SPECIAL JOINT MEETING – 7:00 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

III. ROLL CALL

IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Agenda Items)

VI. NEW BUSINESS
   1. Discussion on Increasing the Amount of Land Classified as Low Density Residential & Rural Preservation under the Proposed Master Plan Amendments

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS – (Non-Agenda Items)

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

NOTE: The public will be given an opportunity to comment on any agenda item when the item is brought up for discussion. Please complete Speaker Information Sheet. The supervisor will initiate comment time.
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MEMO

DATE: January 28, 2022

TO: Planning Commission; Township Board

FROM: Rory Thibault – Senior Planner

RE: Future Land Use Map – Review of Rural Residential Properties

OVERVIEW

At the January 24th, 2022 Township Board Meeting, the Board decided to table an objection to the adoption of the Master Plan, as described below. Due to the substantial enough concern expressed by Board members as to not unanimously support the Objection, the content of the objection warrants further discussion.

Objection: The Board also requested that areas Master Planned for Agricultural Preserve be considered for Rural Residential – with the understanding that Rural Residential is to be served by paved roads so any changes would be limited to areas where paved roads currently exist or may be installed within the next five years.

The concerns expressed are as following.

• Members opposed to the expansion of the Rural Residential (sic) land category under the Master Plan noted that sporadic land divisions that are unplanned will impede future, larger planned residential development and create additional residential areas not supported by basic infrastructure.
• Other members noted that the expansion of the DDA will bring infrastructure near certain areas that could then support large lot Rural Residential (sic) development.

BACKGROUND

As you may recall this conversation has happened previously. The Planning Commission discussed changing some parcels that had been Master Planned “Agricultural Preservation” to “Rural Residential,” (sic) at the October 18th, 2021 Meeting in which the following discussion points and consensus was offered.
• The 2009 Future Land Use Map incorporated a significant amount of Agricultural Preservation to slow down growth and sprawl.
• It may be time to consider allowing more development when utilities become available.
• Wagenmaker noted a desire to master-plan areas between Lincoln Street, M-45, and 152nd Avenue as residential today and not wait for utilities.
• Clearing wooded land for agriculture is expensive and likely a deterrent for wooded lots to be master-planned for Agricultural Preservation.

Consensus: Keep the Agricultural Preservation designation as-is until utilities become available and then consider a change to residential. Wagenmaker noted he disagrees and would prefer the change occur now.

In a subsequent Planning Commission Meeting on November 15th, 2021, the following motion carried:

Motion by Taylor, supported by Chalifoux, to conditionally approve the 2021 Future Land Use Map and associated Future Land Use and Zoning Plan, which replaces Chapter 9 of the Resilient Master Plan, pursuant to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, as amended. Approval shall be conditioned upon the following revisions that must be completed prior to sending the documents to the Township Board for final approval.
  o Change language for future land use classification from “Rural Residential” to “Rural Preservation.”

Therefore, to clarify and summarize the designations and requirements within the Zoning Ordinance and Proposed Future Land Use Plan as of the last discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoning Designation</th>
<th>Future Land Use (Master Plan)</th>
<th>Requirements (FLU)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AG</td>
<td>Agricultural Preservation</td>
<td>• 20+ acres</td>
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<td>• Min. Infrastructure:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- none</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Preserve</td>
<td>Rural Preservation</td>
<td>• 5-20 acres</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural Residential</td>
<td>• Min. Infrastructure:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential</td>
<td>Low Density Residential</td>
<td>• 45000 sf.-5 acres</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Min. Infrastructure:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Direct Access from a Paved Public Roadway, if available</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-1</td>
<td>Medium Density Residential</td>
<td>• 15000 sq.ft</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Min. Infrastructure:</td>
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RURAL PRESERVE/PRESERVATION ZONING AND LAND USE INTENT

RP – Statement of Purpose in Zoning Ordinance

**RP Rural Preserve.** The RP Rural Preserve District is designed to provide an intermediate district between the AG Agriculture District and the other residential districts established under the Zoning Ordinance. It is intended to provide opportunities for development of large lots or parcels with residential uses and related accessory uses, where the lot or parcel is supported only by minimal infrastructure features, such as unpaved roads. It is intended to be a low-density type of use, on which minimal residential development is permitted because of proximity to agricultural uses and practices, and because of the lack of infrastructure such as municipal water and sanitary sewer. This district is intended to provide appropriate uses to large parcels that are not suited to be agricultural and have limited infrastructure.

