



## TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK Land Use Department

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### Initiatives to Support Fair Housing

Old Saybrook's land use agencies support fair housing by coordinating their priorities, resources and responsibilities to provide for housing attainable by varying demographic groups. These agencies include: the Aquifer Protection Agency, Architectural Review Board, Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Economic Development Commission, Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission, Historic District Commission, Planning Commission, Parks & Recreation Commission, Water Pollution Control Authority, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Zoning Commission.

The Town's Plan of Conservation & Development sets **goals** for all residential development:

**Housing alternatives** to the typical high-cost single-family house...

- ...to accommodate the elderly in a safe and convenient environment*
- ...to enable young persons to continue to both live and work in town*
- ...to create attainable housing for families at all income levels*

**Development rates balanced** with existing capacity or planned expansion of public infrastructure and services

**Compatible design** of new or renovated housing with its surrounding neighborhood

**Transit-enhanced development** within the region's existing town centers

**Housing above businesses** in the town center

As relates to residential development, it is the Town's **policy**...

*...to **promote additional multi-family opportunities**, including limited apartment facilities, home conversions, and non-ground floor apartments over Main Street businesses where soils can accommodate waste disposal.*

*...to **encourage creation of accessory apartments** within larger single-family dwellings where single-family character and adequate parking and utilities and soil conditions permit.*

*In the residential area north of I-95:*

*...to **fit to significant natural constraints** of topography, variable soil conditions, and wetlands*

*...to **provide for alternative forms of residential layout and buildings** that best utilize individual site features where land conditions are supportive*

*...to **solve access and internal circulation problems** for the area as a whole*

## Old Saybrook Land Use Department

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Old Saybrook's land use agencies have long supported fair housing both *proactively* – through **physical improvements** and **programs** – as well as *reactively* – by updating **regulations** to better guide market investment in developing land for residential uses.

- ✓ **PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT FLOATING ZONE.** Since the **1970s**, the Town permits single-family, two-family, and townhouses in condominium ownership through a “floating zone” that may “land” in many of its residence districts. As an alternative to owning a home on a single lot, common ownership of lands and neighborhood amenities takes the burden of improvement and maintenance off the individual.
  - There are currently **12 planned residential developments** permitted in town.
- ✓ **SOILS-BASED RESIDENTIAL DENSITY.** The Town continues to base allowable residential densities in all districts and zones on soil capacity and suitability for on-site sewage disposal systems, as part of a sewer avoidance program intended to remove the need for costly construction and on-going maintenance and administration of a centralized sewer plant.
- ✓ **AFFORDABLE HOUSING STUDY.** During the **1980s**, a committee of the Board of Selectmen studied the phenomenon of a lack of housing attainable to lower income levels. The Study recommended a series of revisions to the Zoning Regulations to create alternatives to the single-family home as the town's archetypal housing.
- ✓ **TWO-FAMILY DWELLING.** The Zoning Commission allows a single-family detached dwelling to be converted to contain 2 families.
- ✓ **ACCESSORY APARTMENT.** The Zoning Commission permits apartments accessory to existing residences to provide an alternative to single-family ownership in established residential neighborhoods.
  - There are currently **43 accessory apartments** permitted in town, and, more that continue to exist as legally non-conforming since prior to **1985**.
- ✓ **BOARDING HOUSE OR RENTING OF ROOMS.** The Town also permits the renting of rooms up to 3 people in a dwelling unit.
- ✓ **RESIDENTIAL LIFE CARE FACILITY.** Although not initiated by the Town, the Zoning Commission adopted regulations in **1998** to allow assisted living within the Residence A and C Districts. Presented, in part, as an additional alternative housing type supported by the 1990 Plan, residential life care facility is a medical facility, which contains assisted living units (studio, 1- or 2-bedroom units) designed and equipped to meet the special needs of elderly persons.
  - There are currently **2 residential life care facilities** permitted in town.
- ✓ **OPEN SPACE SUBDIVISION.** The Town reviewed and update existing Open Space Subdivision standards and criteria in **2006** to mandate a development layout that clusters residential buildings where soil conditions will accommodate such density. The result is smaller lots on shorter roads with less road or stormwater infrastructure and more proximity to passive recreational opportunities. The developer benefits from reduced constructions costs, the Town to benefits from lesser maintenance of infrastructure, and the home-buyer to benefits from a lesser initial cost and lesser long-time tax burden.



