

- In transition areas with access to collector roadways, encourage the conversion of small residential dwellings to commercial or office uses where permitted.
3. Promote the maintenance of residential dwelling units and properties through the adoption of a property maintenance code and enforcement program.
 - Assess the number of neighborhoods or areas with a proliferation of poorly maintained housing units using results of windshield survey.
 - Adopt a proactive approach to property maintenance through administration of the Uniform Building Code.
 - Add a Codes Enforcement Officer position to current staff.
 4. Limit conflicts with incompatible uses through consistent application of the long range land use plan and provisions of the zoning ordinance.
 - Review current zoning district boundaries at perimeter of Township and evaluate compatibility with districts in neighboring municipalities.
 - Link the goals for land use with recommended amendments to current land use ordinances and evaluate "best fit" options.
 - Consolidate similar uses in each district into broader use categories and define those uses and categories in the Zoning Ordinance.

D. GOAL: SUPPORT INCREASED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPANSION OF THE ECONOMIC TAX BASE.

Implementation Objectives:

1. Encourage balanced economic growth to avoid an overburden of future tax revenues from residential development only.
 - Prepare a parcel-level commercial land use inventory:
 - Create one layer with all lots currently undeveloped and zoned for commercial uses.
 - Create another layer with all developed lots in areas zoned for commercial land use.
 - Prepare a nonintervention scenario report relative to future tax revenues from residentially zoned land based on projected trends.

- Quantify currently undeveloped commercial or business acreage and project tax revenues based on “developed” status.
 - Quantify currently undeveloped industrial acreage and project tax revenues based on “developed” status.
 - Complete revenue-projection based on current zoning classification, development trends and current rate of taxation.
 - Prepare a parcel-level developed lots maps, animate by year for new housing starts.
 - Prepare an intervention scenario report with options for revised zoning boundaries, and expanded use provisions.
 - Provide additional developable land in nonresidential zoning classifications.
 - Include land in close proximity to the Pittsburgh-Bouquet Airport in a specific plan to permit light industrial, planned commerce and office park uses.
 - Consider select areas within the SR 130 corridor for mixed-use or business transition uses and amend the Zoning Ordinance and map to include traffic mitigation standards.
2. Promote employment opportunities through reasonable development requirements.
- Amend the current Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to establish a fast tract review and approval process for land development applications which will result in permanent well-paying jobs.
 - Amend the current Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to establish a two-tiered land development submittal procedure, one for “neighborhood scaled” developments and one for Township or regional scaled development.
 - Add new definitions and define terms.
 - Eliminate “discretionary” language in both Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances to avoid interpretive issues during application review.
3. Guide commercial and industrial growth to those areas with adequate services and facilities, and avoid conflict with low density residential land use.
- Identify growth corridors where utility extensions are provided or planned.
 - Conduct a transition zone survey at points where potentially incompatible land uses are permitted on abutting lots.

- Establish “limit of construction” standards on large tracts proposed for development.
 - Adopt a Township-wide landscape ordinance.
 - Create “buffer” zones or overlay zones where potentially disparate uses are permitted.
 - Prepare a “prime development sites” inventory based on preferred use, utility availability and the capacity of access roadways.
 - Utilize two (2) maps generated during planning process.
 - Revisit impact fee service district boundaries and include identified parcels.
 - Utilize “corridor design standards” in selected growth corridors for consistency and quality of development.
 - Promote “Smart Development” guidelines to limit sprawl.
 - Add transportation improvement projects to the list of projects funded through impact fees where new commercial and industrial growth will necessitate such upgrades.
4. Assess the consistency of the Township's Comprehensive Plan goals with the recommendations of the Westmoreland County Comprehensive Plan.
- Verify that Penn Township's plan is “generally consistent” with the County plan.
 - Review selected local growth areas for consistency with County's selected sites.
 - Acknowledge County's plan for preservation of natural and historic resources where these areas are located within Penn Township.
 - Evaluate the County plan's strategic initiatives in terms of economic goals and job creation on sites in Penn Township.
 - Assess regional transportation goals and proposed transportation improvements.
 - Update the Township's Act 209 impact fee program.
 - Include potential jointly funded projects with Westmoreland County.

- Pursue Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funding for infrastructure improvements in selected growth corridors in concert with the County.
- Identify perceived differences between the plans at the time of adoption, and document choices made at the local level.

