4.9** No portable signs shall be allowed in any district. 3-10-92

### **3.4.4 SIGN STANDARDS**

#### **3.4.4.1 Temporary Signs for Activities or Events (3.13.07)**

A temporary sign for Activities or Events is permitted for display for a period not to exceed 30 days per separated business unit upon application for and receipt of a temporary sign permit from the Zoning Office. Temporary signs are not permanent signs and only one temporary sign permit shall be issued per calendar year. All signs of a temporary nature, except as otherwise provided by this local ordinance shall be permitted for a period not exceeding two (2) weeks prior to the activity or event nor exceeding four (4) days after the activity or event. Such signs shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in Business Sign District nor eight (8) square feet in General Sign District, nor be attached to fences, trees, utility poles, rocks or other parts of a

natural landscape, nor be placed in a position that will obstruct or impair traffic or in any manner create a hazard or disturbance to the health, safety and welfare of the general public. (3.13.07)

**3.4.4.1.1** Temporary Signs for Activities or Events: Event-Specific Signs are permitted for display for a period not to exceed fifteen (15) days and must be removed at the end of the event. Event-Specific Signs must have permission of the property owner and receive a permit from the Zoning Office. Event-Specific advertising signs may not exceed twenty (20) square feet of surface area, and no more than two (2) such signs may be permitted for any event. In addition, up to ten (10) off-premises directional signs, not to exceed two (2) square feet per sign, may be permitted. 3.9.10

### **3.4.4.2** Permanent Signs

Within any zoning district, unless otherwise specified, the following permanent signs may be erected, provided however, that this subsection shall not serve to expand the number or area of signs otherwise allowed, and pursuant to the following.

#### **3.4.4.2.1** SPECIAL CASES

**3.4.4.2.1.1** A non-illuminated, single-sided real estate development sign, including industrial and commercial development, residential subdivision or construction sign denoting the architect, engineer and/or contractor, not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet in Business Sign District nor sixteen (16) square feet in General Sign District, may be erected on property being sold, leased or developed. Such sign shall be erected parallel to the fronting highway, setback a minimum of fifteen (15) feet from the property line or attached to the building face. Such sign shall be removed upon completion of the project and shall be in place for a period not exceeding two (2) years, renewable for an additional two years, upon filing of a subsequent completed application and payment of the appropriate fee. (3.13.07)

**3.4.4.2.1.2** Signs or bulletin boards customarily incident to places of worship, libraries, museums, social clubs or societies, may be erected on the premises of such institutions. One (1) such sign or bulletin board not exceeding twenty-four (24) square feet may be erected.

**3.4.4.2.1.3** For multiple commercial or industrial units, or residential dwellings or apartment developments one (1) sign identifying the name of the development, located at the entrance of the development, not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet. (3.13.07)

#### **3.4.4.2.2** BUSINESS SIGN DISTRICT( I, C, LC, GO on Rt. 101A)

Unless otherwise specified, the following permanent sign provisions shall apply:

**3.4.4.2.2.1** The area of the freestanding sign permitted on any lot shall be two (2) square feet of sign area per lineal foot of building front, but in no case shall exceed sixty-four (64) square feet, whichever is less, excepting Sign Master Planned developments. A minimum sign area of thirty-two (32) square feet shall be permitted any lot regardless of building frontage. (3-11-03) (3.13.07)

**3.4.4.2.2.2** The total number of permitted signs on a single business or industrial lot shall not exceed two (2) of which only one (1) may be free-standing, excepting master planned developments.

**3.4.4.2.2.3** A lot with approved entrances on two public roads shall be permitted a secondary sign, not on the same public road as the principal sign, provided that such sign does not exceed forty (40) square feet, not withstanding Para. 3.4.4.2.2.1 and Para. 3.4.4.2.2.2 above.

**3.4.4.2.2.4** In addition to the above, one wall sign shall be permitted each separated business unit, not to exceed twenty-five (25) square feet per unit.

**3.4.4.2.2.5** Temporary non-illuminated 'For Sale', 'For Rent', real estate signs and signs of similar nature, concerning the premises upon which the sign is located; in the General Sign District, one sign per lot not exceeding four (4) square feet per side; in the Business Sign District, one sign per lot not exceeding thirty-two

(32) square feet per side setback at least fifteen (15) feet from all property and highway R.O.W. lines. All such signs shall be removed within three (3) days after the sale, lease or rental of the premises. (see Prohibitions, Item 7). Amended 3-8-94 (3.13.07) 3.9.10

#### **3.4.4.2.3 GENERAL SIGN DISTRICT (RR, NR, NTR,GO)**

Unless otherwise specified, the following permanent sign provisions shall apply to non-residential uses:

**3.4.4.2.3.1** The total number of permitted signs on a single lot shall not exceed two (2) of which only one (1) may be free-standing, excepting master planned developments.

**3.4.4.2.3.2** The total cumulative area of all signs permitted on such lot shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet, excepting wall signs for multiple tenants/units. The freestanding sign shall not exceed fourteen (14) square feet. (3.13.07)

**3.4.4.2.3.3** One wall or projecting sign, not to exceed ten (10) square feet Per sign, shall be permitted for each separated business unit in the development.

**3.4.4.2.3.4** One (1) on-premise sign, either free-standing or attached, in connection with any residential building in any zoning district for permitted professional offices or home occupations, not exceeding six (6) square feet and set back at least fifteen (15) feet from the highway right-of-way. Such sign shall state name, street address and vocation only. Illumination shall not produce a direct glare beyond the limits of the property line and shall be mounted on the sign and directed downward.(3-11-03)

**3.4.4.2.3.5** Temporary non-illuminated 'For Sale', 'For Rent', real estate signs and signs of similar nature, concerning the premises upon which the sign is located; in the General Sign District, one sign per lot not exceeding four (4) square feet per side; in the Business Sign District, one sign per lot not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet per side setback at least fifteen (15) feet from all property and highway R.O.W. lines. All such signs shall be removed within three (3) days after the sale, lease or rental of the premises. (see Prohibitions, Item 7). Amended 3-8-94 (3.13.07) 3.9.10

#### **3.4.4.2.4 NEW BUSINESS SIGNS**

A new business, or a business in a new location, awaiting installation of a permanent sign, may utilize a temporary sign for a period of not more than thirty (30) days until installation of a permanent sign. Such sign must meet all appropriate construction standards of the Town. A separate temporary sign permit for such a new business sign shall be required. (3.13.07)

#### **3.4.4.2.5 WALL SIGNS**

**3.4.4.2.5.1** Wall signs shall not extend beyond the ends or over the top of the walls to which attached, and shall not extend above the floor level of the second floor of the building, with a maximum height of fifteen (15) feet measured from the adjacent ground level. (3.13.07)

**3.4.4.2.5.2** Wall signs shall not extend more than fifteen (15) inches from the face of the buildings to which attached.

**3.4.4.2.5.3** Any part of a sign extending over pedestrian traffic areas shall have a minimum clearance of seven (7) feet, six (6) inches.

**3.4.4.2.5.4** Wall signs may be mounted on roofs or eaves as long as they are mounted no more than five (5) feet up from the eaves, provided that the sign height shall not exceed 15 feet when measured from the highest part of the sign to the ground directly below. 3-10-92

#### **3.4.4.2.6 FREE- STANDING SIGNS**

**3.4.4.2.6.1** No free-standing sign shall be located less than fifteen (15) feet from the curb, edge of pavement or inside of sidewalk, provided the sign is not within the governmental right-of-way and is located on the applicants property. No free-standing sign may be located less than one hundred (100) feet from any other free-standing sign. (3-14-00)

**3.4.4.2.6.2** If for any reason the property line is changed at some future date, any free-standing sign made non conforming thereby must be relocated within ninety (90) days to conform with the minimum setback requirements to the extent possible.

**3.4.4.2.6.3** No free-standing sign shall be more than sixty-four (64) square feet. except as provided for in an approved sign master plan.

**3.4.4.2.6.4** The top of the free-standing sign shall not be more than twelve (12) feet in height above road level. (3-11-03) (3.13.07)

**3.4.4.2.6.5** No free standing sign shall extend over or into the public right-of-way, pedestrian walkway or driveway, nor shall it overhang the property lines.

#### **3.4.4.2.7 AWNING SIGNS**

**3.4.4.2.7.1** No sign shall project from an awning.

**3.4.4.2.7.2** Awning graphics may be painted or affixed flat to the surface of the front or sides, shall indicate only the name and/or address of the enterprise or premises.

**3.4.4.2.7.3** Awning graphics shall be a single line of lettering not exceeding six (6) inches in height, but if over three (3) inches in height, shall be debited against the permitted wall sign surface area.

**3.4.4.2.7.4** No awning sign shall be internally illuminated.

**3.4.4.2.7.5** There shall be no more than one awning sign at each separate business location. (3.13.07)

#### **3.4.5 EXISTING SIGNS**

##### **3.4.5.1 Non-Conforming Signs**

In the event of a sign lawfully erected prior to the effective date of this ordinance does not conform to the provisions herein, such shall meet the following specifications:

**3.4.5.1.1** A non-conforming sign shall not be enlarged or replaced by another more non-conforming sign. (3-12-91) 3-10-92

**3.4.5.1.2** No non-conforming sign shall be permitted within a development under a sign master plan.

##### **3.4.5.2 Removal of Signs**

Any sign existing on or after the effective date of this ordinance, whether in conformance with this ordinance or not, which no longer advertises an existing business conducted or product sold on the premises upon which such sign is located, shall be removed within fifteen (15) days.

If the Zoning Official shall find that any sign regulated in the local ordinance is not used, coded in advertising, is abandoned, unsafe or insecure, or is a menace to the public, the administrator shall give written notice to the named owner of the land upon which it is located, who shall remove or repair the sign within fifteen (15) days from the date of the said time period. The Selectmen shall revoke the permit issued for such sign and may invoke court action. Failure to remove or repair such sign would be considered a violation of this provision. (3.13.07)

#### **3.4.6 CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS**

This section provides guidance and standards for construction of signs requiring permits and shall serve as guidance for the construction of exempt signs. It identifies the specifications needed so that signs are constructed to ensure the community's safety.

### **3.4.6.1 General**

**3.4.6.1.1** All signs installed after the effective date of this local ordinance shall have attached to the sign a name plate giving the sign permit number and the name and address of the owner, person or corporation responsible for general requirements and maintenance as outlined in this ordinance.

**3.4.6.1.2** All free-standing signs shall be designed and constructed to withstand a wind pressure of not less than thirty (30) pounds per square foot of surface area.

**3.4.6.1.3** All signs, including wall-mounted and projecting signs, shall be securely anchored and shall not spin or move in any manner. (3-10-92) 3-8-94

**3.4.6.1.4** All signs, sign finishes, supports and electric work shall be kept clean, neatly painted, and free and from all hazards, such as, but not limited to, faulty wiring and loose supports, braces, guys, and anchors.

**3.4.6.1.5** All projecting, free-standing or wall signs shall employ acceptable safety material and shall not constitute a hazard to pedestrian travel or the general public.

**3.4.6.1.6** All signs shall be painted/fabricated in accordance with generally accepted standards.

**3.4.6.1.7** All signs shall be in accordance with the BOCA Code and shall not conflict with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (USDOT/FHWA) or the Life Safety Code (NFPA101). All electrical wiring of signs shall conform to the National Electrical Code. (NFPA-70)

**3.4.6.1.8** Underground wiring shall conform to the National Electrical Code. (NFPA-70)

### **3.4.7 DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SIGN MASTER PLANS**

Where groups of three (3) or more contiguous commercial or industrial units are to be located together in a development or where a lesser number of businesses total not less than twenty thousand (20,000) square feet of gross leasable area, the development may adopt a Sign Master Plan to govern advertising. The intent of this section is to promote a uniform and aesthetic message presentation that is designed to provide information to the general public through its design and coordination of elements. (3.13.07)

The development of a sign master plan shall be governed by the specifications of this section and generally reflect the requirements of the applicable sign district. Application of the sign master planning provisions should not detract from the rural character which the Town, through its adopted Master Plan, has expressed a strong desire to maintain. 3-10-92

#### **3.4.7.1 General Requirements**

Total sign area permitted for the entire development or center shall be calculated at the rate of two (2) square feet of sign per foot of lineal building front with a maximum area of five hundred (500) square feet. The Planning Board may waive the maximum area at its discretion. Each master planned development may have one common free-standing sign denoting the name of the facility not exceeding eighty (80) square feet per side and with bottom panel not less than five (5) feet above road level and a maximum height of fifteen (15) feet. All other signs shall be attached to buildings, a wall, projecting or soffit type, and coordinated in material, shape, lettering, color and/or decorative elements. Information and directional signage, with the exception of uniform traffic control devices, shall be consistent with the general sign design of the development and is exempt from the sign area calculation provided that it does not contain advertising. (3.13.07)

**3.4.7.1.1** Signs shall be designed to be compatible with the surrounding and appropriate to the architectural character of the building on which they are placed. Sign panels and graphics should relate with and not cover architectural features, and should be in proportion to them.

**3.4.7.1.2** Signs should be appropriate to the types of activities they represent.

**3.4.7.1.3** Layout should be orderly and graphics should be of simple shape, such as rectangle, circle or oval.

**3.4.7.1.4** The number of colors used should be the minimum consistent with the design and must provide a reference or relationship to the enterprise or activity being advertised.

**3.4.7.1.5** Illumination should be appropriate to the character of the sign and surrounding and shall bear a relationship to the operating hours of the enterprise or activity being advertised. Illumination of signs permitted only from one (1) hour before opening until one (1) hour after closing.

**3.4.7.1.6** Groups of related signs shall express uniformity, create a harmonious appearance, and provide a visual and aesthetic coordination of the information presented to the public. (3.13.07)

**3.4.7.1.7** Height and physical placement shall be consistent throughout the master planned area.

**3.4.7.1.8** The sign master plan, including a site plan, shall be approved by the Planning Board, at a public hearing, and detail placement, design, color coordination, visibility, information messages and compatibility with the general design of the development.

**3.4.7.1.9** Off-premises directional signs for the convenience of the general public and for the purpose of directing persons to a business, activity, service or community facility operating within the Town of Amherst may be erected as part of the sign Master plan, providing such signs do not exceed four (4) square feet per sign nor total more than two (2) such signs per development. Messages shall be limited to name or identification, arrow or direction, and distance. Advertising messages shall be prohibited.

Off-premise directional signs shall be classified as free-standing sign shall not be placed within 100 feet of another free-standing sign. Illumination is prohibited.

Such signs shall be limited to Major Arterial and Minor Arterial roads as defined in the 1988 Functional Classification System for Amherst Street Network published in the Town-Wide Transportation Master plan. Such signs may be permitted on Collector streets, as defined in the same classification system, within the Business Sign District.

Sign panels may be made of any conventional weather resistant and rigid sign material acceptable to the Town of Amherst Planning Board. They shall be fully reflectorized and shall be similar to 'Engineering Grade' reflective sheeting with respect to color (day and night), brightness, reflectivity and durability as specified in the latest edition of the Manual on Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways.

The panel shall have white legend on a blue background with a 1/2 inch white border. The legend shall be white and 4-inch minimum 'Highway Type' letters, except that nationally, regionally or locally known commercial symbols or trademarks, in their customary colors, may be used when applicable. Sign colors may be coordinated with the development master plan color scheme provided that such a display does not conflict with standardized traffic control devices and is specifically approved by the Planning Board. Nationally recognized approved symbols for services may be incorporated as alternates to word messages. All off-premise sign legends are subject to approval by the Town of Amherst Planning Board. (3.13.07)

### **3.4.8 ADMINISTRATION**

#### **3.4.8.1 Review and Appeals**

Any person aggrieved by a decision of the Zoning Administrator relative to the provisions of this local ordinance may appeal such decision, in writing, to the Board of Appeals as provided in the Zoning Regulations and shall comply with all procedural requirements prescribed by such board.

In granting any variance from the provisions of this ordinance, the Board of Appeals must find that the variance is necessary for the reasonable use of the land or buildings, that granting the variance is in harmony with general purposes and intent of this ordinance, that such will not be injurious to the neighborhood character or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare, and that denial of the variance would result in unnecessary hardship to the applicant.

#### **3.4.8.2 Violations and Penalties**

Any person, firm or corporation, whether as owner, lessee, agent or employee, who proceeds to erect, re-erect, construct or structurally alter any sign without first applying for and obtaining the necessary permit, or who, in any other way, violates any provision of this local ordinance shall be guilty of an offense and receive

punishment as established in the RSA's. Each day's continuous violation shall constitute a separate additional violation.

In case of a violation of this local ordinance, the Town and its officers may, in addition to any other remedies specifically conferred by ordinance, institute any appropriate proceedings to prevent unlawful erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration or use of any sign not in compliance with this ordinance. 3-12-91  
Any sign, permitted or not, placed within any public or private right-of-way or placed so as to impede public access, shall be considered to be a threat to public safety and may be removed at the direction of the public safety officers or Zoning Officials.

### **3.4.9 INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED SIGNS**

#### **3.4.9.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this ordinance is to permit the installation and operation of internally illuminated signs within the Town of Amherst, recognizing their value in providing information to the general public and an aid in the advertising of businesses.

#### **3.4.9.2 General Provisions**

**3.4.9.2.1** Internally illuminated signs shall be permitted in the Business Sign District within the Town of Amherst only when incorporated as an integral part of an approved sign master plan.

**3.4.9.2.2** The total area of internally illuminated signage shall not exceed twenty-five (25%) percent of the permitted sign area for the master planned development.

**3.4.9.2.3** Internally illuminated signs shall conform to all other applicable provisions of the Town of Amherst sign regulations with respect to design, placement, presentation and other regulated features.

**3.4.9.2.4** Only one internally illuminated sign shall be permitted per physically separated business unit and shall replace another otherwise permitted sign.

**3.4.9.2.5** One free-standing internally illuminated sign shall be permitted per development and shall be equal in all other regulated aspects to the free-standing sign it shall replace excepting for the illuminated area limitation of twenty-five (25%) percent as in provision (2) above.

**3.4.9.2.6** The area of the internally illuminated sign shall not exceed the area of the sign it shall replace for the business or development.

**3.4.9.2.7** No internally illuminated sign may be erected within three hundred (300) feet of any residential zone within the Town. 3-12-91

**3.4.9.2.8** No internally illuminated sign erected as part of a sign master plan may be illuminated until the full master plan is implemented, unless a phasing plan is approved by the Board.

### **Section 3.5** (Not used yet)

### **Section 3.6 Mobile Homes and Trailers**

The use as a permanent residence of a house trailer or a mobile home is permitted in all zones of the Town which permit residential uses, and within and subject to the criteria of a Planned Residential Development, and subject to SECTION G, WATER POLLUTION CONTROL REGULATION for the TOWN OF AMHERST. (3-10-64/3-10-87) 3-8-88 (3-11-03)

Travel Trailers, as determined by the State Tax Commission, may be stored unoccupied in all zones of the Town. 3-12-64

### **Section 3.7 Building Regulations**

No building or structure shall be erected, unless in compliance with the following: 3-14-67

**3.7.1** See New Hampshire Building Code. (3-10-98) 3.9.10

**3.7.2** On all new buildings, construction must be at least 75% complete before occupied as a dwelling, as determined by the Administrative Official. (As amended 3-11-80) 3-14-89

**3.7.3** No building permit for a new dwelling shall be issued unless it meets State mandated minimum size requirements.(As amended 3-11-80 / 3-11-86) 3-12-91

### **Section 3.8 Earth Material Removal**

#### **3.8.1 Authority**

Clay, loam, sand, gravel, minerals, and similar earth materials may be removed for either private use, or for sale from any lot parcel of land in any zoning district, except the Historic District and Wetlands Conservation District, only after special permit for such operation has been issued by the Zoning Administrator, in accordance with the provisions of this section. (3-4-75) 11-2-82

#### **3.8.2 Application**

No Earth Material Removal permit shall be issued unless application is made in writing on the forms provided for this purpose by the Town and accompanied by the payment of a fee in such amount as the Board of Selectmen may determine from time to time. The application form shall be accompanied by a plan which describes the proposed Earth Material Removal operation. 3-4-75

#### **3.8.3 Procedure**

Prior to the approval or denial of an Earth Material Removal permit application, the Selectmen or their agent, shall hold a public hearing. The applicant and all abutters within five hundred (500) feet of the parcel or parcels proposed to have earth material removed, shall be notified of the time and place of such hearing, not less than five (5) days prior to the date affixed for said hearing. 3-4-75

In order to ensure the applicant's performance in adherence with these regulations, the applicant shall post a bond with the Town of Amherst in such amount as the Board of Selectmen may determine from time to time. Such bond shall not be less than five hundred dollars (\$500) per acre and shall be posted prior to the issuance of said permit. 3-4-75

During the period of the permit, the Zoning Administrator shall conduct on-site inspections of the earth material removal operation plan. Not less than sixty (60) days prior to the expiration of the permit, the Zoning Administrator shall conduct a compliance review. This review shall indicate what action is necessary by the operator to: 3-4-75

**3.8.3.1** Close out the operation within the permit period in conformance with the plan, or 3-4-75

**3.8.3.2** Be eligible to apply for a renewal of the Earth Material Removal Permit. 3-4-75

If the operator requests a renewal of his permit, the new application together with an amended operation plan shall be submitted at least forty-five (45) days prior to the expiration of the current permit. 3-4-75

If, at the expiration of the permit, the operator has failed to carry out the reclamation of the site as required by this Ordinance in conformance with the operation plan and permit, the bond posted by the operator shall be forfeited and the proceeds used to carry out the reclamation of the site. If the reclamation is performed in accordance with the operation plan, the bond shall be returned to the operator upon establishment of the cover crop for two (2) full growing seasons or earlier upon certification of the Hillsborough County Conservation District. 3-4-75

#### **3.8.4 Standards**

All work executed under an Earth Material Removal Permit shall conform to the following standards:

**3.8.4.1** No excavation shall occur within fifty (50) feet of any property line, Road right-of-way or zoning district boundary in which district earth material removal is not permitted and the natural vegetation shall be retained in this buffer area. 3-4-75

**3.8.4.2** All finished grades shall in no case be steeper than (2:1 horizontal/vertical) slope. 3-4-75

**3.8.4.3** No land shall be excavated below the seasonal high water table Except as part of a plan to develop water conservation or recreational uses. This plan must be submitted at the time of application together with a written review of the plan conducted by the Hillsborough County Conservation District. 3-4-75

**3.8.4.4** The excavation shall proceed in a manner which will not allow it to hold standing surface water in excess of two (2) inches in depth except as approved as part of a surface water absorption system designed to

minimize surface water runoff. 3-4-75

**3.8.4.5** Upon completion of all excavation, the entire site shall be re-spread With loam to a depth of four (4) inches or the average depth of loam prior to the commencement of excavation, whichever is less. Loam sufficient to meet this requirement shall be stockpiled on the excavation site. 3-4-75

**3.8.4.6** Unless a special waiver is granted at the time the permit is issued, The land area disturbed by the operation and in an unrestored condition shall not exceed a total of five (5) acres at any one time. 3-4-75

**3.8.4.7** When the removal of material is completed, the finished grades, as specified in the approved plan shall have a permanent cover crop established, except when ledge rock is exposed, to assure adequate drainage and prevent erosion. 3-4-75

**3.8.4.8** All excavating, handling, processing, and storage facilities shall be removed, the land cleared of all stumps, logs, brush, and rocks, the final grades indicated on the plan established and the site reclaimed prior to the expiration of the Earth Material Removal Permit unless application has been made and approval granted for the renewal of the permit. 3-4-75

**3.8.4.9** All earth material removal operations shall be maintained in a safe condition at all times. No overhanging banking, potential earth slides, or any other unsafe condition shall be permitted at any time. 3-4-75

### **3.8.5 Exceptions**

The removal of loam, sand, gravel, clay, and other similar materials from a site shall require an earth removal permit. The following activities conducted on a lot or site shall not require an earth material removal permit:

**3.8.5.1** The removal of less than two hundred (200) cubic yards of material. (3-4-75) 11-2-82 (3-11-03)

## **Section 3.9 Reduced Frontage Lots**

No building permit shall be issued for any structure on any lot within any subdivision approved subsequent to March 4, 1975 which includes any streets, driveways, or highways associated with reduced frontage lots unless such private driveways shall have been constructed in a fashion consistent with the requirements of the Town of Amherst subdivision regulations as adopted from time to time by the Town of Amherst Planning Board dealing with construction requirements and specifications for private driveways. 3-10-87

**NOTE:** See Town of Amherst Subdivision Regulations, Section 5-2. (3-4-75) 5-1-82

## **Section 3.10 Use Group Classifications**

A classification system is necessary in order that appropriate fire, health, building regulations can be recognized and applied to proposed new structures or those to be altered.

**3.10.1** Scope: The provisions of this section shall control the classification of all buildings and structures as to use groups.

**3.10.2** The provisions of this section shall not be deemed to nullify any provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

**3.10.3** General: All buildings and structures shall be classified with respect to use in one of the use groups listed below and such existing or proposed use shall be specified on the application for permit.

**3.10.3.1** Use Group A. Assembly

**3.10.3.2** Use Group B. Business

**3.10.3.3** Use Group E. Educational

**3.10.3.4** Use Group F. Factory and Industrial

**3.10.3.5** Use Group H. High Hazard

**3.10.3.6** Use Group I. Institutional

**3.10.3.7** Use Group M. Mercantile

**3.10.3.8** Use Group R. Residential

**3.10.3.9** Use Group S. Storage

**3.10.3.10** Use Group U. Utility and miscellaneous.

**3.10.4** Doubtful use classification: When a building or structure is proposed for a use not specifically provided for, the use classification shall be in the use group which it most nearly resembles, and the building or structure shall meet the health and safety requirements of that group.

**3.10.5** Mixed uses and occupancy: When a building is proposed to be occupied for two or more uses, the provision of associated codes securing the greater public health and safety shall be applied.

**3.10.6** Incidental uses: Where the use is supplemental to the main use of the building and the area devoted to such use does not occupy more than ten percent (10%) of the floor area, the building shall be classified according to the main use. 3-8-88

### **Section 3.11 Scenic Setbacks**

**3.11.1** Purpose: The purpose of this section is to preserve and enhance the rural, open character of the Town as viewed from the main roads leading through the Town and scenic roads within the Town and to prevent unsightly development along these routes.

**3.11.2** Regulations To accomplish the purpose of this section, a setback requirement for all structures of one hundred (100) feet from the highway right-of-way is established on the following roads, and said setbacks shall apply notwithstanding any other set-back requirements which may be applicable as a result of other zone regulations: 3-2-76

**3.11.2.1** Rte 122 from Hollis Town line north to Old Rte 101, Horace Greeley Highway. (3-14-00)

**3.11.2.2** Boston Post Rd from Stearns Rd north to Route 122

**3.11.2.3** Boston Post Rd from Beaver Brook north to Mt. Vernon Rd.

**3.11.2.4** Mt. Vernon Rd from Boston Post Rd north to Mt. Vernon Town line

**3.11.2.5** Amherst Street (3-9-99) (3-14-00)

**3.11.2.6** Horace Greeley Highway from Milford Town line north to Bedford Town line. (3-9-99)

**3.11.2.7** New Boston Rd from Boston Post Rd north to Mt. Vernon Town Line

**3.11.2.8** Christian Hill Rd from Davis Lane to Route 13

**3.11.2.9** Corduroy Rd from Merrimack Rd north to Boston Post Rd..

**3.11.2.10** Merrimack Rd from Boston Post Rd north to Corduroy Rd.

**3.11.2.11** Mack Hill Rd from Manchester Rd north to Austin Rd.

**3.11.2.12** All scenic Roads (see Section E) 3-2-76

**3.11.3.** Exceptions to Scenic Setback Requirements

**3.11.3.1** Any person aggrieved by the operation of this section may apply to the Board of Adjustment for a variance here from in like manner as in other situations where the existence of a hardship is alleged. 3-2-76

**3.11.3.2** In the event that a lot of record, at time of passage of this section, is of such size and dimension that the application of the foregoing setback in combination with all other setbacks as may be required for such lot precludes the use of more than sixty percent (60%) of the area of such lot, then the foregoing one hundred (100) foot setback shall not apply to such lot; however, if a lot qualifies for this exception and is also subject to Non-Residential Site Plan Review by the Planning Board, the Planning Board shall determine that appropriate provision has been provision has been provided so as to reasonably achieve the purpose of this section as set forth in Paragraph A above.

3-2-76

**3.11.3.3** The regulations set forth herein, are intended to apply only to the construction of new structures which takes place on and after the effective date of this section. Any dwelling or other structure which was in existence at the time of passage of this section, may be enlarged, modified, or otherwise altered without the necessity of complying with the requirements of this section, provided that such alterations do not reduce the setback from the front lot line to an amount less than the setback which exists on the building to be altered. Provided further, however, that such construction or alterations must comply with any other setback requirements applicable in the respective zones other than the scenic setback. (3-2-76) 3-9-82

### **Section 3.12 Farming**

Intent: In keeping with the goals of the Master Plan, a Right to Farm Ordinance is hereby written to encourage and protect farms and farming in the Town of Amherst. In order to protect the existing farms in the Town of Amherst and to encourage others who might want to farm, it is recognized that "the right to farm" is a natural right and is allowed to exist as a permitted use in the Town of Amherst and State Health and Sanitary Codes for intensive fowl and livestock farms.

The right to farm as used in this Ordinance includes use of necessary equipment, farm machines, farm labors, application of fertilizers etc., for the purpose of producing agricultural products such as vegetables, grains, hay, fruit, trees, plants, etc. The right to farm shall also include the right to use land for grazing by animals and raising of livestock and fowl, when conducted in accordance with generally accepted agricultural practices and may take place on holidays, Sundays, weekends, night and day. (3-13-84)

Agricultural operations and Equestrian operations shall be conducted in accordance with the MANUAL OF BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMP) FOR AGRICULTURE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE published by the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food. (3.8.05)

Two (2) signs totaling twelve (12) square feet are permitted for farm stands.

### **Section 3.13 Dish Antennae**

Purpose: To provide for the safe and aesthetically pleasing installation of dish antennae in the Town of Amherst.

#### **3.13.1 Standards**

**3.13.1.1** These standards shall apply to antennae of four (4) feet in diameter or greater.

**3.13.1.2** Only one antenna shall be allowed for each lot.

**3.13.1.3** Antennae shall be placed at least one hundred (100) feet back from front property line and shall meet the setback requirements for the particular zone in which it is located.

**3.13.1.4** All antennae shall be securely mounted to the ground and shall not be placed on any vehicle or other movable structure.

**3.13.1.5** The antennae shall be visually screened from the roadway and adjoining property by the use of vegetation to the maximum extent possible without impairing efficiency so that said screening is effective year-round.

**3.13.1.6** No portion of the antenna may exceed fifteen (15) feet in height from the natural ground level.

**3.13.1.7** Must be painted matte black or earth tones to blend with surrounding vegetation. 3-11-86

### **Section 3.14 Renewable Energy Systems** (3.11.08), (3.10.09)

**3.14.1** Purpose: The purpose of this Ordinance is to promote the safe, effective, and efficient use of small renewable energy systems designed to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. In accordance with NH RSA 674:17(j), small renewable energy systems such as, but not limited to, solar, wind and biomass facilities may be permitted in any Zone (except the Historic District overlay for Small Wind Energy Systems). Systems proposed within the Historic District are also subject to approval of the Historic District Commission. For purposes of this Ordinance small energy systems shall be those capable of generating not more than 60 KW. Systems rated for production of more than 60 KW shall be considered commercial uses. 3.9.10

#### **3.14.2 Small Wind Energy Systems**

**3.14.2.1** Purpose:

This small wind energy systems ordinance is enacted in accordance with RSA 674:62-66, and the purposes outlined in RSA 672:1-III-a. The purpose of this ordinance is to accommodate small wind energy systems in appropriate locations, while protecting the public's health, safety and welfare. In addition, this ordinance provides a permitting process for small wind energy systems to ensure compliance with the provisions of the requirements and standards established herein.

