



Fairfield Bylaw Update

Public Outreach Session

**DRAFT FOR PLANNING
COMMISSION REVIEW**

Agenda

1. Presentation

- Review of Project Goals & Timeline
- Review of Development Constraints Analysis
- Review Potential Zoning Changes

2. Public Comment

- Small Group Discussion
- Small Group Discussion Share-Out
- Straw Poll on Zoning Options



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Goal: Ensure alignment of the Town Plan and Land Use Regulations, with a focus on prioritizing protection and ongoing use of agricultural lands.

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Town Plan Vision



It is the primary and fundamental intention of Fairfield to remain a rural, agricultural town.



Fairfield supports its agricultural economy and looks forward to a future where working lands continue to be in production for diverse forms of agriculture.



Fairfield encourages the development of small-scale enterprises in the village centers of Fairfield and East Fairfield that will offer basic goods and services for town residents, that will provide employment locally and that will enhance the town's rural way of life.



Fairfield values preserving our natural landscape and historic features.



Fairfield is a vibrant and welcoming community.

Agricultural District Purpose Statement

In agriculture lies the economic, social, historic, aesthetic and scenic character of the town and the fundamental strength and stability of the local and regional economy. Agricultural land represents a vulnerable and irreplaceable resource which must not be wasted; once it is developed it will likely be lost forever.

The purpose of the Agricultural District is **to provide for and protect agricultural, forestry and compatible residential, commercial, and recreational uses. Lower development densities and clustered development are encouraged so as to preserve the rural character and protect the agricultural resources of these areas.**

Though residential development is an appropriate use for these areas, and very likely will take place, measures should be taken to ensure that minimum lot sizes are large enough to accommodate a septic system.

Current Zoning Regulations- Agricultural District

- 1 acre minimum lot size
- Conservation Resources protected during subdivision
 - Farmland, prime and statewide agricultural soils: Structures must be located on field/pasture edge if feasible or on the least fertile soils
 - Steep slopes: No development on slopes >25%, no structures on slopes 15-25%
- Planned Unit Development
 - Optional form of subdivision that allows clustering of lots, with 60% of the parent parcel conserved.

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Development Constraints Analysis



