

Village Center Zoning Bylaw



Westminster, Massachusetts

Prior Planning Efforts

Prior plans recommending proposed zoning changes:

1. Westminster Master Plan, Westminster Master Plan Committee, 2014.
2. Westminster Town Center: Townscape and Streetscape Improvements. *The Cecil Group*: 2014.
3. Main Street Design Workshop: Westminster, Massachusetts. *Center for Economic Development, Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, University of Massachusetts*: 2014.
4. Walkability Report: Westminster Town Center. *Montachusett Regional Planning Commission*: 2012.
5. Analysis of Table of Use Schedule And Dimensional Regulations in Industrial and Commercial Zones. *Montachusett Regional Planning Commission and William Scanlon*: 2010.

Village Center Bylaw Process

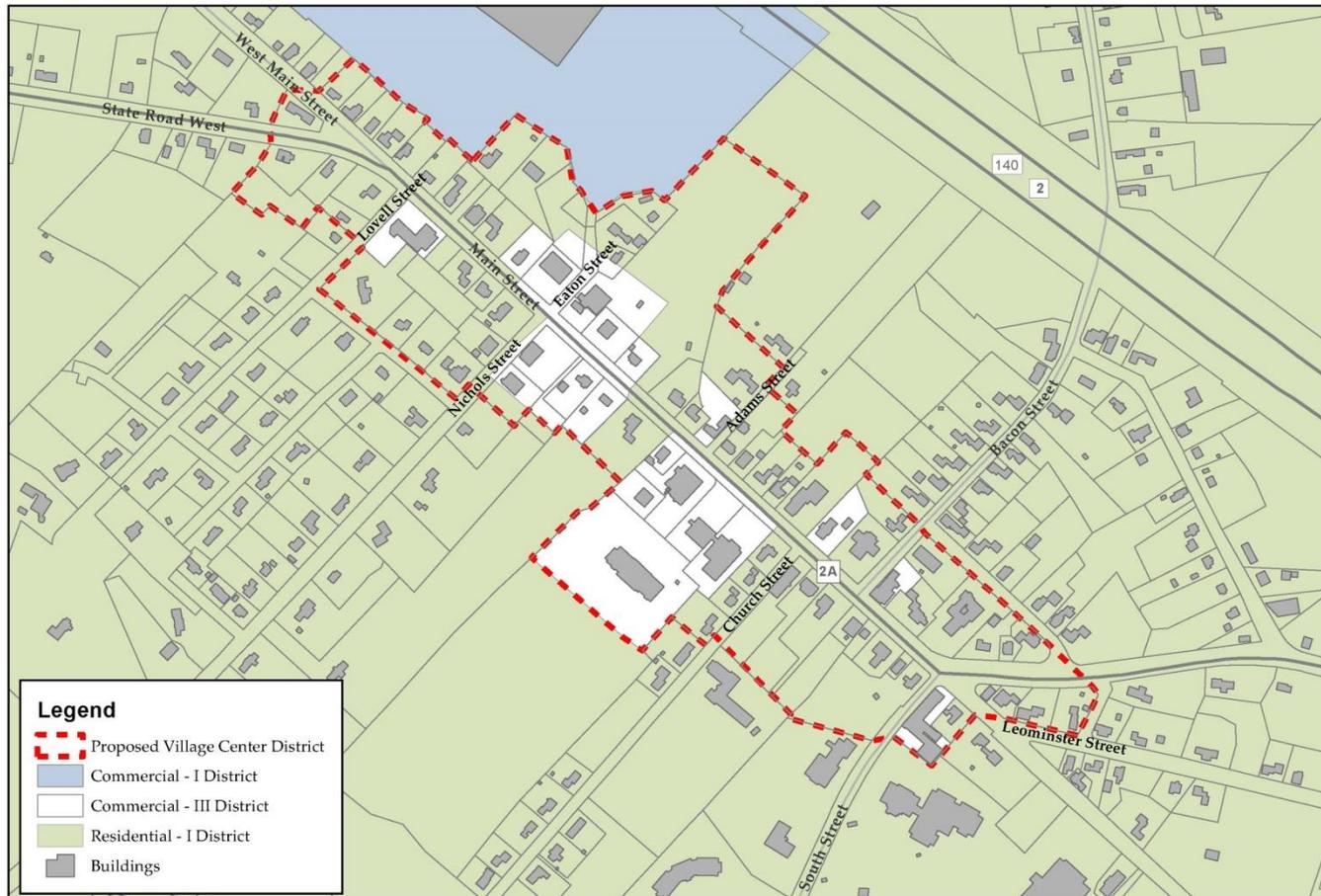
1. Project start-up and kick-off with staff and the Westminster Planning Board (July, 2015)
2. Stakeholder interviews (July-August, 2015)
 - Local business owners
 - Local boards and commissions
 - Town Department Heads
3. Draft Bylaw (December, 2015)
4. Internal Review (January, 2016)
 - Town staff and department heads
 - Local boards and commissions
5. Public Review (February-March, 2016)
 - Two public forums will be conducted to discuss the proposed bylaw and changes to the zoning map.
6. Final Bylaw (March, 2016)
7. Town Meeting (May, 2016)

