

**PHASE 2**  
**ROUTE 140 OVERLAY DISTRICT PROJECT**  
**GARDNER AND WINCHENDON, MASSACHUSETTS**



View of Mt. Wachusett from Route 140

**Prepared by:**



**Montachusett Regional Planning Commission**

**And**

**William Scanlan**

**November 30, 2011**

**Assistance Provided under Montachusett Regional Planning Commission's  
District Local Technical Assistance Program (DLTA) with  
Funding Provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

## CREDITS

The Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) provided assistance for this project with funding provided by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) under the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program. Under Chapter 205 of the Acts of 2006, the DLTA program enables staff of Regional Planning Agencies to provide technical assistance to communities for “any subject within regional planning expertise”.

### Route 140 Steering Committee

Rob Hubbard	Committee Chairman and Gardner Planning Director
Robert Hankinson	Gardner City Engineer
Neil Janssens	Gardner City Councilor
Karen Murphy	Westminster Town Administrator
Stephen Wallace	Westminster Town Planner
John White	Winchendon Planning Board
Ellen DeCouteau	Winchendon Planning Agent
James Kreidler	Winchendon Town Manager

### Report Credit

William Scanlan	Principal Author
Renée Marion	MRPC GIS Analyst
John Hume	MRPC Planning and Development Director
Glenn Eaton	MRPC Executive Director

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction..... 1  
Development Trends in the Region ..... 1  
Zoning Options for the Route 140 Corridor ..... 3  
Preliminary Outcomes ..... 6  
The Route 140 Overlay District..... 7  
Limited Industrial – Office District ..... 10  
Gardner Public Water Supply Watershed ..... 10  
Conclusion ..... 11

**LIST OF MAPS**

Gardner Route 140 Overlay District Map..... 17  
Gardner Parcel Identification Map of the Rt. 140 Overlay District..... 18  
Winchendon Route 140 Overlay District Map ..... 25  
Proposed Light Industrial – Office District Map ..... 36  
Gardner Surface Water Supply Watershed Map..... 37

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Gardner Proposed Rt. 140 Overlay District.....12  
Winchendon Proposed Rt. 140 Overlay District.....19  
Gardner News Article on Joint Planning Board Meeting Held on 5/17/2011 .....26  
Proposed New Light Industrial-Office District .....27

## **Introduction**

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation has assigned the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) with the task of completing a Route 140 Corridor Transportation Study involving the communities of Westminster, Gardner, and Winchendon. MRPC Transportation staff have collected a great deal of data on travel conditions in the Corridor with an eye to making recommendations for improving traffic flow and eliminating hazardous conditions. The report will provide MassDOT with a comprehensive list of improvements to allow the highway to function efficiently and safely for many years.

Notably, transportation engineers now recognize that new capacity gained by adding travel lanes or expanding intersections may be quickly consumed by traffic generated from new development. Ironically, roadway improvements may foster new growth, which quickly consumes the additional traffic capacity. An important objective of making infrastructure improvements is to encourage growth in appropriate locations, yet to do so in a sustainable manner. In order to maximize expensive investments in highway infrastructure, highway planners encourage communities to examine their zoning policies to prevent unintended consequences of growth such as suburban sprawl and highway gridlock.

The Route 140 Corridor Study includes a land use planning component to help the member communities understand the long-term implications of their zoning policies. In a Phase 1 report completed in November 2010, a buildout analysis of land adjacent to the highway in the three communities revealed that a great deal of new growth is possible, and is indeed likely, to take place due to the suitability for development of the adjacent property. The analysis concluded that a great deal of new development could occur in the study area that would undoubtedly generate more traffic than the highway could accommodate.

In response to this finding, the report contained a series of recommendations intended to provide a blueprint for developing alternative strategies to manage development in the Corridor. During the first phase of this planning process, the community representatives on the Route 140 Task Force developed a close working relationship and desired to act on the report's recommendations. Because Gardner and Winchendon contained long segments of Route 140 within their boundaries, they asked for assistance from MRPC to continue the process by allocating additional funding for a Phase 2 effort. Fortunately, MRPC has the ability to support important local planning initiatives with its District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program. MRPC retained the consultant from the Phase 1 study to continue working on the project. Westminster opted to remain a member of the transportation planning process, but its short stretch of Route 140 did not lend itself to participation in the land use planning component.

## **Development Trends in the Region**

Prior to drafting land use regulations for the Corridor, the Consultant interviewed community planners to gain their perspectives on recent development trends in the Region. Presented below is a summary of the growth pressures facing Gardner and Winchendon.

## **Gardner**

1. The City has enough land zoned for commercial development, especially when considering the number of old mills that are vacant and potential candidates for commercial uses.
2. While multi-family housing may be a viable use in the Rt. 140 Corridor, local officials prefer to concentrate housing in central-city locations. The City has a significant amount of subsidized housing and prefers new housing to be market-rate. Officials generally do not favor promoting new single family housing in outlying areas on large lots.
3. The Summit Industrial Park has only four lots remaining for development. As good industrial land is disappearing, the City might support re-zoning other land with available infrastructure for such purposes.
4. An economic development strategy of the City is to encourage medical offices and light industry as it transitions from traditional manufacturing to technology industries.
5. The City hopes to achieve “gold” designation by the National Institute of Health for the development of new bio-technology facilities. Having pre-approved, pad-ready sites would be a significant incentive in attracting such uses.
6. Much of the northern portion of the Rt. 140 Corridor is in the City’s water supply watershed, which allows low density residential development. There is little support for allowing new commercial or industrial development due to potential threats of contamination.
7. The site of the withdrawn Chapter 40R mixed-use development is an appropriate location for high intensity use in the Corridor. For example, this site could make a good Light Industrial-Office district.
8. Water and sewer infrastructure is available in most of the southern end of the corridor or can be extended based on demand. The City is unlikely to extend services to the northern portion of the corridor due to the presence of the water supply watershed.

## **Winchendon**

1. Residents in the Gateway Overlay District desire to exclude large-scale commercial development. If an overlay district is to allow commercial growth, it should have size and use limitations and strong performance standards to protect residential properties.
2. Landscaped buffers and large setbacks from residential uses may help to protect homeowners from intrusive commercial impacts.
3. Access controls would help to manage traffic impacts from new commercial development.
4. Preserving scenic views is an important element for managing growth in the corridor in order to maintain community character.
5. Allowing interior connections between adjacent parking lots can minimize conflicts between thru-traffic and turning traffic by eliminating unnecessary trips onto Rt. 140.

6. Rindge, NH is a strong competitor for new commercial development. As a result, most new commercial growth in Winchendon is likely to be small-scale. The Town is unlikely to get “big box” stores or shopping centers.
7. The Town has a need for “over 55” housing. Winchendon’s stock of underutilized mills could make attractive senior units. The Housing Authority is interested in promoting new subsidized housing using Chapter 40B. When the economy improves, the Town may be able to attract a developer who will propose such a use.
8. Public sewerage is a considerable distance away from the Rt. 140 area and the Town is unlikely to extend service to the study area due to cost. The developer of the Hillview Business Park extended public water into the park. Other developers may wish to continue the line further south for specific projects.

### **Zoning Options for the Route 140 Corridor**

The Phase 1 report identified a number of land use strategies for managing development in the Corridor. During discussions with the Route 140 Task Force, members agreed that developing new zoning regulations was the preferred approach to achieving the long-range vision for the Corridor. In Phase 1, the Task Force adopted the following Land Use Goal for the Route 140 Corridor:

#### Land Use Goal for the Route 140 Corridor

*Communities connected by Route 140 should proactively plan together for future growth. Through innovative zoning measures communities will foster a sustainable pattern of development, one that preserves roadway capacity and public safety, promotes economic development, conserves resources, and achieves high standards of design.*

The Task Force identified two broad approaches for achieving this goal: 1) re-zone land in the Corridor for new economic development that would provide jobs, add to the tax base, and allow for controlled access to Route 140 in order to minimize traffic impacts; and 2) to enact an overlay district that would leave underlying zoning in place but impose design standards to achieve high quality development. The key components of each approach and their application to Gardner and Winchendon are outlined below.

- A. **Create a New Zoning District and Re-Zone Land in the Corridor.** Incorporate appropriate design standards to minimize impacts on adjacent property and preserve road capacity.
  1. **Gardner:** re-zone land to a Light Industrial – Office district at the site of the defunct Chapter 40R project.
    - ♦ The previous proposal contained a mix of high-density residential uses and had a large commercial component. Thus, the location is suitable for intensive development.
    - ♦ Good highway access and high visibility along Rt. 140 can provide added value to potential tenants.
    - ♦ Re-zoning could help to meet the City’s need for good industrial land with water and sewer services.

- ♦ The district can contain design standards to promote a particular kind of development, e.g. a campus-like office setting with a high percentage of open space, or a more intensive industrial park that maximizes development potential. The I-1 and I-2 districts allow building heights of 7 stories.
2. **Winchendon:** re-zone residential areas along Rt. 140 to a Residential – Business or Residential – Office District. This can be either a conventional district or an overlay district.
    - ♦ Identify specific uses to allow and restrict unwanted uses. For example, retail uses may not be suitable here.
    - ♦ Set floor size limits to minimize conflicts with residential uses.
    - ♦ Alternatively, consider a planned commercial development concept on large parcels (e.g. 10 ac. or more). Require a special permit for this use.
    - ♦ Specify large setbacks from adjacent residential property and use of landscaping to provide a natural buffer.
    - ♦ Allow conversions of single family homes to business uses with proper oversight. Limit exterior alterations to retain the residential appearance of the building.
    - ♦ Set stringent criteria for approval.
    - ♦ Limit exterior storage of materials or require adequate screening.

**B. *Create a New Overlay District with Design Standards***

1. The district could be drawn to overlay existing commercial and industrial districts in the Corridor. These include the C-1, I-1, and I-2 districts in Gardner and the C-1 and Ind. districts in Winchendon. The underlying use regulations would remain in play, and each community could decide which uses are most appropriate for its portion of the corridor.
2. Design standards would help to achieve high quality development.
3. Common standards in Gardner and Winchendon would promote a consistent pattern of development for the entire length of the roadway. This should also help to eliminate the pressure to lower standards to attract new growth since both communities will have similar requirements.
4. The concept offers protections to homeowners in the Corridor by insuring new development will achieve high standards of design.
5. High quality development should result in greater tax revenue over time due to higher re-sale value of properties.
6. Greater intensity of development is possible by reducing impacts through design guidelines. The overlay district could promote high intensity development in locations where water and/or sewer services have excess capacity, and roadway improvements will accommodate higher levels of traffic. For example, greater impervious coverage may be possible for projects that provide public benefits, such as public parks, open space, or sewer and water main extensions.
7. Local review processes would remain in place. If desired, an adjacent community could submit advisory comments to the host community to promote regional cooperation in the long-term development of the corridor.

