

TOWN COUNCIL MEMO

DATE: May 20, 2025

TO: Windham Town Council

THROUGH: Barry Tibbetts, Town Manager

FROM: Steve Puleo, Director of Planning

Cc: Bob Burns, Assistant Town Manager
Amanda Lessard, Senior Planner and Project Manager

RE: #25-10 Land Use Ordinance Amendments to Article 3 Definitions, Article 5 Performance Standards, and Table 2 of Appendix B – Controlled Access Streets

Town Council Meeting – May 27, 2025

Overview

In accordance with [§120-107](#), the Planning Board held a public hearing on [April 28, 2025](#), to review proposed amendments to Chapter 120 of the Land Use Ordinance (LUO). These amendments include the designation of Veterans Memorial Drive (Eastern Connector) as a Controlled Access Street. The Board also requested clarification on how access driveways and entrances are measured and asked staff to provide an illustration of the proposed layout.

Background

On [March 25, 2025](#), the Town Council Ordinance Committee unanimously voted to forward the proposed Land Use Ordinance (LUO) amendments to the Planning Board for review. These amendments support the vision outlined in the [21st Century Downtown Master Plan](#) for North Windham and the [Comprehensive Plan](#), which recommend street blocks of approximately 300 to 600 feet to enhance connectivity and promote walkable, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. In alignment with this vision, the Town previously adopted Articles [3](#) and [5](#) in 2013, establishing a performance standard for Controlled Access Streets on Manchester Drive requiring a minimum spacing of 300 feet between curb cuts. More recently, in June 2023, the Town of Windham was awarded a \$25 million RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to fund the “North Windham Moves” project. As part of this initiative, and in collaboration with the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT), it was recommended that Veterans Memorial Drive (the Eastern Connector) be designated as a Controlled Access Street in preparation for its upcoming construction.

Potential Entrance Locations

Figure 1 illustrates the approximate locations of potential entrances along the planned Veterans Memorial Drive (Eastern Connector). In accordance with [§120-522E\(5\)](#), all entrances, driveways, and accessways must be set back at least 50 feet from public street intersections. While there is no specific setback requirement for streets that are not designated as Controlled Access Streets or public streets, [§120-522](#) outlines general standards for curb cuts and driveway openings. These standards emphasize safe access design, adequate sight distances, and adherence to sound construction practices. Additionally, [§120-522D\(3\)](#) requires that driveways be positioned to ensure that vehicles exiting the site have a clear and unobstructed view of oncoming traffic.

Based on these standards, the first potential entrance along Veterans Memorial Drive is located at least 50 feet from the intersection with Route 115. Between Route 115 and Sand Bar Road (a private road), there may be up to five potential entrances. One entrance may be located between Sand Bar Road and the Veterans Center driveway, and another between the Veterans Center driveway and Franklin Drive. This final entrance is intended to serve the future hotel development. These entrance locations are conceptual and subject to further refinement based on detailed engineering design and regulatory review.