Existing Zoning Map

Combination of C-III &
Residential - I Zones

Town of Westminster, Massachusetts

Existing Village Center Zoning



Data Sources: Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, MassGIS
Map prepared by: Community Opportunities Group, Inc. Last Dated 1/4/16.

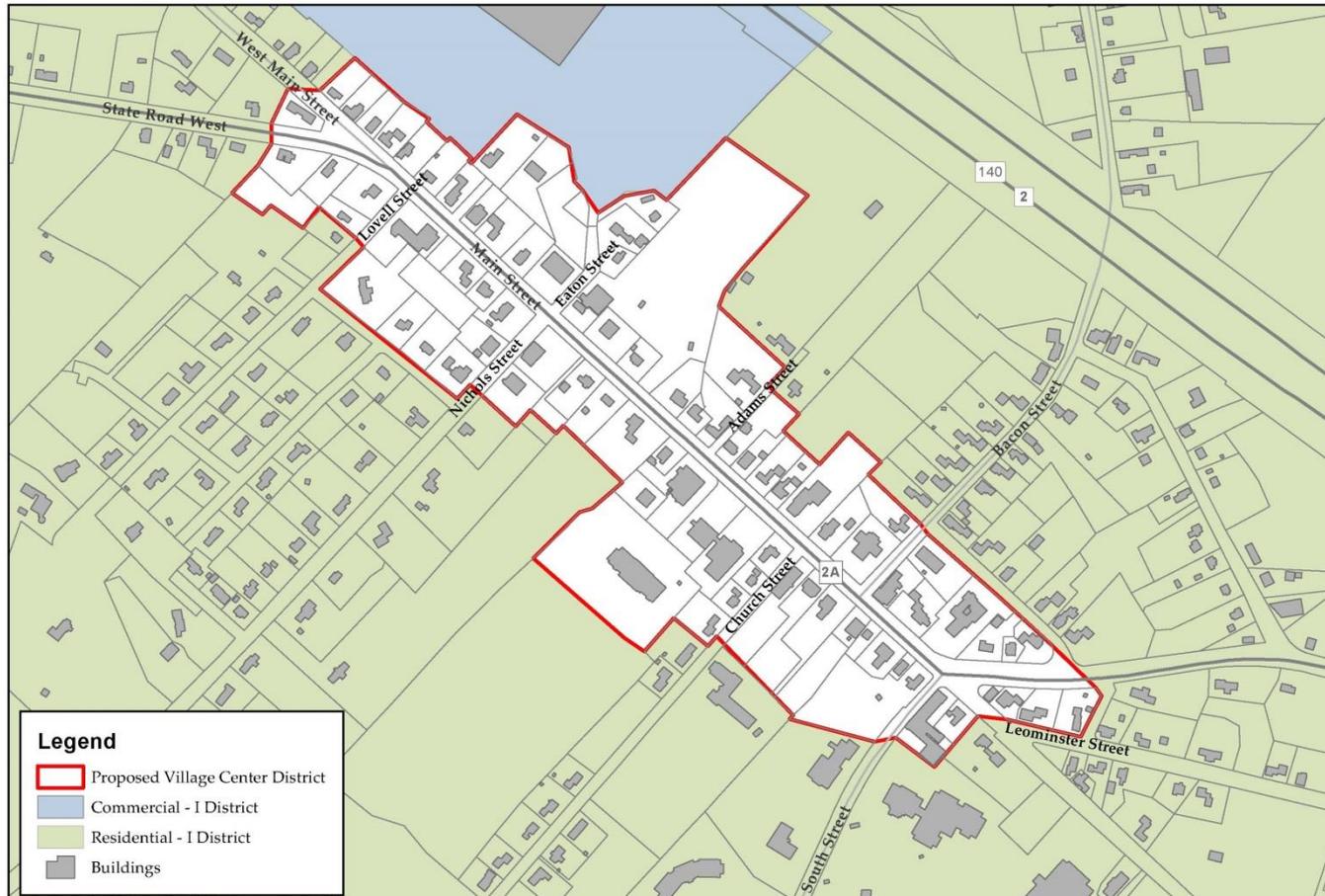
Disclaimer: This map has been prepared for evaluation of proposed district boundaries only. This map is a draft.