8. Some types of design standards such a bylaw might include are:

#### Water Quality

- ◆ Allow Low Impact Development (LID) as an alternative to catch basin-manhole systems to recharge more rainfall on-site and purify runoff to maintain water quality.

#### Open Space

- ◆ Large buffers and/or dense landscaping can protect residential properties from intrusive impacts.
- ◆ Set aside unique resources or habitats of endangered species in undisturbed open space.
- ◆ Provide links to the regional bikeway or existing trails.
- ◆ Offer a density bonus for off-site preservation of open space, i.e. consider a transfer of development rights program.

#### Landscaping

- ◆ Require tree plantings along Rt. 140 and other road frontages to provide visual relief from buildings and parking lots.
- ◆ Establish internal pedestrian paths and link to adjacent developments to promote walking.
- ◆ Use natural materials to screen utilities and waste areas.
- ◆ Require a landscaping plan by a registered landscape architect for larger developments.

#### Access Standards

- ◆ Establish regional identity at entrances through the use of landscaping, fencing, signage, etc. relying on native materials and local motifs.
- ◆ Encourage divided access ways and acceleration/deceleration lanes to enable vehicles to enter and exit developments safely and enter traffic flow smoothly.
- ◆ Minimize curb cuts onto Rt. 140 and promote shared access among adjoining lots through the use of common driveways, cul-de-sacs, loop roads, and cross lot connections.
- ◆ Incorporate transit friendly design features in shopping plazas and high employment locations.

#### Parking Standards

- ◆ Minimize the visual impact of parking lots from the roadway, e.g. use landscaped buffer for lots in the front yard or encourage placing parking lots behind buildings.
- ◆ Use interior landscaping to soften the impact of large number of vehicles, place landscaping around the periphery of lots, and plant deciduous trees for shade.
- ◆ Give parking space preference to car-pool vehicles for large employers.
- ◆ Allow shared parking to reduce the extent of impervious surfaces when adjacent uses have different hours of peak use.

#### View Protection

- ◆ Require analysis of visual impact of a project on the Corridor, and seek to retain scenic vistas from the highway.

- ◆ Within developments, leave open vistas to important features such as lakes, farms, ridges, historic sites, etc.
- ◆ Protect ridgelines by siting structures off the peak of a ridge.

#### Lighting Standards

- ◆ Use decorative luminaires and require cut-offs to reduce glare on adjacent properties.
- ◆ Require underground wiring.
- ◆ Limit the height of light poles.

#### Building Layout

- ◆ Design for internal compact pattern to promote shared parking facilities and pedestrian environment.
- ◆ Except where an existing pattern has been established, require deep setbacks from the highway to preserve visual character.
- ◆ Create strong edge effect by use of transition areas between developments of different character; separate uses with open space.

#### Architectural Standards

- ◆ Require elevations of proposed buildings from a professional architect.
- ◆ Structures should contain pitched roofs, breaks in roofs and wall lines, and variation in detail to provide visual interest and avoid monotony.
- ◆ Use local materials, e.g. clapboard, brick, or stone.
- ◆ Buildings should try to match traditional building styles in the area.
- ◆ Require national franchise chains to substitute corporate designs with custom designs that fit the unique characteristics of each site.
- ◆ Prohibit continuous length of flat, blank walls adjacent to streets, pedestrian pathways, and other public spaces.
- ◆ New buildings should be *Energy Star* rated. Consider using sustainable building practices such as the *LEED* rating system.
- ◆ Require screening of rooftop mechanical equipment.

#### Infrastructure Availability

- ◆ Vary intensity of development with availability of water and/or sewer service.
- ◆ Offer incentives for developer contributions to service extensions.

### **Preliminary Outcomes**

After reviewing the opportunities for re-zoning in the Corridor, the Task Force reached a preliminary consensus on the appropriate implementation steps. Representatives from Gardner and Winchendon agreed that a zoning overlay district offered a viable approach to managing growth. Each community would have the flexibility to apply the district to its own commercial and industrial zones along the Corridor. Thus, the use and dimensional standards already in place would remain, and the current zoning pattern would continue. Landowner expectations of the use of their land would not be affected by the new regulations. Rather, the overlay district would consist of design standards to govern how development would take place. The Task Force believed that the many benefits of the overlay approach listed in the previous section would translate into on-the-ground results

of improved development quality, less intrusive impacts on near-by residents, and better management of traffic to preserve vehicle capacity in the highway.

The other alternative was to draft a new zoning district for economic development specifically designed for Route 140, and to re-zone land to this new designation. In Winchendon, the Consultant proposed re-zoning land in the southern end of the Corridor now zoned Rural Residence (R-80) and in the Gateway Overlay District. The Gateway Overlay District establishes regulations that govern access to adjacent highways, and it establishes a 50-foot buffer between the highway and commercial uses; the intent of the district is to minimize the impacts of strip commercial development, encourage nodal development patterns, and promote bicycling and walking as alternative modes of travel as a means of reducing unnecessary automobile trips. However, the Task Force decided not to pursue this strategy. The area proposed for re-zoning is primarily residential in nature, with small-scale commercial uses and home occupations. While it could be suitable for more intensive commercial development if adequate safeguards were in place to protect residents, the consensus was that the community had a large amount of other land already zoned for economic growth along Route 140.

Conversely, the Gardner Task Force members believed there is an opportunity to re-zone residential land in the Corridor for new economic growth. In 2006, a developer proposed a “Smart Growth” project under the framework of MGL Chapter 40R on property currently zoned Rural Residential and Single Family Residential. The project consisted of a high-density, mixed use development along the westerly side of Route 140 in the vicinity of Pearl and Matthews Streets. Chapter 40R promotes multi-family housing, including affordable units, to create town center-style developments. In return for encouraging housing production, a community receives incentive payments from the state. Chapter 40R requires approval of a discrete zoning district by the local legislative body to demonstrate community support and establish local standards for design. The project consisted of 650 units of housing and 200,000 square feet of commercial space on 114 acres. Because of poor economic conditions, the developer abandoned the project. Since the site remains vacant, has good highway access, and is near public water and sewer systems, Gardner Task Force members believe the area has the potential for accommodating a significant block of commercial or industrial development.

The Consultant proposed a new Light Industrial – Office (LI-O) district for this area. After examining the regulations that apply to the City’s existing industrial districts, it appeared that such standards were not appropriate for a regional highway corridor. The City’s industrial zoning districts are appropriate for its older mills and for newer industrial parks that can accommodate industrial uses without affecting the tranquility of near-by residences. Because this location is near Route 140 and is in close proximity to a residential neighborhood, the members felt it would be advisable to craft a new district that could be tailored to the specific opportunities and constraints of this prominent location.

### **The Route 140 Overlay District**

The Route 140 Overlay District is a rare instance of separate communities adopting common zoning regulations to protect a regional asset, in this case, the substantial potential for economic development in the Route 140 Corridor. The language of the City’s ordinance

and the Town's bylaw are similar in most respects, except for instances where previously adopted regulations would conflict with the proposed regulations. In effect, this is a regional zoning approach that applies to two communities. The Task Force members reviewed several drafts for their community and thoroughly vetted the text to attain exacting standards that will improve the quality of development in the Corridor.

Once armed with acceptable language, the Task Force coordinated a joint meeting of the Gardner and Winchendon Planning Boards. The meeting occurred on May 17, 2011 in the Winchendon Town Hall during a regular meeting of the Winchendon Planning Board. (A newspaper account of the meeting is in the Supporting Documents section of this report.) Planning Board representatives on the Task Force had previously apprised their members of the work that had already occurred so that all members were aware of the project. The two boards listened to a brief presentation of the key elements of the ordinance/bylaw for their community and asked pertinent questions regarding specific standards and the overall approach. Both boards fully supported the Overlay District concept. As a result, the Task Force continued to refine the proposals with the intention of bringing zoning amendments to the appropriate legislative bodies for adoption with the Planning Boards' full support.

After several more review sessions to resolve outstanding issues, the Task Force endorsed final language for the Overlay District. The final ordinance and bylaw are in the Supporting Documents section of this report. Some of the key features of the proposal are outlined below:

Location: In Winchendon, the district applies to the existing Large-Scale Commercial (C-1) District on Route 140 beginning north of the Gateway Overlay District, extending beyond the Route 12 intersection, and terminating at the end of the C-1 district near Glenallen Street. Since the Town has already decided to promote commercial growth along Route 140, the Overlay District will not interfere with this vision, but it will help to achieve a higher standard of design.

In Gardner, the Planning Board envisions a two-stage process for the overlay district. Initially, the district will apply in a limited manner to the existing Industrial 2 districts near the Westminster line and north of Smith Street, and to the Commercial 1 district north of Pearl Street. These locations are currently zoned for non-residential uses and have potential for development or re-development. Secondly, the Planning Board will seek re-zoning of residential land in the vicinity of Pearl Street and Smith Street on the westerly side of Route 140 to the proposed LI-O district and concurrently place the property in the Route 140 Overlay District. The underlying zoning will allow appropriate economic development in a prominent location, and the overlay regulations will promote high quality design to minimize negative impacts on the neighborhood, the environment, and the highway.

Thresholds: Oversight of the overlay district provisions will take place as part of each Planning Board's site plan review process. Site plan review is a strong tool that requires applicants to submit detailed development plans for their property, which in turn, enables local officials to understand the consequences of the development and to require appropriate mitigation where necessary. In Gardner, the threshold for implementing the overlay district standards is set at two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet or more of floor area, or

the addition or alteration of ten (10) or more parking spaces. In Winchendon, all projects that otherwise require site plan approval must comply with the overlay district standards.

Waivers: Because it may create a hardship, or be unwise in some cases to apply the design standards uniformly, the Planning Boards will have the authority to grant waivers for compliance if the standards would unreasonably restrict development of the property.

Inter-Municipal Review: A distinguishing feature of this approach, and one which demonstrates the close cooperation of the two communities to preserve travel capacity and limit the effects of sprawl, is that the Planning Board of the adjacent community will be encouraged to submit advisory comments to the host community Board. In addition, MRPC, as the regional planning agency, may submit comments on the traffic impacts or other concerns of a regional nature. This process will help to achieve sustainable growth that is consistent with the long-term vision for the Corridor.

Coordination with Abutting Landowners: This is a simple concept, but one which is often overlooked in the development process. Applicants must contact adjacent landowners of their intention to develop their property. Whenever possible, the Planning Board will encourage the landowners to work cooperatively to solve common issues such as improving traffic access, sharing parking, allowing connections between properties, etc. By coordinating development plans, the property owners will be able to minimize negative impacts on the highway.

