

**PUBLIC HEARINGS ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS
MAY 26, 2021 BOARD MEETING**

**NOTE TO PLANNING BOARD REGARDING PROPOSED
AMENDMENTS**

From: Wayne Marshall, Project Planner

Erica Nealley is now dropping off information to you regarding the public hearing associated with multi-family housing that is scheduled for May 26. This memorandum provides additional information regarding the material and upcoming hearing.

As folks likely recall, the Planning Board reviewed and discussed potential options and amendments to existing Zoning Ordinances regarding the regulation of multi-family housing at its meeting of February 10, and again at your meeting of April 7. I have now prepared draft amendments that I believe address the issues and approaches that the Board has identified.

The Board is scheduled to conduct a single overall public hearing on the proposed amendments. I would suggest the following:

- 1) Provide me an opportunity to present background information on each of the proposed amendments prior to conducting the hearing. I also suggest limited questions and discussion by the Board during this initial presentation.
- 2) Conduct the public hearing and accept comments on any or all of the proposals. I would not try to segment the hearing among the various Ordinance amendments, I would simply allow anyone who may want to make a comment to offer comment. I also would recommend that the Board not engage in discussion with anyone who offers comments; the hearing is a time to listen.
- 3) If comment is received, at the close of the hearing, the Board can decide if any Board members would like to respond to any comments or questions that are received, or if you would like staff to respond.
- 4) Next, the Board should engage in your discussion of the proposals. I recommend the Board discuss the proposals in the following order:
 - Article IX, Performance Standards, regarding the proposed regulations for multi-family housing.
 - Article V, District Regulations. Proposed amendments to 10 zoning districts.
 - Article VI, PUD, Rural Affordable Housing Standards. This is not an advertised hearing, but the issue is raised in the Art V, discussion above for the Protection Rural 1 and Residential/Agricultural I districts.
 - Chapter 98, Tech Standards. Does Board want to make changes to the parking standards? There was initial discussion of this issue at your April 7 meeting.

- Chapter 66, General Provisions. Definitions.
 - Chapter 102, Zoning, Clean-up to the Art IX, Div 6, Standards for Accessory Dwelling Units. The amendments do not change any standards, they simply clean-up a numbering/citation issue.
- 5) Board is responsible for considering the amendments and deciding if you would like to offer a recommendation to the Council to consider acting on the amendments. The Board should not feel compelled to move forward on any or all of the proposals unless you are prepared to do so. Board votes will be needed at some point.

Next, a bit more background information on the amendments.

1) CHAPTER 102, ZONING, ARTICLE IX, PERFORMANCE STANDARDS, DIVISION 7, SUPPLEMENTAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING.

This is a newly proposed Division in the Code. It establishes specific performance standards that apply to the development of multi-family housing. As discussed at past Board meetings, the amendments identify standards that would apply to the design and installation of a subsurface system for wastewater disposal for any multi-family housing project that cannot connect to public sewer. If the Board chooses to implement the approach you identified at your April 7 meeting to allow multi-family in rural zoning districts where such previously was prohibited, particularly the RA-1, PR-1, and GP-A zoning districts, the Department believes that these subsurface system standards are particularly critical. I believe the standards are well-thought out and rigorous.

2) CHAPTER 102, ZONING, ARTICLE V, DISTRICT REGULATIONS.

The proposed amendments would affect 10 of Belfast's existing zoning districts. I have offered a few overall comments on the draft amendments, and identified some of the specific issues that the Board may want to discuss for each district.

Overall Comment # 1: While much of the information is very similar for the identified zoning districts, this is a lot of information to review and absorb. Also, while many of the changes are associated with the goal of encouraging the development of more multi-family housing, the proposed revisions involve a host of other changes. Please ask any questions that you may have regarding the changes.

Overall Comment # 2: I initially worked on the amendments for the GP-A, GP-B and PR-1 zoning districts. As I began to work on the amendments for the 5 Commercial zoning districts, I chose to change the format of the amendments. In short, I started to use more tables rather than extensive narratives. I would encourage the Board to discuss which format

you like better. If you prefer one format over the other, all amendments can be changed to reflect the preferred format.

