

# Memorandum

**To:** Members, Planning and Zoning Commission  
**From:** Amanda Trianovich, Deputy Planning and Zoning Director  
**Date:** 8/21/2018, revised 12/26/25  
**Re:** §22, Restricted office-Retail District (RORD) History

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**10/2/1975** The Planning and Zoning Commission adopted **Text Amendment #84-A** and a **Map Amendment #84-B** at their 10/2/1975 meeting to provide language under §31 and to designate the location of a Restricted Office-Retail District (RORD) which “generally extending along both sides of West State Street from Wilton Road to just west of Burr Rd. along the south side of Cross Street from West State St. to Riverside Ave., and along the west side of Riverside Ave., from Cross St. to just north of Lincoln St.”.

Allowable uses at this time included up to Four-Family Residential, Office, Medical, and Retail/Service. Prohibited uses included Restaurants, Cafes, Taverns, Gas Stations, Automobile Service Stations, any automobile sales, hotels and motels, veterinary hospitals, and various indoor recreation facilities. The RORD zoning standards in 1975 permitted small scale development in comparison to the Business District in effect at the time. A Building Area standard was established for new buildings in the RORD requiring no one building shall have more than 2,500 SF of building footprint. A Floor Area maximum standard was also adopted that limited expansion to existing buildings.

The Commission found that:

1. *“Most of the existing uses in this West State St. area are offices and residences; and*
2. *Most of the buildings in this West State St. area are small 2-3 story frame structures; and*
3. *The proposed Zoning Amendment No. 84 will help preserve the existing character of and historical structures in the West State Street area; and*
4. *The proposed Zoning Amendment No. 84 is in conformance with the 1975 Updated Town Plan of Development”.*

The Purpose for the RORD listed in the adopted regulation stated:

*“The purpose of the RORD is to allow for the limited use of land and existing buildings for offices, retail stores, multiple family dwellings and combinations thereof. These provisions are designed to create a zone classification which would afford a reasonable and desirable combination of compatible uses along the Post Road and Riverside Avenue adjacent to and in scale with established residential areas. Frame residential structures on small lots with topographic limitations in the proximity of commercial areas tend to become economically depressed as the demand for fire resistant buildings on larger and more accessible sites increases. The character of such areas is more residential in architectural design, building scale and physical features of the land. These provisions are not intended to lead to the wholesale redevelopment of those areas to new commercial uses. Consequently, a mixed use type of zone is required to conserve the value of such property and to recognize the intensity of uses while preserving the character of such areas*

*from the standpoint of compatible land uses, architectural design, building scale and physical appearance. The RORD provides for such mixed-use."*

**Properties located in the Restricted Office – Retail District (Effective 10/10/1975)**

<b>Historic Assessor ID#</b>	<b>Historic Assessor ID# (parcels) (pt. = partial)</b>	<b>Zone prior to RORD</b>
5301	115A, pt. 102, 104, 104, pt. 105, 106, pt. 107, pt. 108, pt. 109, pt. 143, 120, 121, pt. 122, pt. 123, 123A, 124, 125, 126, 127, 137, 138, 139,140, 141, 142.	Business
5302	105, 106, pt. 107, pt. 108, 139.	Business
5301	pt. 122, pt. 123,	Residence A
5302	pt. 108, pt. 107	Residence A
5301	pt. 105, pt. 106, pt. 107, pt. 108, pt. 109, pt. 143.	Residence AA

**04/13/1978** At a public hearing on April 13, 1978, listed under Old Business, the Commission discussed the Adoption of "Proposed Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations". It appears as if there was a major "overhaul" of the regulations at this time. The Commission discussed **re-organizing and re-numbering** the zoning regulations. There was mention of the RTM requesting copies of the changes, in particular they requested changes to the Restricted Office-Retail District (RORD). The result was the Restricted Office-Retail District (RORD) was now placed in §22 of the Zoning Regulations. The Commission adopted the following resolution when they adopted the "Revised Zoning Regulations", which became effective on May 26, 1978:

