

Town of Tolland, Connecticut

Plan of Conservation & Development – Zoning Implementation

POCD Recommendation Review:

Tolland Village Area Zone – Sample Draft of a New TVA Zoning District



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January 20, 2021

Andrew Powell, Chair
Planning & Zoning Commission
21 Tolland Green
Tolland, CT 06084

Re: Sample – New TVA Zoning District

Dear Chairman Powell:

Per our last meeting and in preparation for the upcoming public forum to discuss the Tolland Village Area (TVA) zone, I am providing the Commission with this draft sample regulation for a new TVA zoning district. As you are aware, we have discussed multiple options as to how to proceed with the TVA and one of the options being explored is to turn the TVA zone into a conventional zoning district similar to other commercial zones. As a result of our discussion, you ask that I provide the Commission with a sample TVA zone.

The following sample regulation is a draft of a new zoning district that is conceptualized to replace the existing TVA district. I named the sample district the Tolland Village Area Gateway District (TVA-GD). I did this for two reasons: first, to distinguish the district from the existing TVA, and second, to recognize that this sample district is based on the GDD zone. To create this sample district, I utilized the same format, provisions, and standards as the existing GDD. I did this knowing that the Commission is familiar and generally comfortable with the GDD. Therefore, the only difference between the GDD and the sample TVA-GD are the uses allowed in the TVA-GD. The uses allowed in TVA-GD are the uses conceptual as part of our work and discussion around uses in all commercial zones and specific discussions related to the TVA area and possible suitable uses moving forward.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald J. Poland".

Donald J. Poland, PhD, AICP
Planning Consultant



Sample – Tolland Village Area – Gateway District (TVA-GD)

Section 7-1. Purpose

The Tolland Village Area Gateway District (TVA-GD) zone is a gateway to Tolland's historic town center. The purpose of the TVA-GD is to create an attractive entrance to Tolland while encouraging coordinated commercial retail, service, office, hospitality, and mixed-use residential development that incorporate high design standards at the interchange gateway entrances to the community. The goal is to promote compact commercial, mixed-use, and multi-family residential development having scale and form consistent with the natural landforms of the site, the character of the town, and is sensitive to the historic character of the Town Green area.

Section 7-2. General Concepts/Design Guidelines

These standards and guidelines require a basic level of architectural variety, compatible scale, and mitigation of negative impacts. They are not intended to limit creativity. The purpose of these standards and guidelines is to augment existing criteria with more specific interpretations that apply to the design of commercial developments. This district is intended to encourage smaller sites to combine with other sites in order to provide larger-scale sites and developments.

A. Siting

1. Depending on the overall site design, and where otherwise practicable, buildings should be sited toward the front of the lot and should maintain a pleasing spatial relationship with other buildings and public and interior-access roadways.
2. Structures should be sited in small groups wherever feasible.
3. The use of additive massing (the bulk of the building is broken into smaller sections and horizontally offset) to provide visual interest is desired.
4. All effort should be made to preserve and enhance historic structures, unique landforms, rock outcrops, stone walls, vegetation, views, etc. and incorporate them into site design.
5. Siting should not be detrimental to scenic vistas of the gateway from any public street including I-84. Items of special concern include the placement of dumpsters, loading docks, roof-mounted mechanical units, and antennas.
6. The design of the storm water treatment system shall contain strategies associated with low impact development to the maximum extent possible (MEP) as outlined in the Town of Tolland Design Manual. This provision shall also apply to improvements or redevelopment of existing commercial sites. If stormwater detention/retention basins are necessary, provisions shall be made for shared structures and shared maintenance to the maximum extent feasible.



B. Access

1. Access management will be required on all sites, in order to reduce the number of driveway cuts onto adjacent roads and mitigate the deterioration of traffic flow generally caused by driveways on public roads. Access management techniques include shared driveways (or provisions for future shared driveways for the first site in the area) or interconnected driveways.
2. Use shared parking with abutting properties wherever feasible.
3. Provide safe, convenient pedestrian circulation, which also provides access to off-site sidewalks, trails, parks and other public places.
4. Locate large parking areas at the side or rear of building where practical with landscaping designed to create visual assets.

C. Site Amenities

1. Create pedestrian spaces such as plazas, “greens”, commons and terraces within the development.
2. Add or create amenities such as benches, fountains, sculptures, art, bike racks, sitting walls, planters, period-style lighting or banners.
3. Use creative landscaping design, with plantings of sufficient size and quantity to clearly enhance the site.