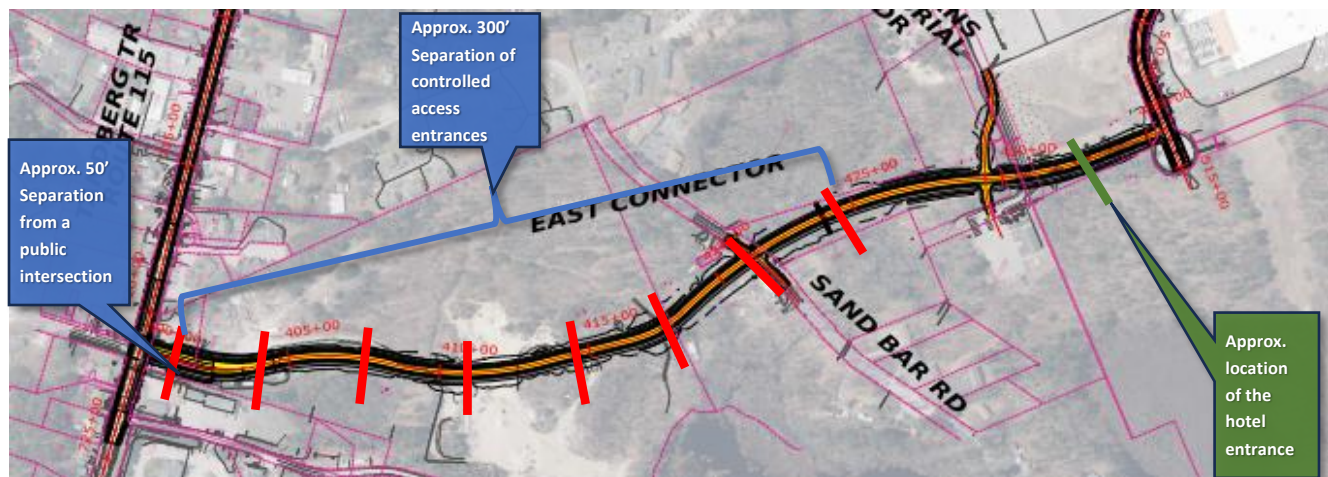


Figure :Approximate locations for driveways, entrances, intersections on the Veterans Memorial Drive as a Controlled Access Street

Summary of the Proposed Chapter 120 Land Use Ordinance Amendments

Article 3 Definition

STREET CLASSIFICATION

C. CONTROLLED ACCESS STREET to add Veterans Memorial Drive to list of roadways as controlled access street.

Article 5 Performance Standards

§ 120-521. Controlled access street. Add Veteran's Memorial Drive (the Eastern Connector) to subsection A.

§ 120-522. Curb cuts and driveway openings. Strike “of Article 9, Subdivision Review” and add “in Appendix B and a...[driveway] entrance” in subsection E(3) Geometry (see Staff comments).

Table 2 in Appendix B: ***Strike “an internal subdivision access” and add “a driveways and entrances”.

Staff Comments:

The current LUO language in §120-522E(3) and Table 2 in Appendix B references “internal subdivision access,” which should be revised to apply to all driveways and entrances. This change aligns with MDOT’s Chapter 299: Highway Driveway and Entrance Rules, which measure spacing from the edge of one access point (excluding radii) to the next. Clarifying this language ensures consistency with both local and state access management standards.

Zoning Amendment Process

There are no specific standards in the Town ordinance by which to judge the proposed zoning change, but State statute requires all proposed zoning to be consistent with the goals and objectives of the [Comprehensive Plan](#).

Planning Board Review and Recommendation

No members of the public spoke for or against the proposed amendments during the Planning Board's public hearing held on April 28, 2025. The Board reviewed and discussed the proposed changes to the Land Use Ordinance (LUO) and expressed general support for the amendments. Board members emphasized the importance of clearly identifying entrance locations along the future Veterans Memorial Drive to ensure consistent and coordinated development in line with the goals of the ordinance.

However, the Board raised several concerns. They noted that the proposed amendments may not have fully accounted for the locations of existing driveways or intersecting streets, and it was unclear how entrances would align across the new road. The Board recommended that the LUO include provisions requiring developments to connect access roads to adjacent properties, encouraging shared access points and minimizing the number of individual curb cuts. Additionally, the Board suggested that the Town Council should be responsible for determining the final locations of curb cuts to ensure safe and efficient traffic flow. The Town Attorney has review the amendments for legal consistency.

A motion to recommend approval of the proposed amendments to Chapter 120 Land Use of Article 3 (Definitions), Article 5 (Performance Standards), and Table 2 in Appendix B, designating Veterans Memorial Drive as a Controlled Access Street.

The motion was made by Evert Krikken, seconded by Anne Daigle, and approved by a 4-0 vote (with Etheridge, Brown, and Yost absent), with the recommendation including the Board's comments