



Town of Hinesburg
Planning & Zoning Department
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MEMORANDUM

Date: December 23, 2015

From: Alex Weinhausen, Hinesburg Director of Planning & Zoning

To:

Williston Planning Commission	Charlotte Planning Commission
St. George Planning Commission	Starksboro Planning Commission
Huntington Planning Commission	Chittenden County Regional Planning
Shelburne Planning Commission	Commission
Monkton Planning Commission	Department of Housing and Community Affairs
Richmond Planning Commission	

RE: Hinesburg Zoning Regulation Revisions – Solar & Commercial/Industrial Screening

The Hinesburg Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at the Town Hall on January 13, 2016, at 7:30 pm to receive public comment on proposed changes to the Zoning Regulations (last revised July 28, 2015). The purpose is to revise and bolster landscaping and screening requirements for commercial and industrial uses, and to ensure these requirements also apply to certain ground-mounted solar installations. The geographic area affected is town-wide.

Copies of the proposed changes, as well as a report on how the proposed changes comply with State Statute and the Town Plan, are available on the Town web site (www.hinesburg.org) and at the Planning & Zoning Office at the Town Office located at 10632 Route 116. The Planning & Zoning Office is open 8am to 4pm Monday through Friday. For information please contact the Planning & Zoning Office, 482-2281 ext 225. A list of the affected section headings follows, as required pursuant to Title 24, Chapter 117 V.S.A Section 4444 (b).

Zoning Regulations Sections:

- Section 5.6 – Design Standards for Commercial and Industrial Uses
- Section 5.6.5 – Screening/Landscaping

Enclosed with this memo, you'll find the following documents:

1. Public hearing notice suitable for posting
2. Proposed regulation changes (3 page document)
3. A report explaining the background and detailing conformance with the Town Plan pursuant to State statutes - Title 24, Chapter 117, Section 4441c

Please feel free to contact me for more information. Your input would be welcome and appreciated!

TOWN OF HINESBURG - PLANNING COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

January 13, 2016

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Zoning Regulations Sections:

Section 5.6 – Design Standards for Commercial and Industrial Uses

Section 5.6.5 – Screening/Landscaping

Zoning Regulations

Town of Hinesburg, Vermont

Solar Array & Commercial/Industrial Screening Revisions

Changes Proposed To Section 5.6 & 5.6.5 Only

- New language is underlined
- Deleted language is under strikeouts

Planning Commission DRAFT – 12/17/2015

Draft for January 13, 2016 PC Public Hearing

First Adopted November 7, 1972
As Amended May 18, 2015 (effective July 28, 2015)

Section 5.6 DESIGN STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES

PURPOSE/APPLICABILITY: The intent of these design standards is to help ensure that new commercial and industrial development respects and bolsters Hinesburg's unique sense of place and rural landscape. These standards are important both in the village growth area and industrial districts where such development is concentrated and more prominent, and throughout the rest of town where such development is more dispersed and less prominent. These standards are intended to guide new development such that its pattern and essential aesthetics facilitate the functional priorities of the village growth area and the rural character throughout the rest of the town.

These design standards shall apply town-wide (or as noted below) to non-residential development that requires site plan approval, including ground-mounted solar energy plant/installations with a capacity more than 15kW. These standards shall not apply to: home occupations described in sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2, accessory apartments as described in section 5.9, commercial agricultural operations, agricultural accessory uses, commercial forest management, and forest management accessory uses. The design standards in section 5.22 also apply to commercial and industrial uses in five village growth area districts (VG, VG-NW, VG-NE, R1, R2); however, where there are any contradictions or inconsistencies, the standards of section 5.22 shall prevail.

