



**Town of Groton, Connecticut  
Planning & Zoning Commission**

**\*Special Meeting Agenda  
For Public Participation Instructions Please  
Visit:**

<https://www.agendasuite.org/iip/groton>

Office of Planning and  
Development Services  
Town Hall Annex  
134 Groton Long Point Road  
Groton, CT 06340

860-446-5970

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**Tuesday, January 17, 2023**

**6:00 PM**

**Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

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**I. ROLL CALL**

I.1. Roll Call

**IX. OLD BUSINESS**

- IX.1. Workshop- Text Amendment Pre-Application
- Short Term Rentals
  - Data Centers
  - Cannabis

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

XIII.1. Adjournment

\*COMMISSION WORKSHOP - PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL NOT BE ORALLY TAKEN DURING THE WORKSHOP. PUBLIC COMMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING BEFORE THE WORKSHOP.

Next Regular Meeting: January 24, 2023



### MEMORANDUM

TO: Jon Reiner  
FROM: Jeff Davis  
DATE: September 27, 2022  
RE: Short Term Rentals

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Horsley Witten Group, Inc. (HW) has participated in three meetings with the Town of Groton's Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) on potential regulatory options for Short-Term Rentals (STR). After its meeting on July 14, 2022, the PZC decided, even though many policy questions remained to be definitively answered, that HW should attempt a first draft at regulating STRs in the Zoning Regulations. At the August PZC meeting, while we ran out of time to discuss this first draft, the PZC requested a questionnaire on STRs so that they could get all their thoughts in writing. The PZC members then responded to the questionnaire and discussed the results at a meeting on September 21, 2022. Based on that discussion, HW is submitting this second draft.

Below are proposed edits to the Zoning Regulations regarding STRs.

#### Definition

The following definition would be added to Sec. 2.1 General Definitions.

**SHORT TERM RENTAL:** The use of a dwelling unit, in whole or in part, for transient lodging for compensation by Renters, for no more than thirty (30) continuous days.

*Note: The above is the definition used in the Town Council's draft STR Ordinance, with the addition of the word 'continuous.' HW recommends that the Town use this definition for consistency. It is also consistent with the PZC's stated desire to define STRs as being rentals of 30 days or less. Alternatively, the PZC could use the similar definition used in the State of Connecticut in its legislation from 2019 regulating the room occupancy tax on STRs: The transfer for consideration of the occupancy in a furnished residence or similar accommodation for a period of 30 days or less. A residence may include all or a portion of a home, apartment, condominium, or similar dwelling.*

#### Table of Permitted Uses

The use "Short Term Rental" should be inserted into Sec. 4.1 Table of Permitted Uses as the last entry under the Residential, Lodging category. The zoning districts should be marked in the table as follows:

*Note: Per the PZC's suggestion, STRs are listed as prohibited in the WW zoning district in this draft.*

RS, R, RU, RM, CN, CR, MDD, MTC, MVC: **SP/C**

IM, IG, WW, GR, GC: **X**

Pkng: See Conditions

Conditions: 5.1-7.C

*Note: There are a number of houses in the IM zone – for example, along Hazelnut Hill Road and 117. Would the PZC be comfortable allowing STR in the IM?*

## Use Standards

The following should be added as a new subsection 5.1-7.C.

### **5.1-7.C Short Term Rental**

Special Permits and the STR conditions listed below apply in the following zoning districts: RS, R, RU, RM, MDD, MTC, MVC

Conditions apply in the following zoning districts: CN, CR

*Note: Per the PZC's suggestion, in this draft, STRs do not require a special permit in the CN and CR but do in every other zone in which they are permitted.*

Short Term Rentals may be permitted in the following areas:

- CN, CR, MDD, MTC, and MVC zoning districts
- RS, R, RU, and RM zoning districts under the following circumstances:
  - Where the STR is located in:
    - One unit of a two-unit dwelling; or
    - A legally permitted structure accessory to (and detached from or attached to) a permitted principal dwelling. And . . .
  - The lot upon which the STR exists must have an owner-occupant.

*Note: The above is meant to reflect the general consensus reached by the PZC on September 21.*

