



Town of Northbridge
2040 Providence Road PDA (216-7):
2040 Providence Road Reuse Plan

Purpose of Analysis

2040 Providence Road was identified by the Town of Northbridge as a Priority Development Area within the 2012 Blackstone Valley Prioritization Project (PDA# 216-7). Priority Development Areas (PDAs) are areas within a municipality that have been identified as capable of supporting additional development or as candidates for redevelopment. These are areas on which a town is focusing its energy to promote thoughtful economic development that is closely tied to the community's goals.

PDA assistance projects are intended as a "next step" following the completion of a prioritization project. Planning funds from the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program support the effort and up to 25 hours of technical assistance may be provided to each interested community. Specifically, the objective of this project is to provide participating communities with a packet of information for a PDA that can be used to guide them in identifying possible zoning changes, development of a Chapter 43D application¹ or other grant applications (MassWorks; DHCD's Downtown Technical Assistance), promotion to developers, as a template for future analysis of additional PDAs, etc. CMRPC staff worked with each participating community to ensure that the technical assistance provided was tailored to the town's specific needs.

Reuse Plan

The Town of Northbridge's DLTA request for the PDA analysis was submitted by Theodore D. Kozak, Town Manager, "for the preparation of a Reuse Plan (study) for 2040 Providence Road." Northbridge Town Planner, Gary Bechtoldt, acted as the primary contact on behalf of the Town. CMRPC Principal Planner, Eric R. Smith, AICP, served as the CMRPC Staff Project Manager for this initiative. Based on an agreed to Scope of Services between CMRPC and the Town of Northbridge, the 2040 Providence Road PDA Project for 2014 involved preparing a "Reuse Plan" that addressed the following issues:

- Site Overview (e.g., history & background)
- Goals & Objectives
- Planning Process (e.g., community input)
- Site Characteristics (subject property itself & regional context, WRTA route, access to river, BVR bikeway, etc.)
- Zoning (existing land use(s) permitted, Floodplain, etc.)
- Clean-up & Mitigation
- Reuse Potential (redevelopment benefits, open space, natural resource protection, etc.)
- Local, Regional, State partners
- Findings and Recommendations

¹ www.mass.gov/hed/business/licensing/43d

Therefore the remainder of this Report consists of the Reuse Plan addressing each component above.

Site Overview

The 2040 Providence Road Site consists of three (3) properties. These properties, with information as provided by the Northbridge Board of Assessors, are as follows (with Map/Parcel info, property owner and acreage of each):

- Map 22 Parcel 25, D & G Recycling. 0.71 acres
- Map 22 Parcel 34, Klocek, Paul D., Trustee; co-owner L & P Realty Trust. 25.15 acres.
- Map 22 Parcel 27, Town of Northbridge. 0.21 acres

The total of the three (3) properties consists of a total of 26.07 acres. This information is based on the 2006 site plan submittal for a commercial building on approximately 2-3 acres of land of the total site located near Providence Road. Although approved by the Northbridge Planning Board, due to the recent economic recession, this building was never built. Map 1 below shows the site in relation to surrounding properties in the Rockdale Village section of the Town of Northbridge. Map 2 on the following page shows ownership by private versus public.

Map 1: 2040 Providence Road Site Map

**Northbridge Priority Development Area Project: 2040 Providence Road
Site Location Map**

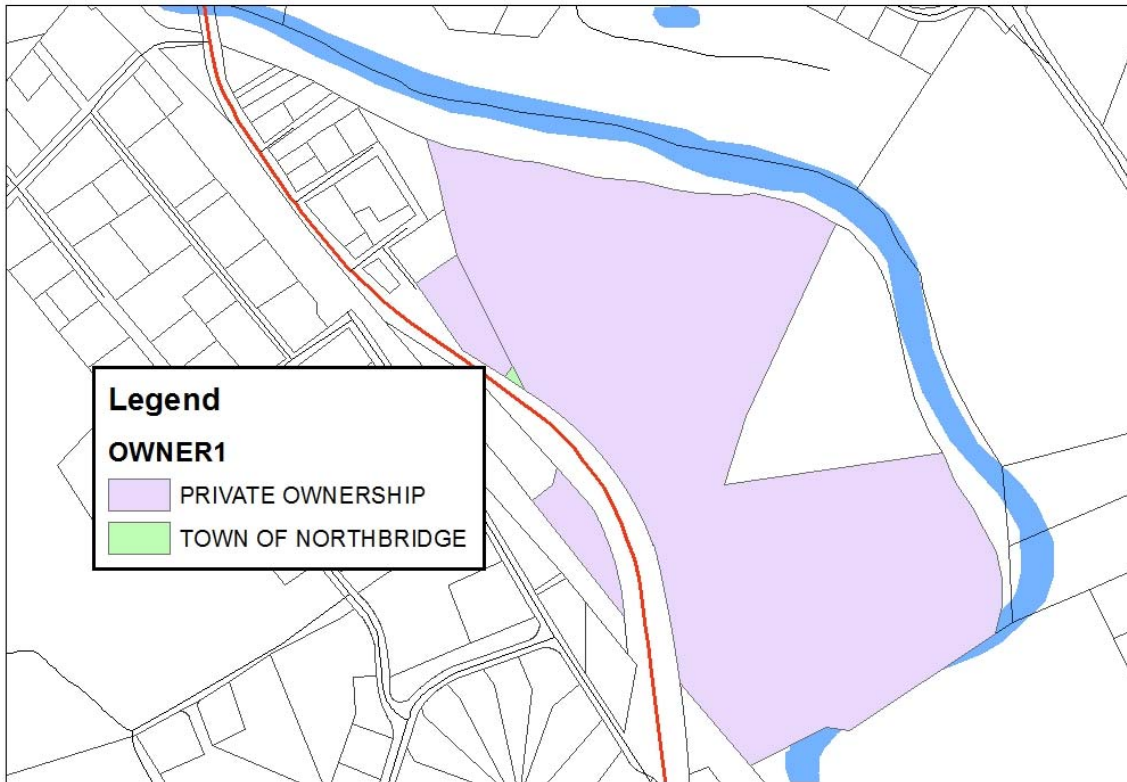


The three (3) parcels that comprise the 2040 Providence Road site make up the majority of land area of the 2040 Providence Road PDA boundary. However, the PDA boundary, as shown in Map 1 is more expansive. The boundary of this PDA actually is similar to the B-2 Zoning District located in this area (see Map 8 for zoning of the

PDA and surrounding areas).

Map 2: Site Ownership: Private versus Public

Northbridge Priority Development Area Project: 2040 Providence Road Site Ownership



History and background: The property is a former auto-salvage yard that has had a Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment completed in 2011 and 2012 (Fuss & O'Neill), as part of CMRPC's Brownfield Assessment Grant Program that was funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). According to information provided in the July 2012 Phase II Environmental Site Assessment, "Based on information previously

provided by the site owner and sole proprietor of Northbridge Auto Wrecking, Mr. Paul Klocek, and MassDEP files, the site was initially developed in approximately 1945 for use as a fueling station, automotive repair facility, and salvaging operation. Four underground storage tanks (USTs) with a combined capacity of 30,000 gallons were located near the site building and were used for vehicle fueling until approximately 1998, at which time they were cleaned, rendered inert (i.e. filled with dry ice), and abandoned in place. In addition, a 500 gallon waste oil UST may have been located near the southeastern corner of the automotive repair garage. However, the exact location and condition of the waste oil UST were not documented in the records reviewed by Fuss & O'Neill. Vehicle salvaging operations ceased in approximately 2005 following administrative proceedings between MassDEP and Northbridge Auto Wrecking. Tires and solid waste were removed from the site at that time and a portion of the building was leased as storage space. The Town has identified the subject site as a potential location for a commercial development. In 2007, the Town Zoning and Planning Boards approved a redevelopment plan involving the construction of a 10,000 square foot commercial building on the western portion of the subject site. However, to date, this redevelopment has not been completed."

The two Environmental Site Assessment documents are available at the Northbridge Planning Board Office or at CMRPC for those who wish to review more of the history and brownfield assessment process associated of this site. David Foss of Fuss & O'Neill provides a summary of existing conditions and remaining actions required for full clean-up to allow for property reuse on page 14 of this report.

