

## **Chapter 101**

### **GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

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**[HISTORY: Adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Windham 7-28-2020 (Ch. 116 of the 1991 Code); amended in its entirety 10-8-2024 by Order No. 24-148;**

#### **§ 101-1. Title.**

This chapter shall be known as the "Growth Management Ordinance of the Town of Windham, Maine" and shall be referred to herein as the "chapter."

#### **§ 101-2. Legal authority.**

This chapter is adopted pursuant to the home rule powers as provided for in Article VIII-A, Part Second, of the Maine Constitution and 30-A M.R.S.A. § 3001, 30-A M.R.S.A. § 4323, and 30-A M.R.S.A. § 4360.

#### **§ 101-3. Purpose.**

The purpose of this chapter is to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of Windham through placing reasonable and appropriate limitations on residential development in accordance with the Town of Windham Comprehensive Plan, more specifically:

- A. To plan for continued residential population growth in Windham which will not impose an undue burden upon the provision of community services, including, but not limited to, education, public safety, transportation infrastructure, waste disposal and health services.
- B. To provide for the immediate housing needs of the existing residents of the Town of Windham;
- C. To ensure fairness in the allocation of building permits;
- D. To ensure that the building permit issuance system does not prevent the creation of a reasonable number of multiple dwelling units or dwelling structures simultaneously; and
- E. To allow for reasonable growth while maintaining the rural character of the Town.

#### **§ 101-4. Definitions.**

As used in this chapter, the terms below shall be defined as indicated. All other terms used in this chapter, if not defined below, shall have the same definition as set forth in § 120-301 of Chapter 120, Land Use.

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**ACCESSORY APARTMENT** – An accessory apartment as defined in § 120-301 of Chapter 120, Land Use.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING** — A dwelling unit that may be purchased or leased by a qualifying household such that annual housing costs will be less than or equal to 30% of household income. A qualifying household is one whose income does not exceed 80% of the most recently published Median Family Income for the Portland, Maine Metropolitan Statistical Area, adjusted for family size, as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (the "MFI Standard").

**BUILDING PERMIT** — A permit issued by the Code Enforcement Officer pursuant to Chapter 28, Building Construction.

**DWELLING STRUCTURE** — A structure that contains one or more dwelling units.

**DWELLING UNIT** — A “dwelling unit” as defined in § 120-301 of Chapter 120, Land Use.

**FAMILY GIFT LOT** — A lot whose creation complies with the requirements of 30-A M.R.S.A. § 4401(4)(D-4), as may be amended or recodified. Without limiting the foregoing, as of the revision of this chapter, a family gift lot is defined to mean a division accomplished by gift to a person related to the donor of an interest in property held by the donor for a continuous period of 5 years prior to the division by gift. “Person related to donor” means a spouse, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, child or grandchild related by blood, marriage or adoption. A gift cannot be given for consideration that is more than ½ the assessed value of the real estate.

**GROWTH PERMIT** — A permit, issued in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, which allows the issuance of a building permit for the construction, creation or placement of one new dwelling unit within the Town of Windham.

**MULTIFAMILY DWELLING STRUCTURE** – A dwelling structure containing three (3) or more dwelling units.

**SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING STRUCTURE** – A dwelling structure containing a single dwelling unit.

**STRUCTURE** — A structure as defined in § 120-301 of Chapter 120, Land Use.

**SUBDIVISION** — A subdivision as defined in 30-A M.R.S.A. § 4401, as such may be amended from time to time, and approved by the Windham Planning Board pursuant to Chapter 120, Land Use.

**TWO-FAMILY DWELLING STRUCTURE** – A dwelling structure containing two (2) dwelling units.

**§ 101-5. Applicability.**

Except as provided in § 101-6 below, this chapter shall apply to the construction, creation or placement of any new dwelling unit within the Town of Windham.

**§ 101-6. Exemptions.**

This chapter shall not apply to:

- A. The repair, replacement, reconstruction, or alteration of an existing dwelling unit or dwelling structure, provided that no new dwelling units or dwelling structures are created, and no seasonal dwelling units are converted into year-round dwelling units.
- B. A dwelling structure containing a single dwelling unit on a family gift lot.
- C. The construction, repair, replacement, reconstruction, or alteration of any dwelling unit meeting the

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definition of "housing for older persons" as set forth in 5 M.R.S.A. § 4581(2), and as may be amended from time to time.

