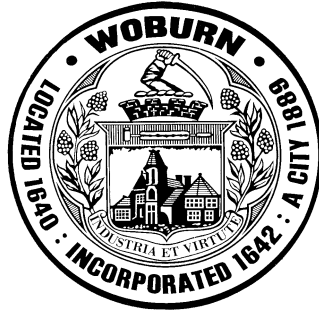


# CITY OF WOBURN



## 1985 ZONING ORDINANCES, AS AMENDED

With Amendments Through

May 6, 2022

A True Copy Attest:

---

City Clerk

SEAL

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF ZONING IN WOBURN**

A Special Meeting of the City Council was convened on Monday, December 22, 1924 by call of Mayor Stephen S. Bean for the purpose of taking action on the Zoning Ordinance. A public hearing was held at that meeting and the matter was referred to a second public hearing. On Friday, January 2, 1925 at 8:15 p.m. a second public hearing was held on the Zoning Ordinance and the matter was passed to be ordained. The Mayor approved the ordinance on Saturday, January 3, 1925 and the ordinance became effective on that date.

The Zoning Ordinance was published as Chapter XXVIII of the Revised Ordinances of 1934 of the City of Woburn.

A substantial revision of the Zoning Ordinance was introduced to the City Council at its regular meeting on May 18, 1961 and set up for a public hearing. The public hearing was held on Monday, June 12, 1961 and the matter was tabled for further study. Several further meetings were conducted during which time the City Council amended several provisions of the original proposal. On July 6, 1961, the City Council voted to revoke Chapter XXVIII of the Revised Ordinances of 1934 and adopted the Revised Zoning Ordinance. On July 10, 1961, the Mayor approved the ordinance and the ordinance became effective on that date.

There was a further re-drafting of the Zoning Ordinance introduced into the City Council on April 9, 1962 and several hearings followed on the revisions during the following weeks. On August 9, 1962, the City Council voted to adopt the revisions to the Zoning Ordinance. The Mayor approved the ordinance on August 20, 1962 and the ordinance became effective on that date.

At a Special Meeting of the City Council on January 22, 1970, a public hearing was held on a further significant revision of the Zoning Ordinance. On April 7, 1970, the City Council adopted a revision of the Zoning Ordinance and repealed the zoning ordinance passed in August 1962. The Mayor approved the ordinance on April 10, 1970 and the ordinance became effective on that date.

On January 2, 1985, a major revision to the Zoning Ordinance was introduced to the City Council. After a series of public hearings, the City Council voted on April 19, 1985 that the proposed Zoning Ordinance be passed to be ordained. The Zoning Ordinance repealed the Zoning Ordinance of 1970. The Zoning Ordinance was approved by the Mayor on April 24, 1985 and became effective on that date.

Written by:  
William C. Campbell  
City Clerk (1997-2021)

[This page intentionally left blank]

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Brief History of Zoning in Woburn.....	i.
Extended Table of Contents.....	v.
Section 1 - Purpose and Application .....	1-1
Section 2 – Definitions .....	2-1
Section 3 - Administration, Enforcement and Appeals .....	3-1
Section 4 - Establishment of Districts.....	4-1
Section 5 - Use Regulations.....	5-1
Section 6 - Dimensional Regulations .....	6-1
Section 7 - Non-Conforming Uses .....	7-1
Section 8 - Off Street Parking and Loading Facilities Regulations .....	8-1
Section 9 - Floodway and Flood Plain Districts .....	9-1
Section 10 - Cluster Development .....	10-1
Section 11 - Special Permits and Variances .....	11-1
Section 12 - Site Plan Review.....	12-1
Section 13 - Sign Regulations.....	13-1
Section 14 - Townhouse Development in Residential Districts R-1 and R-2.....	14-1
Section 15 - Groundwater Protection District .....	15-1
Section 16 - Illustration Addendum .....	16-1
Section 17 - Notification of Adoption of Changes of the Woburn Zoning Ordinances .....	17-1

