

# Notes on proposed Land Use Ordinance changes in Article 4

The Housing Action Sub-committee of the Comprehensive Planning Committee has been working with GrowSmart Maine to address the top two recurring themes expressed at the Bowdoinham public Land Use Forums. These are to **maintain the rural character** of Bowdoinham and to **increase housing opportunities**. Working towards addressing and balancing these priorities the committee worked with the Planning Board to propose changes to the Land Use Ordinance:

## Allow more dense housing in the Village Districts

Density is how many dwelling units are allowed per acre on a property. Density is a planning tool used to direct how different districts in a town will develop. The Comprehensive Plan designates the village districts as growth areas. To address the goal of increasing housing in these districts, there are proposed changes to maximize the use of a lot for building housing.

- Village District 1: Increasing the maximum residential density from 2 dwelling units (DU)/acre to 4 DU/acre; Allow structures to cover up to 50% of any lot, up from 30%; For lots within a subdivision there would be a minimum road frontage on streets within a subdivision of 50 feet which is lower than the 75 feet of road frontage to a public road which remains in the ordinance; Reduces the minimum front yard setbacks for internal subdivision lots from 20 feet to 0 feet; and Requires 10% of the Net Residential Acreage be Open Space.
- Village District 2: Increasing the maximum residential density from 2 DU/acre to 10 DU/acre; Allow structures to cover up to 50% of any lot, up from 30%; For lots within a subdivision there would be a minimum road frontage on streets within a subdivision of 50 feet which is lower than the 100 feet of road frontage to a public road which remains in the ordinance; Reduces the minimum front yard setbacks for internal subdivision lots from 30 feet to 0 feet; and Requires 20% of the Net Residential Acreage be Open Space.

This would allow more housing to be built, including multifamily housing units, rental units, age-friendly housing, etc.

## Increase open space requirements for major subdivisions in the Residential/Agricultural District.

Open space can include forest, fields, agriculture, playgrounds, or any green space. Currently, the town requires the same percentage of open space for both minor and major subdivisions in the Residential/Agricultural district. To address the goal of maintaining the rural character of Bowdoinham, there are proposed change to increase open space and maximize the use of a lot for building housing.

- Residential/Agricultural District: For lots within a subdivision there would be a minimum road frontage on streets within a subdivision of 50 feet which is lower than the 150 feet of road frontage to a public road which remains in the ordinance; Reduces the minimum front yard setbacks for internal subdivision lots from 50 feet to 10 feet; and Requires 80% of the Net Residential Acreage be Open Space for Major Subdivisions, and the Minor subdivision Open Space requirement would stay at 25%.
- Warrant Article 5 would reduce the threshold by one lot or dwelling unit for Major Subdivisions, down from a minimum of 6 to 5 lots or dwelling units.

This would require more land to remain undeveloped as open space preserving natural and cultural resources, such as active hayfields and conservation land.

The proposed changes to the Land Use Ordinance will be voted on at this year's Town Meeting.

TOWN MEETING

Saturday, June 1, 9:00am

Bowdoinham Community School