**3.14.2.2 Definitions:**

Meteorological tower (met tower). Includes the tower, base plate, anchors, guy wires and hardware, anemometers (wind speed indicators), wind direction vanes, booms to hold equipment for anemometers and vanes, data loggers, instrument wiring, and any telemetry devices that are used to monitor or transmit wind speed and wind flow characteristics over a period of time for either instantaneous wind information or to characterize the wind resource at a given location. For the purpose of this ordinance, met towers shall refer only to those whose purpose are to analyze the environmental factors needed to assess the potential to install, construct or erect a small wind energy system.

Modification. Any change to the small wind energy system that materially alters the size, type or location of the small wind energy system. Like-kind replacements shall not be construed to be a modification.

Net metering. The difference between the electricity supplied to a customer over the electric distribution system and the electricity generated by the customer's small wind energy system that is fed back into the electric distribution system over a billing period.

Power grid. The transmission system, managed by ISO New England, created to balance the supply and demand of electricity for consumers in New England.

Shadow flicker. The visible flicker effect when rotating blades of the wind generator cast shadows on the ground and nearby structures causing a repeating pattern of light and shadow.

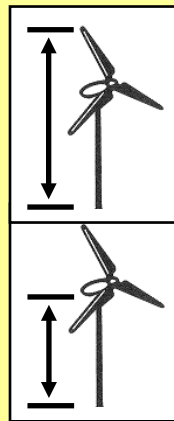
Small wind energy system. A wind energy conversion system consisting of a wind generator, a tower, and associated control or conversion electronics, which has a rated capacity of 60 kilowatts or less and will be used primarily for onsite consumption.

System height. The vertical distance from ground level to the tip of the wind generator blade when it is at its highest point.

Tower. The monopole, guyed monopole or lattice structure that supports a wind generator.

Tower height. The height above grade of the fixed portion of the tower, excluding the wind generator.

Wind generator. The blades and associated mechanical and electrical conversion components mounted on top of the tower whose purpose is to convert kinetic energy of the wind into rotational energy used to generate electricity.



**3.14.2.3 Procedure for Review:**

**3.14.2.3.1 Building Permit:** Small wind energy systems and met towers are an accessory use permitted in all zoning districts where structures of any sort are allowed. No small wind energy system shall be erected, constructed, or installed without first receiving a building permit from the building inspector. A building permit shall be required for any physical modification to an existing small wind energy system. Met towers that receive a building permit shall be permitted on a temporary basis not to exceed 3 years from the date the building permit was issued.

**3.14.2.3.2 Application:** Applications submitted to the building inspector shall contain a site plan with the following information:

**3.14.2.3.2.1** Property lines and physical dimensions of the applicant's property.

**3.14.2.3.2.2** Location, dimensions, and types of existing major structures on the property.

**3.14.2.3.2.3** Location of the proposed small wind energy system, foundations, guy anchors and associated equipment.

**3.14.2.3.2.4** Tower foundation blueprints or drawings.

**3.14.2.3.2.5** Tower blueprints or drawings.

**3.14.2.3.2.6** Setback requirements as outlined in this ordinance.

**3.14.2.3.2.7** The right-of-way of any public road that is contiguous with the property.

**3.14.2.3.2.8** Any overhead utility lines.

**3.14.2.3.2.9** Small wind energy system specifications, including manufacturer, model, rotor diameter, tower height, tower type, nameplate generation capacity.

**3.14.2.3.2.10** Small wind energy systems that will be connected to the power grid shall include a copy of the application for interconnection with their electric utility provider.

**3.14.2.3.2.11** Sound level analysis prepared by the wind generator manufacturer or qualified engineer.

**3.14.2.3.2.12** Electrical components in sufficient detail to allow for a determination that the manner of installation conforms to the NH State Building Code.

**3.14.2.3.2.13** Evidence of compliance or non-applicability with Federal Aviation Administration requirements.

**3.14.2.3.2.14** List of abutters to the applicant's property. Three sets of typed gummed labels (1" x 2.5").

**3.14.2.3.3 Abutter and Regional Notification:** In accordance with RSA 674:66, the building inspector shall notify all abutters and the local governing body by certified mail upon application for a building permit to construct a small wind energy system. The public will be afforded 30 days to submit comments to the building inspector prior to the issuance of the building permit. The building inspector shall review the application for regional impacts per RSA 36:55. If the proposal is determined to have potential regional impacts, the building inspector shall follow the procedures set forth in RSA 36:57, IV.

**3.14.2.4 Standards:**

**3.14.2.4.1** The building inspector shall evaluate the application for compliance with the following standards;

**3.14.2.4.1.1 Setbacks:** The setback shall be calculated by multiplying the minimum setback requirement number by the system height and measured from the center of the tower base to property line, public roads, or nearest point on the foundation of an occupied building.

Minimum Setback Requirements			
Occupied Buildings on Participating Landowner Property	Occupied Buildings on Abutting Property	Property Lines of Abutting Property and Utility Lines	Public Roads
0	1.5	1.1	1.5

**3.14.2.4.1.1.1** Small wind energy systems must meet all setbacks for principal structures for the zoning district in which the system is located.

**3.14.2.4.1.1.2** Guy wires used to support the tower are exempt from the small wind energy system setback requirements.

**3.14.2.4.1.2** Tower: The maximum tower height shall be restricted to 35 feet above the tree canopy within 300 feet of the small wind energy system. In no situation shall the tower height exceed 150 feet.

**3.14.2.4.1.3** Sound Level: The small wind energy system shall not exceed 55 decibels using the A scale (dBA), as measured at the site property line, except during short-term events such as severe wind storms and utility outages.

**3.14.2.4.1.4** Shadow Flicker: Small wind energy systems shall be sited in a manner that does not result in significant shadow flicker impacts. Significant shadow flicker is defined as more than 30 hours per year on abutting occupied buildings. The applicant has the burden of proving that the shadow flicker will not have significant adverse impact on neighboring or adjacent uses. Potential shadow flicker will be addressed either through siting or mitigation measures.

**3.14.2.4.1.5** Signs: All signs including flags streamers and decorative items, both temporary and permanent, are prohibited on the small wind energy system, except for manufacturer identification or appropriate warning signs.

**3.14.2.4.1.6** Code Compliance: The small wind energy system shall comply with all applicable sections of the New Hampshire State Building Code.

**3.14.2.4.1.7** Aviation: The small wind energy system shall be built to comply with all applicable Federal Aviation Administration regulations including but not limited to 14 C.F.R. part 77, subpart B regarding installations close to airports, and the New Hampshire Aviation regulations, including but not limited to RSA 422-b and RSA 424.

**3.14.2.4.1.8** Visual Impacts: It is inherent that small wind energy systems may pose some visual impacts due to the tower height needed to access wind resources. The purpose of this section is to reduce the visual impacts, without restricting the owner's access to the optimal wind resources on the property.

**3.14.2.4.1.8.1** The applicant shall demonstrate through project site planning and proposed mitigation that the small wind energy system's visual impacts will be minimized for surrounding neighbors and the community. This may include, but not be limited to information regarding site selection, wind generator design or appearance, buffering, and screening of ground mounted electrical and control equipment. All electrical conduits shall be underground, except when the financial costs are prohibitive.

**3.14.2.4.1.8.2** The color of the small wind energy system shall either be the stock color from the manufacturer or painted with a non-reflective, unobtrusive color that blends in with the surrounding environment. Approved colors include but are not limited to white, off-white or gray.

**3.14.2.4.1.8.3** A small wind energy system shall not be artificially lit unless such lighting is required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). If lighting is required, the applicant shall provide a copy of the FAA determination to establish the required markings and/or lights for the small wind energy system.

**3.14.2.4.1.9** Approved Wind Generators: The manufacturer and model of the wind generator to be used in the proposed small wind energy system must have been approved by the California Energy Commission or the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, or a similar list approved by the state of New Hampshire, if available.

**3.14.2.4.1.10** Utility Connection: If the proposed small wind energy system is to be connected to the power grid through net metering, it shall adhere to RSA 362-A:9.

**3.14.2.4.1.11** Access: The tower shall be designed and installed so as not to provide step bolts or a ladder readily accessible to the public for a minimum height of 8 feet above the ground. All ground-mounted electrical and control equipment shall be labeled and secured to prevent unauthorized access.

**3.14.2.4.1.12** Clearing: Clearing of natural vegetation shall be limited to that which is necessary for the construction, operation and maintenance of the small wind energy system and as otherwise prescribed by applicable laws, regulations, and ordinances.

**3.14.2.5** Abandonment:

**3.14.2.5.1** At such time that a small wind energy system is scheduled to be abandoned or discontinued, the applicant will notify the building inspector by certified U.S. mail of the proposed date of abandonment or discontinuation of operations.

**3.14.2.5.2** Upon abandonment or discontinuation of use, the owner shall physically remove the small wind energy system within 90 days from the date of abandonment or discontinuation of use. This period may be extended at the request of the owner and at the discretion of the building inspector. "Physically remove" shall include, but not be limited to:

**3.14.2.5.2.1** Removal of the wind generator and tower and related above-grade structures.

**3.14.2.5.2.2** Restoration of the location of the small wind energy system to its natural condition, except that any landscaping, grading or below-grade foundation may remain in its same condition at initiation of abandonment.

**3.14.2.5.3** In the event that an applicant fails to give such notice, the system shall be considered abandoned or discontinued if the system is out-of-service for a continuous 12-month period. After the 12 months of inoperability, the building inspector may issue a Notice of Abandonment to the owner of the small wind energy system. The owner shall have the right to respond to the Notice of Abandonment within 30 days from Notice receipt date. After review of the information provided by the owner, the building inspector shall determine if the small wind energy system has been abandoned. If it is determined that the small wind energy system has not been abandoned, the building inspector shall withdraw the Notice of Abandonment and notify the owner of the withdrawal.

**3.14.2.5.4** If the owner fails to respond to the Notice of Abandonment or if, after review by the building inspector, it is determined that the small wind energy system has been abandoned or discontinued, the owner of the small wind energy system shall remove the wind generator and tower at the owner's sole expense within 3 months of receipt of the Notice of Abandonment. If the owner fails to physically remove the small wind

energy system after the Notice of Abandonment procedure, the building inspector may pursue legal action to have the small wind energy system removed at the owner's expense.

**3.14.2.6 Violation:**

It is unlawful for any person to construct, install, or operate a small wind energy system that is not in compliance with this ordinance. Small wind energy systems installed prior to the adoption of this ordinance are exempt from this ordinance except when modifications are proposed to the small wind energy system.

**3.14.2.7 Penalties:**

Any person who fails to comply with any provision of this ordinance or a building permit issued pursuant to this ordinance shall be subject to enforcement and penalties as allowed by NH Revised Statutes Annotated Chapter 676:17.

**Section 3.15 Home Occupations** (3-14-95), (3.11.08)

**3.15.1 Purpose and Authority**

The Purpose of this ordinance is to provide for home-based businesses while protecting the character of the residential neighborhoods in which they operate. The activities associated with home occupations are not to detract from the rural character of the Town nor shall they create traffic, environmental or aesthetic impacts substantially different than the impacts created by other permitted uses in the neighborhood.

**3.15.2 Definition**

An occupation or business activity which is conducted by a resident within his/her own dwelling or in a garage or barn-type outbuilding and which is clearly subordinate to the principal residential use.

**3.15.3 Requirements for all Home Occupations**

**3.15.3.1** The home occupation shall occupy no more than 20% of the existing, gross heated floor area of the primary residence or, if the home occupation is conducted in an outbuilding, shall not occupy an area greater than 50% of the existing, gross heated floor area of the primary residence. Up to a maximum of 1,000 square feet of covered area may be dedicated to the home occupation.

**3.15.3.2** No emissions of dust, fumes, smoke, noise (greater than 65 decibels), vibration, light or water, attributable to the home occupation, shall be allowed across the property line.

**3.15.3.3** No outdoor display advertising or storage of any products or materials associated with the home occupation shall be allowed except as provided below.

**3.15.3.4** No more than 2 trips per day by commercial delivery vehicles (on average) shall be allowed.

**3.15.4 Classes of Home Occupation**

**3.15.4.1 Class A Home Occupation:**

A Class A Home Occupation has no impact on the neighborhood. The business is not visible to the surrounding properties or the street. Activity is carried out entirely within the residence or accessory buildings, there is no sign other than a rural delivery mailbox, no vehicle other than the residents' personal vehicles, which are not lettered or painted to advertise the business. The business has no employees other than the residents of the dwelling. No clients or customers come to the house to transact business, and any deliveries are made by standard delivery truck (no large freight vehicles are involved in the day-to-day operation). Operators of Class A Home Occupations may choose to register with the Town, using the Home Occupation Registration form. A copy of the registration form, signed by the Planning Director, will be provided to the operator if requested.

**3.15.4.2 Class B Home Occupation**

A Class B Home Occupation has minimal impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

**3.15.4.2.1** No structural change or addition to the existing buildings indicates the business use of the property.

**3.15.4.2.2** The business has no employees other than the residents of the dwelling.

- 3.15.4.2.3** One non-illuminated sign not to exceed six square feet per side may be displayed.
  - 3.15.4.2.4** One vehicle displaying text or decoration promoting the business may be allowed.
  - 3.15.4.2.5** Up to three clients or customers per day (on average) may be received.
  - 3.15.4.2.6** Hours of outside operation may be 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday thru Saturday.
- Operators of Class B Home Occupations must register with the Town, using the Home Occupation Registration form. A copy of the registration form, signed by the Planning Director, will be kept on the premises in a readily accessible location.
- 3.15.4.3** Class C Home Occupation
- A Class C Home Occupation has minor impact on the surrounding neighborhood.
- 3.15.4.3.1** No structural change or addition to the existing buildings indicates the business use of the property.
  - 3.15.4.3.2** The business has no more than two employees other than the residents of the dwelling.
  - 3.15.4.3.3** One non-illuminated sign not to exceed six square feet per side, may be displayed.
  - 3.15.4.3.4** One vehicle displaying text or decoration promoting the business may be allowed.
  - 3.15.4.3.5** Up to ten clients or customers per day (on average) may be received.
  - 3.15.4.3.6** Hours of outside operation are 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday, 9:00 am to 8:00 pm Saturday.
  - 3.15.4.3.7** Deliveries other than those by standard delivery truck must be received between 10 am and 2 pm.
  - 3.15.4.3.8** The site must accommodate parcel pick-up and delivery with facilities for drop-off storage.
- Operators of Class C Home Occupations must register with the Town, using the Home Occupation Registration form. In addition the operator must provide documentation of the adequacy of the septic system for the proposed use, and a sketch of the property demonstrating adequate areas designated for parking of employees and clients/customers, access and turning of delivery vehicles, and safe pedestrian access for clients/customers to the business where applicable. A copy of the registration form, signed by the Planning Director, will be kept on the premises in a readily accessible location.
- 3.15.4.4** Special Provisions
- 3.15.4.4.1** Any Bed & Breakfast operated under this section of the Ordinance shall be limited to a maximum of five bedrooms for guest use.
  - 3.15.4.4.2** Scale of operation of any Class B or C Home Occupation may be limited by the capacity of the existing septic system.
  - 3.15.4.4.3** Adequate off-street parking must be provided for any Class B or C Home Occupation.
- 3.15.5** Renewal or Expiration of Registration
- 3.15.5.1** Class B and C Home Occupation registrations and the uses provided for therein, shall automatically terminate five years after the date of issuance but shall be renewed by the Town provided that the dwelling owner shall certify that the use is in compliance with this Ordinance.
  - 3.15.5.2** Class B Home Occupations that grow to exceed the requirements under Section IV-B shall comply with the requirements of Section IV-C within six (6) months. Class C Home Occupations shall not exceed the requirements of Section IV-C and may be directed by the Planning Director or designated officer to reduce the impact of the operation or move to a non-residential site within sixty (60) days. Home Occupation permits are not transferable.
- 3.15.6** Prohibited Uses
- Home Occupation uses shall not include the following:
- 3.15.6.1** Any use that generates stores or uses regulated hazardous substances, receives or ships hazardous materials regulated under Chapter 49 - Code of Federal Regulations, or that generates or disposes of hazardous waste as regulated under Chapter 40 - Code of Federal Regulations. This prohibition includes dry cleaning facilities, metal extraction and salvage operations, most landscaping businesses, machine shops, photo-developing operations, and laboratories.
  - 3.15.6.2** Sales or repairs of automobiles, snowmobiles, jet skis or other motorized vehicles.
  - 3.15.6.3** Hair or nail salons, barber or beauty shops
  - 3.15.6.4** Medical or dental group practice clinics or veterinary clinics
  - 3.15.6.5** Clothing cleaners or dyers

- 3.15.6.6** Banks
- 3.15.6.7** Coffee or sandwich shops or other restaurant facilities.
- 3.15.6.8** Daycare facilities larger than a maximum of six (6) children. 3.9.10
- 3.15.7** Permitted uses not regulated as Home Occupations

Certain activities conducted in residential zones are regulated by other parts of the Amherst Zoning Ordinance:

- 3.15.7.1** Farming and Agricultural Uses, including Farming (Section 3-12)
- 3.15.7.2** Personal Wireless Service Facilities (Section 3-16)
- 3.15.7.3** Equestrian Facilities and Events (Section 3-17)
- 3.15.7.4** Non-commercial sports and recreational uses
- 3.15.7.5** By Special Exception in certain zones:
  - 3.15.7.5.1** Kennels
  - 3.15.7.5.2** Sawmills
  - 3.15.7.5.3** Religious Uses
  - 3.15.7.5.4** Funeral Homes
  - 3.15.7.5.5** Nursing Homes

**Section 3.16 Personal Wireless Service Facilities** (3.9.99)

**3.16.1 PURPOSE AND INTENT**

It is the express purpose of this Article to permit carriers to locate personal wireless service facilities within particular areas of the Town of Amherst consistent with appropriate land use regulations that will ensure compatibility with the visual and environmental features of the Town. Compatibility with the visual features of Amherst is measured based on the change in community scale and character in relation to the height, mass, materials, contrasts, or proportion within the surroundings of a proposed personal wireless service facilities. This Article enables the review of the locating and siting of personal wireless service facilities by the Town of Amherst so as to eliminate or mitigate the visual and environmental impacts of personal wireless service facilities. This Article is structured to encourage carriers to locate on existing buildings and structures whenever possible. New ground mounted personal wireless facilities are permitted, but only when the use of existing structures and buildings is found to be infeasible. Co-location is encouraged for all personal wireless service facility applications and the review of a personal wireless facility shall be on the basis of the site being built using all positions on the mount.

**3.16.2 APPLICABILITY**

The terms of this Article and the Site Plan Review Regulations shall apply to personal wireless services facilities proposed to be located on property owned by the Town of Amherst, on privately owned property, and on property that is owned by any other governmental entity that acts in its proprietary capacity to lease such property to a carrier.

**3.16.3 DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this Article, the following terms shall have the meaning given herein:

**3.16.3.1** Antenna. The surface from which wireless radio signals are sent and/or received by a personal wireless service facility.

**3.16.3.2** Antenna Array. A collection of antennas attached to mount to send and receive radio signals.

**3.16.3.3** Average Tree Canopy Height. An average height found by inventorying the height at above ground level (AGL) of all trees over twenty (20) feet in height for a defined area. The AGL shall be calculated on the trees within a radius of fifty (50) feet from the proposed Tower, (trees to be removed at tower site cannot be used in calculations.) (3/13/01)

**3.16.3.4** Camouflaged. A personal wireless service facility that is disguised, hidden, part of an existing or proposed structure, or placed within an existing or proposed structure. All paint shall be flat to avoid any reflection. (3/13/01)

**3.16.3.5** Carrier. A Company that provides personal wireless services also sometimes referred to as a provider.

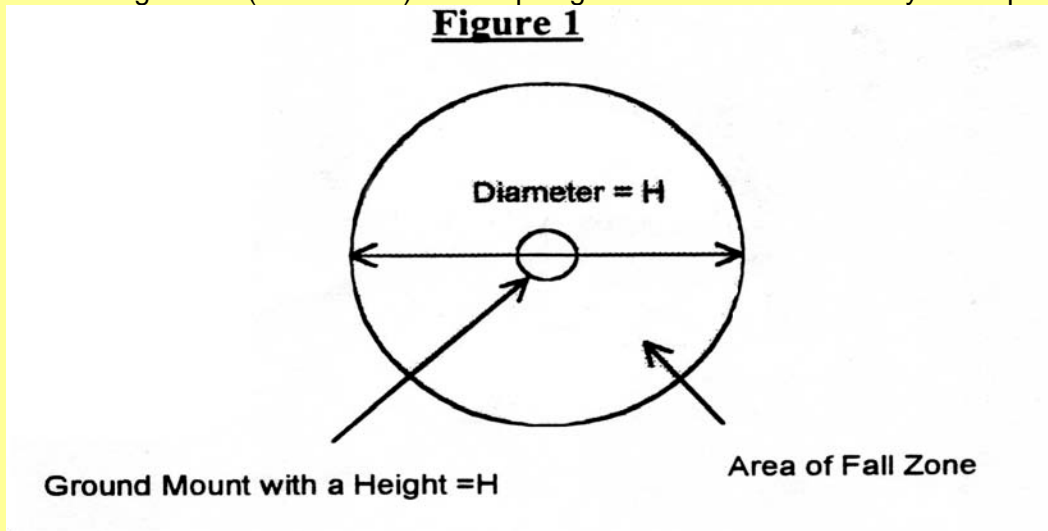
**3.16.3.6** Co-location. The use of a single mount on the ground by more than one carrier (vertical co-location) or the same carrier with multiple licenses, and/or the use of several mounts on an existing building or structure by more than one carrier or the same carrier with multiple licenses.

**3.16.3.7** Environmental Assessment (EA). An EA is a document required by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the national Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) when a personal wireless service facility is placed in certain designated areas.

**3.16.3.8** Equipment Shelter. An enclosed structure, cabinet, shed, vault, or box near the base of the mount within which are housed equipment for personal wireless service facilities such as batteries and electrical equipment. Equipment shelters are sometimes referred to as base transceiver stations.

**3.16.3.9** Facility. See Personal Wireless Service Facility.

**3.16.3.10** Fall Zone. The area on the ground from the base of a ground mounted personal wireless service facility that forms a circle with a diameter equal to the height of the facility, including any antennas or other appurtenances, as set forth in Figure 1. The fall zone is the area within which there is a potential hazard from falling debris (such as ice) or collapsing material. Fall zones may overlap.



**3.16.3.11** Guyed Tower. A monopole or lattice tower that is secured to the ground or other surface by diagonal cables for lateral support.

**3.16.3.12** Height. The height above ground level (AGL) from the natural grade of a site to the highest point of a structure.

**3.16.3.13** Lattice Tower. A type of mount with multiple legs and structural cross bracing between the legs that is self supporting and free-standing.

**3.16.3.14** Mast. A thin pole that resembles a street light standard or a telephone pole. A dual-polarized antenna is typically deployed on a mast.

**3.16.3.15** Monopole. A thicker type of mount than a mast that is self-supporting with a single shaft of wood, steel or concrete, or other material, that is designed for the placement of antennas and arrays along the shaft.

**3.16.3.16** Mount. The structure or surface upon which antennas are mounted, including the following four types of mounts:

Roof-mounted. Mounted on the roof of a building.

Side-mounted. Mounted on the side of a building.

Ground-mounted. Mounted on the ground.

Structure-mounted. Mounted on a structure other than a building.

**3.16.3.17** Personal Wireless Service Facility. Facility for the provision of personal wireless services, as defined by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, as amended. Personal Wireless Service facilities include a mount, antenna, equipment shelter, and other related equipment.

**3.16.3.18** Personal Wireless Services. The three types of services regulated by this Ordinance: Commercial mobile radio services, unlicensed wireless services, and common carrier wireless exchange access services as described in the Telecommunications Act of 1996, as amended.

**3.16.3.19** Radio Frequency (RF) Engineer. An engineer specializing in electrical or microwave engineering, especially the study of radio frequencies.

**3.16.3.20** Radio Frequency Radiation (RFR). The emissions from personal wireless service facilities.

**3.16.3.21** Security Barrier. A wall, fence, or berm that restricts an area from unauthorized entry or trespass.

**3.16.3.22** Separation. The distance between one carrier's array of antennas and another carrier's array.

#### **3.16.4** DISTRICT REGULATIONS

**3.16.4.1** Location – Personal wireless service facilities shall be permitted in all Zoning Districts. Applicants seeking approval for personal wireless service facilities shall first evaluate existing structures for the siting of personal wireless service facilities. Only after finding that there are no suitable existing structures pursuant to Section 4.3 herein, shall a provider propose a new ground mounted facility.

**3.16.4.2** Existing Structures: Policy – Personal Wireless service facilities shall be located on existing structures, including but not limited to buildings, water towers, existing telecommunications facilities, utility poles or towers, and related facilities, provided that such installation preserves the character and integrity of those structures.

**3.16.4.3** Existing Structures: Burden of Proof – The applicant shall have the burden of proving that there are no existing structures which are suitable to locate its personal wireless service facility and/or transmit or receive radio signals. To meet that burden, the applicant shall take all the following actions to the extent applicable:

**3.16.4.3.1** The applicant shall submit to the Planning Board a list of all contacts made with owners of potential sites regarding the availability of potential space for a personal wireless service facility. If the Planning informs the applicant that additional existing structures may be satisfactory, the applicant shall contact the property owner(s) of those structures.

**3.16.4.3.2** The applicant shall provide copies of all letters of inquiry made to owners of existing structures and letters of rejection. If letters of rejections are not provided, at a minimum, unanswered "Return Receipt Requested" forms from the U.S. Post Office shall be provided for each owner of existing structures that was contacted.

**3.16.4.3.3** If the applicant claims that a structure is not capable of physically supporting a personal wireless service facility, this claim must be certified by a licensed professional civil engineer. The certification shall, at a minimum, explain the structural issues and demonstrate that the structure cannot be modified to support the personal wireless service facility without unreasonable costs. The estimated cost shall be provided to the Planning Board.

**3.16.4.4** Ground Mounted Facilities: Policy – If the applicant demonstrates that it is not feasible to locate on an existing structure, ground mounted personal wireless service facilities shall be designed so as to be camouflaged to the greatest extent possible, including but not limited to: use of compatible building materials and colors, screening, landscaping, and placement within trees.

### **3.16.5 USE REGULATIONS**

A personal wireless service facility shall require a building permit in all cases and may be permitted as follows:

**3.16.5.1 Existing Tower Structures:** Subject to the issuance of a building permit that includes review by the Planning Board, which review shall be limited to issues relating to access, bonding, and security for removal, structural integrity and appropriate camouflage of such siting, carriers may locate a personal wireless service facility on any guyed tower, lattice tower, mast, or monopole in existence prior to the adoption of this Article, or on any personal wireless service facility previously approved under the provisions of this Article so long as the co-location complies with the approved site plan. All the Performance Standards from this Article shall be met. This provision shall apply only so long as the height of the mount is not increased, a security barrier already exists, and the area of the security barrier is not increased. Otherwise, site plan review is required.

**3.16.5.2 Reconstruction of Existing Tower Structures:** An existing guyed tower, lattice tower, monopole, or mast in existence prior to the adoption of this Article may be reconstructed with a maximum twenty (20) foot increase in height so as to maximize co-location so long as the standards of this Article are met and so long as this twenty (20) foot increase in height does not cause a facility previously existing at less than two hundred (200) feet to exceed two hundred (200) feet in height. The mount shall be replaced with a similar mount that does not significantly increase the visual impact on the community. Site Plan review is required.

**3.16.5.3 Existing Structures:** Subject to the provisions of this Article and Minor site plan review under RSA 674:43:III and except as otherwise permitted Under Section 5 (A), a carrier may locate a personal wireless service facility on an existing structure, building, utility tower or pole, or water tower. For the purpose of this section, new structures that are conforming to all other district zoning requirements shall be considered as existing structures.

**3.16.5.4 Ground Mounted Facility:** A personal wireless service facility involving construction of a ground mount shall require site plan review and be subject to the provisions of this Article.

### **3.16.6 DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Personal wireless service facilities shall comply with the following requirements:

**3.16.6.1 Height, Maximum:** In no case shall a personal wireless service facility exceed two hundred (200) feet in height, unless the mount for the facility was greater than two hundred (200) feet in height prior to the adoption of this Article.

**3.16.6.2 Height, Existing Structures and Utility Poles:** Carriers that locate new personal wireless service facilities on water towers, electric transmission and distribution towers, utility poles and similar existing utility structures, guyed towers, lattice towers, masts, and monopoles may be permitted to increase the height of those structures no more than twenty (20) feet, or 40 feet at the discretion of the Planning Board, if the additional height will not materially impair the visual impacts of the site. This increase in height shall only be permitted once for each structure.

**3.16.6.3 Height, Other Existing Structures:** The height of a personal

wireless service facility shall not increase the height of a structure by more than fifteen (15) feet, unless the facility is completely camouflaged; for example a facility completely within a flagpole, steeple, or chimney. The increase in the height of the structure shall be in scale and proportion to the structure as originally configured. A carrier may locate a personal wireless service facility on a building that is legally nonconforming with respect to height, provided that the provisions of this Article are met.

**3.16.6.4** Height, Ground-Mounted Facilities: Ground-mounted personal wireless service facilities shall not project higher than (20) twenty feet above the average tree canopy height within a one hundred and fifty (150) foot radius of the mount, security barrier, or designated clear area for access to equipment, whichever is greatest.

**3.16.6.5** Setbacks: All personal wireless service facilities and their equipment shelters shall comply with the building setback provisions of the zoning district in which the facility is located if the fence is six (6) feet or more in height, in accordance with the appropriate Zoning Ordinances.

**3.16.6.6** Fall Zone for Ground Mounts: In order to ensure public safety, the minimum distance from the base of any ground-mount of a personal wireless service facility to any property line, public road, habitable dwelling, business or institutional use, or public recreational area shall be, at a minimum, the distance equal to the fall zone, as defined in this Article. The fall zone may cross property lines, so long as the applicant secures a fall zone easement from the affected property owner(s). The area of the easement shall be shown on all applicable plans submitted to the Town, and the terms of the easement shall be provided as part of the site plan review. (Multiple fall zones may overlap) (3-13-01)

**3.16.6.7** Fall Zone for Non-Ground Mounts: In the event that an existing structure is proposed as a mount for a personal wireless service facility, a fall zone shall not be required, but the setback provisions of the zoning district shall apply. In the case of pre-existing nonconforming structures, personal wireless service facilities and their equipment shelters shall not increase any non-conformities.

**3.16.6.8** Planning Board Flexibility: heights – In reviewing a site plan application for a personal wireless service facility, the Planning Board may permit an increase in the height of a ground mounted facility up to forty (40) feet above the average tree canopy height, if no material increase in visual or environmental impacts will result from the increased height. The visual and environmental criteria of this Article and the Site Plan Review Regulations shall be the guidelines in making this determination.

### **3.16.7** PERFORMANCE AND DESIGN STANDARDS

#### **3.16.7.1** Visibility

**3.16.7.1.1** Visual impacts are measured on the basis of:

**3.16.7.1.1.1** Change in community scale, as exhibited in relative height, mass or proportion of the personal wireless service facility within their proposed surroundings.