Design Standards: The overlay district concept endorsed here is to promote higher quality development than would otherwise occur through use of design standards appropriate for a commercial highway corridor. The types of standards included in the ordinance and bylaw were touched upon in a previous section. These include:

- ❖ analyzing impact on visual quality and taking measures to preserve scenic views and open vistas of the surrounding countryside;
- ❖ implementing access management controls to secure safe and efficient access to and from the highway;
- ❖ requiring utility wires to be placed underground and limiting glare and light trespass onto adjoining properties;
- ❖ avoiding impacts on sensitive natural features such as wetlands, important wildlife habitat, and vernal pools;
- ❖ making efforts to accommodating bicycling by providing secure storage facilities and providing safe and convenient locations for bicycles near building entrances and apart from automobile parking areas; these provisions are important in light of the presence of the North Central Pathway rail trail in the Corridor;
- ❖ using landscaping and screening techniques to protect adjacent residential properties from potential visual and noise impacts, and shielding utility services from view of passing motorists and site visitors;
- ❖ establishing architectural standards to avoid cookie-cutter building designs and promote architectural detail that increases visual quality.

Parking Standards: Winchendon has adopted a zoning provision to control the number of parking spaces in new development by establishing maximum parking ratios; typically zoning only establishes a minimum number of spaces based on area or employment factors. Since vast parking lots present a visually unappealing view of pavement and automobiles, Winchendon's approach is an excellent way to control an unnecessary number of spaces that may seldom be used. Gardner expressed interest in this concept and adopted a provision to limit parking spaces. In the overlay district the number of parking spaces otherwise required by the Ordinance will be the maximum number of spaces normally allowed in a development. An applicant must provide at least 75% of the spaces required by the parking section of the Ordinance. The Board may waive this requirement upon submission of credible evidence that documents the need for additional parking.

### **Limited Industrial – Office District**

As discussed previously, the Gardner Planning Board viewed the site of the proposed Chapter 40R mixed-use development as an appropriate location for intensive development. While the previous project contained a high number of dwelling units that would have provided significant incentive payments to the City, the Board now prefers re-zoning to obtain much-needed economic benefits. The Consultant and Planning Director prepared a draft LI-O district for consideration. (See the Supporting Documents section for a copy of the latest draft and proposed location map.) The proposed district includes land on the westerly side of Route 140 north and south of Matthews Road, and an area on the easterly side of the highway north of Old Matthews Road that is bordered by a Mass. Audubon Society wildlife sanctuary and City watershed land. It is the Planning Board's intent to have the City Council adopt the proposed LI-O zoning district while concurrently placing the same property within the Route 140 Overlay District. In this manner, the underlying district will permit a variety of economic uses, while the overlay district standards will make sure the new development achieves a high quality of design.

The LI-O district will permit high value office uses and industrial operations that will add significant value to the local tax base. Uses permitted include hotels, professional offices, restaurants, indoor recreation establishments, light manufacturing, warehouses, research and development labs, and production facilities in the pharmaceutical, bio-medical, biotechnology, and information technology fields. Retail stores, personal service establishments, and motor vehicle services will not be permitted in order to reserve land for desirable light industrial and office uses. It is an important City growth policy to encourage re-development of its Downtown, and permitting retail and service uses in the Route 140 Corridor would conflict with efforts to revitalize the City's older center.

### **Gardner Public Water Supply Watershed**

The Phase 1 Report contained a recommendation that Gardner water supply officials approach Winchendon officials to discuss ways Winchendon might assist in protecting the City's water supply. It was assumed that the City's watershed extended across the municipal line into Winchendon. A correction is in order since this is not the case. MRPC's GIS Analyst prepared a map that shows that Gardner's public water supply watershed extends into Ashburnham, not Winchendon. The recommendation that the two affected communities work together, however, is still valid. The map is included at the end of this report.

## **Conclusion**

MRPC and the Route 140 Task Force have been studying transportation and land use conditions in the Route 140 Corridor for nearly two years. The innovative effort seeks to link transportation investments with land use planning to make sure that highway improvements provide long-term gains in traffic efficiency and safety enhancements. The Transportation Report will document the need for improvements in specific locations, and the MassDOT will have a long-range plan to implement as conditions warrant. The land use proposals developed during the study are an excellent example of adjacent communities working closely to manage development along a regional highway. The Route 140 Task Force has worked diligently to prepare new regulatory provisions to achieve sustainable growth, achieve high quality development with important economic benefits, and preserve the dividends of the highway improvements for decades.

The DLTA program approved by the State Legislature provides Regional Planning Commissions with the resources to undertake vital planning activities such as this. Adoption of the Overlay District will provide a valuable tool to the Gardner and Winchendon Planning Boards to prevent undesirable strip commercial development and minimize negative impacts that arise from poorly planned development. The concept of a regional overlay district can serve as an example for other highway corridors facing similar growth pressures and loss of travel capacity in their over-worked highways.

The Phase 1 Report contains additional background information on the project and the rationale for selecting this zoning scheme for the Route 140 Corridor. The remainder of this report contains copies of the maps, bylaws and ordinances that were the final outcome of the study.

The Consultant would like to express his appreciation to the members of the Route 140 Task Force, the Gardner and Winchendon Planning Boards, Ellen DeCoteau, the Winchendon Town Planner, Robert Hubbard, the Gardner City Planner, Renée Marion, MRPC GIS Analyst, and John Hume, MRPC Planning and Development Director, for their invaluable contributions to the project.

## Gardner Proposed Rt. 140 Overlay District

### GARDNER

#### SECTION 570, ROUTE 140 CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT

Amend Section 310, Types of Districts, by adding the Route 140 Corridor Overlay District to the list of districts, as follows:

<u>Full Title</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Route 140 Corridor Overlay District	Rt. 140 COD

#### **570 Route 140 Corridor Overlay District**

##### 571 Purpose

The purposes of the Route 140 Overlay District are to:

1. Encourage commercial and industrial development on Route 140 to provide local employment and enhance the tax base, while also protecting surrounding neighborhoods from land use conflicts;
2. Enhance the appearance, function, and safety of Route 140;
3. Facilitate shared access and connections to adjoining properties, thereby reducing the number of curb cuts and improving traffic safety on Route 140; and
4. Promote distinctive architecture, efficient site planning, and improved design standards that will achieve high quality development and preserve the scenic, natural, and cultural resources of the Route 140 Corridor.

##### 572 Application of Overlay District Regulations

This Overlay District sets forth design standards and flexible development options that apply in the Route 140 Corridor. The Use and Dimensional Regulations of the underlying district remain in place and other provisions of the Zoning Ordinance apply unless superseded by this Overlay District. The location of the District is shown on a map entitled Route 140 Corridor Overlay District, which is on file in the office of the City Clerk. The Overlay District consists of all parcels within Industrial 2 (Ind2), and Commercial 1 (Com1) districts where the districts have frontage on Route 140.

##### 573 Application Process

###### 573.1 Site Plan Review

Applicants shall comply with Section 1010 of this Ordinance, Site Plan Review, for development in the Route 140 Overlay District. These Overlay District provisions apply to any development, re-development, or addition containing two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet or more of floor area, or the addition or alteration of ten (10) or more parking spaces. Developments that are exempt from site plan review by this Ordinance are exempt from the application of the Overlay District.

###### 573.2 Waivers

The Board may modify or waive any requirement of the Overlay District upon finding that due to topography, location, or unusual conditions affecting the property, the requirements

of this section would unreasonably restrict development of the property. In modifying or waiving these provisions, the Board may impose conditions it deems necessary to protect the public interest and promote the orderly development of the Corridor.

#### 573.3 Inter-Municipal Review

The Planning Board shall send a copy of the application to the Winchendon Planning Board and the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, which shall have thirty-five (35) days to submit comments to the Board. The purpose of this review is to insure that regional implications are considered by the Board, and that significant impacts of the project on corridor communities can be mitigated.

#### 573.4 Coordination with Abutting Landowners

Applicants shall submit documentation that they have contacted owners of abutting land within the Overlay District regarding their proposed plans. The intent of this notice is to give those landowners the opportunity to coordinate existing uses or future development plans with the project before the Board. Where feasible, the parties should work cooperatively to solve common issues such as improving traffic access, sharing parking, creating frontage roads, allowing connections between properties, buffering incompatible uses, or preserving open space and wetland resources.

#### 574 Design Standards

##### 574.1 General

Buildings and landscape treatments, not parking, should serve as the focal points for development along Route 140. Site design should contribute to a sense of continuity and coherence from Route 140 and distant vantage points.

##### 574.2 View Protection

The Route 140 Corridor offers many scenic views of the surrounding countryside. Each development shall preserve the visual quality of its site in relation to the scenic qualities of the immediate area and the Corridor as a whole. The applicant shall submit photographs of the area to the Board and describe the most prominent features of existing visual quality. Through means of sketches or computer simulations, the applicant shall document the impacts of the proposed development on visual quality. This analysis shall present how the project will be viewed from Route 140 in both directions and how views from the site to the surrounding area can be integrated into the development to enhance the project design. Within the development, the applicant shall preserve open vistas of important features such as Wachusett Mountain, lakes, farms, forests, historic sites, etc.

##### 574.3 Access Management

1. Each new development within the Overlay District shall be limited to one entrance and one exit per street. For multiple building developments, one combined entrance/exit location is preferable at the main entrance to facilitate traffic movement; such an entrance shall be separated by a traffic island with separate in and out movements. If needed, the applicant shall construct separate right and/or left turning lanes to facilitate entry and exit from the site.
2. To reduce turning movements onto Route 140, developers are encouraged to connect internal roadways with adjacent developments. When adjacent lots have contiguous

frontage on Route 140, the Board may require such lots to share a single driveway, or that the lots be accessed by an internal service road. Where such sharing cannot be achieved in the short run, the means and location for future long term inter-parcel connections may be required through right-of-way reservation and/or dedication.

3. Where it is proposed to re-develop property, the Board will evaluate existing access to Route 140 and work with the applicant to re-design curb cuts to improve safety and traffic flow. Where appropriate, the Board may require a reconfiguration to the existing access or the removal of unnecessary driveway openings onto Route 140 in favor of fewer access points with a greater level of traffic control.
4. Where a property proposed for development abuts the North Central Pathway rail trail, the developer shall consider a proposed connection to the trail and access to the principal uses on the lot to promote alternative modes of commuting and/or public access.

#### 574.4 Lighting and Utilities

1. All lighting shall be arranged and shielded so as to prevent direct glare from the light source into any public street or private way or onto adjacent property. Lighting shall comply with section 772.4, Lighting and Landscaping Requirements, and section 1012, Development Impact Standards.
2. All lights and illuminated signs shall be designed to prevent objectionable light and glare from crossing property lines. Externally lit signs, display, building and aesthetic lighting must be lit from the top and shine downward.
3. All electric, telephone, television and other communication lines, both main and service connections, shall be provided by underground wiring.

#### 574.5 Preservation of Sensitive Natural Features

Development shall preserve the natural features of the site, avoid areas of environmental sensitivity, and minimize alteration of natural features. The following resources shall be identified on the site plan and remain undeveloped unless otherwise approved by the Board:

1. Unique or fragile areas including wetlands, vernal pools, and 100-year flood plains;
2. Habitats of rare species listed by the Mass. Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program; and
3. Streams and water bodies.