Overall Comment # 3: One of my main take-aways from the April 7 Board meeting is that the majority of the Board favored allowing some amount of multi-family housing in the City's main rural zoning district's; GP-A, PR-1, and RA-I, along with more opportunities in the RA-II district. Nearly all or all new multi-family housing in these districts would be located on a subsurface system. I have suggested density standards that would allow the development of both triplexes and four-plexes, and suggested options to allow other forms (more units in 1 structure) for PUD developments. The Board should determine if you think the standards I am proposing make sense. **ALSO - YOU HAVE YET TO RECEIVE THE DRAFT AMENDMENTS FOR THE RA-I ZONE;** the only district that I have not yet completed.

Overall Comment # 4: In the Districts that have access to public sewer, the Ordinances allow multi-family housing at densities of about 19 units/acre; a standard that the City adopted for the Rte 3 Commercial and Office Park districts. The Board expressed support of this standard at your past meetings.

Overall Comment # 5: Most districts identify options for residential planned unit developments (PUD) or cluster housing developments. In most districts, no density 'bump' is proposed for a PUD, however, in others, there is a bump. This approach means that the main value of a PUD is the alternative lay-out rather than more units. The Board may want to discuss such.

Some specific comments on the proposed standards for the 10 districts:

General Purpose A: Limited opportunities for housing on public sewer, most on subsurface system. Review of subsurface density standards and lot size standards for subsurface warrants review.

General Purpose B: As directed by the Board, multi-family housing has been eliminated as an option in this zone because of proximity to airport. City will need to revisit this issue when the airport overlay zone is examined.

Residential Agricultural I: While I have yet to send out the final draft (needs a bit more work), there are a number of issues in the draft I am preparing that warrant attention.

- Minimum lot size. I am recommending the current differential in the Ordinance between a lot created through a subdivision (2 acres) and through an exempt division (1 acre) be eliminated. I am recommending a lot size of 1.5 acres (on septic), the size recommended in the adopted land use plan for the Outside Rural area. Board should discuss.
- Minimum lot frontage. I am recommending an increase in lot frontage from current 100 feet to 200 feet. 100 feet makes no sense for either a 2 acre or a 1.5 acre lot.
- Crocker Road. The westerly side of Crocker Road is in the RA-I zone and the easterly side is in the RA-II zone. I have proposed standards that would make the westerly side of

the road more similar to the easterly side of the road. The Board appeared to support such at the April 7 meeting.

- Multi-family on most areas would be for tri-plexes and four-plexes on lot sizes that are 2 and 2 and 2.5 acres respectfully.
- I note that the RA-I zone allows a significant number of nonresidential uses, and that it may be appropriate to require a 2 acre lot size for nonresidential uses.
- I also note that I had not prepared earlier drafts of amendments for this zone because it was not a focus of the initial proposals. In short, please review the draft that I email you to see if it addresses your concerns.

Residential Agricultural II: Many of the amendments for this zone reflect the issue that we discussed of trying to encourage more development in this zone, particularly opportunities for development based on activities that occur in the adjacent Rte 137 zone. Also, while most development in this area likely will be on a subsurface system, I have suggested more intensive density standards for this zone on septic because of its location.

Searsport Avenue Waterfront: As discussed at the April 7 meeting, no opportunities for multi-family housing on a subsurface system. Although not specifically a multi-family issue, I note that the SAW zone is the only one of the zoning districts now being discussed that has a minimum lot coverage standard; building only vs. an impervious surface ratio.

Protection Rural 1: Similar to the RA-I zone, this is the Board's first opportunity to see a specific draft of amendments for this district. I retained the 2 acre minimum lot size with 200 feet of frontage, even though the Future Land Use Plan recommends 1.5 acre for this Outside Rural area. Density standards for multi-family are triplex on 2.5 acres and four-plex on 3 acres. That said, I am uncertain if there is good justification to have different density standards for the RA-I and PR-1 zones for much of the affected areas.