*"Whereas this Commission has, with the assistance of its consultants, worked for the past 15 months to revise the Zoning Regulations; and*

*Whereas this Commission has considered recent amendments to the Zoning Regulations the General Statutes of Connecticut; and*

*Whereas this Commission finds it desirable and necessary to clarify certain ambiguities in the Westport Zoning Regulations; and*

*Whereas this Commission finds it desirable to incorporate established legal opinions into the Westport Zoning Regulations where applicable; and*

*Whereas this Commission this Commission finds it desirable and necessary to resolve other areas of questionable interpretation of the Westport Zoning Regulations; and*

*Whereas this Commission finds it desirable and necessary to add needed definitions to the Westport Zoning Regulations; and*

*Whereas this Commission finds it desirable to strengthen standards where necessary; and*

*Whereas this Commission finds it necessary, pursuant to the Conn. General Statutes, to provide uniformity for each class or kind of buildings, structures or use of land*

*throughout each district and therefore, desirable to revise the RORD regulations; accordingly, and*

*Whereas this Commission finds it desirable and necessary to restrict the retail uses and reduce the height of buildings in the Design Development District regulations; and*

*Whereas this Commission finds it desirable and necessary to clarify and standardize the procedures and application requirements; and*

*Whereas this Commissions finds it desirable and necessary to reorganize the format of the Westport zoning Regulations; and*

*Whereas the Commission finds it desirable and necessary to standard the size and layout of the Westport Zoning Regulations for future reproduction and amendment; and*

*Whereas this Whereas this Commission held public hearings on Nov. 10, 14, 15, 1977 to consider Proposed Zoning Regulations dated Oct. 17, 1977; and*

*Whereas this commission subsequently considered public comments made at those Public hearings and comments made by the Legal Advisory committee and further revised said proposed Regulations; and*

*Whereas this Commission held another Public Hearing on March 30, 1978 to Proposed Zoning Regulations dated Oct. 17, 1977, rev. February 1978; and*

*Whereas this Commission has further considered additional public comments, has consulted with the Town Attorney, and has made subsequent minor revisions to the said Proposed Zoning Regulations."*

**04/01/1978**      **Map Amendment #99** to place 30 Saugatuck Avenue in the RORD zone.

Address at time of Map Amend #221	Historic Assessor ID#	Zone prior to RORD
30 Saugatuck Avenue		Res B

**10/25/1979**      The Planning and Zoning Commission adopted **Map Amendment #221** to change a specific parcel from Business to RORD. The rationale for this amendment listed in the resolution included to reduce the intensity of commercial development, to preserve an existing 2-story frame residential structure, and to allow for the modest expansion of multi-family dwelling units in Westport.

Address at time of Map Amend #221	Historic Assessor ID#	Zone prior to RORD
170 Post Road West	5302 134	Business

**11/5/1981**      The RORD #1 and #2 districts and corresponding regulations were created and adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission pursuant to **Text Amendment #251-A**. The Commission simultaneously rezoned various properties from RORD to RORD #1 and RORD #2 pursuant to **Map Amendment #251-B**. The rezoning expanded the RORD

to include properties located along Riverside Avenue from Treadwell Avenue to Bridge Street. Reasons listed for the regulation changes included to reduce commercial development, to reduce traffic impact, and to help to retain existing dwelling units. The regulations restricted Restaurants and other food service establishments, commercial marinas and docks to the RORD #2 only. Retail/Service and Office uses were allowed with Special Permit approval in both the RORD #1 and #2. A maximum FAR of .5 was allowed in the RORD#1 and a maximum FAR of .35 was allowed in the RORD#2.

**12/16/1982 Text Amendment #283** was approved to amend the language of the RORD #2 and to delete the mixed use requirements in this zone, thus eliminating the one dwelling unit per lot mandatory requirement adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission as Text Amendment #251A.