**3.16.7.1.1.2** New visible elements proposed on a contrasting background.

**3.16.7.1.1.3** Different colors and textures proposed against a contrasting background.

**3.16.7.1.1.4** Use of materials that are foreign to the existing built environment.

**3.16.7.1.2** Enhancements are measured on the basis of:

**3.16.7.1.2.1** Conservation of opportunities to maintain community scale, e.g. buffering areas and low-lying buildings should not be compromised so as to start a trend away from the existing community scale.

**3.16.7.1.2.2** Amount and type of landscaping and/or natural vegetation.

**3.16.7.1.2.3** Preservation of view corridors, vistas, and view sheds.

**3.16.7.1.2.4** Continuation of existing colors, textures, and materials.

**3.16.7.1.3** Visibility focuses on:

**3.16.7.1.3.1** Eliminating or mitigating visual impact.

**3.16.7.1.3.2** Protecting, continuing, and enhancing the existing environment.

**3.16.7.1.4** Camouflage for Facilities on Existing Buildings or Structures – Roof Mounts:

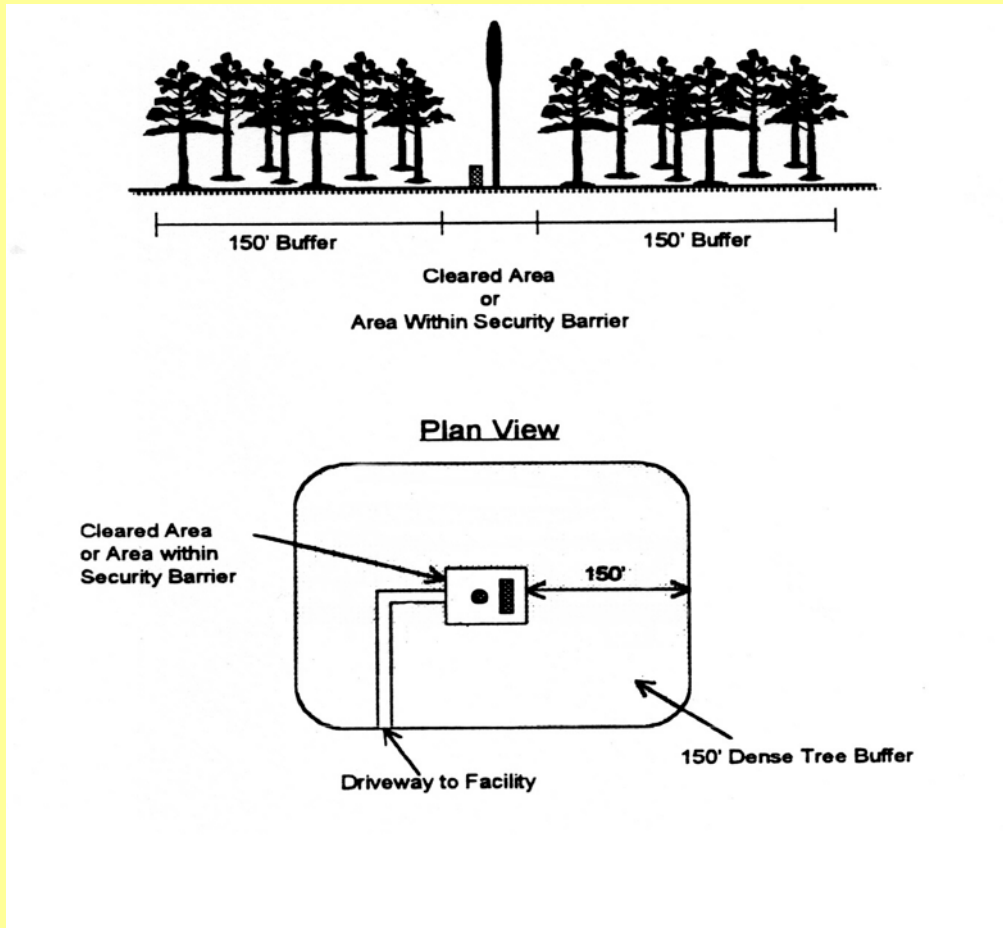
When a personal wireless service facility extends above the roof height of a building on which it is mounted, every effort shall be made to conceal or camouflage the facility within or behind existing or new architectural features to limit its visibility from public ways. Facilities mounted on a roof shall be stepped back from the front façade in order to limit their impact on the building's silhouette.

**3.16.7.1.5** Camouflage for Facilities on Existing Buildings or Structures – Side Mounts:

Personal wireless service facilities which are side mounted shall blend with the existing building's architecture and, if individual antenna panels are over five (5) square feet, the panels shall be painted or shielded with material consistent with the design and materials of the building.

**3.16.7.1.6** Camouflage for Ground Mounted Facilities:

All ground-mounted personal wireless service facilities shall be surrounded by a buffer of dense tree growth that extends continuously for a minimum distance of one hundred and fifty (150) feet from the mount, and screens views of the facility in all directions, as set forth in Figure 2. These trees must be existing on the subject property, planted on site, or be within a landscape easement on an adjoining site. The Planning Board shall have the authority to decrease, relocate, or alter the required buffer based on site conditions. The one hundred and fifty (150) foot vegetative buffer area shall be protected by a landscape easement or be within the area of the carrier's lease. The easement or lease shall specify that the trees within the buffer shall not be removed or topped, unless the trees are dead or dying and present a hazard to persons or property.



**3.16.7.2** Color: To the extent that any personal wireless service facilities extend above the height of the vegetation immediately surrounding it, they shall be of a color which blends with the background or surroundings.

**3.16.7.3** Equipment Shelters – Equipment shelters for personal wireless service facilities shall be designed consistent with one of the following design standards:

**3.16.7.3.1** Equipment shelters shall be located in underground vaults; or

**3.16.7.3.2** Equipment shelters shall be designed so that the shelters are architecturally consistent, with respect to materials and appearance, to the buildings in the area of the personal wireless service facility; or

**3.16.7.3.3** Equipment shelters shall be camouflaged behind an effective year-round landscape buffer, equal to the height of the proposed building, and/or wooden fence. The Planning Board shall determine the style of fencing and/or landscape buffer that is compatible with the neighborhood; or

**3.16.7.3.4** If mounted on a roof top, the equipment shelter shall be concealed or camouflaged so that the shelter either is not visible at grade or appears to be part of the original structure.

**3.16.7.4** Lighting, Signage, and Security

**3.16.7.4.1** Lighting: The mounts or personal wireless service facilities shall be lighted only if required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Lighting of equipment structures and any other facilities on site shall be shielded from abutting properties. Foot-candle measurements at the property line shall be 0.0 initial foot candles.

**3.16.7.4.2** Signage: Signs shall be limited to those needed to identify the property and the owners and warn of any danger. All signs shall comply with the requirements of the Article III, Section 3-4 of the Amherst Zoning Ordinance.

**3.16.7.4.3** Security Barrier: The Planning Board shall have final authority on whether a ground mounted personal wireless service facilities should be surrounded by a security barrier.

### **3.16.7.5** Historic Buildings and Districts

**3.16.7.5.1** Any personal wireless service facility located on or within an historic structure shall not alter the character-defining features, distinctive construction methods, or original historic materials of the building.

**3.16.7.5.2** Any alteration made to an historic structure to accommodate a personal wireless service facility shall be fully reversible

**3.16.7.5.3** Personal wireless service facilities authorized by this subsection shall be concealed within or behind existing architectural features, or shall be located so that they are not visible from public roads and viewing areas.

**3.16.7.5.4** Personal wireless service facilities located in the Amherst Village Historic District shall comply with the provisions of the Historic District Commission.

**3.16.7.6** Scenic Landscapes and Vistas – Ground-mounted facilities shall not be located within open areas that are clearly visible from public roads, recreational areas, or abutting properties. All ground-mounted personal wireless service facilities shall be surrounded by a buffer of dense tree growth as per Section 7.1 (F).

**3.16.7.7** Driveways\_– If available, existing entrances and driveways to serve a personal wireless service facility shall be utilized, unless the applicant can demonstrate that a new entrance and driveway will result in less visual, traffic, and environmental impact. New driveways to serve a personal wireless service facility shall not exceed twelve (12) feet in width. A gravel or crushed stone surface is encouraged.

**3.16.7.8** Antenna Types – Any antenna array placed upon an existing or proposed ground mount, utility pole or transmission line mount shall have a diameter of no more than four (4) feet, exclusive of the diameter of the mount. A larger diameter antenna array may be permitted after a finding by the Planning Board that the visual impacts of a larger antenna array are negligible.

**3.16.7.9** Ground and Roof Mounts – All ground mounts shall be of a mast type mount. Lattice towers, guyed towers, and roof mounted monopoles are expressly prohibited, unless constructed as part of a reconstruction project permitted under Section 5 (B).

**3.16.7.10** Hazardous Waste – No hazardous waste shall be discharged on the site of any personal wireless service facility. If any hazardous materials are to be used on site, there shall be provisions for full containment of such materials. An enclosed containment area shall be provided with a sealed floor, designed to contain at least one hundred & ten percent (110%) of the volume of the hazardous materials stored or used on the site.

**3.16.7.11** Noise – personal wireless service facilities shall not generate noise in excess of that permitted under the Amherst Noise Ordinance.

**3.16.7.12** Radio Frequency Radiation (RFR) Standards – All equipment proposed for personal wireless service facility shall be fully compliant with the FCC Guidelines for Evaluating and Environmental Effects of Radio frequency Radiation (FCC Guidelines), under Report and Order, FCC 96-326, published on August 1, 1996, and all subsequent amendments.

### **3.16.8 MONITORING AND MAINTENANCE**

**3.16.8.1** Maintenance – The owner of the facility shall maintain the personal wireless service facility in good condition. Such maintenance shall include, but shall not be limited to, painting, structural integrity of the mount and security barrier, and maintenance of the buffer areas and landscaping.

**3.16.8.2** Monitoring – As part of the issuance of the site plan approval or building permit, the property owner shall agree that the Town of Amherst may enter the subject property to obtain RFR measurements and noise measurements at the expense of the carrier. The Town shall provide reasonable written notice to the carrier and landowner and provides them the opportunity to accompany the Town representatives when the measurements are conducted.

**3.16.8.3** Security for Removal – Recognizing the hazardous situation presented by abandoned and unmonitored telecommunications facilities, the Planning Board shall set the form and amount of security that represents the cost for removal and disposal of abandoned telecommunications facilities in the event that a facility is abandoned and the facility owner is unwilling or unable to remove the facility in accordance with Section 9.2. The amount of the security shall be based upon the removal cost plus, fifteen percent (15%), provided by the applicant and certified by a professional structural engineer licensed in New Hampshire. The owner of the facility shall provide the Planning Board with a revised removal cost estimate and structural evaluation prepared by a professional structural engineer licensed in New Hampshire every five (5) years from the date of the Planning Board's approval of the site plan. If the cost has increased more than fifteen percent (15%) then the owner of the facility shall provide additional security in the amount of the increase.

### **3.16.9 ABANDONMENT OR DISCONTINUATION OF USE**

**3.16.9.1** Notification – At such time that a carrier plans to abandon or discontinue operation of a personal wireless service facility, such carrier will notify the Town by certified U.S. mail of the proposed date of abandonment or discontinuation of operations. Such notice shall be given no less than thirty (30) days prior to abandonment or discontinuation of operations. In the event that a carrier fails to give such notice, the personal wireless service facility shall be considered abandoned upon such discontinuation of operations.

**3.16.9.2** Removal – Upon abandonment or discontinuation of use, the owner of the facility shall physically remove the personal wireless service facility within ninety (90) days from the date of abandonment or discontinuation of use. "Physically remove" shall include, but not be limited to:

**3.16.9.2.1** Removal of antennas, mount, equipment shelters and security barriers from the subject property.

**3.16.9.2.2** Proper disposal of the waste materials from the site in accordance with local and state solid waste disposal regulations.

**3.16.9.2.3** Restoring the location of the personal wireless service facility to its natural condition, except that any landscaping and grading shall remain in the after-condition.

**3.16.9.3** Failure to Remove – If the owner of the facility does not remove the facility upon the Zoning Administrator’s order, then the Board of Selectmen shall, after holding a public hearing with notice to the owner and abutters, issue a declaration of abandonment. The owner of the facility shall dismantle and remove the facility within ninety (90) days of receipt of the declaration of abandonment by the Board of Selectmen. If the abandoned facility is not removed within ninety (90) days, the Town may execute the security to pay for this action.

**Section 3.17 Equestrian Facilities and Events** (3-10-98)

**INTENT OF THE ORDINANCE**

The Town of Amherst recognizes that equestrian activities and facilities are an integral part of the history and rural character of the town and, as such, can contribute to achieving the goals of the Master Plan. Through the preservation of open space and agricultural practices, the commercial elements of such ventures are of value to the entire community by providing recreational, competitive and other opportunities for public benefit.

The intent of this ordinance is to allow the development of private equestrian facilities and events in the residential zones of the Town of Amherst, while seeking to preserve the rural character of the Town. The provisions of this ordinance are further intended to limit the impact of these commercial ventures on public health, safety and welfare by the establishment of minimum standards and by requiring a review of the design, operating procedures and control of impacts. The ordinance seeks to promote the health, safety and welfare of rider and animal, as well as the public.

**3.17.1 DEFINITIONS**

**3.17.1.1** Equestrian Facility: A private facility with limited and/or occasional availability to the public; primarily for the boarding, training, breeding, sale, riding and maintenance of horses, ponies and other equids, with or without instruction for the rider.

**3.17.1.2** Equestrian Events: Any event of more than 30 participants per day involving horses and/or other animals which are on display or engaged in competition and organized and managed in accordance with the provision of a sanctioning state or national organization.

**3.17.1.3** Riding Lessons: Any lesson or activity with limited availability to the public involving the riding, training or care of horses, whether saddled or otherwise, and including the training or instruction of riders or drivers.

**3.17.2 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**3.17.2.1** Applicability: The provisions of this ordinance apply to all lessons or events involving horses that are open or available to the general public, regardless of whether there is a fee charged. Activities covered under this ordinance are allowed in all zones in the Town of Amherst. These provisions do not apply to the private ownership of horses or other farm animals not available for public use.

The ordinance shall be construed to cover and define uses permitted to equidae as a whole and not to limit permitted uses and activities to a size animal or a species or sub-species.

Allowable uses and activities involve the interaction between horses and humans and can be instructional, competitive, recreational, therapeutic, training, exercise, conditioning, or as otherwise approved by the Planning Board.

**3.17.2.2** Prohibited Uses: Activities, operations or events for the purpose of livestock auctions, commercial horse sales, the sale of transport equipment and vehicles, the manufacture or sale of feed and animal hospitals are not allowable uses permitted under this ordinance. Outdoor lighting for night-time use of arenas, tracks and like training or competition areas is prohibited.

**3.17.2.3 Equestrian Event Management:** Equestrian events consist of horse shows, trials or competitions open to the general public. All events shall be conducted under the rules or other provision of an applicable sanctioning state or national organization. Prior to conducting such events, the owner of the property shall apply for and obtain approval under the Non-Residential Site Plan review regulations of the Town. At a minimum the application shall include:

**3.17.2.3.1** Name of land owner(s).

**3.17.2.3.2** Map and Lot numbers of the parcel(s) to be used for equestrian events.

**3.17.2.3.3** A plan showing the parcel, abutters, existing development and planned improvements or alterations, parking areas and traffic access and circulation.

**3.17.2.3.4** A detailed description of the proposed equestrian events including activities, hours of operation, number of participants, bathroom facilities, water supply, etc.

**3.17.2.3.5** A detailed description of the measures to be implemented to ensure that the proposed activities are compatible with the neighborhood, including but not limited to traffic management, dust and noise control, disposal of manure.

**3.17.2.3.6** The annual schedule of equestrian events.

**3.17.2.3.7** Provisions for access to special populations if events are open to the general public.

**3.17.2.3.8** A copy of the sanctioning organization's requirements for event management.

**3.17.2.3.9** A traffic and parking plan shall designate areas for parking horse trailers and other oversize vehicles and for individual vehicles for those attending the equestrian events. All event parking shall be restricted to the designated areas and limited to the available spaces. No on-street parking shall be allowed. Traffic circulation shall ensure access for emergency vehicles at all times.

**3.17.2.4 Riding Lessons:** Riding lessons are all activities involving instruction, training or participation in horse-back riding provided to the general public using horses not wholly owned by the individual receiving the instruction or training. Riding lessons to more than ten individuals per day may be offered only by facilities approved under this ordinance. Prior to offering riding lessons to the public, the owner of the property shall apply for and obtain approval under the provision of the Non-Residential Site Plan review regulations of the Town. At a minimum the application shall include:

**3.17.2.4.1** Name of the land owner(s).

**3.17.2.4.2** Map and Lot numbers of the parcel(s) to be used for riding lessons.

**3.17.2.4.3** A plan showing the parcel, abutters, existing development and planned improvements or alterations, parking areas and traffic access and circulation.

**3.17.2.4.4** A detailed description of the proposed riding lesson operations including activities, hours of operation, maximum number of hourly and daily participants, bathroom facilities, waiting/classroom areas, water supply, etc.

**3.17.2.4.5** A detailed description of the measures to be implemented to ensure that the activities are compatible with the neighborhood, including but not limited to traffic management, dust and noise control, disposal of manure.

**3.17.2.4.6** The schedule of operation of the riding center.

**3.17.2.4.7** Provisions for access to special populations if lessons are open to the general public.

**3.17.2.4.8** A copy of an emergency response plan to manage accidents and injuries.

**3.17.2.4.9** A traffic management plan must be prepared for any riding center offering lessons to more than 3 (three) riders per hour.

### **3.17.3 OTHER PROVISIONS**

**3.17.3.1** Barns or other structures used to stable horses under this ordinance shall be limited to one animal per stall and one stall per 1.0 acres of pasture. Animals covered under this ordinance smaller than standard horses (58 inches) must be provided adequate pasture area.

**3.17.3.2** Barns used to stable 5 (five) or more horses may contain up to 800 sq. ft. of living space for a stable manager provided such space meets all applicable BOCA requirements and is issued an occupancy permit by the Town.

**3.17.3.3** The restrictions on riding lessons contained in section 2.4 of this ordinance shall not apply to the owners of horses stabled or boarded at a facility not otherwise subject to this ordinance.

**3.17.3.4** Nothing in this ordinance shall be construed to prohibit the private sale or maintenance of horses or farm livestock or to prohibit, or otherwise restrict, agricultural operations.

**3.17.3.5** Agricultural operations and Equestrian operations shall be conducted in accordance with the MANUAL OF BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMP) FOR AGRICULTURE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE published by the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food. (3.8.05)

### **Section 3.18 CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS**

#### **3.18.1 GENERAL**

Conditional Use Permits as herein provided for shall be deemed to be permitted uses in their respective zones, subject to the satisfaction of the requirements and standards set forth herein, in addition to all other requirements and standards of this Ordinance. All such cases are hereby declared to possess characteristics of such unique and special form that each specific use shall be considered as an individual case. The applicant shall bear the burden of persuasion, through the introduction of sufficient evidence through testimony or otherwise, that the development, if completed as proposed, will comply with this Article and will satisfy the specific requirements for the use contained in the ordinance.

#### **3.18.2 PLANNING BOARD TO ADMINISTER**

Wherever a conditional use is authorized by this ordinance, the authority to administer or grant Conditional Use Permits shall be vested in the Planning Board .

#### **3.18.3 STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS**

##### **3.18.3.1 Conditions for Conditional Use Permits**

Before the Planning Board considers the approval of an application for a Conditional Use Permit, the applicant shall prove to the satisfaction of the Planning Board that all the following conditions have been met:

**3.18.3.1.1** That the property in question is in conformance with the dimensional requirements of the zone and that the proposed use is consistent with the Amherst Master Plan.

**3.18.3.1.2** That the proposal meets the purposes of the ordinance under which the application is proposed.

**3.18.3.1.3** That there will be no significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposed use upon the public health, safety and general welfare of the neighborhood and the Town of Amherst.

**3.18.3.1.4** That the proposed use will not be more objectionable to nearby properties by reason of noise, fumes, vibration, or inappropriate lighting than any use of the property permitted under the existing zoning district ordinances.

**3.18.3.1.5** That the proposed use will not adversely affect the ground water resources of Amherst, in particular the Aquifer Conservation District as defined in Section 4-13 of the Amherst Zoning Ordinance.

**3.18.3.2** The applicant shall file a Non-Residential Site Plan Review application in accordance with the NON-RESIDENTIAL SITE PLAN REVIEW REGULATIONS with the Amherst Planning Board.

**3.18.3.3** Conditions of Approval

**3.18.3.3.1** The Planning Board may attach such conditions to its approval as are reasonable, necessary and appropriate.

**3.18.3.3.2** All Conditional Use Permit uses are hereby declared to have special characteristics that shall be considered on a case-by case basis.

**3.18.3.4** Limits on a Conditional Use Permit

**3.18.3.4.1** Substantial construction must commence within one (1) year of the Planning Board approval of the Conditional Use Permit and Site Plan Approval.

**3.18.3.4.2** If construction is not commenced within this period, the Conditional Use Permit approval may be extended for up to one (1) additional year upon Approval of the Amherst Planning Board. If construction is not commenced within this extended period the Conditional Use Permit is declared null and void.

**3.18.4** PERMITS FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS

A building permit for a Conditional Use Permit use shall not be issued by the Board of Selectmen or their duly appointed representative, the Administrative official, until so directed by the Planning Board who shall first be satisfied that all the standards and conditions of this article and the Ordinance have been met.

### **Section 3.19 PHASING** (3.13.07)

**3.19.1** Purpose: To insure that the rate of growth of the Town does not unreasonably interfere with the Town's capacity for planned, orderly, and tangible expansion of its services to accommodate such growth, the Planning Board, at its discretion, may require phasing of subdivisions, as provided in RSA 674:21. Prior to requiring phasing, the Planning Board shall inquire into the impact which the proposed subdivision will have on Town services and shall exercise its discretion to require phasing so as to lessen or mitigate such impact.

**3.19.2** Phasing: In the event that the Board decides, in its discretion, that phasing is required, then each subdivision of land for a residential use producing four (4) lots or dwelling units and not more than six (6) lots or dwelling units shall be phased over a minimum of two (2) years, with not more than 50 % of the dwelling units receiving building permits in a one (1) year period. Every subdivision of seven (7) lots of dwelling units but not more than nine (9) lots or dwelling units shall be phased over a minimum of three (3) years, with not more than 33 % of the dwelling units receiving building permits in a one (1) year period. Every subdivision of ten (10) lots or dwelling units but not more than twenty (20) lots or dwelling units shall be phased over a minimum of four (4) years, with not more than 25 % of the dwelling units receiving building permits in a one (1) year period. Other larger subdivisions shall have phasing as determined by the Board at it's discretion.

The requirement shall apply to all forms of residential subdivision of land, as defined in RSA 672:14 (I), and RSA 674:21.

The Planning Board may require any subdivision to adhere to a longer phasing plan if such phasing is deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, welfare and environment of the Town.

**ARTICLE IV**  
**ZONING REGULATIONS**

**Section 4.1 Application of Regulations**

Subsequent to passage of this Ordinance, building, or land shall hereafter be used, constructed, altered, or enlarged only in conformity with regulations specified herein for the zoning district in which it is located. 3-12-63

**Section 4.2 Lots of Record**

Any lot of record (See Art. IX, Sec. 9.1, Definitions, Lot of Record) in the Town of Amherst prior to the effective date of this section may be occupied by any use permitted in its zoning district, regardless of its size, provided it meets all applicable zoning, setback, building, and water pollution control regulations for the Town of Amherst. Such lots shall provide for access on a publicly or privately maintained road. 3-12-63 (3-9-92) (3-13-82) (3-13-90) (3-11-03)

**Section 4.3 Residential/Rural Zone (RR)** 3-12-63 (3-11-93)

**4.3.1 Permitted Uses**

**4.3.1.1** One-family dwelling and accessory buildings or structures. (3.11.08)

**4.3.1.2** Planned Residential Development (See Art. IV, Sec. 4.17)

**4.3.1.3** Farm, Agricultural or Nursery Use

**4.3.1.4** Roadside stand for the sale of farm produce or nursery products (3-11-93)

**4.3.1.5** Home Occupation (3-11-93)

**4.3.1.6** Open Space Plan (See Art. IV, Sec. 4.16)

**4.3.1.7** Affordable Housing (see Article VIII, Section 8.5) Eliminated (3-14-95)

**4.3.1.8** Non-commercial sports and recreation uses, subject to obtaining Planning Board site approval, which shall provide at minimum for applicable:

**4.3.1.8.1** setbacks,

**4.3.1.8.2** buffers,

**4.3.1.8.3** sanitary facilities,

**4.3.1.8.4** parking,

**4.3.1.8.5** mitigation of traffic impact, and

**4.3.1.8.6** adequate provision of emergency services, and subject to determination by the Planning Board of the following:

**4.3.1.8.7** Such use shall not be the primary use of the lot;

**4.3.1.8.8** Such use shall be non-commercial in nature;

**4.3.1.8.9** Deleted (3.6.04);

**4.3.1.8.10** Deleted (3.6.04);

**4.3.1.8.11** Such use shall be compatible with existing neighborhood uses;

**4.3.1.8.12** Such use complies with the spirit and letter of Section 3.1, Nuisance Provision; and

**4.3.1.8.13** No permanent buildings shall be permitted as part of such use, except for sheds to the extent necessary for storage of equipment for such use.

Uses involving motor-driven objects producing 60 or more decibels of sound at a range of ten feet as part of the sport or recreation are prohibited. Night lighting primarily for uses permitted under this section may be allowed by the Planning Board when more than 500 feet from any abutting lot line, but not between 9:00 p.m. and 7:30 a.m. 3-14-95

In addition to the permitted uses referred to above, the Board of Adjustment may permit certain uses to be carried on in the Residential / Rural Zone by way of Special Exception, which uses are enumerated in Section 5.4 of the Zoning Ordinance and subject to the conditions and limitations therein imposed.

#### **4.3.2 Area and Frontage Requirements**

**4.3.2.1** The minimum lot area shall be two (2) acres. The minimum area shall contain no wetland as defined in Art. IV, Sec. 4.11, no flood plain as defined in Art. IV, Sec. 4.10, and no slopes greater than 20 %. (3-5-74) 3-14-89 (3.6.04)

**4.3.2.2** Each new lot shall have a minimum frontage of two hundred (200) feet on a publicly maintained road, unless frontage has been approved and recorded as reduced frontage lot/s, in which event thirty-five (35) feet shall be sufficient. (3-4-75) 3-10-87

#### **4.3.3 Yard Requirements**

**4.3.3.1** Each dwelling, building, or structure shall be set back at least fifty (50) feet from the front lot line, or at such distance that will be no closer than an existing structure. An addition may not be extended laterally more than a maximum of a 50% increase of the lineal frontage of the existing structure and must conform to any other setback requirements on the lot. (3-12-63) 3-9-82, 3-12-02, (3.11.08)

**4.3.3.2** Except in the Historic District, each dwelling, building, or structure shall be set back at least twentyfive (25) feet from the side and rear property lines. In the case of corner property, this distance shall be increased to fifty (50) feet on that side bordering a street, lane, or public way. (3-12-63) (3.8.05), (3.11.08)

**4.3.3.3** Any accessory buildings or structures shall be set back at least twenty (20) feet from side and rear lot lines and at least fifty (50) feet from the front lot line and not exceed twenty-two (22) feet in height. The height requirement may be waived for farm structures. (3-12-63) 3-10-87 (3.8.05), (3.11.08)

**4.3.3.4** In the Historic District, a new dwelling, building, or structure shall be at least twenty (20) feet from the side and rear property lines or no closer than twentyfive (25) feet from the principal dwelling, building, or structure on any abutting lot, whichever is greater. (3.8.05), (3.11.08)

**4.3.3.5** No new principal dwelling, building, or structure shall be constructed to a height greater than thirty-five (35) feet exclusive of chimneys or cupolas, measured from the lowest average adjacent exterior elevation. No new dwelling, building, or structure, or addition to an existing dwelling, building, or structure that increases the total area of the structure, shall have a floor area ratio greater than 15%. The aggregate floor area ratio shall be no greater than 15%. (3.6.04), (3.13.07), (3.11.08)

#### **4.3.4 Prohibited Uses**

**4.3.4.1** Aircraft landing fields. 3-10-98

### **Section 4.4 Northern Transitional Zone (NTZ) 3-8-88**

**4.4.1** General: The purpose of establishing the Northern Transitional Zone is as follows:

**4.4.1.1** To recognize, establish, and affirm an area of the Town in which lower density development is of itself, desirable.

**4.4.1.2** To recognize the unique scenic and natural character of a portion of Town which forms a natural entry to the Northern Rural Zone.

**4.4.1.3** To ensure that future development in this area of Town be of a type that is compatible with the area's scenic and natural character.

**4.4.1.4** That the Northern Transitional Zone shall be bounded by Horace Greeley Road on the North, NH Route 101 on the South, and Amherst Town line on the East. The Westerly boundary is the intersection of Horace Greeley Road and NH Route 101.

#### **4.4.2 Permitted Uses**

**4.4.2.1** One-family dwelling and accessory buildings or structures. (3-8-88), (3.11.08)

**4.4.2.2** Farm, agricultural, or nursery use. 3-3-88

**4.4.2.3** Roadside stand for the sale of farm products or nursery products.

**4.4.2.4** Home occupation. 3-8-88

**4.4.2.5** Planned Residential Development (PRD) – (See Art. IV, Sec. 4.17) In order to achieve the purpose of this section, Planned Residential Development shall be encouraged as the principle method of future development of this zone. 3-8-88

**4.4.2.6** Open Space Plan (See Art. IV, Sec. 4.16) 3-14-89

**4.4.2.7** Amateur non-profit sports and recreation uses subject to obtaining Planning Board site approval which may provide at minimum for setbacks, buffers, sanitary facilities, parking and traffic impact. Uses involving motorized recreation vehicles are prohibited. Night lighting may be allowed by the Planning Board when more than 500 feet from any residential use but not after 9:00 p.m. 3-12-91

**4.4.2.8** (Deleted 3.9.10)

**4.4.2.9** Other development-all development in this zone other than Planned Residential Development shall adhere to the following:

#### **4.4.3 Area and Frontage Requirements**

**4.4.3.1** The minimum lot area for any permitted use shall be 3.5 acres. The minimum area shall contain no wetland as defined in Art. IV, Sec. 4.11, no flood plain as defined in Art. IV, Sec. 4.10), and no slopes greater than 20 %. (3.6.04)

**4.4.3.2** Each lot shall have a minimum frontage of three hundred (300) feet on the principle route of access to the lot.

**4.4.3.3** If frontage is provided by a Class A or Class B reduced frontage, thirty-five (35) feet of frontage on a publicly maintained road shall be sufficient for the lot or lots.

