

June 11, 2011

Planning Board Roles and Responsibilities

Part 2



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Town of Salem

Topics

- ▶ **Master Planning**
- ▶ **Open Space Subdivisions**
- ▶ **Lot Shape Regulations**
- ▶ **Design Guidelines**
- ▶ **Traffic Management Regulations**
- ▶ **Working with Applicants**
- ▶ **Other**

**We are the Planning Board, not the
Wait-And-See-What-Happens Board!**

John Lukens

Master Plans

Key Questions

- ▶ **Who will prepare the plan?**
- ▶ **How much information/data should be included?**
- ▶ **How will the public be involved?**
- ▶ **Will the plan deal with controversial topics and The Big Picture?**

Master Plans (cont'd.)

Tips

- ▶ **Keep time manageable and cost reasonable**
- ▶ **Use multiple participation techniques – committee, survey, forum, newsletters, mailings, web page, etc.**
- ▶ **Focus on implementation - set priorities and assign responsibilities**
- ▶ **Make it interesting to view and read**

Master Plans in Salem

- ▶ 1986 – Consultant, citizen committee
- ▶ 1991 – Staff update, citizen committee
- ▶ 2001 – Community forum, consultant, Planning Board served as committee

2001 Salem Master Plan Process

- ▶ Started with public forum in January 2000 attended by 125 people
- ▶ Consultant did most of research and wrote plan
- ▶ Regional Planning Commission wrote Transportation Chapter
- ▶ Public meetings held on each chapter; meeting notices mailed to members of public and posted on local TV channel

2001 Salem Master Plan Process (cont'd.)

- ▶ Opinion survey mailed to 2500 households, 602 responses
- ▶ Used newsletters and web page to inform public
- ▶ Held public hearing and adopted plan on Nov. 13, 2001



Pizza!



2001 Salem Master Plan Buildout Analysis

- ▶ Analysis of potential for future residential growth
- ▶ Used Town's Geographic Information System (GIS) to create a base map
- ▶ Mapped all undeveloped land –excluding publicly owned, surface water, prime wetlands
- ▶ Applied zoning district density standards to calculate the potential number of dwelling units that could be built on undeveloped land in each district
- ▶ Buildout scenario - 2700 additional housing units (25% increase)

Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remember, that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever-growing insistency. Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us. Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty.

