

Sec. 14-376. - Sec. 14-380. Reserved.

DIVISION 23. NONCONFORMING USE AND NONCONFORMING BUILDINGS

Sec. 14-381. Continuation.

Any lawful use of buildings, structures, premises or parts thereof, existing on June 5, 1957, and made nonconforming by the provisions of this article or any amendment thereto may be continued although such use does not conform with the provisions of this article or amendment thereto.

(Code 1968, § 602.17.A)

Sec. 14-382. Increase in nonconforming use of structure or alterations to nonconforming structures limited.

(a) A lawful nonconforming non-residential structure may be maintained, repaired, or reconstructed in kind within a one (1) year period or within a two (2) year period for a nonconforming residential structure, but no alterations, modifications or additions shall be made to it, except as provided in this division.

(b) A building whose use is wholly nonconforming shall not be altered so as to increase the cubical content or the degree of nonconformity.

(c) No alterations, modifications or additions shall be made so as to increase the cubical content or the degree of nonconforming use, nor shall a nonconforming use be extended to any other part of such building, unless such part was clearly arranged and designed for such nonconforming use prior to June 5, 1957, or such extension of a nonconforming use is solely for the purpose of bringing the use into compliance with health or safety codes, or to correct a condition that may not technically be in violation but which is determined by the board of appeals to constitute a health or safety problem. In either case, the expansion shall be limited to the minimum necessary to accomplish that purpose.

(d) Alteration, modification or addition may be made to a building which is lawfully nonconforming as to space and bulk or any dimensional requirement where the proposed changes in existing exterior walls and/or roofs would be within the space occupied by the existing shell of the building, and would not create any new nonconformity nor increase any existing nonconformity. This subsection shall not apply to buildings located within shoreland zones and existing on June 15, 1992, which are nonconforming only as to setbacks from wetlands, tributary streams or other water

bodies, which shall be regulated in accordance with subsection (f) of this section.

(e) Except as expressly provided herein, any alteration, modification or addition permitted under this section shall be in compliance with all other applicable sections of this chapter. Nothing within this section shall be construed to permit an increase in the number of nonconforming units in a building which is nonconforming as to the number of dwelling units or will become nonconforming as a result of such alteration, modification or addition.

(f) *Expansions.* A non-conforming structure may be added to or expanded after obtaining a permit from the same permitting authority as that for a new structure, if such addition or expansion does not increase the non-conformity of the structure and is in accordance with the sections below.

1. After January 1, 1989, if any portion of a structure is less than the required setback from the normal high water line of a water body or tributary stream or the upland edge of a wetland that portion of the structure shall not be expanded, as measured in floor area or volume, by thirty (30%) percent or more, during the lifetime of the structure. If a replacement structure conforms with the requirements of section 14-382, and is less than the required setback from a water body, tributary stream or wetland, the replacement structure may not be expanded if the original structure existing on January 1, 1989 had been expanded by thirty (30%) percent in floor area and volume since that date.
2. Whenever a new, enlarged, or replacement foundation is constructed under a non-conforming structure, the structure and new foundation must be placed such that the setback requirement is met to the greatest practical extent as determined by building authority, basing its decision the criteria specified in subsection (3) below. If the completed foundation does not extend beyond the exterior dimensions of the structure, except for expansion in conformity with section (f) above, and the foundation does not cause the structure to be elevated by more than three (3) additional feet as measured from the uphill side of the structure (from original ground level to the bottom of the first floor sill), it shall not be considered to be an expansion of the structure.

3. A nonconforming structure may be relocated within the boundaries of the parcel on which the structure is located, provided that the site of the relocation conforms to all setback requirements to the greatest practical extent as determined by the building authority, and provided that the applicant demonstrates that the present subsurface sewage disposal system meets the requirements of state law, the State of Maine Subsurface Wastewater Disposal Rules (Rules), or that a new system can be installed in compliance with state law, such rules, and all applicable sections of this Code. In no event shall a structure be relocated in a manner that causes the structure to be more nonconforming. In determining whether the building relocation meets the setback requirements to the greatest practical extent, the building authority shall consider the size of the lot, the slope of the land, the potential for soil erosion, the location of other structures on the property and on adjacent properties, the location of septic system and other on-site soils suitable for septic systems, the type and amount of vegetation to be removed to accomplish the relocation. When it is necessary to remove vegetation within the water or wetland setback are in order to relocate a structure, the building authority shall require replanting of native vegetation to compensate for the destroyed vegetation. In addition, the area from which the relocated structure was removed must be replanted with vegetation. Replanting shall be required as follows:

- a. Trees removed in order to relocate a structure must be replanted with at least one native tree, three (3) feet in height, for every tree removed. If more than five trees are planted, no one species of tree shall make up more than fifty (50%) percent of the number of trees planted. Replaced trees must be planted no further from the water or wetland than the trees that were removed.

