

Questions You May Have About the Proposed Orthopaedic Surgery Center



Street view illustration showing existing house and barn at 297 Pleasant Street, which would be preserved and converted to administrative office space. The surgery center would be built into the hillside behind the existing home and barn, largely hidden from view from the street. The evergreen shrubs indicate the approximate location of the surgery center's roof.

Concord Orthopaedics is a highly respected orthopaedic practice founded in 1974 in Concord. We have been at our current location at 264 Pleasant Street since 1981. We employ nearly 200 people and pay \$280,000 per year in property taxes to the City of Concord for our current facility. Patients are referred to Concord Orthopaedics from all over New Hampshire and surrounding states.

You may have heard or read about our proposal for a new orthopaedic surgery center at 297 Pleasant Street to the west of our current location. We are proposing a change in zoning in order to construct this facility. This fact sheet is designed to provide answers to the most commonly asked questions.

Why does Concord Orthopaedics need to expand?

We need to modernize our surgical operating facilities to better meet the needs of our patients and our medical staff. Our current location at 264 Pleasant Street does not provide adequate space for expansion.

Why does Concord Orthopaedics need to build a new orthopedic day surgery center?

- To keep current and to meet growing patient demand for our services.
- What once were hospital in-patient surgical procedures are now commonly being done in day surgery centers, because it is less expensive and more convenient for patients.
- As our population demographics shift and the baby boom generation gets older, the demand for medical services that we perform, like hip and joint replacements, is growing.
- Given the age of our current facility, a new state-of-the-art surgical center will help us to recruit surgeons and medical staff to Concord.

What other options were considered?

Over the last three years, we searched all over Concord for a location that would meet our needs. We could not find a suitable site to expand on other than the property we purchased at 297 Pleasant Street. We need to be close to Concord Hospital for the safety and medical needs of both our patients and Concord Hospital's patients and plan to partner with the hospital on the surgery center.

Could Concord Orthopaedics expand on its existing site?

We have fully considered that option and explored it in depth. Given that construction would take as long as 18 months, and we would need to tear down all or part of our existing building, it is not feasible for us to expand on our existing site and continue to deliver the high quality services our patients expect.

Why is Concord Orthopaedics proposing to rezone an area larger than it needs for its day surgery center?

To be honest, this was not our preferred option. We planned to request a zoning variance to build our proposed orthopaedic day surgery center at 297 Pleasant Street to the west of our current location. However, after consulting with the City of Concord, we have undertaken a rezoning proposal for an area that is quite clearly undergoing an evolution and would benefit from proactive planning. The area in question has been the subject of zoning debates over the years and has seen its zoning designation shift back and forth from institutional to mixed residential.

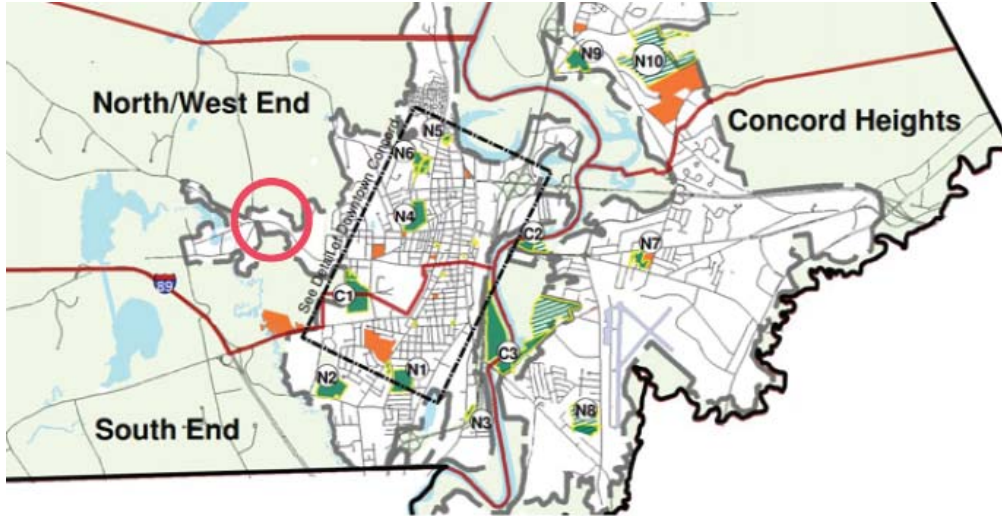
Where is the area that is proposed to be rezoned located?