- ✓ **HOUSING FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH STUDY.** In 2008, the Town analyzed its “developable land” to determine areas of town eligible for high-density dwelling units in support of meeting the State’s goals for towns to create attainable housing for workforce housing.
- ✓ **INCENTIVE HOUSING OVERLAY ZONE.** In 2009, the Town created the Incentive Housing Zone regulation to allow for infill development at densities higher than permitted by the underlying district “incentivizes” uses, collaborative site planning and shared infrastructure, and density to support transit; those uses include retail, restaurants, residences, coffee houses, offices, and general merchandise. The Town will investigate collaboration with property owners near the train station to optimize the potential of their sites individually by providing connections for pedestrians between properties and easements for shared commuter parking.
  - **Ferry Crossing.** Permitted in 2010, all 16 dwelling units at “Ferry Crossing” townhouse development are deed-restricted to be rented at below-market rates for 20 years. The Town provided the land (lease) and a grant for pre-development costs (design and permitting) to a local non-profit housing organization, Hope Partnership, Inc., to construct the mixed-use development of residences and a public park, which serves as the requisite open space for the development.
  - **Eastpointe at Saybrook Junction.** Permitted in 2015, 38 apartments represent 20% of the 186 dwelling units proposed at Eastpointe at Saybrook Junction to be rented at below market rates for 20 years.
- ✓ **MIXED-USE DISTRICTS – CENTRAL BUSINESS, RESTRICTED BUSINESS AND MARINE COMMERCIAL.** The Town revised the Zoning Regulations to permit mixed-use development, including residences above retail shopping, in commercial settings, such as Central Business B-1 District, Restricted Business B-3 District, and Marine Commercial MC District, and to require appropriate infrastructure and amenities for pedestrians.
- ✓ **AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.** The Town’s administration and permitting authorities encourage developers of residential projects to create diversity in housing type, size, and cost in a manner that does not jeopardize the health and safety of residents, or conflict with public interests, the sewer density issue, or the zone.
  - **Saybrook Commons.** Permitted in 2000 and amended in 2004, 53 of 186 units at expired/un-built “Saybrook Commons” apartment development are deed-restricted at below-market rates for 30 years.
  - **Whittier Place.** Permitted in 2007, 2 of 6 units at the “Whittier Place” single- and two-family development are deed restricted at below-market rates for 40 years.
  - **Ethan’s Landing.** Permitted in 2010, a total of 5 of 15 units (3 of the 8 units in Westbrook) at the “Ethan’s Landing” townhouse development are deed-restricted at below-market rates for 40 years.
  - **Marina Village.** Permitted in 2011, 27 of 90 townhouse, duplex and apartment units at approved/un-built “Marina Village” development are deed-restricted at below-market rates for 40 years.
- ✓ **MIXED-USE ACCESSORY APARTMENT.** In 2012, the Zoning Commission adopted a regulation in 2012 to allow for the establishment of 2 residential dwelling units above the first-story of any commercial building in the town center’s Central Business (B-1) District or a Mixed-use (MU) subzone of an Incentive Housing Zone, where soil conditions allow.
- ✓ **DWELLING FOR ELDERLY OR HANDICAPPED PERSONS.** The Zoning Commission allows a dwelling for elderly or handicapped persons when owned by a non-profit corporation, established under the laws of the State of Connecticut for the specific purpose of owning, constructing and operating the dwelling.