Section 18 – Development Impact Assessment and Mitigation..... 18-1

Section 19 – Traffic ..... 19-1

Section 20 – Woburn Loop Bikeway/Greenway Overlay District..... 20-1

Section 21 – Mishawum Station Transit Oriented Development  
Overlay District..... 21-1

Section 22 – Intergenerational Overlay District (IOD) District ..... 22-1

Section 23 – Commerce Way Corridor Overlay District (CWCOD) ..... 23-1

Section 24 – Wind Energy Facilities..... 24-1

Section 25 – Upper Main Street Overlay (UMS) District ..... 25-1

Section 26 – Solar Photovoltaic Installations ..... 26-1

Section 27 - Conversion of Houses of Worship..... 27-1

Section 28 – Technology and Business Mixes Use Overlay District ..... 28-1

Section 29 – Conversion of Significant Historic Building ..... 29-1

Section 30 – Smart Growth Overlay District(s)..... 30-1

Section 31 – Railway Overlay District (ROD) ..... 31-1

# EXTENDED TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1 - PURPOSE AND APPLICATION .....	1-1
1.1 Purpose.....	1-1
1.2 Application .....	1-1
SECTION 2 - DEFINITIONS .....	2-1
SECTION 3 - ADMINISTRATION, ENFORCEMENT AND APPEALS .....	3-1
3.1 Administration .....	3-1
3.2 Enforcement.....	3-2
3.3 Appeals.....	3-3
SECTION 4 - ESTABLISHMENT OF DISTRICTS .....	4-1
SECTION 5 - USE REGULATIONS.....	5-1
5.1 Table of Use Regulations.....	5-1
Notes to 5.1 Table of Use Regulations.....	5-10
5.2 Additional Use Regulations .....	5-15
5.3 Requirements for Fences.....	5-17
5.4 Requirements for Swimming Pools .....	5-18
5.5 Earth Removal or Filling.....	5-18
5.6 Wireless Communication Link/Special Permit Application Requirements and Guidelines.....	5-20
5.7 Buffer Requirements .....	5-24
5.8 Marijuana Establishments Forbidden.....	5-27
SECTION 6 - DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS.....	6-1
6.1 Table of Dimensional Regulations .....	6-2
Footnotes to 6.1 Table of Dimensional Regulations.....	6-5
6.1A Educational - Residential Facilities an Group Homes .....	6-6
6.2 Additional Dimensional Regulations.....	6-6
SECTION 7 - NON-CONFORMING USES .....	7-1
7.1 Application .....	7-1
7.2 Purpose.....	7-2
7.3 Extension or Alteration of Non-conforming Uses .....	7-2

7.4 Abandonment.....	7-2
7.5 Change in nonconforming use after permitted use .....	7-2
7.6 Reconstruction .....	7-3
<b>SECTION 8 - OFF STREET PARKING AND LOADING FACILITIES REGULATIONS .....</b>	<b>8-1</b>
8.1 Applicability .....	8-1
8.2 Numbers of Required Off-Street Parking Facilities .....	8-1
8.3 Locations of Required Off Street Parking Facilities .....	8-3
8.4 Design and Layout of Required Parking Facilities.....	8-4
8.5 Lighting, Surfacing, and Maintenance .....	8-5
8.6 Screening and Landscaping.....	8-6
8.7 Off Street Loading Requirements.....	8-7
<b>SECTION 9 - FLOODWAY AND FLOOD PLAIN DISTRICTS .....</b>	<b>9-1</b>
9.1 Purpose.....	9-1
9.2 Establishment of Districts .....	9-1
9.3 Application .....	9-1
9.4 Use Requirements .....	9-1
9.5 Procedures.....	9-2
9.6 Conditions for Approval of Special Permit Applications .....	9-3
<b>SECTION 10 - CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT .....</b>	<b>10-1</b>
10.1 Purpose.....	10-1
10.2 Procedures.....	10-1
10.3 Content of the Application .....	10-2
10.4 General Requirements .....	10-2
10.5 Requirements for Open Space.....	10-3
10.6 Conditions .....	10-5
<b>SECTION 11 - SPECIAL PERMITS AND VARIANCES.....</b>	<b>11-1</b>
11.1 Purpose.....	11-1
11.2 Authority.....	11-1
11.3 Procedures for Special Permits.....	11-1
11.4 Contents of the Application for Special Permits .....	11-3
11.5 Conditions for Special Permits .....	11-4
11.6 Additional Conditions for Special Permits for Specific Uses and Conditions .....	11-6
11.7 Procedures for Variances.....	11-10

