

Zoning for Middleton

Planning for 2025-2026



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Objectives for today

- general overview of upcoming initiatives
- review types of zoning amendments
- review process for updating zoning bylaws
- timeline and process in Middleton
- review amendments on deck for 2025 and 2026



Upcoming initiatives

- Route 114 Northern Corridor Economic Development Study
- Middleton Town Center Study
- Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw Review
- Housing Production Plan 2025 - 2029
- Preparation for Comprehensive Plan Update - kickoff in 2026



Why update zoning bylaws?

1. General upkeep for clarity, relevance, readability
2. Revise to align with State and Federal guidance
3. Introduce tools to support Town's priorities and goals

Technical Changes

No affect on application of bylaws

Update

example: fix outdated, inconsistent, missing, or confusing content

Reorganize

example: rearrange topics and sections to follow logical order

Consolidate

example: move all definitions to one section

Policy Changes

Changes to process, procedures, rules, or map that will affect how bylaws are applied

Procedural

example: clarify or streamline procedures to better serve residents

Prescriptive

example: adopt new zoning tools to support goals and future plans

Restrictive

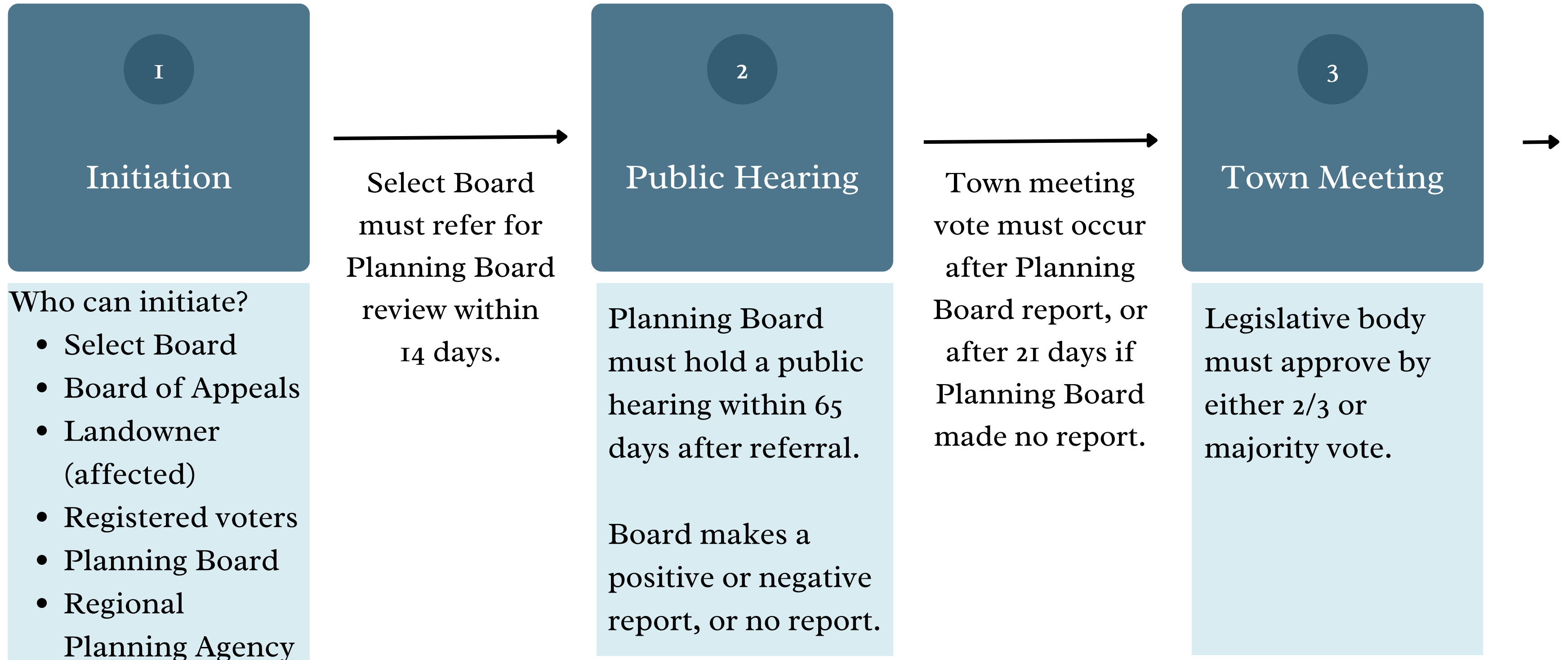
example: adopt or change zoning to regulate or restrict uses

