

Explanation of FAR (Floor Area Ratio) in Southborough Zoning

(from mysouthborough.com)

The Special Town Meeting 2021 Warrant Article for the Downtown District proposes a 0.3 FAR by right, with up to 0.5 FAR allowed by Special Permit from the Planning Board.

Zoning Definitions in the Southborough Town Code clarify:

FLOOR AREA RATIO

The ratio of the aggregate **gross floor area** of all floors of a building or buildings on a lot to the total lot area. The gross floor area shall not include unenclosed porches, cellars, attics or garages not used for human occupancy.

FLOOR AREA, GROSS

The aggregate horizontal area, in square feet, of all floors of a building or several buildings on the same lot, **measured from the interior faces of walls enclosing each building, exclusive of stair and elevator wells, garages, basement and other areas used only for storage or for services incidental to the operation and maintenance of such a building or buildings.** In the absence of information as to what portion of the building will be used for such storage and services, 80% of the aggregate floor area shall be deemed to be the floor area for the purposes of computing the required off-street parking and loading spaces.

FAR visual representation

Presentations by the Board of Selectmen and Economic Development Committee used this graphic (referencing the *American Planning Association as the source*).

They explained that (1) Floor Area Ratio is constant for a zone.

(2) A floor area ratio of 1.0 means that floor area may equal lot area.

(3) A FAR of 2.0 means that the floor area may be up to two times as large as the lot area.

(4) A FAR of 0.5 means that the floor area may be no more than half the lot area.