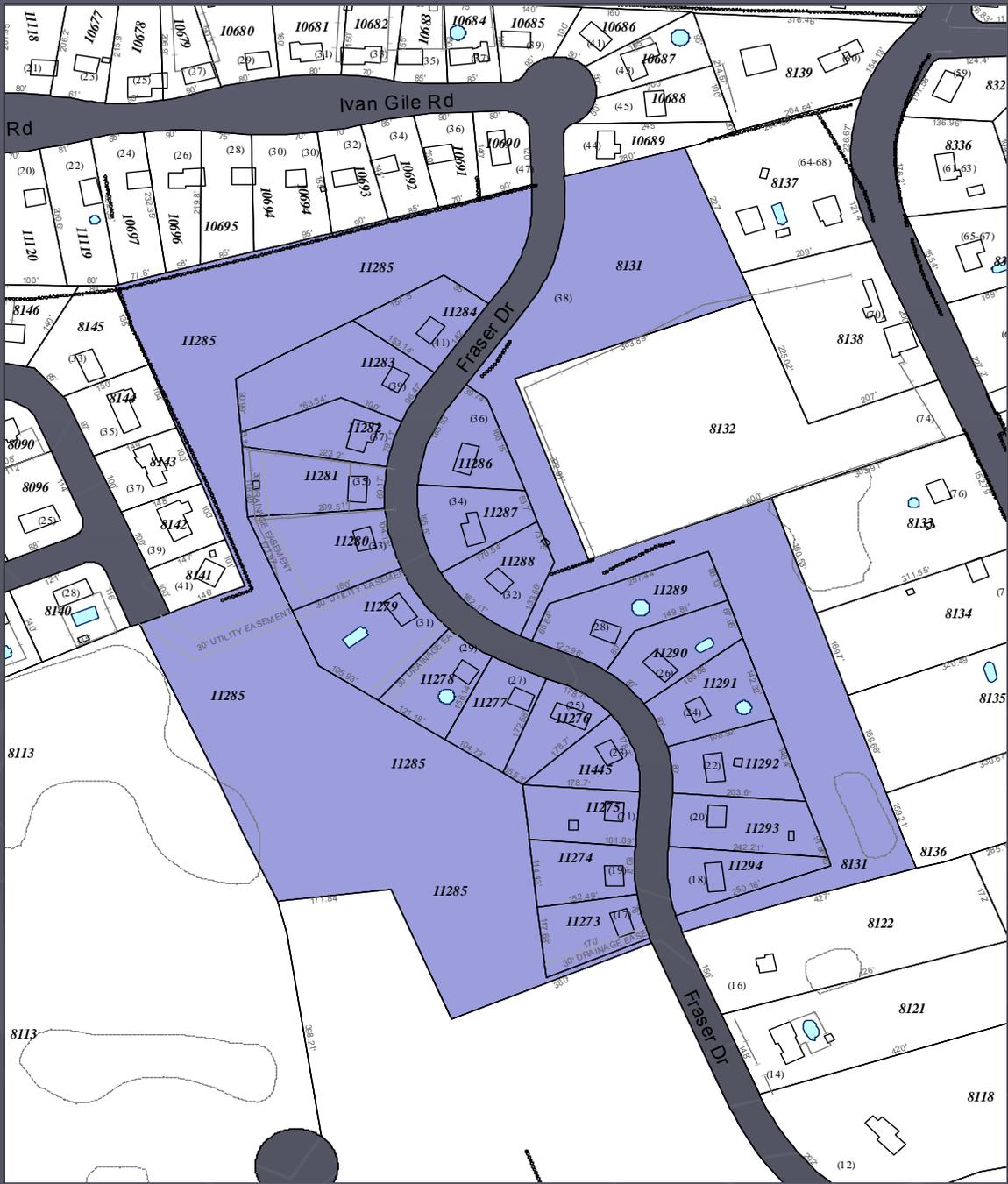
Daniel Burnham

Open Space Subdivisions in Salem

- ▶ Ordinance adopted 1990
- ▶ 15 subdivisions approved and built
- ▶ Several hundred acres preserved
- ▶ Require 50% of parcel to be undeveloped
- ▶ Only single family detached dwellings
- ▶ Same # lots as conventional plan
- ▶ Density bonus for 40 acre+ parcels
- ▶ Allow small lots

Problems With Open Space Subdivisions

- ▶ Open space is afterthought – unusable land, not visible from street, unclear boundaries
- ▶ Lots poorly configured – awkward building envelopes, no trees left, closer together
- ▶ Finished product looks worse than conventional subdivision
- ▶ Yield plan overstates # of lots allowed







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Estates*
Real Estate

FOR SALE
BY OWNER
→











Aurora
Woods









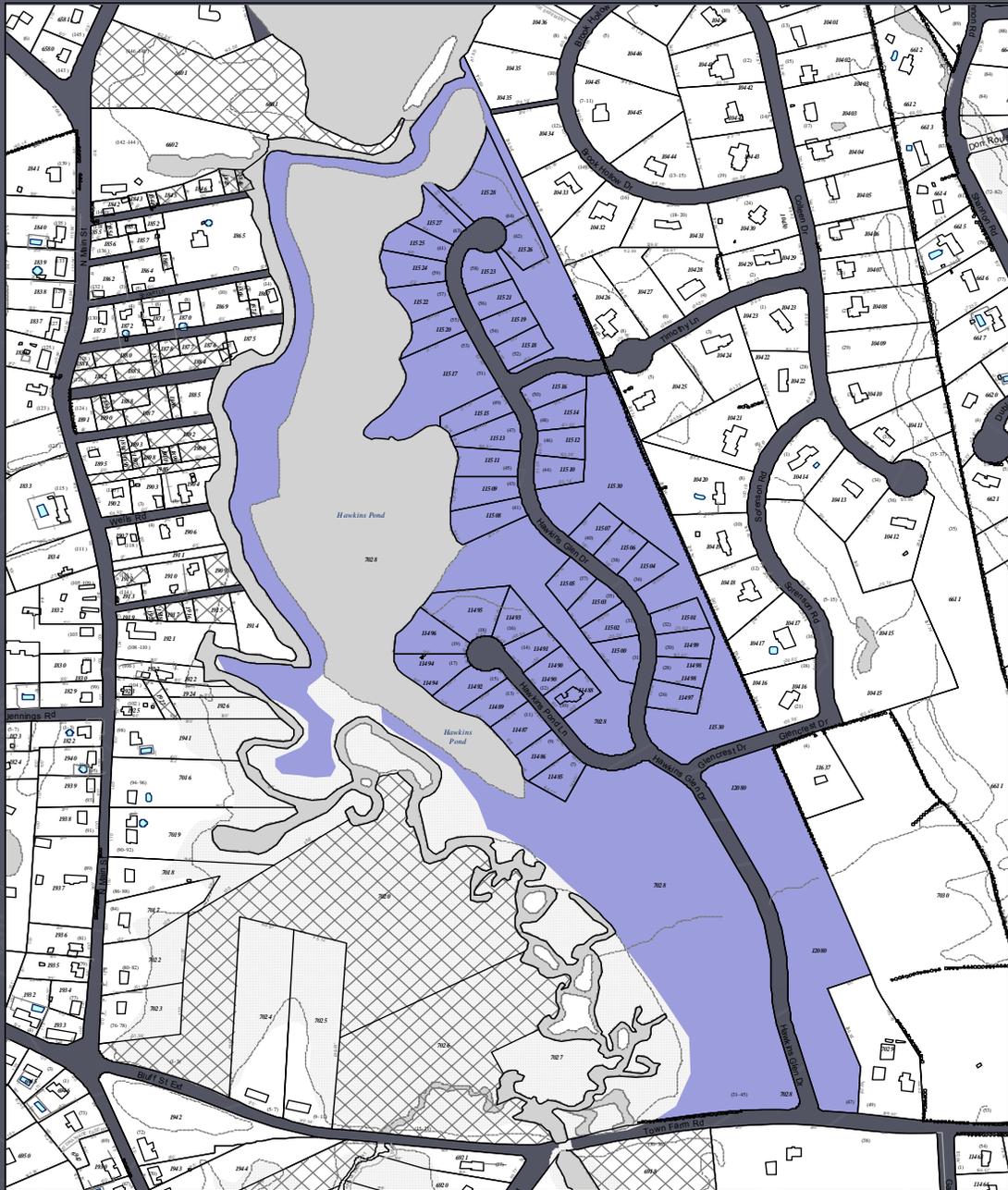
















THE JAWKINS
GLEN

a Captain's Village Development







Lessons

- ▶ **Open space should be visible and usable**
- ▶ **Try to limit cutting of existing trees**
- ▶ **Need street trees to soften impact of denser development**
- ▶ **Make sure that qualifying plans are realistic**
- ▶ **Density bonus is strong incentive**
- ▶ **Difficult for Board members to evaluate subjective criteria**