Other woody and herbaceous vegetation, and ground cover, that are removed or destroyed in order to relocate a structure must be re-established within the setback area. The vegetation and/or ground cover must consist of similar native vegetation and/or ground cover that was disturbed, destroyed

or removed.

- b. Where feasible, when a structure is relocated on a parcel the original location of the structure shall be replanted with vegetation which may consist of grasses, shrubs, trees, or a combination thereof.

4. Buildings in existence on January 1, 1989, and located in shoreland zones may be expanded once during the lifetime of the structure up to twenty-five (25) feet toward a freshwater wetland or tributary stream, provided that a minimum setback of forty (40) feet is maintained and that the existing floor area or volume is not increased by more than thirty (30%) percent, and shall not create any undue environmental impact or flood prone condition.

(Code 1968, § 602.17.B; Ord. No. 271-89, 2-22-89; Ord. No. 96-89, § 2, 9-18-89; Ord. No. 15-92, § 26, 6-15-92; Ord. No. 284-99, §1, 5-17-99, enacted as an emergency; Ord. No. 296-08/09, 6-15-09; Ord. No. 139-12/13, 2-4-13)

Sec. 14-383. Extension of nonconforming use of land prohibited.

A lawful nonconforming use existing on premises outside of a building shall not be extended to or allowed to occupy any part or parts of such premises outside of the building.

(Code 1968, § 602.17.C; Ord. No. 354-85, § 3, 1-7-85)

Sec. 14-384. Change of nonconforming use.

A lawful nonconforming use in a structure designed for a use permitted in the zone in which it is located shall not be changed to any use other than a use permitted in the zone in which the structure is located. When a nonconforming use in such a structure has been changed to a permitted use, it shall not thereafter be changed back to any non-permitted use. For purposes of this section, a use shall be deemed to have been so changed when an existing nonconforming use shall have been terminated and a permitted use shall have commenced and continued for a period of seven (7) days. Any change of use in violation of this division shall be deemed to be an abandonment of the lawfully existing nonconforming use. A lawful nonconforming use in a structure not designed for a use permitted in the zone in which it is located shall not be changed to any use other than a use permitted in the zone in which the use is located or to any use other than a nonconforming use of a more restricted zone, as set forth in the following schedule, provided that in no such case shall any structural alterations be made in any building except those required by law, ordinance or other regulations:

- (a) In a business zone, from any use permitted in an industrial zone to any use permitted in a business zone.
- (b) In a B-1 zone, from any use permitted in a B-3 zone to any use permitted in a B-2 zone.
- (c) In a residence zone, from any use permitted in a B-2 zone to any use permitted in a B-1 zone.
- (d) In a residence zone, from any use permitted in any other residence zone to any use permitted in a more restricted residence zone. For the purpose of this subsection, an R-6 zone shall be deemed the least restricted and an R-2 zone shall be deemed the most restricted, with the intervening zones restricted in order of zone number.

(Code 1968, § 602.17.D; Ord. No. 499-74, § 8, 8-19-74)

Sec. 14-385. Restoration or reconstruction within an existing footprint of damaged nonconforming structure.

A nonconforming structure damaged by fire, explosion, flood, riot, act of the public enemy, accident of any kind, decay or otherwise may be restored or rebuilt only where:

- (a) The restoration or reconstruction is of a building which is nonconforming only as to land area, setbacks or any other dimensional requirements; and
- (b) Where the restoration or reconstruction will occur entirely within the existing footprint and previous shell of the building and will not create a new nonconformity; and
- (c) Restoration or reconstruction occurs within one (1) year for a nonconforming non-residential structure, or two (2) years for a nonconforming residential structure, of the initial damage where such damage is sudden and accidental. Note that for buildings in SHoreland zones, stte regulations may also govern and provide for a shorter period for restoration or reconstruction of nonconforming structures; and
- (d) Restoration or reconstruction necessitated by decay must be completed within one (1) year of the demolition of the building or the commencement of the restoration or reconstruction, whichever occurs first; and

- (e) Any reconstruction, under this provision, in the residential R-6 zone on a lot with 10,000 square feet or less, other than the exact restoration of a previously existing building on the site, shall comply with the applicable standards contained within the Planning and Development Design Manual; and
- (f) A nonconforming building located in the R-6 which is destroyed by fire, explosion, flood, riot, act of the enemy, or accident may be rebuilt under the small residential lot development provisions of the R-6 zone as if the lot were vacant as of January 1, 2005 and such reconstruction shall meet the setback requirements contained therein to the extent practicable; otherwise the building shall be reconstructed within the footprint of the previously existing building such that any nonconformity will not be enlarged.

For the purpose of this section, the footprint of a building is the perimeter of the foundation supporting a structure.