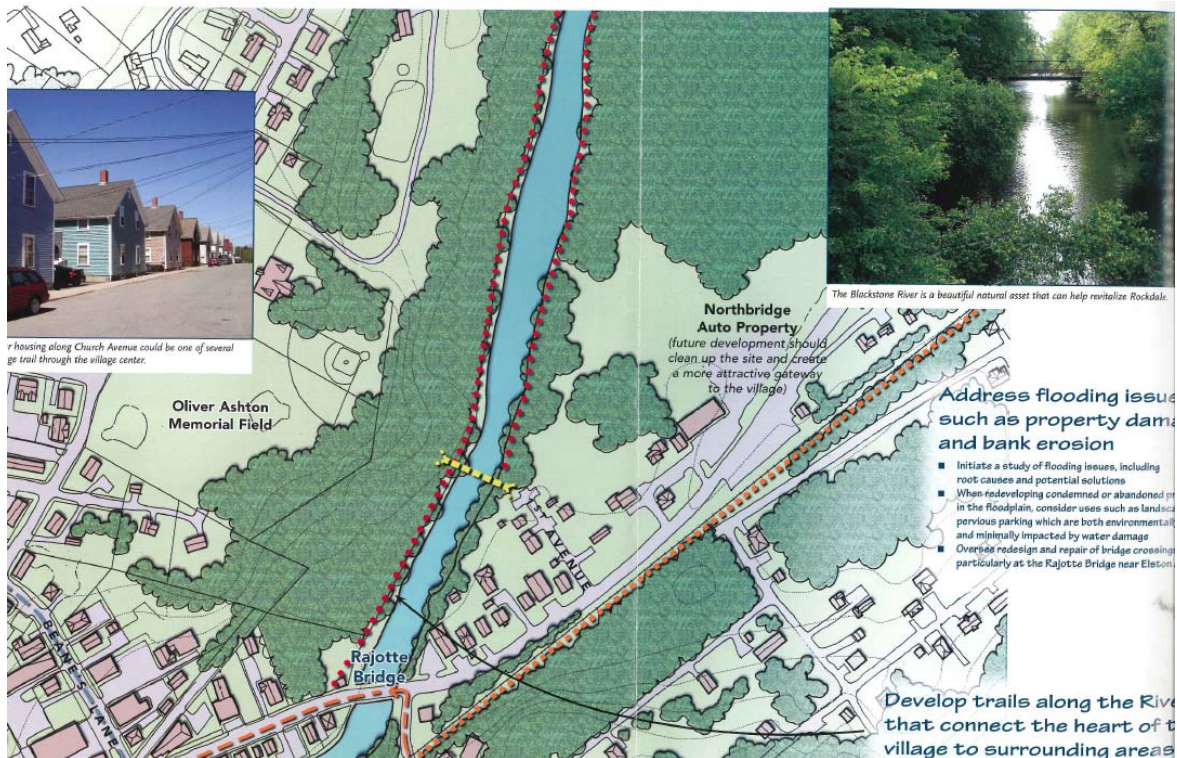
The site was also identified as part of the Town of Northbridge's UrbanRivers Charrette held in the Spring of 2007. The Charrette, which was focused on the Village of Rockdale, led to a Report Summary that provided a series of goals and implementation recommendations. The 2040 Providence Road Site is identified as the "Northbridge Auto Property" and the Charrette Report indicated that *"future development should clean up the site and create a more attractive gateway to the village."* The Charrette Report also had made recommendations to *"develop trails along the River that connect the heart of the Village to surrounding areas"*, *"Connect the Future Blackstone River Bikeway to Rockdale's Village Center in order to capitalize on the trail's economic potential"* and *"Establish water access point for canoes, kayaks, and other recreational opportunities."*

Goals & Objectives

The goals and objectives for this project were identified based on the Town's desire to have this property be cleaned up and placed back on the tax rolls. This desire of the Town's becomes an important goal: "Seek redevelopment of 2040 Providence Road by having the property cleaned up and back as a tax revenue-generating property." Goals and Objectives related to this Site are found in the Urban Rivers Charrette summary (see page 5) and the 1994 Master Plan discussion (see pages 5-6).

Planning Process

CMRPC Staff met with the Northbridge Town Planner on July 17, 2014 to begin to learn about the background and history associated with the 2040 Providence Road Site. Beyond learning what was important from the Town Planner's perspective, it was agreed to allow for direct community input by facilitating a planning process and the Scope of Services for this Project included one Public Workshop.



Excerpt from the 2007 Urban Rivers Vision 2 Charrette Report

On Tuesday, August 26, 2014, this Public Workshop was held as part of a Northbridge Planning Board meeting. Based on a review of the meeting sign-in sheet, approximately twenty (20) people attended the workshop. This number included CMRPC's Principal Planner, who began with a presentation with background information on the property and findings to date, the Northbridge Planning Board, Town Planner, a number of Rockdale Village residents, and a property owner representative (Jerry Caya).

Key themes from the workshop were: a) residents want to see the property cleaned up, b) there is support for reuse/redevelopment of the property that includes a mixed-use development, c) would like to have elements of recreation/open space associated with such reuse/redevelopment, and d) include preservation of historical elements, particularly with the remnants of the Blackstone Canal.

CMRPC Staff also conducted a Site Visit on Tuesday, September 23rd that included the participation of the current property owner, past property owner and the Town Planner. This allowed Staff the ability to get on-site and see the potential location for the walking trail and boat ramp/canoe launch and where the developable area is located.

CMRPC then presented a Project Summary with Findings and Recommendations at the December 15th Board of Selectmen meeting. This presentation was part of delivering the draft report to the Town and allowing for review and input before the report was finalized by the December 31, 2014 project deadline.

Master Plan: The Town of Northbridge's 1994 Master Plan provided community input in the form of goals, objectives, and a vision statement. Those items that are relevant to the 2040 Providence Road Site are provided below.

Master Plan Vision Statement: *“In the year 2005...Rockdale (identified as 1 of the 3 main village centers)...is an attractive, vibrant center with mixed residential, commercial and light industrial uses....the Blackstone (1 of 3 identified rivers) has been cleaned up and now provides numerous...recreational opportunities...”*

There was the following Housing and Population Goal: *“To Protect and Enhance the Existing Growth Pattern of the Town by Allowing Higher Density and Encouraging In-fill Development in the Village Centers...”* One Objective was to *“Allow by Special Permit, mixed / commercial / residential uses in the downtown area...of...Rockdale.”*

Within the Economic Development section it was noted that: *“Mixed-use on a Main Street is a good idea because it keeps people around. **Current zoning does not permit residential uses in the business zones** (emphasis added). There are residential units in the downtown area (particularly in the Rockdale section) only because they were pre-existing units. Apartments should be permitted over storefronts in these areas.”*

The theme of lack of parking in Rockdale was identified in the Master Plan: *“Parking is a problem in Rockdale. Merchants should be encouraged to park behind their buildings to open up parking on their street for their customer and the town should work with the merchants to find alternate off-street parking.”* The Theme of providing municipal parking appears in more than one Economic Development-related Goal/Objective.

Community Services and Facilities section included a Goal for the Town to *“Increase its Recreational Opportunities.”* One relevant objective with this Goal was to *“Create bike paths and pedestrian paths.”*

CMRPC Staff notes that the 1994 Master Plan and the August 28th Public Workshop provide support for the Town to move forward with development of mixed-use zoning for not only 2040 Providence Road but the Rockdale Village as a whole. The workshop also identified support for recreational uses in this area.

Site Characteristics

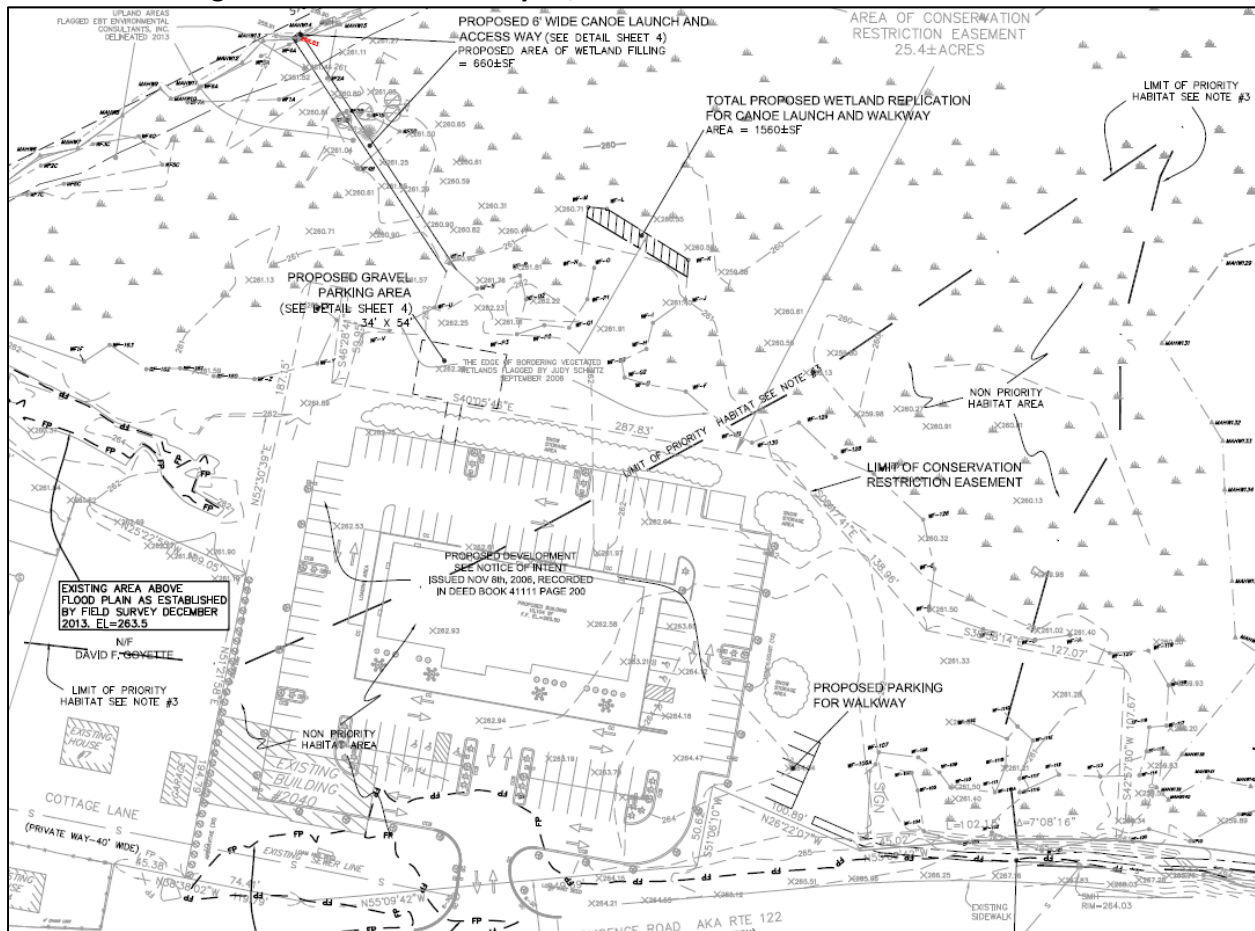
The Site and its Regional Context: As introduced on Page 2, the 2040 Providence Road Site is part of the Rockdale Village section of the Town of Northbridge. It is an important gateway site, especially approaching the Village from the South along Providence Road (Route 122). The site has extensive access to the Blackstone River, as it forms the rear boundary of the Site. 2040 Providence Road is located about 13 miles southeast of The City of Worcester.