#### 574.6 Maximum Parking Requirement

The number of parking spaces required in Section 752, Schedule of Parking Uses, shall be the maximum number of spaces constructed for developments in the Route 140 Corridor Overlay District. At a minimum, applicants shall provide at least 75% of the spaces required by Section 752. The Board may waive this requirement upon submission of credible evidence from a professional transportation engineer that documents the need for additional parking for a specific development.

#### 574.7 Parking Lot Design

1. The provisions of Section 770, Design Requirements for Parking Lots and Facilities, shall apply unless superseded by the following standards.
2. Sidewalks and pedestrian paths shall connect the lots to the principal uses they will serve. Such walkways shall be constructed with brick, decorative pavers, or other materials, and may be bordered with fencing or shrubbery to clearly separate pedestrians from automobile traffic. Facilities and access routes for deliveries, service and maintenance shall be separated, where practical, from public access routes and parking areas. Car stops shall be provided to prevent parked cars from damaging trees and shrubs or disrupting pedestrian walkways.
3. The Planning Board may modify the above requirements for any interior landscaped areas or islands that serve as vegetated swales or bioretention cells.

#### 574.8 Bicycle Accommodation

Bicycle parking facilities shall be provided for any new building, addition or enlargement of an existing building, or for any change in the occupancy of any building that results in the need for additional vehicular parking facilities. One bicycle space shall be provided for every 10 vehicle parking spaces, up to a maximum of 25 spaces.

1. Parking for bicycles shall include provision for secure storage of bicycles. Such facilities shall provide lockable enclosed lockers or racks or equivalent structures in or upon which the user may lock a bicycle.
2. Bicycle parking facilities shall be sufficiently separated from motor vehicle parking areas to protect parked bicycles from damage by motor vehicles. The separation may be accomplished through grade separation, distance or physical barrier, such as curbs, wheel stops, poles or other similar features.
3. Bicycle parking facilities shall be located in a clearly designated safe and convenient location. Whenever possible, the bicycle parking shall be placed within 50 feet of building entrances and in well-lit areas.

#### 574.9 Landscaping and Screening

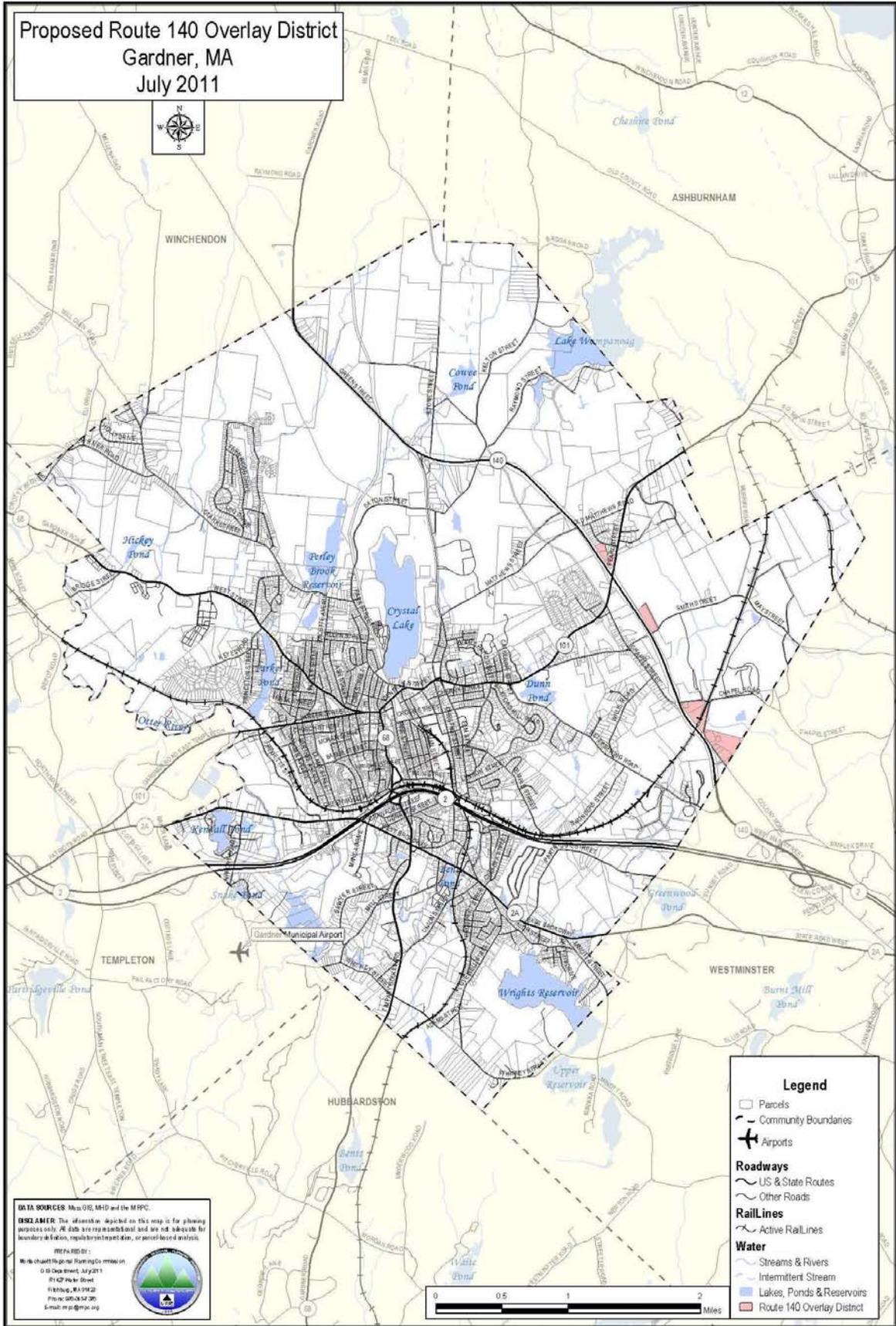
1. A registered landscape architect shall prepare a landscape plan drawn to scale, including dimensions and distances. The plan shall delineate all existing and proposed parking spaces or other vehicle areas, access aisles, driveways, and the location, size and description of all landscaping materials and tree cover.
2. The development shall have one central gathering place of unique visual interest. This may include elements such as a fountain, pond, sculpture, gazebo or similar open space or structure. The area shall be provided with benches, stone walls, and similar amenities, and shall be accessible to individuals in wheelchairs.
3. Loading areas and service facilities (dumpsters, storage areas, utility boxes, etc.) shall be placed to the rear of buildings in visually unobtrusive locations. Screening and landscaping shall prevent direct views of such areas from adjacent properties or from public ways. Screening shall be achieved through walls, fences, landscaped berms, evergreen plantings, or combinations thereof. Fences made of wood, stone, or brick are preferred; chain link or concrete materials are prohibited.

4. HVAC units, telephone boxes, electrical transformers, etc. shall be screened through use of landscaping, berms, or fences and shall be as unobtrusive as possible. HVAC units may be located behind roof ridge lines so they are not visible from the front view of the building.
5. When a proposed development abuts a Residential district, whether presently developed or not, landscaped buffers shall be employed to shield the residential property from view of the proposed development, and to minimize lighting and noise impacts. Such a buffer shall contain a screen of plantings not less than three feet (3') in width and six feet (6') in height at the time of planting, and shall thereafter be maintained by the owner or occupant so as to provide a dense screen year-round. At least fifty percent (50%) of the plants shall consist of evergreens. A solid wall or fence, not to exceed six feet (6') in height, complemented by suitable plantings may be substituted for such landscaped buffers.

#### 574.10 Architectural Standards

1. The site plan application shall contain elevations of all proposed buildings, prepared and stamped by a registered professional architect.
2. Exterior materials may include clapboard, wood shingles, stone, brick, or materials of comparable appearance. Applicants are encouraged to use green building technologies and materials, wherever possible, to limit environmental impacts.
3. Buildings should contain variation in detail to provide visual interest and to avoid monotony. Use of pitched roofs, breaks in roof and wall lines, towers, cupolas and building ornamentation should be incorporated into building design. The Planning Board may authorize a flat roof that includes green-roof technology with plants suited for the local climate.
4. Architecture based upon generic franchise design is prohibited. Rather, architects should rely upon models of regional building types to incorporate elements of historic design into the development.
5. Except for industrial, warehousing, and similar uses, windowless buildings with standardized facade treatments are prohibited. No building shall have more than 100 linear feet of unbroken wall area.
6. Architectural Focal Points. In any development with 10,000 square feet or more of retail use, the principal building on a lot shall have clearly defined, highly visible customer entrances featuring at least two (2) of the following: canopies or porticos; overhangs; recesses/projections; raised corniced parapets over the door; peaked roof forms; arches; outdoor patios; display windows; planters or wing walls that incorporate landscaped areas and/or places for sitting.

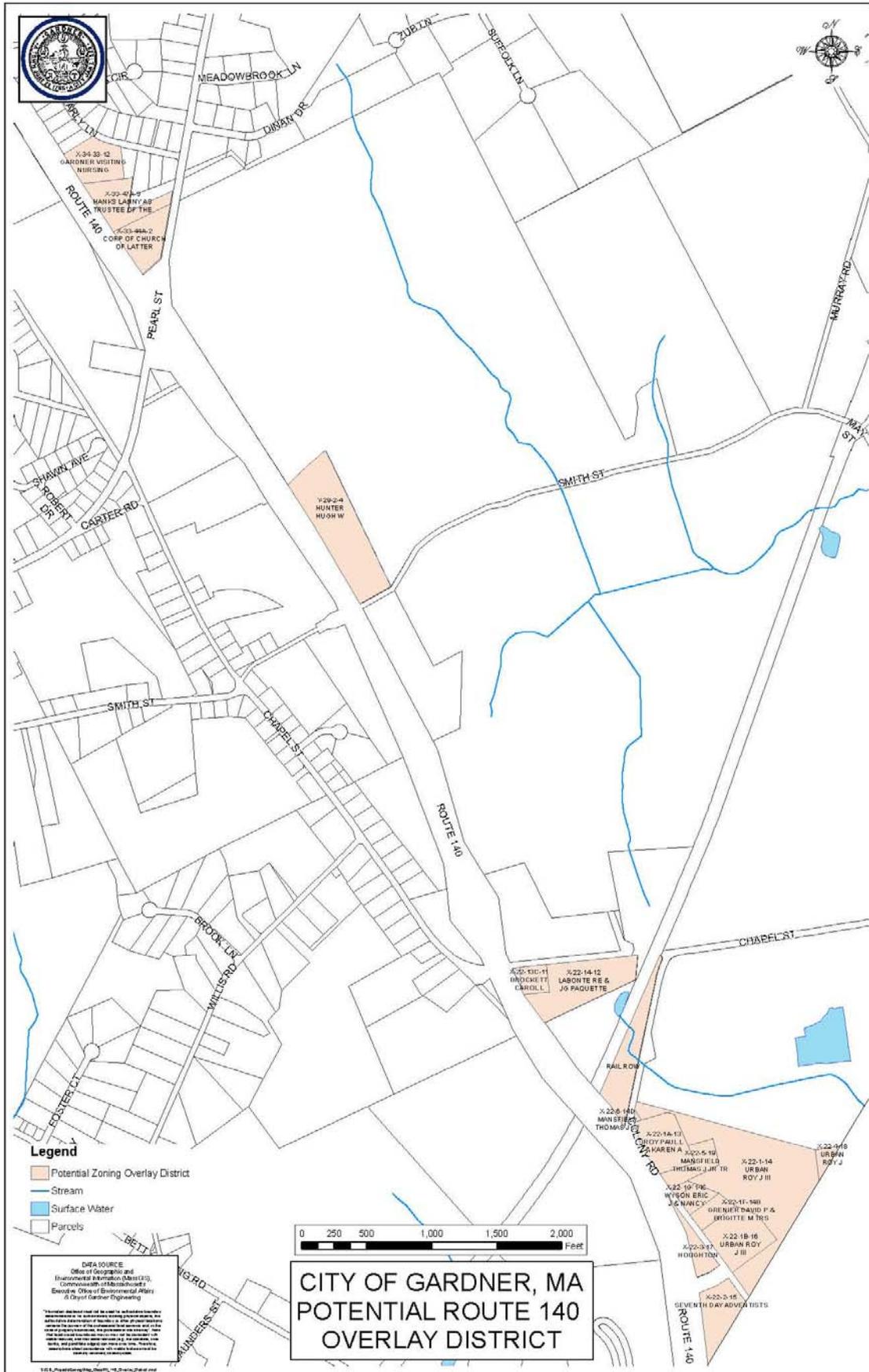
Proposed Route 140 Overlay District  
 Gardner, MA  
 July 2011