Route 137 Mixed Use (Commercial): This district will allow multi-family on a subsurface system because less than half of the district has access to public sewer.

Route 141 & Mill Lane Mixed Use (Commercial): This district does not allow multi-family on Mill Lane per Board discussions. There are opportunities for multi-family on Swan Lake Ave and on Rte 1 because of access to public sewer.

Route One South Mixed Use (Commercial): Like SAW zone, no multi-family options on a subsurface system since sewer is generally available.

Searsport Avenue Mixed Use (Commercial): SAC zone allows multi-family on septic and densities similar to RA-II zone; hard to provide sewer to the extensive amount of backland in this zone.

3) RURAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING PUD STANDARDS, CHAPTER 102, ZONING, ARTICLE VI, DIVISION 2.

First, these amendments were not noticed in the public hearing ad. That said, this type of development is allowed in the RA-I and PR-1 zoning districts. With the Board's direction to allow multi-family housing in these zoning districts, I have included language in both the RA-I and PR-1 proposals to allow multi-family housing in a Rural Affordable Housing PUD. If the Board is interested in this option, the City will also need to enact minor amendments to the Rural Affordable Housing standards as shown in the draft amendments that I provided for your consideration. I also note that I have included the complete text for these standards since no one on the current Board has ever reviewed a proposal for this type of subdivision.

4) CHAPTER 98, TECHNICAL STANDARDS, PARKING FOR MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING.

The Board discussed this issue at its meeting of April 7, but there was no clear consensus. I have prepared a revised parking table that makes some minor tweaks to the current on-site parking standards. Board should review such and determine what you believe is appropriate. I also attached the parking standard comparison table for other Maine municipalities that I provided to you at your meeting of April 7.

5) CHAPTER 66, GENERAL PROVISIONS.

The Board appeared to be comfortable with the proposed revisions at past meetings. Let me know if you have any questions.

6) CHAPTER 102, ZONING, ARTICLE IX, PERFORMANCE STANDARDS, DIVISION 6, ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS.

So, why is this on the agenda? Well, some well meaning planner (me) inadvertently used citations (Section numbers) that are used in other parts of the Code. Stupid mistake. In short, the sole purpose of having this public hearing on this issue is starting the public process to fix this error.

I also have attached information from my February 10 and April 6 memorandums to the Board regarding this issue. Please review if you so choose. I am also attaching a zoning map for the City to help you in your review of information for the zoning districts.

I will do my best to answer any questions at the May 26 meeting.

APRIL 7, 2021 MEETING MEMORANDUM

MY MAIN TAKE-AWAYS FROM THE FEBRUARY 10 BOARD MEETING

1. The Board recognized that the City and Planning Board, pursuant to Ordinance amendments adopted in October 2020, will use Chapter 90, Site Plan, to conduct the review of all multi-family housing projects.
2. The Board supported the proposed increase in density standards for multi-family housing in all of the above identified zoning districts if the property is connected to public sewer. Density standard typically is about 19 units/acre, with a minimum lot size to support multi-family housing in the range of .33 acre to .5 acre.
3. The multi-family standards would not preclude consideration of a PUD/open space proposal such as the one that occurred with the Co-Housing project. A PUD is simply an approach to allow an alternative project lay-out and often does not result in density increases. This will require some minor clean-up language in the PUD standards to eliminate potential appealable concerns.
4. The Board concurred that the City should not allow new multi-family housing in the current General Purpose B or Airport Growth zones until the City determines how to regulate land uses near the Belfast Airport, including the establishment of an Airport Overlay District.
5. The City should not allow multi-family housing on a subsurface system in the following zoning districts: Searsport Avenue Waterfront (SAW), Rte 1 South Commercial (Rte 1S), or Route 141/Mill Lane (Rte 141 Commercial). Sewer is available through-out nearly all of the SAW and Rte 1S zones, and there are neighborhood concerns (traffic) associated with greater density on Mill Lane. There is sewer for properties that have road frontage on Rte 1 and Rte 141 in the Rte 141/Mill Lane zone.
6. As I noted at the meeting, I don't think the Board should devote any time to a discussion of multi-family housing in either the Residential Growth (RG) or Residential II (R-II) zones because it is anticipated (Comprehensive Plan/Land Use Plan) that both of these zoning districts will eventually be eliminated.
7. As discussed at the meeting, multi-family housing clearly should be allowed on a subsurface system in the Rte 137 Commercial (Rte 137) zone and the adjacent Residential Agriculture II RA-II) zone because of the proximity to the inside the bypass area, the amount of available land, the lack of sewer in much of this area (and little likelihood of a sewer extension) and the Comp Plan/Land Use Plan identifying such as a Residential Growth area.
8. The Board engaged in a discussion regarding if it is appropriate to allow multi-family housing, nearly all of which would be on a subsurface system, in the more 'rural' zoning districts of Belfast. This particularly includes the Protection Rural 1 (PR-1), Protection