How To Get Good Open Space Subdivisions

- ▶ Visit other projects
- ▶ Make sure your ordinance says what you want (and don't want)
- ▶ Educate landowners and engineers/surveyors
- ▶ Don't settle for bad projects
- ▶ Get outside help

Lot Shape Regulations in Salem

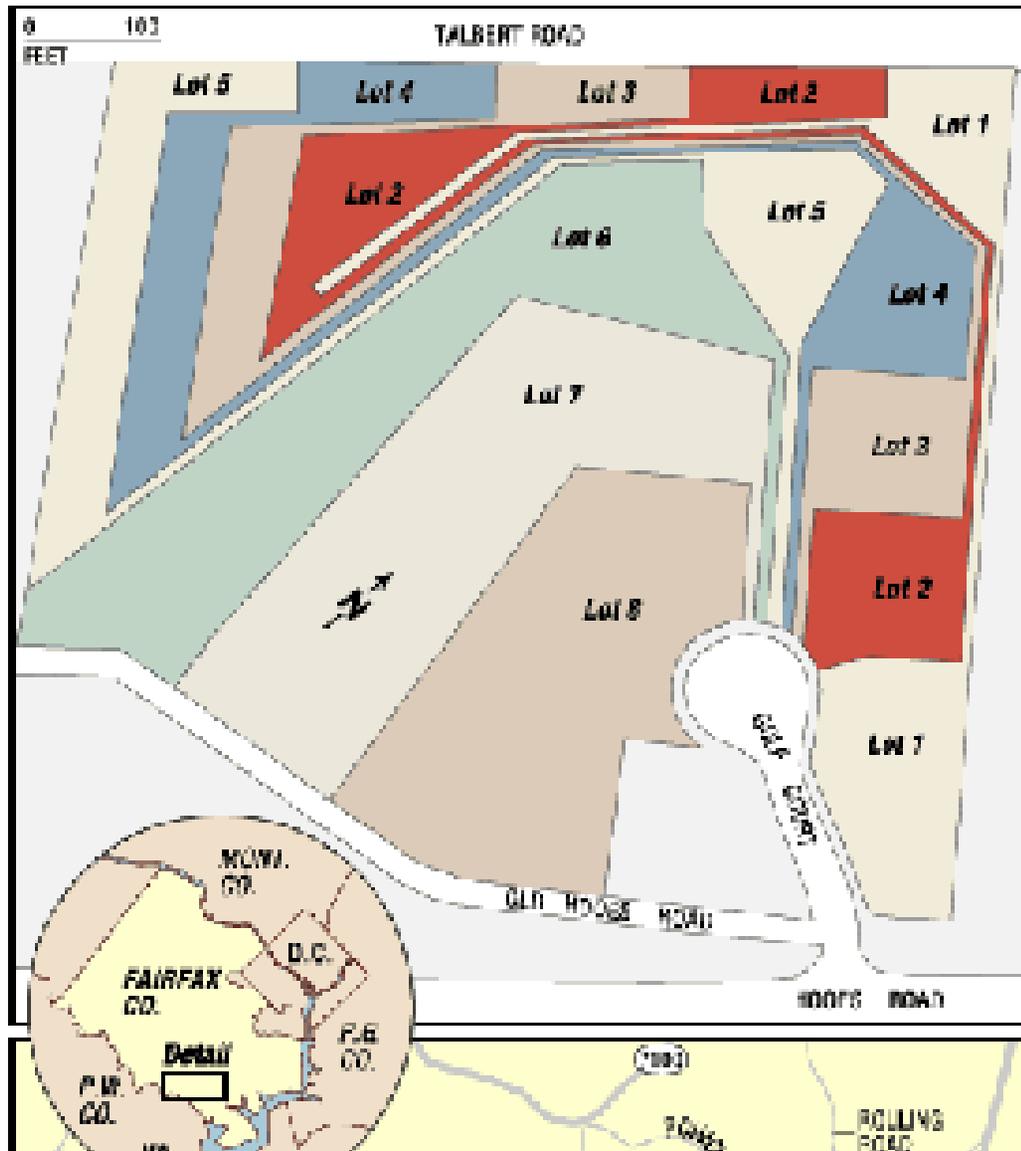
- ▶ The lot size, width, depth, shape, and orientation and the minimum building setback lines shall be appropriate for the location of the subdivision and the type of development and use contemplated. Lots shall provide satisfactory sites for buildings and be properly related to topography. Lots should generally be square or rectangular in shape. Lots shall not contain irregular shapes or elongations solely to provide necessary square footage.

