

PLANNING BOARD MEMO

DATE: June 30, 2026

TO: Windham Planning Board
FROM: Steve Puleo, Planning Director
Cc: Amanda Lessard, Assistant Town Manager
Natalie Thomsen, Town Planner

RE: #26-13 Chapter 120 Land Use Ordinance Amendments Articles 4 and 9 to update Conservation Subdivision and Zoning Standards

Planning Board Meeting of July 13, 2026

Overview

The amendment updates the Conservation Subdivision standards in [§120-911K](#). The changes remove single-family-only limitations, clarify conservation area and buffer requirements, revise open space calculations, and allow limited alteration of natural resources where the conservation purpose of the subdivision is maintained. The amendment also updates [Article 4](#) by correcting prior density omissions and requiring conservation subdivisions for larger parcels in the Farm (F) and Farm Residential (FR) Districts.

Policy Purpose

The amendment is intended to preserve rural character, agricultural lands, natural resources, wildlife habitat, and connected open space while accommodating residential growth. The proposed standards direct development to the most suitable portions of a site, clarify subdivision design and open space requirements, and provide a more predictable review process for applicants and the Planning Board.

Summary of the Proposed Chapter 120 Land Use Ordinance Changes

Conservation Subdivisions

Article 4 District Standards

- [§120-406E\(2\)](#). Corrects prior density omissions in the Farm (F) District Country Subdivision standards Farm (F) District Country subdivision net density standard.
- [§120-406F\(2\)](#). Requires conservation subdivision design for subdivisions on parcels greater than 8 acres in the Farm District.
- [§120-407E\(2\)](#). Corrects prior density omissions in the Farm Residential (FR) District Country subdivision net density standard.
- [§120-407F\(3\)](#). Requires conservation subdivision design for subdivisions on parcels greater than 5 acres in the Farm Residential District.

Article 9 Subdivision Review

- [§120-911K](#). Conservation Subdivisions.

- Removes references to single-family subdivisions as two-family dwelling are now permitted in all zoning districts.
- Clarifies the process of including priority and secondary conservation areas in the proposed open space.
- Specifies a buffer yard meeting the standards of [§120-511](#) along the subdivision adjacent to streets and the exterior perimeter of the subdivision.
- Allows for alteration of natural resources. for the construction of certain improvements where the Board makes certain findings.
- Changes the minimum amount of open space required by eliminating road rights-of-way from the calculation and basing the amount in part on the zoning district.
- Clarifies the size and function of wetlands identified as primary and secondary conservation areas.

Zoning Amendment Process

There are no specific standards in the Town ordinance by which to judge the proposed text amendment; however, State statute requires that ordinance amendments be consistent with the goals and policies of the [Comprehensive Plan](#).

The amendment process is governed by [§120-107](#) of the Land Use Ordinance. In accordance with this process, the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on July 27, 2026, and following deliberation may vote to forward a recommendation to the Town Council. The Town Council may schedule to act on the proposed amendments at the August 11, 2026 meeting.

MOTION:

To [**recommend / recommend with comments / not recommend**] approval of the proposed amendments to Chapter 120, Articles [4](#) and [9](#), updating Conservation Subdivision standards, correcting density requirements in the Farm and Farm Residential Districts, and revising open space, conservation area, and subdivision design requirements under [§120-911K](#).