Rural 2 (PR-2), Residential Agricultural I (RA-I) and General Purpose A (GP-A) zones. I also noted that the Board likely should not pursue allowing multi-family housing in the Protection Rural 2 zone because this zoning district was established in 2001 by citizen petition to the City Council. I will expand on the overall discussion of these zoning districts in a moment.

9. We discussed, but did not come to any conclusions regarding how to treat multi-family housing on a subsurface system in the Searsport Avenue Commercial (SAC) zone. While nearly all properties with road frontage on Searsport Ave/Rte 1 have access to public sewer, there is a significant amount of backland off of Rte 1 (including Stephenson Lane) that would need to rely on a subsurface system.
10. The Board asked that I provide potential standards for the use of a subsurface system to manage wastewater for multi-family housing. The main concern with multi-family housing is that it often requires a 'large' subsurface system to manage wastewater, and this can lead to problems, particularly in the case of rental housing. I have attached draft performance standards that focus on the issue of subsurface system regulations, but that also identify potential standards for the location of driveways and on-site turn-around areas to eliminate the need for tenants to back out into the adjacent street (Note - The Board approved similar standards for detached accessory dwelling units to a single family house).
11. Multi-family likely is not an opportunity in most areas in the Shoreland Zone because of stricter lot size, shore frontage and density requirements.

DISCUSSION OF ISSUE 8 - ALLOWING MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING IN RURAL AREAS

At present, the City does not allow multi-family housing in most rural zoning districts unless the property is connected to public sewer. The only 'rural' zone that has any public sewer is the GP-A zone, and that is only for a short section of Rte 141 located between the intersection with Mill Lane and the area near Back Searsport Road. Thus, I would suggest that the Board focus its discussion on the PR-1, Res Ag I, and GP-A zoning districts.

Several Board members, at the February 10 meeting, questioned if it was appropriate City policy not to allow multi-family housing in these areas. Folks particularly noted the need for multi-family housing and how some housing could be developed in this area because of lower land costs and the availability of land.

I and some Board members noted concerns such as the following at the February 10 meeting:

- Current Future Land Use Plan/Comp Plan does not support allowing multi-family housing in these areas;
- City has attempted to direct growth to areas with more services, particularly public sewer and public water;
- Encouraging multi-family housing in these areas could contribute to sprawl;
- Encouraging multi-family housing in these areas is not consistent with rural character;

- Some issues with MDOT access management standards, particularly Rte 3, Rte 52, Rte 137, Rte 7 and some sections of Rte 141. (More than 5 dwelling units involves stricter State requirements); and
- Concern with use of subsurface systems for more intensive development.

In short, we should talk about the desirability of allowing multi-family housing in all or some rural areas. I offer a few thoughts for the purposes of discussion.