- D. The construction, repair, replacement, reconstruction, or alteration of an accessory apartment, or other dwelling unit that qualifies as an "accessory dwelling unit," as defined 30-A M.R.S.A. § 4301(1-C), as may be amended or recodified.
- E. One-bedroom dwelling units within a multifamily dwelling structure, provided that no more than 30% of the dwelling units within a multifamily dwelling structure may be exempted from this chapter under this provision.
- F. Dwelling units that are exempted from this chapter by a two-thirds vote of the Town Council under § 101-7(G).

### **§ 101-7. Administration.**

- A. Unless otherwise exempt under § 101-6, the construction, creation, or placement of each new dwelling unit shall require one growth permit.
- B. Two sources of growth permits. Growth permits are available from two sources: from an annual allocation of growth permits and from the Code Enforcement Officer's reserve pool of growth permits.
  - (1) The number of growth permits allocated annually and the process for the issuance of growth permits from this annual allocation are set forth in Subsections C, D and E.
  - (2) The operation of the Code Enforcement Officer's reserve pool of growth permits is set forth in Subsection G.
- C. Annual allocation of growth permits per calendar year.
  - (1) The maximum number of growth permits issued from the annual allocation each calendar year shall be as follows:
    - (a) No more than 78 growth permits shall be issued for new dwelling units located in single-family dwelling structures.
    - (b) No more than 28 growth permits shall be issued for new dwelling units located in two-family dwelling structures.
    - (c) No more than 78 growth permits shall be issued for new dwelling units located in multifamily dwelling structures.
    - (d) In addition to the above categories, 19 growth permits may be issued for new dwelling units that qualify as affordable housing, as defined in § 101-4 of Chapter 101, Growth Management, regardless of the type of dwelling structure within which the proposed dwelling units are to be located. For the avoidance of doubt, proposed dwelling units that qualify as affordable housing shall receive growth permits from this portion of the annual allocation first. If all affordable housing growth permits have been issued in a calendar year, additional proposed affordable housing dwelling units may apply to receive a growth permit from other categories of the annual allocation, and if none remain, from the Code Enforcement Officer's reserve pool.
    - (e) Notwithstanding any provision in this chapter to the contrary, no more than 45 total growth permits shall be issued in a calendar year for properties located within the Farm (F) zoning district. For the avoidance of doubt, no growth permit from the Code Enforcement Officer's reserve pool, under § 101-7(G), may be issued for projects located within the Farm (F) zoning district.

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### D. Application procedure for growth permits.

- (1) A growth permit application must be completed and signed by a record owner of the lot for which the growth permit is sought, or their authorized representative, on a growth permit application form provided by the Code Enforcement Officer. The growth permit application shall be accompanied by an application fee, commensurate with the number of growth permits applied for in the application, in an amount to be set by the Town Council and proof of the applicant's right, title, or interest in the subject property.
- (2) The growth permit application shall be submitted to the Code Enforcement Officer either by mail or in hand during normal business hours at the Town office. The Code Enforcement Officer shall endorse each application with the date and time of receipt. In the event two or more growth permit applications are received simultaneously, the Code Enforcement Officer shall determine their order by random selection.
- (3) The Code Enforcement Officer shall review growth permit applications for completeness and accuracy in the order in which they are received. If an application is incomplete, the Code Enforcement Officer shall notify the applicant of the additional information or material needed to complete the application and shall resume review of the application only when such additional information or materials are provided. Once the Code Enforcement Officer determines that an application is complete, they shall approve the application as complete, endorsing the date and time of such approval on the application.

### E. Issuance procedure for growth permits from the annual allocation.

- (1) Growth permits shall be issued from the annual allocation in the order in which a complete application is submitted until all such growth permits have been issued. Unused growth permits at the end of the calendar year shall not carry over to the following calendar year.
- (2) At the end of each calendar year, if the number of approved applications for growth permits exceeds the number of permits available for issuance from the annual allocation and Code Enforcement Officer's reserve pool, such approved applications shall remain pending into the next calendar year and shall retain their ranking according to the order in which they were approved as complete.

### F. Ripeness of application; conversion of growth permit into building permit; expiration

- (1) Growth permits for dwelling units to be located in a single-family or two-family dwelling structure, not located within a proposed subdivision, shall be applied for in conjunction with the submittal of an application for a building permit for the dwelling unit in question, and shall expire on the same date as said building permit.
- (2) Growth permits for dwelling units to be located in a multifamily dwelling structure that is required to receive site plan approval (but not subdivision approval), consistent with § 120-802(A)(6) of Chapter 120, Land Use, may be applied for after the project receives final site plan approval from the Planning Board pursuant to Article 8 of Chapter 120, Land Use, and shall be replaced by a building permit for construction, placement or creation of such structure on the specific lot for which the growth permit was issued, no later than two years from the date of issuance. A growth permit which is not replaced by a building permit within such two-year period shall expire, except that the Code Enforcement Officer may approve two extensions for periods of one year each, if a request for the extension is made prior to the expiration of the original one-year period, or extension thereof.
- (3) Growth permits for dwelling units to be located in a proposed subdivision, may be applied for after the project receives preliminary subdivision approval from the Planning Board pursuant to Article 9 of Chapter 120, Land Use, and shall be replaced by a building permit for construction, placement or creation of such structure(s) on the specific lot for which the growth permit was issued, no later than two years from the date of issuance. A growth permit which is not replaced by a building permit