Rural Preservation – Master Plan

**RURAL PRESERVATION**

**Intended Land Uses**

Areas planned for Rural Preservation (RP) are characterized by single-family homes on lots that range from 5 to 20 acres. This “rural development” pattern is typically integrated, with or adjacent to, agricultural activities and generally there is a significant separation distance between homes. Unchecked, the indiscriminate application of this type of development can lead to an early or inappropriate transition of agricultural/rural land uses to a sprawling suburban residential development pattern. Therefore, this classification should be applied cautiously. The transition to Rural Preservation should be guided by the availability of public infrastructure. For parcels smaller than five acres this means requiring direct access to a paved public roadway.

**Corresponding Zoning Districts**

Rural Preserve (RP) zoning district corresponds to areas planned for Rural Preservation. This zoning district requires 5 acre minimum lot sizes. The primary purpose for the RP zoning district is to preserve large areas of rural land from premature development and act as a buffer in order to reduce development pressure on agriculture land. Therefore, parcels five acres or greater that are designated Rural Residential and are currently zoned RR, or more intensely, are encourage to be rezoned to RP.

**General Location**

Small pockets of Rural Residential are found throughout the Township primarily near areas designated Agricultural Preservation. Specifically, these areas are concentrated in the Southwest quadrant of the Township. Rural Residential areas are so designated because of existing patterns of this type of land use. Most existing lots either contain a single family home, or they are vacant but are too small to subdivide or develop as a Planned Unit Development due to the lack of infrastructure. Therefore, to avoid an inappropriate transition from agricultural/rural land to residential sprawl development. This plan limits its application.
RR – Statement of Purpose in Zoning Ordinance

RR Rural Residential. The RR Rural Residential District is designed to be those semi-open areas of the Township where the conduct of agriculture and other rural-type activities may co-exist with large-tract residential housing and residentially related facilities with the realization that adequate open and semi-open areas are essential to the health and welfare of the Township. This district is not intended to be served by public municipal water and sanitary sewer, but should be served by paved roads, if available.

Low Density Residential – Master Plan

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Intended Land Uses

When served by adequate public infrastructure, Low Density Residential areas are appropriate places for future residential development. However, additional residential growth in the Township, even in areas master-planned for such uses, must be carefully evaluated and should be permitted only where there is a demonstrated need.

To promote high quality development, Planned Unit Development (PUD) or Open Space Cluster requirements should apply to all future development in Low Density Residential areas. While these development options may allow increased residential densities, they also promote innovative design techniques (e.g., open space preservation, public amenities, and mixed housing and land use types) which are supported by this Master Plan.

As established by a 2011 Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment, certain large scale developments with eight or more lots (includes subdivisions, site condominiums, and mixed uses) shall not be created in the RR Zoning District unless it is designed as a Planned Unit Development. This form of regulation will enable the Township to control and moderate the size, scope and impact of future projects.

Corresponding Zoning Districts

The Rural Residential District accommodates the land uses in this category. Specifically, the minimum lot size is 45,000 square feet, or in the case of a PUD, it should be used to establish a base density that is appropriate for the area.

General Location

This category is primarily found near Buchanan Street, west of 168th Avenue, and east of Lakeshore Drive. The Southwest quadrant is facing high development pressures to convert agricultural land into residential uses. Therefore, it is important to establish gradient buffers to preserve the valuable agricultural land. To accomplish this, LDR designations are established between Medium Density Residential and Rural Preservation land uses. Another substantial pocket of an LDR designation is found along Ferris Street between US-31 and the Schmidt Heritage Park.
1. Does the Planning Commission and Township Board agree with the Zoning and Future Land Use corresponding districts?
   a. Rural Preserve = Rural Preservation; Rural Residential = Low Density Residential, etc

2. Does the Planning Commission and Township Board agree with the Future Land Use parcel size designations?
   a. Low Density Residential = 45,000sf – 5 acres

3. Does the Planning Commission and Township Board agree with the Future Land Use Minimum infrastructure requirements as it relates to the named designation?
   a. Low Density Residential = requires Direct Access from a Paved Public Roadway, if available

4. Does the Planning Commission and Township Board agree with the Statement of Purpose for each Zoning Designation?

5. Does the Planning Commission and Township Board agree with the Intended Land Use text for each Master Plan category?

6. Where does the Planning Commission and Township Board feel that the scope of this amendment to the Master Plan be drawn?
   a. Should it include the DDA expansion?
   b. DDA expansion and 3 areas w/ active developers?
   c. DDA expansion, 3 areas with active developers and sections of the Township?
   d. DDA expansion, 3 areas with active developers and all of the Township?

7. Does the PC and TB feel any land should be changed from AP to RP in the FLU Map?
   a. Why, What conditions, where?

8. Does the PC and TB feel any land should be changed from AP to LDR in the FLU Map?
   a. Why, What conditions, where?
“The Future Land Use Plan is the general framework upon which land use and policy decisions will be guided for the next 20 to 25 years. The Future Land Use Plan was developed after careful consideration of several dynamic factors, including: availability of utilities, type of roadway (paved or gravel), existing land use, future development plans, community services, environmental features and a built-out analysis.”

