

Town Article 5 – Zoning Amendment 4

This article amends Subsection 15.3.2 of the Zoning Ordinance (1) for all lots in Zone G, Conservation District (2), requiring a minimum wetland setback of 75 feet. Raymond’s Conservation District, described in Zoning Article 4.9.1, was established “in the interest of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare by preserving the Town’s lakes, ponds, river systems, wetlands and important local water resources.” The Planning Board would like to further protect the groundwater, particularly near wellheads and aquifers. (3)

It effectively removes the language, “except a minimum wetland setback of 25 feet shall apply to lots that contain an approved structure with a drinking well or municipal water hookup and an approved working septic system on record at date of adoption on record as of March 14, 2023.” This was approved by the voters in 2023. (4)

A YES vote would require a 75 foot wetland setback in Conservation District Zone G.

A NO vote would leave the Zoning Ordinance unchanged.

Reasons why some voters might vote yes:

- To make wetland buffers consistent for Zone G lots, bringing all to a 75-foot minimum
- To support protection of drinking water as identified as the number two priority in the 2009 Master Plan survey results for quality of life and future land use (5)

Reasons why some voters might vote no:

- Think it is unreasonable for residents with existing structures in Zone G to meet the more restrictive setback, potentially decreasing their property value, reducing buildable area on their lot, and possibly preventing planned additions or added time and cost associated with the Zoning Board of Adjustment (6)
- To explore other options to protect water sources from density of development near wetlands in Zone G

References:

1. Town of Raymond Zoning Ordinance, last amended October 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/wxtmdft6>
2. Groundwater Overlay District in Zoning Map B, dated April 2021, <https://tinyurl.com/mry24xv4>
3. Public Hearing on Zoning Amendments, Planning Board meeting, 01/23/2025, timestamp [41:14], <https://tinyurl.com/2tdnu3ss>
4. 2023 Town Voting Results, Article 7, <https://tinyurl.com/2bj7jmwy>
5. 2009 Master Plan survey results, Section IV, p. 51, <https://tinyurl.com/48d45a7u>
6. Deliberative Session, 02/08/2025, timestamp [32:37], <https://tinyurl.com/5dbc5csa>