#### **4.4.4 Yard Requirements**

**4.4.4.1** Each dwelling, building, or structure shall be set back at least fifty (50) feet from the front lot line, or at such distance that will be no closer than an existing structure. An addition may not be extended laterally more than a maximum of a 50% increase of the lineal frontage of the existing structure and must conform to any other setback requirements on the lot. (3.11.08)

**4.4.4.2** Each dwelling, building, or structure shall be set back at least forty (40) feet from the side and rear lot lines. In the case of corner property, this distance shall be increased to fifty (50) feet on that side bordering a street, lane, or public way. (3.8.05), (3.11.08)

**4.4.4.3** Any accessory building or structure shall be set back at least thirty (30) feet from the side and rear lot lines and at least fifty (50) feet from the front lot line and shall not exceed twenty-two feet in height. This requirement may be waived for farm structures or buildings. (3-8-88), (3.11.08)

**4.4.4.4** No new principal dwelling, building, or structure shall be constructed to a height greater than thirty-five (35) feet exclusive of chimneys or cupolas, measured from the lowest average adjacent exterior elevation. No new dwelling, building, or structure, or addition to an existing dwelling, building, or structure that increases the total area of the dwelling, building, or structure shall have a floor area ratio greater than 15%. The aggregate floor area ratio shall be no greater than 15%. (3.6.04), (3.11.08)

#### **4.4.5 Prohibited Uses**

**4.4.5.1** Aircraft landing fields. (3-10-98)

### **Section 4.5 Northern Rural Zone (NR) 3-2-76**

**4.5.1** General: The purpose of establishing the Northern Rural Zone is the following:

**4.5.1.1** To recognize, establish, and affirm an area of the Town in which lower density development is of itself, desirable. (3-11-86)

**4.5.1.2** To recognize the unique rural, scenic, and natural character of a portion of Town which has remained essentially undeveloped and unchanged during the time that the remainder of the Town has experienced considerable physical development and change. 3-2-76

**4.5.1.3** To identify a portion of Town that contains extensive areas of poor soils, steep slopes, and limited accessibility which limits the type of development which is compatible with these limitations as well as the areas in which development can suitably take place. 3-2-76

**4.5.1.4** To ensure that future development in this area of Town be of a type that is compatible with the area's extensive physical limitations as well as its unique rural, scenic, and natural character. 3-2-76

#### **4.5.2 Permitted Uses**

**4.5.2.1** One-family dwelling and accessory buildings or structures. (3-2-76), (3.11.08)

**4.5.2.2** Farm, agricultural, or nursery use. 3-2-76

**4.5.2.3** Roadside Stand for the sale of farm produce or nursery products. 3-2-76

**4.5.2.4** Home Occupation. 11-2-82

**4.5.2.5** Planned Residential Development - PRD. In order to achieve the purpose of this section, Planned Residential Development shall be encouraged as the principle method of future development of this zone.(See Art. IV, Sec. 4.17) (11-2-82)

**4.5.2.6** Open Space Plan (see Art. IV, Sec. 4.16) 3-14-89

**4.5.2.7** Affordable Housing (see Art. VIII, Section 8.5) 3-14-89 Eliminated (3-14-95)

**4.5.2.8** Amateur non-profit sports and recreation uses subject to obtaining Planning Board site approval which may provide at minimum for setbacks, buffers sanitary facilities, parking and traffic impact. Uses involving motorized recreation vehicles are prohibited. Night lighting may be allowed by the Planning Board when more than 500 feet from any residential use but not after 9:00 p.m. 3-12-91

**4.5.2.9** (Deleted 3.9.10)

In addition to the permitted uses referred to, the Board of Adjustment may permit certain uses to be carried on in the Northern Rural Zone by way of Special Exception which uses are enumerated in Article V, Section 5.7 of the Zoning Ordinance and subject to the conditions and limitations therein imposed. 3-2-76

#### **4.5.3 Area and Frontage Requirements**

**4.5.3.1** The lot area shall be five (5) acres. The minimum area shall contain no wetland as defined in Art. IV, Sec. 4.11, no flood plain as defined in Art. IV, Sec. 4.10), and no slopes greater than 20 %. 3-14-89 (3.6.04)

**4.5.3.2** Each new lot shall have minimum frontage of three hundred (300) feet on a publicly maintained road, unless frontage has been approved and recorded as reduced frontage lot/s, in which event thirty-five (35) feet shall be sufficient. (3-9-82) 3-10-87

#### **4.5.4 Yard Requirements**

**4.5.4.1** Each dwelling, building, or structure shall be set back at least fifty (50) feet from the front lot line, or at such distance that will be no closer than an existing structure. An addition may not be extended laterally more than a maximum of a 50% increase of the lineal frontage of the existing structure and must conform to any other setback requirements on the lot. (3-11-80) 3-9-82, (3.11.08)

**4.5.4.2** Each dwelling, building, or structure shall be set back at least forty (40) feet from the side and rear lot lines. In the case of corner property, this distance shall be increased to fifty (50) feet on that side bordering a street, lane or public way. (3.8.05), (3.11.08)

**4.5.4.3** Any accessory building or structure shall be set back at least thirty (30) feet from side and rear lot lines and at least fifty (50) feet from the front lot line and shall not exceed twenty-two (22) feet in height. This

height requirement may be waived for farm structures or buildings. (3-11-80/3-9-82/3-12-85), (3-10-87), (3.11.08)

**4.5.4.4** No new principal dwelling, building, or structure shall be constructed to a height greater than thirty-five (35) feet exclusive of chimneys or cupolas, measured from the lowest average adjacent exterior elevation. No new dwelling, building, or structure, or addition to an existing dwelling, building, or structure that increases the total area of the dwelling, building, or structure, shall have a floor area ratio greater than 15%. The aggregate floor area ratio shall be no greater than 15%. (3.6.04), (3.11.08)

#### **4.5.5 Prohibited Uses**

**4.5.5.1** Aircraft landing fields. (3-10-98)

### **Section 4.6 General Office Zone (GO) 3-12-85**

#### **4.6.1 Permitted Uses**

**4.6.1.1** Professional offices 3-12-85

**4.6.1.2** General offices of individuals or groups for the handling of administrative functions such as but not specifically limited to: executive offices, business offices handling sales or services off the premises, including salesmen, agents or representatives of manufacturing, distributing, insurance and wholesale companies. 3-12-85. Specifically excluded is the retail sale of any product from the premises. 3-12-85

**4.6.1.3** Mixed use development, limited to office and residential uses. (See Article IX Definitions) (3-14-89) 3-13-90

**4.6.1.4** Amateur non-profit sports and recreation uses subject to obtaining Planning Board site approval which may provide at minimum for setbacks, buffers, sanitary facilities, parking and traffic impact. Uses involving motorized recreation vehicles are prohibited. Night lighting may be allowed by the Planning Board when more than 500 feet from any residential use but not after 9:00 p.m. 3-12-91

**4.6.1.5** Outside storage of materials and/or equipment, other than vehicles, shall be prohibited.

#### **4.6.2 Area and Frontage Requirements**

**4.6.2.1** The minimum lot area shall be (1) acre except for a residential use which shall be two (2) acres 3-12-85

**4.6.2.2** Each lot shall have a minimum frontage of two hundred (200) feet on the principle route of access to the lot. 3-12-85

#### **4.6.3 Yard and Building Requirements 3-12-91**

**4.6.3.1** Each new structure shall be set back either fifty (50) or one hundred (100) feet from the edge of the public road right-of-way.

The fifty (50) foot option requires that a natural vegetation or landscaped area only shall exist between the structure and the highway, excepting driveways and permitted signs.

The hundred (100) foot option allows parking areas to the front of the structure, which parking areas shall be setback a minimum of fifty (50) feet from the edge of the highway right-of-way.

Any permitted enlargement of pre-existing structures shall be beyond the fifty (50) foot setback line.

On corner lots, parking areas shall be screened from the highway with fences, landscaping and natural vegetation.

**4.6.3.2** Each new structure or addition to a structure shall be set back thirty (30) feet from side and rear lot lines.

**4.6.3.3** Any lot bordering a residential zone or an existing residential use shall have a landscape buffer between any buildings and such residential zone or use.

- 4.6.3.4** No structure shall be constructed to a height greater than thirty-five feet, exclusive of chimneys or cupolas, measured from the lowest adjacent exterior elevation.
- 4.6.3.5** The floor area ratio shall be a maximum of twenty percent (20%).
- 4.6.3.6** A minimum of thirty percent (30%) of the area of any lot shall remain landscaped open space and not be utilized for construction (including parking).
- 4.6.3.7** There shall be no more than one access to any lot wherever desirable for traffic safety and consideration shall be given to combining access points where two or more lots are being concurrently developed.
- 4.6.3.8** All storage and/or equipment parking areas shall be fenced, screened, or otherwise protected from view. 3-12-91

#### **4.6.4 Architectural Design**

**4.6.4.1** As a condition of final approval, the applicant must obtain the Planning Board's approval of the exterior architectural design to ensure that it is in harmony with the neighborhood and the surrounding environment. 3-12-85

#### **4.6.5 Prohibited Uses**

**4.6.5.1** Aircraft landing fields. (3-10-98)

### **Section 4.7 Commercial Zone (C)**

**General Purpose** To provide commercial areas to serve major commercial and business needs of the general public. 3-14-78

#### **4.7.1 Permitted Uses**

Uses which include, but are not limited to the following: 3-13-90

- 4.7.1.1** Retail establishments 3-12-63
- 4.7.1.2** Hotel and motels. (3-12-63) 3-14-78
- 4.7.1.3** Public utility building, structure or facility. 3-14-78
- 4.7.1.4** Home Occupation. 11-2-82
- 4.7.1.5** Planned Residential Development (See Art. IV, Sec. 4.17) 1-2-82
- 4.7.1.6** Mixed Use Development. 3-14-89 (See Art. IX Definitions)
- 4.7.1.7** Affordable Housing (See Art. VIII Sec. 8.5) 3-14-89 Eliminated 3-14-95
- 4.7.1.8** Amateur non-profit sports and recreation uses subject to obtaining Planning Board site approval which may provide at minimum for setbacks, buffers, sanitary facilities, parking and traffic impact. Uses involving motorized recreation vehicles are prohibited. Night lighting may be allowed by the Planning Board when more than 500 feet from any residential use but not after 9:00 p.m. 3-12-91
- 4.7.1.9** All family day care home facilities are subject to compliance with all current licensing procedures and all applicable health/safety ordinances for the State of New Hampshire and the Town of Amherst. Family day care facilities are regulated by RSA 170-E:1, 170-E:2, 204-C:72, 161-G:4 and all other applicable State Laws. (3-12-91) 3-10-92

In addition to the permitted uses referred to above, the Board of Adjustment may permit certain uses to be carried on in the Commercial Zone by way of Special Exception, which uses are enumerated in Section 5.6 of Zoning Ordinance and subject to the conditions and limitations therein imposed. (3-12-63) 3-9-82

#### **4.7.2 Area and Frontage Requirements**

**4.7.2.1** The Minimum lot area shall be one (1) acre. 3-14-89 (3-11-97)

**4.7.2.2** Each new lot shall have a minimum frontage of two hundred (200) feet on a publicly maintained road, unless frontage has been approved and recorded as reduced frontage lot/s, in which event thirty-five (35) feet shall be sufficient. (3-14-78/3-9-82)

**4.7.3 Yard and Building Requirements**

**4.7.3.1** Each new structure shall be set back either fifty (50) or one-hundred feet from the public road right-of-way of New Hampshire Route 101A. (3-14-89) 3-10-92

**4.7.3.1.1** The fifty (50) foot option requires that a natural vegetation of landscaped area only shall exist between the structure and the highway, excepting driveways and permitted signs. (3-14-89) 3-10-92

**4.7.3.1.2** The one-hundred (100) foot option allows parking areas to the front of the structure, which parking areas shall be set back a minimum of fifty (50) feet from the edge of the highway right-of-way. 3-14-89

**4.7.3.1.3** Any permitted enlargement of pre-existing structures shall be beyond the fifty (50) foot setback line. 3-14-89

**4.7.3.2** Each new structure shall be set back fifty (50) feet from the edge of the public road right-of-way on all roads within the Commercial Zone. 3-10-92

**4.7.3.3** Each new structure or addition to a structure shall be set back thirty (30) feet from side and rear lot lines. 3-14-89

**4.7.4.4** Any lot bordering a residential zone or an existing residential use shall have a landscaped buffer between any buildings and such residential zone or use. (3-4-75)

**4.7.4.5** No structure shall be constructed to a height greater thirty-five (35) feet, exclusive of chimneys or cupolas, measured from the lowest adjacent exterior elevation. 3-11-86

**4.7.4.6** The floor area ratio shall be a maximum of twenty-five (25%) percent. (3-12-85) 3-10-87

**4.7.4.7** A minimum of thirty (30%) percent of the area of any lot shall remain landscaped open space and not be utilized for construction (including parking). 3-4-75

**4.7.4.8** There shall be no more than one access to any lot wherever desirable for traffic safety and consideration shall be given to combining access points where two or more lots are being currently developed. 3-4-75

**4.7.4.9** All storage and/or equipment parking areas shall be fenced, screened, landscaped, or otherwise protected from view. 3-14-78

**4.7.5 Prohibited Uses**

**4.7.5.1** Aircraft landing fields (3-10-98)

**Section 4.8 Limited Commercial Zone (LC)** 3-2-76

General Purpose: To provide commercial area to serve limited commercial and business needs of the general public.

**4.8.1 Permitted Uses**

**4.8.1.1** Retail, personal service and business establishment of a type consistent with the purpose of this zone to serve limited commercial needs of various neighbor-hoods in Town. The foregoing shall include, but not necessarily be limited to:

**4.8.1.1.1** retail grocery, meat, produce, drugs, stationery, hardware, baked goods 3-2-76

**4.8.1.1.2** barber and beauty shops 3-2-76

**4.8.1.1.3** shops for the collection and distribution of clothing materials for dyeing and cleaning establishments 3-2-76

**4.8.1.1.4** banks 3-2-76

**4.8.1.1.5** coffee or sandwich shop (except for drive-in or fast service types). 3-2-76

**4.8.1.2** Business and/or professional offices for individual or group practice, including doctors and dentists (including medical or dental clinics), lawyers counseling services, engineers, architects, planners, insurance and accountants. 3-2-76

**4.8.1.3** Veterinary clinic. 3-2-76

**4.8.1.4** Gasoline service station which may have a garage for repair to automobiles only but not to include body or fender repair, paint spraying, or used car sales lots. (3-2-76) 3-12-91

**4.8.1.5** Interior storage. (3-2-76) 3-8-

**4.8.1.6** Interior recreational establishments. 3-2-76

**4.8.1.7** Home occupation. 11-2-82

**4.8.1.8** Planned Residential Development (See Art. IV, Sec. 4.17) 11-2-82

**4.8.1.9** Mixed Use Development (See Art. IX Definitions) 3-14-89

**4.8.1.10** Affordable Housing (See Art. VIII Sec. 8.5) 3-14-89 (eliminated 3-14-95)

**4.8.1.11** Amateur non-profit sports and recreation uses subject to obtaining Planning Board site approval which may provide at minimum for setbacks, buffers, sanitary facilities, parking and traffic impact. Uses involving motorized recreation vehicles are prohibited. Night lighting may be allowed by the Planning Board when more than 500 feet from any residential use but not after 9:00 p.m. 3-12-91

**4.8.1.12** All family day care home facilities are subject to compliance with all current licensing procedures and all applicable health/safety ordinances for the State of New Hampshire and the Town of Amherst. Family day care facilities are regulated by RSA: 170-E:1, 170-E:2, 204-C:72, 161-G:4 and all other applicable State Laws. (3-12-91) 3-10-92

In addition to the permitted uses referred to above, the Board of Adjustment may permit certain uses to be carried on in the limited Commercial Zone by way of Special Exception which uses are enumerated in Section 5.9 of the Zoning Ordinance and subject to the conditions and limitations therein imposed. 3-11-86

#### **4.8.2** Area and Frontage Requirements

**4.8.2.1** The minimum lot area shall be one (1) acre. (3-2-76) (3-14-89) (3-11-97)

**4.8.2.2** Each new lot shall have a minimum frontage of two hundred (200) feet on a publicly maintained road, unless frontage has been approved and recorded as reduced frontage lot/s, in which event thirty-five (35) feet shall be sufficient. (3-14-78/3-9-82) 3-10-87

#### **4.8.3** Yard and Building Requirements

**4.8.3.1** Each new structure shall be set back either fifty (50) or one-hundred (100) feet from the edge of the public road right-of way. The fifty (50) foot option requires that a natural vegetation or landscaped area only shall exist between the structure and the highway, excepting driveways and permitted signs. The one-hundred (100) foot option allows parking areas to the front of the structure, which parking areas shall be set back a minimum of fifty (50) feet from the edge of the highway right-of-way. Any permitted enlargement of pre-existing structures shall be beyond the fifty (50) foot setback line.

On corner lots, parking areas shall be screened from the highway with fences, landscaping and natural vegetation. 3-14-89

**4.8.3.2** Each new structure or addition to a structure shall be set back thirty (30) feet from side and rear lot lines. 3-14-89

**4.8.3.3** Any lot bordering a residential zone or an existing residential use shall have a landscape buffer between any buildings and residential zone or use. 3-2-76

**4.8.3.4** No structure shall be constructed to a height greater than thirty-five (35) feet, exclusive of chimneys or cupolas, measured from the lowest adjacent exterior elevation. (3-2-76/3-12-85) 3-11-86

**4.8.3.5** The floor area ratio shall be a maximum of twenty (20%) percent. (3-2-76/3-12-85) 3-10-87

**4.8.3.6** A minimum of thirty (30%) percent of the area of any lot shall remain landscaped open space and not be utilized for construction (including parking). 3-4-75 (3-13-31)

**4.8.3.7** There shall be no more than one access to any lot wherever desirable for traffic safety and consideration shall be given to combining access points where two or more lots are being concurrently developed. 3-2-76

**4.8.3.8** All storage and/or equipment parking areas shall be fenced, screened, or otherwise protected from view.

#### **4.8.4 Prohibited Uses**

**4.8.4.1** Aircraft landing fields. (3-10-98)

### **Section 4.9 Industrial Zone**

#### **4.9.1 Permitted Uses**

**4.9.1.1** Light Manufacturing 3-12-63

**4.9.1.2** Assembly of previously prepared materials 3-12-63

**4.9.1.3** Metal working 3-12-63

**4.9.1.4** Equipment sales and service 3-12-63

**4.9.1.5** Creamery, bakery and soft drink bottling plants 3-12-63

**4.9.1.6** Distribution plants, service industries and parcel delivery 3-12-63

**4.9.1.7** Laboratories 3-12-63

**4.9.1.8** Corporate and business offices compatible with other permitted uses in the zone and/or professional offices for individual or group practice, including doctors and dentists (including medical and dental clinics), counseling services, engineers, architects, planners, insurance and accountants. (3-14-78) 3-10-87

**4.9.1.9** Wholesale business and storage 3-14-78

**4.9.1.10** Storage yards (but not junk yards) 3-14-78

**4.9.1.11** Banks 3-10-87

**4.9.1.12** Coffee or sandwich shops (except for fast service types) 3-10-87

**4.9.1.13** Veterinary clinic 3-10-87

**4.9.1.14** Interior recreational establishments 3-10-87

**4.9.1.15** Home occupation 11-1-82

**4.9.1.16** Public utility buildings, structures or facility (3-14-78) 3-10-87

**4.9.1.17** Affordable Housing(See Art. VIII, Sec. 8.5) 3-14-89 Eliminated 3/14/95

**4.9.1.18** Amateur non-profit sports and recreation uses subject to obtaining Planning Board site approval which may provide at minimum for setbacks, buffers, sanitary facilities, parking and traffic impact. Uses involving motorized recreation vehicles are prohibited. Night lighting may be allowed by the Planning Board when more than 500 feet from any residential use but not after 9:00 p.m. 3-12-91

**4.9.1.19** Retail Establishments - change of use permit from the Planning Board required for existing buildings. (adopted 3-11-97)

#### **4.9.2 No Land, building or structure shall be used for any of the purposes enumerated below:**

**4.9.2.1** Manufacture or storage of explosives in bulk quantities greater than twenty-five (25) pounds. 3-12-63

**4.9.2.2** Fertilizer manufacture 3-12-63

**4.9.2.3** Glue manufacture 3-12-63

**4.9.2.4** Petroleum refining 3-12-63

**4.9.2.5** Smelting of metallic ores 3-12-63

**4.9.2.6** Preparation of cement, gypsum, lime or plaster of paris 3-12-63

**4.9.2.7** Manufacture of acids 3-12-63

**4.9.2.8** Fat rendering in preparation of grease or tallow 3-12-63

**4.9.2.9** Animal reduction or garbage dumping except sewage disposal or incineration done by the Town of Amherst. 3-12-63

**4.9.3** Area and Frontage Requirements

**4.9.3.1** The minimum lot area shall be one (1) acre. (3-14-78/3-13-84) 3-14-89

**4.9.3.2** Each lot shall have a minimum frontage of two hundred (200) feet on the principle route of access. (3-14-78) 3-13-84

**4.9.4** Yard and Building Requirements

**4.9.4.1** Each new structure shall be set back either fifty (50) or one-hundred (100) feet from the edge of the public road right-of-way. 3-14-89

The fifty (50) foot option requires that a natural vegetation or landscaped area only shall exist between the structure and the highway, excepting driveways and permitted signs. 3-14-89

The one-hundred (100) foot option allows parking areas to the front of the structure, which parking areas shall be set back a minimum of fifty (50) feet from the edge of the highway right-of-way. 3-14-89

Any permitted enlargement of pre-existing structures shall be beyond the fifty (50) foot setback line. 3-14-89  
On corner lots, parking areas shall be screened from the highway with fences, landscaping and natural vegetation. 3-14-89

**4.9.4.2** Each new structure or addition to a structure shall be set back thirty (30) feet from side and rear lot lines. 3-14-89

**4.9.4.3** Any lot bordering a residential zone or an existing residential use shall have a landscaped buffer between any building and such residential zone or use. 3-4-75

**4.9.4.4** No structure shall be constructed to a height greater than thirty-five (35) feet, exclusive of chimneys or cupolas, measured from the lowest adjacent exterior elevation, excepting Industrial structures south of the Boston & Maine Railroad which shall not exceed fifty (50) feet for inhabited and eighty (80) feet for uninhabited structures. (3-4-75 / 3-11-86) 3-12-91

**4.9.4.5** The floor area ratio shall be a maximum of forty (40%) percent. (3-4-75) 3-10-87

**4.9.4.6** A minimum of thirty (30%) percent of the area of any lot shall remain open space and not be utilized for construction including parking. 3-4-75 (3-13-01)

**4.9.4.7** There shall be no outside storage of materials or equipment between the front of any buildings and the street. All storage and/or equipment parking areas shall be fenced, screened, landscaped or otherwise protected from view. 3-4-75

**4.9.5** Access: Access to any lot with frontage on Route 101A shall be by such other streets as are available and not by Route 101A unless no other access is available. 3-14-78

**Section 4.10 Flood Plain Conservation District** 3-10-70 (3-11-97)

**4.10.1** General: In the interest of public health, convenience, safety and welfare, the regulations of this district are intended to guide the use of areas of flood plain subject to flood water, and to encourage the retention of open land so as to constitute an harmonious and appropriate physical development of the Town, as developed from the Master Plan. The specific intent of this district is:

**4.10.1.1** To prevent the development of buildings and uses in areas that are unsatisfactory and hazardous due to the threat of flooding.

**4.10.1.2** Protection of natural flow and drainage.

**4.10.2** Purpose: Certain areas of the Town of Amherst, New Hampshire are subject to periodic flooding, causing serious damages to properties within these areas. Relief is available in the form of flood insurance as

authorized by the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968. Therefore, the Town of Amherst, New Hampshire has chosen to become a participating community in the National Flood Insurance Program, and agrees to comply with the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-488, as amended) as detailed in this Floodplain Management Ordinance. (3.13.07)

**4.10.3** Definition: This ordinance, adopted pursuant to the authority of RSA 674:16, shall be known as the Town of Amherst, New Hampshire Flood Plain Conservation District. The regulations in this ordinance shall overlay and supplement the regulations in the Town of Amherst, New Hampshire Zoning Ordinance, and shall be considered part of the Zoning Ordinance for purposes of administration and appeals under state law. If any provision of this ordinance differs or appears to conflict with any provision of the Zoning Ordinance or other ordinance or regulation, the provision imposing the greater restriction or more stringent standard shall be controlling.

The following regulations in this ordinance shall apply to all lands designated as special flood hazard areas by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in its "Flood Insurance Study for the County of Hillsborough, N. H." dated Sept. 25, 2009, or as amended, together with the associated Flood Insurance Rate Maps dated Sept. 25, 2009, or as amended, which are declared to be a part of this ordinance and are hereby incorporated by reference. (3.13.07) (7.16.09)

#### **4.10.4** Definition of Terms

The following definitions shall apply only to this Floodplain development Ordinance, and shall not be affected by, the provisions of any other ordinance of the Town of Amherst, NH.

**Area of Special Flood Hazard** is the land in the floodplain within the Town of Amherst subject to a one (1) percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year. The area is designated as Zones A and AE on the Flood Insurance Rate Map. (3.13.07)

**Base Flood** means the flood having a one-percent possibility of being equaled or exceeded in any given year.

**Basement** means any area of a building having its floor subgrade on all sides.

**Building** – (see structure)

**Development** means any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation, or drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials. (3.13.07)

**FEMA** means the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**Flood or Flooding** means a general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land areas from: 1) the overflow of inland or tidal waters, and (2) the unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source.

**Flood Insurance Rate Map** (FIRM) means an official map incorporated with this ordinance, on which FEMA has delineated both the special flood hazard areas and the risk premium zones applicable to the Town of Amherst.

**Flood Insurance Study** means an examination, evaluation and determination of flood hazards and, if appropriate, corresponding water surface elevations, or an examination and determination of mudslide (i.e. mudflow) and/or flood-related erosion hazards. (3.13.07)

**Floodplain or Flood-prone area** means any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source (see definition of "Flooding").

**Flood proofing** means any combination of structural and non-structural additions, changes, or adjustments to structures which reduce or eliminate flood damage to real estate or improved real property, water and sanitation facilities, structures and their contents.

**Floodway-** (see Regulatory Floodway)

**Functionally dependent use** means a use which cannot perform its intended purpose unless it is located or carried out in close proximity to water. The term includes only docking and port facilities that are necessary for the loading/unloading of cargo or passengers, and ship building/repair facilities but does not include long-term storage or related manufacturing facilities.

**Highest adjacent grade** means the highest natural elevation of the ground surface prior to construction next to the proposed walls of a structure.

**Historic Structure** means any structure that is:

**4.10.4.1** Listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places (a listing maintained by the Department of Interior) or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as meeting the requirements for individual listing on the National Register;

**4.10.4.2** Certified or preliminarily determined by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historical significance of a registered historic district or a district preliminarily determined by the Secretary to qualify as a registered historic district;

**4.10.4.3** Individually listed on a state inventory of historic places in states with historic preservation programs which have been approved by the Secretary of the Interior; or:

**4.10.4.4** Individually listed on a local inventory of historic places in communities with historic preservation programs that have been certified either:

**4.10.4.4.1** By an approved state program as determined by the Secretary of the Interior, or:

**4.10.4.4.2** Directly by the Secretary of the Interior in states without approved programs.

**Lowest Floor** means the lowest floor of the lowest enclosed area (including basement). An unfinished or flood resistant enclosure, usable solely for parking of vehicles, building access or storage in an area other than a basement area is not considered a building's lowest floor; provided, that such an enclosure is not built so as to render the structure in violation of the applicable non-elevation design requirements of this ordinance.

**Manufactured Home** means a structure, transportable in one or more sections, which is built on a permanent chassis and is designed for use with or without a permanent foundation when attached to the required utilities. For floodplain management purposes the term "manufactured home" includes park trailers, travel trailers, and other similar vehicles placed on site for greater than 180 consecutive days. This includes manufactured homes located in a manufactured home park or subdivision. (3.13.07)

**Manufactured home park or subdivision** means a parcel (or contiguous parcels) of land divided into two or more manufactured home lots for rent or sale. (3.13.07)

**Mean Sea Level** means the National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) of 1929 or other datum, to which base flood elevations shown on a communities Flood Insurance Rate Map are referenced.

**New Construction** means, for the purposes of determining insurance rates, structures for which the start of construction "commenced on or after the effective date of an initial FIRM or after December 31, 1974, whichever is later, and includes any subsequent improvements to such structures. For floodplain management purposes, new construction means structures for which the start of construction commenced on or after the effective date of a floodplain management regulation adopted by a community and includes any subsequent improvements to such structures. (3.13.07)

**100-YEAR FLOOD -** (See Base-Flood)

**Recreational Vehicle** is defined as:

**4.10.4.5** Built on a single chassis;

**4.10.4.5.1** 400 square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection;

**4.10.4.5.2** Designed to be self propelled or permanently tow able by a light duty truck; and

**4.10.4.5.3** Designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel, or seasonal use.

**Regulatory Floodway** means the channel of a river or other water course and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height. (3.13.07)

**Special Flood Hazard Areas** (see - Area of Special Flood Hazard) (3.13.07)

**Structure** means for floodplain management purposes, a walled and roofed building, including a gas or liquid storage tank, that is principally above ground, as well as a manufactured home.

**Start of Construction** includes substantial improvements, and means the date the building permit was issued, provided the actual start of construction, repair, reconstruction, placement or other improvement was within 180 days of the permit date. The actual start means either the first placement of permanent construction of a structure on site, such as the pouring of slab or footings, the installation of piles, the construction of columns,

or any work beyond the stage of evacuation; or the placement of manufactured home on a foundation. Permanent construction does not include land preparation, such as clearing, grading and filling; nor does it include the installation of streets and/or walkways; nor does it include excavation for a basement, footings, piers, or foundations or the erection of temporary forms; nor does it include the installation on the property of accessory buildings, such as garages or sheds not occupied as dwelling units or part of the main structure.

**Substantial Damage** means damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its before damaged condition would equal or exceed 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred.

**Substantial Improvement** means any combination of repairs, reconstruction, alteration, or improvements to a structure in which the cumulative cost equals or exceeds fifty percent of the market value of the structure. The market value of the structure should equal: (1) the appraised value prior to the start of the initial repair or improvement, or (2) in the case of damage, the value of the structure prior to the damage occurring. For the purposes of this definition, "substantial improvement" is considered to occur when the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor, or other structural part of the building commences, whether or not that alteration affects the external dimensions of the structure. This term includes structures which have incurred substantial damage, regardless of actual repair work performed. The term does not, however include any project for improvement of a structured required to comply with existing health, sanitary, or safety code specifications which are solely necessary to assure safe living conditions or any alteration of a "historic Structure", provided that the alteration will not preclude the structure's continued designation as a "historic structure".

**Violation** means the failure of a structure or other development to be fully compliant with community's flood plain management regulations. A structure or other development without the elevation certificate, other certifications, or other evidence of compliance required in 44CFR Sec. 60.3(b)(5), (c)(4), (c)(10), (d)(3), (e)(2), (e)(4), or (e)(5) is presumed to be in violation until such time as that documentation is provided. (3.13.07)

**Water Surface Elevation** means the height, in relation to the National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) of 1929, (or other datum, where specified) of floods of various magnitudes and frequencies in floodplains.

#### **4.10.5 Permitted Uses:**

Any of the following uses, which may require a permit, that do not result in the erection of any structures or require the addition of fill, and that are otherwise permitted by the Zoning Ordinance.