11.8	Standards for Variances.....	11-10
11.9	No use variance shall be granted.....	11-10
11.10	List of variances .....	11-10
11.11	Affordable Housing Requirement .....	11-11
11.12	Modification of Special Permits .....	11-15
11.13	Board of Appeals Modifications of Special Permits and Variances .....	11-17
SECTION 12 - SITE PLAN REVIEW .....		12-1
12.1	Purpose.....	12-1
12.2	Requirements.....	12-1
12.3	Authority.....	12-1
12.4	Procedures.....	12-2
12.5	Content of the Application for Site Plan Review .....	12-5
12.6	Conditions .....	12-6
12.7	Application Review Fees – Special Municipal Accounts .....	12-7
SECTION 13 - SIGN REGULATIONS .....		13-1
13.1	Procedures.....	13-1
13.2	Signs Permitted in all Districts.....	13-1
13.3	Signs prohibited in all Districts .....	13-3
13.4	General Requirements for Signs .....	13-4
13.5	Non-Conforming Signs.....	13-5
13.6	Sign Regulations for Residential Districts.....	13-6
13.7	Sign Regulations in Downtown Business (B-D) and Neighborhood Business (B-N) Districts .....	13-7
13.8	Sign Regulations for Special Mixed Use Districts (S-1).....	13-9
13.9	Sign Regulations for Highway Business Districts (B-H), Interstate Business (B-I) and Industrial Districts .....	13-11
13.10	Sign Regulations for Office Park (OP), Industrial Park (IP) and Industrial General (IG) Zoning Districts .....	13-12
13.11	Sign review Board (SRB) for Downtown and Business Neighborhood Zoning Districts.....	13-15
13.12	Permit Requirements and Sign Review Process for the Downtown Business (B-D) and Business Neighborhood (B-N) Zoning Districts .....	13-16
SECTION 14 - TOWNHOUSE DEVELOPMENT IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS R-1 AND R-2 .....		14-1
14.1	Purpose.....	14-1
14.2	Procedures.....	14-1



14.3	Content of the Application .....	14-1
14.4	General Requirements .....	14-2
14.5	Requirements for Open Space.....	14-3
14.6	Conditions .....	14-4
SECTION 15 - GROUNDWATER PROTECTION DISTRICT .....		15-1
15.1	Purpose.....	15-1
15.2	Scope of Authority.....	15-1
15.3	Definitions .....	15-1
15.4	Establishment and Delineation of Groundwater Protection District .....	15-2
15.5	District Boundary Disputes .....	15-2
15.6	Use Regulations.....	15-3
15.7	Procedures for Issuance of Special Permit .....	15-6
15.8	Severability .....	15-8
SECTION 16 - ILLUSTRATION ADDENDUM.....		16-1
16.1	Attachment "A" - Lot Width Illustration .....	16-2
16.2	Form A - Submission Checklist for Special Permit Applications.....	16-3
16.3	Form B - Submission Checklist for Site Plan Applications Requiring a Special Permit.....	16-4
16.4	Form C - Submission Checklist for Site Plan Applications Requiring Planning Board Approvals .....	16-5
SECTION 17 - NOTIFICATION OF ADOPTION OF CHANGES OF THE WOBURN ZONING ORDINANCES .....		17-1
SECTION 18 - DEVELOPMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION....		18-1
18.1	Purpose.....	18-1
18.2	Scope of Study.....	18-1
18.3	Definitions .....	18-2
18.4	Applicability .....	18-2
18.5	Development Impact Statement (DIS).....	18-3
18.6	Report by City Engineer .....	18-9
18.7	Peer Review.....	18-9
18.8	Performance and Completion of Mitigation Measures.....	18-9
18.9	Severability .....	18-11
SECTION 19 - Reserved		
SECTION 20 –WOBURN LOOP BIKEWAY/GREENWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT		