E. GOAL: CONTINUE CONSERVATIVE FISCAL POLICIES REGARDING THE PROVISION OF PUBLICLY OWNED AND MAINTAINED INFRASTRUCTURE.

Implementation Objectives:

1. Continue to commit pro-rated revenues for capacity and safety improvements to Township owned and maintained roadways through the Impact Fee Program.
 - Monitor development trends and adjust the Transportation Impact Fee Program list accordingly.
 - Reevaluate the listed transportation improvement projects every two (2) years.
2. Promote traffic planning activities in the development and review of subdivision and land development plans.
 - Establish a policy of requiring traffic impact analyses for smaller land developments in growth corridors.
 - Continue to budget thirty percent (30%) or more of the annual budget for road and street maintenance and safety and capacity improvements.
3. Explore public/private funding mechanisms for the expansion of public utilities and facilities to those areas identified for growth.
 - Establish a policy of co-mingling of funds where resulting expansion will improve public service delivery.
 - Consider an "infrastructure overlay" district to identify areas with inadequate facilities to support continued development.

F. GOAL: PROMOTE THE TOWNSHIP AS AN, ATTRACTIVE, HEALTHY, AND SAFE COMMUNITY WITH A RURAL CHARACTER.

Implementation Objectives:

1. Continue to distribute the Township newsletter.
 - Use to inform residents of new policies and planning initiatives.

- Include a "viewpoint" section to get taxpayer's opinions on local government operations.
2. Prepare a developer's packet with Township review and approval procedures, planning philosophy, and community goals and objectives.
- Include copies of all required application forms.
 - Include info about mandatory dedication of open space and transportation impact fees.
 - Provide crime statistics and incident report summaries.
 - Include digital color photos of Township landmarks and rural characteristics.
3. Continue to fund administrative operations at the current staffing level and provide for ongoing training to Township officials.
- Create additional codes enforcement position at such time that aggressive property maintenance is warranted.
 - Provide line item for training for new planning commissioners, hearing board members and commissioners.
 - Schedule in-house presentations of new and innovative planning tools and concepts.

ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan is intended as a reference guide to the Penn Township Commissioners in establishing planning and development policies for the Township. Some of the activities identified can be accomplished on a yearly basis; others can be shifted from one "phase" to another. Again, it is a guide for local action, and can be amended at any point in time depending on the needs of Township residents.

The Action Plan has identified several specific projects which Penn Township should consider implementing in order to achieve the Plan's goals and objectives. The Comprehensive Plan becomes a viable document only when Township officials and interested citizens take an active part in seeing that stated goals and objectives are achieved. Methods for that achievement include the adoption of specific local legislation, the conduct of research for the framing of development issues, and the adoption of certain policies, where recommended.

The ultimate responsibility for implementing actions designed to achieve the Township's stated "planning objectives" falls directly on the shoulders of the Planning

Commission and the Board of Commissioners. These appointed and elected officials have enjoyed a close working relationship and that must continue if the goals are to be reached. Many human resources are available to assist in the implementation of the designated goals and objectives, including of course the Township staff, Westmoreland County Planning Commission staff, Township residents, adjacent municipal staff and professional consultants. All of these resource people should continue to be regular participants in the planning process within Penn Township.

CHRONOLOGY OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Year 2004 - 2009

1. Adopt additional land use regulations as a tool to achieve community objectives.
2. Review building codes, update and adopt as mandated.
3. Prepare a Development Design Manual with preferred development characteristics.
4. Research and develop regulations aimed at preserving existing agricultural and natural resource extraction operations.
5. Coordinate development proposals with adjacent municipalities.
6. Establish growth area boundaries, including "Public Infrastructure Areas" and a "Rural Resource Area."

Year 2010 - 2015

1. Review and update land use and development regulations (zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance.)
2. Review and revise previously identified growth area boundaries as necessary.
3. Update Transportation Capital Improvements Program.
4. Provide information and arrange with local financial institutions, financial assistance for housing rehabilitation.
5. Review Comprehensive Plan - update as necessary.
6. Research the need for public transit service to Township neighborhoods.

7. Research opportunities for joint municipal service programs.

Year 2016 - 2021

1. Update Transportation Capital Improvements Program consistent with development trends.
2. Review and update land use and land development regulations.
3. Update and inventory municipal buildings, furnishings and equipment.
4. Expand joint municipal service programs where proven to be effective.
5. Update housing rehabilitation assistance program.