**4.10.5.1** Minor fences, docks, wharfs, boat houses

**4.10.5.2** Agriculture

**4.10.5.3** Forestry

**4.10.5.4** Recreational purposes such as accessory tennis courts, swimming pools, playing fields

**4.10.5.5** Golf courses

**4.10.5.6** Parking lots, driveways, roads

**4.10.5.7** Non-commercial sports and recreation uses, subject to obtaining Planning Board site approval, which shall provide at minimum for applicable:

**4.10.5.7.1** setbacks,

**4.10.5.7.2** buffers,

**4.10.5.7.3** sanitary facilities,

**4.10.5.7.4** parking,

**4.10.5.7.5** mitigation of traffic impact, and

**4.10.5.7.6** adequate provision of emergency services, and subject to determination by the Planning Board of the following:

**4.10.5.7.7** Such use shall not be the primary use of the lot;

**4.10.5.7.8** Such use shall be non-commercial in nature;

**4.10.5.7.9** Deleted (3.6.04);

**4.10.5.7.10** Deleted (3.6.04);

**4.10.5.7.11** Such use shall be compatible with existing neighborhood uses;

**4.10.5.7.12** Such use complies with the spirit and letter of Section 3-1, Nuisance Provision.

**4.10.5.7.13** No permanent buildings shall be permitted as part of such

use, except for sheds to the extent necessary for storage of equipment for such use; and

**4.10.5.7.14** The Conservation Commission has determined, and the Planning Board agrees, that such use shall not:

**4.10.5.7.14.1** contribute to pollution of surface or groundwater;

**4.10.5.7.14.2** damage or destroy habitats or reproductive areas for plants, fish, and wildlife of importance;

**4.10.5.7.14.3** eliminate, depreciate, or obstruct the commerce, recreation or aesthetic enjoyment of the public;

**4.10.5.7.14.4** be detrimental to adequate ground water levels;

**4.10.5.7.14.5** adversely affect stream channels and their ability to handle runoff of water; or

**4.10.5.7.14.6** disturb or reduce the natural ability of wetlands to absorb floodwaters and salt.

Uses involving motor-driven objects producing 60 or more decibels of sound at a range of ten feet as part of the sport or recreation are prohibited. Night lighting primarily for uses permitted under this section may be allowed by the Planning Board when more than 500 feet from any abutting lot line, but not between 9:00 p.m. and 7:30 a.m.

**4.10.5.8** Recreational vehicles placed on sites within Zones A or AE shall be either; a) be on site for fewer than 180 consecutive days, b) be fully licensed and ready for highway use; or c) meet all standards of Section 60.3 (b) (1) of the National Flood Insurance Program Regulations and the elevation and anchoring requirements for manufactured homes in Paragraph c(6) of Section 60.3. (3.13.07)

**4.10.5.9** The Zoning Department shall review all building permit applications for new structures or substantial improvements to determine whether proposed building sites will be reasonably safe from flooding. If a proposed building site is located in a special flood hazard area, all new construction or substantial improvements shall: (3.13.07)

**4.10.5.9.1** be designated (or modified) and adequately anchored to prevent flotation, collapse, or lateral movement of the structure resulting from hydrodynamic and hydrostatic loads, including the effects of buoyancy;

**4.10.5.9.2** be constructed with materials resistant to flood damage;

**4.10.5.9.3** be constructed by methods and practices that minimize flood damages; and

**4.10.5.9.4** be constructed with electrical, heating, ventilation, plumbing, and air conditioning equipment, and other service facilities that are designed and/or located so as to prevent water from entering or accumulating within the components during conditions of flooding.

**4.10.6** Where new or replacement water and sewer systems (including on-site systems) are proposed in a special flood hazard area the applicant shall provide the Zoning Department with assurance that these systems will be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of flood waters into the systems and discharges from the systems into flood waters, and on-site waste disposal systems will be located to avoid impairment to them or contamination from them during periods of flooding.(3.13.07)

**4.10.7** For all new or substantially improved structures located in Zones A or AE, the applicant shall furnish the following information to the Zoning Department:

**4.10.7.1** the as-built elevation (in relation to NGVD) of the lowest floor (including basement) and include whether or not such structures contain a basement.

**4.10.7.2** if the structure has been flood proofed, the as-built elevation (in relation to NGVD) to which the structure was flood proofed.

**4.10.7.3** any certification of flood proofing.

The Zoning Department shall maintain for public inspection, and shall furnish such information upon request. (3.13.07)

**4.10.8** The Zoning Department shall not grant a building permit until the applicant certifies that all necessary permits have been received from those governmental agencies from which approval is required by federal or

state law, including Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, 33 U.S.C. 1334. (3.13.07)

#### **4.10.9**

**4.10.9.1** In riverine situations, prior to the alteration or relocation of a watercourse the applicant for such authorization shall notify the Wetlands Bureau of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and submit copies of such notification to the Zoning Department, in addition to the copies required by RSA 482-A:3. Further, the applicant shall be required to submit copies of said notification to those adjacent communities as determined by the Zoning Department, including notice of all scheduled hearings before the Wetlands Bureau. (3.13.07)

**4.10.9.2** The applicant shall submit to the Zoning Department, certification provided by a registered professional engineer, assuring that the flood carrying capacity of an altered or relocated watercourse can and will be maintained. (3.13.07)

**4.10.9.3** Along water courses with a designated Regulatory Floodway no encroachments, including fill, new construction substantial improvements, and other development are allowed within the floodway unless it has been demonstrated through hydrologic and hydraulic analyses performed in accordance with standard engineering practices that the proposed encroachment would not result in any increase in flood levels within the community during the base flood discharge. (3.13.07)

**4.10.9.4** Until a Regulatory Floodway is designated along watercourses, no new construction, substantial improvements, or other development (including fill) shall be permitted within Zone AE on the FIRM, unless it is demonstrated by the applicant that the cumulative effect of the proposed development, when combined with all existing and anticipated development, will not increase the water surface elevation of the base flood more than one foot at any point within the community. (3.13.07)

**4.10.9.5** The Zoning Department shall obtain, review, and reasonably utilize any floodway data available from Federal, State, or other sources as criteria for requiring that all development located in Zone A meet the following floodway requirement: "No encroachments, including fill, new construction, substantial improvements, and other development are allowed within the floodway that would result in any increase in flood levels within the community during the base flood discharge." (3.13.07)

#### **4.10.10**

**4.10.10.1** In special flood hazard areas the Zoning Department shall determine the 100 year flood elevation in the following order of precedence according to the data available:

**4.10.10.1.1** In Zone AE, refer to the elevation data provided in the community's Flood Insurance Study and accompanying FIRM or FHBM. (3.13.07)

**4.10.10.1.2** In A Zones the Zoning Department shall obtain, review, and reasonably utilize any 100 year flood elevation data available from any federal, state or other source including data submitted for development proposals submitted to the community (i.e. subdivisions, site approvals). (3.13.07)

**4.10.10.2** The Zoning Department's 100 year flood elevation determination will be used as criteria for requiring in Zones A and AE that: (3.13.07)

**4.10.10.2.1** All new construction or substantial improvement of residential structures have the lowest floor (including basement) elevated to or above the 100 year flood elevation;

**4.10.10.2.2** That all new construction or substantial improvements of non-residential structures have the lowest floor (including basement) elevated to or above the 100 year flood level; or together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, shall:

**4.10.10.2.2.1** be floodproofed so that below the 100 year flood elevation the structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water; (3.13.07)

**4.10.10.2.2.2** have structural components capable of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy; and

**4.10.10.2.2.3** be certified by a registered professional engineer or architect that the design and methods of construction are in accordance with accepted standards of practice for meeting the provisions of this section;

**4.10.10.2.3** All manufactured homes to be placed or substantially improved within special flood hazard areas shall be elevated on a permanent foundation such that the lowest floor of the manufactured home is at or above the base flood level; and be securely anchored to resist flotation, collapse, or lateral movement.

Methods of anchoring may include, but are not limited to, use of over-the-top or frame ties to ground anchors. This requirement is in addition to applicable state and local anchoring requirements for resisting wind force;

**4.10.10.2.4** All recreational vehicles placed on sites within Zones A and E shall either: (3.13.07)

**4.10.10.2.4.1** be on the site for fewer than 180 consecutive days;

**4.10.10.2.4.2** be fully licensed and ready for highway use; or

**4.10.10.2.4.3** meet all standards of section 60.3(b)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Program Regulations and the elevation and anchoring requirements for "manufactured homes" in Paragraph (c) (6) of section 60.3.

**4.10.10.2.5** For all new Construction and substantial improvements, fully enclosed areas below the lowest floor that are subject to flooding are permitted provided they meet the following requirements:

**4.10.10.2.5.1** the enclosed area is unfinished or flood resistant, usable solely for the parking of vehicles, building access or storage;

**4.10.10.2.5.2** the area is not a basement;

**4.10.10.2.5.3** shall be designed to automatically equalize hydrostatic flood forces on exterior walls by allowing for the entry and exit of floodwater. Designs for meeting this requirement must either be certified by a registered professional engineer or architect or must meet or exceed the following minimum criteria; A minimum of two openings having a total net area of not less than one square inch for every square foot of enclosed area subject to flooding shall be provided. The bottom of all openings shall be no higher than one foot above grade. Openings may be equipped with screens, louvers, or other coverings or devices provided that they permit the automatic entry and exit of floodwater.

**4.10.11** Variances and Appeals.

**4.10.11.1** Any order, requirement, decision or determination of the Building Inspector made under this ordinance may be appealed to the Zoning Board of Adjustment as set forth in RSA 676:5.

**4.10.11.2** If the applicant, upon appeal, requests a variance as authorized by RSA 674:33, I(b), the applicant shall have the burden of showing in addition to the usual variance standards under state law:

**4.10.11.2.1** that the variance will not result in increased flood heights, additional threats to public safety, or extraordinary public expense.

**4.10.11.2.2** that if the requested variance is for activity within a designated regulatory floodway, no increase in flood levels during the base flood discharge will result.

**4.10.11.2.3** that the variance is the minimum necessary, considering the flood hazard, to afford relief.

**4.10.11.3** The Zoning Board of Adjustment shall notify the applicant in writing that:

**4.10.11.3.1** the issuance of a variance to construct below the base flood level will result in increased premium rates for flood insurance up to amounts as high as \$25 for \$100 of Insurance coverage and

**4.10.11.3.2** such construction below the base flood level increases risks to life and property. Such notification shall be maintained with a record of all variance actions.

## **Section 4.11 Wetland Conservation District**

**4.11.1** General: The Wetland Conservation District is hereby determined to be those areas identified or delineated as poorly drained or very poorly drained soils, or as bodies of water by the National Cooperative Soil Survey through field mapping surveys completed in 1970 and shown on its field mapping photographic sheets for the Town of Amherst, New Hampshire. The Wetland Conservation District as herein defined as shown on a map designated as:

"U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service Town of Amherst, Hillsborough County, New Hampshire Soil Survey, November 1970

Amherst Wetlands Conservation District Map adopted 1973 Amended March 1975 (3-4-75) and is a part of the 'Zoning Map' of the Town of Amherst, NH

In all cases where the Wetland Conservation District is super-imposed over

another zoning district in the Town of Amherst, that district whose regulations are the more restrictive shall apply.

In the event an area is incorrectly designated as being poorly drained or very poorly drained soils on the Town of Amherst Wetland Conservation District map and evidence to that effect is satisfactorily presented to the Building Inspector or Zoning Administrator, the restriction contained in this section shall not apply. Conversely, in the event that an area not so designated has poorly drained or very poorly drained soils within the meaning of the aforementioned definition, then the restriction contained in this section shall apply. Such evidence may be obtained by adequate on-site soils investigation and analysis conducted by a certified soil scientist or certified wetland scientist. As amended 3-11-80

The location of a wetland boundary in any particular case must be determined by on-site inspection of all three characteristics of wetlands, namely, hydrology, hydric soils, and hydrophytic plants. Said inspections shall conform to standards set forth in:

Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual, Technical Report Y-87-1, Environmental Laboratory, Department of the Army, 1987.

Field Indicators for Identifying Hydric Soils in New England, Version 2, New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission, 1998.

Chapters Wt 100-800 of the NH Code of Administrative Rules, April 21, 1997, as amended.

In the interest of public health, convenience, safety and welfare, the regulations of the Wetland Conservation District are intended to guide the use of areas of land that have soils that are saturated or inundated for extended periods of time during the growing season, and their surrounding buffers.

The specific intent of this District is:

**4.11.1.1** To prevent the development of buildings and land use on naturally occurring wetlands, which would contribute to pollution of surface and ground water. 3-6-73

**4.11.1.2** To prevent the destruction of natural wetlands which provide flood protection, recharge of ground water suppliers, retention of sediments, attenuation of nutrients, augmentation of stream flow during dry periods, and important wildlife areas. 3-6-73

**4.11.1.3** To prevent unnecessary or excessive expenses to the Town to provide and maintain essential services and utilities which arise because of inharmonious use of wetlands. 3-6-93

**4.11.1.4** To encourage those uses that can be appropriately and safely located in the wetland area. 3-6-73

**4.11.1.5** To protect water suppliers, aquifers and aquifer recharge areas.

#### **4.11.2 Permitted Uses**

Any of the following uses, which may require a permit, and that do not result in the erection of any structure and that are otherwise permitted by the Ordinance:

**4.11.2.1** Forestry - tree farming (see Special Provisions) 3-6-73

**4.11.2.2** Agriculture (see Special Provisions) 3-6-73

**4.11.2.3** Well and well lines 3-11-80

**4.11.2.4** Wildlife refuge 3-6-73

**4.11.2.5** Parks and such recreation uses as are consistent with the purpose and intentions of Section 4.11 3-6-73

**4.11.2.6** Conservation areas nature trails 3-6-73

**4.11.2.7** Open space as permitted by subdivision regulations and other sections of this Ordinance 3-6-73

**4.11.2.8** Minimal impact crossing of wetland and their buffers by roads, bridges and driveways, subject to Planning Board review and approval, and only when there is no feasible alternative. 3-12-91 (3-11-03)

**4.11.2.9** Other uses consistent with the intent of the ordinance as approved by the Planning Board pursuant to Water Resources Management Plans Alternative Use below. 3-13-01

#### **4.11.3 Special Provisions**

**4.11.3.1** No wetland may be used to satisfy minimum lot size requirements in any zone.

**4.11.3.2** No septic tank or leach field may be located closer than seventy-five (75) feet to any wetland.

- 4.11.3.3** No structure shall be erected within fifty (50) feet of any wetland.
- 4.11.3.4** A naturally vegetated buffer of twenty-five (25) feet shall be maintained from the edge of any wetland.
- 4.11.3.5** A naturally vegetated buffer of one hundred (100) feet shall be maintained from the edge of any Public Water Protection Wetland, as defined in Public Water Protection Wetlands of this ordinance.
- 4.11.3.6** Except as determined by the Planning Board there shall be no alteration of contours and no filling of land within a buffer. (3-11-03)
- 4.11.3.7** Except as provided for in 4.11.2.8, no structures, parking areas or driveways (paved or unpaved) shall be located within a buffer. Within a buffer, the footprint of an existing structure, parking area or driveway shall not be expanded. Forestry and tree farming in buffers shall be conducted in accordance with Best Management Practices for Erosion Control on Timber Harvesting Operations in New Hampshire, published by the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development, as amended. (3-11-03)
- 4.11.3.8** Agricultural activities in buffers shall be conducted in accordance with the Manual of Best Management Practices for Agriculture in New Hampshire, published by the NH Department of Agriculture, as amended. Such activity is prohibited within a 25 ft. buffer. (3-11-03)
- 4.11.3.9** A "Water Resource Management Plan" which provides for substitutes for wetlands restrictions and setbacks may be submitted to the Planning Board. See Water Resource Management Plans Alternative Use. (3-11-03)
- 4.11.3.10** Nothing in this part, Special Provisions, shall be construed as prohibiting the permitted uses contained in Permitted Uses above. (3-11-03)
- 4.11.3.11** In order to define the edges of the naturally vegetated buffers, a disk (or other small, durable sign) shall be placed and maintained on such edges, at reasonable intervals of no more than 50 feet apart, which states: ENTERING WETLAND BUFFER – Do Not Disturb Beyond This Point. (3.13.07)

**4.11.4 Public Water Protection Wetlands**

The town's wetlands ranked highest for their critical role in protecting public water supplies shall be designated as Public Water Protection Wetlands (See the Amherst Wetland Assessment and Prime Wetland Designation Project report dated January 2000).

Witches Brook	Ponemah Bog	Thibodeau Bog
Theraults Marsh	Glover Beds	Ponemah Hill Complex
Stump Pond	Homestead Commons	J&J Party Outlet Nolan Pond
Maine RR Sand Pit	Belden's Mill	Currier Lumber
Baboosic Lake	North Baboosic	Boardman
Horace Greeley Triangle	Jasper Valley	Baboosic Forested
Weimont	Honey Pot Pond	Black Forest
Souhegan Three	Curtis Well	House of Faith
Beaver Brook South	Holt Road	Souhegan Street
Meeting Place	Currier Land	Pond Parrish
North Embankment Road	Corduroy/Dog Pound	Pulpit Meadow
Souhegan Two	St. Patricks Cemetery	Little Baboosic
Souhegan One	Post Road & Courthouse	Great Meadow
Ross Bird Sanctuary	Hertzka Atherton	
Pond Parish Outlet	Southfield	

In addition, wetlands located within NH Public Water Supply Wellhead Protection Areas (delineated by NH Department of Environmental Services) and wetlands within the Pennichuck Brook Watershed as shown on the plan titled shall be designated Public Water Protection Wetlands.

#### **4.11.5 Water Resource Management Plans Alternative use**

The use restrictions and setbacks established in Permitted Uses and Special Provisions above are important measures intended to protect wetlands, ground water, surface water, and important wildlife resources. This part of the ordinance is intended to provide for the development of a comprehensive plan for the protection of these resources as part of the site plan approval process in lieu of the standard requirements of the ordinance listed in Permitted Uses and Special Provisions above. Under the provisions contained in this part, the Town and landowners are offered greater flexibility in establishing effective controls through development, implementation and maintenance of site specific Water Resource Management Plans. When meeting the criteria below, and when the owner so elects, a site-specific plan may be adopted, upon review of the Conservation Commission, Pennichuck Water Works (if required), and approval of the Planning Board, for the protection of water and wildlife resources.

**4.11.5.1** The provisions of this part are applicable, for modification of or an alternative to the provisions contained in Permitted Uses and Special Provisions above, to any parcel of land to be developed or otherwise altered if one or more of the following conditions are met:

**4.11.5.1.1** if the parcel is greater than 10 acres;

**4.11.5.1.2** if the plan involves a subdivision of a parcel into 5 or more lots;

**4.11.5.1.3** if the parcel contains wetlands area of greater than 2.0 contiguous acres, or;

**4.11.5.1.4** if the parcel falls within the standard setbacks of Public Water Protection Wetlands defined in Public Water Protection Wetlands above.

#### **4.11.5.2 General Requirements**

Each Water Resource Management Plan must conform to the intent of the ordinance and provide for effective, long term design and engineering controls to minimize the impacts of development and other uses adjacent to wetland areas. These plans are intended to provide for alternative controls to the setbacks and use restrictions. In no case should this section be interpreted to allow wetland degradation.

**4.11.5.2.1** Mitigation plans are to incorporate controls that achieve a “best available technology” (BAT’s) standard for engineering design.

**4.11.5.2.2** As a minimum, site activities and uses are to reflect applicable Best Management Practices as issued by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services or other state agency.

**4.11.5.2.3** Plans must incorporate documentation of all monitoring, Maintenance and reporting provisions and procedures as well as any needed legal provisions to ensure future compliance with the plans.

**4.11.5.2.4** A minimum 25 ft. undisturbed, naturally vegetated buffer shall Be established under a Water Resource Management Plan for all Public Water Protection Wetlands. The extent of the buffers must reflect the nature and value of the resources to be protected as defined in Sec. 4-11, General 2. (3-11-03)

**4.11.5.2.5** Building setbacks from the edge of the wetland may vary but in no case shall the setback be less than 50 feet.

**4.11.5.2.6** Plans for any residential development that contain more than 2.0 acres of Public Water Protection Wetlands, or a commercial or industrial development should include surface and groundwater monitoring implementation methods and timetables. In addition to hazardous chemicals stored or used on the site, monitoring should include nutrients contributed by fertilizer applications, pesticides and herbicides of concern, chlorides, coliform bacteria and BOD. A program for reporting baseline and periodic testing for at least two years is required.

#### **4.11.5.3 Water Resource Management Plan Requirements**

A minimum of forty-five (45) days prior to submission to the Amherst Planning Board, each Water Resource Management Plan shall be presented to the Amherst Conservation Commission for review, and also to Pennichuck Water Works for review if the parcel is within the Pennichuck Brook watershed. Each Water Resource Management Plan submitted to the Planning Board for review shall contain the following provisions:

- 4.11.5.3.1** Identification of the risks to water resources from the proposed site activities or development and site specific restrictions to eliminate or control uses and activities that produces impacts;
- 4.11.5.3.2** Identification of ecologically sensitive areas and features, Including but not limited to, water supplies and water resources, wildlife and wildlife habitats or other resources within the influence of the site that warrant high levels of protection;
- 4.11.5.3.3** Site design and engineering controls to minimize both on-site and off site (within 500 ft.) impacts to water resources;
- 4.11.5.3.4** Storm water provisions shall include at a minimum:
  - 4.11.5.3.4.1** Post development storm water peak (for 10-year storm) must be less than or equal to predevelopment storm water peak.
  - 4.11.5.3.4.2** Post development infiltration (2-year storm) must be greater that or equal to predevelopment storm water peak.
  - 4.11.5.3.4.3** Storm water facilities must have a solids removal area that is independent of infiltrative area. Solids removal area must be easily cleaned. Storm water facilities must be designed for grease and oil removal (either mechanical or biological with plants);
  - 4.11.5.3.5** A letter from the New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory containing information on any rare or endangered species within the project area, or within 500 ft. of the nearest wetland/buffer impact site, whichever is furthest;
  - 4.11.5.3.6** Written provisions for the protection of any rare or endangered species as referenced above or known by the Conservation Commission;
  - 4.11.5.3.7** Provisions for the protection of the ecologically sensitive areas and features of the site;
  - 4.11.5.3.8** Building and storage area design to prevent releases or spills of hazardous materials;
  - 4.11.5.3.9** Prohibitions on the use of lawn chemicals or implementation of an integrated pest management plan to govern the use of lawn chemicals;
  - 4.11.5.3.10** Prohibition on the use of salt for winter road and parking lot maintenance and sedimentation controls for winter sand use;
  - 4.11.5.3.11** Provisions for periodic groundwater monitoring and reporting, if required;
  - 4.11.5.3.12** Provisions for periodic surface water monitoring and reporting, if required;
  - 4.11.5.3.13** A plan showing the edge of wetlands within 500 ft. of the nearest impact area, and all setback/buffer areas for any Public Water Protection Wetland;
  - 4.11.5.3.14** Provisions for future maintenance of the engineering design, operating and monitoring controls to be implemented;
  - 4.11.5.3.15** A copy of the Pennichuck Water Works review report, if required;
  - 4.11.5.3.16** A copy of the Amherst Conservation Commission review report.

## **Section 4.12 Watershed Protection District**

**4.12.1** General: In the interest of public health, convenience, safety and welfare, the following regulations are intended to guide the use of areas of land with extended periods of high water table and lands draining into wetlands, brooks, ponds or water supply areas; to control building and land uses which would contribute to pollution of surface and ground water; to prevent the destruction of watershed areas which provide flood protection, recharge or ground water supply, and augmentation of stream flow during dry periods; to control construction and prevent alteration of watershed areas where such activities would significantly alter the surface water drainage (pattern and concentration) and/or cause excessive erosion; to prevent unnecessary or excessive expenses to the Town to provide and maintain essential services and utilities which arise because of

inharmonious use of watershed areas; and to encourage those uses that can be appropriately and safely located in this District. 3-2-76

#### **4.12.1.1 Definition of Watershed Protection District**

Watershed Protection District shall mean an area of land surrounding bodies of water for the purpose of controlling building and land uses, which uses could contribute to the pollution of surface and ground water. Watershed Protection district shall also mean any areas of surface or ground water of such a nature that if altered by dredging, filling, or relocating, would result in damage or destruction to habitats and reproduction areas for plants, fish and wildlife of importance, and if altered by dredging, filling, or relocating, would result in eliminating, depreciating or obstructing the commerce, recreation and aesthetic enjoyment of the public, and would be detrimental to adequate ground water levels, and would adversely affect stream channels and their ability to handle runoff of waters, and would disturb and reduce the natural ability of wetlands to absorb flood waters and silt. (3-14-78) 3-11-86

For the purpose of this section, such Watershed Protection District shall include, but not be limited to, all lands within one hundred (100) feet of bodies of water, perennial streams, or intermittent streams. Intermittent stream is one that flows within well defined stream beds during wet periods.

**4.12.1.2 Regulations:** No septic system and no building shall be constructed within the Watershed Protection District. 3-8-77

#### **4.12.2 Permitted Uses**

Any of the following uses, which may require a permit, and that do not result in the deterioration of the water quality or cause erosion in the Watershed Protection District shall be permitted:

**4.12.2.1** Miscellaneous trimming, pruning, and thinning according to good forestry practices.

**4.12.2.2** Tree farming, timbering and forestry according to practices approved by the County Forester.

**4.12.2.3** Wildlife refuge

**4.12.2.4** Wharfs, boat houses, footbridges or similar structures normally associated with use in or near water. (3-2-76) 3-12-91

**4.12.2.5** Non-commercial sports and recreation uses, subject to obtaining Planning Board site approval, which shall provide at minimum for applicable:

**4.12.2.5.1** setbacks,

**4.12.2.5.2** buffers,

**4.12.2.5.3** sanitary facilities,

**4.12.2.5.4** parking,

**4.12.2.5.5** mitigation of traffic impact, and

**4.12.2.5.6** adequate provision of emergency services, and subject to determination by the Planning Board of the following:

**4.12.2.5.7** Such use shall not be the primary use of the lot;

**4.12.2.5.8** Such use shall be non-commercial in nature;

**4.12.2.5.9** Deleted (3.6.04);

**4.12.2.5.10** Deleted (3.6.04);

**4.12.2.5.11** Such use shall be compatible with existing neighborhood uses;

**4.12.2.5.12** Such use complies with the spirit and letter of Section 3-1, Nuisance Provision.

**4.12.2.5.13** No permanent buildings shall be permitted as part of such use, except for sheds to the extent necessary for storage of equipment for such use; and

**4.12.2.5.14** The Conservation Commission has determined, and the Planning Board agrees, that such use shall not:

**4.12.2.5.14.1** contribute to pollution of surface or ground water;

**4.12.2.5.14.2** damage or destroy habitats or reproductive areas for plants, fish, and wildlife of importance;

**4.12.2.5.14.3** eliminate, depreciate, or obstruct the commerce, recreation or aesthetic enjoyment of the public;

**4.12.2.5.14.4** be detrimental to adequate ground water levels; e) adversely affect stream channels and their ability to handle runoff of water; or

**4.12.2.5.14.5** disturb or reduce the natural ability of wetlands to absorb floodwaters and salt.

Uses involving motor-driven objects producing 60 or more decibels of sound at a range of ten feet as part of the sport or recreation are prohibited. Night lighting primarily for uses permitted under this section may be allowed by the Planning Board when more than 500 feet from any abutting lot line, but not between 9:00 p.m. and 7:30 a.m.

### **Section 4.13 Aquifer Conservation District** 3-13-84

**4.13.1 PURPOSE:** Pursuant to RSA 31:60 (674:16) and RSA 31:61A (674:21) and in order to help maintain the quality of living in the Town of Amherst as set forth in the Master Plan, the Town believes that an adequate water supply is indispensable to the health, welfare, and safety of its citizens. Such an adequate supply is also essential to the maintenance of the ecological balance of the natural environment of the Town, an environment which the Town wishes to protect. These water resources are subject to an ever increasing demand for new and competing uses. Thus, the Town declares and determines that such water resources whether occurring above or below ground constitute a precious, finite, and invaluable public resource. These resources should be protected, conserved, and managed in the interest of present and future generations. The intent of this ordinance is to provide for the protection of the water resources from contamination by polluting, hazardous, or toxic materials.

**4.13.2 LOCATION:** The Aquifer Conservation District is identified as those areas designated by blue shading or crosshatching which appear on statewide mapping prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey entitled "Availability of Ground water in the Lower Merrimack River Basin, Southern New Hampshire" by John E. Cotton 1977, and as may be amended or superseded by the U.S.G.S. or by the Planning Board as provided herein from time to time. This map is on display in the Zoning Office of the Town of Amherst. The District shall include mapped primary and secondary recharge areas.

#### **4.13.3 Permitted Uses**

Any of the following uses, which may require a permit, that meet the purpose of the District outlined above which comply with all of the following requirements and conditions:

**4.13.3.1** Industrial or commercial uses, in the Industrial and Commercial zones respectively, which discharge no hazardous, or toxic waste on site and which uses are non-polluting.

**4.13.3.1.1** Residential uses.

**4.13.3.1.2** Activities designed for conservation of soil, water, plants and wildlife.

**4.13.3.1.3** Outdoor recreation activities except those which destroy the surfaces of hillsides, and other watershed areas.

**4.13.3.1.4** Operation and maintenance of existing bodies of water, wells, dams or other conservation devices.

**4.13.3.1.5** Forestry uses provided that the land is returned to its natural state in order to prevent loss of top soil, erosion, or alteration of the normal drainage patterns and low. Agricultural uses where the land in question is planted with a cover crop when the use is terminated.

**4.13.3.1.6** Amateur non-profit sports and recreation uses subject to obtaining Planning Board site approval which may provide at minimum for setbacks, buffers, sanitary facilities, parking and traffic impact. Uses involving motorized recreation vehicles are prohibited. Night lighting may be allowed by the Planning Board when more than 500 feet from any residential use but not after 9:00 p.m. 3-12-91

#### **4.13.4 Prohibited Uses**

The following uses are prohibited in this District:

- 4.13.4.1** Outdoor storage of road salt or other deicing chemicals and dumping of snow containing road salt or other deicing chemicals.
- 4.13.4.2** Solid Waste disposal sites.
- 4.13.4.3** Seepage disposal sites and lagoons.
- 4.13.4.4** Automotive repair shops, junkyards, automotive junkyards, and automotive salvage operations, as well as any similar use which might potentially affect water quality.
- 4.13.4.5** On-site storage of hazardous waste, or toxic materials, except temporarily as necessary in the ordinary course of business. A permit is required for such temporary storage.
- 4.13.4.6** Residential underground hazardous fuel storage tanks (3-14-89)
- 4.13.4.7** Filling Stations/Gas Stations 3-11-93

#### **4.13.5 Special Conditions**

The following conditions shall apply to all uses in this District:

- 4.13.5.1** Sanitary waste water discharge to septic and leaching systems shall conform to the regulations set forth in the Town of Amherst Water Pollution Control Regulations.
- 4.13.5.2** All liquid or solid waste other than normal septic effluent shall be temporarily stored on-site and disposed of in a manner determined by the Planning Board.
- 4.13.5.3** Monitoring wells shall be established for all industrial and commercial uses utilizing or storing hazardous or toxic materials. The number, construction, and location of these wells shall be determined by the Planning Board. These wells shall be checked for compliance with the Interim Primary Drinking Water Regulations and Secondary Drinking Water Regulations as provided for in the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974. The checking of wells shall take place on a monthly basis and the results reported to the Board of Health.
- 4.13.5.4** Non-residential storage of petroleum products shall be above ground in a manner approved by the Fire Department unless Planning Board permission is obtained for subsurface storage. It shall be the responsibility of every applicant for such permit to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Planning Board that subsurface storage can be accomplished in a manner which will not adversely affect the aquifer. Subsurface storage of such materials is permitted only with permission of the Planning Board and with such conditions specified to prevent the pollution of the aquifer. Permits issued by the Board of Selectmen shall be for a period of not more than fifteen (15) years, renewable upon application.
- 4.13.5.5** Use of pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, manure and other potentially dangerous leachables shall be controlled in a manner determined by the Board of Health and in compliance with RSA 149D, 149D:7, 222 and the NH Code of Administrative Rules. Storage of these materials shall not be outdoors.
- 4.13.5.6** When an industrial or commercial use changes on a site within this district to a use which involves the use, storage, or disposal of hazardous or toxic materials, a non-residential site review shall be required.
- 4.13.5.7** No more than 70% of a lot should be rendered impervious.
- 4.13.5.8** Storm water drainage from Aquifer sites shall be collected into catch or settling basins before leaving the site.