As indicated on pages 3-4, the Site had been a former auto-salvage yard that has seen recent actions towards the clean-up of past contamination. An important element of this site, especially related to the clean-up of the past contamination introduced on pages 3-4, is the Consent Order between the property owner and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The current owners, D&G Recycling, have signed a Consent Order with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MA DEP) that spell out the terms for taking the site through final clean-up and the Consent Order states that: *“As of November 16, 2012, D&G as the owner of the Site, has assumed all responsibility for the Site, including, but not limited to responsibility for operating and maintaining the Site in compliance with all applicable status and regulations enforced by the Department (of Environmental Protection.”* Attachment A of the Consent Order is the Supplemental Environmental Project Proposal (SEPP).

The SEPP includes a requirement for the property owner to put the site into a Conservation Restriction, develop a walking trail down to the Blackstone River, develop a canoe launch and construct a parking lot for users of the trail and canoe launch. Speaking to the property owner’s environmental consultant, CMRPC has learned that the buildable area as indicated in the 2006 Site Plan is still allowed to be buildable area under the Consent Order and

SEPP. The property owner is working with the Metacomet Land Trust to be the entity to hold the Conservation Restriction. Both the Consent Order and the SEPP identify the Site as Map 22 Lot 34 consisting of 25 acres. A portion of a Site Plan prepared on May 16, 2014 is provided below, which shows the proposed location of the gravel parking area, walkway and the canoe launch. It also indicates where the buildable area is, based on the 2006 Site Plan. Any development (this includes the trail/canoe launch/parking area and the proposed building and associated parking) will have to go through the local permitting process. More on this status is discussed under the “Local, Regional, State Partners” Section that begins on page 18.

Figure 1: Portion of the May 16, 2014 Site Plan for 2040 Providence Road

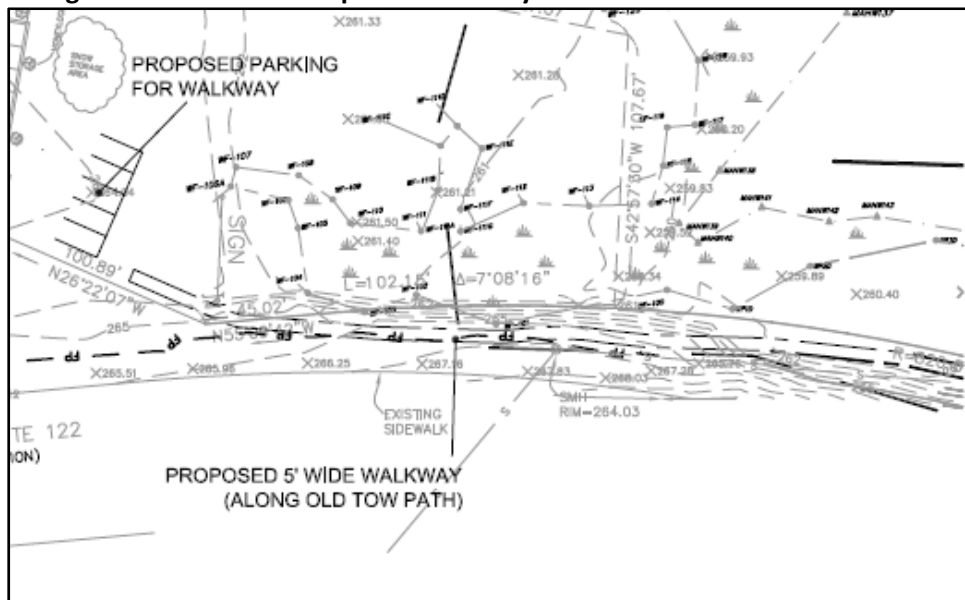


Infrastructure: The site benefits from readily-available public water and sewer services. The site is on the recently established WRTA bus route, servicing the towns of Northbridge, Grafton & Millbury, known as Route A. This bus route helps connect Rockdale to Worcester via Millbury at the Blackstone Valley Shoppes. For more information on the Route A see the following link: <http://www.therta.com/routea/>.

The planned Blackstone River Bikeway would pass nearby the Site as part of the Bikeway’s Vision to connect Providence and Worcester with a continuous off-road multi-use path. As part of the SEPP agreement, the property owner will also be constructing a 5-foot wide walkway along the old tow path associated with the former Blackstone Canal, remnants of which still remain on a portion of the Site. As shown above in Figure 1 and also in more detail below in Figure 2, parking will be provided on-site for the walkway as part of the SEPP terms. Future planning and implementation of the Blackstone Bikeway may be able to benefit from this walkway that will be installed on the Site.

For more information, including the current status of the Blackstone Valley Bikeway initiative, see the following link: <http://www.blackstonevalleycorridor.org/explore/bikeway/comprehensive-overview-11-2014.pdf>

Figure 2: Location of Proposed Walkway near Blackstone Canal Remnants



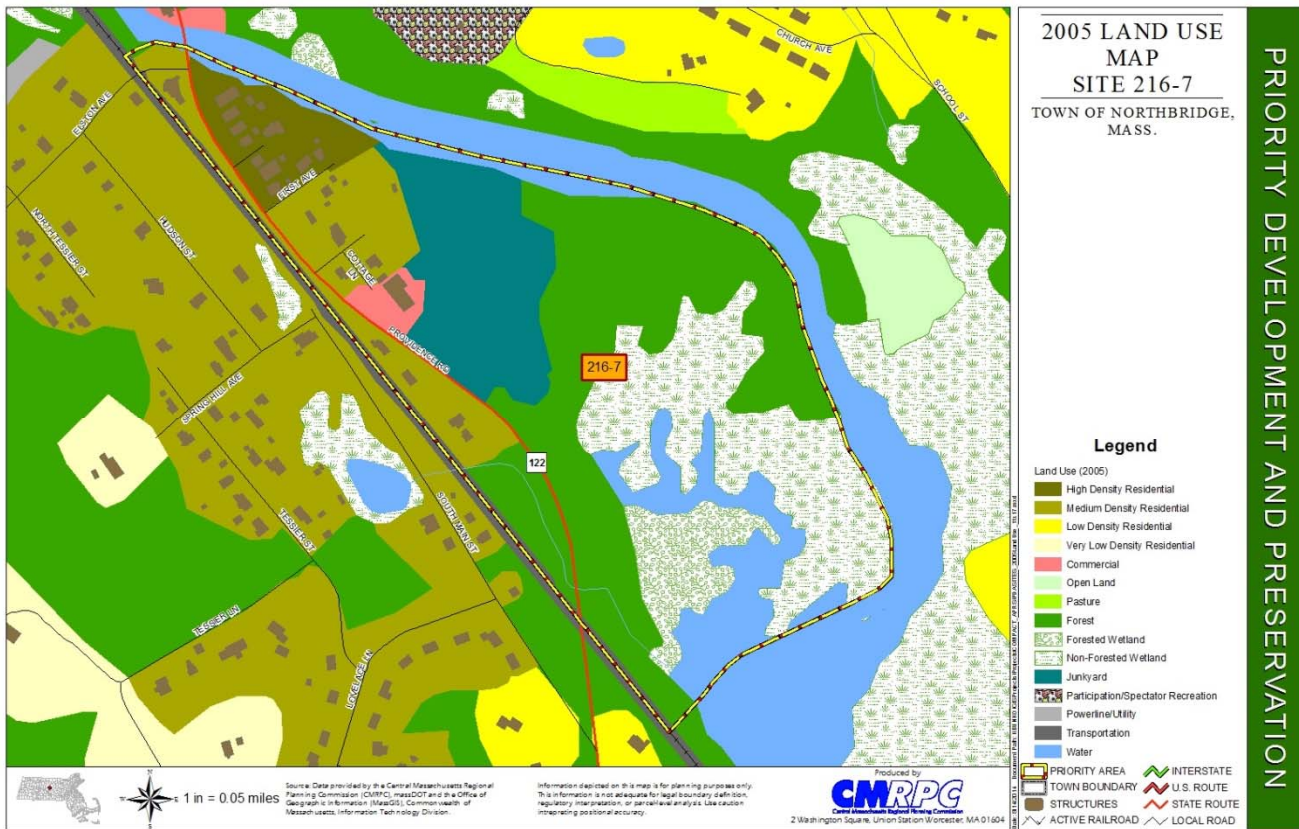
Land Use: According to the 2005 Land Use GIS Datalayer provided by MassGIS, the site is a mixture of commercial development, which is located up front near the existing building, a junkyard (in the area behind the building, which has since been subject of clean-up as noted in this Report), forest and then a mix of forested and non-forested wetlands. The other parcels associated with the 2040 Providence Road PDA, are a mix of medium and high-density residential. Although zoned B-2, CMRPC Staff notes these residential uses are non-conforming uses, though likely grandfathered. More discussion on this land use / zoning conflict is found on page 12. The 2005 land use of the site and vicinity is shown on Map 3 on the following page.