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

The goals and objectives stated in this plan, and those policies recommended for implementation, which are applicable in 2004, can be achieved through the use of tools available to local governments:

Regulations:

- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance
- Special Purpose Ordinances
- Building Codes
- Property maintenance codes
- Official map
- Development Design Guidelines

Public Services

- Local, County and State Government Funding Sources
- Local and State Law Enforcement Agencies

- Volunteer Fire Companies and Emergency Services
- Educational and Informational programs administered by public agencies.

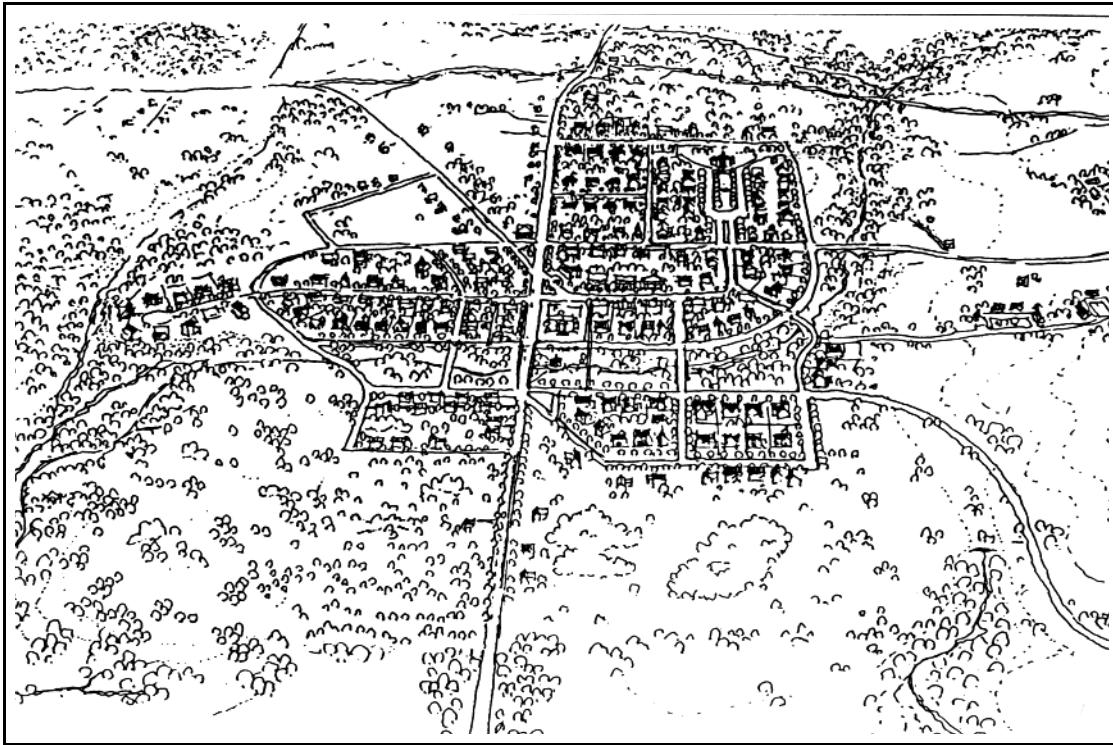
Capital Improvements

- Capital program
- Public/Private Partnerships
- Roadway improvements through Impact Fees or Special Assessment Districts
- Park and Open Space improvements through Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
- Facility improvements through user fees

The Goals and Policies presented in this Comprehensive Plan may need to be altered throughout the implementation period due to changes dictated by Commonwealth agencies relating to the environment, by a shift in development activities, a change in municipal financial resources or other external or internal factors. Thus, it is necessary that the Planning Commission and elected officials use this document on a regular basis when reviewing plans for development in Penn Township. It will provide guidance in the decision making process, and should the Township's goals and objectives change, the Plan can be updated in a timely manner in order to focus the appropriate resources toward solutions. The Plan is a guide or a blueprint for achieving a "vision" of the community preferred by the landowners and taxpayers of Penn Township. It's effectiveness will be evaluated based on the commitment of Township officials, professional staff and residents.

