

Subdivision from page 1

if they can subdivide a large forested plot into uniform two-acre lots, each with at least 250' of road frontage. While this old restrictive "suburban" model will continue to exist in Andover, a far more aesthetic model with greater creative flexibility is possible under the proposed Conservation Subdivision.

The new ordinance provides greater financial reward to the landowner/developer in return for building a type of housing that preserves the rural character of our town and is in great demand across a wide range of age and income demographics.

The new proposed Conservation Subdivision ordinance will be presented at two public meetings in January.

Impacts of Proposed Ordinance

The proposed ordinance has several incentives for the Town and the landowner/developer.

- 1) The incentives increase the number of housing units that may be built on the parcel.
- 2) The more compact arrangement of housing units has a low requirement for lot frontage on a Town road, saving road construction, maintenance, and snow removal costs.
- 3) The nearness of the housing units to protected natural areas (rather than being surrounded by suburban landscaping) makes them more desirable

places to live, which will enhance their sale prices.

Notice that these gains benefit not only the developer, but also provide benefits to the Town in terms of reduced road maintenance per household, and increased tax base as new homes are built.

There are two general types of incentives in the proposed ordinance: density incentives and conservation incentives.

Density incentives encourage "European-style" or "pocket" developments that create compact residential villages surrounded by natural or open spaces. In the early days of Andover's development, such small villages were known as Potter Place, Cilleyville, East Andover, etc. Density incentives could encourage the creation of new residential groupings in undeveloped areas.

Conservation incentives encourage thoughtful use of energy and natural resources, aimed toward long-lived, low-maintenance, and energy-efficient structures with the lowest lifetime ownership costs. Such an incentive discourages low-quality housing that deteriorates and depreciates rapidly, but instead encourages durable housing with low long-term cost of operation and maintenance.

Density Incentives

How much could these incentives be worth to citizens of Andover? Let's compare a Conservation Subdivision

scenario to a traditional two-acre subdivision of the same 40-acre buildable plot, as a baseline. Let's also pretend that all the housing units have an equal average base value, just to simplify the comparisons.

Andover's current "suburban" development ordinance would alter all the scenic and natural acreage in the tract, producing 20 homes or rental units worth, say, \$200,000 apiece. Such a development would increase the Town tax base by \$4 million, raise \$94,000 in new revenue, but require nearly a mile of Town road to be built and maintained

in perpetuity. Last year, road expenses averaged about \$7,000 per mile annually in Andover, so the gross revenue increase would only be about \$87,000.

An alternative scenario is illustrated in the drawing at the head of this article. It shows a Conservation Subdivision of the same 40 acres of land. It puts 60% of the acreage in protection and allows 25 housing units, arranged according to the developer's optimized plan for housing on 16 acres and greenspace with trails on 24 acres.

The estimated value of this larger See Subdivision on page 5

SB2 from page 1

RSA 40:13. In short, SB2 only changes how we vote, not what is voted on.

A meeting similar to a Town Meeting, called the Deliberative Session, is typically held in early February and formulates the warrant articles to be voted upon. All voters will then have an opportunity to vote individually on each warrant article by private ballot a minimum of 30 days later during the all-day voting as part of Town elections on the second Tuesday of March.

Voters may also obtain and vote via absentee ballot. The 30+ day period between the deliberative session and ballot voting gives everyone the opportunity to become informed about the warrant articles.

As with most things in life, neither a traditional Town Meeting nor SB2 is perfect, thus neither will make everyone happy. What's important is that the voters have the choice to decide which method is best suited for Andover.

An article in the February issue of *The Andover Beacon* will attempt to outline the pros and cons of each method. This will be available just before the public hearings, in advance of the Town Meeting in March. In the end, it's hoped that Andover voters in attendance at the Town Meeting will be able to make an informed decision about the method of voting for all in the future.

It's worth repeating: For those that care about this outcome, it is vital that you attend and vote at the upcoming Town Meeting.

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Mary Kay - Laura Condon	Gift Certificate	Ray and Robin Davis
The Refinery Restaurant	Gift Certificate	Joanna Sumner
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