Environmental Constraints, Floodplain: Based on CMRPC's review and analysis of available GIS, the site is subject to a number of environmental constraints. The most significant of these constraints is the floodplain associated with the Blackstone River. Map 4 on the following page shows the various environmental constraints while Map 5, also on the following page, focuses on the 100-year floodplain and associated floodway². Presence of the 100-year floodplain and the floodway, in particular, limit development of the site in those areas. The Town has adopted a Floodway and Floodplain Overlay District, which spells out what sorts of limited developments are allowed in these areas. Given that the floodway involves the channel of the river (not only presently, but also past based on historical records and potential, based on geological and hydrological forces), the Floodway provisions are much more prohibitive than any allowed used in the Floodplain. See pages 13-14 for greater discussion of this matter.

Other constraints include wetlands, priority habitat and being located within a Zone II associated with drinking water resources.

² FEMA defines the Floodplain as “Any land area susceptible to being inundated by flood waters from any source.” Whereas the Floodway is “the channel of a river and the portion of the overbank floodplain that must be reserved in order discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation by a designated height.”

Map 3: 2005 Land Use of the 2040 Providence Road



Endangered / Priority Habitat Environment

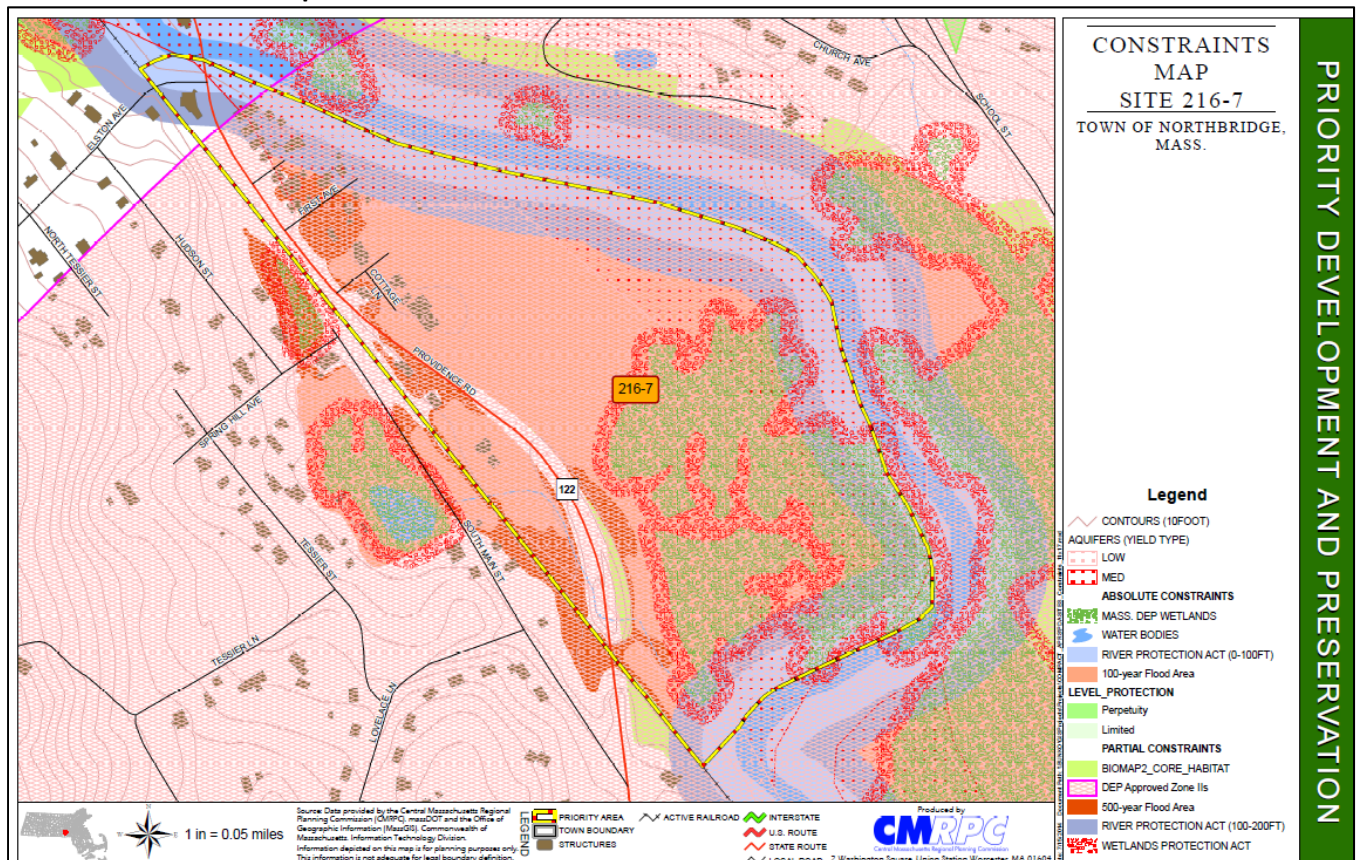
BioMap 2 Habitat Identified: According to BioMap2, there is one core habitat located in the study area. This core habitat area is identified as Core 1285 that is “a 353-acre Core Habitat featuring Species of Conservation Concern.” See Map 6 on page 11. There are two specific dragonfly species that have been identified in this core habitat area. The Arrow Clubtail is a large dragonfly whose aquatic nymphs inhabit medium to large, swift-flowing, sandy-bottomed rivers and occasionally large lakes. The terrestrial adults inhabit riparian areas and the surrounding uplands, and return to the water body to mate and lay eggs. Brook Snaketails are dragonflies whose nymphs can be found in clear, sand-bottomed streams with intermittent rapids, often flowing through dense woodland.

For more information on the BioMap2 Program visit: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dfg/dfw/natural-heritage/land-protection-and-management/biomap2/>

Priority Habitat Identified: In addition to the BioCore Habitat area, the 2040 Providence Road area appears to be mostly in a State-identified Priority Habitat Area, as indicated in the Map 7 on page 12 (PH 445). Priority Habitats are for use with the MA Endangered Species Act Regulations (321 CMR 10). A primary responsibility of the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program is the regulatory protection of rare species and their habitats as codified under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MESA) (M.G.L. c.131A) and Wetlands Protection Act (WPA) (M.G.L. c.131 s.40). In order to protect rare species and their habitats NHESP reviews projects and activities proposed within Estimated or Priority Habitat. Glenn Krevosky of EBT Environmental Consultants, who has been acting as the wetlands and environmental consultant for the property owner, noted that “from our research we

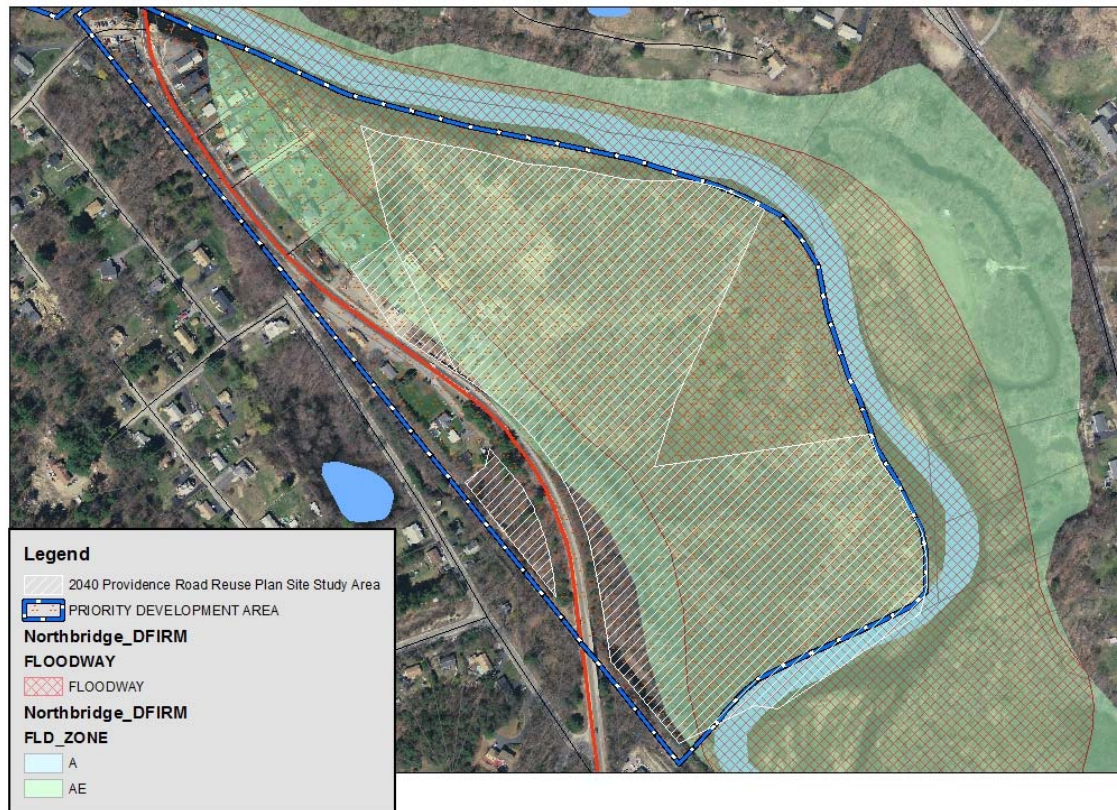
found out through the Conservation Commission (as the commission had a bridge construction filing at the beginning of this D&G Recycling Project) it was the Brook Snaketail Dragonfly; we believe it is nothing we can't overcome – we are very familiar with Rare Species- as soon as the plans have been finalized we will be filing (with) the Rare Species program and the Northbridge Conservation Commission.” CMRPC Staff's review of the Priority Habitat Map shows that the Dragonfly habitat seems to be mostly on the unbuildable area at least. Although the trail and canoe launch/boat ramp as well as the Canal Tow Path walkway will have to address the priority habitat considerations as part of the permitting process.

