



City of Bristol
Zoning Commission

SPECIAL MEETING - THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2025
VIRTUAL - ONLINE VIA ZOOM
5:00 P.M.

INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC TO ACCESS THIS MEETING

Zoom Meeting link:

<https://bristolct-gov.zoom.us/j/89143786515?pwd=hlo3VBYMUbec4X1ZCdYWZNhTHQc8kb.>

1

Meeting ID:

891 4378 6515

Meeting Passcode:

123456

Join by phone

1-929-205-6099

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. New Business
 - a. Presentation of recommended Commercial and Industrial regulation amendments to the Zoning Regulations.
 - b. Discussion of recommended amendments including questions and answers
 - c. Next Steps
3. Public Participation
4. Adjournment

REMINDER: The next Regular Meeting of the Zoning Commission is Monday, January 13, 2025



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 12/17/2024

Recommendation 19: Allow a Wider Range of Uses in Commercial and Industrial Zones

Purpose: Provide more flexibility in the uses permitted to better respond to changing market conditions and encourage the redevelopment of properties.

Description: This recommendation would allow a greater range of currently permitted uses in commercial and industrial zones. The recommendation also seeks to remove high-intensity uses from the BT zone, which overlays the R-15 (a residential zone) due to the incompatibility of those uses with residential areas.

Geographic Extents: Citywide, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use zoning districts

Potential Impacts: No adverse impacts.

Context: Changes in the retail market due to online commerce have resulted in a shrinking demand for retail space. More flexibility is needed in the zoning recommendations to avoid vacant retail space and to allow for complementary uses that may not be currently permitted.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Amend the Section 4.2 Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts Principal Use Summary Table to allow for a wider range of uses in the zones (see next page).
2. Remove Brewpubs and Microbreweries as permitted uses in the BT zone, which overlays the R-15, a residential zone.



Principal Use (Only principal uses that are recommended for amendment are shown)	Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts								
	BN	BG	BD	BT	BHC	I	IP-1	IP-3	IP-25
Adaptive Reuse of Non-Residential Buildings	SP	SP	SP	—	SP	SP	—	—	—
Animal Day Care Facility	—	—	—	—	—	SP	SP	SP	SP
Brewpub	—	SP	ZP	SP	SP	—	—	—	—
Climate Controlled Self-Storage Facility	—	—	SP	—	ZP+S	ZP+S	—	—	—
Contractor Yard	—	—	—	—	—	ZP+S	SP	SP	SP
Conversion to Three-Family	ZP+S	ZP+S	—	ZP+S	—	—	—	—	—
Conversion to Two-Family	ZP+S	ZP+S	—	ZP+S	—	—	—	—	—
Environmental Service Facility	—	—	—	—	—	SP	SP	SP	SP
Fitness Club	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP/	—	ZP+S	SP	SP	SP	SP
For Profit School or Studio	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP	—	ZP+S	ZP+S	SP	SP	SP
Fuel Oil and Heating Fuel Storage Facility	—	—	—	—	—	SP	SP	SP	SP
Indoor Entertainment Facility	—	SP	ZP	—	SP	SP	—	—	—
Medical Laboratory	—	ZP+S	—	—	ZP+S	SP	SP	SP	SP
Medical Office	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP	SP	ZP+S	ZP+S	SP	SP	SP
Membership Organization	SP	ZP+S	ZP	—	ZP+S	—	—	—	—
Microbrewery	—	ZP+S	ZP	SP	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S
Nursery	—	ZP+S	—	—	SP	SP	—	—	—
Restaurant, Take Out	SP	ZP+S	ZP	—	ZP+S	SP	SP	SP	SP
Social Services Agency or Charitable Institution	SP	ZP+S	ZP	SP	SP	—	—	—	—
Specialty Food or Beverage Manufacturer	—	ZP+S	—	—	—	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S
Specialty Retail	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP	SP	ZP+S	—	—	—	—
Specialty Trade Contractor	—	—	—	—	SP	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S
Taxicab Service	—	—	ZP	—	—	ZP+S	—	—	—
Tennis or Racquet Clubs	—	—	SP	—	—	SP	—	—	—
Wholesale Business	—	ZP+S	—	—	—	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S
Key Items highlighted in blue are not currently permitted in the zone and are recommended uses. Items highlighted in red are recommended for prohibition in the zone.									