DEVELOPMENT MODELS

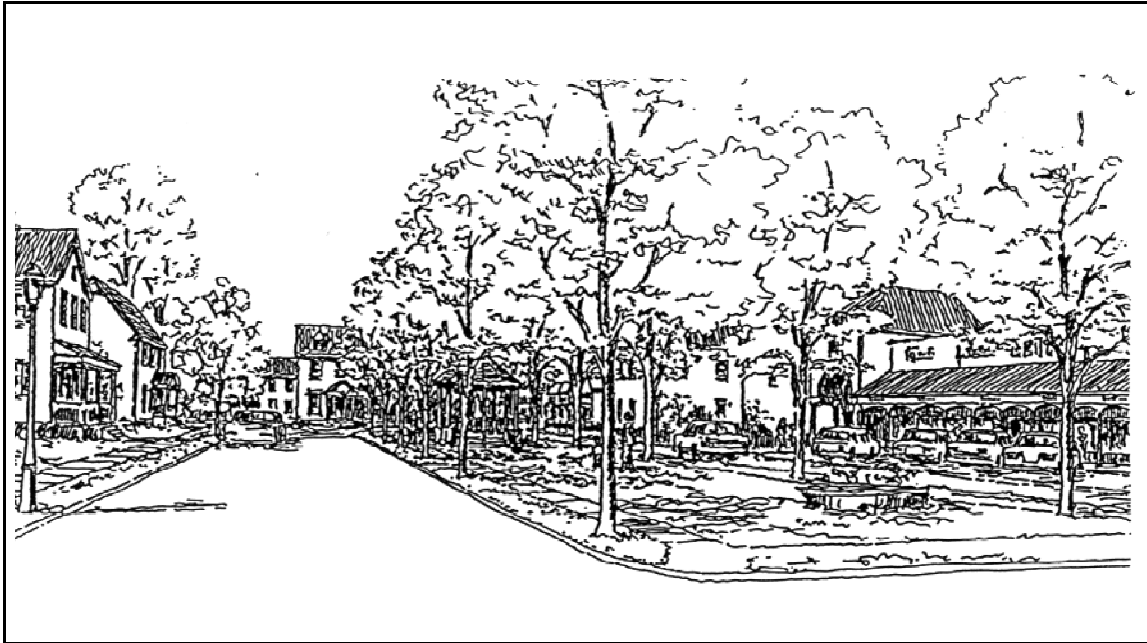
A. VILLAGE MODEL



1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Village Model is to encourage compact, mixed use development with a definite boundary separating the built-up area from defined open space within the model. The model helps to achieve the community development objective of preserving rural character by concentrating development and surrounding it with defined open space in the same plan.

2. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND DESIGN STANDARDS



Village Model Developments shall incorporate the following land use characteristics and design guidelines as a condition of approval:

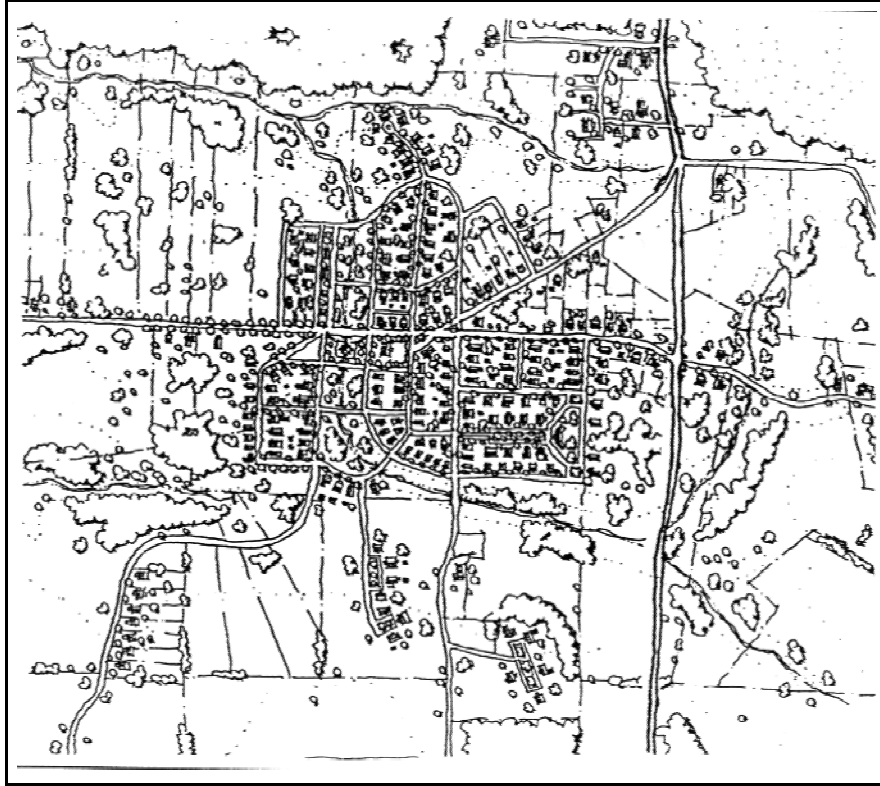
Form: The heart of the Village is the village center - a central green, main street or similar community gathering place and focus - surrounded by residential neighborhoods with open space beyond. The majority of streets should interconnect to create blocks. Buildings should be located close to the street right-of-way to create a residential scale environment.