**DATA SOURCES:** MassGIS, MHD and the MRPC.  
**DISCLAIMER:** The information depicted on this map is for planning purposes only. All data are representative and are not suitable for boundary definition, regulatory enforcement, or parcel-level analysis.  
 MRPC/MAHD BY:  
 01000 State Street, Lowell, MA 01854  
 617-452-7400  
 www.mass.gov/mrpc

**Legend**

- Parcels
- - - Community Boundaries
- ✈ Airports
- Roadways**
  - ~ US & State Routes
  - ~ Other Roads
- RailLines**
  - ~ Active RailLines
- Water**
  - ~ Streams & Rivers
  - ~ Intermittent Stream
  - Lakes, Ponds & Reservoirs
  - Route 140 Overlay District



## Winchendon Proposed Rt. 140 Overlay District

### WINCHENDON

#### SECTION 4.9, ROUTE 140 CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT

Amend Table 3.1, Zoning District Designations, by adding the Route 140 Overlay District to the list of districts, as follows:

<u>Designation</u>	<u>Title</u>
Rt. 140 COD	Route 140 Corridor Overlay District

##### 4.9.1 Purpose

The purposes of the Route 140 Overlay District are to:

5. Encourage commercial and industrial development on Route 140 to provide local employment and enhance the tax base, while also protecting surrounding neighborhoods from land use conflicts;
6. Enhance the appearance, function, and safety of Route 140;
7. Facilitate shared access and connections to adjoining properties, thereby reducing the number of curb cuts and improving traffic safety on Route 140; and
8. Promote distinctive architecture, efficient site planning, and improved design standards that will achieve high quality development and preserve the scenic, natural, and cultural resources of the Route 140 Corridor.

##### 4.9.2 Application of Overlay District Regulations

This Overlay District sets forth design standards and flexible development options that apply in the Route 140 Corridor. The Use and Dimensional Regulations of the underlying district remain in place and other provisions of the Zoning Bylaw apply unless superseded by this Overlay District. The location of the District is shown on a map entitled Route 140 Corridor Overlay District, which is on file in the office of the Town Clerk. The Overlay District consists of all parcels within the Highway Commercial (C1) district where the district has frontage on Routes 140 and 12.

##### 4.9.3 Application Process

###### 1. Site Plan Review

Applicants shall comply with Section 12 of this Bylaw, Site Plan Review, for development in the Route 140 Overlay District. Developments that meet the thresholds in Section 12.2, Projects Requiring Site Plan Review, shall require site plan approval by the Planning Board. Developments that are exempt from site plan review by Section 12.3 of this Bylaw are exempt from the application of the Overlay District.

###### 2. Waivers

The Board may modify or waive any requirement of the Overlay District upon finding that due to topography, location, or unusual conditions affecting the property, the requirements of this section would unreasonably restrict development of the property. In modifying or waiving these provisions, the Board may impose conditions it deems necessary to protect the public interest and promote the orderly development of the Corridor.

### 3. Inter-Municipal Review

The Planning Board shall send a copy of the application to the Gardner Planning Board and the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, which shall have thirty-five (35) days to submit comments to the Board. The purpose of this review is to insure that regional implications are considered by the Board, and that significant impacts of the project on corridor communities can be mitigated.

### 4. Coordination with Abutting Landowners

Applicants shall submit documentation that they have contacted owners of abutting land within the Overlay District regarding their proposed plans. The intent of this notice is to give those landowners the opportunity to coordinate existing uses or future development plans with the project before the Board. Where feasible, the parties should work cooperatively to solve common issues such as improving traffic access, sharing parking, creating frontage roads, allowing connections between properties, buffering incompatible uses, or preserving open space and wetland resources.

#### 4.9.4 Design Standards

##### 1. General

Buildings and landscape treatments, not parking, should serve as the focal points for development along Route 140. Site design should contribute to a sense of continuity and coherence from Route 140 and distant vantage points.

##### 2. View Protection

The Route 140 Corridor offers many scenic views of the surrounding countryside. Each development shall preserve the visual quality of its site in relation to the scenic qualities of the immediate area and the Corridor as a whole. The applicant shall submit photographs of the area to the Board and describe the most prominent features of existing visual quality. Through means of sketches or computer simulations, the applicant shall document the impacts of the proposed development on visual quality. This analysis shall present how the project will be viewed from Route 140 in both directions and how views from the site to the surrounding area can be integrated into the development to enhance the project design. Within the development, the applicant shall preserve open vistas of important features such as Wachusett Mountain, lakes, farms, forests, historic sites, etc.

##### 3. Access Management

1. Each new development within the Overlay District shall be limited to one entrance and one exit per street. For multiple building developments, one combined entrance/exit location is preferable at the main entrance to facilitate traffic movement; such an entrance shall be separated by a traffic island with separate in and out movements. If needed, the applicant shall construct separate right and/or left turning lanes to facilitate entry and exit from the site.
2. To reduce turning movements onto Route 140, developers are encouraged to connect internal roadways with adjacent developments. When adjacent lots have contiguous frontage on Route 140, the Board may require such lots to share a single driveway, or that the lots be accessed by an internal service road. Where such sharing cannot be

achieved in the short run, the means and location for future long term inter-parcel connections may be required through right-of-way reservation and/or dedication.

3. Where it is proposed to re-develop property, the Board will evaluate existing access to Route 140 and work with the applicant to re-design curb cuts to improve safety and traffic flow. Where appropriate, the Board may require a reconfiguration to the existing access or the removal of unnecessary driveway openings onto Route 140 in favor of fewer access points with a greater level of traffic control.
  4. Where a property proposed for development abuts the North Central Pathway rail trail, the developer shall consider a proposed connection to the trail and access to the principal uses on the lot to promote alternative modes of commuting and/or public access.
4. Lighting and Utilities
4. All lighting shall be arranged and shielded so as to prevent direct glare from the light source into any public street or private way or onto adjacent property.
  5. Each outdoor luminaire shall be a full cutoff luminaire to prevent light trespass into the night sky. The design of light standards and fixtures shall be consistent with the style and character of architecture existing or proposed on the site.
  6. All lights and illuminated signs shall be designed to prevent objectionable light and glare from crossing property lines. Externally lit signs, display, building and aesthetic lighting must be lit from the top and shine downward.
  7. All electric, telephone, television and other communication lines, both main and service connections, shall be provided by underground wiring.
5. Preservation of Sensitive Natural Features

Development shall preserve the natural features of the site, avoid areas of environmental sensitivity, and minimize alteration of natural features. The following resources shall be identified on the site plan and remain undeveloped unless otherwise approved by the Board:

4. Unique or fragile areas including wetlands, vernal pools, and 100-year flood plains;
  5. Habitats of rare species listed by the Mass. Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program; and
  6. Streams and water bodies.
6. Shared Parking<sup>1</sup>
1. The number of parking spaces required shall be determined by using the standards for each use as provided elsewhere in this Zoning Bylaw. The Board may allow a reduction of the required number of spaces by up to twenty percent (20%) if the applicant demonstrates that two or more uses within a development can share parking areas due to different hours of activity. A change in use of one of the businesses shall require the construction of the full amount of parking otherwise required unless the Board grants site plan approval to allow the parking reductions to remain in effect.

---

<sup>1</sup> The provisions of Section 8.2.1 shall also apply in the Overlay District.

2. When adjacent property owners agree to share parking and a combined entrance, the Planning Board may allow a reduction in the number of required parking spaces by as much as twenty (20) percent for each business. In addition, the side yards (including associated landscaping) between the two parcels are not required. The property owner(s) shall file a written agreement to guarantee long-term joint use of the shared parking, which shall be recorded at the Worcester District Registry of Deeds. The parties may only revoke this agreement by constructing the full number of spaces required by the Zoning Bylaw and Planning Board approval of a revised plan.

## 7. Parking Lot Design

1. The provisions of Section 8.5, Parking Lot Design Requirements, shall apply unless superseded by the following standards.
  2. Parking lots shall generally be sited to the side or rear of buildings in order to minimize the obtrusiveness of large parking areas on the visual quality of the Corridor. Up to fifteen percent (15%) of the parking spaces may be in the front of the building to accommodate short-term parking needs of the proposed uses.
  3. Parking lots of twenty (20) or more spaces shall contain interior landscaping covering not less than five percent (5%) of the total area of the lot. Landscaping shall also be provided around the perimeter of the lot for a width of ten feet (10') and planted with trees and shrubs. There shall be two shade trees or three ornamental trees for every ten (10) spaces. Dead or diseased trees shall be replaced during optimal planting times.
  4. Sidewalks and pedestrian paths shall connect the lots to the principal uses they will serve. Such walkways shall be constructed with brick, decorative pavers, or other materials, and may be bordered with fencing or shrubbery to clearly separate pedestrians from automobile traffic. Facilities and access routes for deliveries, service and maintenance shall be separated, where practical, from public access routes and parking areas. Car stops shall be provided to prevent parked cars from damaging trees and shrubs or disrupting pedestrian walkways.
  5. The Planning Board may modify the above requirements for any interior landscaped areas or islands that serve as vegetated swales or bioretention cells.
8. Bicycle Accommodation. Bicycle parking facilities shall be provided for any new building, addition or enlargement of an existing building, or for any change in the occupancy of any building that results in the need for additional vehicular parking facilities. One bicycle space shall be provided for every 10 vehicle parking spaces, up to a maximum of 25 spaces.
4. Parking for bicycles shall include provision for secure storage of bicycles. Such facilities shall provide lockable enclosed lockers or racks or equivalent structures in or upon which the user may lock a bicycle.
  5. Bicycle parking facilities shall be sufficiently separated from motor vehicle parking areas to protect parked bicycles from damage by motor vehicles. The separation may be accomplished through grade separation, distance or physical barrier, such as curbs, wheel stops, poles or other similar features.

