**TOWN OF FRANCONIA**

**Summary of Village Mixed Use District (VMU) and proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance to be voted on at Town Meeting in March, 2018**

**In 2016, the Town of Franconia received an MTAG Grant to support the creation of a Village Mixed Use district (VMU) within the so-called downtown area. The Planning Board was assigned the task of managing the MTAG Grant and developing a viable VMU for Franconia under the guidelines of the Grant and working with the North County Council. The project was completed in June of 2017 and reviewed at several public hearings held this past fall.**

**The goal of a VMU district is to create a more vibrant village center that is walkable, has a greater mix of commercial and residential (i.e. a business with a 2nd floor residence) and is more affordable to develop due to greater density accommodations allowed within certain parameters. The group spent considerable time defining and outlining a formal VMU district area for the Town (see map). The purple borderline defines the outer limit of the newly created district. The primary drivers for creating the expanded VMU are as follows:**

* **Proximity to the current village center**
* **Access to municipal services – (primarily municipal water)**
* **Walkability from current village center**
* **Availability of developable land**

**In order to accommodate the objectives and priorities of the VMU district, updates and additions were made to the Town of Franconia Zoning Ordinance:**

* **Allowance for ‘Mixed Use Structures’ (commercial & residential combined)**
* **Greater allowance for Multi-Family and Work Force housing units**
* **VMU zoning that allows for great development density nearer the roadways, in exchange for open space preservation behind the development**
* **Cluster development road frontage modifications within the VMU**
* **Ability for special exceptions related to Accessory Dwelling Units**

**Zoning Definitions that were revised and updated to accommodate the VMU priorities and come into compliance with State RSA regulations:**

* **Multi-Family Residential Units – Built under a provision of the VMU Overlay District shall conform to the minimum acreage required in the district in which it is to be located, with an additional one (1) acre of land required for each residential unit over one (1) provided in the multi-unit structure up to eight (8) residential units. The total number of residential units shall not be greater than twenty (20).**
* **Cluster Developments – Road frontage requirements were modified within the VMU district to reflect smaller lots already allowed**
* **Mixed Use Structure – A building which contains dwelling units located above the floor of a retail use, commercial office, civic or institutional space.**
* **Accessory Dwelling Unit – As compliant with the State RSAs. Allowing special exceptions, the ZBA may permit one unit attached to a one-family residential structure in any district whether as a conversion or a new-construction, if conditions are met.**
* **Work Force Housing (WFH) – Housing which is purpose-built to be affordable to a household with an income of not more than 100% of the median income for a 4-person household for the county in which the housing is located, as published annually by the U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). For a WFH rental, it has to be affordable to a household with an income of no more than 60% of the median income for a 3-person household for the county in which the housing is located as published annually by HUD.**

**The Board also revised the wording regarding building setback and parking requirements for pre-1987 building lots.**

**The proposed revisions to the Franconia Zoning Ordinance are available on the Town of Franconia website or at the Town Hall.**