(Code 1968, § 602.17.E; Ord. No. 89-88, 7-19-88; Ord. No. 284-99, §2, 5-17-99, enacted as an emergency; Ord. No.254-05/06, 6-5-06; Ord. No. 61-07/08, 10-1-07; Ord. No. 240-09/10, 6-21-10; Ord. No. 139-12/13, 2-4-13)

***Editor's note**—Ord. No. 89-88, adopted July 19, 1988, amended this section to read as herein set out. See also the editor's note to Art. III of this chapter for additional provisions relative to Ord. No. 89-88.

Sec. 14-386. Discontinuance of use of land for ninety days.

A nonconforming use of land where no buildings or only incidental or accessory buildings are employed together with such use shall not be changed to any other nonconforming use, and if such use is discontinued for a period of ninety (90) days, it shall not be reestablished.

(Code 1968, § 602.17.G)

Sec. 14-387. Discontinuance of use of property.

If a legally nonconforming non-residential use is discontinued for a period of twelve (12) months or if a legally nonconforming residential use is discontinued for a period of twenty-four (24) months, such discontinuance shall constitute an abandonment of the use and the property shall not thereafter be occupied or used except in conformity with the provisions of this article. In cases of foreclosure or similar situations involving a legally

nonconforming residential structure, the Planning Authority shall be authorized to extend the aforementioned period up to an additional five (5) years provided that the extension is for good cause and the minimum length considered necessary to resume the legally nonconforming use of the structure. A nonconforming use of land which is incidental or accessory to such nonconforming structure shall be considered as being discontinued at the same time as the nonconforming use of the structure. Note that for buildings in SHoreland zones, state regulations may also govern and provide for a shorter period of time for nonconforming properties. (Code 1968, § 602.17.F; Ord. No. 499-74, § 9, 8-19-74; Ord. No. 139-12/13, 2-4-13)

Sec. 14-388. Reserved.

***Editor's Note**—Per Council Order 125-09/10 passed on January 4, 2010 Section 14-388 (Nonconformity as to the area of dwelling) was repealed in its entirety.

Sec. 14-389. Nonconformity as to off-street parking.

A building or structure which is nonconforming as to the requirements for off-street parking shall not be enlarged or altered to create additional dwelling units, or seats as in the case of places of public assembly, or floor area as in the case of industrial, business, manufacturing, institutional or recreational buildings, or accommodations as in the case of hotels, tourist homes and tourist courts, unless required off-street parking is provided for such addition or enlargement.

(Code 1968, § 602.17.I)

Sec. 14-390. Nonconformity as to off-street loading.

A building which is nonconforming as to the requirements for off-street loading shall not be enlarged or added to, unless off-street loading is provided sufficient to satisfy the requirements of this article for both the addition or enlargement and the original building or structure.

(Code 1968, § 602.17.J)

Sec. 14-391. Nonconformity as to number of dwelling units.

(a) Purpose. The purpose of this provision is to establish a process whereby certain dwellings which contain more dwelling units than the number permitted by the applicable provisions of the Land Use Code may be recognized as legal, nonconforming uses. This provision shall not apply to rooming units.

(b) Approval by Zoning Administrator.

1. Application. Application for validation of such non-conforming dwelling units shall be on a form provided by the Division of Housing and Neighborhood Services, Inspection Services Office. The application fee will be \$300.00 for each dwelling unit which is the subject of the application, and will be accompanied by: (i) a plan, drawn to scale, which shows the location of the building(s) on the lot, parking, easements, dumpsters, fencing, public ways and any other significant feature and (ii) a floor plan for each unit in the dwelling, whether or not it is the subject of the application.

(c) Eligibility. In order for a nonconforming dwelling unit to be validated by administrative action of the Zoning Administrator as authorized herein, the Zoning Administrator must find, based on competent evidence, supported by public records, that:

1. The nonconforming dwelling units were either in existence April 1, 1995, or the structure in which they are located was originally designed to accommodate more than the number of such units presently in use.
2. The applicant neither constructed nor established the non-conforming dwelling units.
3. The nonconforming dwelling units comply with or can be made to comply with current standards of the National Fire Protection Association Life Safety Code (§16-1) and the National Fire Protection Association 1: Fire Prevention Code (§10-16), as amended.
4. Each of the nonconforming dwelling units complies with provisions of the City's Housing Code or can be made to conform with, as amended, including, but not limited to, the requirements of §6-110, Minimum Standards for Space and Occupancy and §6-111, Minimum Plumbing Standards, and §6-112 Minimum Ventilation Standards.
5. The structure containing the nonconforming dwelling units is located in the R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6 or R-7 Zones; or the B-1, B-1(b), B-2, B-2(b) or B-3 Zones.