The area outlined by the dotted red line in the zoning map below shows the area of proposed rezoning. The green area is the section of the lot at 297 Pleasant included within the proposed rezoned area. The purple area to its right is zoned institutional and includes Concord Hospital, Dartmouth Hitchcock Concord, Pleasant Street Family Medicine, the Unitarian Universalist Church, the Carmelite Monastery and our current location. The purple area further left is St. Paul's School.



What is Concord's Urban Growth Boundary?

According to the current Concord Master Plan, "The 1993 Master Plan introduced the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), an innovative anti-sprawl policy that has since guided the City's land use regulatory changes. The UGB defines the limits of urban development within the City such that the land inside the UGB is served by City water and sewer utilities, there is an extensive transportation network available, and the City will continue to focus its investment in such infrastructure in this area. The most intensive residential development as well as the vast majority of the City's economic development have occurred and are planned for the area inside the UGB."



Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) depicted with broken grey line. Red circle points out area of proposed rezoning within UGB.

What is "Medium Density Residential" zoning?

According to Concord's zoning ordinance, "The Medium Density Residential (RM) District is established to accommodate single- and two-family dwellings, cluster developments, and planned unit developments at densities of between one and five (5) dwelling units per acre, elementary and secondary schools, and housing for the elderly at densities not exceeding fourteen (14) dwelling units per acre, in areas within the Urban Growth Boundary where municipal utilities are present or anticipated, with the lowest density corresponding to the absence of utilities and the greater densities corresponding to full municipal utility service."

The RM Zoning District also permits by conditional use permit or special exception, such institutional uses as "residential social service centers, assisted living residences, nursery schools and child and adult day care facilities, churches and convents, municipal and governmental facilities, conservation centers, community centers as well as certain indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, veterinary hospitals and commercial greenhouses." The area in question (tan color on map above) is currently zoned RM.

What is "Institutional" zoning?

According to Concord's zoning ordinance, "The Institutional (IS) District is established to accommodate large scale governmental, educational, healthcare, and cultural facilities together with medical and professional offices and high density residential uses in buildings of high quality architectural design, and within well landscaped environs. All uses in the IS District shall have full municipal utility services and access to the City's collector and arterial streets and to limited access highways." The area in which our current facility, Concord Hospital and most nearby other medical offices and religious institutions are located (blue color on map) is zoned IS, as is the St. Paul's campus to our west.

How is rezoning the area in question consistent with Concord's Master Plan?

These are the first 5 of the city's 8 economic development goals as outlined in the current Master Plan. Economic Development Goals:

1. Enhance the property tax base, either through strategic new development where appropriate, redevelopment, or a combination of the two.
2. Conserve the tax base by discouraging sprawl and the attendant inefficient dispersal of City services.

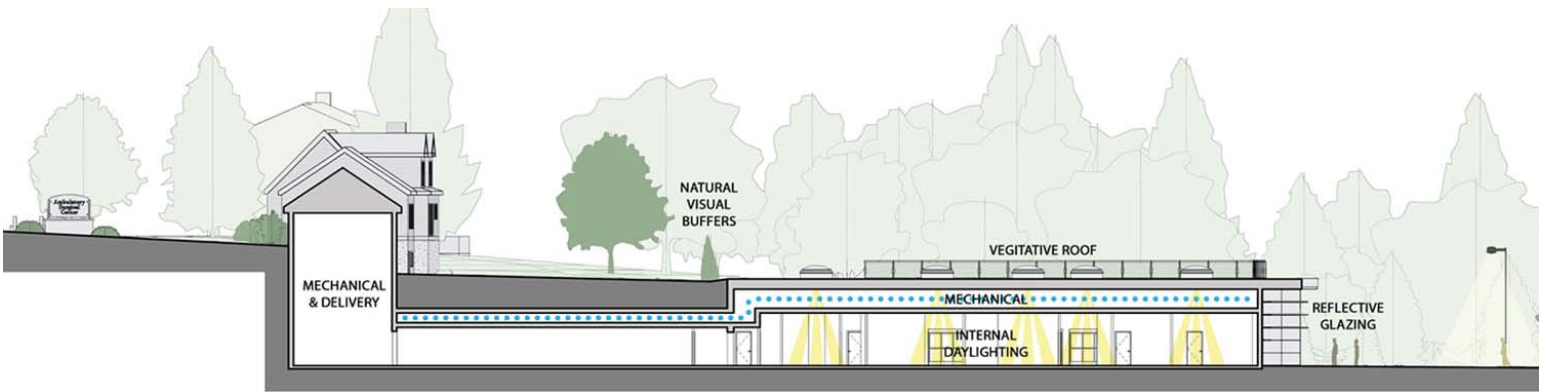
3. Retain, and encourage the expansion of, existing local businesses.
 4. Promote the City's quality of life amenities which play an important role in attracting highly skilled labor and professional businesses.
 5. Focus the City's economic development efforts primarily on redevelopment of previously developed areas.
- The rezoning proposal is also consistent with the Master Plan's land use goals.