#### **4.13.6 Incorrectly Designated Zones**

When the actual boundary of the Aquifer Conservation District is disputed, the Planning Board, at the complainant's expense and authorization, may engage a professional geologist or hydro geologist to determine the precise location of the Aquifer Conservation District boundaries in the properties affected. A report of his/her findings shall be submitted to the Planning Board and shall include but not be limited to the following:

- 4.13.6.1** A revised soils map of the area in question prepared by a soils scientist qualified in hydrologic studies along with a written report of his/her on-site field inspection and test boring data.
- 4.13.6.2** The Planning Board shall adjust the boundary of this district based on the evidence provided as set forth above. It shall reserve the right to withhold action on any plat pending the results of an on-site inspection

by the Board or its appointed agent and shall act to approve or disapprove the plan within ninety (90) days of submission or such further time as deemed necessary, but not to exceed an additional ninety (90) days.

#### **4.13.7 Administration**

All existing industrial and commercial uses utilizing or storing hazardous or toxic materials which are located within the Aquifer Conservation District must be reviewed by the Planning Board within six (6) months of the enactment of this Ordinance and must be in compliance with the conditions of this ordinance by January 1, 1986.

#### **4.13.8 Non-Conforming Uses**

Non-conforming uses which exist at the time of adoption of this ordinance may continue unless that use is found by the Board of Selectmen in consultation with the Planning Board to be an imminent danger to the public health, safety, and welfare. In such cases, that use must be brought into conformance with this Ordinance in a timely fashion as determined by the Board of Selectmen or the Board of Health. 3-13-84

#### **Section 4.14** (Not yet used)

#### **Section 4.15 Historic District (HD)** (Adopted 3-11-86; re-drafted 3-13-01)

##### **4.15.1 Historic Preservation**

**4.15.1.1 Purpose:** The purpose of this ordinance is to promote the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public for the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and preservation of the Historic District. It is hereby declared that it is a public purpose that the heritage of Amherst will be safeguarded by:

**4.15.1.1.1** Preserving districts in Amherst which reflect elements of the cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history;

**4.15.1.1.2** Conserving property values in such districts;

**4.15.1.1.3** Fostering civic beauty;

**4.15.1.1.4** Strengthening the local economy;

**4.15.1.1.5** Promoting the use of an historic district for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of Amherst.

**4.15.1.2 Definitions.** (3-13-01) Unless specifically defined below, words or phrases in this ordinance shall be interpreted to give them the same meaning as they have in common usage and so as to give this ordinance its most reasonable application.

**4.15.1.2.1 Abutter:** Any person whose property is located in the Amherst Village Historic District and adjoins or is directly across the street or stream from the land under consideration by the Commission. For purposes of receiving testimony only and not for purposes of notification, the term abutter shall include any person who is able to demonstrate that his property will be directly effected by the proposal under consideration.

**4.15.1.2.2 Alteration:** Any act or process that changes one or more of the exterior architectural features of a structure, including, but not limited to, the erection, construction, reconstruction, or removal of any structure.

**4.15.1.2.3 Alternate Member:** A member of the Commission who, at the direction of the chairperson, serves in the absence or disqualification of a regular member of the Commission.

**4.15.1.2.4 Appearance:** The architectural character and general composition of the exterior of a structure, including, but not limited to, the kind, color, and texture of the building material and the type, design, and character of all windows, doors, light fixtures, signs, and appurtenant elements.

**4.15.1.2.5 Appurtenance:** Property that is situated on, but subordinate to, the structure or place, such as a hot tub, swimming pool, antennae, satellite dish, etc.

**4.15.1.2.6 Building:** Any structure that has a roof and is intended to shelter people, animals or chattel.

- 4.15.1.2.7 Building Permit (or Permit):** A certificate issued by the Zoning Administrator permitting the building, alteration, installation, repair, or change of buildings, fences (within the Historic District), land, or uses as regulated by the Zoning Ordinance. (3-11-03)
- 4.15.1.2.8 Certificate of Approval (or Certificate):** A certificate issued by the Historic District Commission indicating its approval of an application to alter, repair, construct, add onto, move, demolish, or change the use of a structure or a site within an Historic District.
- 4.15.1.2.9 Change of Use:** A change in how a structure or place is utilized or developed, whether for industrial, commercial, residential or agricultural purposes.
- 4.15.1.2.10 Character:** The aggregate of visible historic and architectural features and traits that together form the individual nature of an historic district.
- 4.15.1.2.11 Commission:** Commission shall mean the Historic District Commission of the Town of Amherst, New Hampshire.
- 4.15.1.2.12 Construction:** The act of adding an addition to an existing structure or the erection of a new principal accessory or structure on a lot or property.
- 4.15.1.2.13 Demolition:** Any act or process that destroys in part or in whole a landmark or structure.
- 4.15.1.2.14 Designation:** Act of identifying historic structures and districts subject to regulation in historic preservation ordinances or other preservation laws.
- 4.15.1.2.15 Design Guidelines (or Guidelines):** Standards of appropriate design and activity developed by the Commission which offers property owners guidance in preserving the historic and architectural character of a structure, setting, or place, and which standards shall include the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. (See Regulations.)
- 4.15.1.2.16 Ex Officio Member:** Any member of the Commission who holds office by virtue of an official position and who shall exercise all the powers of a regular member of the Commission.
- 4.15.1.2.17 Elevation:** The orthographic projection of an object or structure on a vertical picture plane parallel to one of its sides, and usually drawn to scale.
- 4.15.1.2.18 Historic District:** An area designated by ordinance of the Town of Amherst and which contains within definable geographic boundaries a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.
- 4.15.1.2.19 Historic Property (or Historic Resource):** Any prehistoric or historic site, place, building, structure, or object that is deemed by the Commission to have historic, cultural, social, economic, political, or architectural significance.
- 4.15.1.2.20 Maintenance:** Ordinary maintenance and repair of any architectural feature that does not involve removal or a change in design, dimensions, materials or outer appearance of such feature.
- 4.15.1.2.21 Moving:** Any relocation or removal of a structure on its site or to another site.
- 4.15.1.2.22 National Register of Historic Places (or National Register):** Official inventory of "districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture."
- 4.15.1.2.23 Orthographic Projection:** A method of projection in which a three-dimensional object is represented by projecting lines perpendicular to a picture plane.
- 4.15.1.2.24 Place:** An open space of land within the historic district.
- 4.15.1.2.25 Preservation:** The act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic structure, place, or feature.
- 4.15.1.2.26 Reconstruction:** The act or process of reproducing by new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purposes of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.
- 4.15.1.2.27 Regular Member:** A member of the Commission who has full voting power.
- 4.15.1.2.28 Regulations:** Local design guidelines and standards of review promulgated by the Commission that interpret and implement statutory requirements and are in conformance with the Historic District Zoning Overlay.

**4.15.1.2.29 Rehabilitation:** The process of returning property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.

**4.15.1.2.30 Repair:** Any change that is not construction, addition, demolition, moving, or alteration.

**4.15.1.2.31 Restoration:** The act or process of accurately recovering the form, features, and character of a property and its setting as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.

**4.15.1.2.32 Rules of Procedure:** A set of rules adopted by the Commission pursuant to RSA 676 concerning the method of conducting the Commission's business.

**4.15.1.2.33 Scale:** A certain proportionate size, extent, or degree, usually judged in relation to some standard or point of reference.

**4.15.1.2.34 Street:** Relates to and includes street, avenue, boulevard, road, lane, alley, viaduct, highway, freeway and other ways.

**4.15.1.2.35 Structure:** Anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires permanent or temporary location on or in the ground, including, but not limited to: buildings, fences, stone walls, gazebos, signs, backstops for tennis courts and ballparks, antennae, above ground pools and hot tubs, air conditioning units, propane tanks, playground equipment, etc.

**4.15.1.2.36 Texture:** The visual and tactile quality of a surface, apart from its color or form.

**4.15.1.2.37 Zoning Ordinance:** The laws of the Town of Amherst regulating the building, alteration, installation, repair, or change of buildings, land, or uses within the borders of the entire Town.

#### **4.15.2 Historic District**

**4.15.2.1 Amherst Village Historic District:** Pursuant to RSA Chapter 674:46, there is hereby established an historic district known as the Amherst Village Historic District, the boundaries of which are delineated on the Zoning Map on file with the Zoning Administrator.

**4.15.2.2 Historic Significance:** The Amherst Village Historic District is hereby recognized as an area of unique character, and architectural nature which can contribute significantly to the attractiveness and vitality of Amherst. It is further recognized that the character and nature of the area depends on the unity of design of the complex in which each building contributes creating a value greater than the sum of the individual contributions. The character and value of the area as the county seat and center of government of Hillsborough County from 1771 to 1879, the continuity of rich architectural expression, quality and integrity in closely related styles, materials, scale and detail in individual buildings and throughout the area and the opportunities that the area offers to maintain its historical heritage. The opportunities that the area offers are recognized as including retention of the architectural and historic values of the area. This ordinance is intended to provide for regulations of activities that would alter the exterior appearance of existing and proposed structures and for activities that would alter the use and appearance of the exterior spaces adjoining these buildings.

**4.15.2.3 Criteria for designation of local historic districts:** Criteria for the designation of local historic districts shall be the same as the National Register criteria as set forth in 36 CFR 60 ["Code of Federal Regulations," Chapter 36, Part 60 published in the *Federal Register*]. 3-13-01

**4.15.2.4 Procedures for designation of local historic districts:** An historic district shall be considered to be superimposed over the existing zoning districts and the rules and regulations applicable to an historic district shall be in addition to those applicable to the zoning districts which have been established for the area and as they may from time to time be amended. Procedures for the designation of local historic districts shall be in conformance with RSA 674:46 and other applicable statutory requirements.

#### **4.15.3 Historic District Commission**

In order to carry out the purpose of this ordinance, a Historic District Commission known as the Amherst Historic District Commission is hereby established pursuant to RSA Chapter 673 which Historic District

Commission is the successor to, and a continuation of the Historic District Commission established at the Annual Meeting in March 1970.

**4.15.3.1 Membership.**

**4.15.3.1.1** The Commission shall consist of not fewer than five nor more than seven regular members, one of whom shall be an *ex officio* member of the Board of Selectmen and one of whom may be an *ex officio* member of the Planning Board. Not more than five alternate members may be appointed. *Ex officio* members from the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen shall be appointed by their respective boards. All other regular and alternate members shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen. 3-13-01

**4.15.3.1.2** The qualifications and terms of Commission members, the organization, election and terms of its officers, and the scheduling of meetings shall be in accordance with the provisions of RSA Chapter 673 and any rules of procedure of the Commission not inconsistent with the State enabling statutes. At a minimum, in determining each member's qualifications, the Board of Selectmen shall take into consideration the appointee's demonstrated interest and ability to understand, appreciate and promote the purposes of the Commission. 3-13-01

**4.15.3.2 Powers and Duties.**

**4.15.3.2.1** The Commission shall have all the powers and duties vested in the Historic District Commissions under RSA Chapter 674 and 675.

**4.15.3.2.2** The Commission shall adopt rules of procedure (to prescribe the method of conducting its business) and regulations (to provide design guidelines and standards of review) consistent with this ordinance and RSA Chapters 673, 674 and 676.

**4.15.3.2.3** The Commission shall seek advice from such professional, educational, cultural, and other groups of persons that may be deemed necessary in the determination of a reasonable decision. The Commission shall have the power to engage such technical assistance and consultants as may be deemed necessary to carry out the purposes of this ordinance.

**4.15.3.2.4** The Commission shall have the power to accept and use gifts, grants and contributions in the exercise of its function.

**4.15.3.2.5** The Commission may conduct surveys of the buildings for the purposes of determining those of historic and/or architectural significance and pertinent facts about them, formulate recommendations concerning the preparation of maps, brochures and historic markers for selected historic and/or architectural sites and buildings, cooperate with and advise the governing body, the Planning Board and other municipal agencies involving historic and/or architectural sites and buildings; advise owners of the buildings of the problems of preservation and restoration.

**4.15.4 Certificate of Approval required**

**4.15.4.1 Certificates of Approval.**

Except as provided herein, it shall be unlawful for any owner or person (including without limitation any municipal or governmental entity) to alter, construct, repair, move, demolish, or change the use of any structure or place located within the Historic District without applying for and receiving from the Commission a Certificate of Approval for such activity. Activities which require Certificates of Approval are intended to include, but not limited to, such activities as changing the architectural detail of exterior walls, replacement or modification of windows, ~~or~~ doors or siding, installation or removal of porches or fire escapes, roofing or chimney modification and installation of antennae or other appurtenances on or near the building exterior or similar activities for which a building or zoning permit are also intended to include, but not be limited to, such activities with regard to the balance of the site as regrading, paving, repaving, removal of mature trees, installation or removal of fences, retaining walls, signage, on-site lighting, commercial style trash receptacles, telecommunication towers, and similar activities but are not intended to include or prevent ordinary maintenance, repair or grounds keeping activities.

**4.15.4.2 Certificate of Approval Application Procedure.**

For purposes of Administration, the Certificate of Approval application procedure involving a structure or place in an Historic District may be combined with building permits which may be required under the Zoning Ordinance

and/or Building Code. Materials required as part of a Certificate of Approval application include materials necessary for such building permits as may be required under the Zoning Ordinance and/or Building Code, plus such renderings, elevations, photographs or other materials as the Historic District Commission may specify to the Zoning Administrator as being necessary for their review and consideration.

**4.15.4.3 Review by Historic District Commission**

Prior to the issuance of a building permit for any exterior work or changes of use with respect to any property situated in an Historic District, the owner shall submit a Certificate of Approval application to the Historic District Commission for consideration. The Zoning Administrator may issue the building permit only following approval of that application by the Historic District Commission or as provided in RSA Chapter 676:8 and 676:9. In any case in which the Zoning Administrator is unclear as to the applicability of this ordinance to a particular case, he or she may consult with the Commission for an interpretation of the requirements of the Commission. Although the provisions of this section are not intended to impede the Zoning Administrator in ordering the correction of unsafe conditions of an emergency nature, he or she shall make every effort to coordinate his or her actions with the interests of the Commission by advising it of any such orders or actions and by involving the Commission in the review of building permits for corrective measures to the extent feasible and practical.

**4.15.4.4 Personal Wireless Service Facilities.**

Applications to erect personal wireless service facilities in an historic district shall be reviewed by the Commission pursuant to its own design guidelines and standards of review as well as to Article III, Section 3-16, Paragraph 7.5 of the Zoning Ordinance ("Personal Wireless Service Facilities: Historic Buildings and Districts"). 3-13-01

**4.15.5 Interpretation**

Nothing in this ordinance shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or repair of any structure or place within any Historic District nor to prevent the construction, alteration, repair, moving or demolition of any structure under a building permit issued by the Zoning Administrator, or any duly delegated authority, prior to the establishment of such district.

**4.15.6 Matters to be considered in Passing Upon Appropriateness of Erection, Reconstruction or Restoration of Structures**

The Historic District Commission or Board of Adjustment, on appeal, shall only consider exterior arrangement or features. The Historic District Commission or Board of Adjustment, on appeal, shall consider the following criteria in passing upon an application for a Certificate of Approval. For purposes of this section, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* are incorporated herein. 3-13-01

**4.15.6.1** The special character of the area.

**4.15.6.2** The historical and/or architectural value of the building/s, structure/s and its setting, and also as it relates to its setting and to the welfare of the community.

**4.15.6.3** The compatibility of exterior design, arrangement, texture and materials proposed to be used in relationship to the existing building or structure and its setting or if new construction, to the surrounding area.

**4.15.6.4** The general size and scale of new construction in relation to the existing surroundings including consideration of such factors as the building's overall height, width, street front, number of stories, type of roofs, facade, openings (windows and doors), and architectural details.

**4.15.6.5** The economic activity of the building and the needs of that activity as it relates to the welfare of the community.

**4.15.6.6 EXCEPTIONS:** The Zoning Administrator is not required to forward the following applications to the Historic District Commission for their review, provided the proposed project complies with the stipulations specified:

**4.15.6.6.1** Ordinary maintenance and repair of any exterior architectural feature which does not involve a change in design, material, or outer appearance thereof; including but not limited to maintenance and repair of firewalls, roofs, chimneys and temporary removal of shutters.

**4.15.6.6.2** Storm doors and storm windows providing that the original architectural features are not removed or destroyed.

**4.15.6.6.3** Painting or repainting of a building/s or structure/s in any color.

#### **4.15.7** Enforcement

This ordinance shall be enforced in accordance with the provisions of Article VI of the Zoning Ordinance, and violators shall be subject to the penalty provisions contained therein.

#### **4.15.8** Remedies

In the case of any violation of this ordinance, or regulations adopted hereunder, the Commission, in addition to other remedies may institute any appropriate action or proceedings to prevent, restrain, correct or abate such violation.

#### **4.15.9** Appeal

Any person aggrieved by a decision of the Historic District Commission shall have the right to appeal concerning such decision to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Upon appeal, the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall review the decision of the Historic District Commission to determine whether the decision conforms to the provisions under this ordinance and the rules of procedure and regulations adopted hereunder. 3-13-01

#### **4.15.10** Validity

If any section, subsection, phrase, sentence or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate distinct and independent provision and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

**4.15.11** Effective date: This ordinance shall take effect upon adoption. 3-11-86

### **Section 4.16 Open Space Plan**

#### ALLOWED BY CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (3.6.04)

**4.16.1** PURPOSE: To provide for an alternative single-family development plan that would provide areas of open space, reduce the amount of road maintained by the Town, allow a predictable rate of development, and keep the integrity of existing zone densities intact.

**4.16.2** DENSITY: The basic number of lots allowed per parcel:

**4.16.2.1** Option A: The basic number of lots is the same as would be obtainable for a conventional subdivision of the same parcel using the existing Town Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and having public roads. The applicant shall provide the Planning Board with a Preliminary Plan of the parcel to establish the basic number of lots.

**4.16.2.2** Option B: The basic number of lots is the same as would be obtainable for a conventional subdivision of the same parcel using the existing Town Zoning and Subdivision Regulations and having private roads. The land area used for the private roads may be divided by the minimum lot area and the resulting number is to be added to the basic number of lots. The applicant shall provide the Planning Board with a Preliminary Plan of the parcel including the area of land used for private roads to establish the basic number of lots.

**4.16.3** Minimum Parcel Area: 10 acres in the Residential/Rural Zones. 25 acres in the Northern Rural and Northern Transitional Zones Minimum Lot Area:

**4.16.4** Minimum Lot Area: 40,000 square feet in the Residential / Rural, Northern Rural, and Northern Transitional Zones. In the Northern Rural and Northern Transitional Zones, the average minimum lot area shall be 80,000 square feet, with a maximum lot area of five acres allowed for the purpose of calculating the average minimum lot area.

**4.16.5** Minimum Lot Frontage and Width: 100 feet at the edge of the road right-of-way with a width of 150 feet at the front structure setback line in the Residential and Rural Zones. 150 feet at the edge of the road right-of-way with a width of 200 feet at the front structure setback line in the Northern Rural and Northern Transitional Zones. No Class A or Class B reduced frontage lots shall be allowed in an Open Space Plan.

**4.16.6** Front Structure Setback: 100 feet from existing Town roads and 75 feet from proposed roads in the Residential and Rural Zones, 300 feet from existing Town roads and 75 feet from proposed roads in the Northern Rural and Northern Transitional Zones.

**4.16.7** Side and Rear Structure Setback: 30 feet in the Residential and Rural Zones. 40 feet in the Northern Rural and Northern Transitional Zones.

**4.16.8** Cul-de-sac Turnaround Lot Frontage: 75 feet at the edge of the road right-of-way.

**4.16.9** Slopes and Wetlands: No wetlands, no flood plain as defined in Art. IV, Sec. 4-10, or slopes over 20% will be used to compute the minimum lot area. No dwelling will be constructed on slopes over 15%. (3.6.04)

**4.16.10** Number of Lots Per Minor Dead End Cul-de-sac: Twelve (12)

**4.16.11** Open Space: The open space shall be of a shape and size to be of value as land suitable for outdoor non-commercial recreation and conservation. No open space will be disturbed or developed except with the approval of the Planning Board. The minimum area shall be the basic number of lots times 0.75 in the Residential and Rural Zones and time 2.0 in the Northern Rural and Northern Transitional Zones. Open space shall be permanently restricted from further subdivision as building lots. 3-13-90

**4.16.12** Phasing: The Open Space Plan shall have a reasonable phasing plan based on the Town of Amherst Master Plan and Capital Improvements Plan and be defined in a maximum number of dwellings constructed (Building Permits) each twelve (12) month period commencing with the date of the first permit.

**4.16.13** Minor Dead End Cul-de-sac. A road that does not carry traffic from other roads.

**4.16.14** Major Dead End Cul-de-sac. A road that may carry traffic from other roads to existing Town roads.

## **Section 4.17 Planned Residential Development ( PRD) 11-2-82**

### **ALLOWED BY CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (3.6.04)**

**4.17.1** PURPOSE: Planned Residential Development allows an alternative pattern of land development to the pattern permitted in the Residential/Rural, Northern Rural, Northern Transitional and Commercial Zones. It is intended to encourage the preservation of open space and, at the same time, provide for a greater variety of housing types and affordability in the Town of Amherst at somewhat greater densities than permitted elsewhere in the Zoning Ordinance, without causing a significant increase in the town-wide population density. It is envisioned that in a PRD, dwelling units will be constructed in clusters which are harmonious with neighborhood developments and housing, and with natural surroundings. These clusters shall detract neither from the ecological and visual qualities of the environment, nor from the value of the neighborhood, environment, or the Town. The PRD should contain a variety of housing types to accommodate the Master

Plan purposes of encouraging a diversity of people, a variety of age groups of different interests, backgrounds, and economic levels. The overall site design and amenities should enhance the quality of living for the residents of the development and, in general, the neighborhood and the Town. The Board shall determine whether the proposed PRD, namely the site plan or layout, and number, type, and design of the proposed housing is suitable to the neighborhood within which it is to be located and is consistent with the Master Plan and its reasonable growth objectives. 3-14-89

**4.17.2 CONDITIONS:** An applicant for approval of a proposed PRD shall make application to the Planning Board in the same fashion as specified in the Subdivision Regulations. In the course of review of the proposal by the Planning Board, the Board shall hear evidence presented by the applicant and determine whether, in its judgment, the proposal meets the objectives and purpose set forth above, in which event the Board may grant approval to the proposal subject to such reasonable conditions and limitations as it shall deem appropriate.

**4.17.3 MINIMUM LOT AREA:** Planned Residential Developments may be permitted on single or adjacent tracts -of land, under one ownership, or to be brought under one ownership, which have a net tract area of no less than twenty (20) buildable, non-wetland acres in the Residential/Rural, and Commercial Zones, and thirty (30) buildable, non-wetland acres in the Northern Rural Zone, and twenty-five (25) buildable, non-wetland acres in the Northern Transitional Zone. Net tract area shall mean the total area of the tract or tracts less the area in the Wetlands Conservation District, Flood plain Conservation District, areas of slope equal to or greater than 20%, and soils with severe limitations as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture Soils Survey Interpretation Sheets of 1973, 1975 or 1976. On-site determination of soil types may be conducted at the request of the Board by an agent of the Hillsborough County Soil Conservation Service or a qualified soils scientist approved by the Town of Amherst. Only soils with slight or moderate limitations shall be included in the net tract area. PRDs may be built only on the net tract area. 3-14-89 (3-12-02) (3.6.04)

**4.17.4 DENSITIES:** In a Planned Residential Development, density shall be determined by the following methods. In the Residential/Rural, and Commercial Zones, divide the net tract area by two (2) and multiply the result by four (4) if soils are of slight limitation, or three (3) if more than 50% of the net tract area is of moderate limitation. 3-10-87

**4.17.4.1** In the Northern Rural Zone, divide the net tract area by 3.75 if more than 50% of the net tract area is classified as slight (multiply by four); or by 4.25 if more than 50% of the net tract area is classified as moderate (multiply by three). 3-10-87

**4.17.4.2** In the Northern Transitional Zone, divide the net tract area by 2.88 if more than 50% of the net tract area soil is classified as slight (multiply by 4); or by 3.13 if more than 50% of the net tract area soil is classified as moderate (multiply by 3). 3-14-89

The result of these calculations shall be a number of bedrooms permitted in the entire development. "If bonuses, as explained below, are granted, the total number of bedrooms shall not exceed one and one-half the number of bedrooms calculated above. The number of bedrooms permitted in any PRD shall be determined by the Board to assure compliance with the purpose of PRD and shall not exceed the limit determined above. 3-10-87

For the purpose of this Ordinance, a bedroom may mean any room other than a kitchen, bathroom, living, or small utility room. In the review of the floor plan or plans, the Board, when appropriate, may deem floor space shown on said plans to constitute the number of bedrooms which could be reasonably built in that space, as opposed to the number of bedrooms shown. The Board may designate a room not to be a bedroom if it is clear that its use as a bedroom is unlikely in view of the layout of the unit or overall character of the PRD. The number of said bedrooms that shall be permitted in any one of the units proposed shall be fixed by the Board before the approval of the Final Review. The Board shall also approve the external architectural design of the PRD to ensure its compliance with the goals of this Ordinance as stated in the section on PURPOSE. The number of bedrooms permitted in the PRD shall be noted on the Final Plat. 3-13-84

All of the above notwithstanding, the total number of dwelling units within the PRD shall not exceed the total number of acres calculated as the net tract area. 3-10-87

**4.17.5 PERMITTED USES:**

**4.17.5.1** There may permitted in any PRD, single family detached and single family attached, and multi-unit structures of any type without regard to dwelling unit configuration or form of ownership. It is envisioned that the housing types, while having different internal configurations, will have an external appearance that complements and is in general harmony with the natural surroundings of the PRD. Up to 10% of the dwelling units may be mobile homes. The maximum height of any dwelling structure shall be thirty-five (35) feet, exclusive of chimneys or cupolas, measured from the lowest adjacent exterior elevation. For the purposes of this Ordinance, the following definitions shall apply:

**4.17.5.2** Single Family Detached Dwelling Unit - any building designed for and occupied by not more than one family and which is not attached to any other dwelling unit by any means.

**4.17.5.3** Single Family Attached Dwelling Unit - a single family dwelling attached to one other single family dwelling by a common vertical wall.

**4.17.5.4** Multi-unit Structure - a building which contains from three (3) to six (6) dwelling units.

The Board shall determine the mix of housing types, number of dwelling units and structures, and the number of bedrooms for each dwelling unit. These shall be determined at the Final Review and be noted on the Final Plat.

**4.17.6 OPEN SPACE:**

All land in the PRD which is not covered by buildings, septic systems, wells, paved areas, service areas, or which is not set aside as private yards, patios, or gardens for the residents shall be treated as open space. The area of the open space shall be at least 40% of the total area of the PRD tract. Such land shall have a shape dimension, character, and location suitable to assure its use for park, recreation, conservation, or agricultural purposes by at least all the residents of the PRD.

Provisions shall be made for the open space to be held in common, equally, by all the owners of the PRD. Such provision shall further hold that all the open space shall be readily accessible to all the residents of the PRD and that such open space shall be retained in perpetuity for one or more of the following uses: conservation, agriculture, recreation, or park. No building or construction whether it be structures or septic systems shall take place in the open space. Harvesting of trees in the open space is permitted if it is done according to good forestry practice and with the expressed permission of the Planning Board. 3-13-84

**4.17.7 BONUSES: 3-10-98**

The Board shall review the proposed PRD and consider the extent to which it meets or addresses the objectives set forth in this ordinance and may, in its judgment, grant density bonuses not to exceed those indicated below.

<b>4.17.7.1</b> <u>Item</u>	<u>Maximum % Increase in Density</u>
<b>4.17.7.2</b> Recreation Facilities	5%
<b>4.17.7.3</b> Phasing	5 Years - 10%, 10 Years - 20%
<b>4.17.7.4</b> Conservation	5% for each 5% of net tract area placed in conservation easement and/or set aside for trails to integrate with Town trail system
<b>4.17.7.5</b> Low and Moderate Cost Housing	30% if between 20% and 40% of the total number of bedrooms which are Low to Moderate cost housing

**4.17.7.6 Bedroom Count** 40% if the units are of one or two bedrooms (3.13.01)

**4.17.8 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN:**

As a condition of final approval, the applicant must obtain the Board's approval of the external architectural design of the PRD to ensure that it complies with the goals of harmonious existence with the neighborhood and the environment as stated in the paragraph on PURPOSE at the beginning of this Ordinance. The approval of the architectural design shall be a part of the Final Review approval.

**4.17.9 LIMITATION OF SUBDIVISION:**

No lot shown on a plan for which a permit is granted under this Ordinance may be further subdivided and a note to this effect shall be placed on the Final Plan.

**4.17.10 OTHER PROVISIONS:**

If lots are to be created within the PRD, then such individual lots shall be a minimum of 3/4 acres if on-site well and septic system are to be provided, or 1/2 acre if water is to be provided by off-site water supply system. Each PRD shall be subject to the Subdivision Regulations. Where there are differences between the PRD requirements and the Subdivision Regulations, the requirements of the PRD shall prevail. All other regulations and restrictions not specifically mentioned in this Ordinance shall be those of the Zone in which the PRD is located. At a minimum there shall be a fifty (50) foot setback from the property line around the perimeter of the property. (11-2-82) 3-13-90 3-10-98 (3.8.05)

**ARTICLE V**

**SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS**

**Section 5.1 General**

Special exceptions as herein provided for shall be deemed to be permitted uses in their respective zones, subject to the satisfaction of the requirements and standards set forth herein, in addition to all other requirements and standards of this Ordinance. All such cases are hereby declared to possess characteristics of such unique and special form that each specific use shall be considered as an individual case. 3-12-63

**Section 5.2 Standards Applicable to All Special Exceptions**

**5.2.1 Conditions for Special Exceptions**

Before the Board of Adjustment considers the approval of an application for a special exception, the applicant shall prove to the satisfaction of the Board of Adjustment that all the following conditions have been met:

**5.2.1.1** That the property in question is in conformance with the dimensional requirements of the zone; and that the minimum lot area shall contain no wetland as defined in Art. IV, Sec. 4.11; no flood plain as defined in Art. IV, Sec. 4.10; and no slopes greater than 20%; and that the use is compatible with the Amherst Master Plan. (3.13.07)

**5.2.1.2** That there is safe vehicular and pedestrian access to and from the site.

**5.2.1.3** That there will be no significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposed use upon the public health, safety and general welfare of the neighborhood and of the Town of Amherst.

**5.2.1.4** That the proposed use will not be more objectionable to nearby properties by reason of noise, fumes, vibration, or inappropriate lighting than the existing use of the property.

**5.2.1.5** That the applicant describe in writing and on a scaled drawing, the location and size of the use, the nature and intensity of operations involved, the tract size, parking areas and other physical land features of the site in question.