- 5.6.1 **New Streets:** All newly constructed streets will be paved and be constructed according to Town Road Standards, which are in effect at the time that the street is constructed. All newly constructed streets in the Village Growth Area zoning districts shall have sidewalks at least 5 ft. wide and street trees as specified in the Subdivision Regulations which are in effect at the time the street is constructed. The Development Review Board may require sidewalks and street trees as part of site plan approval or subdivision approval in other districts.
- 5.6.2 **Road Cuts:** Any parcel of land in commercial and industrial districts in single ownership on November 7, 1972, shall be served by no more than one (1) road-cut. (The present access to the former Giroux Building Supply, Inc. property shall not be included in the foregoing calculation.) Additional curb cuts may be allowed by the Development Review Board for a lot in single ownership that obtains site plan approval for the entire parcel of land.
- 5.6.3 **Parking and loading areas:** Parking and loading areas for any new structures shall be located in the side or rear yards of the structure. Where sufficient screening is provided, and with Development Review Board approval, up to 20% of the total number of parking spaces may be located in the front yard of the structure. If more than one structure is served by the parking area, the parking area may be located in the front yard of half of the structures.
- (1) Parking and loading areas shall be set back a minimum of five (5) feet from any property line to allow sufficient space for screening, grading and or control of storm water. No such setback shall be required from property lines crossed by shared parking facilities.
- (2) Shared parking facilities including those crossing property lines are encouraged where such arrangements reduce curb-cuts, improve circulation and provide for maximum efficiency in the use of parking spaces.
- 5.6.4 **Exterior lighting:** All exterior lighting shall be installed or shielded in such a manner as to conceal light sources and reflector/refractor areas from view from points beyond the perimeter of the area to be illuminated.
- 5.6.5 **Screening/Landscaping:** For development with total lot coverage of 10,000 square feet or more (existing and proposed combined), In addition to generally improving the appearance of a site, plantings, fencing and other landscape features shall be designed to as follows:
- (1) ~~serve a clear function such as:~~ Provide visual screening between incompatible uses

or structures including, but not limited to, large parking areas, large unbroken building facades, ground-mounted solar arrays.

~~(2) visually screening expanses of pavement or large unbroken building facades; providing~~ Provide shade in summer for roads, parking lots and buildings.;

~~(3) defining~~ Define street edges and other public spaces; while giving visual emphasis to entryways; and providing for privacy.

~~(4) controlling~~ Control erosion, ~~and/or to~~ and filter, absorb and slow storm water runoff.

~~(5) Screening material must be either vegetation (preferred) or wood; however, other types fencing material (e.g., chain link) may be allowed with appropriate coverings in combination with natural landscaping. Reflective screening materials are prohibited.~~

~~(6) Existing and/or proposed screening shall break up the visual impact of the development, such that development is visually absorbed into the surroundings.~~

~~(7) Contiguous areas comprised of any combination of structures, parking lots, loading areas, outdoor storage, or ground-mounted solar energy arrays that are greater than one acre shall utilize internal landscaping to break up the site and mitigate large expanses of development.~~

~~(8) Landscaping/screening shall be maintained and effective year round. Plant materials shall be placed such that fulfill the landscaping/screening objective within five years of planting.~~

~~5.6.5(9) –See section 4.3.8 for more comprehensive landscaping requirements for projects subject to site plan review standards. Section 4.3.8 shall not apply to a ground-mounted solar energy plant/installation.~~

5.6.6 **Storage of Materials and Equipment:** To reduce impacts on adjoining uses, all materials and equipment in the Village Growth Area zoning districts as well as Industrial District 2 shall be screened from adjoining properties and roads and all uses shall conform to the performance standards in Section 5.12 of this Regulation.

5.6.7 **Sidewalks and Trails:** At the discretion of the Development Review Board, sidewalks a minimum of five (5) feet wide, bike lanes or trails may be required for projects in the Industrial and Village Growth Area zoning districts where, in the judgment of the Development Review Board, these facilities are necessary to improve public safety, reduce vehicular traffic, provide access to services or otherwise promote continuity within the zoning district.

5.6.8 **Gas Station Separation Distance:** No new gas station shall be permitted within 1,500 feet linear feet in any direction from the property boundaries of an existing gas station. Gas station in this context refers to any business that sells gas for motor vehicles, regardless of whether this is the primary or accessory use of the property – i.e., inclusive of service stations and convenience stores that sell gas.

5.6.9 **Roof Materials:** Highly reflective and lighter roof colors designed for building energy savings shall be allowed.

Section 5.7 ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

5.7.1 Required frontage on, or access to, public roads or public waters:

(1) No land development may be permitted on lots which do not either have frontage on a public road (Class I, II, or III) or on public waters, or, with the approval of the Development Review Board, access by means of a Class IV road or a permanent easement or a right-of-way on record at least fifty (50) feet in width. Refer to Table 1 for required frontages.

(2) If an easement or right-of-way is to be used as the primary access to any lot, such