Utilities: All buildings with plumbing shall be connected to public water and public sanitary sewer systems.

Streets: Streets should include sidewalks, planting strips, street trees, benches and pedestrian scale lighting.

Open Space: A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the total area shall be identified as common open space, commonly owned and maintained by property owners in this village. The central green should include a planted and maintained pedestrian area. The permanent open space within the plan surrounding the developed village may be undeveloped - meadow, open field, natural woods, steep slopes, wetlands, etc., or leased for the raising of farm crops. Open space areas should be connected to the village by pedestrian walkways.

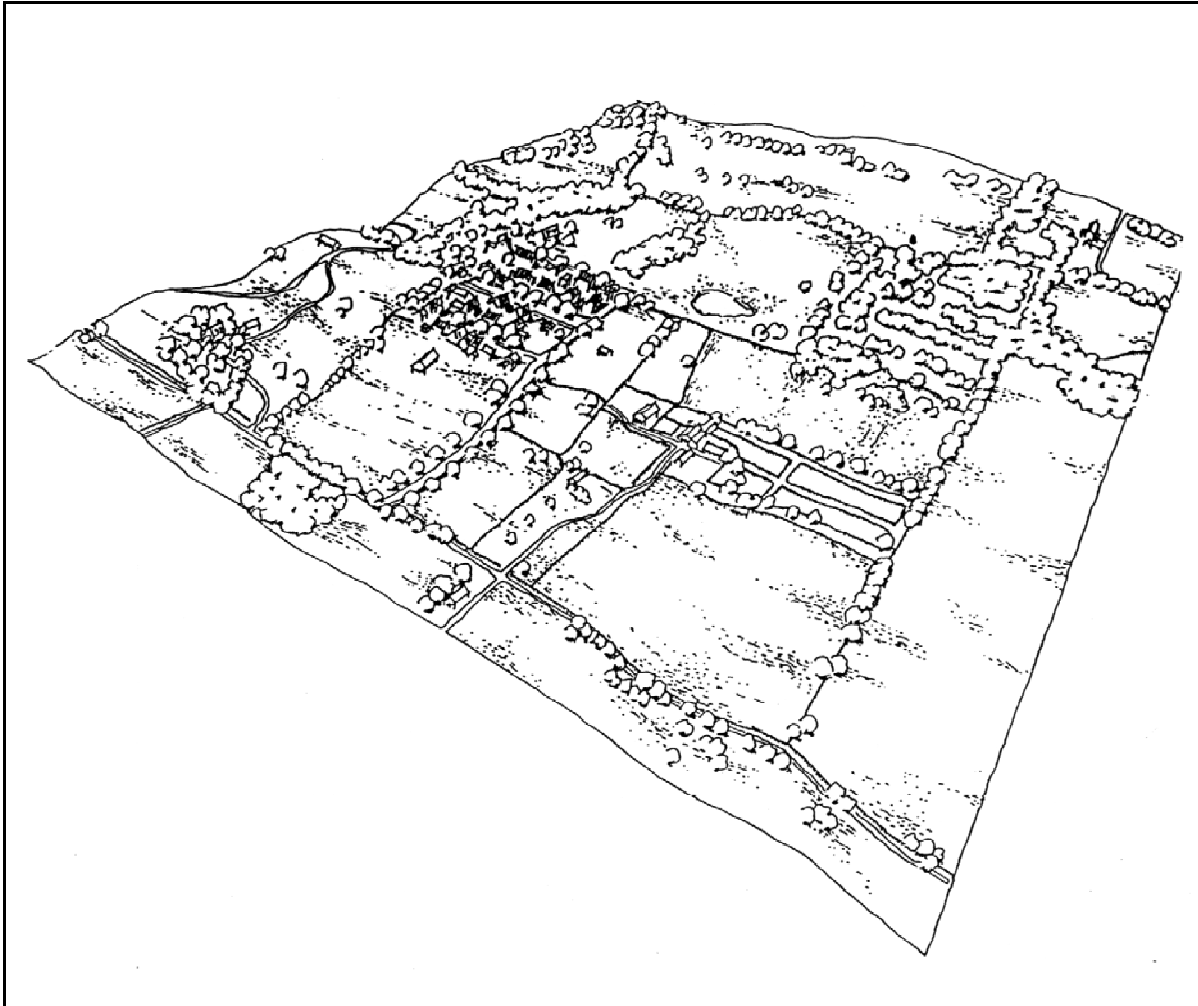
Bufferyards: A planted buffer should be provided where the developed part of a village abuts a heavily traveled road.