Map 4: Environmental Constraints in the 2040 Providence Road PDA

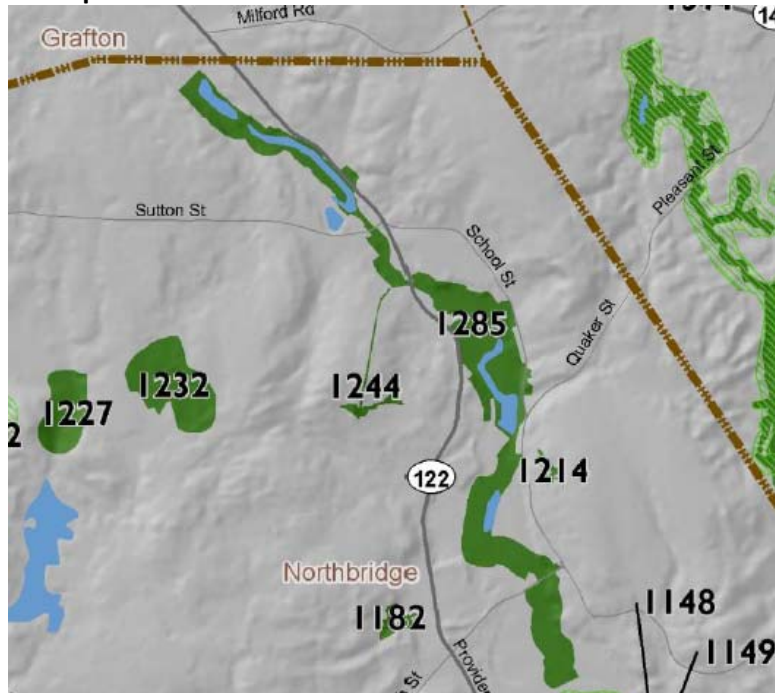


Map 5: 2040 Providence Road and Location of the 100-Year Floodplain and Floodway

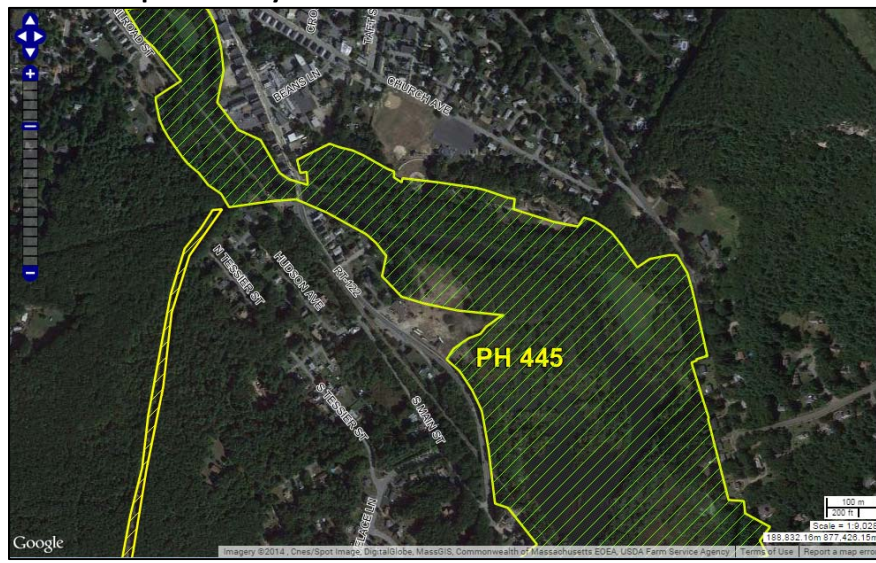
2040 Providence Road: Location of the 100-Year FloodPlain and Floodway



Map 6: BioCore Habitat in the 2040 Providence Road PDA



Map 7: Priority Habitat in the 2040 Providence Road PDA



Zoning (existing land use(s) permitted, Floodplain, etc.)

Zoning of Site and Vicinity: The Property is in the Town's B-2 Zoning District, which is one (1) of the Town's three (3) Business/Commercial-related Zoning Districts. See Map 8 on page 13 for zoning in the vicinity of the 2040 Providence Road site.

Zoning Use Assessment:

Residential uses are currently not allowed on the subject property. This prohibition of residential uses under existing B-2 zoning poses a land use conflict with some of the existing residential land uses located in vicinity of 2040 Providence Road, which have been part of the fabric of this area for many years, in most cases predating the adoption of zoning. The prohibition is also problematic in that the mixed-use development desired for this site could not be built under current zoning. Hence a recommendation to re-zone the area is a key recommendation that is found on page 18 of this Report. Rezoning to allow mixed use is also consistent with the Vision of the 1994 Master Plan.

To follow are a summary of uses that are either permitted on the site by-right or by Special Permit, based on the existing B-2 Zoning District use requirements (Section 173-12 of the Zoning Bylaw).

A summary of uses that are allowed by-right in the B-2 Zone is as follows:

- Community uses such as: Churches, Educational, Municipal Buildings and Utilities (except Power Plant, Sewer Treatment and Refuse Facility).
- Agricultural uses such as: various agricultural uses (crops, forestry), along with allowance of both a year-round greenhouse or stand for sale of agricultural products and a temporary stand (not to exceed three months in any one year) for such products raised on the same premises.
- Retail and Sales uses such as: Vending Machines, Auto Sales/Repair (not including junkyard), Hotels and Motels, Movie Theatre, Agri-Tourism Farm, Taxi/Bus Terminals and Commercial Parking Lot.

A summary of uses that are allowed by Special Permit in the B-2 Zone is as follows:

- Community uses such as: Nonprofit Recreational Facility (excluding Membership Clubs) and Town Cemetery.
- Retail and Sales uses such as: Stores selling a combo of two (2) more or more of Dry Goods, Apparel, Furniture, Hardware, and Food; Restaurants; Personal Service Establishments; Funeral Home; Business Office; Auto Junkyard; Commercial Recreation, Exercise and Athletic Facilities³; Membership Clubs; and, Communications and Television Towers.
- Wholesale and Manufacturing uses such as: Manufacturing and light industries; Railroads and railway express service; Trucking service and warehousing; and Wholesale trade.

Map 8: Zoning Districts in the 2040 Providence Road PDA and Vicinity

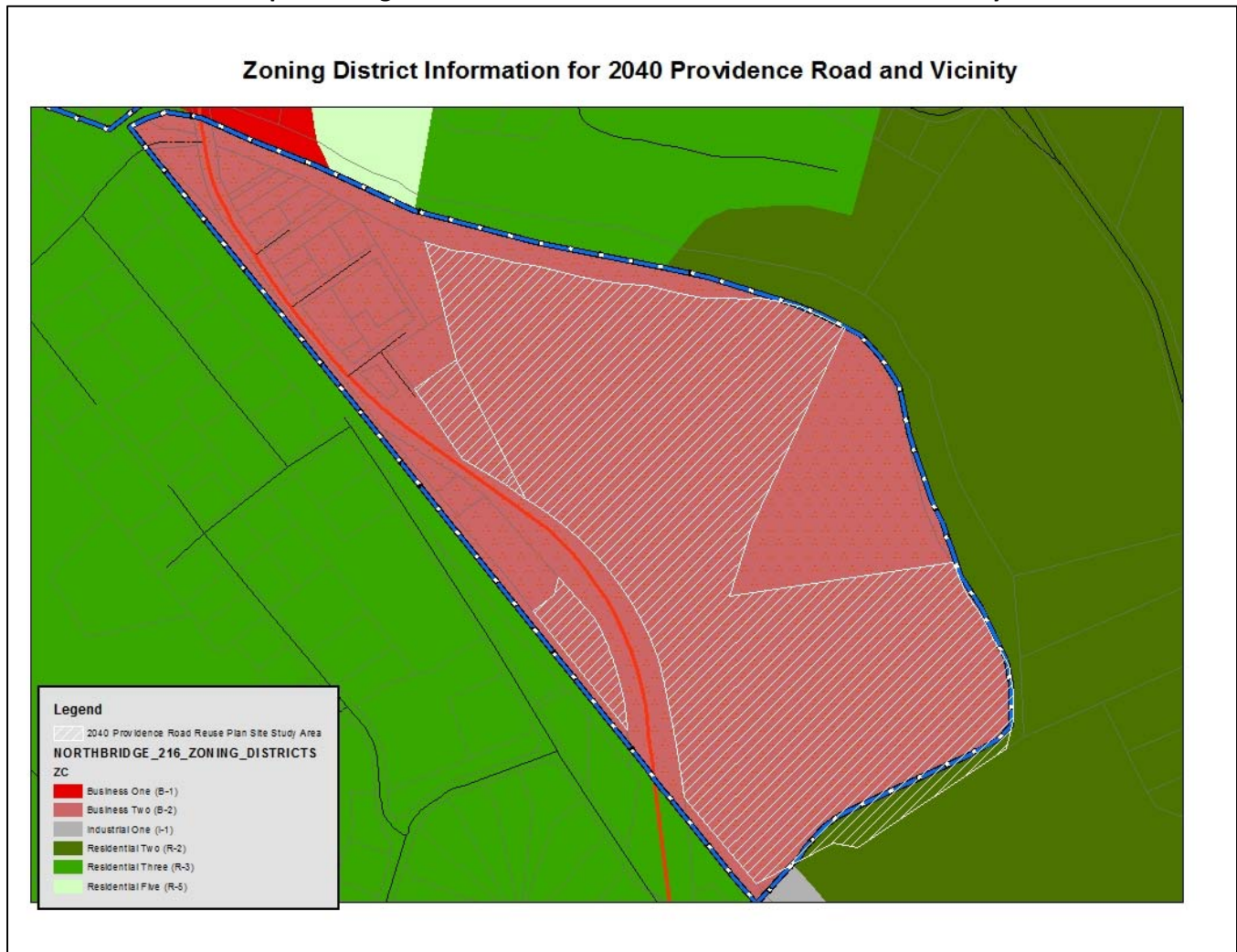


Table 1 on the following page shows the current dimensional requirements for lots within the B-2 Zoning District. CMRPC Staff notes that the minimum requirements are the same if public sewer is available or not, in this case at 2040 Providence Road public sewer is available. The Town has provided different requirements depending on

