

CITY OF TORRINGTON



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To: Planning & Zoning Commission
From: Jeremy Leifert, AICP, City Planner *JL*
Date: March 23, 2022
RE: Proposed Revisions to Zoning Regulations, Section 6.7, Mobile Homes and Recreational Vehicles

Lelah Campo and Daniel Mahieu have filed an application for a text amendment to the zoning regulations Section 6.7 governing Mobile Homes and Recreational Vehicles. Their proposed amendments are specific to Recreational Vehicle Parks. This section of the regulations was initially adopted around 1992 and last comprehensively amended in 1998.

The intent of this proposed Zoning Regulation is to modify the regulations to adapt to evolving national standards for RV parks. The applicant has provided the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards for Recreational Vehicle Parks and Campgrounds as a reference for the proposed amendments.

The proposed amendments are noted below:

6.7 Mobile Homes and Recreational Vehicles (Rev. 12/19/98)

6.7.1 Mobile Homes

A. A mobile home may be used as a temporary office incidental to the development of the parcel on which the mobile home is located.

B. Where a dwelling unit has been destroyed by a fire or other natural disaster, a mobile home may be placed on the property and used as the property owner's temporary residence for a period not to exceed one year. A Zoning Permit is required for the mobile home. Within thirty days after the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the permanent dwelling unit on the property, the mobile home shall be removed from the property. A performance bond as specified in Section 8.4.5 shall be posted prior to the issuance of the certificate of occupancy to ensure the removal of the mobile home.

6.7.2 Recreational Vehicles

A. Except in a recreational vehicle park, no recreational vehicle shall be occupied for more than two weeks in any calendar year. (Rev. 2/1/06)

6.7.3 Mobile Home Parks and Recreational Vehicle Parks

The minimum requirements in this section shall apply to both mobile home parks and recreational vehicle parks. The term "park" shall mean both mobile home parks and recreational vehicle parks.

- A. Mobile homes shall not be permitted in recreational vehicle parks. Recreational vehicles shall not be permitted in mobile home parks.
- B. Camping tents shall be permitted in recreational vehicle parks. Such tents shall be treated as recreational vehicles.
- C. A park shall have a minimum of 25 acres.
- D. The park density shall not exceed one home site per 40,000 square feet.
- E. Each mobile home shall be certified under the federal Mobile Home Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5401 et. seq.).
- F. No more than one mobile home or recreational vehicle may be placed on a home site, except that up to three tents may be placed on a tent site in recreational vehicle parks.
- G. For a mobile home park, a home site shall have a minimum area of 6,000 square feet. Each home site shall be of sufficient size to contain a 60 foot by 100-foot rectangle. The boundaries of each home site shall be marked with permanent markers. For a recreational vehicle site, the site shall have a minimum area of 1500 square feet. Each RV site shall be a minimum of 30' wide and 50' deep.
- H. Each home site in a mobile home park shall have at least 60 feet of frontage on an interior road.
- I. All mobile homes, recreational vehicles and accessory structures shall be at least 10 feet from an interior road.
- J. All mobile homes, recreational vehicles and accessory structures shall be at least 20 feet from any other mobile home or recreational vehicle.
- K. No home site shall be within 100 feet of a property boundary.
- L. There shall be a 100-foot buffer along all property lines. The intent of the buffer is to provide a visual barrier between the park and the surrounding properties. Except for the interior road running roughly perpendicular to the buffer, there shall be no roads, home sites, parking spaces or structures placed in the buffer. For property access roads there shall be a 50-foot buffer along all boundary lines. Existing vegetation shall be preserved wherever possible. The Commission may require fencing or plantings to supplement or replace existing vegetation.
- M. The parking spaces for each mobile home or recreational vehicle shall be on or within 100 feet of the home site it is meant to serve.
- N. Interior roads shall be at least 22 feet wide for two way interior roads and 12 feet wide for one way interior roads. Such roads shall be constructed to specifications approved by the Commission. The Commission may require the lighting of interior roads.
- O. Each home site shall have provision for connection to adequate water and sanitary services.
- P. No mobile home or recreational vehicle in the park may be occupied until all required improvements in the park are completed. The Commission may approve the development of a park in phases. However, no home site shall be occupied in a phase until all required improvements in the phase are completed.
- Q. Parks may designate an area for the temporary storage of mobile homes and recreational vehicles. This storage area shall be shown on the plans. No mobile home or recreational vehicle shall be stored outside of the approved storage area. No mobile home or recreational vehicle in a storage area shall be occupied.
- R. Recreational vehicle parks ~~are not intended to~~ shall not be a place of permanent residence. A recreational vehicle shall not remain on a home site for more than ~~179~~ 187 consecutive days. At the end of the ~~179~~ 187-day period, the recreational vehicle shall be either removed from the park for a period of at least 90 consecutive days or placed in an on-site approved storage area.

