

MIXED USE OVERLAY DISTRICT EXPLANATION

The New Boston Planning Board is working on a proposal for a Mixed Use Overlay District in the village area of New Boston. The map of the proposed area is available on the Town's website at http://www.newbostonnh.gov/Pages/NewBostonNH_Planning/MixedUse.pdf. The 2006 Master Plan update recommended the establishment of a Village District "to regulate development of the Village Center to maintain its rural, small town character. This character is dependent upon preserving architecture and a mix of commercial and residential uses in the district."

Based on feedback from some village center residents and business owners, the Planning Board took a proactive decision at the end of 2011 to focus on working on a mixed use district as part of their 2012 goals. Creating a Mixed Use District will provide opportunities for affordable housing, economic development, and preserving traditional development patterns. History tells us that there have consistently been business uses mixed with residential uses in the village area. While not necessarily in the same building, there have, as is common in many small New England towns, always been businesses and houses side by side on their respective lots.

The Planning Board discussed the many ways in which a Mixed Use District could be enacted and decided to use an overlay district approach. An overlay district is a set of requirements that are superimposed over the existing underlying zoning district and the physical area it encompasses. In the context of mixed use, the overlay is proposed to go over various lots in the village area (see map), and could have uses that are different than currently allowed.

It may seem that there are not many details available at the moment and there is a very good reason for this. While the Planning Board has been researching this matter for months and is familiar with the many possible ways a mixed use district could be enacted, they are committed to getting input and opinion from the people who will be affected by the proposal before beginning a draft ordinance. To this end the Board has set a target to have the mixed use overlay district on the 2014 ballot.

A public input gathering session has been scheduled for **Saturday, October 20, 2012, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Whipple Free Library Community Room**. Breakfast refreshments will be provided. This session is not intended only for residents of the proposed Mixed Use Overlay District. The Board urges anyone with an interest in New Boston's future planning to attend. Other public meetings will take place through the fall and winter of 2012.

Following the public input sessions, the Board will be able to prepare a draft ordinance based on the information gathered over the fall and winter. This draft will be publicized and discussed through 2013. The Planning Board is excited to work through this collaborative process and encourages anyone with questions to come to the meetings or to contact the Planning Department for further details: 487-2500 ext. 142 or s.silver@newbostonnh.gov.