

How Much Living Space Do You Need?

Many people in Andover are living in houses larger than they currently need. Some of those people want to be able to use that space for another family to live without the process of creating an apartment building. At the same time there are people looking for small living spaces because of new jobs in the area, completion of school, or changes in family. The Planning Board is proposing a way of dealing with both needs at the same time.

The Planning Board was developing a proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance which would allow Accessory Dwelling Units in existing residences. Simultaneously, the solons in Concord passed a new law requiring towns to offer Accessory Dwelling Units. The Planning Board has developed a plan that meets Andover's situation instead of allowing the state to tell us how to do it.

The Andover Planning Board wants to provide residents with the opportunity to allow Accessory Dwelling Units in our community.

What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)? An ADU is defined as a residential living unit that is within or attached to a single-family dwelling, and provides independent living facilities for one or more persons, including provisions for sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation on the same parcel of land as the principle dwelling unit it accompanies.

There are many important benefits associated with the creation of Accessory Dwelling Units:

1. increasing the supply of affordable housing without the need for more infrastructure or further land development;
2. benefiting ageing homeowners, single parents, recent college graduates who are saddled with significant student load debt, caregivers, and disables persons;
3. integrating affordable housing into the community with minimal negative impact; and
4. providing elderly citizens with the opportunity to live in a supportive family environment with both independence and dignity.

Why is this important to the Town of Andover? A new State of NH Law effective June 1, 2017 shall allow an attached ADU unit as a matter of right or by conditional use permit, or by special exception, in all zoning districts that permit single family dwellings.

1. Andover's Zoning Ordinance does not mention ADUs. If Andover does not adopt an ordinance for ADUs, they will automatically be deemed permitted by NH State Law.
2. A Guiding Principle of Andover's Master Plan identifies the concept to provide choices in housing types. One priority is to maintain Andover's small town and rural character.

What can you do? The Andover Planning Board has drafted a proposed warrant article to the Zoning Ordinance and encourages public input and support.

1. Read the **Proposed Warrant Article for the Zoning Ordinance – March 2017 Town Meeting** found in this edition of the Beacon and on the town Web-site at Andover.NH.us.
2. Attend one of the **Public Hearings** to be held on Tuesdays, December 13, 2016 and January 10, 2017 at 7:30 pm, in the Andover Town Hall meeting room. This is an opportunity to review and accept comments from the public on the proposed Warrant Article.
3. E-mail your comments or questions to Planning Board Chair Nancy Teach: nanceteach@gmail.com. These will be included in the public hearing minutes.
4. Vote in favor of the ADU Zoning Ordinance at the March 14, 2017 Town Meeting.