

Subdivision Regulation Revision Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What are these subdivision regulations for, anyway?

It's one way for the Town to make sure that the creation of new parcels of land follows a pattern that does not negatively impact neighboring property owners or the Town in general. Concerns that are particularly important are the protection of both private wells and public water systems, the facilitation of emergency services and disaster escape routes, and making sure that new roads and residences enhance the Town rather than excessively add to the Town's costs and therefore to all our tax bills.

Of course, we all want the maximum amount of freedom, but at the same time we also all want our property and our Town to be protected from the excessive use of freedom by somebody else. It's pretty difficult to find the perfect balance point between these two conflicting wants, and just where that balance point is can be pretty different for each Town. If a Town doesn't set up some system for finding that balance point for itself, then the balance point will ultimately be decided by Concord or by the actions of some private individual who, while exercising his or her maximum of freedom, may ignore the rest of the Town's financial, property, and lifestyle interests. Subdivision rules are one of the ways the State still allows a Town's residents to find the best balance for themselves between individual freedom and the adequate and appropriate protection of property.

2. I want to build some camps on my property. Will these regulations prevent me from doing that?

No. The regulations apply only when you want to change the boundary lines of your property or if you're developing a condominium. If you're not doing either of those things, then the regulations don't affect you at all.

3. What if I want to build a house near the back of my property and I need to build a road to the site?

Go right ahead. The road you are discussing would actually be a private driveway and the subdivision regulations don't apply to you in that case. But please remember that you do need to check with the Town about connecting your driveway to a Town road, or the State if you're connecting it to a State road.

- 4. Each of my kids want a camp of their own on my property. Do I have to go through a subdivision process if I give each of them their own lot to build on? After all, it's all in the family!**

Yes, you do. You would be changing your boundary lines by creating new lots. Even though it's all a private family matter right now, the Town has to consider not only what is happening today, but also what might happen in 10, 20, and even more years. At some point, one or more of your children may want or even need to sell and the new people moving in will need to know that their property is safe and protected - which also increases the value of that property! You, your other children, and your neighbors too, all deserve that same assurance. The subdivision regulations give everyone involved a way to gain confidence that each new subdivision has been given some careful thought.

- 5. I don't think that a few people sitting in some office somewhere should be able to tell me what's good for me, my neighbors, or the Town!**

That's why the Town has a Master Plan, the Planning Board has procedures, and there are set regulations for subdivisions, all of which are developed through public processes. And because of each of these things, and State RSAs that define the powers of planning boards, the Planning Board has to follow step-by-step methods even while it is trying to serve the Town's - and the subdivider's! - best interests. The subdivision regulations do allow some flexibility to make exceptions and allowances when there are unusual situations or the regulations would cause undue hardship, but every subdivision process is a public process that gives abutters a voice they can use so they can object to the objectionable or praise the praiseworthy. The Planning Board doesn't make its decision all on its own without the property owner and his neighbors taking part!

- 6. I'm a businessman who needs to make a reasonable profit. These regulations just make my job harder and might even prevent me from making any money.**

It is not the purpose of the subdivision regulations to create unnecessary barriers to entrepreneurs; at the same time, however, facilitating an entrepreneur's profits is also not their primary purpose. Rather, they seek to ensure development in the Town that is in accordance with the Master Plan, the needs for safety, pure water, and clean waste disposal, and the Town's or the individual residents' well-being. In short, it is the Board's duty to help find ways that a proposed subdivision can meet both the subdivider's and the Town's interests.