3. SITE REQUIREMENTS

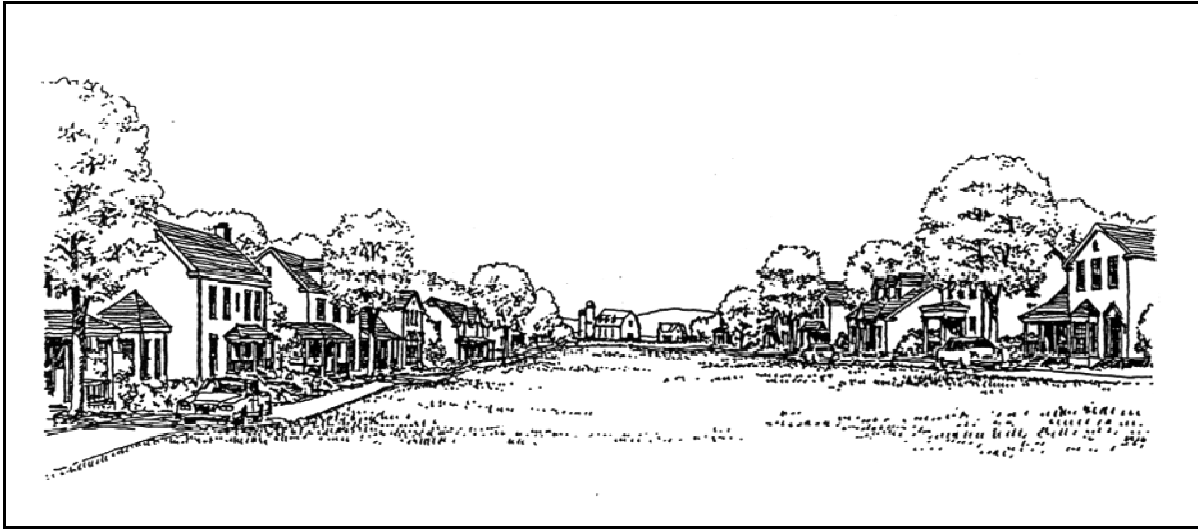
Minimum Site Size:	60 acres
Maximum Site Size:	200 acres
Minimum Open Space:	30% of gross acreage (common and private open space combined)
Maximum Commercial Component:	5% of gross acreage
Maximum Institutional Component:	See Small Institutional Model
Minimum Distance between Villages:	2 miles

B. HAMLET MODEL



1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Hamlet Model is to encourage compact residential development that preserves the natural and unique features of the property to be developed and of the surrounding area.



2. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

Hamlet Models shall incorporate to the following land use characteristics and design guidelines as a condition of approval.

Form: The development should be compact, abutting significant open space on at least two (2) sides. The site's unique natural features should be preserved and incorporated into the plan. Among the features that should be preserved if they are present are farm houses, barns, silos, stone walls, fence lines, ponds and tree lines, hedgerows and farm lanes.

Utilities: All buildings with plumbing shall be connected to public water and public sanitary sewer systems.

Streets: Within the developed community, sidewalks and street trees are encouraged. Existing farm lanes should be enhanced as access to the community rather than creating new streets.