6. Bicycle parking facilities shall be located in a clearly designated safe and convenient location. Whenever possible, the bicycle parking shall be placed within 50 feet of building entrances and in well-lit areas.

## 9. Landscaping and Screening

- 1 Sections 4.8.2.1 and 7.2.5 shall apply in the Overlay District.<sup>2</sup>
2. A registered landscape architect shall prepare a landscape plan drawn to scale, including dimensions and distances. The plan shall delineate all existing and proposed parking spaces or other vehicle areas, access aisles, driveways, and the location, size and description of all landscaping materials and tree cover.
3. The development shall have one central gathering place of unique visual interest. This may include elements such as a fountain, pond, sculpture, gazebo or similar open space or structure. The area shall be provided with benches, stone walls, and similar amenities, and shall be accessible to individuals in wheelchairs.
4. Loading areas and service facilities (dumpsters, storage areas, utility boxes, etc.) shall be placed to the rear of buildings in visually unobtrusive locations. Screening and landscaping shall prevent direct views of such areas from adjacent properties or from public ways. Screening shall be achieved through walls, fences, landscaped berms, evergreen plantings, or combinations thereof. Fences made of wood, stone, or brick are preferred; chain link or concrete materials are prohibited.
5. HVAC units, telephone boxes, electrical transformers, etc. shall be screened through use of landscaping, berms, or fences and shall be as unobtrusive as possible. HVAC units may be located behind roof ridge lines so they are not visible from the front view of the building.
6. When a proposed development abuts a Residential district, whether presently developed or not, landscaped buffers shall be employed to shield the residential property from view of the proposed development, and to minimize lighting and noise impacts. Such a buffer shall contain a screen of plantings not less than three feet (3') in width and six feet (6') in height at the time of planting, and shall thereafter be maintained by the owner or occupant so as to provide a dense screen year-round. At least fifty percent (50%) of the plants shall consist of evergreens. A solid wall or fence, not to exceed six feet (6') in height, complemented by suitable plantings may be substituted for such landscaped buffers.

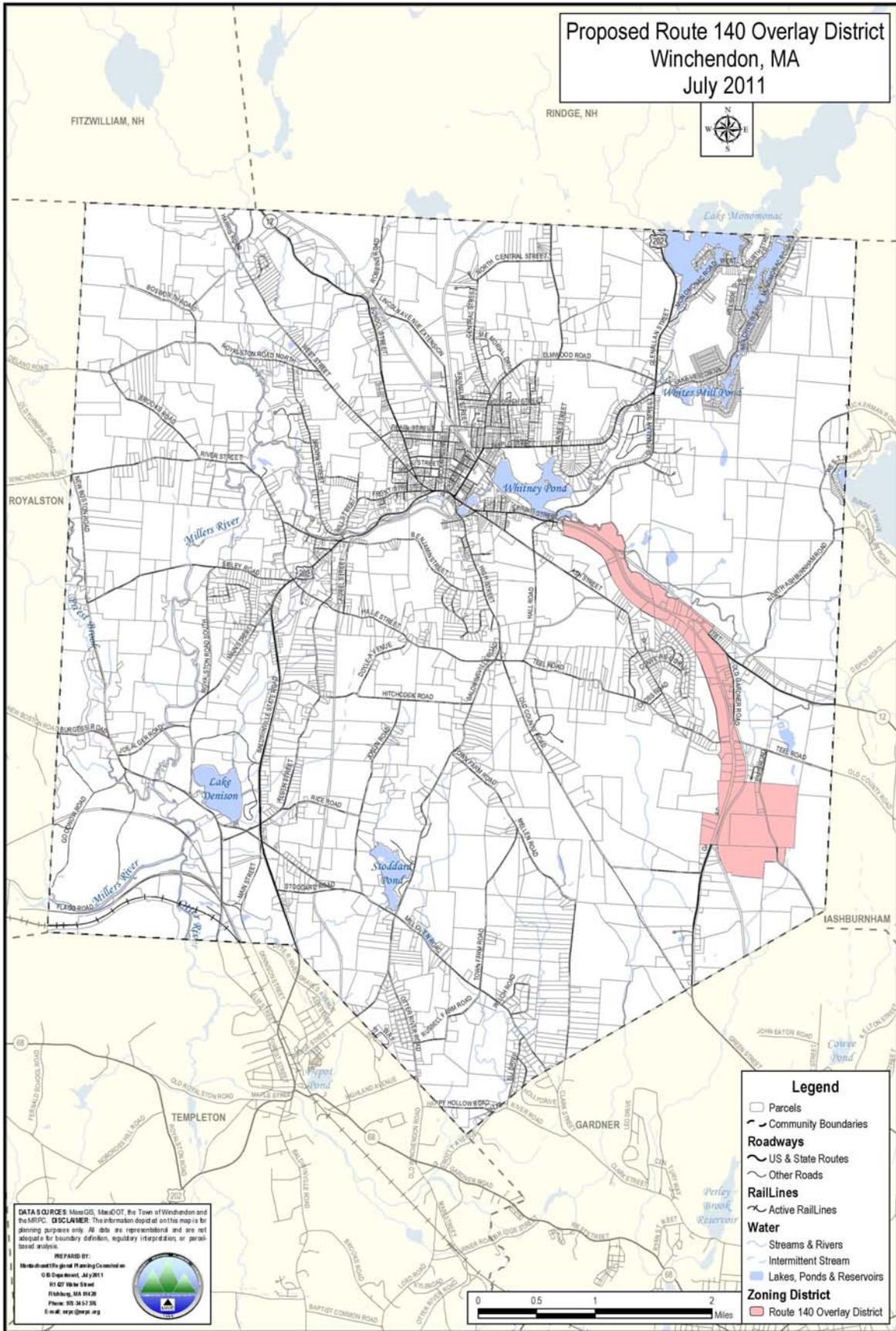
## 10. Architectural Standards

1. The site plan application shall contain elevations of all proposed buildings, prepared and stamped by a registered professional architect.
2. Exterior materials may include clapboard, wood shingles, stone, brick, or materials of comparable appearance. Applicants are encouraged to use green building technologies and materials, wherever possible, to limit environmental impacts.

---

<sup>2</sup> Ed. Note: Section 4.8.2.1 requires a vegetated buffer zone along the highway of at least 50' to screen views of structures, parking lots, and outdoor storage areas from the highway. Section 7.2.5 applies where C1, C2, and I districts abut residential property and requires a buffer zone/yard of 50' to screen the residential properties.

3. Buildings should contain variation in detail to provide visual interest and to avoid monotony. Use of pitched roofs, breaks in roof and wall lines, towers, cupolas and building ornamentation should be incorporated into building design. The Planning Board may authorize a flat roof that includes green-roof technology with plants suited for the local climate.
4. Architecture based upon generic franchise design is prohibited. Rather, architects should rely upon models of regional building types to incorporate elements of historic design into the development.
5. Except for industrial, warehousing, and similar uses, windowless buildings with standardized facade treatments are prohibited. No building shall have more than 100 linear feet of unbroken wall area.
6. Architectural Focal Points. In any development with 10,000 square feet or more of retail use, the principal building on a lot shall have clearly defined, highly visible customer entrances featuring at least two (2) of the following: canopies or porticos; overhangs; recesses/projections; raised corniced parapets over the door; peaked roof forms; arches; outdoor patios; display windows; planters or wing walls that incorporate landscaped areas and/or places for sitting.



## **Gardner News Article on Joint Planning Board Meeting Held on 5/17/2011**

Route 140 overlay district proposed  
MRPC urges Gardner, Winchendon to pursue common strategies

By Damien Fisher  
Published On Wednesday, May 18, 2011

WINCHENDON —The Gardner and Winchendon Planning Boards met Tuesday night with representatives from the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission to discuss commercial and industrial expansion on Route 140.

Bill Scanlon of the planning commission said the two adjoining communities need to plan for the expansion of Route 140, and come up with common strategies to control the growth along the corridor connecting the two communities.

Route 140 is seeing a flurry of activity on the Winchendon side, including the Hillview Business Park that is home to the new Mylec manufacturing facility and hockey rink.

Mr. Scanlon said an planning overlay district for the area along the highway will give both communities the ability to manage the safe growth of the area. There is a lot of undeveloped land on Route 140, he said.

The planning commission formed a task force including representatives from both communities to come up with a draft overlay district ordinance.

“We tried to develop reasonable standards for new developments.” Mr. Scanlon said.

The areas of concern are traffic, open space and aesthetic concerns like lighting and screening, he said.

Many of the proposals in the draft ordinance have already been incorporated into Winchendon’s zoning bylaws, Mr. Scanlon said.

Gardner will need to rezone much of the area in the Route 140 corridor from residential to commercial/ industrial before the city can adopt the overlay, said Robert Hubbard, Gardner’s director of community development and planning.

The draft will be discussed by both boards and brought before the public as soon as this fall for more input, Mr. Scanlon said

## Proposed New Light Industrial-Office District

Amend the Gardner Zoning Ordinance by adding a new district known as the Light Industrial-Office District (LI-O) as follows:

Add the LI-O District to the Types of Districts enumerated in Section 310:

### 310 TYPES OF DISTRICTS

For the purpose of this Ordinance, the City of Gardner is hereby divided into the following types of districts:

<u>Full Title</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Light Industrial-Office	LI-O

---

### 410 PERMITTED USES IN RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

Add a new column to the Table of Uses with the heading LI-O and specify permitted, prohibited and special permit uses, as shown on the attached table.

---

Add the LI-O District as a suitable location for Smart Growth PUDs (§541), the minimum tract size of 60,000 sq. ft. (§541), and the minimum common open space requirement of 20% (§543). (New text is shown in ***bold, italics font.***)

### 540 SMART GROWTH PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (SGPUD)

#### 541 Purpose

By Special Permit, the Planning Board seeks to facilitate an alternative pattern of land development which promotes compact, mixed use development that is convenient to a variety of transportation options, to preserve common open space, and to promote the creation of new housing units that are contained in a variety of building types and laid out in a manner to promote the establishment of a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood(s). This type of development may be determined to be sufficiently advantageous to render it appropriate to grant special permission to depart from the normal requirements of the district to the extent authorized by the Ordinance.