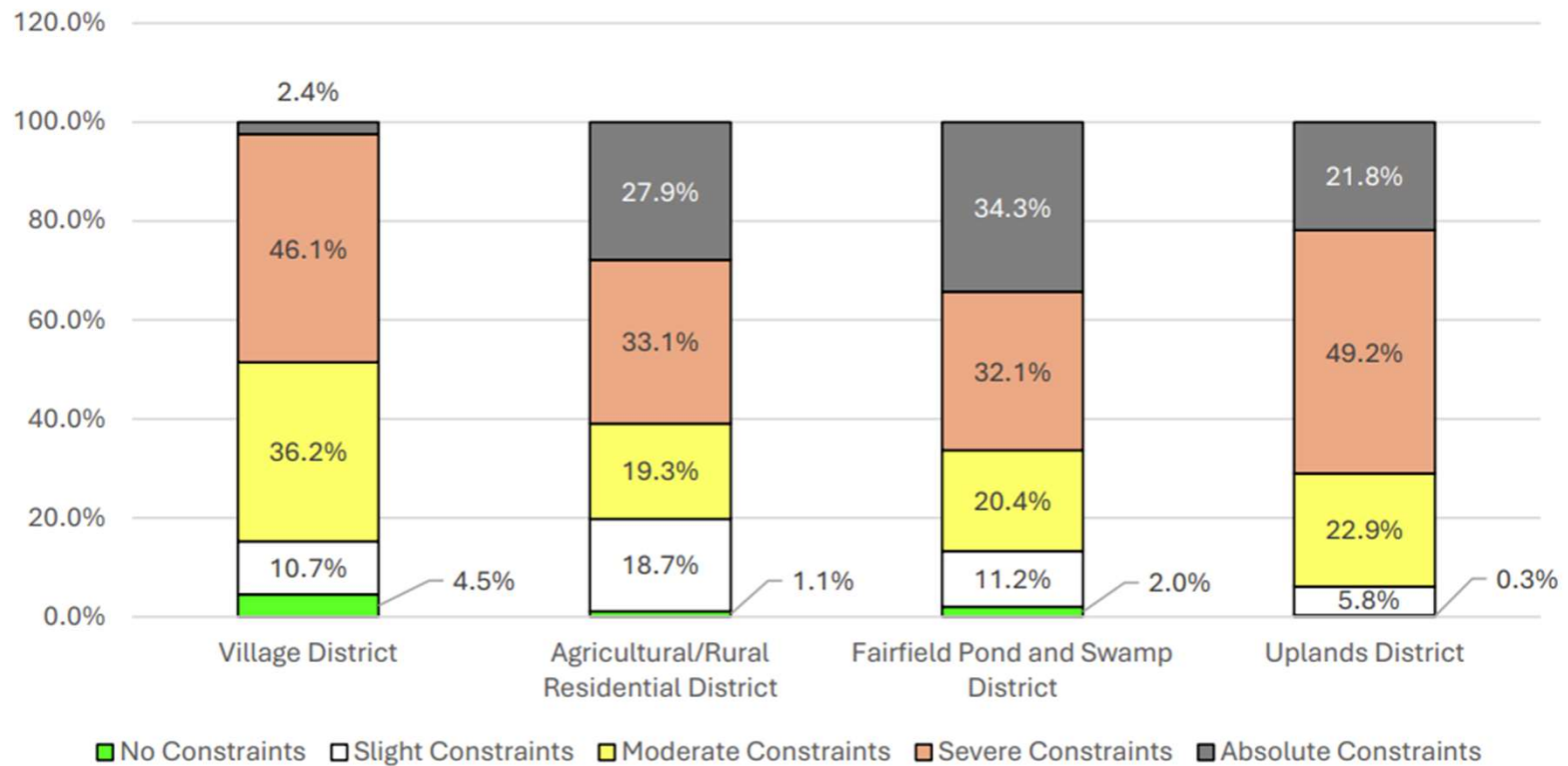
Purpose: Reference tool to understand locations of potentially sensitive areas.



Process: Identify and score various resources such as wetlands, agricultural soils and steep slopes.

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Development Constraints by Current Zoning District



Potential Zoning Changes

Focus is on changes that address density of development

Balance need to protect agricultural lands and need to ensure affordability



Zoning Options to Discuss

Anything else that
needs to be
added?

Increasing minimum
lot size

Separating minimum
lot size from density

Conservation
subdivision

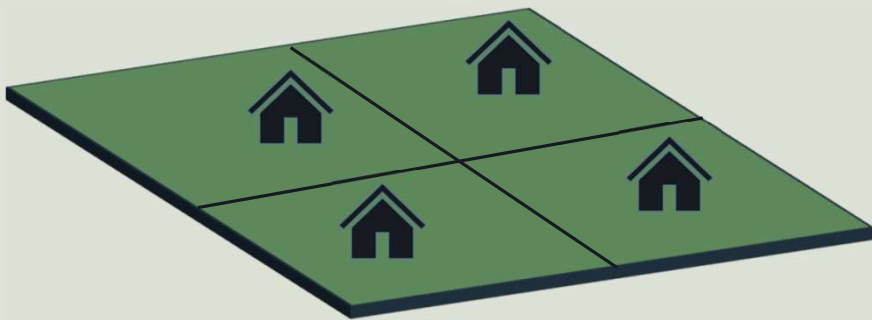
Increasing Minimum Lot Size

- Current minimum lot size in Agricultural District = 1 acre
- Very large lot sizes 25+ acres may be enrolled in current use
 - Smaller 2-10 acre lots will preserve open space but may not be large enough to ensure continued use for agriculture
- Larger lot size are less affordable
- Larger minimum lot sizes reduce ability of landowners to subdivide and sell land

