

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Sherborn's MBTA Zoning Compliance

What is the MBTA Communities Law?

The "MBTA Communities Law," or Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 3A, was passed in January 2021 by the Legislature. The Law creates a requirement for communities with or adjacent to MBTA service to zone for multifamily construction. Sherborn is classified as an "adjacent small town," with a requirement from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) to zone for the construction of 78 multifamily housing units in the Town.

How will Sherborn achieve compliance with the law?

The Town has crafted the Multifamily Overlay District (MOD) to achieve compliance with the law. This overlay district, comprising several parcels in the Town Center and a parcel on Kendall Avenue, will allow for certain multifamily and mixed-use development that meets set requirements and passes site plan review by the Planning Board.

What is an overlay district?

Overlay districts add additional requirements and opportunities to a base district. In Sherborn's case, the overlays will augment the base residence and business districts in the Town Center, allowing for certain types of multifamily development that meet the Town's specifications.

How will the new zoning affect the look and feel of the Town?

The Multifamily Overlay District (MOD) is limited to certain parcels in the Town Center, as well as a parcel on Kendall Avenue. The MOD allows for mixed-use development (such as a combination of retail, community, and residential uses), with a minimum front setback of 20 feet, and a side setback of 30 feet if abutting residential. Proposed projects will be subject to site plan review by the Planning Board, as well as development standards concerning parking, open space, lighting, trash disposal, stormwater management, and other concerns.

How can I provide input?

The Planning Board will be scheduling a mapping session at Town Hall (19 Washington Street) in June. After a brief presentation, there will be the opportunity for community input on the proposed zoning areas.