

# **Zoning Amendments**

Amendments to the Dracut Zoning Bylaw or Zoning Map are subject to the provisions of Chapter 40A of the Massachusetts General Laws. All zoning amendments must be approved by Town Meeting.

The following may initiate a petition for a zoning amendment:

1. The Board of Selectmen;
2. The Zoning Board of Appeals;
3. The Planning Board;
4. A landowner to be affected by a zoning change;
5. Ten registered voters if the petition is to be brought before an Annual Town Meeting;
6. 100 registered voters if the petition is to be brought before a special Town Meeting;
7. The regional planning agency (Northern Middlesex Council of Governments).

## **Petition Process**

All petitions for zoning amendments must be submitted to the Board of Selectmen on the appropriate form with the required supplemental information. A copy of the petition form is available from the office of the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk will note the request and submit the petition to the Planning Board for its recommendation.

The Planning Board will conduct a public hearing within 65 days of receiving the petition from the Town Clerk (but at least 14 days after publication of a hearing notice) and prepare a recommendation on the amendment by majority vote. The Board must make a report to Town Meeting on the proposed amendment or 21 days must elapse after the public hearing before Town Meeting can vote on the amendment. The Town Meeting vote must occur within six months of the public hearing. All zoning amendments require a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting for approval.

## **Effective Date**

Amendments to the Zoning Bylaw or Zoning Map are effective immediately upon adoption by Town Meeting but are subject to approval by the Massachusetts Attorney General.

## **Reconsideration**

Any proposed zoning amendment that is disapproved by Town Meeting cannot be reconsidered by Town Meeting until two years have passed, unless adoption of such amendment is recommended by the Planning Board.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, Call the Office of the Town Clerk (978) 453-0951