



Fresh Coast Planning

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MEMORANDUM

To: Ravenna Township Planning Commission
From: Kevin Yeomans
Date: 11/11/2024
Re: Master Plan – Chapters for Review

For your November 18, 2024, meeting we have prepared two chapters of the Master Plan for your review. Below we have identified the chapters that have been prepared for your review and a brief summary of items for you to review.

As you review the attached chapters, please note that each chapter has four sections. The purpose of each section is as follows:

Purpose Statement – Identifies the purpose and intent of the land use classification or community attribute.

General Description of Appropriate Uses – Provides examples of uses that may be appropriate within each land use classification.

Goals – Identifies the goals in list format for ease of use when reviewing land use and zoning ordinance amendment proposals.

Recommendations – Provides recommendations on how the Township may help promote and create the desired future state of the land use as identified in the Purpose Statement.

Additionally, when you are reviewing the chapters, please note that different color text was used to indicate the following:

- a. Text in black is taken from your existing master plan.
- b. Text in green indicates language that is from your existing master plan.
- c. Text in red is recommended edits to existing language.
- d. Text in blue is newly recommended language to include in the new master plan.

1. Chapter 1 – Agricultural Uses: In your existing master plan there is only one goal stated for Agricultural lands. This goal has been included in the attached draft; all other language used is new. The intent of this language is to expand on the goal of protecting agricultural lands and providing recommendations or actions steps that the Planning Commission and/or Township can take to help reach the identified goals. The added language is designed similar to what has been used in other communities who are highly protective of their agricultural lands. If the Commission believes the Township should be less restrictive on non-agricultural development with agriculturally zoned lands, it may be beneficial to rewrite many of the goals and recommendations contained within the first draft of this chapter

2. Chapter 2 – Residential Uses: In your existing master plan there is only one goal stated for Residential lands. As you'll see while we have included the language in the first draft of the new residential chapter, we recommend that each item in the old goal is broken out to be a separately identified goal for residential land uses. Otherwise, the goals within this chapter are very similar to what already exists.

We look forward to your discussions and direction. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

KLY
Planner

CHAPTER ONE AGRICULTURAL USES

Purpose Statement

The primary intent and purpose of the Agricultural Land Use Classification is to protect prime agricultural areas based on farming best practices and farming operations. Farmland and farming operations play an important role in the economy and heritage of the Township and are relied upon to feed our community, State, and Country both now and for future generations. The suitability of land for farming should be a key factor in determining which areas are appropriate for inclusion in the agricultural land use classification.

The secondary intent and purpose of the Agricultural Land Use classification is to protect and preserve Open Space and the Rural Character of the community.

General Description of Appropriate Land Uses

The primary or principal uses intended for Agricultural lands are cropland, pastureland, rangeland, forest land, and other similar uses. Any other uses within agricultural lands should be designed to promote and facilitate the primary intended uses. Further, any non-farm use should be located and designed so as to protect Farmland and the rural character of these lands.

The Township recognizes that agritourism is a growing trend and neither encourages or discourages these types of uses.

Goals

- Encourage the continuation of agriculture and agricultural related activities and to protect the lands identified as suitable for agricultural use and production.
- Protect Prime Agricultural Areas.
- Protect Farming Operations from encroachment of uses that would inhibit their ability to operate.
- Protect and preserve Open Space and the rural character of the community.

Recommendations

- Review the Zoning Map to ensure lands that are suitable for farming are zoned appropriately.
- Periodically review Agricultural District regulations to ensure there is an appropriate relationship between allowed uses and the intent of the district.
- Periodically review zoning ordinance regulations to ensure they are not negatively impacting the safe, efficient, and financial feasibility of farming operations on lands with prime farmland.
- Create development boundaries or other limiting provisions that protect prime farmlands by generally restricting residential neighborhood development, commercial development, and industrial development within that area.
- Review the Agricultural and Rural Residential Districts and allow farming only in areas where appropriate.
- Review and develop area, width, depth, and other regulations to ensure parcels are developed and oriented to protect the rural image and blend development with the natural landscape.
- Review and develop regulations to accommodate and protect wildlife corridors.
- Encourage soil conservation practices, the prudent use of fertilizers and pesticides and other means of conserving wildlife habitat, wetlands and woodlands.

- Consider adoption of regulations which require the preservation of a natural vegetation filtration strip along lakes, rivers, and streams.
- Develop zoning regulations which make lands which are less suitable for agriculture use more attractive to develop than prime agricultural land.
- Encourage those farms currently preserved through the Farmland Preservation Act (P.A. 116) to remain as part of the Act.

CHAPTER TWO RESIDENTIAL USES

Purpose Statement

The primary intent and purpose of residential land uses is to provide people with a range of residential living styles that provide individuals and families the opportunity to live in a way that meets their needs and wants in a manner that is safe, affordable, and enhances a sense of community.

General Description of Appropriate Land Uses

Residential land uses range in terms of densities and intensity of land use. The denser a residential land use is the more intense its use of the land and the land's resources. As such, denser residential uses such as apartments and multi-family housing should be located where public utilities are available, with less dense residential uses being located in areas that are not near public utilities and private well and septic systems are able to safely be installed and maintained.

Goals

- Provide people with a range of residential styles and densities.
- Ensure that residential land uses are organized in such a way that they are harmonious with agricultural areas, natural areas, and the existing character of the surrounding area.
- Ensure that new residential land uses are located so as to provide for the orderly expansion and use of existing utilities.
- Encourage and concentrate residential growth in appropriate areas near the Village of Ravenna.
- Ensure that residential land uses are designed in conjunction with agricultural and commercial land uses to create a sense of community.
- Encourage the preservation of open space, wildlife habitats, and recreation opportunities

Recommendations

- Require higher density housing on lands that have the capacity to support such development by means of adequate public roads, connection to public water and public sanitary sewers, and other available infrastructure.
- Encourage creative design of neighborhoods to enhance desirability by including sidewalks, bike paths, pedestrian paths, open space, parks, and playgrounds.
- Provide development incentives within the Zoning Ordinance which require the preservation of natural features and open space accessible to all persons in site development design. Such as the preservation of public access to lakes in the Township.
- Require that development layouts blend with the natural features and existing physical attributes.
- Establish general density limits with range to guide future zoning decisions.
- Encourage, where appropriate, light pollution regulations to preserve the night sky.
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new development.
- Encourage the creation of wildlife corridors throughout residential developments and areas.
- Coordinate with property owners to rezone lands that may be inconsistent with the Township Master Plan Map.