

Town of Weld
Public Information Session
Town Hall
7PM, Tuesday, August 19, 2025

Comprehensive Plan Update
Draft Commercial Site-Review Plan Ordinance

Tonight's Agenda:

- Update: Ordinance Enactment Process to-date
- Update: Select Board/Ordinance Committee's Effort to incorporate Public Survey Responses into current Draft Ordinance
- Brief Outline/Summary of the Draft Ordinance
- Public Comment/Q&A
- Adjournment

Ordinance Status Update

- Ordinance Project: Born from citizens' requests to Select Board in Summer 2024 to regulate Solar Farms
- 2 different Select Boards have worked on it
- Related Moratorium on Solar Farm Applications approved/extended 3x
 - March 9, 2024 (Town approved)
 - October 15, 2024 (Expired/Town re-approved)
 - March 25, 2025 (Selectboard extended 180 days from April 15, 2025)
 - Expires September 15, 2025, unless extended by Select Board
- Joint Effort: Select Board and Appointed Ordinance Committee*
(Committee met 5x from 2024-2025)
 1. Carol Conant
 2. Dave Conant
 3. Richard Doughty
 4. Rick Duval
 5. Lisa Miller
 6. Laurie Pratt
 7. Mike Stephenson
 8. Dina Walker

* All available to answer questions

- Town Attorney consulted/reviewed 3x

Before we delve in....

Purpose of this Ordinance Project

- This Ordinance attempts to allow the Town as a whole (rather than *each individual*) to decide how the Town develops **commercially**.
- Each of us = different view
- Ordinance intended to be a **compromise** that MOST people can be happy with, while

Recognizing --

- those who want NO commercial development under *any* circumstances; and
- those who want UNRESTRAINED commercial development under *every* circumstance

cannot be accommodated simultaneously.

Public Survey Results

20 written responses received

Highlights*

Exclusions to Scope of Commercial Projects

- All responses either agreed with current exclusions or suggested exclusions already covered by the Draft Ordinance

Commercial Multi-Family Residences (MFR)

- Vast Majority (16) → Yes, MFRs should require approval
- Majority ((12) → 5-family limit was too high, suggested going down to 2-families**

Large Commercial Structures (LCS)

- Vast Majority (15) → LCS should not be visible from outside of property line
- Smaller Majority (10) → wants more requirements for LCS:
 - Noise pollution

- No lighted signs
- Watershed plans
- Excessive large vehicle traffic
- Minority (3 or less) → For those who wanted less restricted LCS → no consensus on alternative

Solar Farms

- Majority (11) → Solar Farms should be banned or have more requirements than average commercial structure
- No consensus → alternate proposal of size of Solar Farm

Community Impact of All Commercial Projects

- All but one wanted Community Impact requirements in Ordinance
- Majority (13) → similar restrictions as above (e.g., noise, lights, watershed, traffic)

Summary of Draft Ordinance

-Purpose/Scope

- **Purpose:** to regulate
 - Commercial projects (non-residential)
 - Multi-family residences (3 families or more)
- Exclusions: The Ordinance does NOT apply to:
 - Non-multi-family residential constructions and alterations
 - Agriculture
 - Lumbering
 - Small commercial activities operated out of a residence (eggs, syrup, produce, etc.)
 - Residential solar panels
 - Home occupations
- **Example:** if you want to install a commercial structure or multi-family residence, submit a Commercial Site-Plan Application for approval before applying for a Building Permit.

Summary of Draft Ordinance

-Large Commercial Projects

- Commercial Project structures of a certain size (see below) may not be visible off-property from any location within the Town.
 1. Project Structure larger than 3,000 ft²,
 2. Project Site larger than 10,000 ft², or
 3. Project Structure taller than 75 ft.
- **Example:** If you want to build a Retail Store larger than the above, it will need to be visually buffered (e.g., by woods) from the rest of the Town. If you want to build a Retail Store smaller than the above, no such buffer is required.

Summary of Draft Ordinance

-Community Impact Nuisance Criteria

The Commercial Project should not create an ***unreasonable nuisance*** for the rest of the community (Sec 5.11):

1. Excessive lighting (Sec 5.6, Sec 5.11)
2. Excessive noise (Sec 5.7, Sec 5.11)
3. Excessive noxious odor (Sec. 5.8, Sec 5.11)
4. Excessive blocking of scenic views (Sec 5.11)

The Planning Board is charged with using these criteria when assessing an application under this ordinance.

Q & A

PUBLIC COMMENT

Help us to make this ordinance as acceptable as possible.