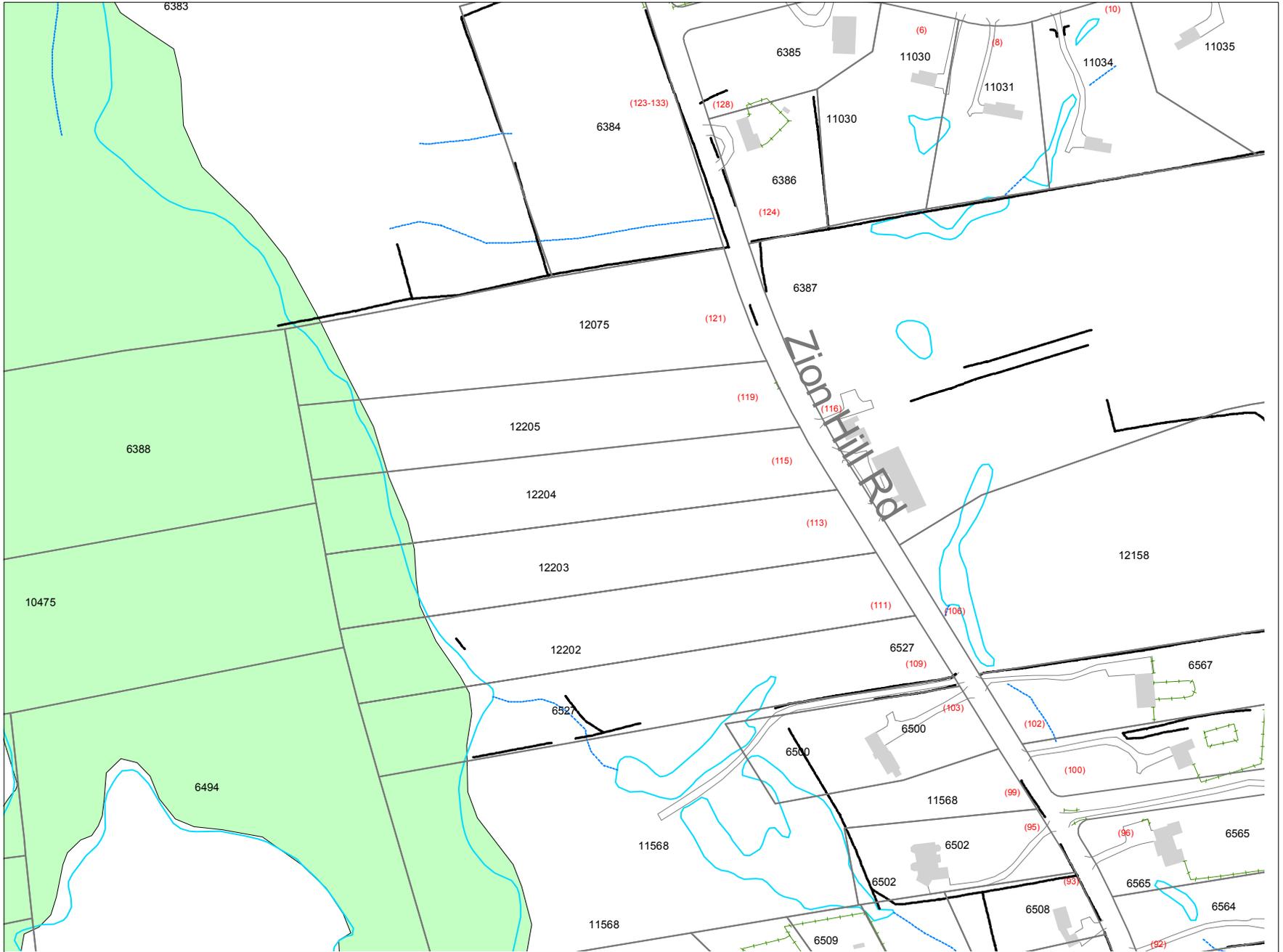
Lot Shape Regulations in Salem (cont'd.)

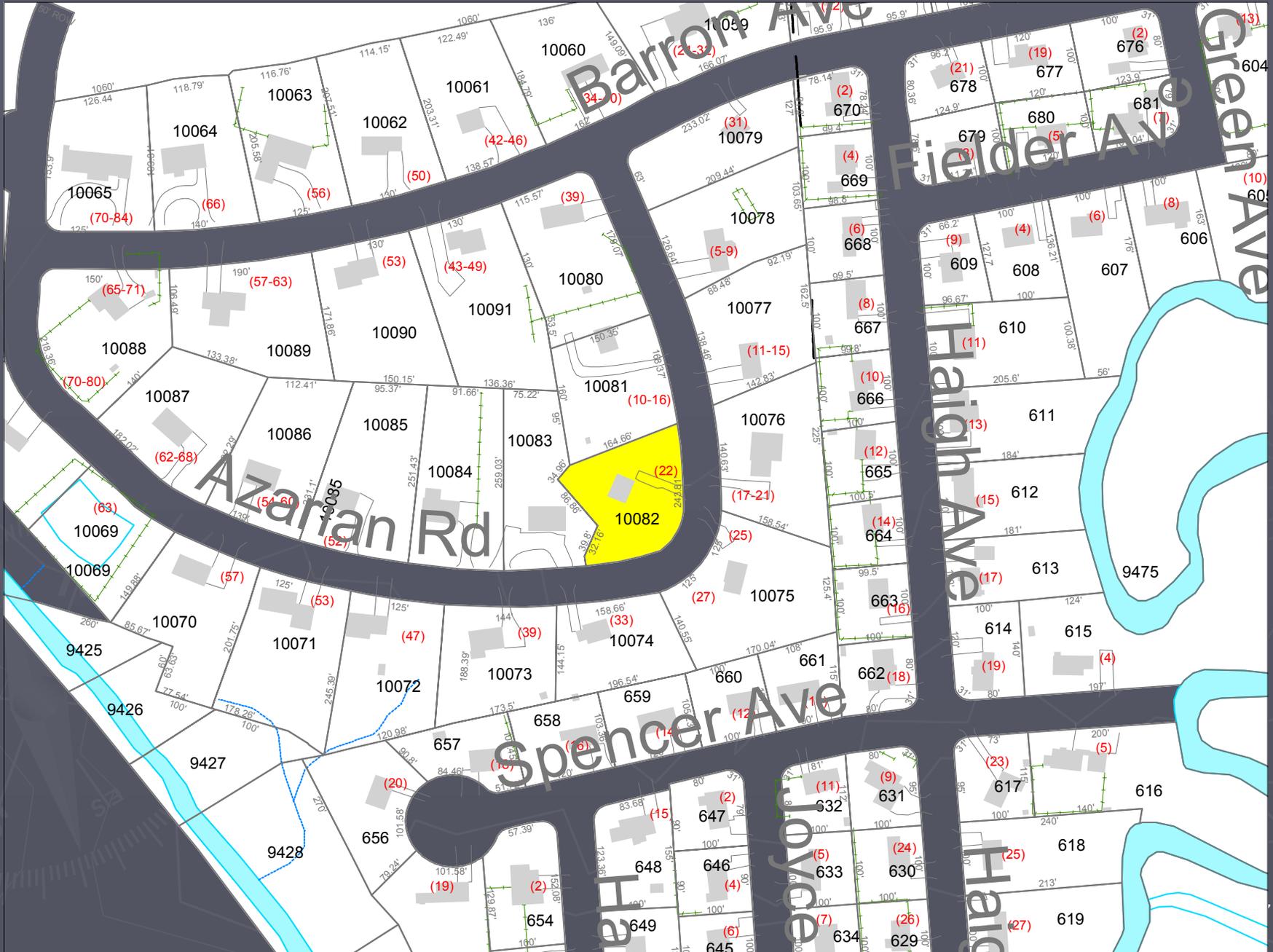
- ▶ Each lot shall contain a building envelope meeting all setback requirements which includes, at a minimum, a contiguous area of useable land (non-wetland, no more than 25% of envelope with slopes greater than 25%) equal to 15,000 square feet in the Rural District and 7,500 square feet in other districts. The building envelope shall be configured such that a rectangle with minimum dimensions of 75'x100' or a circle with a diameter of 100' can be contained within it.

