

## Article 26

### Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Bylaw

#### Q&A

**1. Q: What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?**

**A:** Though the State has a detailed definition, put simply, an Accessory Dwelling Unit is a small residential living space located on the same lot as another home. Carlisle zoning has allowed them since 1989, but if you're not familiar with the term, you may have heard them referred to as "accessory apartments," "in-law suites," or "granny flats."

**2. Q: What is the intent of the proposed bylaw amendment?**

**A:** The proposed bylaw intends to align Carlisle's zoning with the State law for Protected Use Accessory Dwelling Units, by allowing Protected Use ADUs on single-family properties via the by-right Site Plan Review process with the Planning Board. It also intends to limit the number of ADUs achievable on a lot to 1 in almost all cases.

**3. Q: What does "Protected Use" mean?**

**A:** In Massachusetts General Law, "Protected Use" refers to certain uses that municipalities may not unreasonably regulate. In addition to ADUs, protected uses include educational and religious uses. These uses must be allowed by-right and cannot be denied.

**4. Q: How large can my ADU be?**

**A:** Up to 900 square feet, which aligns with the State law.

**5. Q: What is the process for permitting an ADU?**

**A:** The proposed bylaw will require a Site Plan Review process with the Planning Board, which will include abutter notification, a legal ad in the newspaper, and a public hearing.

**6. Q: What does a YES vote mean?**

**A:** A YES vote for Article 26 means the following:

1. There will be a local public process (the Site Plan Review process I mentioned earlier) for by-right Accessory Dwelling Units up to 900 square feet.
2. The requirements for by-right ADUs are clearly spelled out in zoning and not left up to the Building Commissioner to figure out.
3. It will no longer be possible for property owners to obtain new 1200 square foot ADUs, as they can in the current zoning bylaw.
4. Compliance with Title 5 and local Board of Health regulations – and all other State and local regulations – is still required.

**7. Q: Where can I find more information on the proposal?**

**A:** There is a link called "Accessory Apartment Bylaw / Accessory Dwelling Unit Law" on the lefthand side of the Planning Board webpage. I update it regularly!