If the area in question is rezoned will current residents be forced to sell their homes or move?

No. Residents and property owners in the area will be free to do as they choose. Immediate, rapid or large-scale development in this area is not foreseen. Even if the corridor is returned to Institutional zoning, single family and duplex/two family dwellings, among other types of traditional residential uses, will continue to be permitted because those uses are permitted by right in the Institutional Zoning District.

What would the proposed day surgery center look like?

This is our home and we want to be good neighbors. As illustrated below, our proposed day surgery center is designed to fit into the existing character of the area and be sensitive to those who live nearby. The center itself and its parking area will not be visible from Pleasant Street. The building will be below street level and tucked into the hillside. Outside lighting will be dark sky compliant. A conservation easement will be placed on the majority of the property. This will allow public access to nearby trails and open space.



Section view of proposed orthopaedic day surgery center viewed from west side of property.



Front view of proposed Orthopaedic Surgery Center (OSC). OSC is set into the hill and not visible from Pleasant Street.

If you are allowed to proceed, what will you do with your existing facility?

We will continue to see office patients in our existing facility and use it for administrative staff.

What are your future plans for the rest of the 30 acres at 297 Pleasant Street?

Our plan is to preserve approximately 25 of the 30 acres by putting the land into a conservation easement. (See figure at right). This will allow public access to trails for walking, skiing, birdwatching, etc.

Will you pay property taxes on your new day surgery center?

Yes, likely more than \$150,000 per year.

Why does rezoning this area make sense?

Here's why it seems to be a sensible decision:

1. During our research, we discovered that the area in question was zoned institutional (IS) until 2001. It is a bit unclear as to why the zoning was changed to Medium Density Residential (RM) at that time. In hindsight, this seems to have been a questionable decision. A number of lots in the current RM district are owned by institutions (The Birches and St. Paul's School, for example). Given the development pattern along the Route 202/9 corridor from Concord High School west toward St. Paul's School it seems to make sense to return the zoning to institutional.
2. It's quite apparent that this corridor is evolving. This was once an agricultural area, but when Concord Hospital moved there in 1954 that began to change. It is now home to Concord Hospital, Dartmouth Hitchcock Concord, a number of dental offices (including oral surgery), general medical and physical therapy offices, 4 nursing homes and/or assisted living facilities, a mental health counseling center as well as Russell Animal Hospital, a monastery, the Unitarian Universalist Church and St. Paul's School.
3. Returning the zoning to institutional appears fully consistent with Concord's Master Plan. The area in question is within the City's Urban Growth Boundary within which city leaders have planned to concentrate growth and economic development.
4. And finally, this area is home to our regional health system. Concord Hospital and medical services are an essential contributor to continued economic opportunity in Concord, but as of now there's limited opportunity for growth in proximity to the hospital.

Given all this, it does seem inevitable that the zoning of this area will be eventually returned to institutional.

Additional questions?

Please contact Carl Moskey at Concord Orthopaedics.

603-224-3368



Map showing proposed orthopaedic surgery center lot (entire property is outlined in red) and conservation easement (green area) within proposed rezoned area (black outline)