D. Architectural Guidelines

The purpose of architectural design review is to provide insights regarding Tolland’s design objectives, to encourage aesthetically pleasing commercial structures, to reduce massive scale and uniform impersonal appearance, to provide visual interest and scale consistent with the Town’s identity, size and character. All applications for Special Permit shall require design review with consideration given to the following guidelines:

1. Facades.
 - a. No uninterrupted length of any facade shall exceed 100 feet and shall incorporate wall plane projections or recesses.
 - b. The ground floor facade facing a public street should incorporate display windows, awnings or other such features to create visual interest.
 - c. Windows should be recessed and should include visually prominent sills, shutters or other such forms of framing.



- d. All building facades that are visible from a public street, including I-84 and its ramps, should be attractively designed with windows and other architectural elements so that no visible elevations look like the back of a building.
- 2. Roofs.
 - a. Variations in roof lines should be used to add interest and complement the character of the Town.
 - b. Rooftop equipment such as HVAC units shall be screened from public view with parapets featuring three-dimensional cornice treatments.
- 3. Materials, colors and detail features.
 - a. Building facades should include a repeating pattern including color, texture or change of materials.
 - b. Predominant exterior building materials should be high quality materials such as brick, wood, sandstone and other native stone or tinted textured, concrete masonry units.
 - c. Facade colors should be low reflectance, subtle, neutral or earth tone colors. The use of high intensity colors, metallic colors, black or fluorescent colors is discouraged.
 - d. Predominant exterior building materials should not include smooth-faced concrete block or pre-fabricated steel panels.

Section 7-3. Uses

A. Permitted Uses

The following table identifies those uses permitted by zoning district. All commercial, mixed-use, residential uses, developments, and new construction, except for changes in use and minor changes specified in Section 20-8 and 20-9, require approval by the Commission. Any use not expressly permitted by these Regulations shall be prohibited unless the Commission, upon request by an applicant, decides that a use is similar to uses permitted in the zone. In addition, the Commission retains the right to determine if any use meets the intent of the regulations.

B. Table of Uses.

Retail, Personal, & Professional Service Uses	TVA
Retail & Personal Service Establishment (excluding drive-through service)	P
Financial Institution	P
Drive-Thru Service – Pharmacy & Financial Institutions (Section 16-7)	P
Veterinary Hospital (without outdoor animals)	SP
Laundromat (public sewer required)	P



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Hospitality Uses	TVA
Restaurant (without liquor sales)	P
Restaurant (with liquor sales)	P
Drive-Thru Service – Fast & Fast-Casual (Section 16-7).	SP
Outdoor Dining	P
Restaurant – Brewpub	P
Micro-Brewery, Micro-Distillery, or Micro-Winery	SP
Hotel (internal access guest rooms)	SP
Bed & Breakfast Establishment	SP
Retail Food Service Establishment	SP
Catering Facilities	SP
Banquet Facilities	SP
Commercial/Shared Kitchen	P
Food Trucks	SP

Commercial Office Uses	TVA
Office (Professional & General)	P
Office (Medical)	SP

Commercial Laboratory & R&D Uses	TVA
Training and/or Conference Center	SP

Residential & Mixed-Use Developments	TVA
Mixed Use – Commercial & Residential	SP
Multi-Family Residential	SP

Institutional, Public, & Recreational Uses	TVA
Cultural Institution, Art or Music Center, & Museum	P
Public & General Assembly	SP
Places of Worship & Religious Institution	P
Utilities – Public/Private: Structures, Substation, or Office	SP
Club	SP

Automotive Uses	TVA
Gasoline Service Station & Convenience Store (Section 16-3)	SP
Parking Facilities (public/private parking serving off-premises uses)	SP

Agriculture & Natural Resources	TVA
Agriculture, Nurseries, Forestry, Forest Management	P
Excavation – Pre-Development Site Grading	SP



D. Accessory Uses

Customary accessory uses shall be subject to the provisions of Article 17.