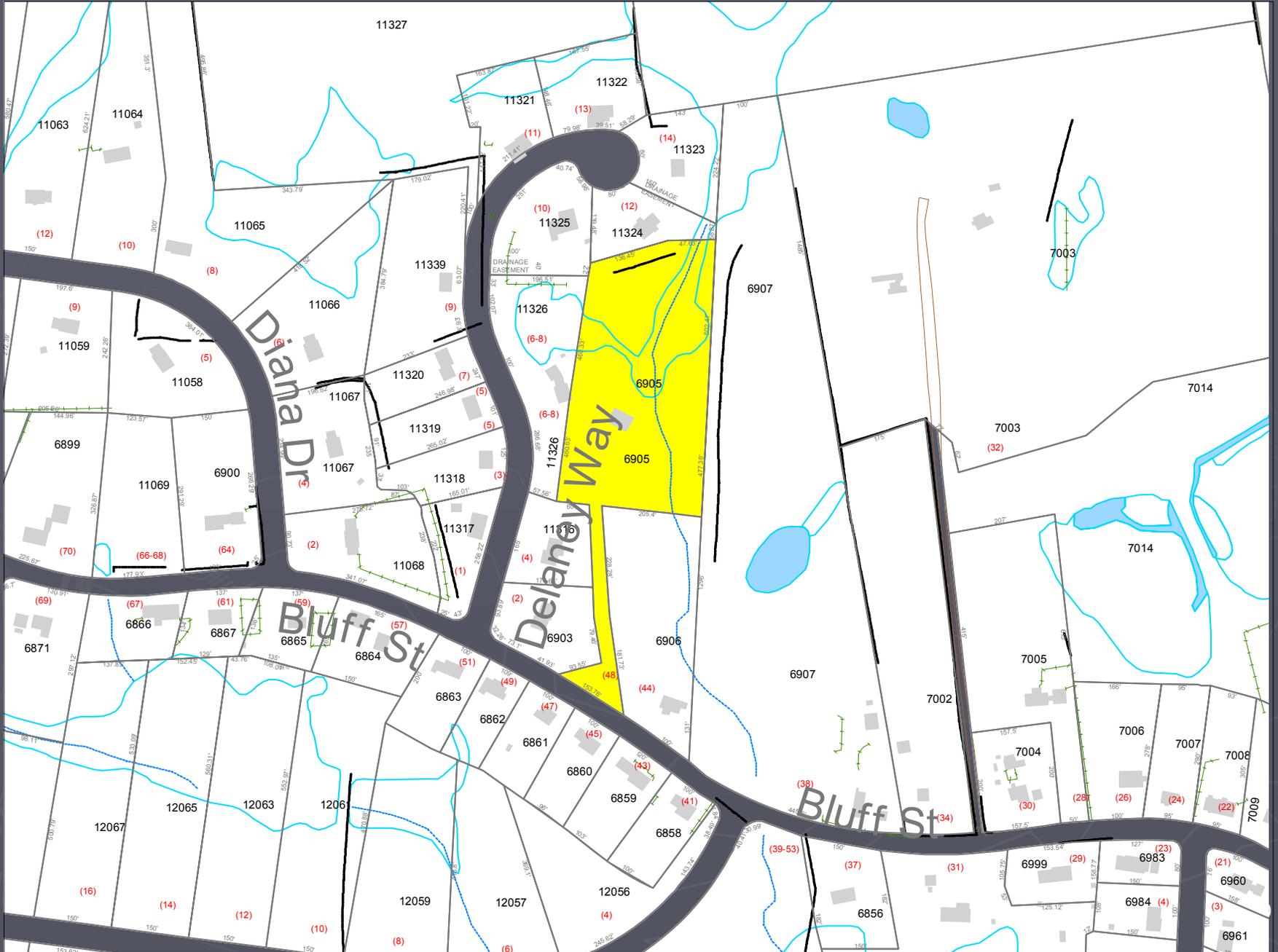
Suburban Growth

Land scarcity and rising prices are driving some developers to carve up a given landscape in an unusual way to create as many lots as possible and still meet county regulations. The planned Giles Glen subdivision in southern Fairfax County is an example of this practice: Here, some side lots and back lots are connected to front lots by small strips of land.