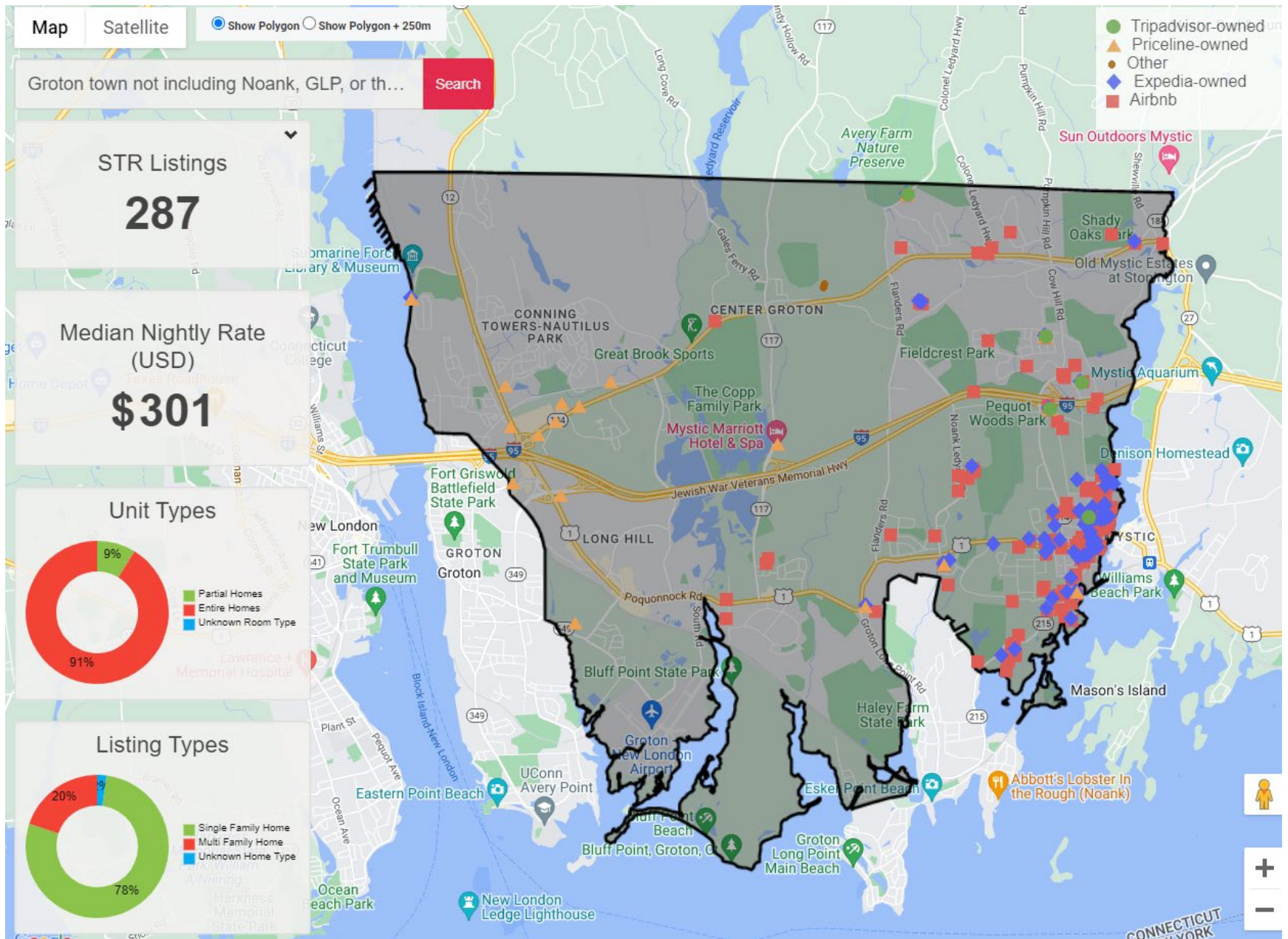
STR Conditions. STRs are permitted in the areas described above provided the following conditions are met:

1. **Town Permit:** All STRs must file for an STR Permit with the Town of Groton per the Code of Ordinances.  
*Note: This will be adjusted depending on how the Town finalizes an STR ordinance.*
2. **Number of STRs per Lot:** No more than one STR may be allowed per lot.  
*Note: The above is a new standard suggested by the PZC.*
3. **Off-street Parking:** One off-street parking space must be provided for every STR bedroom on the lot. All required off-street parking must be located on the lot where the STR is located.  
*Note: The above was edited so that all required parking must be accommodated on site.*
4. **Noise and Nuisance:** The Environmental Performance Standards of Sec. 7.4 shall apply to any STR. Further, the applicant shall demonstrate that, through setbacks, buffering,

topography, or other means presented by the STR owner, the STR shall not be a nuisance to abutting residential neighbors.

5. **Lighting:** For all STRs except those physically connected with the principal residential dwelling on a lot, the lighting standards Sec. of 8.5-3.A (Standards, General) and Sec. 8.5-3.B (Standards, Security, Aesthetics, and Display) apply.