- Chapter 9, Master Plan

As the Future Land Use Plan was developed comprehensively, with and for the community, it is of my opinion that the original intent of the Plan is to be upheld until such time when the Township, as determined by the citizen’s input, no longer reflects the needs of the community. The Plan is not intended to be a static document, but must be of sound strength as to provide a legitimate framework for decision-making. A piecemeal approach for amending the Plan, undermines by definition, what the Plan is meant to provide. Singularly focused developmental pressures can not by themselves override the Collective factors used to create the Plan to begin with.

With that said, when an area has been identified for a specific use and it is clear and obvious that this Planned use is incongruous with the goals of the Township, then this area should be re-evaluated based on a collective set of factors with a collective set of voices representative of the Township, in this case the Planning Commission and Township Board within a public session.

In the case of the JOST expansion:
A goal expressed by the Township, has been to “be a vital economic center that includes a balance of clean manufacturing.” As such we have a duty to support our existing industries, therefore it is of my opinion that expanding the area around existing Industrial properties, such that it does not infringe on adjacent residents health, safety, and wellbeing or cause significant detriment to the environment, is of sound judgment.

In the case of the M45/US31 Development:
Whereas the original intent of the land was to be commercial, and then amended to Industrial due to perceived market considerations, and now pressured for High Density residential – perhaps it is time to look at the specifics of the property. A significant portion of the property is covered by wetlands. As such highly intensive development would not only have a deleterious environmental impact but also be economically disadvantageous. When a dynamic and broad set of factors are not examined in the re-consideration of land — socially, economically, and environmentally unsuitable determinations may be made.

In the case of Agricultural Preservation Land change:
**IF** land is to be reconsidered and its Future Land Use designation changed, **THEN** it should not solely come from the determination of the Planning Commission, nor the Township Board, nor the Planning Staff by themselves absent the input of the community. A stated
goal from the Master Plan is to “Discourage the inappropriate and unplanned use of land through sporadic and isolated land divisions. Encourage carefully planned developments that are responsive to market demands.” The consideration for a large swath of land to be changed is antithetical to the stated and collectively agreed upon goal.

With that said, the monopolization of developers to purchase and develop land into subdivision type developments because the financial capital to accomplish this outside of the traditional Development paradigm is too prohibitive for the public at large, often yields a singular choice for potential residents. They must purchase a lot in a subdivision or face high costs associated with waterfront development or large tracts of land.

Further, it is of my opinion that IF the Township’s stated goal is to “Support multiple housing options and mixed-use developments for all segments of the population that place users near daily services,” THEN a diversity of land use types must also be available to the public.

Per the Master Plan, Low Density Residential Land Uses:
‘must be carefully evaluated and should be permitted only where there is a demonstrated need. So, where there is a demonstrated need, “to promote high quality development Planned Unit Development (PUD) or Open Space Cluster requirements should apply to all future development in Low Density Residential areas. While these development options may allow increased residential densities, they also promote innovative design techniques (e.g. open space preservation, public amenities, and mixed housing and land use types) which are supported by this Master Plan.’

In an effort then to promote a diversity of land use types, without so large an economic burden to access it on the market for individual or collective members of the public, then in strategic cases where access to a Paved Public Roadway is anticipated in the next 5 years, it may be appropriate for parcels currently designated as Agricultural Preservation to be changed to Low Density Residential. If and only if the developmental impact does not endanger the health, safety, and wellbeing of the individual nor cause significant enough damage to undermine the goal of preserving natural resources.

For areas where Paved Public Roadway access is not anticipated, changing the designation to Rural Preservation risks “an early or inappropriate transition of agricultural/rural land uses to a sprawling suburban residential development pattern. Therefore, this classification should be applied cautiously.” In both cases, Public and Quasi-Public land should accompany any intensified residential land change, as is the case in the rest of the township historically.

Goal 1: The Township will preserve valuable natural resources, and the shorelines along Lake Michigan and the Grand River. These natural assets provide a cultural identity and add economic value to the community.

If you have any questions please reach out to me.
FUTURE LAND USE MAP
Draft Date: 11/05/2021

Legend
2021 Proposed Designations
- Agricultural Preservation (AP)
- Rural Residential (RR)
- Low Density Residential (LDR)
- Medium Density Residential (MDR)
- High Density Residential (HDR)
- Manufactured Home Park (MHP)
- Office/Service (OFC)
- Commercial (COM)
- Light Industrial (LI)
- Industrial (IND)
- Public/Quasi-Public (PQP)

City of Grand Haven

Coordinate System; State Plane 1983- MI South