**5.2.1.6** That the proposed use will not adversely affect the ground water resources of Amherst, in particular the Aquifer Conservation District as defined in Section 4-13 of the Amherst Zoning Ordinance. Response to each of the above conditions shall be provided in writing on forms available in the Amherst Zoning/Planning Office.

The Board of Adjustment may seek additional recommendations of the Amherst Planning Board. The applicant shall file a Non-Residential Site Plan Review application in accordance with Section "C" of the Amherst Zoning Ordinance with the Amherst Planning Board. 3-10-92

### **5.2.2 Conditions of Approval**

The Board of Adjustment may attach such conditions to its approval as are reasonable, necessary and appropriate. All special exceptions users are hereby declared to have special characteristics that shall be considered on a case- by-case basis. To ensure compliance with the spirit of the Zoning Ordinance, such conditions shall not conflict with the review and approval of the Planning Board. 3-10-92

### **5.2.3 Limits on a Special Exception**

Substantial construction, or occupancy if no construction is involved, must commence within one (1) year of the Board of Adjustment approval of the special exception. If construction or occupancy is not commenced within this period, the special exception approval is declared null and void. 3-10-92

### **Section 5.3 Permits for Special Exceptions**

A permit for a special exception use shall not be issued by the Board of Selectmen or their duly appointed representative, the Administrative Official, until so directed by the Board of Adjustment who shall first be satisfied that all of the standards and conditions of this article and the Ordinance have been met. 3-12-63

### **Section 5.4 Uses permitted by Special Exception Residential/Rural** 3-11-93

**5.4.1** Religious purposes 3-1

**5.4.2** Nursing Homes 3-12-63

**5.4.3** Elderly Housing: Single or Multi unit residential developments which comply with the Federal Definition of Elderly Housing subject to the following: (3-14-89) (3-12-91) (3-11-03)

**5.4.3.1** Each structure may be a single dwelling unit or a cluster of units containing from two (2) to twelve (12) dwelling units. 3-14-76 (3-11-03)

**5.4.3.2** Tract density shall be a minimum of one-half acre for each dwelling unit, and the entire tract of land on which a development is situated shall contain not less than fifteen (15) acres. 3-4-7

**5.4.3.3** If off-site drinking water is available and on-site soils are classified by the NHDES as Group I or II then the tract density in units shall be limited to a maximum of six (6) bedrooms per acre and the minimum tract size shall be reduced to seven and one-half (7.5) acres. (3-13-01) (3-11-03)

**5.4.3.4** Ancillary facilities such as community meeting rooms, site management offices, and rooms for limited healthcare services are allowed. (3-13-01) (3-11-03)

**5.4.3.5** No structure shall be constructed to a height greater than thirty-five (35) feet, exclusive of chimneys or cupolas, measured from the lowest adjacent exterior elevation. (3-4-75) 3-11-86 (3-11-03)

**5.4.4** Accessory Apartment- A second dwelling unit incorporated within a existing or proposed single family home which is structurally integrated with direct access between it and the main living unit. The total area of the accessory apartment shall not exceed 800 square feet and shall consist of only one bedroom. Any changes to the total number of bedrooms per lot will require a new state approved septic plan to be placed on file with the Zoning Office prior to the issuance of a conversion/building permit. 3-9-82 (3-10-98) 3-11-03

### **Section 5.5** (Not yet used)

## **Section 5.6 Uses permitted by Special Exception Commercial Zone**

- 5.6.1** Outside recreation establishments exclusive of outdoor theaters. 3-2-76
- 5.6.2** Outside storage of equipment and materials, but not including junk yards. 3-2-76
- 5.6.3** Religious Uses 3-2-76
- 5.6.4** Private Schools 3-2-76
- 5.6.5** Hospitals, nursing homes and other similar uses 3-2-76
- 5.6.6** Accessory Apartment- A second dwelling unit incorporated within a existing or proposed single family home which is structurally integrated with direct access between it and the main living unit. The total area of the accessory apartment shall not exceed 800 square feet and shall consist of only one bedroom. Any changes to the total number of bedrooms per lot will require a new state approved septic plan to be placed on file with the Zoning Office prior to the issuance of a conversion/building permit. 3-9-82 (3-10-98) (3-11-03)
- 5.6.7** Kennels 11-2-82

## **Section 5.7 Uses Permitted by Special Exception Northern Rural Zone**

- 5.7.1** Religious purposes 3-2-76
- 5.7.2** Private schools 3-2-76
- 5.7.3** Hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, and other similar uses 3-2-76
- 5.7.4** Professional Offices 3-2-76
- 5.7.5** Funeral Homes 3-2-76
- 5.7.6** Sawmills (3-2-76) 3-9-82
- 5.7.7** Accessory Apartment- A second dwelling unit incorporated within a existing or proposed single family home which is structurally integrated with direct access between it and the main living unit. The total area of the accessory apartment shall not exceed 800 square feet and shall consist of only one bedroom. Any changes to the total number of bedrooms per lot will require a new state approved septic plan to be placed on file with the Zoning Office prior to the issuance of a conversion/building permit. 3-9-82 (3-10-98) (3-11-03)
- 5.7.8** Kennels 11-2-82

## **Section 5.8 Uses Permitted by Special Exception Industrial Zone**

- 5.8.1** Kennels. 11-2-82
- 5.8.2** Sexual Oriented Businesses (3-14-00)
- 5.8.2.1** Purpose and Intent

It is the purpose of this article to establish reasonable and uniform regulations to prevent the concentration of sexually oriented businesses within the Town of Amherst and, it is the intent to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the Citizens of the Town of Amherst and, it is the intent of this article that the regulations be utilized to prevent problems of blight and deterioration which accompany and are brought about by the concentration of sexually orientated businesses; and, the provisions of this Article have neither the purpose nor the effect of imposing limitation or restriction on the content of any communicative materials, including sexually oriented materials; and, it is not the intent nor affect of this Article to restrict or deny access by adults to sexually oriented materials protected by the First Amendment, or to deny access by the distributors and exhibitors of sexually oriented entertainment to their intended market; and, neither is it the intent nor effect of this Article to condone or legitimize the distribution of obscene material. The nature of the proposed use shall not be sufficient grounds to support a finding that the use does not meet the criteria set forth in Section 5-2.

### **5.8.2.2** Definitions of Sexually Oriented Businesses

A sexually orientated business is any place of business at which any of the following activities is conducted:

**5.8.2.2.1** Adult Bookstore or Adult Video Store — a commercial establishment that devotes more than 15% of the total display, shelf, rack, wall, table, stand or floor area, utilized for the display and sale of the following; The establishment, as one of its principal business purposes, offers for sale or rental any form of consideration, any one or more of the following:

**5.8.2.2.1.1** Books, magazines, periodicals, or other printed matter, or photographs, films, motion pictures, video cassettes, video reproductions, slides, tapes, records, CD-ROMs or other forms of visual or audio

representations which depict or describe “specified sexual activities” or “specified anatomical areas” or meet the definition of “harmful to minors” and/or “sexual conduct” as set forth in RSA 571-B:1; or,

**5.8.2.2.1.2** Instruments, devices or paraphernalia which are designed for use in connection with “sexual conduct” as defined in RSA 571-6:1, other than birth control devices. A commercial establishment may have other principal business purposes that do not involve the offerings for sale or rental of material depicting or describing “specified sexual conduct or activities” and still be categorized as “Adult Video/Book Store.” Such other business purposes will not serve to exempt such commercial establishments from being categorized as an “Adult Video/Book Store” so long as one of its principal business purposes is offering for sale or rental for consideration to specified material which depict or describe “specified sexual conduct or activities” or specified anatomical areas.”

**5.8.2.2.1.2.1** Specified sexual conduct or activities — means the male genitals in a state of sexual arousal and/or vulva or more intimate parts of the female genitals.

**5.8.2.2.1.2.2** Specified anatomical areas — means and includes any of the following:

**5.8.2.2.1.2.2.1** The fondling or other erotic touching of the human genitals, pubic region, buttocks, anus, or female breasts;

**5.8.2.2.1.2.2.2** Sex acts, normal or perverted, actual or simulated, including intercourse, or copulation, or sodomy;

**5.8.2.2.1.2.2.3** Masturbation, actual or simulated; or

**5.8.2.2.1.2.2.4** Excretory function as part of or in connection with any of the activities set forth in (1) through (3) above.

AN ADULT BOOKSTORE OR ADULT VIDEO STORE DOES NOT INCLUDE AN ESTABLISHMENT THAT SELLS BOOKS OR PERIODICALS AS AN INCIDENTAL OR ACCESSORY PART OF ITS PRINCIPAL STOCK AND TRADE AND DOES NOT DEVOTE MORE THAN 15% OF THE TOTAL DISPLAY AREA OF THE ESTABLISHMENT TO THE SALE OF BOOKS AND PERIODICALS.

**5.8.2.2.2** Adult Motion Picture Theatre — An establishment with a capacity of five or more persons, where for any form of consideration, films, motion pictures, video cassettes, slides or similar photographic reproductions are shown, and in which a substantial portion of the total presentation time is devoted to the showing of material which meets the definition of “harmful to minors” and/or “sexual conduct” as set forth in RSA 571-B: 1, for observation by patrons. For subsections C, D, E, F, G, a “substantial portion of the total presentation time shall mean the presentation of films or shows described above for viewing on more than seven (7) days within any 56 consecutive day period.

**5.8.2.2.3** Adult Motion Picture Arcade — Any place to which the Public is permitted or invited wherein coin or slug-operated or electronically, electrically or mechanically controlled still or motion picture machines, projectors, or other image-producing devices are maintained to show images to five (5) or fewer persons per machine at any one time, in which a substantial portion of the total presentation time of the images so displayed is devoted to the showing of material which meets the definition of “harmful to minors” and/or “sexual conduct,” as set forth in RSA 571-6:1.

**5.8.2.2.4** Adult Drive-In Theatre — An open lot or part thereof, with appurtenant facilities, devoted primarily to the presentation of motion pictures, films, theatrical productions and other forms of visual productions, for any form of consideration to persons in motor vehicles or on outdoor seats, in which a substantial portion of the total presentation time being presented for observation by patrons is devoted to the showing of material which meets the definition of “harmful to minors” and/or “sexual conduct” as set forth in RSA 571-B:1.

**5.8.2.2.5** Adult Cabaret — A nightclub, bar, restaurant, or similar establishment which during a substantial portion of the total presentation time features live performances which meet the definition of “harmful to minors” and/or “sexual conduct” as set forth in RSA 571-B: 1, and /or feature films, motion pictures, video cassettes, slides or other photographic reproductions, a substantial portion of the total presentation time of which is

devoted to showing of material which meets the definition of “harmful to minors” and/or” sexual conduct” as set forth in RSA 571-B:1.

**5.8.2.2.6 Adult Motel** — A motel or similar establishment offering public accommodations of any form of consideration which provides patrons with closed circuit television transmissions, films, motion pictures, video cassettes, slides or other photographic reproductions, a substantial portion of the total presentation time of which are distinguished or characterized by an emphasis upon the depiction or description of materials which meet the definition of “harmful to minors” and/or “sexual conduct” as set forth in RSA 571-B:1.

**5.8.2.2.7 Adult Theatre** — A theatre, concert hall, auditorium or similar establishment either indoor or outdoor in nature, which for any form of consideration, regularly features live performances, a substantial portion of the total presentation time of which are distinguished or characterized by an emphasis on activities which meet the definition of “harmful to minors” and/or “sexual conduct” as set forth in RSA 571-B: 1.

**5.8.2.2.9 Nude Model Studio** — A place where a person who appears in a state of nudity or displays male genitals in a state of sexual arousal and/or the vulva or more intimate parts of the female genitals and is observed sketched, drawn, painted, sculptured, photographed, or similarly depicted by other persons who pay money or any form of consideration or such display is characterized by an emphasis on activities which meets the definition of “harmful to minors” and/or “sexual conduct,” as set forth in RSA 571 -B:1.

**5.8.2.2.10 Sexual Encounter Center** — A business or commercial enterprise that as one of its primary business purposes, offers for any form of consideration:

**5.8.2.2.10.1** physical contact in the form of wrestling or tumbling between persons of the opposite sex; or

**5.8.2.2.10.2** activities between male and female persons and/or persons of the same sex when

one or more persons is in the state of nudity; or where the activities in 5.8.2.2.10.1 or 5.8.2.2.10.2 is characterized by an emphasis on activities which meets the definition of “harmful to minors” and/or “sexual conduct,” as set forth in RSA 571-B:1.

### **5.8.2.3 Allowed Locations and Location Restrictions of Sexually Oriented Businesses**

Sexually oriented businesses, as defined above, shall be permitted only in the Industrial Zone, by Special Exception, provided that all other regulations, requirements, and restrictions for the zone in which the sexually oriented Business is to be located are met; and no sexually oriented business shall be permitted within 1,000 feet of another existing sexually oriented business or one r which a building permit has been applied for; and, No sexually oriented business shall be permitted within 750 feet of any other zoning boundary.

No sexually oriented business shall be permitted within 750 feet of any church, place of worship, parish house, convent, public, parochial, or private school, kindergarten, State approved day care center or public sports/recreation parks; and no sexually oriented business shall be permitted within 750 feet of the Town boundaries; and,

No sexually oriented business shall be permitted within 1,000 feet of another existing sexually oriented business on the date of the passage of this article and, no sexually oriented business shall be permitted within a building, premise, structure or other facility that contains a sexually oriented business as defined in paragraphs A through I above.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment shall grant the Special Exception provided the applicant demonstrates facts sufficient to support a finding that the conditions for the granting of a Special Exception in section 5-2A have been met.

### **5.8.2.4 Measure of Distance**

The distance between any two sexually oriented businesses shall be measured in a straight line, without regard to intervening structures, from the closest exterior structural wall or temporary or permanent physical divider between each of the businesses.

#### **5.8.2.5 Additional Reasonable Regulations**

The Planning Board is empowered hereunder to review and approve permit applications for sexually oriented businesses and impose reasonable restrictions for buffering, outdoor parking lighting, adequate ingress and egress from the site off of and onto public roads, pedestrian movement, and to provide for appropriate landscaping and building aesthetic in the "Non-Residential Site Plan Review Regulations of the Town of Amherst, New Hampshire," and to avoid site development layout which may result in negative environmental impacts.

#### **5.8.2.6 Severability**

The invalidity of any section or provision of this Article shall not invalidate any other section or provision thereof.

### **Section 5.9 Uses Permitted by Special Exception Limited Commercial Zone**

**5.9.1** Accessory Apartment- A second dwelling unit incorporated within a existing or proposed single family home which is structurally integrated with direct access between it and the main living unit. The total area of the accessory apartment shall not exceed 800 square feet and shall consist of only one bedroom. Any changes to the total number of bedrooms per lot will require a new state approved septic plan to be placed on file with the Zoning Office prior to the issuance of a conversion/building permit. 3-9-82(3-10-98) (3-11-03)

**5.9.2** Religious purposes 3-8-88

**5.9.3** Kennels (3-13-01)

### **Section 5.10 Uses Permitted by Special Exception Northern Transitional Zone**

**5.10.1** Religious purposes 3-14-89

**5.10.2** Private Schools 3-14-89

**5.10.3** Hospitals, Clinics, nursing homes, and other similar uses 3-14-89

**5.10.4** Professional Offices 3-14-89

**5.10.5** Funeral Homes 3-14-89

**5.10.6** Sawmills 3-14-89

**5.10.7** Accessory Apartment- A second dwelling unit incorporated within a existing or proposed single family home which is structurally integrated with direct access between it and the main living unit. The total area of the accessory apartment shall not exceed 800 square feet and shall consist of only one bedroom. Any changes to the total number of bedrooms per lot will require a new state approved septic plan to be placed on file with the Zoning Office prior to the issuance of a conversion/building permit. 3-9-82 (3-10-98) (3-11-03)

**5.10.8** Kennels 3-14-89

**ARTICLE VI**  
**ADMINISTRATION**

**Section 6.1 Enforcement**

This Ordinance shall be enforced by the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Selectmen is hereby given power and authority to enforce the provisions of this Ordinance. The Board of Selectmen is further empowered to confer upon an administrative official appointed by the Board of Selectmen, the duty of administering the provisions of this Ordinance. Upon any well founded information that this Ordinance is being violated, the Selectmen shall seek an injunction in Superior Court or shall take such other legal action as they deem appropriate. 3-12-63

**Section 6.2 Building Permits, Certificates of Occupancy, Earth Removal Permits**

**6.2.1 Building Permits**

**6.2.1.1** No building or structure shall hereafter be erected or structurally altered until a building permit shall be issued by the Selectmen or their authorized agents, the Building Inspector or Zoning Administrator, stating that the building or structure, and use of land comply with the regulations of this Ordinance and the Amherst Water Pollution Control Regulations and the New Hampshire Building Code.

3-14-78 3.9.10

**6.2.1.2** No permits shall be issued to any lot upon which there is outstanding a recorded violation of the rules, regulations or Ordinances of the Town of Amherst, excepting any permit required to correct such violation.

**6.2.1.3** A foundation plot plan shall be required prior to backfill of the foundation. Foundations shall include: poured concrete walls, concrete block or stone walls, poured concrete monolithic slabs, and pole barn piers or similar type permanent supports. This shall not apply to structures that are set on semi-permanent bases – such as concrete or stone pier blocks or pressure treated wood blocks. This foundation plan shall be done by a Licensed Land Surveyor and shall certify that the foundation meets all the setback regulations in the zone in which it is located. (3.9.99) (3.8.05)

**6.2.2 Certificate of Occupancy**

**6.2.2.1** No building or structure hereafter erected or structurally altered shall be occupied or used until a certificate has been issued by the Selectmen, or their authorized agents, the Building Inspector or Zoning Administrator. The certificate shall be issued only after the Building Inspector or Zoning Administrator makes a finding that the building or structure has been constructed, arranged, or structurally altered or is to be used in conformance with the provisions of this Ordinance and all other health, safety and building laws, including but not limited to a requirement that the site be serviced by all necessary utilities including municipal water (or that water certified as satisfactory is available if municipal water is not provided) and that construction be in accordance with all representations made as part of the application for and granting of the building permit. 3-14-78

**6.2.2.2** Certificates of Occupancy for new structures shall not be issued unless two (2) copies of a plot plan (survey) are filed with the Building Official, prepared by a Licensed Land Surveyor certifying the following information:

**6.2.2.2.1** Boundary markers are found or set at least at the four principle corners of the lot, or at least three points or angles for lots so configured. Metal pins are acceptable in bituminous concrete paving. If the lot is greater than ten (10) acres and no portion of the perimeter property line is closer than five (5) times the minimum zoning setback distance from the building/s on it, then the requirements to set markers noted above is waived, however all other provisions of this Ordinance shall be required.

**6.2.2.2.2** Location to scale on the lot of the building/s, well/s, septic system/s, driveway/s. The plot plan shall include dimensions, taken from two corners of the structure, or other permanent location points, to the main cleanout on the septic tank, to the distribution box, and to the two (2) closest corners of the leach field, 3-12-85

**6.2.2.2.3** A statement that the building/s conform to the setbacks of the District where located. 3-11-93  
Scale of the plot plan to be 1"=100' if the entire lot will not fit on 17" x 22" paper. Boundary markers shall be of granite, concrete or drill holes in granite or durable ledge. Offset markers may be used where natural or historical obstruction occurs. 3-9-82

**6.2.3** Uses and Certificate of Occupancy

No change shall be made in the use of a building or part thereof now or hereafter erected or structurally altered, or in the use of land now or hereafter occupied, nor shall any use of a building or land be undertaken, without a Certificate of Occupancy having first been issued by the Selectmen, or their authorized agents, the Building Inspector or Zoning Administrator. No such certificate shall be issued to make such change or undertake such use unless it is in conformity with the provisions of this Ordinance or amendments thereto hereafter duly enacted. 3-14-78

**6.2.4** Earth Material Removal

No earth material as defined in Section 3-8 hereof shall be removed unless a permit has been applied for and obtained in a fashion consistent with the provisions of Section 3-8 hereof. 3-14-78

**6.2.5** The Board of Selectmen, or the Administrative Official, may require of any applicant for a permit such sketches, drawings, plot plans or other material as are deemed necessary to make a decision as to compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance. They may require plans, details, specifications for new structures to have been prepared, or sealed, by a licensed architect or engineer. (3-12-63) 3-13-84

**6.2.6** If an applicants requests a permit to undertake an activity on a lot not conforming in size and frontage as otherwise required by this Ordinance and is making application under Article IV, Section 4-2 of this Ordinance, such applicant shall file as part of his application, the date of the recording and the Registry of Deeds reference number of the recording of the non-conforming lot. 3-12-63

**6.2.7** The Administrative Official shall be a salaried employee of the Town and shall be paid a salary as determined by the Selectmen and approved by the Town as part of the annual budget. 3-6-73

**6.2.8** All permits issued under the provision of this Ordinance shall expire and become invalid two years from the date of issuance of the permit. 3-14-78

Effective this date, all non-residential site plans approved by the Planning Board shall expire four (4) years from the date of Planning Board approval. This expiration date shall not apply to plats that are exempt or vested because of the operation of RSA 674:39. 3-14-89 3.9.10

**6.2.9** Upon receipt of the application

**6.2.9.1** for a permit with sufficient information to clearly establish the nature and extent of the proposed activity the Administrative Official shall determine whether the proposed activity or use constitutes a permitted use within the provisions of this Ordinance or whether a special exception or a variance is required. 3-14-78

**6.2.9.2** If the proposed use requires a special exception or a variance, the Administrative Official shall refer the application for permit to the Board of Adjustment for action. 3-14-78

**6.2.9.3** If the proposed use or activity is within the provisions of this Ordinance, the Administrative Official shall post a notice in two public places in the Town of Amherst, one of which shall be at the Town Hall and no permit shall be issued until said notice has been posted for a period of seven (7) days. If during that period the Administrative Official received objection to the issuance of the requested permit, he may issue the permit, refer the application to the Board of Adjustment for action, or deny the permit. 3-14-78

**6.2.10** Consistent with State Statues, public utility structures proposed for the Town of Amherst shall obtain building permits and meet zoning requirements. 3-13-84

**Section 6.3 Board of Adjustment**

**6.3.1** Establishment - In accordance with the provisions of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated 1955, Chapter 673 as amended and as hereinafter provided, a Board of Adjustment is established. 3-12-63

### **6.3.2 Organization**

**6.3.2.1** The Board of Adjustment shall consist of five members who shall not hold any other elective office or position under the municipality. 3-12-63

**6.3.2.2** The members of the Board of Adjustment shall be elected at the annual Town Meeting. 3-5-74, 3-12-96

**6.3.2.3** DELETED (3-10-98)

**6.3.2.4** Vacancies in the Board, occurring other than through the expiration of a term, shall be filled in accordance with RSA 673:12.

**6.3.2.5** DELETED (3.8.05)

**6.3.2.6** Members of the Board of Adjustment shall serve without compensation. 3-12-63

### **6.3.3 Powers**

The Board of Adjustment shall perform all the duties and have all the powers provided by the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated 1955 as Amended and as hereinafter provided. 3-12-63

### **6.3.4 Meetings**

Meetings of the Board shall be held at the call of the Chairman and at such other times as the Board of Adjustment may determine. All meetings shall be open to the public. 3-12-63

The Board shall keep a record of proceedings showing the vote upon every question. 3-12-63

Every rule or regulation, and every order, requirement, decision or determination of the Board of Adjustment shall immediately be filed in the office of the Board of Adjustment and shall become a public record. 3-12-63

The concurring vote of three members of the Board of Adjustment shall be necessary to reverse any order, requirement, decision or determination of the administrative office, or to decide in favor of the appellant, or to decide any matter upon which it is required to pass, or to effect any variance from the strict application of provisions of this Ordinance. 3-12-63

All applications shall be acted upon within ninety days after the date of filing the application or within 90 days of the date of filing of any additional information requested by the Board but no later than 6 months after the date of filing; provided, however, when additional information is not furnished within a reasonable time, the Board may, on notice to the applicant, deny the application without prejudice to the right to refile. When an application is denied on the merits, the application may not be refilled for a period of one year after the date of denial. 3-6-73

### **6.3.5 Procedure on Permits for Special Exceptions, Variances and Appeals of Administrative Decisions**

**6.3.5.1** The Board of Adjustment shall not authorize the issuance of a permit until after a hearing on the application is held.

**6.3.5.2** Upon receipt from the Administrative Official of an application for a special exception, variance, or appeal of an administrative decision, the Board of Adjustment shall hold a public hearing. 3-12-91 Notice thereof shall be given as follows:

**6.3.5.2.1** The applicant and all of the abutters shall be notified of the hearing by certified mail, return receipt requested, stating the time and place of the hearing, and such notice shall be mailed not less than five days before the date fixed for the hearing of the appeal.

**6.3.5.2.2** A public notice of the hearing shall be published in a newspaper of the general circulation in the area, not less than five (5) days before the date fixed for the hearing of the appeal.

**6.3.5.2.3** The public hearing shall be held within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the notice of the appeal.

**6.3.5.2.4** Any party may appear in person or by his agent or attorney at the hearing of an appeal.

**6.3.5.2.5** The cost of advertising and costs of mailing the notices of hearing shall be payable by the person making the appeal prior to the hearing. 3-9-82

**6.3.6 Conditions for the Granting of a Variance 3-10-64**

**6.3.6.1** Every variance granted by the Board of Adjustment shall be based upon and accompanied by a specific finding or findings, supported by evidence produced at the hearing that:

**6.3.6.1.1** There are several circumstances or conditions, fully described in the findings applying to the land or buildings that do not apply generally to land or buildings in the neighborhood. 3-12-63

**6.3.6.1.2** Said circumstances or conditions are such that the strict application of the provisions of the Ordinance would deprive the applicant of the reasonable use of the land or building and would result in unnecessary hardship. 3-12-63

**6.3.6.1.3** For reasons set forth in the findings granting of the variance would be of benefit to the public interest, would promote the reasonable use of the land or building and that the variance granted by the Board of Adjustment is the minimum variance that will accomplish this purpose. 3-12-63

**6.3.7 Time Limits of Special Exceptions and Variances**

If, after a permit has been authorized by the Board of Adjustment as a result of a request for a Special Exception or Variance, such permit has not been obtained within one year from the date of such authorization, then such authorization shall become null and void, and no permit shall be issued thereunder. (3-4-75) 3-9-82

**6.3.8 Appeal from Order of the Board of Adjustment**

Within thirty (30) days after any order or decision handed down by the Board of Adjustment, any party to the action or proceedings of the Board of Adjustment, or any person directly affected thereby, may move for a re-hearing and thereafter, if necessary, appeal by petition to the Superior Court in accordance with the provisions of the laws of the State of New Hampshire and may pursue such remedies as are therein provided for said party. 3-12-63 (3.8.05)

**6.3.9 Rules of Procedure**

The Board of Adjustment shall adopt and promulgate rules of procedure for the guidance of all persons having business before the Board of Adjustment. Said rules shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of the Statutes of the State of New Hampshire nor with the provisions of this Ordinance. 3-12-63

**6.3.10 Authorize Temporary Uses (deleted 3-12-91)**

**Section 6.4 Costs**

Any person appearing before the Zoning Board of Adjustment may be represented by counsel, but the costs of retaining such counsel shall be borne by the party retaining them, and not by the Town of Amherst. 3-12-63

**Section 6.5 Existing Ordinances**

All existing ordinances or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this ordinance are repealed upon passage of this ordinance. 3-12-63

**Section 6.6 Severability Clause**

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or other part of this ordinance is for any reason held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. 3-12-63

**Section 6.7 Governmental Services**

No provision of this Ordinance shall be interpreted as to prevent the Town of Amherst from providing for or performing any existing or necessary governmental, education, or protective services. 3-12-63

**Section 6.8 Penalty**

In accordance with RSA 676:17, as amended, any person, firm, or corporation violating the provisions of this Ordinance is punishable by a civil fine of up to \$ 275 (Two hundred and seventyfive dollars) per day, for every day after the conviction date that the violation continues, or after the date on which the violator received written notice from the municipality that is in violation, whichever date is earlier. 3-11-86

**ARTICLE VII**

**AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE**

**Section 7.1 General**

This Ordinance may be amended in conformance with the New Hampshire State Statutes. 3-12-63  
This Ordinance is intended to be consistent with NHRSA enabling legislation and to the extent that any portion hereof is or shall become inconsistent with said enabling legislation this Ordinance shall be invalid to that extent. 3-5-74

**Section 7.2 Referral of Amendments to Planning Board**

Upon the petition of twenty-five voters for an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Board shall proceed and submit the amendment or amendments to the Voters of the Town as prescribed in RSA 675:4. The Planning Board may not reject the amendment or amendments proposed by petition but shall submit the proposed amendment or amendments to the voters as offered by the petition. The petitioners shall submit the proposed amendment or amendments to the Zoning Ordinance in correct form as determined by the Selectmen. The following question shall be submitted to the voters: " Are you in favor of the adoption of the amendment to the Zoning Ordinance as proposed by petition of the voters of this Town ?". The approval or disapproval of the Planning Board shall also be noted on the ballot immediately following the question. In the event that there shall be more than a single proposed amendment to be submitted to the voters at any given meeting, the issue as to the several amendments shall be put in the following manner: "Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No..... as proposed by petition of the voters for this Town?". (Here insert topical description of substance of amendment.) The approval or disapproval of the Planning Board shall also be noted on the ballot immediately following the question. An amendment proposed by petition shall be submitted to the voters at an annual Town or Village District meeting. 11-2-82

**ARTICLE VIII**

**MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

**Section 8.1 Interpretation**

In their interpretation and application, the provisions of this Ordinance shall be held as the minimum requirements adopted for the promotion of the public health, morals, safety or the general welfare. Whenever the requirements of this Ordinance are at variance with the requirements of any other lawfully adopted rules, regulations, or Ordinances, the most restrictive, or that imposing the higher standards, shall govern.

**Section 8.2 Short Title**

This Ordinance shall be known and may be cited as "The Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance of 1963".

### **Section 8.3 Effective Date**

This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

### **Section 8.4 Impact Fee Ordinance**

#### **8.4.1 Purpose**

This ordinance is enacted pursuant to RSA 674:16, (II), 674:17, and 674:21, and in order to:

**8.4.1.1** Promote the public health, safety and welfare, and prosperity (3.10.09);

**8.4.1.2** Provide for adequate and appropriate facilities are available to individuals who may come to be located in the Town of Amherst;

**8.4.1.3** Help meet the needs occasioned by development for the construction or improvement of capital facilities owned or operated by the municipality, including and limited to water treatment and distribution facilities; wastewater treatment and disposal facilities; sanitary sewers; storm water, drainage and flood control facilities; public road systems and rights-of-way; municipal office facilities; public school facilities; the municipality's proportional share of capital facilities of a cooperative or regional school district of which the municipality is a member; public safety facilities; solid waste collection, transfer, recycling, processing and disposal facilities; public library facilities; and public recreational facilities not including public open space;

#### **8.4.2 Scope**

The regulatory scope of this ordinance is intended to implement and be consistent with the Town of Amherst's Master Plan and Capital Improvements Program as well as to allocate a fair and equitable share of the cost of public capital facilities (including school construction) to new development, and require that new development contribute its proportionate share of funds necessary to accommodate its impact on those public facilities. It is intended to apply to all forms of development identified in RSA 674:21 (V).