The only exception to this requirement is for one recreational vehicle or permanent dwelling, per every ~~100~~50 home sites in the park, used by the park owner or by employees responsible for the operation of the park.

S. Parks shall contain a minimum of 150 square feet of common recreation area per home site. The maximum slope of the recreation area shall be 2.5%. The recreation area shall be a cleared, open grassed area. Play equipment, basketball courts, tennis courts, pools, community buildings and other recreational facilities may be placed in the recreation area.

T. The owner of the park shall be responsible for maintaining in good repair all interior roads, lawns, utilities, refuse collection, recreation areas and structures in the park.

U. Accessory uses and accessory structures may be allowed provided they are for the exclusive use of the occupants of the park. Such accessory uses and accessory structures include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. park offices;
2. maintenance structures;
3. restaurant;
4. retail store;
5. laundry facilities;
6. bathroom facilities; ~~and~~
7. recreational facilities; and

8. Park Model RVs. (As defined in NFPA 1194 and certified by manufacturer to be in compliance with ANSI A119.5)

V. Up to 25% of the home sites in a recreational vehicle park, or in a phase of a recreational vehicle park, may be designated as tent sites. Such sites shall not be subject to the provisions of Sections 6.7.3.H, 6.7.3.M, and 6.7.3.O. Sanitary facilities and water supplies shall be provided for such sites in accordance with the health code requirements of the State and the Torrington Area Health District. Tent sites shall be designated as such on the plans required for special exception and site plan applications.

Other Staff Comments:

Economic Development Director: Rista Malanca, AICP, Torrington Economic Development Director verbally indicated her support for the proposed text amendment to me.

Northwest Hills Council of Governments: Application information sent 2/17/22. No comments received.

Fire: No comments received

Engineering: No comments received

Police Traffic: No comments received

Conclusion:

The main proposed changes to the existing regulations are:

- Reduction of the minimum site size for RV Parks sites from 6000 sf to 1500 sf and 30' wide by 50' deep. Larger sizes remain for mobile home parks.

- Reduction of the property buffer for main access roads reduced from 100' to 50'. Interior park roads and sites remain at 100'.
- Lengthen the seasonal occupancy of sites from 179 to 187 days. Language also strengthened to prevent permanent residency at RV parks.
- Add regulation to allow for park model RV's

The proposed text amendment was discussed with the Mayor and City Staff at the 3/7/22 staff Land Use Meeting and no objections to the proposed change were voiced. The Connecticut General Statutes requires the Commission, when making a decision on a zoning text amendment, take into consideration the Plan of Conservation and Development, prepared pursuant to CGS 8-23. In my opinion, the Commission can make a finding that the proposed zoning text amendment is in accordance with the 2019 Torrington Plan of Conservation and Development. The amendments as proposed are relatively minor in nature and do not fundamentally change the regulations on Mobile Homes and Recreational Vehicle Parks. I recommend approval of the regulation text amendment as proposed above, with the effective date the day after the date of publication of the approval.

Draft revised: 3/23/22