

Town of Greece

2020 Zoning Ordinance and Map

Overview

In coordination with its 2020 Comprehensive Plan update, the Town of Greece is adopting a new Zoning Ordinance and Map which will repeal and replace the existing ordinance (Chapter 211 of Town of Greece Code).

The new Chapter 211 is intended to advance the recommendations of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan and includes new districts and provisions which will allow the community to adapt to changing housing preferences, the retail market, and an evolving industrial sector. The changes also include new definitions, reduced parking requirements, and green energy provisions. This was an opportunity to modify outmoded provisions, clarify ambiguities, and clean up some formatting issues. Generally the new Chapter 211 should be easier to use, more consistent in terms of land use descriptions, and more accommodating to economic growth while protecting the character of existing residential areas.

Summary of changes

- **The following districts have been eliminated:**
 - *Light Industrial (IL)* – This district was limited in geographic area and significantly overlapped in terms of provisions and allowable uses with the Flexible Office Industrial District (FOI). In general, areas that were zoned IL will now be zoned FOI. The FOI district allows many of the uses previously permitted in the IL district, but with more flexibility in design and allowable uses.
 - *Multi-family Residential, Low Density (RML)* – This district is being replaced by the more flexible Planned Residential (RP) district, which allows for a variety of housing types.
 - *Single-family Residential (R1-8, R1-12, R1-18)* – These 3 districts have been eliminated and replaced by the R-1 district described below.
 - *Single-family Residential (R1-S)* – The R1-S district was very limited in geographic area and the uses permitted are also permitted in the new RS district (which permits both single-family and multi-family senior housing). RS is generally used as a floating district so the change does not affect the potential for new single-family senior housing options.
 - *Agricultural Residential (AR)* – This district was enacted in 2003 with the greatest of intentions, however, in practice it did not provide any additional protections or relief to agricultural use and in fact presented additional difficulty to landowners in matters of estate by being overly restrictive on residential use. This does not change the status of agricultural exemptions or any of the other protections afforded to farmers under NYS Agriculture and Markets Law.

- *Lake Ontario Cluster (LOC)* – This district was enacted in 2003 to require cluster subdivisions in certain areas of town in the vicinity of Lake Ontario and the Braddock Bay wetland complex. Since that time, the town adopted a more comprehensive mechanism Cluster Subdivision Regulation (§211-59.1, adopted in 2007). The new regulation provides for cluster subdivisions in any residential district and gives the Planning Board authority to require clustering in the R1-44 zoning district.
- **The following districts have been renamed or adapted:**
 - *Multi-family Residential, High Density (RMH)* – This district has been renamed to Multi-family Residential (RM), and its provisions remain unchanged.
 - *Multi-family Residential, Senior (RMS)* – This district has been renamed to Multi-family Residential (RS), and its provisions remain unchanged.
 - *Professional Office (BP-1 & BP-2)* – These two districts were combined into the new BP district. BP-1 did not permit medical offices and contained design requirements meant to maintain residential character in existing neighborhoods. Most of the areas zoned BP-1 have been transitioned to the new Neighborhood Business (BN) district which has even more robust design requirements geared toward architecture, neighborhood character, and walkability.
 - *Flexible Office Industrial (FOI)* – This innovative district (introduced in 2010) was formerly limited to areas south of the Erie Canal and had provisions specific to that geographic area. The district has now been adapted for use town wide and has replaced all of the previous Light Industrial (IL) designation, and has been introduced in some areas that were previously zoned General Industrial (IG). The FOI district permits greater flexibility in use by office and some service uses, while limiting certain heavy industrial uses. The FOI district includes some design requirements.
 - *Waterfront Development (WD)* – This mixed use waterfront district (also introduced in 2010) was formerly limited to areas south of the Erie Canal and had provisions specific to that geographic area. The district has now been adapted for use in the Lake Ontario waterfront as well.
- **The following new districts have been added:**
 - *Single-family Residential (R-1)* – Replaces several districts with one uniform set of requirements. Intended for undeveloped areas where residential development was already permitted. Lot size is proposed to be 70'-wide by 130'-deep, with 25' front setback, 30' rear setback, and 6' side setback.
 - *Planned Residential (RP)* - The RP district's intent is to maintain the character of existing neighborhoods while providing opportunities for in-fill development that incorporates smaller homes and properties along with townhomes. Development standards will provide for a transition in density along with architectural standard
 - *Neighborhood Business (BN)* – The BN district is intended to encourage small-scale neighborhood commercial nodes at existing commercial intersections in close proximity to residential areas. Design requirements are modelled after our successful Dewey Avenue Mixed Use district and includes architectural standards, pedestrian friendly site design, and a generally denser pattern of