1. If multi-family housing is allowed, the Board may want to consider limiting the scale/size of the buildings. Perhaps institute a cap on the total number of dwelling units in a building coupled with the number of bedrooms. Perhaps no more than 4 dwelling units (in a structure) and no more than 8 bedrooms, or some combination.
2. If multi-family housing is allowed, perhaps require increases in lot size (GP-A is now 1 acre and RA-I and PR-1 is typically 2 acres, however RA-I also allows a lot created by an exempt division to be 1 acre in size), increases in road frontage and/or increases in structure setbacks. Could also consider standards regarding location of parking areas, and perhaps even some screening for parking areas. If multi-family housing, perhaps increase minimum lot size to 3 acres, increase road frontage to 250 - 300 feet, increase structure setbacks, and push parking areas to side or rear of structure.
3. Institute stricter standards for the design and maintenance of subsurface systems. I have prepared draft standards for your consideration. I note that while Steve Wilson, CEO, and Bub Fournier, Department Director, had an opportunity to comment on a list of potential approaches that I prepared quite a while ago, they did not have an opportunity to comment on the specific language for the detailed standards when I sent such to you. Thus, they may have comments tomorrow night on some of the approaches I have now detailed.
4. Does the City allow multi-family housing in more clustered approaches in greater amounts if open space land is preserved? Co-housing (Tufts Road) is the only real example of this in a rural area. While I doubt many new developments would be 35+ units in size, however, this approach resulted in all intense development in a 3+ acre area on a 40+ acre property, which may help address some issue regarding rural character. But, perhaps more realistically, is it okay to have two 4-plexes on a 8 acre property if 5 - 6 acres is maintained as open space?
5. Does the City allow opportunities for more intensive multi-family development in rural areas that are served by public water? Smart Road and parts of Rte 141 have access to public water because of the location of the Water District wells.
6. Similar to #5 above, should the City allow multi-family housing in rural areas that may now have denser development patterns (smaller lots and more houses). For example, development patterns on the Back Belmont Road, Rte 141 and Rte 137 differ from development patterns on Shepard Road, Rte 7 and Park Hill Road.
7. Should the City consider to just say no to multi-family housing in most rural areas?

DISCUSSION OF SEARSPORT AVENUE COMMERCIAL ZONE

Soils conditions in much of the backland area off of Searsport Avenue, including on Stephenson Lane, are less than ideal. Also, many of the lot configurations on Searsport Avenue make it difficult to support dense development --- long narrow lots that do not allow housing development on both sides of an access road and that result in expensive infrastructure costs (roads and electric). That said, there are areas where development could be possible, such as off the Old Searsport Ave Road and in a limited area of Stephenson Lane. Do you believe the adoption of better quality subsurface standards create potential opportunities to support multi-family housing?

PARKING STANARDS

The Board, in its review of the Wight Street affordable housing projects and the Congress Street housing project now under review devoted significant time to considering the amount of on-site parking that should be required for multi-family housing. The City's current standards are as follows (Chapter 98, Section 242):

Single-family and two-family (duplex)	Dwelling unit	2.0 per unit. Such units are exempt from the maximum number of parking spaces requirement.
Multi-family	Dwelling unit	2.25 per dwelling unit, except 1.5 per unit for 1 bedroom efficiency
Elderly independent housing Congregate housing	Dwelling unit	1.0 per unit
Independent units	Dwelling unit	1.0 per unit
Assisted living	Living units	1.0 per 3 units
Nursing home	Beds and employees	1 space per 6 beds and 1 space/employee maximum shift

While Chapter 98 provides the Board flexibility to consider alternative amounts of parking for a specific development based on supporting information, perhaps it is time to re-examine some of the current standards. Is the Board interested in addressing multi-family housing standards as part of this proposal?

Some thoughts.

1. City could develop a more defined standard for affordable housing projects based on some of information considered for the Wight Street and Congress Street projects. For example, maximum of 1 space for 1 bedroom affordable housing units rather than current standard of 1.5 spaces. For 2 bedroom and above, perhaps 1.5 spaces rather than the current 2.25 standards.
2. For non-affordable housing projects, perhaps 1 and 2 bedroom parking ratios could decrease to 1.5 spaces universally; currently need 2.25 spaces for any 2 bedroom. I looked at quite a few small Maine community parking standards in the past several weeks and quite a few that do not have good quality public transit, use a parking standard similar to our current code of 2.25 spaces. I note that I did similar research when Belfast revised its parking standards in

2010. While some flexibility may be warranted, I would caution against reducing standards based on approaches that are now being used in larger public transit oriented communities.