Proposed Zoning

Unified Village Center District

Town of Westminster, Massachusetts

Proposed Village Center Zoning District Boundaries



Data Sources: Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, MassGIS
Map prepared by: Community Opportunities Group, Inc. Last Dated 1/4/16.

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Issues to be Addressed

Current Issues:

- Current C-III Zoning constitutes “spot zoning” and could face legal challenge
- Rezoning requires a petition at Town Meeting and a 2/3 majority vote for approval to change from residential to commercial
- Current zoning lacks legal basis for the Planning Board to request architectural and landscape design improvements to ensure new development befits a traditional New England town center



District Goals



Village Center District Goals:

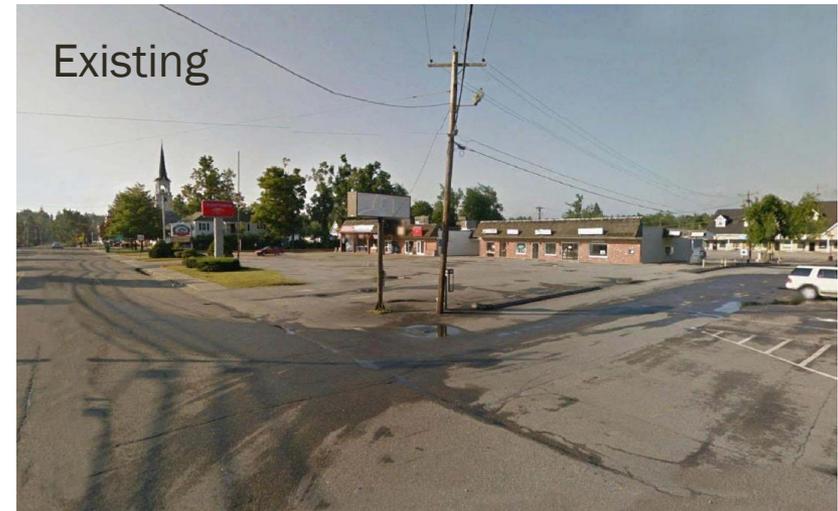
- Establish one unified zoning district to direct development in the Village Center
- Expand allowed commercial and residential uses to all properties within the Village Center
- Create a provision for the inclusion of new residential units in the Village Center to increase housing diversity
- Provide design guidance to applicants seeking permit for new construction or alterations to existing sites and buildings

New Bylaw Provisions

- ☞ Applies to new construction and alterations to existing properties.
- ☞ Expands commercial and residential uses to all properties located within the Village Center.
- ☞ Allows for upper-story residential units in existing and new buildings subject to certain limitations. Increasing the residential population in the Village Center helps support local business.
- ☞ Enables more than one use on a particular lot (i.e. both commercial and residential).
- ☞ Establishes additional site plan review and sign standards to ensure new development is complementary

Design Guidelines

- Design guidelines are advisory and may be waived by the Planning Board if a site cannot meet standards
- Guidelines clarify what types of architectural styles, site, and landscape design are desired in the Village Center to guide new development
- Guidelines promote traditional New England Town Center design aesthetic



Questions and Comments

Please direct any questions and comments pertaining to the proposed Village Center Bylaw to:

Stephen Wallace, Town Planner

Town Hall

11 South Street, Room 219

Westminster, MA 01473

Email: swallace@westminster-ma.gov

Phone: (978) 874-7414

Copies of the proposed bylaw may be obtained online at:

[2016 Proposed Zoning Changes](#)