The Commission took this action for the following reasons:

1. *"The Planning & Zoning Commission honored its agreement to decide Amendment #283 and #284 as a package.*
2. *The one-unit mandatory requirement has not achieved the purpose of providing new dwelling units.*
3. *It will slightly decrease the impact on sewers.*
4. *The mandatory residential requirement is rigid and inflexible since it limits residential development of the principal buildings only."*

**12/16/1982 Map Amendment #284** was approved to amend the addition of properties to the RORD#2 zone from the Business Center District (BCD). This amendment included certain properties located along the east side of Saugatuck Avenue from I-95 to Franklin street, along the west side of Franklin Street from I-95 to Saugatuck Avenue and along the east side of Franklin Street from I-95 to Ketchum Street.

The Commission took this action for the following reasons:

1. *"The Planning & Zoning Commission honored its agreement to decide Amendment #283 and #284 as a 'package'.*
2. *The overall impact on sewage and traffic is lessened.*
3. *The RTM has indicated that it wants this area to remain zoned commercial in response to and at the insistence of the property owners".*

**12/16/1982 Text Amendment #285-A** (Application #82-66-A) was approved to amend §22 (Restricted Office-Retail District #1 and #2) by creating a **Restricted Office-Retail District #3** (RORD3) zone, which would allow office and residential uses only, and would require that at least 30% of the total building floor area on the lot be devoted to residential dwelling units. Additional density requirements were added to the multi-family standards in the RORD #3 to encourage this use Indoor recreational facilities remained a prohibited use for all RORD properties. The Sylvan Tennis Club located at 26 Sylvan Road South pre-dated the

prohibition on Indoor Recreational Facilities. At a public hearing held on 12/16/82, for the Text Amendment for the RORD#3 zone.

The Commission found that:

1. *"It reduces the building height and building coverage.*
2. *It reduces the traffic impact.*
3. *It provides for mixed (commercial/residential) development.*
4. *It provides for small, potential less expensive residential units.*
5. *Retail uses are excluded from RORD #3.*
6. *It creates an effective commercial FAR of .25 i.e. 70% of the .35 FAR.*
7. *It allows 100% residential development."*

At a public hearing held on 12/16/82, upon unanimously (6-0), adopting **Text Amendment #285-A** the Commission took this action for the following reasons:

1. *"The 30% mandatory residential requirement guarantees the retention of some housing units.*
2. *The residential units may be small and less expensive.*
3. *It more nearly conforms to the Town Plan of Development Housing Policy.*
4. *It will help lessen congestion in the streets.*
5. *It will help prevent overcrowding of the land".*

#### **Properties located in the Restricted Office – Retail District #3 (Effective 1/3/1983)**

<b>Address at time of Map Amend #285B</b>	<b>Historic Assessor ID#</b>	<b>Current Address</b>	<b>Current Assessor ID#</b>	<b>Zone prior to ROR</b>
222-228 Riverside Avenue	5302 091	220 Riverside Avenue	C0803 1000	Bus. 1 & Res. A
25 Sylvan Road S	5302 120	25 Sylvan Road S.	C0803 0000	Bus. 1 & Res. A
240 Riverside Avenue	5302 089-A	240 Riverside Avenue	C0800 5000	Bus. 1
26 Sylvan Road S	5302 089-1	18 Sylvan Road S	C0800 6000	Bus. 1
18 Sylvan Road S	5302 090	18 Sylvan Road S	C0800 7000	Bus. 1
10 Sylvan Lane	5302 090-A	10 Sylvan Lane	C0800 8000	Bus. 1
210 Riverside Avenue	5302 089	236 Riverside Avenue	C0800 4000	Bus. 1
260 Riverside Avenue	5302 088-A 5302 088	260 Riverside Avenue & 1 Sylvan Lane	C0800 2000 C0800 3000	Bus. 1 & Res. AA
266 Riverside Avenue	5302 0087	274 Riverside Avenue	C0800 1000	Bus. 1