Bedford, NH

- ▶ The **arrangement of lots** shall be appropriate for the location of the subdivision and for the type of development and use contemplated. Lots shall be arranged such that their sidelines are substantially perpendicular or radial to streets. Lots shall be configured in regular geometric shapes, such as squares, triangles, rectangles, or any other form acceptable to the Planning Board to address specific site constraints.
- ▶ A **minimum Buildable Area** of 13,000 square feet shall be provided on lots where the existing natural slopes contained within the Buildable Area are 0% to 8%.
- ▶ A minimum Buildable Area of 20,000 square feet shall be provided on lots where the existing natural slopes contained within the Buildable Area are greater than 8%, but are less than or equal to 25%.
- ▶ No Buildable Area shall contain existing natural slopes that exceed 25%.
- ▶ Each lot shall be configured such that a rectangle with dimensions of 100 feet by 75 feet of Buildable Area or a circle with a diameter of 100 foot of Buildable Area can be contained within it.

Litchfield, NH

- ▶ A subdivision lot layout resulting in an unusual shape solely to satisfy minimum area requirements of the Zoning Ordinance will not be approved. To ensure regular shaped lots, the following standard applies. The Regularity or "R" value of a lot shall be no less than 0.40, where (16 times the area of the lot) is divided by (the perimeter of the lot, squared). A perfect square has an "R" value of 1.0. The applicant shall also demonstrate that each dwelling unit is in a feasible location for safe and convenient access for a driveway without unreasonable grades.

Newbury, NH

- ▶ In order to avoid odd shaped lots, and to ensure adequate space near the road for the construction of a dwelling unit, each lot shall have a Form Factor of less than 25. Lots with either frontage greater than 300 feet or area greater than ten acres are exempt from this requirement
- ▶ Form Factor means the number which represents the relationship between the boundaries of a lot and its area. A small number indicates a squarish, compact lot, while a large number indicates a long and narrow, or convoluted shape. The number is calculated by squaring the perimeter of the lot, in feet, and dividing by its area, in square feet. (FF = P[squared] ÷ A)

Pelham, NH

- ▶ The intent of these regulations is to enhance and insure consistency with the Pelham Zoning Ordinance and the following purposes:
 - To promote lots that are shaped in a manner that promotes clarity of ownership, access across fee-title land rather than easement interests which may promote destructive property disputes, and to promote the convenient and harmonious development of the land.
 - To prevent close proximity of narrow portions of lots that will create a situation that reduces privacy and increases congestion and overcrowding of the land.
 - To prevent the close proximity of house sites tend to create conflicts among the use of the land, including maintenance disputes, use disputes, and property ownership disputes between landowners and is not permitted.
 - To prevent lot shapes lot that cannot reasonably be interpreted to be an orderly layout of the land or insure that proper description of ownership or ease of identification will carry forward in time are not permitted.

Pelham, NH (cont'd.)

Lot Shape

- ▶ Lots shall be shaped in a manner that promotes clarity of ownership
- ▶ No portion of a lot between the dwelling unit site or usable building envelope and the street upon which the lot has frontage shall be less than 75' in width.
- ▶ To maximum extent possible all new lots shall be **rectangular** in nature.
- ▶ In order to protect neighborhood character and promote privacy, non-rectangular or pie-shaped lots may be allowed as long as they are a minimum of three acres in size.
- ▶ No portion of a lot created under these regulations shall be less than 50' in width.

Pelham, NH (cont'd.)

- ▶ Each lot created as a part of these regulations shall have a contiguous **building envelope** area delineated on the parcel and shall be at least 100 by 150 in dimension. The minimum building envelope area shall be 15,000 square feet, sufficient space for natural expansion residential uses commonly associated with single-family structures.
- ▶ Building envelopes shall be selected so as not to intrude on the tops of visible ridgelines.
- ▶ Building envelopes shall be located to minimize the visual impact of the development unless such placement is part of an integrated plan to protect viewsheds or minimize the visual intrusion of the improved portion of the subdivision.
- ▶ Building envelopes shall not include wetlands or 100-year floodplains.
- ▶ Building envelopes shall not include areas with slopes in excess of 25%.
- ▶ No more than 50% of the building envelope may contain 15% slopes.
- ▶ The building envelope shall be accessible to existing or proposed roadways without crossing the wetland conservation district

Design Guidelines

- ▶ Regulations are all text and mandatory
- ▶ Most Board members and applicants don't understand/visualize design regulations
- ▶ Applicants ask "What do you really want?"
- ▶ Guidelines includes photographs and details and are more flexible
- ▶ Pictures make a big difference

Salem Design Guidelines

- ▶ Kick-off meeting with development community (sign companies, landscapers, builders, landowners, media)
- ▶ Draft guidelines prepared by consultant with help from staff, reviewed by Planning Board, posted on web page
- ▶ Adopted as part of site plan review regs
- ▶ See <http://salemnhprojects.org/>

Salem Design Guidelines

(cont'd.)

- ▶ Purpose: help applicants understand what Town wants
- ▶ Five chapters: Site Planning, Architecture, Landscaping, Lighting, Signage
- ▶ Goals, Objectives, Guidelines for each topic
- ▶ Lots of photographs of Salem buildings and sites
- ▶ Incorporates existing design regulations

Salem Design Guidelines

(cont'd.)

- ▶ **More details than standard regulations:**
 - **pedestrian spaces, sidewalks, internal walkways**
 - **multi-building projects, linear buildings, street corners**
 - **awnings and canopies, drive-throughs, service stations**
 - **list of recommended and prohibited plantings**
 - **maintenance of plantings**
 - **size of letters on signs**
- ▶ **Recommended guidelines, not mandatory standards**

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Salem, NH



October 2010

GENERAL ARCHITECTURAL PRINCIPLES



These three commercial buildings are characterized by their use of traditional New England forms and materials. Entrances are well marked and provide users with areas for shelter and/or interaction.