20.1	Purpose of District.....	20-1
20.2	Scope of Authority.....	20-1
20.4	Allowed Uses .....	20-2
20.5	Townhouse Requirements .....	20-2
20.6	Development Impact Mitigation .....	20-3

**SECTION 21 – MISHAWUM STATION TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT**

21.1	Purpose of District.....	21-1
21.2	Scope of Authority.....	21-1
21.3	Definitions .....	21-1
21.4	Allowed Uses .....	21-2
21.5	Requirements for Residential Uses allowed by right in the Mishawum Station Transit Oriented Development Overly District.....	21-2
21.6	Development Impact Mitigation .....	21-3

**SECTION 22 – INTERGENERATIONAL OVERLAY DISTRICT (IOD) DISTRICT**

21.A	Purposes and Objectives.....	22-1
21.B	Application.....	22-1
21.C	Associated Criteria .....	22-1
21.D	By Right Uses.....	22-2
21.E	Special Permit Uses .....	22-2
21.F	Dimensional and Density Regulations .....	22-3
21.G	Off-Street Parking Requirements .....	22-4
21.H	Design Standards.....	22-4

**SECTION 23 – COMMERCE WAY CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT (CWCOD)**

23.1	Purposes of District.....	23-1
23.2	Establishment and Applicability.....	23-1
23.3	Project Review Procedures.....	23-2
23.4	Application for Site Plan Approval or Special Permit; Initial Project Construction.....	23-6
23.5	Permitted Uses .....	23-7
23.6	Re-tenanting After Initial Construction.....	23-12
23.7	Dimensional Regulations .....	23-12
23.8	Off-Street Parking Requirements .....	23-13
23.9	Signs.....	23-17
23.10	Utilities and Easements.....	23-17
23.11	Development Impact Mitigation .....	23-18

## SECTION 24 – WIND ENERGY FACILITIES

24.1	Purpose and Intent.....	24-1
24.2	Wind Monitoring or Meteorological (“test” or “met”) Tower.....	24-1
24.3	Roof Top Wind Energy Facility.....	24-2
24.4	Small Wind Energy Facility .....	24-4
24.5	Large Wind Energy Facility .....	24-10

## SECTION 25 – UPPER MAIN STREET OVERLAY (UMS) DISTRICT ..... 25-1

25.A	Purpose of District .....	25-1
25.B	Scope of Authority .....	25-1
25.C	Associated Criteria .....	25-1
25.D	By Right Uses.....	25-1
25.E	Special Permit Uses .....	25-2
25.F	Dimensional and Density Regulations .....	25-2
25.G	Off-Street Parking Requirements .....	25-2

## SECTION 26 – SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC INSTALLATIONS ..... 26-1

26.1	Purpose.....	26-1
26.2	Applicability .....	26-1
26.3	General Requirements for all Solar Photovoltaic Installations.....	26-1
26.4	Use Regulations.....	26-2
26.5	Dimensional and Density Requirements .....	26-3
26.5.5	Appurtenant Structures .....	26-3
26.6	Solar Photovoltaic Installation Site Plan Review and Special Permit .....	26-3
26.7	Application and Plan Requirements .....	26-4
26.8	Design Standards .....	26-5
26.9	Safety and Environmental Standards.....	26-6
26.10	Monitoring and Maintenance.....	26-6
26.11	Abandonment or Decommissioning .....	26-7

## SECTION 27 – CONVERSION OF HOUSES OF WORSHIP ..... 27-1

27.1	Purpose of District.....	27-1
27.2	Scope of Authority.....	27-1
27.3	Uses By Right .....	27-1
27.4	Uses by Special Permit.....	27-1
27.5	Dimensional and Density Regulations.....	27-2
27.6	Off-Street Parking Requirements .....	27-2
27.7	Required Additional Findings for Conversion of Houses of Worship.....	27-2