#### **8.4.3 Definitions**

**8.4.3.1** New Development: Any activity that results in:

**8.4.3.1.1** The creation of a new dwelling unit or dwelling units;

**8.4.3.1.2** The conversion of a non-residential use to a dwelling unit or dwelling units;

**8.4.3.1.3** Construction of new non-residential facilities and/or accessory structures;

**8.4.3.1.4** The conversion of a residential use to non-residential use.

**8.4.3.2** New Development does not include:

**8.4.3.2.1** The reconstruction of a residential or non-residential structure that has been destroyed by fire or natural disaster, provided there is no change in the number of dwelling units or size of the structure;

**8.4.3.2.2** The replacement of a manufactured home with another manufactured home provided there is no change in the number of dwelling units or size of the structure.

**8.4.3.3** Public Capital Facilities:

**8.4.3.3.1** Facilities and equipment which are owned and operated by the Town of Amherst, the Amherst School System, or cooperatively with other municipalities and which have a useful life of no less than five years. Public capital facilities do not include the costs associated with the operation, maintenance or repair of such facilities, or with facility replacements that do not increase the capacity or level of service, but do include reasonable costs for planning, engineering, design, land acquisition, and other reasonable costs associated with such facilities.

**8.4.3.4** Impact Fee: A fee or assessment imposed upon new development, including subdivision, building construction, or other land-use change, in order to help meet the needs occasioned by the development for the construction or improvement of capital facilities owned or operated by the municipality, including and limited to: water treatment and distribution facilities; wastewater treatment and disposal facilities; sanitary sewers; storm water, drainage and flood control facilities; public road systems and rights-of-way; municipal office facilities;

public school facilities; the municipality's proportional share of capital facilities of a cooperative or regional school district of which the municipality is a member; public safety facilities; solid waste collection, transfer, recycling, processing and disposal facilities; public libraries; and public recreation facilities, not including permanently unimproved open space. This definition is intended to be the same as that set forth in RSA 674:21, (V), and, in the event of an amendment of that section, such amendment shall be incorporated into the within definition so that the within definition and the statutory definition are identical.

**8.4.4 Authority to Assess Impact Fees:**

The Planning Board is hereby authorized to assess impact fees, as herein defined, and in accordance with the standards herein set forth. Except for regulations establishing Impact Fee Formulae, the Planning Board shall have the authority to adopt regulations to implement the provisions of this ordinance so long as the same are consistent with the regulations contained herein.

**8.4.5 Authority to Establish Impact Fee Formulae:**

Impact fee formulas shall be adopted by the Board of Selectmen, in the manner and subject to the criteria set forth herein.

**8.4.6 Impact Fee Schedules**

**8.4.6.1 Impact Fee Formula Methodology**

**8.4.6.1.1 General Considerations**

The amount of any impact fee formula shall be a proportional share of municipal capital improvement costs which are reasonably related to the capital needs created by new development, and to the benefits accruing to the new development from the capital improvements financed by the fee.

Upgrading of existing facilities and infrastructures, the need for which is not created by new development, shall not be paid for by impact fees.

In the case of development created by a change of use, redevelopment, expansion, or modification of an existing use, the capital facilities fee shall be based upon the net positive increase in the impact created by the new use as compared to that which was or would have been assessed for the previous use.

**8.4.6.1.2 Computation of Impact Fees.**

**8.4.6.1.2.1 Amount of Impact fees and type of facilities:** The amount of the impact fees shall be determined using the values contained in the Impact Fee Schedules for the following types of facilities:

**8.4.6.1.2.1.1** storm water, drainage and flood control facilities

**8.4.6.1.2.1.2** public road systems and rights-of-way

**8.4.6.1.2.1.3** municipal office facilities

**8.4.6.1.2.1.4** public school facilities

**8.4.6.1.2.1.5** the municipality's proportional share of capital facilities of a cooperative or regional school district of which the municipality may be a member or any other cooperative joint governmental venture

**8.4.6.1.2.1.6** public safety facilities

**8.4.6.1.2.1.7** solid waste collection, transfer, recycling, processing and disposal facilities

**8.4.6.1.2.1.8** public library facilities

**8.4.6.1.2.1.9** public recreational facilities not including public open space.

**8.4.6.1.2.1.10** Sewer and water facilities, if any.

**8.4.6.1.2.2** Impact Fee Schedules shall be established and reviewed as set forth in this section and 8.4.6.1.2.3 and 8.4.6.2 below. In the case of change of use, redevelopment, or expansion or modification of an existing use which constitutes new development, the impact fees shall be based upon the net positive increase in the impact fee for the new use as compared to the previous use. (3.10.09)

**8.4.6.1.2.3** Impact Fee Establishment Procedure: In order to establish an impact fee, the Selectmen shall identify projects eligible for impact fee funding as indicated in the Capital Improvements Program, as, from time to time, amended. The Selectmen shall then prepare a report describing a methodology or basis for calculating impact fee assessments and an

Impact Fee Schedule, in accordance with RSA 674:21, and this Ordinance. The Selectmen shall conduct a public hearing on the proposed schedule, and shall consider all comments received prior to finalizing the Schedule. The Selectmen, upon such finalization, shall then submit the Schedule to the Planning Board for their review and recommendation. The Board of Selectmen at a regular meeting shall accept or modify the proposed schedule which may include modifications consistent with the recommendations of the Planning Board. The Impact Fee Schedule shall be in effect when a majority of the Board of Selectmen approves the schedule. (3.10.09)

**8.4.6.1.2.4.1** A determination of the number of building permits that will need to be issued in order to finance the impact fee. (3.10.09)

**8.4.6.2** Review of Impact Fees: The Selectmen may review and revise an Impact Fee Schedule whenever circumstances warrant and shall review an established Impact Fee Schedule, at a minimum, on an annual basis and shall modify the Impact Fee Schedule if it finds that new data is available that will refine the schedule. This may include the replacement of figures used in the Impact Fee Schedule with more accurate or recent projections, data and figures, as well as modifications in the Capital Improvements Program. The Selectmen shall submit the Impact Fee Schedule to the Planning Board for their review and recommendation before the adoption of any revised schedule.

**8.4.6.3** Termination of Impact Fees:

**8.4.6.3.1** Impact fees shall terminate when the Board finds that the appropriate conditions for assessment are no longer present. (3.10.09)

**8.4.6.3.2** The Board of Selectmen may also by majority vote terminate an impact fee schedule in effect, whenever there is occasion to do so. This may be done only after soliciting recommendations from the Planning Board, and after conducting a public hearing.

**8.4.7** Administration of Impact Fees:

**8.4.7.1** Accounting for Impact Fees: Each impact fee shall be accounted for separately, shall be segregated from the Town's general fund, may be spent upon order of the Selectmen and shall be used solely for the capital improvements for which it was collected, or to recoup the cost of capital improvements made in anticipation of the needs for which fees are collected to meet. In the event that bonds or other debt instruments have been issued for public capital facilities which were constructed in anticipation of new development, or are issued for advanced provision of capital facilities identified in this Ordinance, Impact fees may be used to pay debt service on such bonds or similar debt instruments. Each fee collected under a specific Impact Fee Schedule shall not be commingled with any other impact fee accounts or any other funds. (3.10.09)

**8.4.7.2** Assessment of Impact Fees: All impact fees shall be assessed at the time of planning board approval of a subdivision plat or site plan. When no planning board approval is required, or has been made prior to the adoption or amendment of the impact fee ordinance, impact fees shall be assessed prior to, or as a condition for, the issuance of a building permit or other appropriate permission to proceed with new development. Impact fees shall be intended to reflect the effect of development upon municipal facilities at the time of the issuance of the building permit.

**8.4.7.3** Collection of Impact Fees: Impact fees shall be collected at the time a certificate of occupancy is issued. If no certificate of occupancy is required, impact fees shall be collected when the development is ready for its intended use. The Selectmen and the assessed party may establish an alternate, mutually acceptable schedule of payment of impact fees in effect at the time of subdivision plat or site plan approval by the planning board. If an alternate schedule of payment is established, the Selectmen may require developers to post bonds, issue letters of credit, accept liens, or otherwise provide suitable measures of security so as to guarantee future payment of the assessed impact fees.

**8.4.7.4** Refund of Unused Impact Fees: If, within six (6) years of the collection of an Impact Fee pursuant to this ordinance, any portion of such Impact Fee which has not become encumbered or otherwise legally bound to be spent for the purpose for which it was collected shall be refunded, with any accrued interest, to the owner of record of the property. Whenever the calculation of an impact fee has been predicated upon some portion of capital improvement costs being borne by the municipality, a refund shall be made upon the failure of the legislative body to appropriate the municipality's share of the capital improvement costs within said six (6) year period. (3.10.09)

**8.4.7.5** Maintaining Records of Impact Fees & Related Projects - The Town Treasurer shall have custody of all accounts and shall pay out the same only upon written orders of the Board of Selectmen. At the end of each fiscal year, the Town Treasurer shall prepare a report, showing a full account of all impact fee transactions during the year and deliver

same to the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Board, and the same shall be available to the public. (3.10.09)

#### **8.4.8 Waiver and Appeal of Fees**

**8.4.8.1** Any person may request from the Planning Board, a full or partial waiver of Impact Fee payments required by this Ordinance where it can be shown that, due to unique and/or mitigating circumstances, the impact of the particular new development is demonstrated to be nonexistent or less than anticipated.

**8.4.8.2** On-site and off-site improvements which are required by the Planning Board as a result of subdivision or site plan review, including but not limited to, extension of water and sewer mains or the construction of roads or other infrastructure, which would have to be completed by the developer regardless of the capital facilities fee provisions, shall not be considered eligible for waiver under this Ordinance.

#### **8.4.9 Credits**

**8.4.9.1** Land or Improvement Construction in Kind in Lieu of Payment: Land for capital facilities and/or public capital facility improvements may be offered by the fee-payer as total or partial payment of the required fee. The offer must be determined to represent an identifiable dollar value computed in a manner acceptable to the Planning Board.

#### **8.4.10 Applicability**

**8.4.10.1** This Ordinance shall not be deemed to affect the existing authority of the Planning Board over subdivisions and site plans, including, but not limited to the authority to declare a development to be premature or scattered in accordance with the regulations of the Board and in accordance with RSA 674:36, II(a).

#### **8.4.11 Off site Improvements**

**8.4.11.1** Definition of Offsite Improvement - A specific 'off-site' capital facility or infrastructure improvement that is required by the Planning Board for either a site plan or subdivision that is necessary, in the judgment of the Planning Board, for the project to operate properly on the day that it opens shall be considered to be an Off-Site Improvement.

**8.4.11.2** Imposition of Offsite Improvements Requirements: Off site improvements for site specific applications shall be assessed on a case by case basis and shall be in addition to other impact fees imposed pursuant to this ordinance. In a case in which it is determined that such an improvement is necessary for the proper operation of the project, the Planning Board shall so notify the applicant.

**8.4.11.3** Determination of Proportionate Share of Off-Site Improvement Cost(s): In circumstances where it can be demonstrated that such improvement will benefit the community at large, as well as the future occupants of the proposed new development, the Planning Board may require the applicant to present to the Board a study that identifies the proportionate share of the cost of the required improvement that pertain to the new development. In such a case, the Planning Board may, at the expense of the applicant, refer such study to a consultant of its own choosing to determine the reliability of the findings that shall be considered by the board to arrive at an amount to be contributed by the applicant for the off site improvement.

**8.4.11.4** Reimbursement for Contributions in Excess of Proportionate Share: The applicant shall be assessed his/her proportionate share of the cost of the project. In cases where it is determined that an improvement is necessary for the proper functioning of a new development but the applicant, for whatever reason is determined to contribute more than his/her proportionate share to the improvement under this section, and, therefore, that the improvement will also accommodate other future development, the Selectmen, at the request and expense of the applicant, may establish a separate, project related impact fee that assesses other new development for their proportionate share of the improvement to reimburse the applicant for such disproportionate contribution. Such future impact fees shall provide for the payment to the original applicant, with any interest.

#### **8.4.12 Applicability of Impact Fees**

**8.4.12.1** Any person or agent, who after the effective date of this ordinance, seeks to undertake new development within the Town of Amherst, New Hampshire, by applying for site plan approval, subdivision approval or a building permit and who is not vested pursuant to RSA 674:39, is hereby required to pay the appropriate Impact Fees in the manner set forth in this Ordinance, in accordance with any Impact Fee Schedule adopted by the Board of Selectmen.

**8.4.12.2** No new building permit for an activity requiring payment of one or more impact fee(s) pursuant to this Ordinance shall be issued unless and until the impact fee(s) hereby required have been assessed and/or otherwise agreed upon, and no certificate of occupancy or other permission for the use of said new development project shall be issued until the same have been paid or otherwise discharged .

**8.4.13 Other Assessments Unaffected**

Payment of an impact fee does not restrict the Town or the Planning Board from requiring other payments from the applicant, including without limitation such payments relating to the cost of the extensions of water and sewer mains or the construction or improvement of roads or streets or other infrastructure and facilities specifically benefitting the development which are required by the subdivision or site plan review regulations or as otherwise permitted by law.

**8.4.14 Premature and Scattered Development**

Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed so as to limit the existing authority of the Amherst Planning Board to provide against development which is scattered or premature, which requires an excessive expenditure of public funds, or otherwise violates the Town of Amherst's Site Plan Review Regulations, Subdivision Regulations, or Zoning Ordinance.

**8.4.15 Severability**

If any section, phrase, sentence or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision, and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

**8.4.16 Effective Date**

This ordinance shall become effective on the date of its passage, subject to the limitations imposed by RSA 676:12.

**8.4.17** Any aggrieved party may appeal any decision under this Ordinance in accordance with NH RSA 674:21, (V)(f).

**Section 8.5 Affordable Housing** (3-14-89), (3.10.09)

**8.5.1** Affordable Housing Developments are permitted upon demonstration of the conditions set forth below. (3.10.09)

**8.5.2 PURPOSE:** The Town recognizes the importance and benefit to the community and its citizens in the establishment and encouragement of suitable opportunities for affordable housing. The Town also recognizes that frequently, property that may be suitable as a location for affordable housing fails to meet some of the objective criteria that govern land use, and that strict adherence to all Zoning and Subdivision requirements may render the project economically unfeasible. The Town also recognizes that there are some situations in which normal Zoning or Subdivision requirements can be waived without necessarily sacrificing public health, safety and welfare so long as proper safeguards are maintained. Accordingly, it has been deemed advisable to adopt an innovative land use control in accordance with RSA 674:21 which would permit the Planning Board to identify a project that is a suitable candidate for the waiver of requirements, and when so identified, that project would be required to meet less stringent standards, provided the conditions set forth herein were met. It is intended that the housing provided for in this section shall allow for workforce housing and, moreover, that it constitute a reasonable and realistic opportunity for the provision of such housing within the Town of Amherst, thus also intending to comply with the provisions of 674:58, et. seq., as amended by SB 342 as enacted at the 2008 NH legislative session. (3.10.09)

**8.5.3 IDENTIFICATION OF SUITABLE PROJECT:** The Planning Board may review an application to construct affordable housing and identify the same as a suitable project if the applicant demonstrates to the Planning Board that the project meets the following criteria:

General Criteria: (3.10.09)

**8.5.3.1** The project shall be constructed in a manner that is harmonious with neighboring developments, housing, and natural surroundings.

**8.5.3.2** The project shall not detract from either the ecological or visual qualities of the environment.

**8.5.3.3** The housing proposal shall be affordable within the meaning of the Ordinance.

**8.5.3.4** The proposal meets the purposes of the ordinance under which the application is proposed. (3.10.09)

**8.5.3.5** There will be no significant adverse impacts resulting from the proposed use upon the public health, safety and general welfare of the neighborhood and the Town of Amherst. (3.10.09)

**8.5.3.6** The proposed use will not be more objectionable to nearby properties by reason of noise, fumes, vibration, or inappropriate lighting than any use of the property permitted under the existing zoning district ordinances. (3.10.09)

**8.5.3.7** The proposed use will not adversely affect the ground water resources of Amherst, in particular the Aquifer Conservation District as defined in Section 4.13 of the Amherst Zoning Ordinance. (3.10.09)

**8.5.3.8** The project shall comply with all site plan and/or subdivision regulations that apply, other than those waived hereunder. (3.10.09)

Specific Criteria: (3.10.09)

**8.5.3.9** Where there is no existing dwelling, the net tract area (total parcel minus wetlands) shall be at least four (4) acres and not more than fifteen (15) acres, except in the Northern Rural Zone, the net area shall be at least ten (10) acres but not more than twenty (20) acres. (3.12.91), (3.9.99), (3.10.09)

**8.5.3.10** Where there is an existing dwelling, the net tract area (total parcel minus wetlands) shall be at least sufficient to provide a conforming conventional sized lot for the existing dwelling and the maximum net tract area shall be as listed above. (3.12.09), (3.10.09)

**8.5.3.11** If an existing dwelling is located on the site and sufficient evidence is presented to the Planning Board to show that the existing dwelling is affordable within the meaning of this Ordinance, then 8.5.3.10 shall not apply to that existing dwelling. (3.10.98), (3.10.09)

**8.5.3.12** Unless waived pursuant to section 8.5.8., below, the project will comply with the MODIFIED LOT SIZE, DENSITY, SETBACKS, AND OPEN SPACE requirements set forth in Sections 8.5.5, 8.5.5.1, 8.5.5.2, 8.5.5.3, 8.5.5.4, and to 8.5.5.5, inclusive, set forth below. (3.10.09)

**8.5.4 ZONING STANDARDS:** Once the Planning Board has designated a proposed project as affordable and indicated that the same is satisfactory and compliant with the above standards, that project may be located on any suitable property irrespective of the zoning district classification. (3.10.09)

**8.5.4.1 ANNUAL LIMITATION:** Maximum number of units approved for construction in a calendar year shall not exceed one percent (1%) of the number of dwelling units existing in Town in the preceding calendar year. This figure shall be determined each January. While the Board may approve more than the number identified in this section, it may not approve more than the annual amount indicated for construction in that year and shall indicate in such approval, when necessary, a phasing schedule relative to which excess approved units may be constructed. (3.10.09)

**8.5.5 MODIFIED LOT SIZE, DENSITY, SETBACKS, AND OPEN SPACE:** The traditional lot size, density, setback, and open space requirements applicable in other districts shall not apply and the Planning Board shall establish the lot size, density, setbacks, and open space requirements for each project as they determine to be necessary in the best interest of the Town and to facilitate the project, provided however, that the following limitations shall apply: (3.10.09)

**8.5.5.1** Lot size and density shall be not less than three quarters (3/4) of an acre for a detached single family unit and not more than two units per acre for multi-family housing, except in the Northern Rural Zone where the minimum lot size for a detached single family unit would be two (2) acres and no more than one unit per acre for multi-family housing.

**8.5.5.2** Open space shall be sufficient to accommodate the needs of the proposed occupants of the project.

**8.5.5.3** Setbacks shall be sufficient to buffer and protect adjacent properties and the street from encroachment. At a minimum there shall be a fifty (50) foot setback from the property line around the perimeter of the property. (3.8.05)

**8.5.5.4** No structure shall be constructed to a height greater than thirty five (35) feet, exclusive of chimneys or cupolas, measured from the lowest adjacent exterior elevation.

**8.5.5.5** The maximum unit size shall not exceed 1,300 square feet of heated living space, and shall include any finished basement or finished attic areas, heated or not. This provision shall remain with the development for a period of ten years from the date of the first certificate of occupancy. (3-12-02), (3.11.08)

**8.5.6 RULES AND REGULATIONS:** The Planning Board may adopt appropriate rules and regulations to implement the review process contemplated hereunder. Such rules shall at a minimum provide for the developer to restrict the sale or lease of the units through appropriate recorded covenants to those who qualify pursuant to the definition of affordable housing contained in this Ordinance.

**8.5.7 DEFINITION:** 'Affordable Housing', as that term is used in this ordinance, shall constitute housing which is intended for sale or lease, and is affordable.

'Affordable' in this context, for purposes of housing intended for sale, means housing with combined mortgage loan debt services, property taxes, and required insurance that do not exceed 30 percent of a household's gross annual income when such annual gross income is no more than 100 percent of the median income for a 4-person household for the metropolitan area or county in which the housing is located as published annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

'Affordable' in this context, for purposes of housing intended for lease, means housing with combined rental and utility costs that do not exceed 30 percent of a household's gross annual income when such annual gross income is no more than 60 percent of the median income for a 3-person household for the metropolitan area or county in which the housing is located as published annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. (3.10.09)

**8.5.8 Waiver of Specific and General Conditions for 'Workforce Housing' project -** (Effective on the effective date of RSA 674:58, proposed as SB342 in the 2008 legislative session) the Planning Board is hereby empowered to approve a project and waive any or all of the above listed standards, but only when it has been demonstrated that construction of a 'workforce housing project', (as that term is defined below), is incapable of being feasibly constructed because of those standards for economic reasons. In making such a determination, however, the Planning Board shall not allow the construction of any project when the same will not comply with reasonable standards related to environmental protection, water supply, sanitary disposal, traffic safety, and fire and life safety protection. Further, the Board, in making such waiver, shall grant only the minimum waiver(s) demonstrated to be necessary to render the project economically feasible. (3.10.09)

An applicant seeking to request a waiver under this section shall apply for the same to the Planning Board according to the procedure set forth in Section C of the Site Plan Regulations. When making that application, the applicant shall provide sufficient information to the Board to demonstrate the following, the burden for which shall be on the applicant: (3.10.09)

**8.5.8.1** The proposed project is incapable of being feasibly constructed within the limitations identified in the specific and general criteria set forth in the above section of the ordinance for economic reasons and that the limitations do not permit any other sufficient realistic or reasonable opportunities to provide workforce housing; and, (3.10.09)

(NOTE: See Non-Residential Site Review Regulations for Project Suitability Procedure Regulations. Affordable Housing.)

**8.5.8.2** The granting of waivers will result in the project being feasible, economically, and will allow for the construction of 'workforce housing' units that are available to the target income group(s); and, (3.10.09)

**8.5.8.3** The applicant will identify the general and specific standards for which a waiver is being sought and will provide appropriate documentation to demonstrate the manner in which the application of such general or specific standards is causing the project to be incapable of being feasibly constructed for economic reasons; and, (3.10.09)

**8.5.8.4** The project design is such that it complies with all applicable standards related to

environmental protection, water supply, sanitary disposal, traffic safety, and fire and life safety protection; and, (3.10.09)

**8.5.8.5** The project is 'affordable' within the meaning of this ordinance and/or the statutory workforce housing provisions found at RSA 674:58, et. seq.; and, (3.10.09)

**8.5.8.6** The applicant has provided a suitable mechanism to insure that the housing stock proposed to be constructed will be available to persons of the target income group for a period not less than 25 years. (3.10.09)

**8.5.9 DEFINITION:** 'Workforce Housing' shall include 'Affordable housing' as defined above but shall not include housing developments that exclude minor children from more than 20 percent of the units, or in which more than 50 percent of the dwelling units have fewer than two bedrooms, shall not constitute workforce housing for the purposes of this subdivision. 'Workforce Housing' shall also include 'multi-family housing' as that term is defined in RSA 674:58, (II), which means a building or structure containing 5 or more dwelling units, each designed for occupancy by an individual household. (3.10.09)

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **DEFINITIONS**

#### **Section 9.1 Meaning of Certain Words**

The following terms, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the Ordinance, shall mean the following:

**Abutter** Any person or persons holding legal title to land which adjoins or is directly across the street or stream from land under consideration. (3-12-63) 3-9-82

**Accessory Building** A detached building or structure on the same lot with the primary building, the use of which is clearly incidental to that of the primary building or use of the land. (3-12-63), (3.11.08)

**Administrative Official** The person delegated by the Board of Selectmen to administer the provisions of this Ordinance. 3-12-63

**Apartment** A room or set of rooms arranged for occupancy as a dwelling and containing a kitchen or cooking range. 3-14-89

**Aquifer** A geologic unit capable of yielding usable amounts of water. 3-13-84

**Building** Any structure or dwelling that has a roof and is intended to shelter people, animals or chattel. (3-12-63), (3.11.08)

**Buffer** An upland area immediately adjacent to a jurisdictional wetland or body of water, usually specified by a setback distance from the edge, that server to filter surface water flowing into the wetland or body of water. (3-13-01)

**Cabin** A building used or rented for the purpose of overnight sleeping accommodations, generally on a transient basis. 3-12-63

**Driveway** A private lane from the public road traversing private property, ordinarily leading to a single residence. 3-10-87

**Dwelling** A structure or building that is designed or used as a place of residence for one family. (3-12-63), (3.11.08)

**Dwelling Unit** A structure or building or part of a structure or building used as a place of residence for one family. (3-12-63), (3.11.08)

**Family** One or more persons who live as a single housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit. 3-12-63

**Flashing Sign** Any illuminated sign on which the artificial light is not maintained stationary or constant in intensity or color at all times when in use including any revolving illuminated sign. 3-6-73

**Floodway** The channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one foot. 9-22-79

**Floor Area Ratio** The ratio of gross floor area to the total lot area. 3-4-75

**Frontage**: The continuous distance of any property line of a lot which abuts a legally accessible public street as classified by RSA 229:5, or a private road approved by the Planning Board. (3.6.04)

**Garage Type Sales** limited to a maximum of ten (10) days a year. The sum of the horizontal area of the several floors of a building and its accessory buildings on the same lot, measured from the exterior faces of the walls, and not including cellars, attics, porches, etc. not used as part of the principle use. 3-4-73

**Hazardous or Toxic Material or Liquids** Materials or liquids that pose a threat, present or future, to the environment, whether in use, storage or transit, including without exception hazardous waste identified and listed in accordance with section 3001 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, and as may be amended from time to time. 3-13-84

**Home Occupation** - A home occupation is an accessory non-retail business or professional use incidental and subordinate to the dwelling use, occupying no more than 20% of the existing gross, heated floor area of the dwelling.

(As amended 3-2-80, 11-2-82) 3-10-92 3-11-93 3-8-94 3-14-95

**Hotel/Motel** Structure/s which provide transients with temporary sleeping accommodations and do not include individual units which provide housekeeping accommodations in more than 10% of the units.

**House Trailer** A unit similar to a mobile home which is equipped with some or all of the following: running water, sanitary facilities, bath facilities, and toilet. 3-12-68

**Inn** A structure intended or designed to be used or which is used for sleeping purposes or paying guests and where a general kitchen and/or dining room may or may not be provided. 3-12-63

**Kennel** Any lot or premises on which four (4) or more dogs, other than personal pets, at least four (4) months of age, are kept, boarded, or trained whether in special structures or runways or not. The foregoing definition shall specifically exclude veterinary clinics which are defined as a structure in which small animals or pets are given medical or surgical treatment and are cared for during the time of such treatment only. 11-2-82

**Lot** A tract of land occupied or capable of being occupied by a building or use and by accessory uses, including the open space provided for in this Ordinance.  
3-12-63

**Lot of Record** A distinct tract of land recorded in a legal deed and plan filed in the records of Hillsborough County, New Hampshire. 3-12-63

**Minimal Impact Crossing** Minimal impact means the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative.

**Mixed Use Development** Any proposed or existing commercial development may have incorporated, a mixed use factor, consisting of residential units up to a maximum of twenty-five (25%) percent of the approved gross square footage of the commercial development. The residential units may be either attached or detached from the commercial structure/s and may have a maximum of one bedroom per five hundred (500) square feet of gross residential floor area. Such proposals are subject to Planning Board site review and all applicable health and safety requirements. 3-14-89

**Mobile Home** A dwelling accommodation designed to permit movement as a vehicle with or without wheels or skids in place and which is equipped with running water, sanitary facilities, bath facilities and toilet.

**Multi Family Housing** A structure or parcel of land containing more than one dwelling unit. 3-13-90

**Non-Conforming Use** A structure or land area that is lawfully occupied by a use that does not conform to the specifications of this Ordinance. 3-12-63

**Open Space** – As stated in Article IV, the Commercial, Limited Commercial and Industrial Zone shall not be utilized for construction, storage or parking/drives. (3-13-01)

**Open Space Development** Eliminated 11-2-82 3-14-89

**Open Space Plan** Moved to Article IV, Section 4.16

**Parking Space.** An off-street space available for the parking of one motor vehicle and have an area of not less than 9' x 18' not including the driveways and passageways appurtenant thereto and giving access thereto and having direct access to a public way. (3-12-63) 3-12-85.

**Planned Residential Development** ( PRD) 11-2-82 Moved to Art. IV, Sec. 4.17

**Primary Recharge Area** The area immediately overlying the stratified drift aquifer and adjacent areas of stratified drift which may not have sufficient thickness to be part of the Aquifer. The boundary of the primary recharge area is the contact between stratified drift and adjacent till or bedrock. 3-13-84

**Principal Route of Access** A principal route of access within the meaning of this Ordinance shall be deemed to consist of any road, street, highway which is maintained. 3-3-75

**Private Road.** A road constructed to the Town of Amherst Subdivision Standards but that may have a reduced width right-of-way and roadway surface. The Planning Board shall require adequate covenants, restrictions, and agreements including a Home Owners Association to insure that the Town will have no liability or responsibility to maintain said road.

**Private Road** A road or road system layout, on private property, from the public road to the development. Such private property and private road shall be permanently encumbered with deed restrictions, satisfactory to Town Counsel, which shall insure that the private road does not become a Town road. 3-10-87

**Professional Office** A professional office shall be one, or a combination of the following type: doctors, dentist, lawyers, engineers, surgeons, veterinary clinic, accountants, architects.

**Public Water Protection Wetlands** Wetlands identified in Section 4-11 for their critical role in protecting water supplies.

**Reduced Frontage**

A minimum of thirty-five (35) feet of frontage on a publicly maintained road. There are two classes of reduced frontage :

Class A frontage provides access to one building lot

Class B frontage provides access to two building lots 3-10-87

(See Section 5-2, Subdivision Regulations re: Reduced Frontage Lots)

**Seasonal** Any non-residential use which is intended to operate only during specific periods of the year. Such use may include temporary structures. Seasonal uses shall be subject to site plan review. Planning Board may also require removal of any temporary buildings or other structures during the off-season. 3-11-93

**Secondary Recharge Area** The land adjacent to primary recharge area from which ground water moves down a gradient into the aquifer. 3-11-84

**Shopping Center** A group of businesses centrally arranged and identified by a common ground sign. 3-13-90

**Sign** (3-12-63) See Section 3-4 3-12-91

**Sign Advertising** (3-12-63) See section 3-4, Off premise Signs 3-12-91

**Special Exception Use** A use which because of its unique characteristics requires individual consideration in each case before it can become permitted in the Zone enumerated. 3-12-63

**Story** That portion of a building included between the upper surface of a floor and the upper surface of the floor or roof next above . (Crawl spaces, unfinished and unoccupied attic spaces, cellars when not to be occupied shall not be considered a story.) 3-11-86

**Structure** Anything constructed, erected, or assembled for occupancy or use, such as, but not limited to, a building, dwelling, stadium, platform, shelter, swimming pools, sports courts, or the like. The term structure shall not include: a/ fences or retaining walls; b/ radio towers or antennae which are for the exclusive use of amateur radio service and they shall be limited to a total height of 150 feet. (3-12-63/3-9-82), (3-12-85), (3.11.08)

**Temporary Structure** Any structure designed to be movable or disassembled, which does not permanently alter the land or buildings on the lot. Temporary structures shall not have utilities or plumbing. Such structures shall be subject to ordinary requirements of the zone (setbacks, floor area ratio, green space, height, etc.) and may require non-residential site review. 3-11-93

**Turnaround.** The end area of a cul-de-sac used to reverse direction. 3-14-89

**Utility** Any public service subscribed to by an owner and/or tenant of a site which does not require surface transportation. 11-2-85

**Water Resource Management Plan** A written plan containing maps, base line data, and provisions for the protection of surface water, ground water and important wildlife resources associated with a development project.