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 12/17/2024

Recommendation 20: Amend Principal Use Permit Requirements

Purpose: Amend permit requirements for principal uses in Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use zones to facilitate economic development, reduce administrative burden, and better distribute workload between the Planning and Zoning Commissions.

Description: This recommendation would reduce the Special Permit requirement for multiple principal uses across zoning districts to a Site Plan requirement. This recommendation seeks to make the permit requirement more consistent across uses and reserves the Special Permit requirement for high-intensity or highly impactful uses.

Geographic Extents: All commercial, industrial, and mixed-use zoning districts with exception of the BD zone.

Potential Impacts: This recommendation will shift workload from the Zoning Commission, which reviews Special Permits, to the Planning Commission, which reviews Site Plans.

Context: The Special Permit requirement is widely used across Connecticut for mixed-use, commercial, industrial and other high intensity uses but this permit requirement is often applied broadly without sensitivity to specific uses. This increases the workload for staff and commissions, lengthens the review and approval process, and adds cost to development.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Reduce the Special Permit requirement for select principal uses to a Site Plan requirement in commercial, industrial, and mixed-use zones by amending the Principal Use Summary Table of Section 4.2 (see next page).



Principal Use (Only principal uses that are recommended for amendment are shown)	Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts								
	BN	BG	BD	BT	BHC	I	IP-1	IP-3	IP-25
Adult Day Care Center	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	ZP	—	SP ZP+S	—	—	—	—
Business or Professional Office	SP ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP	SP	ZP+S	SP ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S
Child Care Center	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	ZP	—	SP ZP+S	SP	SP	SP	SP
Fitness Club	—	ZP+S	ZP/	—	ZP+S	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	—
Garden Supply	—	ZP+S	—	—	SP ZP+S	—	—	—	—
Indoor Entertainment Facility	—	SP ZP+S	ZP	—	SP ZP+S	—	—	—	—
Medical Office	SP ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP	SP	ZP+S	—	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S
Personal Service Establishment	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP	SP ZP+S	ZP+S	—	—	—	—
Restaurant, Sit-Down	SP ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP	SP	ZP+S	SP	SP	SP	SP
Restaurant, Take Out	SP ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP	—	ZP+S	—	—	—	—
Social Services Agency or Charitable	SP	ZP+S	ZP	—	SP ZP+S	—	—	—	—
Specialty Food or Beverage Establishment	SP ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP	SP	ZP+S	—	—	—	—
Key Items highlighted in yellow are recommended for reduction from a Special Permit to a Site Plan. The current permit requirement is shown in strikethrough text.									



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 12/17/2024

Recommendation 21: Amend Accessory Use Permit Requirements

Purpose: More appropriately regulate accessory uses based upon potential impacts of the uses.

Description: This recommendation would modify the permit requirement for three accessory uses across most zoning districts. These uses include: ground-mounted solar panels, parking structures, and sports courts. This recommendation seeks to make the permit requirement more consistent for uses across districts and establish permit requirements that are aligned with the intensity of the use.

Geographic Extents: All commercial, industrial, and mixed-use zoning districts with exception of the BT zone.

Potential Impacts: This recommendation will shift workload from the Zoning Commission, which reviews Special Permits, to the Planning Commission, which reviews Site Plans and will require review of uses that are currently approved administratively by the Planning Commission.

Context: Sports courts are potentially impactful uses due to noise and must be sited and a buffered appropriately based upon adjacent land uses. Parking structures (this excludes residential garages) are large multi-level structures that have access requirements and should therefore be subject to a Site Plan review. Ground-mounted solar panels are benign uses that are environmentally beneficial and can appropriately be reviewed through a Site Plan requirement.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Increase the permit requirement for select accessory uses from a Zoning Permit to a Site Plan requirement in commercial, industrial, and mixed-use zones by amending the Accessory Use Summary Table of Section 5.2 (see excerpt of table below).
2. Reduce the permit requirement for select accessory uses from a Special Permit to a Site Plan requirement in commercial, industrial, and mixed-use zones by amending the Accessory Use Summary Table of Section 5.2 (see excerpt of table below).

