

Appendix C

Parma Master Plan – Agricultural Provisions

Evaluation of Comprehensive Plan provisions

The 1989 Town of Parma Master Plan acknowledges that agriculture is the dominant land use. In 1989, farmland and cropland accounted for 40% of the land area, approximately 10,950 acres. A total of 5,789 acres were in the Agricultural District. The plan noted that acreage in the Ag. District had increased from 5,176 in 1984.

The Master Plan also acknowledged the significant of agriculture to the local and regional economy. It reported that agricultural operations consisted of dairy, vegetable, fruit and apple farms. It noted the historical importance of orchards, which contributed to the once-flourishing canning industry in Hilton.

Land Use Policies relating to agriculture

1. Conserve viable working farmland in recognition of the community and regional contributions of farming and agri-business
2. Develop an environment encouraging good farmers with adequate resources to remain in farming, including neighbor relations, property taxation policies and town regulations
3. Development in rural and agricultural areas should occur on lands either unsuitable for farming or on lands where conflicts would be minimal.
4. The goal of preserving agricultural lands will be actively pursued by the Town throughout the planning period. The Town will develop and implement innovative approaches to maintaining viable agriculture including conservation easements, various zoning techniques such as 281 (cluster) zoning, purchase and transfer of development rights and public education.
5. Discourage the placement of public sanitary sewers and other utilities and services that would encourage growth in those areas of the Town designated as agricultural on the land use plan.
6. Residential development proposed for agricultural areas should be limited to low density, single-family units and located so as to minimize potential loss of prime agricultural soils or the disruption of agricultural operations.
7. Support State and County programs, such as the agricultural districting program, which are aimed at the protection of established viable agricultural areas.

Residential policies

#7: Residential densities shall be based upon compatibility with existing development patterns, impact on established agricultural resources and operations, availability of public water and sewer facilities, accessibility and natural constraints.

#8: The majority of the Town will remain rural in character through the planning period, with low density, single-family residences and agricultural land.

#10: Zoning in rural and agricultural areas shall be based on, among other factors, the goal of maintaining an overall low density and reducing the pressure for premature subdivision of agricultural and rural lands.

#11: Provide for the use of Section 281 of the Town Law (average density development) to allow for smaller lots in rural/ agricultural areas at an underlying low density, thereby conserving farmland and open space.

#12: Provide for a transition area between large scale agricultural operations and higher density residential development.

Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan (see Figure 4) includes an Agricultural Conservation designation, which represents areas which should be considered for continued agricultural operations as well as low density residential development. These areas have soils suitable for agriculture and were mostly within the County Agricultural District. They did not have sanitary sewer service and extension of sewer service was seen as unlikely during the planning period. In addition, soils in these areas are generally poor for on-site septic systems.

Densities of 3-5 acres per dwelling are recommended. Lot size would depend on compliance with health regulations pertaining to septic systems. Clustered designs could reduce lot size to one acre, with remaining lands used for continuing agricultural operations or conservation and open space.

Lot design needs to be addressed to avoid long, narrow lots, such as 5-acre lots with 200 feet of road frontage.

