



**Town of Westport
Planning and Zoning Commission**

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Planning and Zoning Commission
FROM: Michelle Perillie, Planning and Zoning Director
DATE: March 12, 2026
SUBJECT: **Pre-Application Meeting, HB 8002**

Proposal

Rick Redniss, Redniss and Mead, submitted a [Pre-Application Meeting Request](#) to receive feedback on how HB 8002 will impact development in Westport. Mr. Redniss states:

“As discussed, please add this pre-app request on the 3/16 PZC agenda to discuss some of the ways for Westport to positively respond to the requirements of 8002 prior to 7/1/2026. We have several sites that will help expand the discussion and guide the process that works best.”

Analysis

The following is a short analysis of Connecticut [Public Act 25-1 \(aka HB 8002\)](#), enacted during the November 2025 Special Session as “*An Act Concerning Housing Growth.*” The bill was crafted and enacted after months of negotiation, following the veto of a previous housing bill (H.B. 5002) earlier this year.

This law primarily influences municipal zoning pushing towns to plan for and accommodate more housing—especially multifamily and mixed-use development.

Summary Review (Sec 8-2r, 15, 17 and 41)

Under the bill, Transit Community Middle Housing developments and Mixed-Use Developments are permitted subject to “summary review” (no public hearing) on any lots zoned for commercial or mixed-use. Municipalities can opt-in to allow transit community middle housing by summary review on any residentially zoned lot as well.

By July 1, 2026, municipalities must allow a residential development between 2 - 9 units (Transit Community Middle Housing Development or Mixed-Use Development) can be developed with residential use on any lot zoned commercial or mixed use by Summary Review.

- **Transit Community Middle Housing Development** is a residential building containing not less than 2 but not more than 9 units (townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, perfect sixes and cottage clusters). No relationship to transit.
- **Mixed Use Development** is a development containing both residential and nonresidential uses in any single building. (CGS 8-1a(b)(7))

- **Summary review means** w/o a public hearing, variance or special permit or some other discretionary zoning action be taken other than a determination that a site plan is in conformance with zoning regulations and that public health and safety will not be substantially impacted. Consideration can be given to setbacks, lot size and building frontage.

Parking Provisions

By July 1, 2026, municipal zoning regulations shall be modified so that the minimum number of off-street parking for residential developments does not exceed 1 space for studios and 1-bedrooms and 2 spaces for 2-bedrooms or larger.

The law prohibits municipalities from denying an application solely for failing to meet minimum parking demands except:

- Larger developments over 16 units; or
- If located in a Conservation and Traffic Mitigations District (CTMD) (cannot exceed 8% of town).

For developments under 16 units, no parking is required except if in a CTMD.

Requirements if development is in a CTMD include permitting the applicant to propose an alternative number of spaces via a Parking Needs Assessment (paid for by the applicant). In order to reject a lower parking needs assessment figure, the Commission would need to substantiate a finding that a lack of parking will have a “specific adverse impact” on public health and safety which cannot be mitigated through approval conditions that have no substantial impact on the viability of such development

For developments over 16 units, the regulations cannot require more than 1 space for studios and 1 bedrooms and 2 spaces for 2 bedrooms or greater OR require a Parking Needs Assessment. The Westport zoning regulations now require 1.75 spaces for studios and 1 bedrooms, 2.25 spaces for 2 bedroom unit and 2.5 spaces for 3 bedrooms or greater.

The P&ZC must approve the **lesser** of the parking space cap or Parking Needs Assessment. Market incentives to provide parking is strong because most households have a car and we do not have a robust transit system.

HUE Points (PA25-1Sec 41)

Section 41 modifies CGS § 8-30g to establish new pathways for municipalities to be awarded additional housing unit-equivalent (HUE) points. *Transit Community Middle Housing Developments* (§11, §16, §17), as defined on Page 1, subject only to Summary Review will receive one-quarter housing unit equivalent point for each unit of middle housing for which a CO has been issued by the Municipality.

Housing Growth Plan

H.B. 8002 replaces the current statutory requirement for each town to develop an affordable housing plan and empowers regional government—utilizing Connecticut’s Council of Government (COG) structure—to develop regional housing growth plans (regional HGP).