3. I would hesitate to reduce standards to rely on on-street parking in urban areas (mostly inside the bypass) to supplement on-site parking, mostly because of City policy that prohibits overnight on-street parking in the winter. Re-thinking or changing the current City policy has many downsides to winter street maintenance.
4. Also, the future of parking needs and approaches may need to start changing dramatically within the next 10 years as driverless cars begin to work their way more commonly into the landscape. Opportunities for off-site public parking could greatly reduce the need for on-site parking.
5. In Belfast's rural areas (most of Belfast) it is critical that there is adequate on-site parking to support all on-site uses. Perhaps City has different standards based on different areas. Ellsworth has incorporated these concerns into their parking standards.

A FEW PASSING THOUGHTS

Most of the new multi-family housing that Belfast has experienced in the past 20 years or so is associated with public housing projects supported by State bond propositions. There are only 3 significant private projects of any size; the Co-Housing project on Tufts Road (2010 - 2011), Springbrook Condominium (MBNA Housing) on Crocker Road (2002 - 2003), and Crosby Manor Estates on Northport Ave (1999 start). That said, there were other proposals. At one time, 2004 - 2007, the Planning Board approved projects to construct more than 80 new multi-family units (mostly condominiums); none of which came to fruition. More recently, Paul Overgaag proposed constructing 10 units on Washington Street, but withdrew his proposal when COVID hit, and the potential buyers of the former Pierce St School withdrew their proposal to redevelop the property for multi-family housing in the face of strident neighborhood opposition.

Continuing, much of the current private sector rental housing supply was carved out of older homes inside the bypass and several buildings in or near the downtown that were converted to multi-family housing or mixed development (particularly in late 80's to mid-90's); but the costs and issues associated with doing such are now more complex, because the City actually enforces a building code, including life safety and accessibility standards.

Making multi-family housing work has been a daunting challenge in Belfast. While we seem to have the population and job base to support more rental housing, but it rarely has happened. Changes in zoning standards to create more opportunities is a good starting point, but more may be needed in the longer term.

INFORMATION FROM MY FEBRUARY 10 MEETING

MEMORANDUM

THE FOLLOWING BACKGROUND INFORMATION IS REPEATED FROM MY FEBRUARY 10 MEMORANDUM

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT REGULATIONS FOR MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

Following is an overview of Belfast's current multi-family housing standards. The City's goal has generally been to direct (encourage) multi-family housing to areas that have public sewer, which is why many of the more rural areas in Belfast do not allow multi-family housing.

Inside the Bypass (None of these areas are affected by the currently proposed amendments).

- 1) The Downtown Commercial zoning district allows multi-family housing on the upper floors of downtown buildings. There are no density standards, and in many areas, there is no on-site parking requirement. This policy has been in place for at least the last 45+ years, however, the City has tweaked the regulations over the years to encourage the development of additional upper floor units in the downtown.
- 2) The Waterfront Mixed Use 1 and 2 zoning districts allow multi-family housing as an accessory use to a nonresidential use, typically on the upper floors. This standard generally was implemented in 2004 when the current Mixed Use districts replaced the former Waterfront IA and IB districts.
- 3) The RES-2 and RES-3 zoning districts, which were established in October 2014, allow multi-family housing at densities of about 20 units/acre, with a minimum lot size of 10,000 sq. ft. From 1985 until 2014, these areas did not allow multi-family housing, even though there is a significant amount of multi-family housing located in these areas.
- 4) The only zoning district located Inside the Bypass that does not now allow multi-family housing is RES-1. While there is a considerable amount of multi-family housing in some sections of RES-1, the City eliminated multi-family housing as a permitted use in this zone in 1985. Further, when the City overhauled the zoning standards for the Inside the Bypass area in 2014, the City chose to continue to prohibit multi-family housing. The contract rezoning process, however, does allow multi-family housing on several properties in this zone.