A detailed street map of a neighborhood, likely in a rural or semi-rural area. The map shows a network of roads including North Dixey Drive, Lake St., Forest St., Main St., and Route 62. There are several ponds labeled, such as Mill Pond, Pout Pond, and Aunt Betty's Pond. Other landmarks include Dansread Place, Maytum Way, and a Brook. The map is rendered in a light gray, semi-transparent style, serving as a background for the text overlay.

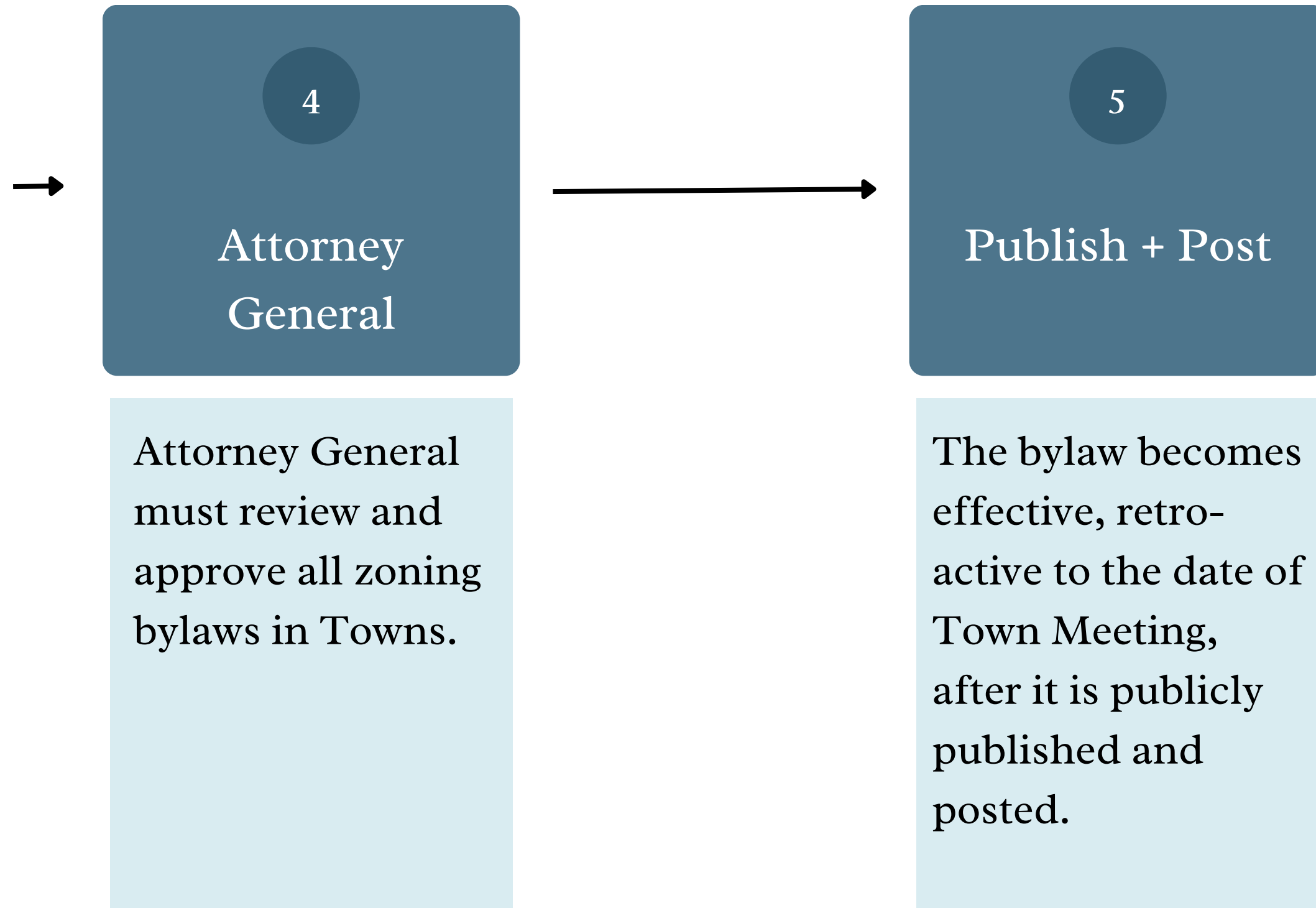
Keep in mind:

- zoning is biased toward uses present when it was adopted
- zoning historically was designed to restrict uses, recent interest in more prescriptive approaches

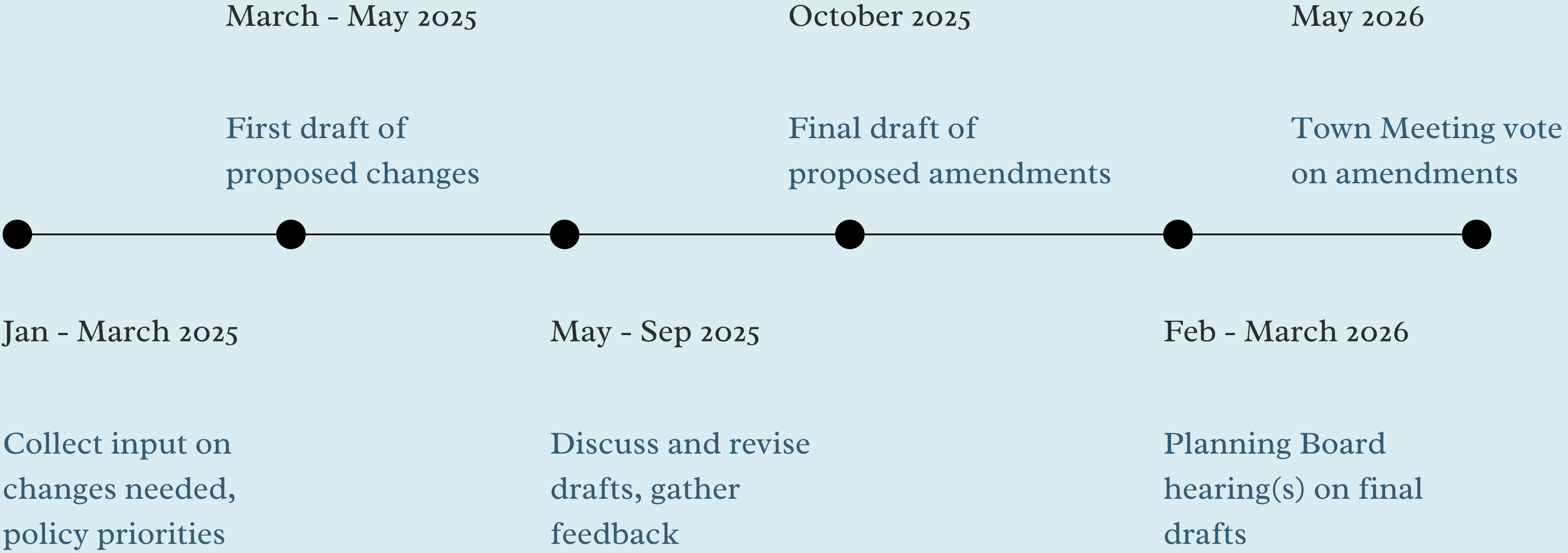
Process for updating zoning bylaws

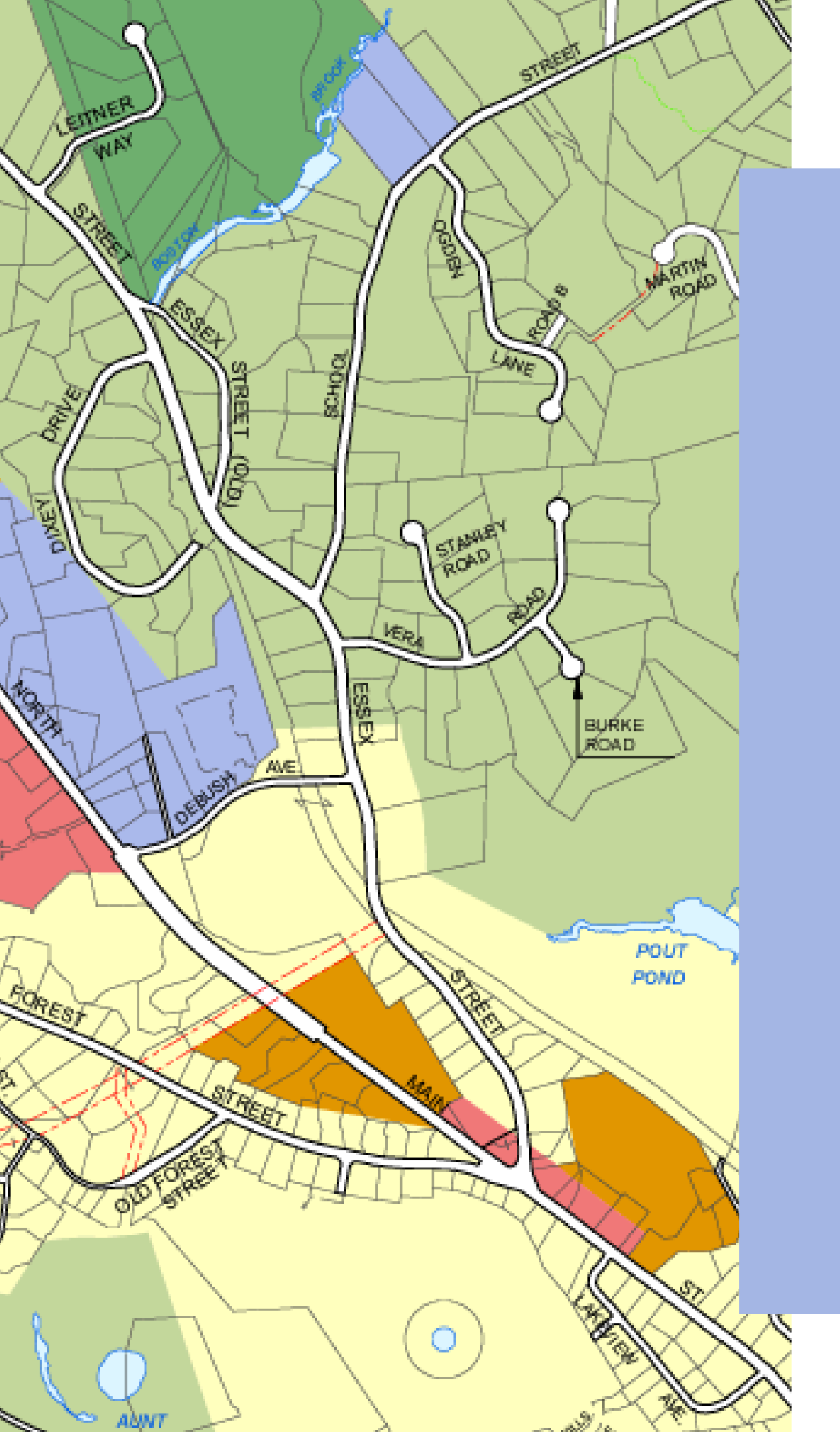


Process for updating zoning bylaws (cont.)



Timeline





Zoning changes to date

- Current zoning code adopted in 2005 and amended in entirety in 2008
- Minimal updates since then
- Town Meeting requested the formation of a Zoning Bylaw Review Committee in 2018; this Committee completed a zoning audit in 2022
- Town staff secured grant funding for a comprehensive review in 2023
- All previous audits and reviews will be incorporated into this process

On deck for 2025

Technical

Policy Changes

Sec 8.I	Revise text to reflect new Essex County Flood Insurance Rate Map

Concepts to consider for 2026

Technical Changes to Consider

- Remove outdated information as recommended in audit
- Clarify language as recommended in audit

Policy Changes to Consider

- Design guidelines for commercial districts
- Commercial parking regulations
- Strategies to increase affordable housing, including to achieve safe harbor from 40B target
- Inclusionary zoning
- Strategies to conserve open space and agricultural resources



Questions to consider:

- Any specific sections that are difficult to implement, causing confusion, or leading to unintended outcomes? Trends to consider planning for?
- Affordable housing priorities or strategies to consider?
- Any recommendations from 2018 Master Plan to carry forward?
- From your perspective as a board member, what are current policy priorities for Middleton?
- From your perspective as a board member, what are current development concerns that zoning may be able to help address?