commercial development with smaller individual retail and service uses. More intense retail uses are restricted and second floor apartments are a permitted accessory use.

- *Planned Mixed Use (PMU)* – A floating district that applies design requirements similar to our successful Dewey Avenue Mixed Use district for town wide use.
- *Economic Development & Innovation Overlay (EDIO)* – This overlay prioritizes projects which bring industry and jobs. The EDIO applies to Eastman Business Park, Canal Ponds Business Park, Northampton Landing, and the town’s Central Health Care zoning district.

- **Other changes and related work:**

- The new §211-57 (Solar Energy) is based on NYSERDA’s model solar ordinance.
- Residential lot coverage has been increased from 25% to 33% to provide more efficient use of land, and to accommodate current demand for smaller lot sizes. Lot dimensions and setbacks have been adjusted to accommodate a more compact pattern of development for in-fill areas. The new R-1 zoning district requires lots to be generally the same size as an average lot in the northeast quadrant of town.
- Commercial lot coverage has been increased from 15% to 50% to provide for more efficient use of land, and opportunity for economic growth within the existing commercial zoning footprint. Building and pavement setbacks, parking requirements, storm water management, required buffering and other site features will be the primary limiting factor in commercial site development, much of which gong forward will infill or redevelopment in existing commercial areas.
- Providing for low impact light manufacturing in certain heavily commercial areas as an opportunity for adaptive reuse of existing “big box” retail areas. This use would be subject to a ZBA special use permit and can only occupy 25% of existing floor space in the General Business (BG) district.
- Parking requirements have been cut to reduce impervious area and align with actual need. Business center parking requirements have been greatly simplified to accommodate sharing of spaces and more flexibility in occupancy.
- Adjusted commercial front setback requirements to allow more flexibility in site design and encourage building placement that addresses the street.
- Adjusted tables to reflect new and adapted zoning designations and bulk requirements.
- Relaxed restrictions on live entertainment and background music.
- The town is developing standards for highway corridor redevelopment for certain areas of West Ridge Road and possible other areas of town.

- **Definitions were updated to include:**

- New terminology associated with §211-57 (Solar Energy).
- Terminology associated with signage including LED signs.
- More uniform definitions related to land uses referenced in the code.

- Aligned “Farm” definition with that of NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets.
- **Changes to the Official Zoning Map**
 - Consolidated various single-family districts into 3 (R-1, R1-E, and R1-44).
 - Maintained large lot residential character west of North Greece Road and north of Mill Road.
 - Designated infill residential areas, and areas in transition between different uses with the new Planned Residential (RP) district to allow flexibility in design, accommodate current housing trends, use land more efficiently, and maintain the character of our existing single-family residential neighborhoods.
 - Expanded opportunities in the Central Health Care (CHC) district for growth in the health care industry (the number #1 growing sector according to our 2020 Comprehensive Plan).
 - Placed the new Economic Development and Innovation Overlay strategically to help attract high paying jobs for Greece’s highly skilled workforce.
 - Expanded the Waterfront Development (WD) mixed use district to existing commercial areas in the Lake Ontario Waterfront.
 - Expanded the Flexible Office Industrial (FOI) to existing industrial areas.