



# MERIDIAN LAND SERVICES, INC.

CIVIL ENGINEERING | LAND SURVEYING | PERMITTING | SOIL & WETLAND MAPPING | SEPTIC DESIGN | ENVIRONMENTAL

Office: 31 Old Nashua Road, Suite 2, Amherst, NH 03031

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June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024

Re: **Hildreth's Farm Subdivision (FKA: 114 west Road, LLC Conceptual Condominium Development)  
114 West Road, Tax Map 248 Lot 8, Canterbury, NH**

## CLUSTER DENSITY CALCULATION

### (I) Baseline Density Determination

The Canterbury Zoning Ordinance determines density for cluster developments via section 6.4.C, which then refers to section 5.2. This section

*6.4.C. The density, or maximum number of residential dwelling units permitted in a cluster neighborhood, may not exceed the density allowed under Section 5.2 of the Zoning Ordinance, except when a request for a density incentive is approved by the Planning Board under Section 6.6 or Section 6.7.*

**Note:** From this section there is a restriction on residential dwelling units but is silent on how the commercial “units” effect the total units. There is no mention of commercial density determination till Section 6.9 Commercial Cluster Development. See **(V) Density Allocation of Commercial and Residential** from the “Canterbury Zoning Interpretation Letter”, dated December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 for Commercial Density Determination and how it is allocated.

Referring to Section 5.2, it is not clear how the maximum number of units is calculated. The most relevant section is section 5.2.A. Minimum Lot Size Standards. Of section 5.2.A., section 5.2.A.1 is the most appropriate.

#### 5.2.A. MINIMUM LOT SIZE STANDARDS

- 1. In computing the minimum lot acreage requirements under this article, any portion of the lot not suitable for building due to high water table as evidenced by open water or wetland shall not be included. Open water or wetland that has been dredged, drained or filled shall not be included in computing the minimum lot sizes.*
- 2. In computing minimum lot depth and width, each lot must contain within its bounds a rectangle meeting these requirements: each of the sides parallel to the front boundary line must equal or exceed the minimum lot width requirement in the zone, and each of the other sides must equal or exceed the minimum lot depth requirement in the zone.*
- 3. In computing the minimum lot acreage requirement, that portion of the lot between the front boundary line and the line from which the front setback is measured shall not be included.*
- 4. In computing minimum lot acreage requirements for proposed two-family or multi-family uses, the minimum acreage for the lot shall be calculated as follows: (number of dwelling units per lot) x (minimum lot acreage requirement) x 75%. Width and depth requirements will be consistent with the zone.*



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The use of Section 5.2.A.1 is further supported by our conversation with the Planning Board at the 10/22/24 Planning Board meeting. This section allows for density to be calculated by subtracting the wetland area from the overall property area, then dividing the remaining area by the minimum lot size.

As a point of clarification, some board members mentioned steep slopes need to be subtracted as well. However, there is no mention of steep slopes in this section. Upon further review of the Canterbury Zoning Ordinance, the deduction of steep slopes for the purposes of a yield is mentioned in Article 16 Workforce Housing Ordinance. Article 16 does not apply since the proposed development is not workforce housing.

### (II) Bonus Density Determination

Bonus are given by Section 6.6 Bonus Density 10% is allocated for providing one of the below criteria and 15% for two and 20% for providing three.

*6.6.A. For exemplary cluster neighborhood or commercial cluster proposals, the Planning Board, at its discretion, may grant a density bonus of not more than 20%, if one or more of the following criteria are met. A 10% density bonus may be granted by the Planning Board if one criterion is met, 15% for two criteria, and 20% for three or more criteria:*

- 1. Preservation of 75% or more of the parcel as Designated Open Space.*
- 2. Preservation and maintenance of five or more acres of contiguous, open field.*
- 3. Preservation or construction of 1,000 linear feet or more of connected stone walls. The connected stone walls shall be visible to the public and breaks for driveways and walkways are permitted.*
- 4. Maintenance of existing or new agricultural use(s) on the property.*
- 5. Provision of planned pedestrian access, such as sidewalks or maintained trails for public use.*
- 6. Provision of outdoor amenity which may include access to public space.*
- 7. Use of community well or septic system serving six or more units*
- 8. Contiguous connections with permanent conservation land on adjacent parcels*

*B. A density bonus yielding a half unit or more may be rounded up.*

The 10% density bonus is supported by the criteria outlined in section 6.6.A.7, via the use of a community well. The additional 5% density bonus bringing the total bonus to 15% is section 6.6.A.2 supported by the criteria outlined in section 6.6.A.7, via the preservation of the existing field which is approximately 9.40 acres. Although the field does include a wet meadow it does meet the criteria "Preservation and maintenance of five or more acres of contiguous, open field". Therefore a 15% bonus is applied.

Further density bonuses could be sought via the criteria above, although none are proposed at this stage in the process.



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### (III) Density Calculation

Based on the interpretation of Section 5.2.A.1 the density calculation would be the following without consideration of density bonuses and commercial units.

Gross property area:	37.26 acres	[1,623,197 sf]
Wetland area:	5.09 acres	[221,541 sf]
Net tract area:	32.17 acres	[1,401,656 sf]

**Baseline Density = 32.17 acres / 1 unit per acre = 32.17 units**

Then applying the bonus allocated per section 6.6, the proposed development yields the following

Baseline density =	32.17 units
Applied bonus:	15%
Density Bonus	4.83
Unit total =	36.996

**Rounded Unit Total = 37 Units**