Accessory Use	BN	BG	BD	BT	BHC	I	IP-1	IP-3	IP-25
Ground-Mounted Solar Panels	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	—	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	SP ZP+S
Parking Structures	—	ZP ZP+S	ZP ZP+S	—	ZP ZP+S	ZP ZP+S	ZP ZP+S	ZP ZP+S	ZP ZP+S
Sports Courts	ZP ZP+S	SP ZP+S	ZP ZP+S	SP	SP ZP+S	ZP ZP+S	ZP ZP+S	ZP ZP+S	ZP ZP+S

Key

Items highlighted in **yellow** are recommended for reduction from a Special Permit to a Site Plan.
 Items highlighted in **green** are recommended for an increase from a Zoning Permit to a Site Plan.
 The current permit requirement is shown in ~~strikethrough~~ text.



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 12/17/2024

Recommendation 22: Amend BN Zone

Purpose: Provide more flexibility in the BN zone to allow for a greater scale of uses in response to changing retail market conditions.

Description: Increase the maximum permitted establishment size from 2,500 square feet to 5,000 square feet and remove the restriction on maximum building size.

Geographic Extents: BN zone

Potential Impacts: May incentivize redevelopment within BN zone.

Context: Retail market conditions are changing due to online commerce and demand for retail space has weakened.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Amend Section 8.2.1 as follows:

8.2.1 General Requirements

The following general requirements shall be applicable to all developments in the BN zone:

- A. On any lot, the net floor area of each individual establishment shall not exceed ~~2,500~~ 5,000 square feet.
- ~~B. On any lot, the gross floor area of all buildings shall not exceed 12,000 square feet.~~



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 12/17/2024

Recommendation 23: Eliminate the Unified Downtown Development Regulations

Purpose: Eliminate an unproductive section of the zoning regulations to simplify the regulations and remove redundancy and potentially conflicting standards.

Description: Eliminate the Unified Downtown Development regulations, which are unique to the BD zone.

Geographic Extents: BD zone.

Potential Impacts: None

Context: The Unified Downtown Development Regulations have never been successfully used to facilitate development in the BD zone. Downtown development has successfully occurred without use of the Unified Downtown Development regulations. The regulations are complex and provide parallel and alternative standards to the BD zone. There is nothing in the regulations that prevent the unified development of parcels in the Downtown and the unified downtown development regulations are not required to facilitate such development.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Eliminate Section 8.4.8 Unified Downtown Development Projects regulations and remove references to the Unified Downtown Development in the Section 4.2 Principal Use Summary Table and from the Section 19 Use Definitions.



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Date: 12/17/2024

Recommendation 24: Amend the IP-25 Zone Standards

Purpose: The IP-25 zone has a high minimum lot size requirement (25 acres) that presents a barrier to the use of land in the zone for developments on lots smaller than 25 acres unless subdivided. Amending the lot standards will enable smaller scale developments in this zone.

Description: The recommended amendment adopts the subdivision standards of the IP-25 zone as the standards for the zone thereby reducing the minimum lot size to 5 acres and reducing lot width, yard requirements, and building height while increase building and impervious coverage. A name change from IP-25 to IP-5 is recommended to align the district name with the new lot size minimum.

Geographic Extents: IP-25 zone

Potential Impacts: May incentivize new development in the IP-25 zone.

Context: There is only one IP-25 zone in Bristol, located in the northwest corner of the City, and bounded by the Plymouth town line, Minor Street, Hill Street, and Marsh Road. The zone is 234 acres in total and there are 8 parcels in the zone with three City-owned parcels comprising 28.7 acres. Seven of the eight properties in the zone are undeveloped. The developed property is the 139-acre industrial property occupied by ClarkDietrich/Holcim.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Rename the IP-25 to the IP-5. Update throughout the regulations and on Zoning Map as required.
2. Amend the standards in Section 8.1 as follows:

Standard	IP-25 IP-5
A) Minimum Lot Area (sf or acres if noted)	25 ac 5 ac
B) Minimum Lot Frontage (ft)	N/A
C) Minimum Lot Width (ft)	500 250
D) Minimum Front Yard on a State highway (ft)	125 75
E) Minimum Front Yard on a City street (ft)	100 60
F) Maximum Front Yard (ft)	N/A
G) Minimum Front Yard on a City street opposite a residential zone (ft)	150 90
H) Minimum Side Yard (ft)	50 25
I) Minimum Side Yard abutting a residential zone (ft)	150 75
J) Minimum Rear Yard (ft)	50 25
K) Minimum Rear Yard abutting a residential zone (ft)	150 75
L) Maximum Building Height (ft)	60 50
M) Maximum Building Coverage (%)	20 30
N) Maximum Impervious Coverage (%)	60 70