

An Ordinance Permitting Increased FAR in the Central Business (BC) Zone

WHEREAS the continued interest in commercial development opportunities within West Hartford Center supports a reevaluation of the current limitation on the floor area ratio standard; and

WHEREAS the desire for grand list growth within West Hartford Center must be balanced against the need to avoid expansion of the commercial center outward into residential neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS there is a particular benefit to encouraging further residential development within West Hartford Center in order to ensure continued year-round vibrancy, support existing businesses in the Center, and to increase pedestrian activity within that area; and

WHEREAS a limited increase in the permitted floor area ratio within the BC zone may promote development of sites which are currently underutilized, particularly infill site locations in the Center where development of structured underground parking will be required to support residential development.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF WEST HARTFORD THAT the West Hartford Code of Ordinances is hereby amended to include a new section 177-16.11 Alteration of Floor Area Ratio Standard in BC Zones, as follows:

§177-16.11 Alteration of Floor Area Ratio Standard in BC Zones

The Town Council of West Hartford, through adoption of the Plan of Development, finds that areas zoned BC are characterized by physically and economically underutilized properties from the perspective of a suburban town center area and that these areas are also appropriate for residential development. It further finds that areas zoned BC are conducive to an increased floor area ratio to support residential development only if the impact on the Town's infrastructure, traffic circulation and parking, residential neighborhoods and community facilities is addressed satisfactorily. Accordingly, within the BC zones, the floor area ratio may be increased to 1.5 upon application to the Town Council for a special development district, provided that the following criteria, in addition to the criteria of § 177-44, are met:

- A. The Town Council must find that adequate parking exists to meet the needs of the proposed development.
- B. The Town Council must find that adequate street capacity exists on adjacent streets to accommodate the traffic projected to result from any increase in floor area ratio above that allowed as of right.
- C. The Town Council must find that appropriate bicycle and pedestrian amenities, such as but not limited to bicycle storage and/or parking, park benches and pedestrian walkways, are provided.
- D. The maximum floor area ratio may be increased up to 1.5 only if the floors above the ground floor are used for residential purposes.