Three examples of generic buildings that have no reference to traditional New England forms or materials.

PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING



Grass or other living groundcover is preferred over inert mulch in parking lot islands to counteract the heat island



Perennials can be an effective way to add color and visual interest to parking lots.



Tall shrubs in parking lots can block visibility and present a safety hazard. Their location also interferes with snow removal.



This island adds visual interest to the parking lot and can withstand harsh winter conditions.



Ornamental trees lead the eye to the entrance of this outlet mall. Shrub masses and/or berms should have been used in addition to screen the parking lot.



Parking lot islands provide an opportunity to use a variety of plant species to break up the mass of pavement and introduce interesting textures.

OBJECTIVES

Exterior Lighting must be designed to provide the minimum level of illumination necessary for security, safety, and visual appeal for both pedestrians and vehicles. Lighting should allow activity after sunset without adding to unnecessary skyglow. Functional, aesthetic, and safety goals should be met with fixtures that are designed as integral site elements.



The color, form, and line of this fixture reflects the contemporary design of this office building. Its height and placement contributes to the human scale of the entrance.



A cut-off fixture that complements the simple line of this commercial building.

Period or Ornamental Fixtures. Decorative fixtures may be used as alternatives to cut-off fixtures, provided that they comply with the Site Plan Regulations, Chapter 268. Period or ornamental fixtures should be designed or selected to complement the color, form, and lines of the architecture on the site.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Lighting Plan. Lighting plans required for development plan review must be presented with the application to enable the Planning Board to properly understand and review the lighting design.

Luminaires. Lighting fixtures mounted on poles or masts must be cut-off fixtures (cut-offs control light 'spill' onto adjacent properties) except for period or historical fixtures described below.

Pole and Fixture Design. The location and design of lighting should complement adjacent buildings, pedestrian amenities, and site elements. Poles and fixtures should be proportionate to the buildings and spaces they illuminate.



Period light fixtures can be an effective and attractive way to add character and scale to the landscape. Fixtures are available with internal baffles to minimize glare.

OBJECTIVES

Signs used to identify a business should be kept simple and direct in message and content. They should convey only the most essential information about the business. Motorists should not be distracted by signs containing excessive information.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Content. Identification signs should contain a maximum of either 30 letters or 7 bits of information. A bit can be a syllable or a symbol. Repetitious information between signs and buildings should be avoided, regardless of the sign area allowed.

Advertising. The use of 'sponsor' logos, slogans, or other messages on a sign, where the 'sponsor' is not the occupant of the property or a franchiser of a business located on the property, is strongly discouraged. If a sign is sponsored, the name of the sponsor and/or its logo, should not occupy more than 25% of the total face of the sign.

Readerboards. Where readerboards are part of a permanent sign, they should contain no more than three lines of text. Lettering height should be a maximum of 6". The readerboard should be fully integrated into the overall sign design by virtue of its form, scale, color, and detailing.



A typical sign treatment for a large retailer, containing more information than is needed to identify the premises.



An attractive identification sign for a similar use that contains just the basic information.



The readerboard in this sign contributes to a cluttered appearance.



The readerboard at the bottom of the panel has been designed as an integral part of the sign.



A simple, direct sign with four 'bits' of information.









Salem Traffic Management Regulations

- ▶ **Do traffic study if generating 100+ new trips per hour**
- ▶ **Propose mitigation to offset impacts**
- ▶ **Use standard performance indicators and guidelines**
- ▶ **Meet minimum sight distance standards**
- ▶ **Construct required improvements prior to occupancy**

Salem Traffic Management Regulations (cont'd.)

- ▶ **Share access points and provide connections to minimize driveways**
- ▶ **Design internal site circulation to accommodate trucks**
- ▶ **Minimize adverse traffic impacts on residential neighborhoods**
- ▶ **Pay roadway impact fees for off-site impacts**



CONGESTED
AREA
AHEAD



RALPHIE'S
CAFF' ITALIANO

Sir Speedy
Printing

Carvel ice cream bakery

Sir Speedy
PRINTING
COPYING
DIGITAL NETWORK

1.07
1.17
1.27

NAILS

SHYER'S
LOBSTER POUND
FISH MARKET

SITTLES
GLASS
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SALEM, NH

SITE







LUMBER

LOFFERY

STOP

STOP





LIQUIDATORS

SPEED LIMIT 35



2412 WC

ONLY

Impact Fees

- ▶ The Good News: Since 1994, impact fees have raised over \$4 million in Salem! Used to pay down bonds for school construction, road improvements, engineering for new police station, plan for park expansion, match for grants
- ▶ Adopted road fees in 1994, school fees in 1997, recreation, public safety, and revised school fees in 2005, new road fee system in 2010
- ▶ Total fee for new single family house is now \$6963 (up from \$2350 in 1997)

Impact Fees (cont'd.)

- ▶ The Bad News: Impact fees are not fair, costly to develop, difficult to administer, and don't necessarily solve problems
- ▶ Long-time residents with no kids in school system must pay impact fees if they build a new house. Newcomers with lots of kids pay no fee if they move into an existing house. 2-bedroom house pays the same fees as 5-bedroom house.
- ▶ Need to hire consultant to prepare methodology report and fee schedule and update it periodically
- ▶ Planning Board assesses fees, but Board of Selectmen spends them
- ▶ Need to refund fees after 6 years if not used

Impact Fees (cont'd.)

