

## **OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED ZONING BYLAW REORGANIZATION**

In 2021 and early 2022, the Town of Essex Planning Board performed a comprehensive zoning audit (see link at end) to assess how the Town’s current zoning bylaw performs for residents and towards advancing community goals. This process was led by the Planning Board with assistance from the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC). Significant community input was collected to inform recommendations included in the final zoning diagnostic, starting with a recommendation to reorganize the bylaw.

This proposed reorganization of the zoning bylaw aims to make it consistent with current bylaw standards and best practices. The changes are intended to provide a better and more intuitive organization, grouping similar regulations in appropriate sections. The new outline will allow greater flexibility for future improvements and updates, within the proposed structure.

- The ONLY changes made in this revision are the new section numbers and titles, with some new sections added (which are all noted as such and which are only placeholders).
- All the FORMER numbering and titles have been included for reference in the new sections, immediately below the new number and title, and are noted as “**formerly**” (in boldface) throughout the reorganized bylaw.
- All the current text of the existing bylaw has been included verbatim, adding only additional (boldface and/or underlined) updated section number references, consistent with the new numbering (again leaving the existing referenced number noted as “formerly”).
- No wording and/or meaning of any portion of the bylaw has been altered at all. The text has been simply moved to a new location in the new format, with no substantive changes.

<b>CURRENT ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>PROPOSED ORGANIZATION</b>
<b>6-1</b> General Provisions	<b>6-1:</b> General Provisions
<b>6-2</b> Definitions	<b>6-2:</b> Definitions
<b>6-3</b> Land Use Regulations	<b>6-3:</b> Establishment of Districts
<b>6-4</b> Non-Conforming Uses	<b>6-4:</b> Use Regulations
<b>6-5</b> Supplementary Provisions	<b>6-5:</b> Dimensional and Density Regulations
<b>6-6</b> Off-Street Parking and Loading	<b>6-6:</b> Development Regulations
<b>6-7</b> Signs	<b>6-7:</b> Additional Regulations
<b>6-8</b> Administration	<b>6-8:</b> Open Space Residential Development
<b>6-9</b> Board of Appeals	<b>6-9:</b> Nonconforming Uses and Structures
<b>6-10</b> Overlay Districts	<b>6-10:</b> Administration and Enforcement
<b>6-11</b> Southern Conomo Point Zoning District	
<b>6-12</b> Central Conomo Point Zoning District	
<b>6-13</b> Open Space Residential Development	
<b>6-14</b> Temp. Moratorium on Recreational Marijuana Establishments	

<b>6-15</b> Essex Downtown Zoning District	
<b>6-16</b> Temp. Moratorium on Business and Industrial Conversions	

#### **EXAMPLES OF REORGANIZED PORTIONS:**

The examples provided below are some of the more significant steps of the reorganization, and the list is not intended to address every reorganized section, which are all in the 58-page proposed bylaw reorganization, found on the Town website at [www.essexma.org](http://www.essexma.org).

- New sections **6-1: General Provisions** and **6-2: Definitions** remain as currently organized.
- New section **6-3: Establishment of Districts** includes existing sections **6-10** (Overlay Districts), **6-11** (Southern Conomo Point Zoning District), **6-12** (Central Conomo Point Zoning District) and **6-15** (Essex Downtown Zoning District), which all regulate separate districts. This new section keeps all district regulations together, with subsections for each unique area.
- New Section **6-4: Use Regulations** includes existing section **6-3** (Land Use Regulations) as well as Special Permit categories (also currently in 6-3) and allows for additional (future) sections that may cover Accessory Structures, as well as allowing for the future development of comprehensive Use Tables, which are a ‘best practice’ and widely used in current bylaw development.
- New section **6-6: Development Regulations** includes existing sections 6-6 (Parking) and 6-7 (Signs), as well as other site and feature related regulations.
- New section **6-7: Additional Regulations** includes other regulations, such as Home Occupations and Moratoria, and also provides a new title (no language) for future guidance on Scenic Roads.
- New Section **6-8: Open Space Residential Development** includes current section 6-13 in its existing organization. New section **6-9: Nonconforming Uses and Structures** includes current section 6-4 in its existing organization.
- New section **6-10: Administration and Enforcement** includes existing sections **6-8** (Administration) and **6-9** (Board of Appeals), along with Special Permit Regulations and Site Plan Review, which are part of the administration of the bylaw.

#### **Questions?**

If you have questions about the reorganization or the impetus for this work, please contact Planning Board Chair Lisa O’Donnell ([planningboard@essexma.org](mailto:planningboard@essexma.org)).

More information on the zoning project can be found at <https://mapc.ma/essexmazoning>.