6. In the absence of legally competent evidence, supported by records, (such as, but not limited to, Assessor's records, purchase and sale agreements, affidavits, deeds, mortgages, as well as reliable secondary sources, such as the Portland Director), that the conditions of subsections c(1), C(2), c(3), c(4), or c(5) can be met, the Zoning Administrator may not approve the application, but shall advise the applicant that the matter may be appealed to the Board of Appeals.

- (d) Notice to Abutters. Upon receipt of a completed application, the Zoning Administrator will provide both the owners of abutting properties as well as the owners of property situated within 300 feet of the structure of the essential information contained in the application, along with a notice that they may object to the Zoning Administrator's acting on the application and require the applicant to appeal to the Board of Appeals. The notice shall be in conspicuous type and advise the abutters and owners of property within 300 feet that any objection must be submitted in writing to the Zoning Administrator within ten (10) days of the date of the notice sent to them.

The failure of any property owner to receive the notice described above shall not invalidate any action by the Zoning Administrator. The Zoning Administrator shall promptly notify the applicant of receipt of the objection, that the Zoning Administrator is without authority to proceed and advise the applicant that, within 30 days from receipt of the letter, an application may be filed to have the matter reviewed by the Board of Appeals as a conditional use.

- (e) Approval of Application.

1. The Zoning Administrator may approve the application, provided: (i) the evidence presented satisfies all of the requirements of this section; (ii) the Office of Inspection Services and Fire Prevention Bureau have certified that the nonconforming units conform with or can be made to conform with the applicable codes; and (iii) no abutter nor person entitled to notice has requested that the application be referred to the Board of Appeals, instead of the Zoning Administrator.

2. Upon approval of the application and receipt of an additional fee in the amount of \$75.00 for each nonconforming dwelling unit which has been recognized as a lawful, nonconforming use, the Zoning Administrator will issue a certificate of occupancy.
- (f) Disapproval of Application. In the event the application is not approved by the Zoning Administrator or in the event of a timely objection filed by a person qualified herein to file such an objection, the applicant, within (30) days from the decision of the Zoning Administrator or objection, may appeal the matter to the Board of Appeals as a conditional use.
- (g) Action by Board of Appeals. The Board of Appeals shall treat applications filed under this section as an application for a conditional use (§14-474) applying the standards applicable to conditional uses as well as the requirements of this section.
- (h) Dimensional and Parking Requirements. In making decisions under this section neither the Zoning Administrator nor the Board of Appeals shall apply the dimensional or parking requirements which would otherwise apply in the zones where the nonconforming dwelling units are situated.
- (i) Exclusions.
1. The provisions of this section shall not apply to rooming units (§14-47), but shall apply to efficiency apartments (§6-110(b)).
 2. The Board of Appeals is without jurisdiction to grant any relief (including, but not limited to, variances) which would recognize the particular dwelling units which are the subject of this section as legal, nonconforming uses, except in strict compliance with each requirement of this section.
- (j) Prior Judicial and Administrative Action. Decisions of any court or administrative body, including but not limited to, the Zoning Administrator, the Planning Board or the Board of Appeals made prior to the effective date of this section and which addressed the number of nonconforming dwelling units in a particular structure, will not bar relief under this section.

***Editor's note**—Section 4 of Ord. No. 354-85, adopted Jan. 7, 1985, repealed the pre-2004 version of § 14-391, relative to the Board of Appeals permitting temporary nonconforming uses, which derived from Code 1968, § 602.17.K.

Sec. 14-392. - Sec. 14-400. Reserved.

DIVISION 24. USE REGULATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS

Sec. 14-401. Generally.

The requirements of this article shall be subject to the use regulations and exceptions of this division.

(Code 1968, § 602.18)

Sec. 14-402. Relationship of buildings to lots.

Every building hereafter erected shall be located on a lot as defined in section 14-47.

(Code 1968, § 602.18.A)

Sec. 14-403. Street access.

(a) *In general.* No building intended for use as a habitation shall be erected on a lot which has its only street frontage on a street less than thirty-five (35) feet wide. No building shall be erected on a lot, except on the islands in Casco Bay, which does not abut a street meeting the minimum requirements for street improvements set forth in this section. For purposes of this section, street shall be as defined in section 14-47, except that a dedicated street which may no longer be accepted due to lapse of time and an accepted street which may have been discontinued by abandonment shall also be deemed to be streets, provided that an applicant for a building permit respecting any lot abutting such street shall, without compensation or claim for damages, and at his own cost and expense, first submit to the building authority (a) a deed from the owner of such lot conveying to the city all his right, title and interest in and to such street or any portion thereof; and (b) an agreement by such owner forever releasing the city from any and all claims for damages for the laying out and taking of such street and indemnifying the city against any and all other such claims, both such instruments to be executed and in recordable form acceptable to the corporation counsel and to