- ▶ Administration of fees is not easy – requires coordination and cooperation of numerous parties; Bldg. Inspector or Planner has to review building permits, some applicants are angry about paying fees, waivers are limited, appeal is to Superior Court, Treasurer has to account for all fees; can't be co-mingled with General Fund revenue
- ▶ Pressure to spend \$ on non-qualified items (such as maintenance of roads)
- ▶ “Proportional share” means Town must pay some part of capital costs
- ▶ Having \$ in the bank does not solve any problems
- ▶ Getting capital projects built is time-consuming, costly, and complicated





Working With Applicants

- ▶ Tell them what information is required and what rules must be followed
- ▶ Consistency
- ▶ Reasonable costs
- ▶ Timely decisions
- ▶ Fair treatment

Working with Applicants (cont'd.)

- ▶ Conceptual discussions/pre-application meetings
- ▶ Communicate concerns early
- ▶ Checklists
- ▶ Staff reviews
- ▶ Outside technical reviews
- ▶ Site visits

Pre-Application Meetings

SCOPE

- ▶ review of basic regulations
- ▶ desirability of project
- ▶ introduction to difficult/complex issues

APPLICATION MATERIAL

- ▶ existing conditions - soils, topography
- ▶ proposed development – road location, lot sizes and frontages, building/parking configuration,
- ▶ composite tax map
- ▶ letter describing project and major issues

PROCESS

- ▶ public hearing
- ▶ notice to abutters

SITE PLAN CHECKLIST

Format

___ title block ___ date ___ scale ___ engineer/surveyor stamp ___ abutters names /addresses ___ zoning dist.
___ zoning boundary ___ lot & street numbers ___ North arrow ___ owner/applicant ___ location plan
___ permission from owner

Topography and Environmental Features

___ high intensity soils/wetlands ___ streams, ponds ___ wetland impact ___ wetland mitigation
___ min. wetland setbacks (40' pavement/bldg, 75' septic) ___ dredge/fill permit ___ Cons. Comm. approval
___ local conditional use permit ___ prime wetlands ___ 100' prime wetlands setback (no disturb.)
___ conservation easements ___ floodplain ___ floodplain impact ___ compensatory storage
___ exist. & proposed elevs. (USGS Benchmark) ___ significant environmental features ___ shoreland protection

Drainage & Utilities:

___ water/sewer lines (location & sizes) ___ sewer manholes, watergate valves ___ daily water use/sewer flow
___ pump stations/force mains ___ septic system ___ 4000 sf septic area ___ well ___ protective radius
___ drainage pipes (types, sizes, slopes) ___ drainage calcs ___ peak flow comparison ___ dnstrm/abutter impact
___ invert and rim elevations ___ catch basins (every 300') ___ easements (20' min. width) ___ swales/ditches
___ direction of flow ___ curbing ___ typical details ___ outside engineering review ___ max. fill/cut
___ est. high water table ___ max. side slope 4:1 ___ gas lines ___ existing undgrd utilities ___ utility poles
___ erosion control plan

Buildings:

___ uses ___ dimensions ___ square footage ___ floor elevations ___ setbacks ___ mezzanines, basements
___ rendering ___ front & side elevation drawings (materials, colors, height) ___ height ___ doorways
___ retail design standards ___ screen rooftop mechanical units

Traffic:

___ driveways ___ driveway profiles ___ curb cut widths & radii ___ driveway widths
___ loading areas ___ sidewalks ___ circulation ___ pedestrian circulation ___ parking configuration
___ sight distance ___ traffic study ___ outside review ___ off-site impacts ___ road improvement fee
___ traffic management regs. ___ compliance with ADA parking standards ___ conformance with ITS plan

Other:

___ lot size ___ lot coverage calculations ___ parking calculations ___ parking spaces (9' x 20')
___ 5' or 10' parking lot buffer ___ handicapped spaces (upright signs)
___ landscaping (size, quantity, species) ___ retail landscaping standards ___ screening/buffers
___ 1 tree per 2000 sf. pavement (for 50 car lots) ___ 20' front yard (for 100+ lots)
___ trash disposal (fence around dumpster) ___ fences
___ signs (size, height, setback, material, color, illumination) ___ retail sign standards
___ height of light posts ___ outdoor lighting (location, fixtures, intensity) ___ retail lighting standards
___ fire lanes ___ fire hydrants ___ fire alarm/sprinkler notes ___ LP and fuel tanks ___ pollutants
___ hazardous materials ___ noise ___ snow storage ___ regional impact ___ variances/special exceptions
___ waivers ___ shopping cart storage areas ___ outside storage areas/containers ___
___ construction standards and details ___ public safety impact fee ___ 11" x 17" version of plans
___ pdf version of plans ___ Design Guidelines

State/Federal Permits:

___ subdivision - DES ___ sewer extension - DES ___ water line extension - DES ___ septic - DES
___ community well - DES ___ dredge/fill - NHWB ___ Army Corps of Engineers ___ Site Specific - DES
___ driveway - NH DOT

Town Staff Recommendations:

___ Assessors Office ___ Building Department ___ Engineering Department ___ Fire Department
___ Planning Department ___ Police Department ___ Public Works Department

Site Plan-Subdivision Enforcement Tips

- ▶ **Outside reviews and inspections**
- ▶ **As-built plans**

As-Built Site Plan Certification

I certify that the building and site improvements for this project, including but not limited to building location, dimensions, and setbacks, site grading, utilities, road work, drainage, landscaping, lighting, parking spaces, signage, wetland impact, floodplain impact, and wetland/floodplain mitigation areas, if any, have been installed in conformance with the approved site plan and acceptable construction standards. Any discrepancies from the approved site plan have been identified. I certify that the improvements as constructed meet the design intent and will function as designed.

Engineer/Surveyor/Wetland Scientist Stamp