

**Planning Commission Report  
On the Municipal Bylaw Amendments  
As amended at the Public Hearing of August 30, 2021**

This report is in accordance with 24 V.S.A. 441 © which states:

When considering an amendment to a bylaw, the planning commission shall prepare and approve a written report on the proposal. A single report may be prepared so as to satisfy the requirements of this subsection concerning bylaw amendments and subsection 4384 © of this title concerning plan amendments.

The report shall provide:

(A) *Brief explanation of the proposed bylaw, amendment or repeal and ... include a statement of purpose as required for notice under section 4444 of this title.*

The proposed changes to **Article IV, Districts and Uses; Article VII, Standards; and Article X, Definitions** are intended to address

- 1) Design Standards for buildings in Wilmington, VT, specifically, establishing a **Senior/ADA-Compliant Housing/Adult Living Community** conditional use as well as **Senior/ADA-Compliant Housing/Adult Living Community Specific Standard**,
- 2) Specifying in what districts the **Senior/ADA-Compliant Housing/Adult Living Community** conditional use may be applied,
- 3) Definitions of terms used in the Wilmington Zoning Ordinance related to **Senior/ADA-Compliant Housing**.

In the spirit of the Wilmington Town Plan adopted 10/2/2018 (Goal 7): “Ensure the availability of housing for all residents of Wilmington,” and further, to implement Goal 7 Policy 1: “Provide housing at varied prices, sizes and locations to meet the needs of all residents including low to moderate income and elderly,”

The Planning Commission of the Town of Wilmington has determined that:

1. Establishing standards for development of senior housing serves an important inclusionary purpose in addressing the need for senior housing.
2. Housing for seniors, located near services, shopping, transportation and support networks, is beneficial to the general welfare and health of seniors and the public.
3. Encouraging the development of market-priced and affordable multiple-dwelling units for seniors provides a range of housing choices that can enable seniors of various abilities and income levels to live without leaving established networks of nearby family and friends.
4. The safety and convenience of residents will be enhanced through site and housing unit design requirements which consider:
  - The special physical and social needs of seniors; and
  - The physical characteristics of the project site.
5. When establishing senior housing in a setting that involves renovating or adding residential space to an existing building, allowing a mix of complementary uses is encouraged, such as medical offices, retail, entertainment and services on the first floor of residential buildings, which would be compatible with the senior housing developments. Preserving and repurposing our historic structures and their design elements is a goal within the village which motivates the design of new construction to be compatible with existing buildings.
6. Creating a conditional use for the Village (including overlays), Commercial/Residential, and Resort/Residential Districts provides flexibility in designing senior housing options, whether

on a large or small scale. It also provides that future development of Senior Housing will be located on transportation corridors and/or where development is already concentrated, limiting sprawl, allowing for future development of public transportation along these corridors, and preserving the character of the compact village settlement.

7. These senior housing opportunities should be designed to be integrated within the existing fabric of the community where the use is being proposed, which promotes social interactions and encourages the integration of senior housing into established neighborhoods.

Therefore, the Planning Commission proposes the following changes and additions to the Wilmington, VT zoning ordinances:

1. **Addition of proposed Section 733 (Senior/ADA-Compliant Housing/Adult Living Community Specific Standards) to Article VII (Standards)**
2. **Changes to Article IV (Districts and Uses) to incorporate the 'Senior/ADA-Compliant Housing/Adult Living Community' conditional use.**
3. **Addition of proposed definitions to Article X (Definitions)**

The report shall also

*“(B) include findings regarding how the proposal:*

1. *Conforms with or furthers the goals and policies contained in the municipal plan, including the effect of the proposal on the availability of the safe and affordable housing:”*

This plan, it is hoped, will increase the development of safe and affordable housing in Wilmington, particularly for individuals over the age of 62.

2. *Is compatible with the proposed future land uses and densities of the municipal plan:*

The proposed amendment, while it includes increased density for Senior Housing, also specifies that all housing developed under these Standards Senior Housing “shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than the provision of senior housing unless the alternative use satisfies all applicable land use regulations pertaining to the underlying zoning of the district in which the parcel is located.” In addition, limiting development of Senior Housing to the Village (including Overlays), Commercial/Residential, and Resort/Residential districts will ensure that future development of Senior Housing is located on transportation corridors and/or where development is already concentrated, limiting sprawl and preserving the character of the compact village settlement.

Therefore, these amendments are compatible with the proposed future land uses called for in the municipal plan.

3. *Carries out, as applicable, any specific proposal for any planned community facilities.*

No planned community facilities are affected by this amendment.

Approved in our meeting of September 13, 2021

Meg Staloff, Chair

John Lebron, Vice Chair

Angela Yakovleff, Secretary

Brian Holt

Michele Carlson