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within such two-year period shall expire, except that the Code Enforcement Officer may approve two extensions for periods of one year each, if a request for the extension is made prior to the expiration of the original one-year period, or extension thereof.

### G. Establishment of the Code Enforcement Officer's reserve pool of growth permits.

- (1) A reserve pool of growth permits administered by the Code Enforcement Officer shall be established as follows:
  - (a) 14 growth permits for dwelling units to be located in single-family dwelling structures; and
  - (b) 6 growth permits for dwelling units to be located in two-family dwelling structures.
  - (c) Growth permits in the above categories shall be available regardless of whether the proposed dwelling structure(s) are located within a subdivision or not.
- (2) In addition to all other application requirements imposed by § 101-7(D), applicants for a growth permit from the Code Enforcement Officer's reserve pool shall submit evidence that the dwelling unit for which the growth permit is sought will be occupied by the owner of the property as their principal residence.
- (3) The Code Enforcement Officer shall issue growth permits from the Code Enforcement Officer's reserve pool in the order in which applications are received and deemed to be complete, provided that sufficient growth permits for the project do not remain within the annual allocation.
- (4) Notwithstanding any provision in this section to the contrary, the provisions of § 101-7(F) of this chapter shall apply to growth permits issued under this section.

### H. Town Council exemptions.

Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter to the contrary, if sufficient growth permits for the one or more multifamily dwelling structures (but not a single-family or two-family dwelling structure) are not available from the annual allocation then upon application from the property owner on a form to be provided by the Town, the Town Council may, by an affirmative vote of 2/3 of its members, exempt one or more of such dwelling units from provisions of this chapter. Such a decision within the Town Council's sole and exclusive discretion, is legislative in nature consistent with Art. II, § 3(I) of the Town Charter, and is not appealable.

### I. Transferability.

Growth permits are issued only for the specific lot identified in the growth permit application. A growth permit may be transferred to a new owner of the lot, provided notice of the transfer of ownership is given, in writing, to the Code Enforcement Officer before the growth permit is replaced by a building permit. Transfer of ownership does not change the date of issuance or the ranking of an issued growth permit.

### § 101-8. Periodic review of provisions.

The Town Council shall conduct a periodic review of this chapter to evaluate whether the rate of residential growth remains consistent with the Town's ability to absorb the growth and shall determine whether the number of growth permits available under this chapter should be adjusted by amendment to this chapter. The Town Council shall conduct a review at least once every three years and shall make all adjustments to the chapter necessary to comply with 30-A M.R.S.A. § 4360, as may be amended or recodified. The Town Council may seek assistance or advice from the Planning Board in connection with such review. This section does not limit the Council's authority to review and/or amend this chapter at any other time.

**§ 101-9. Violations and penalties; enforcement.**

Any person who constructs, creates or places a dwelling unit within the Town of Windham without a growth permit required by this chapter or who owns or occupies a dwelling unit constructed, created or placed within the Town of Windham without a growth permit required by this chapter is in violation of this chapter and is subject to the fines, penalties and remedies, including but not limited to payment of all attorney fees and costs, as provided in 30-A M.R.S.A. § 4452. Each day a violation continues to exist after notice of the violation is issued to the owner and/or violator constitutes a separate violation. This chapter shall be enforced by the Town of Windham Code Enforcement Officer in the manner provided for enforcement of violations of the Zoning Ordinance under § 120-1004 of Chapter 120, Land Use and 30-A M.R.S.A. § 4452.

**§ 101-10. Appeals.**

- A. An applicant for a growth permit who is adversely affected by a decision or action of the Code Enforcement Officer in the administration of this chapter may appeal to the Windham Board of Appeals under the provisions governing administrative appeals in § 120-1105 of Chapter 120, Land Use. Decisions of the Code Enforcement Officer to approve a growth permit application as complete or to issue a growth permit are not appealable.
- B. Actions of the Town Council with respect to this chapter are not appealable.