

Green Zoning Examples for Concord

Increasing electrification of buildings is one of the goals in Concord's 2020 Climate Action and Resilience Plan, [Sustainable Concord](#), because of the potential to significantly reduce GHG emissions, improve climate resilience, and provide health benefits. The first step identified in the plan to tackle [this priority action](#) is understanding possible local policy mechanisms to encourage and incentivize electrification of new construction. To that end, a Concord group has been participating in a Building Electrification Accelerator program facilitated by Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) since summer of 2020. The program has provided guidance on legal options for communities to increase electrification of buildings given the Attorney General's ruling on Brookline's attempt to limit new fossil fuel infrastructure. A promising approach is through the zoning bylaw. Below is a list of green zoning options that may be effective in Concord.

Step 1 might be to define "Net Zero" uses, such as a net-zero residential dwelling, a NZ PRD, A NZ preliminary/definitive subdivision plan, NZ combined business/residence, etc.

- Meet performance standards (e.g. passive house, LEED, LBC, HERS rating, etc)
- Electrification Measures (no on-site combustion, heat pump or variable refrigerant flow (VRF) for larger projects)
- On/off-site renewable energy procurement
- Energy storage capacity
- EV charging infrastructure
- Electrification in affordable housing units

Step 2 would be to identify incentives or inducements that would apply to NZ permit applications, site plan reviews, special permit applications or non-conforming use applications, preliminary subdivision plans, etc.

- Offer height/setback/FAR relaxation for residential by-right development
- Waive parking requirements for NZ commercial construction
- Expedited permitting for "sustainability" aspects of development applications (e.g. new (2020) "sustainability" criterion included in site plan review)
- Relaxation of new (2020) PRD requirements for NZ PRD development
- Creation of a NZ special overlay district (awaiting Attorney General decision on Northhampton). Could be considered for NMI/Starmet Site. Are there other locations?

Many other types of "green zoning" that deal with issues other than electrification (green roofs, tree protection, water use, etc.)

Additional Resources: NEEP report on Green Zoning, RMI slide deck on Green Zoning, RMI summary of Green Zoning case studies in MA