



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island

Department of Community Development

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November 27, 2023

TO: Melissa Cordeiro, Town Clerk
FROM: Diane M. Williamson, Director
RE: **Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Chapter 28 – Per State Law Revisions**

The Planning Board reviewed the proposed amendments to Chapter 28, as drafted by the Town Solicitor's Office and the Department of Community Development Staff, at their November 9 and November 21, 2023 meetings.

Following the review of these amendments at the November 21, 2023 meeting, the Planning Board unanimously passed a motion to refer the draft proposals, as revised, to the Town Council and recommend adoption of same. The Planning Board made a finding in the motion that the draft proposed amendments are consistent with the General Purposes of Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan.

Attached are the documents that reflect the Planning Board's recommendations for the Town Council's December 6, 2023 meeting as follows:

- Draft proposed amendments to the Permitted Land Use Table;
- Draft proposed amendments to the Special Use Permit Standards; and,
- Draft proposed amendments incorporating required language from State Law

As you know, these changes to the Zoning Ordinance are in response to the State Law amendments that will take effect on January 1, 2024. In addition to required language that must be included in the Town's Zoning Ordinance, the State Law says that any Special Use Permit uses without standards are allowed uses by right. The Board spent considerable time reviewing the Permitted Land Use Table and the recommended edits include creating new Special Use Permit standards where there were none or changing a use to a permitted or non-permitted use.

Given the short timeframe for these amendments to be considered and adopted, the Planning Board will conduct a 6-month review following adoption. The Planning Board would like to re-examine the proposed changes to see if any need to be further clarified or refined. The Board was particularly concerned with the new Adaptive Reuse section and over the next 6 months would like to study what other Towns have adopted to see if there are examples that Bristol could adopt to further protect the Town.

It is also noted that the Planning Board recommended that the Inclusionary Zoning provision of the Ordinance be repealed given the new State Law mandating high density bonus calculations. The Comprehensive Permit process will remain with revisions as per the State Law. The Town has recently received a grant to update the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan; it is hoped that through this update we may find other tools to create more affordable housing.

Thank you.