The regional HGP's are required to identify "housing growth policies," which may include any of the following:

- zoning regulation amendments;
- fee waivers;
- tax fixing agreements;
- tax abatements;
- expedited housing development approval processes;
- municipal or regional actions seeking funding for the development of affordable housing units or sewer infrastructure;
- donating municipal land for development; or
- entering into agreements with developers for developments that include affordable housing units.

Local municipalities are then given the opportunity to weigh in and comment on their municipal affordable housing goals; these goals are included as part of the regional affordable housing goals. Municipalities will have the option to either join the regional HGP or create their own municipal HGP subject to detailed requirements set forth in the bill. The WestCOG region is required to submit their plan **by June 1, 2029**.

A municipality that fails to submit a municipal HGP or join in a regional HGP, will be ineligible for a moratorium on not yet commenced affordable housing appeals under Connecticut General Statutes § 8-30g. This ineligibility continues until the municipality submits a municipal HGP or joins a regional HGP. Municipalities must submit annual reports showing their progress toward housing goals.

POCD Goals and Policies

The Plan of Conservation and Development Chapter 10, (*Guide Residential Development*) of the Plan of Conservation and Development includes the following policies and goals:

"As with prior Plans, it is a central goal of this Plan to maintain the single-family residential character and density of Westport's existing neighborhoods. The overall character and ambience of existing neighborhoods is responsible for the recognized quality of life in Westport." Pg. 79

"Maintaining residential character is a fundamental philosophy of the Plan and this has three components:

- *Maintaining the overall residential density of an area (units / acre) within a range that is reflective of the built form of the neighborhood or otherwise appropriate for the location,*
Protecting residential neighborhoods from encroachment by inappropriate uses, and
Managing residential development and redevelopment and other activities on residential properties to ensure they are appropriate for the site and/or given the impacts on neighbors." Pg. 80

“To protect residential neighborhoods from inappropriate uses:

- Residential neighborhoods will continue to be protected from the intrusion of commercial activities.*
- Boundaries between residential neighborhoods and nonresidential zoning districts will remain clear.*
- Transitions from residential neighborhoods to nonresidential zoning districts will be logical and have appropriate buffering, as necessary.*
- Special Permit requests in residential zones will be carefully reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate and suitable for that location.” Pg. 80*

Goals for managing development include:

- “1. Maintain the residential density pattern within a range that is reflective of the built form of the neighborhood or otherwise appropriate for the location.*
- 2. Protect residential neighborhoods from encroachment from inappropriate uses.*
- 3. Manage residential development and redevelopment to ensure that new construction is appropriate in scale and character for its setting. Pg. 83*

“Consider ways of integrating affordable and workforce housing in future projects.” Pg. 85

“The demand for affordable housing in Westport outstrips the supply.” As a result, the Planning and Zoning Commission will continue to seek ways to address the need for ‘below market rate’ housing.” Pg. 87

“Continue to address housing needs in Westport (affordable, aged, special needs, ADA).” Pg. 88

“Seek to address affordable housing in ways that are appropriate for the community rather than dictated by private developers.” Pg. 88

Next Steps

Planning and Zoning staff will bring a draft text amendment to the next Zoning Regulation Revision subcommittee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2026 at 12:00pm.

The Planning and Zoning Commission should provide feedback to the applicant on the proposal so the applicant can make an informed decision whether to proceed and file an application to be scheduled for review at a future public hearing.

If/when an application is filed the Commission will need to consider relevant sections of the Zoning Regulations and State Statutes. The Commission acting in a legislative capacity has broad authority when rendering a decision.

Process Considerations

A Pre-Application Meeting is a non-binding forum allowing an applicant to obtain feedback on a proposal from members of the Planning and Zoning Commission without expending resources associated with filing a formal application. §7-159b of the Connecticut General Statutes is the enabling legislation that allows for a non-binding to exchange ideas. CGS §7-159b states:

“A Pre-Application review and any results or information obtained from it may not be appealed under any provision of the general statutes and shall not be binding on the applicant or any authority, commission, department, agency or other official having jurisdiction to review the proposed project.”

The Pre-Application meeting is NOT a public hearing. Public comments are accepted in writing if received by noon-time on the day of the Commission’s meeting currently scheduled for 3/16/26.