³ No special permit shall be required for commercial recreation, exercise and athletic facilities in the B-2 District when the square-footage of the building designated for such use is less than or equal to 3,000 square feet.

use, with motion picture and recreational-related uses requiring 20,000 square feet per lot, automotive-related uses requiring 10,000 square feet per lot and all other requiring 5,000 square feet per lot

Table 1: Northbridge B-2 Zoning District Dimensional Requirements

USE	ZONING DISTRICT	MIN. LOT AREA (Sq. Ft.)	MIN. LOT WIDTH (Ft.)	MIN. FRONT YARD (Feet)	MIN. SIDE YARD (Feet)	MIN. REAR YARD (Feet)
Automotive sales, service or repair establishment	B-2	10,000	100	25	10	25
Motion-picture or amusement & recreation establishment	B-2	20,000	125	25	12	25
Any other permitted structure or principal use	B-2	5,000	40	10	8	10

Floodway and Floodplain Districts: As indicated on page 8, a significant portion of the 2040 Providence Road PDA (outside the buildable area) is either within a 100-year floodplain or a floodway. Section 173-18 guides what is permitted and prohibited in each of these respective areas. The Town has adopted a corresponding Floodway and Floodplain Overlay District that is superimposed over the existing underlying B-2 Zoning District (see Map 9 on page 15).

Section 173-18(C) provides the set of Floodway Use Regulations, which indicates that *“Only the following uses of low flood damage potential and causing no obstructions to flood flows shall be allowed, provided that they do not require structures, fill or storage of materials or equipment:*

- 1) *Agricultural uses such as farming, grazing, truck farming, horticulture and forestry and nursery uses.*
- 2) *Outdoor recreational uses, including fishing, boating and play areas, etc.*
- 3) *Conservation of water, plants and wildlife; wildlife management; and foot-, bicycle and horse paths.*
- 4) *Temporary nonresidential structures used in connection with fishing or with growing, harvesting or storage of crops raised on the premises.*
- 5) *Buildings lawfully existing prior to May 10, 1983.”*

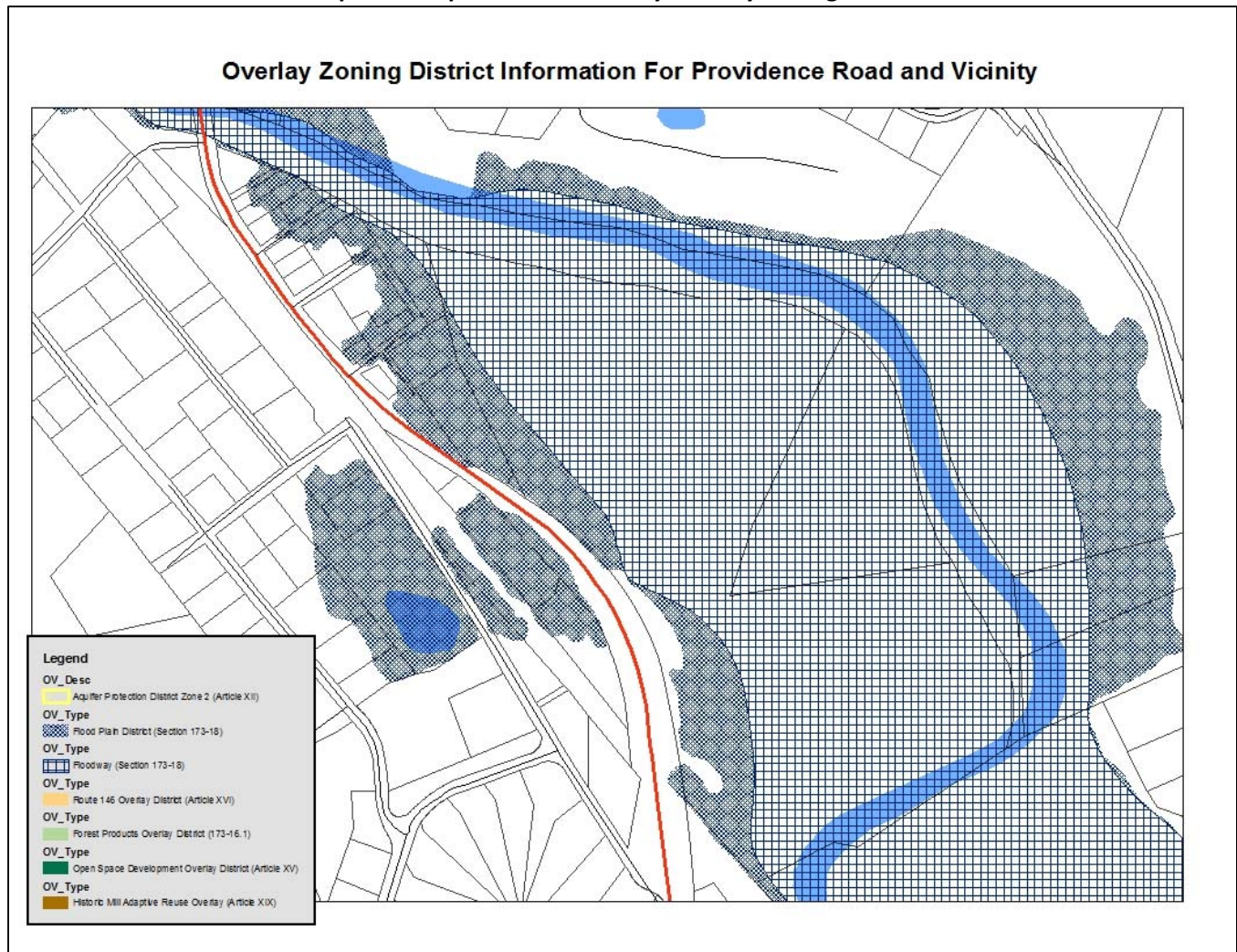
The Floodway area is more restrictive than the 100-year floodplain and within the Floodplain there are some/greater development provisions (notwithstanding the fact that the DEP Consent Order further limits most of the 2040 Providence Road Site outside the development area that was approved back in 2007). Section 173-18(D) provides the set of Floodplain District Use Regulations), which state that all development must comply with:

- 1) The Section of the Massachusetts State Building Code which addresses floodplain and coastal high hazard areas.

- 2) Wetlands Protection Regulations, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).
- 3) Inland Wetlands Restriction, DEP.
- 4) Minimum Requirements for the Subsurface Disposal of Sanitary Sewage, DEP.

In addition, any building in the Floodplain would require a Zoning Board of Appeals Special Permit, subject to set of performance standards per Section 173-18(D)(2) and (3) of Northbridge's Zoning Bylaw. Along with meeting these set of Zoning Regulations, the proposed land use would have to address National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Standards.

Map 9: Floodplain and Floodway Overlay Zoning Districts



Clean-up & Mitigation

Based on information provided by David Foss of Fuss & O'Neal, a summary of existing site conditions along with required remaining cleanup actions are provided in the text that follows:

"(The 2040 Providence Road)...site is currently classified by MassDEP as a Tier 1D disposal site, meaning that MassDEP is aware of a release of oil or hazardous materials at the site but the responsible party has

not completed submittals required by MassDEP. Before additional remedial actions can be conducted at the site, the site must be Tier Classified, a process involving the evaluation of the general level of environmental risk associated with the Site based on the contaminants of concern, the site setting, and the number and type of potential receptors. The Tier Classification affects the types of submittals required and MassDEP's level of direct involvement in the cleanup of the site.

Based on our review of the data, it is our understanding that the site will categorically be a Tier 1 site as it meets minimum inclusionary requirements for Tier 1 (groundwater contamination in a mapped wellhead protection area).

Actions required to bring the site back into compliance with MassDEP and MCP requirements include the following:

1. RAM Completion Report

During Spring 2014, a volume of soil was excavated and disposed of off-site by asphalt-batch recycling. That work was conducted as a Release Abatement Measure (RAM). A RAM Plan was submitted to MassDEP. The soil was managed off-site under a Bill-of-Lading. The RAM Completion report has been drafted. Pending resolution of contract obligations the RAM Completion report shall be submitted to MassDEP.

2. MCP Phase I Initial Site Investigation (ISI) and Tier Classification Report

The Site is currently classified as a Tier 1D Disposal Site. The MCP requires that a Tier Classification report be submitted. A review of site conditions and available data indicates that the site will be classified as a Tier 1 Disposal Site. A draft Tier Classification report has been prepared. Pending resolution of contract obligations the Tier 1 Classification report will be updated, finalized and may then be submitted to MassDEP.

3. MCP Phase II Comprehensive Site Assessment

The MCP requires that the full nature and extent of the disposal site be characterized, and that all potential sources of releases to the environment be identified and mitigated. To date, significant assessment of environmental media has been performed including testing of soil, groundwater, sediment, and surface water. A review of the existing data set shall be conducted and data gaps will be evaluated. If warranted, a supplemental sampling program will be designed and implemented. In addition to addressing data gaps, the sampling will support remedial design and planning. Based on changes to the MCP regulatory program (promulgated in July 2014) it is anticipated that additional delineation of groundwater contamination will be warranted to satisfy MCP Phase II requirements.