SGPUD is allowed in the RR2, COM2, IND1, ~~and~~ IND2, ***and LI-O*** zones. Proposed SGPUD development shall be located on a lot or contiguous lots of not less than 60,000 s.f. in the RR2 zone, and shall employ public water and sewage. In the COM2, ~~and~~ IND2, ***and LI-O*** zones, the tract shall contain no less than 60,000 s.f. In the IND1 zone, the tract shall contain no less than 50,000 s.f. A development plan shall be presented for the entire tract.

#### 543 Density and Dimensional Requirements

1. The minimum common open space requirement of the overall tract in the RR2 shall be 30% exclusive of areas located in flood plains and wetlands. In the COM2, IND1, ~~and~~ IND2, ***and LI-O*** zones the minimum common open space requirement of the overall tract is 20% exclusive of areas located in flood plains and wetlands.

---

## **620 TABLE OF LOT, AREA, FRONTAGE, YARD, AND HEIGHT REQUIREMENTS**

Add a new row to the dimensional table labeled Light Industrial-Office and specify the minimum and maximum dimensional requirements that apply to the LI-O district, as shown on the attached table.

---

Specify certain requirements for signs in §914.5 and §916.

### 914 Signs which Do Not Require a Sign Permit

5. Window Signs – Window Signs in Commercial, ~~or~~ Industrial, **or Light Industrial-Office** Districts shall not require a sign permit provided that the aggregate display surface of all signs covers no more than 50% of the window or door on which they are placed. Such signs shall not be illuminated other than by lighting fixtures on the building.

### 916 Signs Permitted in the Commercial or Industrial Districts

Any principal use permitted in the Commercial, ~~or~~ Industrial, **or Light Industrial-Office** Districts may erect a sign or signs subject to the following:

---

415 TABLE OF USES

<i>Description of Use</i>	<b>SF Res. 1</b>	<b>Rural Res. 2</b>	<b>Gen. Res. 3</b>	<b>Com. 1</b>	<b>Com. 2</b>	<b>Ind. 1</b>	<b>Ind. 2</b>	<b>LI-O</b>
<b><i>Residential Uses</i></b>								
1. Single Family detached dwelling	P	P	P	P	NP	NP	NP	NP
2. Single Family detached dwelling for personnel required for safe operation of a permitted use	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P
3. Two family dwelling	P	SP	SP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
4. Three or four family dwellings	NP	SP	SP	SP	NP	NP	NP	NP
5. Multifamily dwelling	NP	NP	SP	SP	NP	NP	NP	NP
6. Hotel/Motel	NP	SP	NP	P	P	SP	SP	SP
7. Rooming house	NP	SP	SP	SP	NP	NP	NP	NP
8. Bed and Breakfast	SP	SP	SP	SP	NP	NP	NP	NP
9. Assisted living facility	NP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	NP
10. Open Space Residential Development	NP	SP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
<b><i>General and Institutional Uses</i></b>								
11. Agricultural use – non-exempt	SP	P	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
12. Agricultural use – exempt	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
13. Commercial greenhouses-any greenhouse operation where there is more than 200 square feet of gross floor area	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
14. Farm stand, non-exempt	NP	SP	NP	P	NP	NP	NP	NP
15. Use of land or structures for religious purposes	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

<i>Description of Use</i>	SF Res. 1	Rural Res. 2	Gen. Res. 3	Com. 1	Com. 2	Ind. 1	Ind. 2	LI-O
16. Schools--public, religious, sectarian or private	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
17. Colleges and dormitories accessory thereto	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
18. Child care facility	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
19. Adult social day care facility	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
20. Hospital, sanitarium, nursing, rest or convalescent home	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	NP
21. Human service program operated out of a residential structure	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
22. Library, museum, art gallery	SP	P	P	P	P	NP	NP	P
23. Civic center	NP	SP	NP	SP	SP	NP	NP	SP
24. Municipal use	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
25. Essential services	NP	SP	SP	P	P	P	P	P
26. Country or tennis club, lodge building or other non-profit social, civic, conservation, or recreational use	NP	P	P	P	P	NP	NP	NP
27. Cemetery	NP	SP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
28. Earth moving and alteration	<b>See Section 1060</b>							
<b><i>Business Uses</i></b>								
29. Mixed use	SP	NP	SP	P	NP	NP	NP	NP
30. Professional office	NP	NP	NP	P	P	NP	NP	P
31. Professional office or studio within the principal building of a residence	NP	NP	SP	P	P	NP	NP	NP
32. Office building	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P

<i>Description of Use</i>	SF Res. 1	Rural Res. 2	Gen. Res. 3	Com. 1	Com. 2	Ind. 1	Ind. 2	LI-O
33. Home occupation	P	P	P	P	NP	NP	NP	NP
34. Convenience retail	SP	NP	SP	P	P	SP	SP	NP
35. Retail Store up to 15,000 s.f.	NP	NP	NP	P	P	NP	NP	NP
36. Retail Store over 15,000 s.f.	NP	NP	NP	SP	SP	SP	NP	NP
37. Bank or other financial institution	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	NP	P
38. Craft, consumer, personal service establishment dealing directly with the general public	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	NP	NP
39. Undertaking establishment or funeral home	NP	SP	SP	P	P	NP	NP	NP
40. Motor vehicle light service	NP	NP	NP	SP	SP	SP	NP	NP
41. Salesroom for motor vehicles, trailers, boats, farm implements, or machinery with repair services and storage permitted	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P	NP	NP
42. Motor vehicle general repairs	NP	NP	NP	NP	SP	P	NP	NP
43. Motor vehicle body repair, soldering or welding shop	NP	NP	NP	NP	SP	P	SP	NP
44. Restaurant	NP	SP	NP	P	P	P	NP	P
45. Restaurant, fast food including appurtenant structures to provide drive-thru or drive-in services.	NP	NP	NP	NP	SP	NP	NP	NP
46. Restaurant serving food or beverages with live or mechanical entertainment	NP	SP	NP	SP	P	NP	NP	NP
47. Wholesale office or showroom, with storage limited to floor samples only	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P
48. Wholesale office or showroom with storage permitted on property	NP	NP	NP	SP	P	P	P	P

<i>Description of Use</i>	<b>SF Res. 1</b>	<b>Rural Res. 2</b>	<b>Gen. Res. 3</b>	<b>Com. 1</b>	<b>Com. 2</b>	<b>Ind. 1</b>	<b>Ind. 2</b>	<b>LI-O</b>
49. Indoor amusement or recreational place or place of assembly provided that the building is so insulated and maintained as to confine noise to the premises and is located not less than one hundred feet from a residential district	NP	NP	NP	P	P	NP	NP	SP
50. Commercial clubs and/or recreational establishments such as swimming pools, tennis courts, ski clubs, camping areas, skating rinks or other commercial facilities offering outdoor recreation	NP	SP	NP	P	P	NP	NP	SP
51. Public or commercial outdoor amusement or recreation use but not including outdoor movie theater	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P	NP	NP
52. Bus station or terminal or railroad station for passengers	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	NP	NP
53. Transport terminal	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P	SP
54. Contracting business and contractor's yard including storage in the open. <sup>3</sup>	NP	NP	NP	NP	SP	P	NP	NP
55. Drive-thru or drive-in business and appurtenant structures for any use permitted use excluding fast food restaurants and convenience retail.	NP	NP	NP	SP	SP	SP	NP	P
56. Animal clinic or veterinary hospital	NP	SP	NP	NP	P	P	NP	SP
57. Commercial kennel	NP	SP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
58. Printing or publishing establishment	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P
59. Adult uses	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	SP	NP
<b><i>Industrial Uses</i></b>								

<sup>3</sup> Storage in the open shall be screened from public view. The preferred method of such screening shall be a landscaped arrangement of plantings; if this is not feasible, opaque fencing shall be used.

<i>Description of Use</i>	<b>SF Res. 1</b>	<b>Rural Res. 2</b>	<b>Gen. Res. 3</b>	<b>Com. 1</b>	<b>Com. 2</b>	<b>Ind. 1</b>	<b>Ind. 2</b>	<b>LI-O</b>
60. Light manufacturing using electric power only and causing no external disturbances to abutters	NP	NP	NP	SP	SP	P	P	P
61. Telegraph, telephone and express offices, radio, television and film broadcasting studios	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P
62. Warehouse and storage facilities including storage in the open. <sup>4</sup>	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P	SP
63. Converting, fabricating, manufacturing, altering, finishing and/or assembling	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P	SP
64. Scientific or research laboratory	NP	NP	NP	NP	SP	P	P	P
65. Distributorships dealing with commercial and industrial supplies	NP	NP	NP	NP	SP	P	P	P
<b>66. Basic and applied research and development in the pharmaceutical, biological, biotechnology, biomedical, and engineering fields, production and product assembly, laboratory testing, and related uses</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>
<b>67. Research and development in the field of information technology, including the manufacture and production of equipment, internet service providers, data storage centers, and similar back office operations</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>
68. All other industrial uses not expressly referred to above or not expressly prohibited	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	SP	SP	SP
<i>Accessory Uses</i>								
69. In-Law apartment within a single-family dwelling	P	P	P	P	NP	NP	NP	NP
70. In-Law apartment in a detached structure	SP	SP	SP	SP	NP	NP	NP	NP

<sup>4</sup> Storage in the open shall be screened from public view. The preferred method of such screening shall be a landscaped arrangement of plantings; if this is not feasible, opaque fencing shall be used.

<i>Description of Use</i>	<b>SF Res. 1</b>	<b>Rural Res. 2</b>	<b>Gen. Res. 3</b>	<b>Com. 1</b>	<b>Com. 2</b>	<b>Ind. 1</b>	<b>Ind. 2</b>	<b>LI-O</b>
71. Family Day Care Home, Small	SP	P	P	P	SP	SP	SP	SP
72. Family Day Care Home, Large	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
73. Customary home occupation	P	P	P	P	NP	NP	NP	NP
74. Free-standing aerial antenna towers and Wind Energy Conversion Systems.	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	SP	SP	SP
75. Land uses accessory to scientific development or production	NP	SP	NP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP

***Prohibited industrial uses.***

- 76. Acetylene gas, cyanide compound or oxygen manufacture.
- 77. Asphalt manufacture or refining.
- 78. Chlorine or bleaching powder manufacture.
- 79. Creosote manufacture.
- 80. Distillation of coal or wood.
- 81. Drop forge shop.
- 82. Explosives, fireworks, or ammunition manufacture.
- 83. Gypsum, cement, plaster, or plaster of paris manufacture.
- 84. Incineration, reduction or dumping of offal, garbage or refuse on a commercial basis (except where controlled by the City)
- 85. Junk yard, junk storage, scrapping of autos and parts and the salvage thereof.
- 86. Linoleum manufacture.
- 87. Match manufacture. Fertilizer manufacture.
- 88. Fumigation plants.
- 89. Glue or size manufacture from fish or animal offal.
- 90. Storage, collection, treatment, burial, incineration or disposal of radioactive wastes, including but not limited to low level waste.