Section 7-4. Requirements

A. Dimensional Requirements

1. Minimum lot area: one (1) acre.
2. Minimum lot frontage on a public street or private street with legal access and maintenance rights: 50 feet to 200 feet depending on existing or proposed development pattern and ability to provide safe access. The frontage of two (2) or more lots, which share a single joint entrance and a single joint exit to a public street, may be computed as a single frontage.
3. Minimum front yard setback: 50 feet. This requirement may be reduced to no less than 25 feet, by four (4) concurring votes of the Commission, per Section 10-4.B.
4. Maximum lot coverage: 50%, including principal and accessory structures and impervious surfaces. The Commission may, by four (4) concurring votes:
 - a. Permit lot coverage up to 65%. This increased coverage shall be permitted only in special instances where special attention has been given to access management through linkages to abutting properties, special provisions for non-motorized transportation or site sensitivity.
 - b. Permit lot coverage up to 80%, not including the area of public access management roadways. This increased coverage shall be permitted in unique circumstances where a public roadway will be provided to link abutting properties to promote public safety and meeting the lot coverage requirement limits lot development design.
5. Minimum side yard setback: 50 feet. The side yard for parking areas and driveways may be reduced depending on the nature of the adjacent land-uses and the proposed landscaping/screening plan, by four (4) concurring votes of the Commission, per Section 10-4.B. Required side yard setback may be eliminated if the parcels that share that side property line share a single joint entrance and single joint exit to a public street or share parking facilities and do not contain a residential use.
6. Minimum rear yard setback: 35 feet. This requirement may be reduced to no less than 25 feet, by four (4) concurring votes of the Commission, per Section 10-4.B.
7. Minimum separation between buildings on the same site: 20 feet, unless sharing a common wall.
8. Minimum distance from residential zones (RDD & VCZ). All buildings, structures and uses shall be located at least 100 feet from the boundary of any residential zone, unless waived by



a majority vote of members present due to the nature of adjacent land uses and the proposed landscaping/screening plan. The Commission shall require screening and landscaping of the setback area.

9. Minimum building floor area: 1,000 square feet.
10. No individual retail business establishment may exceed 52,000 square feet. The Commission may, by four (4) concurring votes, increase the maximum size up to 60,000 square feet, not including mezzanines that comprise no more than 10% of the total square footage, if the applicant provides one (1) or more of the following criteria:
additional buffering, linkages to abutting properties, special site sensitivity and a special architectural design.

B. Reductions in Dimensional Requirements

Reductions in dimensional requirements will be considered by the Commission only in special instances when the development pattern will do at least one (1) of the following:

1. Provide pathway connections and promote walkability within the area.
2. Improve overall compatibility of the site to surrounding or connecting property.,
3. Give special attention to one or more of the following: landscaping, building orientation, New England style architecture, linkages to abutting properties and other site amenities.

C. Other Requirements

1. All business establishments shall conform to the environmental and performance standards specified in Section 19-7 and to the requirements of all other applicable town regulations.
2. Except as otherwise permitted, all production, repair, treatment, storage and display of goods shall be accessory to the principal use of the premises.
3. No outside storage of goods or merchandise and no goods or merchandise shall be sold from a trailer or truck situated on a lot unless permitted by the Commission.
4. Loading docks and receiving areas shall be carefully located for accessibility and designed as an integral part of the building and shall not detract from the building and site.
5. All dumpsters shall be placed on a concrete pad, and suitably screened with trees, shrubs, fencing or other appropriate means (e.g., the building itself). Their placement with respect to buildings shall be as approved by Public Safety personnel.
6. Areas for truck parking, recycling, trash collection and compaction shall not be visible from abutting streets including I-84 and the ramps.
7. The areas and facilities listed in 4, 5 and 6 above, if not totally enclosed, shall be at least 50 feet from any public road, public sidewalk or pedestrian way.



8. Loading docks, truck parking, utility meters, HVAC equipment, trash collection, trash compaction and other service functions, shall be incorporated into the overall design of the building and landscaping.

Section 10-5. Consolidated Parcels

For the purpose of integrated development, any number of contiguous parcels may be consolidated and the consolidated parcel shall be construed to be one lot when computing building coverage and yard requirements, and permitted uses, provided:

- A. The owner of each lot shall give to the owner of each lot in the consolidated parcel by deed, easement, or agreement filed in the office of the Town Clerk, the right of entrance, exit, passage, parking and loading.
- B. The consolidated parcel is developed with an integrated plan of buildings, parking, loading and unloading, landscaping and common areas, etc.
- C. The Commission may require or limit use of access driveways to one or more parcels, whether or not under separate ownership, in accordance with access management policies and plans.