++ *The southern portion of 274 Riverside Avenue (former assessor ID 5302 0087) is currently developed with a commercial office building and the northern portion of 274 Riverside Avenue (former assessor ID 5302 0087) is developed with a ground level parking lot, and both portions are currently shown as being entirely in the GBD zone. The property has been consistently designated in zoning permits as lying in a split zone (GBD/RORD3) until around 2011 when some of the permit designated CGB can be found in the file. The most current survey in the file is dated 11/1/2008, which shows the property as a split zone (GBD/RORD3). A search of the P & Z records does not reveal that this portion of the lot was ever re-zoned. Staff's assessment is that the northern portion of the property at 274 Riverside Avenue remains in the RORD3 zone.*

- 12/19/1983**    **Text Amendment #303** which allowed for new multifamily dwelling in six (6) commercial zones including the RORD zone.
- 1/3/1984**      **Map Amendment #305** to change properties on Main Street, Elm Street, Church Lane and Myrtle Avenue from the BCD zone to the RORD#2 zone.
- 2/12/1990**    **Text Amendment #390** to modify the allowed signs in the RORD zone.
- 6/1/1992**      **Text Amendment #415** Increases the setbacks for buildings and structures in commercial zones from residential boundary lines.
- 5/21/1993**    **Text Amendment #423** Clarifies when parking is required and not required for outdoor eating areas.
- 6/24/1994**    **Text Amendment #434** Adds Fast Food restaurants to Prohibited uses within the RORD.
- 6/13/1996**    **Text Amendment #451** included a group of proposed amendments that were *“technical in nature, in that they correct minor discrepancies in the regulations”*. One of the modifications included clarification that medical use is not permitted in the RORD #1, #2 and #3 zones. The language excluded “medical offices and clinics, and other similar uses including chiropractors, physical therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists and naturopaths” from the RORD. The minutes from meeting state “the previous Commission implied the RORD change but didn’t state it clearly. The change was excluding medical use.” A letter dated 2/10/96 from Pat Coplen, previous Planning and Zoning Commission Chairwoman, stated that the original intent of the RORD regulation was not to allow medical offices due to traffic concerns. The new language became effective July 1, 1996.
- 6/1/2000**      **Text Amendment #485** Added Commercial Wireless telecommunication service facilities as a Special Permit use, in conformance with §32-16.
- 9/5/2002**      **Text Amendment #511** Extends time of use by 1 month each year for outdoor patios in RORD.
- 9/15/2004**    **Text Amendment #528** Clarifies allowable height for buildings and other structures.
- 3/1/2005**      **Text Amendment #539** Changes section to list Healthcare Professional as a use excluded from the RORD.

- 2/21/2006** The Planning and Zoning Commission adopted **Text Amendment #556** (#06-002) to allow Private Occupational Schools to locate in non-residential districts, including §22, RORD #1, #2 and #3. The amendment was submitted by Attorney Lawrence Weisman in an effort to help legalize an expansion of the Connecticut Center for Massage Therapy who had previously obtained approval to located at 25 Sylvan Road South, in the RORD #3, as a "School," but became a pre-existing non-conforming use when the "School" definition was modified by the Commission to require a curriculum comparable to that of a public school, nursery school, kindergarten or religious school.
- 9/1/2006** **Text Amendment #560** Deletes the word financial.
- 6/14/2010** **Text Amendment #610** To modify Outdoor Eating Areas to Accessory Uses in RBD to an annual Zoning Permit.
- 6/14/10** **Text Amendment #611** To replace references to Customary Home Occupations with Home Occupations, Level 1 & Level 2 when describing prohibited accessory uses in RORD1, 2, & 3.
- 7/8/2010** The Planning and Zoning Commission sponsored **Text Amendment #613** (#10-014) to make changes throughout the regulations, included modifying the regulations to permit Restaurants, Cafes, and Taverns, fast food restaurants, indoor theaters & assembly halls and indoor & outdoor commercial recreational facilities would be eliminated from the list of prohibited uses in the RORD #1, #2, and #3. These changes would allow of the all of the above uses in all RORD zones by Special Permit. The reason offered for the amendment was to address a need to increase opportunities and remove barriers for new restaurants to locate throughout Westport.
- 12/3/2010** **Text Amendment #618** To add Inclusionary Two-family & Multi-Family Dwelling Units to allowable Special Permit uses and to modify Building Area and FAR.
- 4/8/2011** **Text Amendment #628** To delete Fast Food Restaurant and give Cafes and Taverns the same Outdoor Eating Area privileges as Restaurants and Retail Food Establishments.
- 7/25/2013** **Text Amendment #661** (#13-002) was approved to allow Professional Healthcare Offices in Restricted Office-Retail Districts (RORD) but to exclude Medical Offices. Text Amendment #539, effective 3/1/05, added a definition of Professional Healthcare and modified the regulations to add this use to zoning districts that already allow medical. A new lower parking standard was also added to the regulations. Professional healthcare had previously specifically been excluded from the Restricted Office-Retail Districts (RORD). In 2013, there are 54 properties in RORD #1, 40 properties in RORD #2 and 30 properties in RORD #3.