Near By-Pass (Mixed Use/Commercial Zoning Districts)

- 1) The current density standards for most of the zoning districts that are the subject of the proposed amendments in this proposal were established in 2001. The current density standards are about 6 units per acre. Prior to 2001, the density standard was 3 units per acre. The proposed amendments would increase allowable density to about 19 units per acre, and would establish the minimum size lot on which a multi-family project could be developed. The affected zoning districts include: SAW, SAC, Rte 141 & Mill Lane, Rte 137 Commercial, and Rte One South.

- 2) As previously noted, the City, in the past 2 years, has increased the multi-family density standards for the Office Park district, and has established multi-family housing as a permitted use in the Route 3 Commercial district. The 2001 amendments for the Rte 3 Commercial zone previously prohibited all new residential uses. Density standards for both districts are about 19 units per acre.

Residential Agricultural II zone (Crocker Road area).

This zone was created in 2001. In 1997, it was identified as part of the newly created Residential Agricultural zone (established pursuant to the 1997 Comprehensive Plan); prior to 1997 it was part of the General Purpose zone. Also, prior to 1997, all areas outside of a 500 ft deep strip of land located adjacent to Routes 1 and the beginning part of Route 3 were in the General Purpose zone. The Res Ag II zone was split off from the overall Res Ag (now Res Ag I) zone in 2001 and treated differently because of its proximity to the more developed areas of Belfast.

This zoning district currently allows multi-family housing if a property is connected to sewer, but prohibits multi-family housing if the property is on a subsurface system. The only property in this district that is now connected to sewer is the Springbrook Condominium (MBNA) project (private sewer line from Rte 3 through the Bahre property). The current proposal would increase density for properties connected to sewer, and would allow a lesser density for multi-family housing for properties on a subsurface system; 3 units for first acre, and an additional unit for each additional one-quarter acre.

General Purpose Districts

The current standards for the GP-A and GP-B zones date to 1997, when the City revised the former standards. Current standards allow multi-family housing if a property is on public sewer; 3 units per acre. I note that only a limited section of the GPA zone has public sewer, mostly along Swan Lake Avenue. All sewer for the GP-B zone is on Congress Street and it is a force main line.

Other Districts

- 1) The Res Ag I and Protection Rural 1 districts, which includes nearly all of the rural area in Belfast, prohibit multi-family housing. These areas previously were in the General Purpose zone. While the GP zone allowed multi-family housing at 3 units per acre if connected to public sewer, there is no public sewer in any of these areas.
- 2) Residential II. This district does not allow multi-family housing. I note that the intent of the 2009 Future Land Use Plan (Comp Plan) was to eliminate this Zone (and to replace such with more area specific zoning), and I believe this should remain a long-term goal. In short, I don't believe the Board should direct any attention to adding multi-family housing as a use for this zone.

- 3) Residential Growth. This zone is located along Edgecomb Road. Similar to the Residential II zone above, the intent of the 2009 Future Land Use Plan was to eliminate this zone. Multi-family housing is now a prohibited use.
- 4) Protection Rural 2 Zone. This zone was established in 2002 via a City petition from area property owners pursuant to a process identified in the 1997 Comp Plan. The district does not allow multi-family housing. The main reason the petition was submitted was because of the Penquis CAP multi-family housing project on Patterson Hill. As such, it likely would not be a good idea to allow multi-family housing in this area. Also, there is no public sewer.
- 5) Route One South Business Park. This zone was established in 2018 to allow City consideration of the Nordic Aquafarms project. Multi-family housing is not a consideration in this limited area zoning district.
- 6) Business Park & Airport Growth District. Housing is not allowed in these districts. While future discussion of the current Airport District boundaries is warranted, I do not believe that now (this process) is the time to address this issue.

As noted, the availability of public sewer has been a key factor in where the City has allowed higher density housing, including multi-family housing. I have prepared a (rough) map that identifies where public sewer is available outside of the bypass (public sewer is available to most areas inside the bypass, although there are some very notable exceptions). As identified on the map, few areas outside of the bypass on the west side have access to public sewer, particularly gravity sewer. The eastside has much greater access to public sewer, however, MDOT access management regulations often affect how much development may occur on a property.