

Short Term Rental Text Amendment Proposal

The Town of Groton Planning & Zoning Commission proposes to define and to conditionally allow Short Term Rentals in certain zones as outlined below. New text is underlined red.

A. Proposed Zoning Text Amendment

Section 2.1: General Definitions

SHORT TERM RENTAL: The use of a furnished legal dwelling unit, in whole or in part, providing transient lodging to the general public, for compensation, for a period of 30 days or less.

Section 4.1: Table of Permitted Uses

Separate attachment

Section 5.1-7.C: Short Term Rental

Conditions apply in the following zoning districts: R, RU, RM, CN, CR, MDD, MTC, MVC, IM

Conditions and Special Permit apply in the following zoning districts: R, RU, RM, MDD, MTC, MVC

1. **Number of Short Term Rentals per Lot:** No more than one Short Term Rental may be allowed per lot in R and RU districts. Not more than one Short Term Rental may be allowed per lot in RM districts with existing single- and two-unit dwellings
2. **Location of Short Term Rentals:** Short Term Rental may be located in the principle dwelling unit or not to exceed one accessory building.
3. **When Located in an R, RU or RM District:** The owner or lessee of the lot must have their primary residence in one unit of a two-unit dwelling, in the principal dwelling unit, or in a legally permitted accessory dwelling unit.
4. **Off-street Parking:** One off-street parking space must be provided for every Short Term Rental bedroom on the lot. All required off-street parking must be located on the lot where the Short Term Rental is located.
5. **Noise and Nuisance:** The Environmental Performance Standards of Sec. 7.4 shall apply to any Short Term Rental. Further, the applicant shall demonstrate that, through setbacks, buffering, topography, or other means that the Short Term Rental shall not be a nuisance to abutting residential neighbors.
6. **Lighting:** For all Short Term Rentals, except those physically connected with the principal residential dwelling on a lot, the lighting standards of Sec. 8.5-3.A (Standards, General) and Sec. 8.5-3.B (Standards, Security, Aesthetics, and Display) apply.

7. **Code Compliance:** The Short Term Rental building shall be in compliance with all applicable zoning, building, fire, electrical and plumbing codes.

8. **Residential and Mixed-Use Districts:** The following conditions apply in residential and mixed-use districts (R, RU, RM, MDD, MTC and MVC).
 - a. **Exterior Evidence:** There is to be no exterior evidence of the activity other than a sign permitted pursuant to Section 8.4 of these regulations and the required parking.
 - b. **Temporary Events:** Temporary Events, as regulated by Section 5.1-3.H, hosted by the occupant(s) of a Short Term Rental are not allowed in the R districts or in a RU district on a site of less than two (2) acres.

B. Reason for Amendment

Currently, the Town of Groton does not regulate Short Term Rentals (STR). The Planning & Zoning Commission proposes this text amendment to limit the impact in certain zones, to prohibit STRs in certain zones and to conditionally allow STRs in certain zones.

C. Consistency with 2016 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

The Short Term Rental text amendment will preserve and enhance community character as recommended in Section 2.

Section 3 notes that land use regulations should accommodate housing needs as they change. Recent analysis reveals a housing shortage as the town's large employers expand their work force. This shortage is exacerbated by the conversion of existing homes to short term rentals. The text amendment will control the unregulated creation of new short term rental units.