SECTION 28 – TECHNOLOGY AND BUSINESS MIXED USE OVERLAY DISTRICT .....	28-1
28.1 Purpose and Objectives of District .....	28-1
28.2 Establishment and Applicability .....	28-1
28.3 Authority of Permit Granting Authority .....	28-2
28.4 Master Concept Plan.....	28-2
28.5 Exclusivity/Control.....	28-4
28.6 Uses.....	28-4
28.7 Density and Dimensional Regulations.....	28-7
28.8 Off-Street Parking Requirements .....	28-8
28.9 Design Standards .....	28-8
28.10 Sign Regulations .....	28-8
28.11 Permitting Requirements.....	28-9
28.12 Application Requirements .....	28-10
28.13 Plan Content Requirements .....	28-11
28.14 Procedures for Approval .....	28-12
28.15 Validity of Decision.....	28-14
 SECTION 29 – CONVERISON OF SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC BUILDING .....	 29-1
29.1 Purpose of District.....	29-1
29.2 Scope of Authority.....	29-1
29.3 Uses Allowed by Right .....	29-2
29.4 Uses Allowed by Special Permit .....	29-2
29.5 Dimensional and Density Regulations.....	29-2
29.6 Off-Street Parking Requirements .....	29-4
29.7 Conditions .....	29-4
29.8 Required Additional Findings for Conversion of Significant Historic Buildings .....	29-5
29.9 Procedure .....	29-5
29.10 Application Requirements .....	29-6
29.11 Plan Content Requirements .....	29-7
 SECTION 30 – SMART GROWTH OVERLAY DISTRICT(S) .....	 30-1
30.1 General Regulations that apply to all Smart Growth Overlay Districts ..	30-1
30.1.1 Purposes.....	30-1
30.1.2 Definitions .....	30-2
30.1.3 Scope and Authority.....	30-14
30.1.4 Administration, Enforcement and Appeals .....	30-15
30.1.5 Off-Street Parking and Loading.....	30-15

30.1.6	Open Spaces and Recreational Areas .....	30-18
30.1.7	Affordable Housing.....	30-19
30.1.8	Signage Regulations.....	30-23
30.1.9	Additional Use Regulations .....	30-25
30.1.10	Development Impact Mitigation.....	30-26
30.1.11	Plan Approval Procedures .....	30-34
30.1.12	Waivers .....	30-37
30.1.13	Plan Changes After Approval by City Council .....	30-38
30.1.14	Fair Housing Requirement .....	30-38
30.1.15	Project Phasing.....	30-38
30.1.16	Decisions .....	30-39
30.1.17	Date of Effect .....	30-39
30.1.18	Severability .....	30-39
30.1.19	Design Standards.....	30-39
30.2	Establishment and Delineation of the Smart Growth Overlay Districts.....	30-40
30.2.1	Woburn Mall Smart Growth Overlay District (WM-SGOD) .....	30-40
30.2.1.1	Establishment and Delineation of the WM-SGOD.....	30-40
30.2.1.2	Allowed and Prohibited Uses .....	30-40
30.2.1.3	Dimensional and Other Requirements .....	30-42
30.2.1.4	Parking Ratio .....	30-42
30.2.1.5	Density Allowances/Multi-Family Residential .....	30-43
30.2.1.6	Age-Restricted Housing Units .....	30-43
30.2.1.7	Rooftop Dining .....	30-44
30.2.1.8	Permitted Signage.....	30-45
SECTION 31 – RAILWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT (ROD) .....		31-1
31.1	Purpose of District.....	31-1
31.2	Establishment and Applicability.....	31-1
31.3	Authority of Permit Granting Authority.....	31-1
31.4	Associated Criteria .....	31-1
31.5	Uses.....	31-2
31.6	Density and Dimensional Regulations.....	31-2
31.7	Off-Street Parking Requirements .....	31-3
31.8	Design Standards .....	31-3
31.9	Sign Regulations .....	31-3

\*\*\*\*\*