

WD Zoning Overview – Rail-Served Waterfront Property

Town of Waterford, Connecticut

Why This Property Is Unique

This site is located within the **Waterfront Development (WD) District**, one of Waterford’s most flexible and opportunity-driven zoning designations. Combined with **active rail access directly into the property and warehouse**, waterfront exposure, and multiple existing structures, this zoning allows for **industrial operations, marine-related uses, commercial activity, or residential redevelopment**—all in one location.

Uses That Fit This Property Well (By Right)

The following uses are **permitted without a special permit** and align directly with the existing infrastructure:

- Rail-served **warehouse and industrial operations**
- Marine and boat storage, service, repair, or sales
- Port-related or water-dependent industrial uses
- Boat yards, docks, piers, and wharves
- Marine equipment sales and support facilities
- Fuel docks and marina-related uses
- Nautical or maritime-themed facilities

These uses benefit from **direct rail access, gated entry, fencing, paved yard space, and existing buildings**, allowing for immediate or phased use.

Value-Add Uses (Special Permit)

With Planning & Zoning approval, the property may also support:

- **Residential development** (currently up to 40 units)
- Mixed-use or adaptive reuse projects
- Restaurants, retail, and professional offices
- Hotel or lodging use
- Port facilities and bulk storage

- Fishing, lobstering, and seafood processing operations

This flexibility makes the site especially attractive for **redevelopment, repositioning, or mixed-use concepts**.

Key Development Standards (Quick Facts)

- **Minimum lot size:** 20,000 SF (site exceeds this)
 - **Building coverage:** Up to 50%
 - **Base height limit:** 25 feet
 - **Height incentives:** Up to 45 feet with reduced coverage or public waterfront access
 - **Setbacks:**
 - Front: 20 ft
 - Side: 10 ft (may be reduced to 0 with approval)
 - Rear: 20 ft
 - Minimum 25 ft from river at mean water level
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Major Incentives That Increase Value

This zoning strongly rewards thoughtful development:

- **Additional building height** in exchange for lower coverage
- **Increased riverfront building width** if public access is provided
- **Flexible parking placement**, including off-site parking within 400 feet
- Encourages **reuse of existing buildings** and infrastructure

These incentives can materially improve **project feasibility and return on investment**.

Why You Care

- Rare **rail-served waterfront zoning**
- Supports **industrial, marine, commercial, or residential** strategies
- Existing buildings allow **income, storage, or phased redevelopment**
- Proximity to major employers and institutions drives demand
- Zoning flexibility + incentives = **multiple exit strategies**