

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw to revise permitting criteria to ameliorate racial, disability, and other equity impacts; make special permitting criteria and site plan review criteria consistent; replace the term “family” with the term “household”; permit more than one individual in rooming units; or act in any other manner in relation thereto.

(Inserted by the Select Board at the request of the Planning Board)

DESCRIPTION:

This article would update the Zoning Bylaw to incorporate a variety of changes in response to the Systemic Racism Resolution adopted under Article 8 of Special Town Meeting 2020-2, the Full Inclusion Resolution adopted under Article 30 of the 2021 Annual Town Meeting, and the site plan review changes adopted under Article 44 of the 2021 Annual Town Meeting. Specifically, it would:

- State the Town’s intent that any ambiguities in the Zoning Bylaw be interpreted and applied to forbid discriminatory effects;
- Address and ameliorate racial, disability, and other equity impacts in permitting decisions;
- Update and simplify the special permit and site plan review criteria ~~related to transportation and the environment~~ to be consistent;
- Replace the definition of “family” with a more inclusive definition of “household” ~~that includes groups of unrelated disabled persons~~; and
- Permit more than one resident in a rooming unit.

PROPOSED MOTION:

That the Zoning Bylaw, Chapter 135 of the Code of the Town of Lexington, be amended as follows (~~struck-~~~~through~~ text is to be removed and underlined text is to be added), and further that non-substantive changes to the numbering of this bylaw be permitted to comply with the numbering format of the Code of the Town of Lexington:

1. Add a new sentence at the end of § 135-1.2, as follows:

It is the intent of the Town of Lexington that zoning requirements within the town encourage diversity and equity among Town residents and do not discriminate against any person or group on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality, ability, or any other basis prohibited by federal or state law, and further that any ambiguities in the bylaw be interpreted with this intent in mind.

2. Amend § 135-9.4.2 as follows:

9.4.2 Criteria. Special permits ~~will shall~~ be granted by the SPGA, unless otherwise specified herein, only upon its written determination that the adverse effects of the proposed use will not outweigh its beneficial impacts to the Town or the neighborhood, in view of the particular characteristics of the site, and of the proposal in relation to that site. The determination will shall include consideration of each of the following in addition to any other specific factors applicable to a particular use or activity and required elsewhere by this Bylaw.:

1. ~~Specific factors set forth elsewhere in this bylaw for the proposed use or activity;~~
1. Social, equity, diversity, public health, economic, or community needs; ~~which are served by the proposal;~~

2. Transportation access, parking, circulation, and accessibility; Traffic flow and safety, including parking and loading;
 3. Public infrastructure, Adequacy of utilities and other public services;
 4. Neighborhood scale; and character and social structures;
 5. Open space, natural features, and the landscape. Impacts on the natural environment; and
 6. Potential fiscal impact, including impact on Town services, tax base, and employment.
3. Amend § 135-9.5.5 as follows:

9.5.5 Review Standards. The Planning Board in its regulations shall establish standards for site plan review of activities and uses not covered by § 9.5.6 that will at a minimum address the following:

1. Siting of facilities;
 2. Sustainable, climate-sensitive, and environmentally-conscious site design practices;
 3. Open space, natural features, and the landscape, ~~emphasizing the function of natural, aesthetic, social, and recreational design;~~
 4. Ecosystem function;
 5. ~~Circulation and connectivity that is safe and accessible for all;~~
 6. ~~Effective and efficient transportation systems and the adverse impacts of motor vehicle transportation;~~
 4. Transportation access, parking, circulation, and accessibility;
 5. Protection of surface and groundwater quality;
 6. Social, equity, diversity, public health, or community needs;
 7. ~~Town character and Historic significance;~~ Historically significant buildings or places;
 8. ~~Impacts on public services and facilities;~~ Public infrastructure, utilities, and public services; and
 9. Siting of signage.
 10. Safety; and
 11. ~~Potential adverse effects of development.~~
4. In § 135-10.0, amend definitions as follows:

DWELLING UNIT

One or more rooms designed, occupied, or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, with cooking, sleeping and sanitary facilities provided within the dwelling unit for the exclusive use of a single family ~~maintaining~~ a household.

FAMILY HOUSEHOLD

One or more individuals living together as a single housekeeping unit and occupying one dwelling or rooming unit. ~~For purposes of controlling residential density, not more than four unrelated individuals shall constitute a family; any roomer living in the dwelling unit shall be included in determining the number of unrelated individuals.~~

ROOMER

~~An individual, other than a member of a family occupying a dwelling unit,~~ A household occupying a rooming unit, for living and sleeping but not for cooking and eating purposes, and paying rent, which may include an allowance for meals, by prearrangement on a long-term basis.

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