Separating Minimum Lot Size from Density

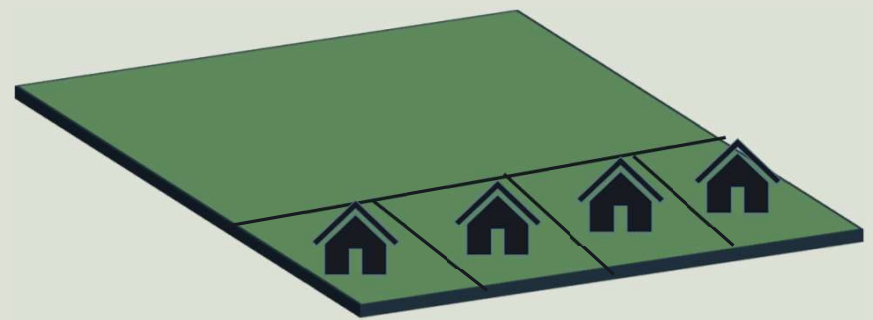
Large Lot Zoning

- 20 acre lot
- 5 acre minimum lot size
- 4 developed lots



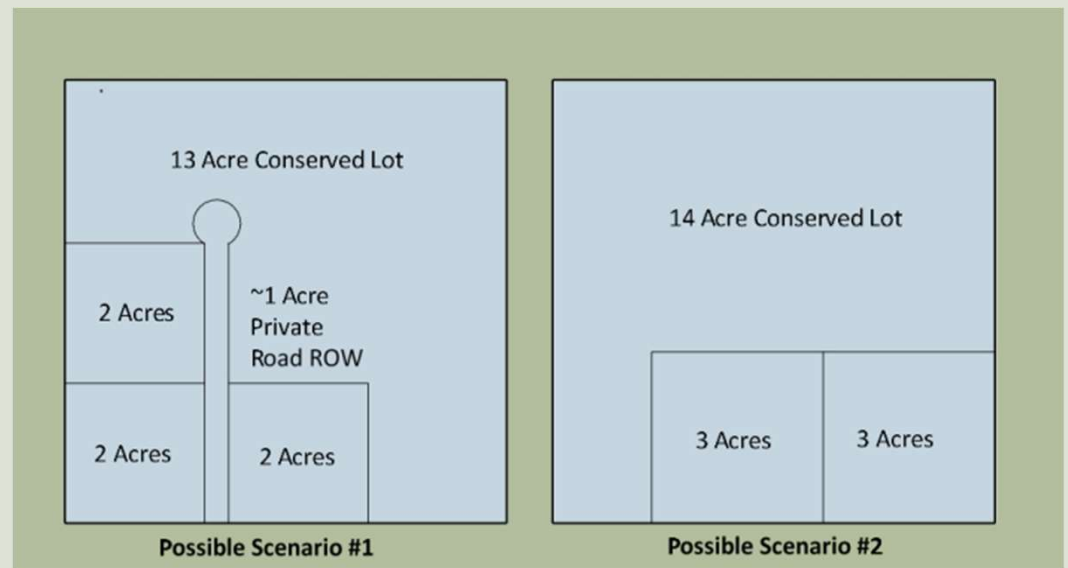
Separating Lot Size for Density Zoning

- 20 acre lot
- Density of 1 unit/5 acres
- 1 acre minimum lot size
- 4 developed lots, 16 acres undeveloped



Conservation Subdivision

- May apply only to subdivisions above a set number of lots
- Requires a percentage of any developed lot be conserved
- May require protected resources to be within the conserved area



Small Group Discussion

- What, if any, are your major concerns with the current zoning bylaws?
 - Are there areas where the current regulations do not align with the Town Plan?
- Aside from overall density of development, are there other specific areas of concern the Planning Commission should consider?
- Which of the zoning tools discussed so far would you support? Which would you not?
- Do you have any additional concerns that have not been addressed so far?

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Straw Poll: Do You Support Increasing Minimum Lot Size ?

[Poll Results]

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Straw Poll: Do You Support Separating Minimum Lot Size from Density?

[Poll Results]

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Straw Poll: Do You Support Conservation Subdivision?

[Poll Results]