

RURAL ZONING COMMITTEE

Background Paper No. 4 July 16, 2007; Rev. August 13, 2007

FRAMEWORK FOR THINKING ABOUT FUTURE OF F&A DISTRICT

We might consider putting the different sectors (or parts of them) into one of **four categories**:

1. **Low-Density Residential:** Areas/sectors (or parts of them) that are developing as and are appropriate for low-density, suburban-style residential development.
 - a. Move these into MDR designation, but with lot size, frontage, and setback standards for on-site sewerage and water supply (currently 40,000 SF minimum lot size, 150 ft. of frontage, 20-foot front yard setback); OR
 - b. Keep these areas as 2-acre minimum lots, but change F&A name to “Low Density Residential” (LDR) to better reflect the purpose of the district
 - c. In either case, provide the option for cluster development with appropriate density bonus if the development uses state-approved community underground wastewater disposal system
2. **Forestry and Agriculture (True Rural):** Areas/sectors (or parts of them) that should be kept rural, with standards that reflect this purpose – namely, maintaining the land primarily for the purposes of production (woodlots, farms, wildlife, outdoor recreation, etc.)
 - a. Keep the F&A label, but revise the standards to reflect the needs of rural land uses -- lower density than presently allowed, requirements for blocks of open space, etc.
 - b. Trick is to find a balance between preserving land as rural and still allowing some level of development so that land owners can get a return from their land if and when they want or need to
 - c. Consider standards that are calibrated to rural land use, but choose one or more mechanisms that allow compatible scale, design, pace of development; e.g.:
 - i. Conservation subdivision
 - ii. Development transfer fees
 - iii. Limits on subdivision size and permits per year in rural subdivisions
3. **Mixed Use Residential/Commercial:** Areas/sectors (or parts of them) that are more appropriately zoned for a different set of uses than F&A allows due to location, proximity to utilities, or history of use. These are areas where multifamily development or some degree of commercial development should be recognized as allowable.
 - a. In some cases, these can be rezoned to another existing district, e.g., C-2
 - b. In some cases, such as Stillwater Ave., may need customized zoning language to strike a balance between low-impact commercial and residential uses

4. **Resource Protection or Conservation:** Areas/sectors (or parts of them) with fragile resources that should be in resource conservation or protection.
 - a. “Resource Protection” is a highly restrictive zone (no residences or most other structures allowed), designed as part of shoreland zoning, but that can be used outside of the shoreland area as well.
 - b. “Resource Conservation” would be a new zone for Orono, but is used elsewhere for fragile areas that can tolerate some minimal level of development.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT WHILE COMPLETING FUTURE ZONING CHART

1. Are there valued or fragile natural resources in this sector that are hard to protect under existing zoning, or is it relatively free of such resources?
2. Are large blocks of land important to wildlife in danger of being cut into smaller pieces, or is the area already trending toward development?
3. Is there active woodlot management or farming activity in the sector? If so, is it threatened by housing development?
4. Is the area close to public water and/or sewer? How close would development in this area be to town services – school buses, police, fire, snow plowing?
5. Is traffic increasing in this area to a level that is hard for rural roads to handle?
6. Is the scenic character of the area important? Is it changing or threatened?
7. Do natural growth trends and forces suggest that F&A zoning is obsolete for the area and should be changed?
8. Is there an unmet need for housing in Orono that could/should be met in part through development in this area?
9. Is public access to open lands and water an important element of this sector? If so, is that access secured? Is it threatened?

FUTURE ZONING CHART - Draft for Discussion
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Sector	Low-Density Resid. a. MDR on-site utilities stds. b. Existing F&A stds.	Forestry and Agriculture (Stds to reflect true rural character)	Mixed Use Residential/Comm a. C-2 b. Customized c. Other	Resource a. Preservation b. Conservation	Other
Outer Essex/Forest		XXX			
Pushaw Community	XXX				
Rare Natural Communities				XXX	
Newman & Bangor Hills		Some want XXX		Some want b. XXX	
Kelley Hill/Forest	XXX				
Stillwater Ave			b. XXX		
Route 2 Gateway		XXX	Oronoko, motel		Extend MDR to Basin
Penobscot River N					TBD??

(THIS CHART COMPLETED AS A RESULT OF THE COMMITTEE’S JULY 16 AND AUGUST 20 MEETINGS.)