**9/3/2015** The Planning and Zoning Commission adopted **Text Amendment #699** (#15-038) to modify the RORD #3 to allow Healthcare Professionals in this zone. This amendment was submitted by Barr Associates in an effort to legalize two tenants who had occupied space at 25 Sylvan Road South. One of these tenants was Peak Fitness whom the Commission determined could qualify as a Healthcare Professional due to the proprietor's education and training as a physiologist.

At this point in time, the only distinctions between the RORD #1, 2, and 3 with respect to allowable uses include:

1. The allowance for commercial marinas and docks to locate in the RORD #2 only; and
2. The prohibition on Retail/Service uses from locating in the RORD #3.

**9/1/2016** **Text Amendment #717** (Resolution 16-018) was approved to amend the RORD #3 zone as submitted by Barr Associates proposes to allow Retail/Service use limited to fitness centers and exercise facilities, subject to Special Permit approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission, with the following limitations:

*"The facility shall not exceed 2,500 square feet of floor area;  
The main exercise area in the facility shall not exceed 1,000 feet of floor area;  
There shall be no more than two (2) such facilities within this zone".*

The Planning and Zoning Commission approved the Text Amendment with an effective date of October 9, 2016, and added another standard:

*"...restricting the number of clients to twenty (20) that may be present at any one time during peak weekday periods when parking may be limited in an effort to ensure adequate parking will be available".*

**5/6/2017** **Text Amendment #727** Add new section on front setbacks for properties within the Restricted Office Retail District/Village District Overlay Zone. Add new section on Site Plan Review for properties within the Restricted Office Retail District/Village District Overlay Zone.

**9/15/2017** **Text Amendment #737** Modified front lot-line requirements, to restore the thirty-foot (30') front setback requirement in the Restricted Office Retail District.

**11/25/2018** **Text Amendment #752** Modify the current standards for fitness centers and/or exercise facilities in the RORD#3 zone.

**3/27/2022** **Text Amendment #813** To remove references to a district's "character".

**8/22/2025** **Text Amendment #851** Exempt existing non-conforming uses from the required creation of residential dwelling units. Remove RORD #3 from maximum expansion regulation and apply it only to RORD #1 and #2.

**TBD**      **Text Amendment #857** Text Amendment #857 proposes amending the Zoning Regulations to modify §22, Restricted Office-Retail District #1, to increase the allowed building area from 2,500 square feet to 50% of the existing footprint when the lot is at least one acre in size, the building is listed on the Historic Resources Inventory, and any additions are designed as an integral part of the existing structure—both internally and externally.