4. MCP Phase III Remediation Design and Planning

Once the full nature and extent of the release(s) to the environment have been characterized, a comprehensive remediation program will be designed for submittal to MassDEP. It is anticipated that a primary component of the remediation strategy will be to design and install an engineered barrier -- a cap -- over regulated soil at the site, and the preservation of that cap with a deed restriction called an Activity and Use Limitation (AUL). Capping the regulated soil may allow for commercial and/or mixed use development, while restricting direct contact to soil containing regulated levels of compounds of concern.

The full range of remedial technologies to be implemented at the site cannot be defined until the MCP Phase II report is prepared. In addition to capping other techniques that will be evaluated include: groundwater treatment, soil removal and off-site disposal, and design of future buildings to mitigate potential exposures.

5. MassDEP Coordination

It is recommended that the Responsible Parties coordinate and meet with the appropriate MassDEP Staff. Given the site history - - past noncompliance - - and overlapping jurisdictions between the MassDEP Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup and Wetlands Sections, it will be valuable to maintain open lines of communication between the stakeholders to ensure that the selected remedy and site design mutually agreeable.

6. Regulatory Closure

Following the implementation of the remedial plan, a summary report called a "Permanent Solution Statement" will be prepared and submitted to MassDEP. The Permanent Solution will include an evaluation of risk to human health and the environment. In order to achieve a Permanent Solution, the response actions implemented will have to document that a condition of "No Significant Risk" has been achieved at the site."

Fuss & O'Neill note that the following two additional items may be required prior to site development, but were excluded from the summary of MCP requirements:

- a) *"If warranted, we anticipate that the property owner will separately address building demolition associated with the former filling and maintenance facility. Issues related to state and local permitting, asbestos and lead management within the building, air quality monitoring or similar activities are not included herein.*
- b) *We understand that up to four petroleum underground storage tanks (USTs) may still be located on the southwestern side of the garage building near the entrance to the site. MassDEP and Fire Prevention Regulations require removal of these USTs. A Release Abatement Measure (RAM) Plan or Phase IV Remedy Implementation Plan (RIP) for submittal to MassDEP may be warranted prior to UST removal. The appropriate regulatory submittal will be determined after the property owners indicate their strategy to manage the USTs, and are not included herein."*

MassDevelopment is a potential source of funding in the form of brownfields remediation loans available to assist in the cleanup of the 2040 Providence Road site. See the Local, Regional, State Partners section on page 19 for more information.

Reuse Potential (redevelopment benefits, open space, natural resource protection, etc.)

The full reuse potential of the site, based on the vision expressed by the Town through this planning process can only be realized by a) allowing the mixed-use zoning, b) the property owner completing the required clean-up actions and c) the property owner meeting the requirements of the Consent Order and SEPP. The Town can assist in all items of the above, as the Town is an important Partner, as noted in the Section that follows. There are the benefits to the Town of getting this property back on the tax roll by redevelopment of the allowable land that can be developed.

If realized, this site, when redeveloped, could become an excellent model of mixed-use development for other areas in Rockdale and in other mill villages of Northbridge (and even for other Blackstone River Valley communities). It will preserve over 20 acres of land and wetlands as permanent open space, provide access to the Blackstone River for citizens of the Rockdale area and other citizens in the region and allow for a walking area adjacent to the remnants of the Blackstone Canal that are found on this site.

Local, Regional, State Partners

The Town of Northbridge is a partner in the process of seeking redevelopment of the site. Town Meeting will need to approve any rezoning initiatives to allow mixed uses on the site, as residential is currently not allowed. The Town's Conservation Commission and Planning Board will be the local permitting authorities to allow any construction on the site, including the planned trail and canoe launch. The Town needs to be a supportive of the grant applications that could help offset the cost of the recreational improvements. See below for more information on potential grant funding sources.

The Metacomet Land Trust is also a partner, as they will be the entity, once the agreement is finalized, to hold the Conservation Restriction on the open space at 2040 Providence Road. For more information:

<http://www.metacometlandtrust.net/>.

State Resources

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)'s Recreational Trails Program (RTP), represents a source of funding for walking trail to the Blackstone River and the canoe ramp. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) accepts applications for Recreational Trails Grants on an annual basis. The next deadline for all RTP grants is February 2, 2015. The Massachusetts Recreational Trails Program generally provides grants ranging from \$2,000 to \$50,000, however, grant proposals will be accepted, considered and awarded for larger amounts up to \$100,000, based on need, breadth and reach of the trail project. Recreational Trails grants are 80-20 challenge grants. In other words, 80% of the project costs are reimbursed to grantees, but at least 20% of the total project value must come from other sources.

For more information visit:

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/services-and-assistance/grants-and-technical-assistance/recreational-trails-grants-program.html>. Program contact is Amanda Lewis, amanda.lewis@state.ma.us. CMRPC spoke with Ms. Lewis who has confirmed that the walking trail and canoe launch are eligible for funding under the RTP.

MA DCR is important state partner as besides the entity who administers the RTP grants, DCR administers the State Park system. This includes the Blackstone River and Canal Heritage Park. Currently the park includes the River Bend Farm Site in Uxbridge with its Visitor Center located there. But there are also a set of trails that extend north from the River Bend Farm to Plummers Corner in Northbridge. One idea identified at the August 26th Planning Workshop is to extend trails up from Plummers Corner to Rockdale Village and the 2040 Providence Road Site as the opportunity to be a part of this initiative.

The Blackstone River and Canal Heritage Park website link:

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/region-central/blackstone-river-and-canal-heritage-state-park.html>

MA DCR's Greenway and Trails Program website:

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/services-and-assistance/grants-and-technical-assistance/greenways-and-trails-program.html>. Program contact is Jennifer Howard, jennifer.howard@state.ma.us. CMRPC Staff did discuss this Project with Ms. Howard.

MassDevelopment: The Brownfields Remediation Loan.

Since the Town of Northbridge is listed as an “Economic Distressed Area (EDA)” by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the site becomes eligible for loans under the MassDevelopment Redevelopment Fund Program. Another key factor for eligibility is that the current private owners were not the responsible parties contributing to the environmental contamination. The Brownfields Remediation Loan Program provides flexible loans up to \$500,000 for environmental clean-up of brownfields.

For more information visit: <http://www.massdevelopment.com/financing/specialty-loan-programs/brownfields-redevelopment-fund/>.

The Blackstone River and Canal Commission:

The Blackstone River and Canal Commission was established based on Chapter 155 of the Acts of State Legislature in 1988, as amended. The Commission had been chaired by longtime State Senator Richard T. Moore, D-Uxbridge. However, Sen. Moore lost the election in November 2014. State Rep. Ryan C. Fattman, R-Webster, won the seat, so in 2015 there will be new leadership of the Blackstone River and Canal Commission.

For any development or construction that occurs on land abutting the route of the Blackstone Canal, the Commission needs to be notified at least seven (7) days prior to any local board/commission action on such proposed development/construction. The Commission can also act as a clearinghouse of information for potential grant sources.

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is also an important state partner. DEP is the State agency charged with overseeing the Consent Order for 2040 Providence Road.

Blackstone Heritage Corridor Resources

The Town of Northbridge is a part of the Blackstone Heritage Corridor, which does represent some potential funding opportunities:

- The Blackstone Heritage Corridor has developed a new Partnership Grant Program. Although the Town missed out on an initial round, the Corridor hopes to initiate a second round in the early part of 2015. CMRPC Staff met with the Executive Director, Charlene Cutler, about potential use of the Partnership Grant Funds for implementation associated with the 2040 Providence Road PDA, especially related to the canoe launch. Ms. Cutler indicated that a detailed cost estimate of the canoe launch would be required to be submitted with the grant application. The good news is that canoe launch initiative is eligible for this funding source. The grant award ranges from \$5,000 - \$30,000 and does require a 1:1 match. CMRPC Staff will notify Northbridge Officials when we become aware of the next grant cycle when it is announced in early next year.
http://blackstoneheritagecorridor.org/about/news/press-release-new-grant-program.html?utm_source=New+Grant+Program&utm_campaign=Announcement%3A+New+Grant+Program&utm_medium=email

- All of the communities within the Blackstone Heritage Corridor have been designated **Preserve America** communities, making them eligible to receive technical assistance and matching grants related to heritage tourism. Eligible grant activities include research, documentation (e.g., historic resource surveys and National Register nominations), interpretation and education (e.g., signage, exhibits and itineraries), planning, marketing and training. More details about this Program are available from the website: <http://www.nps.gov/preservation-grants/PreserveAmerica/>. However, according to the program status on the website: “Although not currently funded the program is authorized in legislation.”

CMRPC-related Resources

DLTA funds will be available in 2015, which can offer the opportunity for CMRPC Staff to build on the 2040 Providence Road Re-use Plan, perhaps by assisting with the development of a mixed-use zoning bylaw. CMRPC could also assist the Town with a broader analysis of the Rockdale PDA, which is located to the northwest of the 2040 Providence Road PDA.

CMRPC Transportation Staff may be able to help with some of the transportation planning issues. Contact Mary Ellen Blunt, Program Manager, at (p) 508-459-3337 or email @ mblunt@cmrpc.org.

Findings and Recommendations

Mixed use zoning is not permitted on the subject site. The Town should consider adopting a zoning provision that allows for the desired mixed use. Given the Master Plan’s goal for the entire village to have mixed use zoning, this rezoning initiative should not be limited to 2040 Providence Road. But in the short term perhaps it is a place to start. Below are a few examples of more rural, village-based zoning initiatives that allow for mixed-use development.

Besides zoning, the Town should support the property owner by assisting in completing grant application to assist in the development of the walking trail and boat ramp. The property owner is willing to have any required match be in the form of the use of his equipment and labor to run the equipment, but the grants will require a public sector entity to act as a fiscal agent to administer the grant funds. The Town should take on this responsibility as part of showing its support for the grants. The Town should work with DCR to see about the potential for the trail network to be extended north of Plummers Corner to Rockdale.

