

# NEW CANAAN AIRS CHANGE IN ZONING

## Town Split Over Proposal to Upgrade Plot Sizes and Restrict Multiple Units

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**NEW CANAAN, Conn., Nov. 10**—A lively controversy has erupted here anew over a plan to upgrade nearly half of the town's 14,000 acres.

The zoning commission proposed to increase the minimum plot size from two to four acres in a 4,500-acre area in the northern part of the town. They also proposed an increase from one acre to two in a 2,400-acre section in the southern part.

Sixty-four acres near the center of town also would be raised from small lots to a minimum of one acre each. In addition, the commission urges a halt to construction of apartment buildings pending the preparation of new specifications covering multi-dwelling projects.

The commission's program, which will be presented formally at a public hearing Nov. 19, is designed to limit the ultimate size of the town's population and to preserve as far as practicable the semi-rural character of the community.

A similar but less drastic proposal made last June aroused heated public debate and was withdrawn for further study. The current proposal also has engendered sharp differences.

Town opinion is divided between the long-time residents who are opposed to upgrading on the theory that it would stifle growth and the newer residents, many of them com-

muters, who feel that the present restrictions will result in increased tax rates, overcrowding in the schools and a general invasion of "privacy."

Among the more vocal opponents of the plan are real estate operators, who are anxious to purchase large tracts of still undeveloped land for small home subdivisions.

### Plan's Adoption Expected

It is generally believed that the five-member commission will have its way, however. Under Connecticut law, the body is empowered to order the revisions even though opposition is expressed. The only stipulation is that the revision must be by a three-quarter vote if 20 per cent of the property owners protest. It is understood that the commission already has received support from a majority of the landowners involved.

John H. Waldron, commission chairman, said in announcing the proposal that it represented the "culmination of an extended study by the Zoning Commission to safeguard further the health, safety and welfare of the community and to preserve the semi-rural and open feeling of the outlying sections."

The proposed zoning changes are tied in closely with a town-wide development plan, details of which still are to be announced. Paul Davidoff, town planner, already has discussed the possibility of providing for multiple dwellings of the garden apartment type and also the construction of subsidized housing for middle-income groups.

Mr. Davidoff also has disclosed that the planners were considering whether it would be more practical from a "esthetic and economic" viewpoint to sell large tracts to developers or to provide for executive office buildings or research laboratories. Also being considered is additional recreation space.