**12/26/2025**      **Current properties in the RORD#1 Zone.**

<b>Current Assessor #</b>	<b>Historic Assessor ID #</b>	<b>Street number</b>	<b>Street Address</b>
C09006000	53010143	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 15, 17	LUDLOW RD
C09005000		19	LUDLOW RD
C09061000	53010109	90	POST RD W
C09062000	53010108	88	POST RD W
C09063000	53010106/107	56 to 64	POST RD W
C09064000	53010105	50	POST RD W
C09065000	53,010,103,104	38	POST RD W
C09066000	53010115	35	POST RD W
C09068000	53010123-A	24	CROSS ST
C09069000	53010123-2	20	CROSS ST
C09070000	53010122	16	CROSS ST
C09071000	53010121	8	CROSS ST
C09072000	53010120-A-2	57	POST RD W
C09073000	53010139	79	POST RD W
C09074000	53010138	85	POST RD W
C09005001		130	POST RD W
C09002000		170	POST RD W
C09075000	53010137	1	LINCOLN ST
C09087000	53020105	8	LINCOLN ST
C09088000	53020106	2	LINCOLN ST
C09089000	53020107	1	BURR RD
C09090000	53020108	111	POST RD W
C09098000	53010127	62	RIVERSIDE AVE
C09099000	53010126	56 to 58	RIVERSIDE AVE
C09100000	53010125	50	RIVERSIDE AVE
C09101000	53010124	46	RIVERSIDE AVE
C09108000	53010115-A	2	RIVERSIDE AVE

**12/26/2025**      **Current properties in the RORD#2 Zone.**

<b>Current Assessor #</b>	<b>Historic Assessor ID #</b>	<b>Street number</b>	<b>Street Address</b>
B06114000	53030279-X	107	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06115000	53030278-X	111	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06039000	53030189	521	RIVERSIDE AVE
B06046000	53030276	500	RIVERSIDE AVE

B06047000	53030273	490	RIVERSIDE AVE
B06048000	53030274	484	RIVERSIDE AVE
B06049000	53030275	472	RIVERSIDE AVE
B06036000		471	RIVERSIDE AVE
B06037000		481	RIVERSIDE AVE
B06038000		485	RIVERSIDE AVE
B06045000		512	RIVERSIDE AVE
B06050000	53030240	3	TREADWELL AVE
B06076000	53030244	38	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06077000	53,030,242,243	20	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06091000	53040218	31	FRANKLIN ST
B06092000	53040217	35	FRANKLIN ST
B06093000	53040216	37	FRANKLIN ST
B06098000	53030277-X	48	FRANKLIN ST
B06099000	53030276 -X	44	FRANKLIN ST
B06100000	53,030,264,265	38	FRANKLIN ST
B06101000	53030263	34	FRANKLIN ST
B06102000	53030262	30	FRANKLIN ST
B06103000	53030261	26	FRANKLIN ST
B06104000	53030258	77	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06105000	53030259	10	FRANKLIN ST
B06106000	53030260	67	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06107000	53030257	83	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06108000	53030256	87	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06109000	53030255	91	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06110000	53030254	95	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06111000	53030253	99	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06112000	53030280-A	103	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06113000	53030280-B	105	SAUGATUCK AVE
B06078000		10	SAUGATUCK AVE
C06057000	53030188	535	RIVERSIDE AVE
C06058000	53030187	1	BRIDGE ST
C09140000	5301015,16,17	59	POST RD E
C10145000	5301011	36	ELM ST
C10156000	53181159	36	CHURCH LN
D09137000	53181154	199	POST RD E
D10001000	53181155,155A	15	MYRTLE AVE
D10002000	53181156	66	CHURCH LN
D10003000	53181157	60	CHURCH LN
D10092000	53181183A	8	MYRTLE AVE

**12/26/2025 Current properties in the RORD#3 Zone.**

<b>Current Assessor #</b>	<b>Historic Assessor ID #</b>	<b>Street number</b>	<b>Street Address</b>
C08031000	5302091	222	RIVERSIDE AVE

C08002000	5302088-A	260	RIVERSIDE AVE
C08003000	5302088	1, 3, 5	SYLVAN LN
C08004000	5302089	236	RIVERSIDE AVE
C08005000	5302089A	240	RIVERSIDE AVE
C08006000	5302089-1	26	SYLVAN RD S
C08007000	5302090	18	SYLVAN RD S
C08008000	5302090-A	10	SYLVAN LN
C08030000	53020120	25	SYLVAN RD S
C08031000	5302091	220	RIVERSIDE AVE