Mixed Use Developments and Zoning Bylaw Examples

Town of Rutland

The Town of Rutland has two small scale mixed use developments within the Rutland Center Village. They were developed under the Town’s Village Center and Town Center Zoning Provisions. CMRPC Staff does not recommend the Town of Northbridge adopt the specific provisions as they seem overly complex, but the development they have yielded in these two case studies, which are provided below, show how development of mixed use zoning

The first mixed use development in Rutland is on Route 56 (Pommogussett Road) across from the Rutland DPW and is called Colonial Village. It was built in 2004. One the first floors are commercial tenants such as Rutland Marketplace and GFA Federal Credit Union with condominiums located on the upper floors (access to the condo units is provided to the rear of the site). This development is located on 1.54 acres (66,908 square feet).



Colonial Village, Route 56, Rutland

The second mixed use development is Rutland Commons, which is located on Route 122A. This development is on 0.91 acres (39635.24 square feet). This development is just a little older, having been constructed in 2003. There is a gas station/convenience store as the anchor commercial tenant. Other commercial enterprises on the first floor are a Chinese Restaurant and a Barber Shop. The residential units are located on the upper floors. There is shared parking found on the sides of the building.



Rutland Commons, Route 122A, Rutland

Town of Clinton

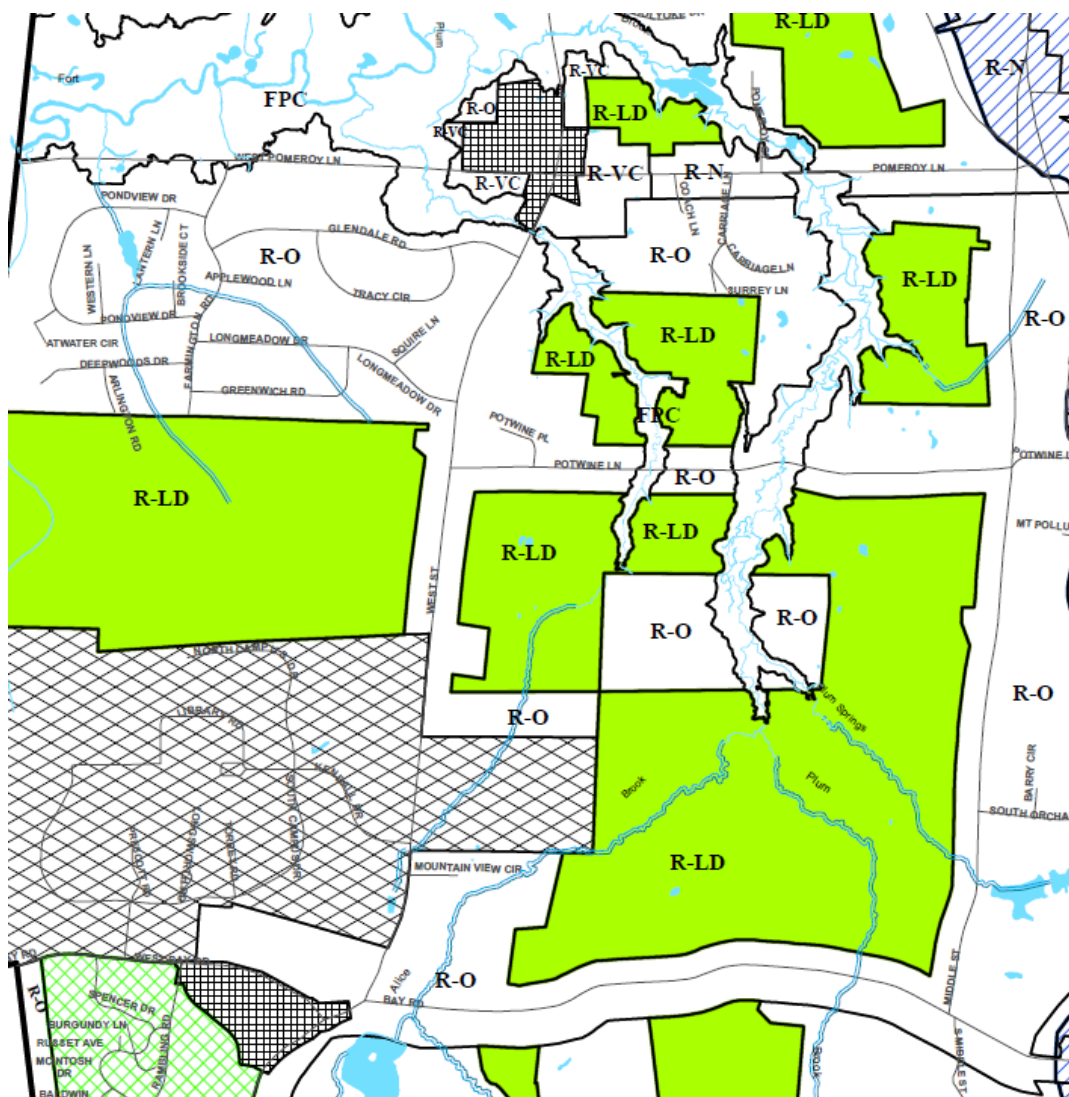
The Town of Clinton adopted a Mixed Use Overlay District (MUOD) Zoning Bylaw to provide for alternative development proposals for two 5+-acre surplus church properties, located in older neighborhoods. The Bylaw provides the opportunity for a single development proposal to contain a mix of residential, exempt or institutional, and/or commercial uses as allowed in a single property. Town Meeting Voters adopted the Bylaw for the two properties noted above and the Town of Northbridge could adopt a similar Bylaw to cover the properties that make up the 2040 Providence Road site. A copy of this Bylaw has been included as Appendix A of this Report.

Of interest to the Town of Northbridge should be how the MUOD Bylaw provides the Planning Board the flexibility to waive the minimum frontage, lot width, or setback, or building height requirements of the underlying zoning district.

Today, one former parochial school is now headquarters for a 14-person software development firm, the other has been developed in 39 dwelling units.

Town of Amherst

Outside of the traditional Amherst Center, the Town of Amherst has developed Village-based Zoning Districts to encourage mixed-use in the Town's outlying villages. South of Amherst Center is one such area, which is at the crossroads of West Street and Pomeroy Lane. Here the Town adopted a Village Center Business Zone (B-VC) where the two roads come together and then a Village Center Residence Zone (R-VC) in the lands behind the B-VC Zone. See the figure on the following page for the Town of Amherst's zoning map in this area.



Amherst Zoning Map in area of Pomeroy Village

A mixed-use building has since been built in this area. Known as Pomeroy Commons, this two and half story building has offices on the first floor and residential units above. It is located at 495 West Street in Amherst and a photo of the building is provided for on the following page.



Pomeroy Commons, 495 West Street, Amherst

CMRPC Staff provide a summary of the various requirements associated with the Town of Amherst's Village Center zoning districts in the text that follows. For a copy of the full set of relevant requirements, please see Appendix B for excerpts of the Town of Amherst Zoning Bylaw related to the two Village Center zoning districts.

As indicated on page 22, the Town adopted two Village Center zoning districts: Village Center Business Zone (B-VC) and then a Village Center Residence (R-VC). These are two standalone zoning districts, which contrasts to the approach the Town of Clinton took with adopting an overlay district on properties they wanted to allow for a mixed of land uses (including commercial and residential) and providing their Planning Board with the authority to grant flexible dimensional requirements based on a specific development proposal.

The Town of Amherst Village Center Residence Zone (R-VC) was created for the purpose *"to provide for residential neighborhoods, within and adjacent to village centers, that are of medium densities and that allow a limited mix of residential and office uses. The R-VC is, in general, intended to provide for a transition between the Business Village Center District and surrounding residential districts."*

The Town of Amherst Village Center Business Zone (B-VC) was created for the purpose *"to provide areas within the village centers of Amherst that allow for a mix of uses, including retail, commercial, office and housing of moderate to high density."*

Within Section 3.3 of Amherst's Zoning Bylaw is the Town's Table of Uses similar to Section 173-12 of the Town of Northbridge's Table of Uses Regulations. Here the Town of Amherst provides for the opportunity for a mix of land uses in both the R-VC and the B-VC. Of interest to the Town of Northbridge should be the "mixed-use building" use provision. The Town of Amherst defines a "mixed-use building" as a *"building containing dwelling unit(s) in combination with permitted retail, business, institutional, government, public service, consumer service, office or similar principal use(s) and lawful accessory use(s)."* Such buildings are allowed by Site Plan Review approval in the B-VC zones and by Special Permit in the R-VC zones. Appendix B provides the full set of allowed land uses in the two zones including whether they are permitted by-right, via Site Plan Review or subject to Special Permit approval.

Located within Section 6 of the Amherst Zoning Bylaw, Table 3 provides the set of dimensional requirements for the Town of Amherst. The minimum lot area is 12,000 square feet in the B-VC zone and 15,000 for the R-VC; this compares to the 5,000 square feet for most uses in the existing B-2 Zoning District. Each additional family dwelling would require an additional 2,500 square feet in the B-VC zone and 4,000 square feet in the R-VC. The approach of requiring additional lot area for additional housing units is common in multi-residential use provisions in zoning bylaws. For example, the Town of Northbridge does this currently for multi-family dwellings in the R-4 and R-5 zoning districts. Amherst does provide the opportunity for the Planning Board to modify the requirement for additional family unit lot area, for properties in the B-VC zone, as noted in footnote a. of Table 3. In general it appears that the B-VC allows for a great density of land uses compared to the R-VC zone.