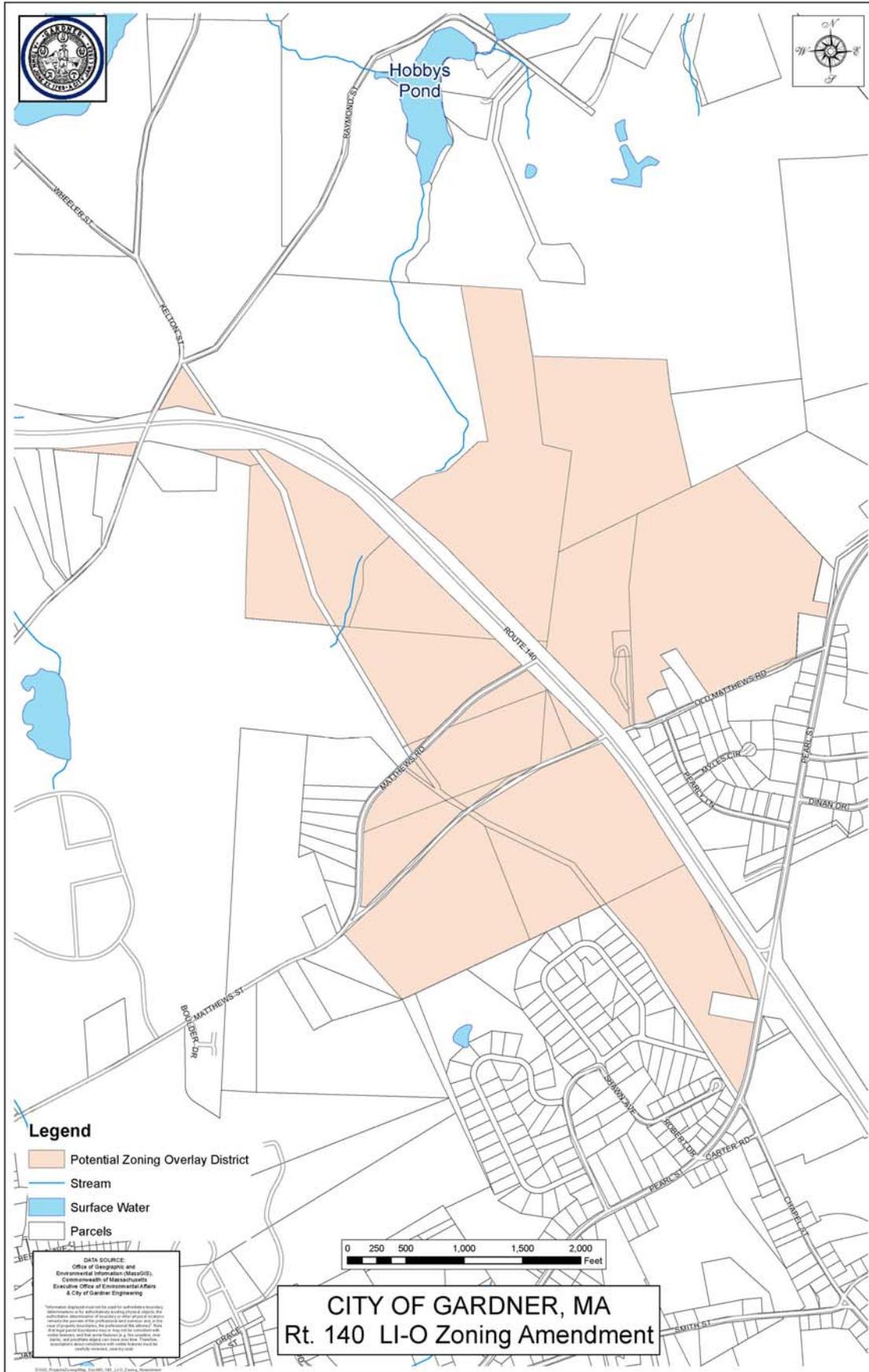
620 TABLE OF LOT, AREA, FRONTAGE, YARD, AND HEIGHT REQUIREMENTS<sup>5</sup>

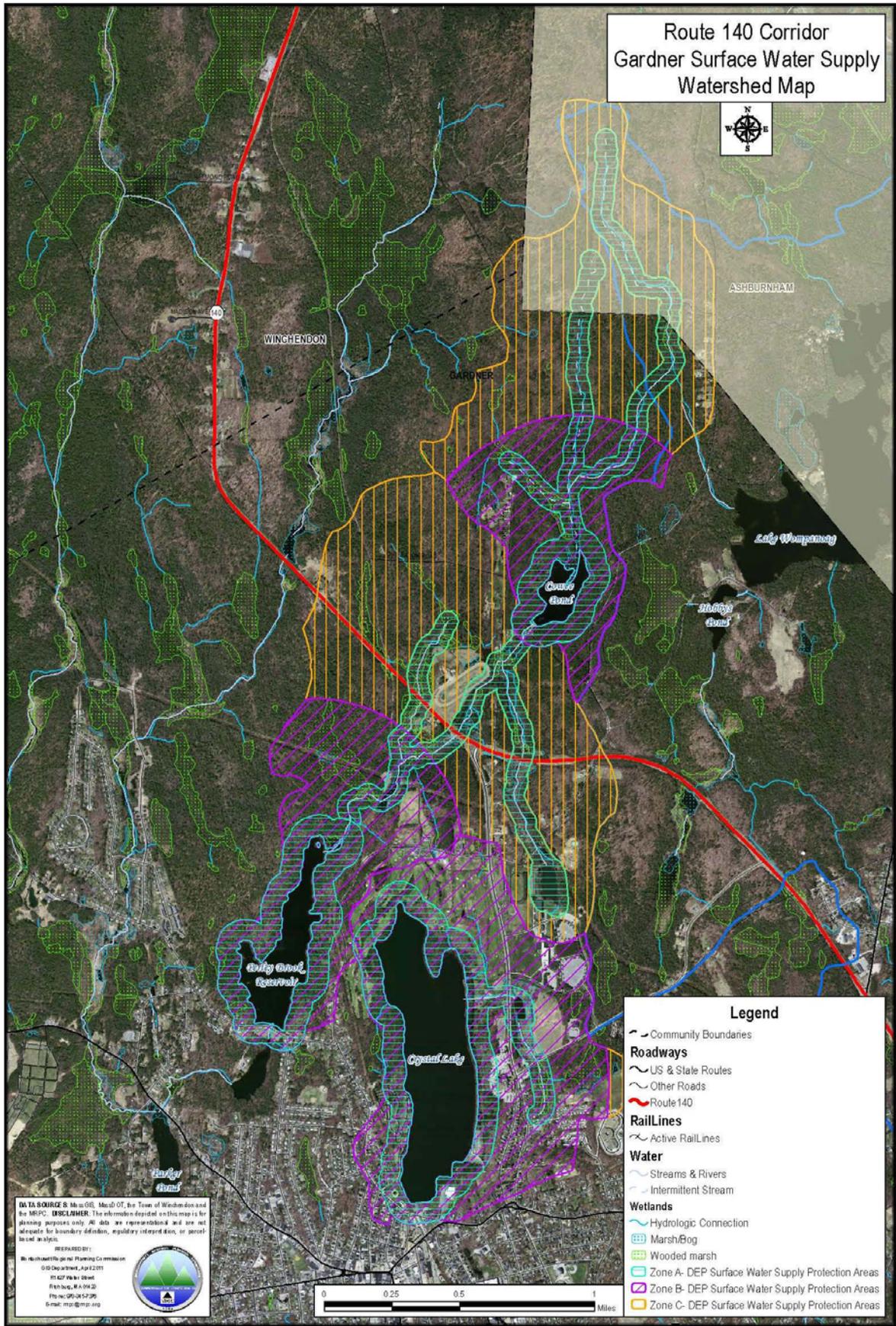
	MINIMUM LOT DIMENSIONS		MINIMUM YARD DIMENSIONS IN FEET <sup>6</sup>			MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF BUILDING		MAX % BLDG. COV. INCLU. ACCESSORY BUILDING	% OPEN SPACE REQUIRED
	AREA SQUARE FEET	FRONTAGE IN FEET	FRONT	SIDE	REAR	STORIES	FEET		
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL 1	12,500	100	30	15	20	3	36	30%	
RURAL RESIDENTIAL 2	60,000	150	30	20	40	3	36	25%	
GENERAL RESIDENTIAL 3	8,000	75	20	10	20	3	36	65%	
Multifamily Use	3,500/unit	75	30	20	20	3	36	30%	40%
COMMERCIAL 1	10,000	80	10	10	20	5	60	30%	
Multifamily Use	2,500/unit	80	30	20	20	3	36	30%	40%
COMMERCIAL 2	30,000	100	30	20	30	4	48	50%	
INDUSTRIAL 1	10,000	80	10	10	20 <sup>5</sup> <sub>7</sub>	7	84	65%	
INDUSTRIAL 2	30,000	150	40	20	30 <sup>5</sup> <sub>3</sub>	7	84	50%	
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL-OFFICE	60,000	150	40	20	30	5	60	50%	

<sup>5</sup> 1. See Infill Development (Section 630), Overlay Districts and Planned Unit Developments (Section 5) Special Residential (Section 8) and Supplemental (Section 10) regulations for applicable dimensional requirements pursuant to special conditions.

<sup>6</sup> No accessory building or structure shall be located within the required front yard area. No accessory building shall be located in any side yard area nearer to the side lot line than five feet, or in a rear yard area nearer to the rear lot line than five feet, or nearer to another principal or accessory building than five feet.

<sup>7</sup> Where the rear lot line in such zones abuts a rail track, the REAR SETBACK shall be reduced to five (5) feet. (8/6/2007)





Route 140 Corridor  
Gardner Surface Water Supply  
Watershed Map



ASHBURNHAM

WINGENDON

GARDNER

Lake Wompatoy

Little Pond

Eagle Pond

Crystal Lake

Legend

- Community Boundaries
- Roadways**
  - US & State Routes
  - Other Roads
  - Route 140
- RailLines**
  - Active RailLines
- Water**
  - Streams & Rivers
  - Intermittent Stream
- Wetlands**
  - Hydrologic Connection
  - Marsh/Bog
  - Wooded marsh
  - Zone A- DEP Surface Water Supply Protection Areas
  - Zone B- DEP Surface Water Supply Protection Areas
  - Zone C- DEP Surface Water Supply Protection Areas

**DATA SOURCE:** GIS Data: GIS, MapInfo of the Town of Wingendon and the MRPC. **DISCLAIMER:** The information depicted on this map is for planning purposes only. All data are representative and are not adequate for boundary definition, regulatory interpretation, or parcel-based analysis.

PREPARED BY:  
Mr. Nicholas DeGroot, Planning Commission  
918 Depot Street, Apt #201  
10407 Park St  
Barnstable, MA 01953  
Ph: 508-261-5736  
E-mail: mrp@mrp.org