*Note: I believe the above is what the PZC generally agreed to.*





### MEMORANDUM

TO: Deborah Jones, Assistant Director, Town of Groton, CT Planning and Development Services  
FROM: Jeff Davis, Senior Planner  
DATE: January 3, 2023  
RE: Data Centers

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Horsley Witten Group, Inc. (HW) has had several conversations with the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) regarding the drafting of new regulations for Data Centers. This has included discussions on June 15 and August 11, which led to a draft set of regulations on September 1. This first draft was followed by a questionnaire to help the PZC answer some key policy questions. The results of the questionnaire were discussed at a PZC meeting on October 27. At this meeting, the PZC decided to prohibit Data Centers as a principal permitted use and only allow them as accessory uses. At the follow up meeting on November 29, the PZC decided to take a slightly different approach and allow Data Centers only of a small scale and dedicated to support the needs of local businesses. The PZC wanted to know what the data center needs are for local businesses. Town staff provided HW with contact information for six large local businesses, and HW sent them a 4-question survey on data centers. HW received responses from three of these companies. Also following the discussion on November 29, PZC Chair Jeff Pritchard drafted his own suggestions for data centers.

At a special meeting on December 19, the PZC discussed the results of the survey to local business owners as well as Mr. Pritchard's suggestions. The PZC was generally comfortable with Mr. Pritchard's approach but wanted to add back in several pieces from HW's last draft. Below are the latest proposed additions to the Zoning Regulations regarding Data Centers based on this direction.

#### Definitions

The following definitions would be added to Sec. 2.1. General Definitions.

**DATA CENTER:** A facility that houses a group of networked computer servers in one physical location or multiple contiguous locations to centralize the storage, management and dissemination of data and information pertaining to a particular business or classification or body of knowledge.

*Note: The above is derived from the definition of "qualified data center" used in CT Public Act No. 21-1, An Act Concerning Incentives for Qualified Data Centers to Locate in the State.*

DATA CENTER, ACCESSORY: A Data Center that is collocated with a permitted principal use where such facility is accessory and is in support of the principal facility use.

#### Table of Permitted Uses

The use “Data Center” should be inserted into Sec. 4.1 Table of Permitted Uses under the Industrial category. The zoning districts should be marked in the table as follows:

IM, IG: SP/C

RS, R, RU, RM, MDD, WW, MTC, MVC, CN, CR, GR, GC: X

Pkng: -

Conditions: 5.1-6.F

The use “Data Center, Accessory” should be inserted into Sec. 4.1 Table of Permitted Uses under the Industrial category. The zoning districts should be marked in the table as follows:

RS, R, RU, RM, MDD, WW, MTC, MVC, CN, CR, IM, IG: A/C

GR, GC: X

Pkng: -

Conditions: 5.1-6.F

#### Use Standards

The following should be added as a new subsection 5.1-6.F.

#### **5.1-6.F Data Center**

Conditions apply as specified below. Special Permits apply in the following zoning districts: IM, IG. Special Permits do not apply to Accessory Data Centers.

1. **Size:** The size of any Data Center structure containing computer servers, excluding space for personnel needs and office and maintenance use, must not exceed 12,500 square feet. Any Accessory Data Center must be no more than 20% of the gross square footage of the principal use, as described above, or 1,000 square feet, whichever is less, so long as the dimensional, building, and lot standards of the underlying zoning district are met per Sec. 4.2. Equipment cabinet height must not exceed seven (7) feet.
2. **Location:** A Data Center cannot be located within 1,500 feet of another Data Center measured to the closest property line. This does not apply to an Accessory Data Center.
3. **Cooling:** Facility cooling using water evaporation technique is prohibited.
4. **Power Generation:** On site power generation using fossil fuels is prohibited except for an occurrence of unforeseen loss of off site power.
5. **Noise:** Noise standards of Section 7.4-3.I shall be satisfied.
6. **Fire Suppression and Mitigation Plan:** A written fire suppression plan acceptable to and approved by the Fire Chief of the fire district within which the facility is located shall be required, demonstrating the protocol and capacity to prevent, contain, and mitigate

fires. Fire suppression systems shall be installed that meet the codes and standards of the National Fire Protection Association.

7. **Utility Notification:** No Special Permit granted under this section shall become effective until the applicant submits an agreement with water and electrical utilities demonstrating that the Data Center's utility demands can be met at the proposed location for the estimated life of the system.
8. **Residential Districts:** In residential zoning districts and the MDD, Data Centers are not allowed accessory to residential uses but may be allowed accessory to permitted institutional or commercial uses.
9. **Buffers:** All Data Centers on a lot abutting a property in any zoning district other than IG and IM, or abutting a residential use in any zoning district, must follow the buffer standards of Sec. 8.1-6.

To add to **Sec. 7.4-3.I Noise**, after the existing noise level table . . .

All industrial uses on a lot abutting a property in any zoning district other than IG and IM must match the wave signature of the existing ambient noise level and not increase the existing ambient noise level as measured at the lot line. Such measurements must be made each hour over the course of a week to determine noise levels over time. Such measurements must also be taken with the industrial use running at full capacity, including any backup generators, to determine peak noise levels. This condition shall be demonstrated to the Town prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. In no instance shall the noise exceed the standards of the table above.