Open Space: A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the total area shall be identified as public open space commonly owned and maintained by property owners in the hamlet. Much of the site will be open permanently as meadows, farm fields for crop raising, woods, steep slopes and/or wetlands. Lots in the development should abut or have easy access to the open space, or lots may extend into or through the open space provided an easement guarantees that no development by the landowner will occur in the open space.

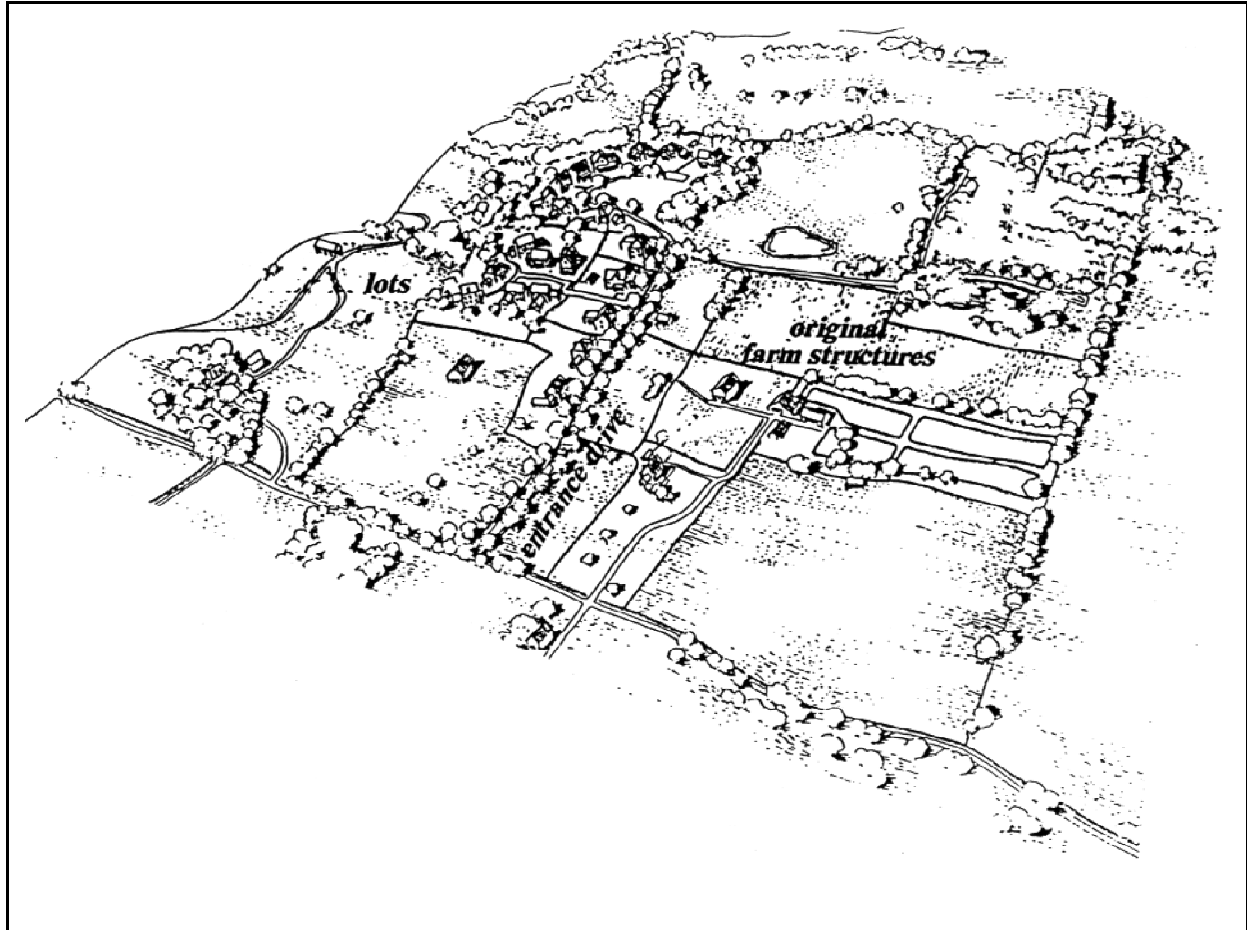
Bufferyards: A planted buffer should be provided where the developed part of a Hamlet plan abuts a collector roadway.



3. SITE REQUIREMENTS

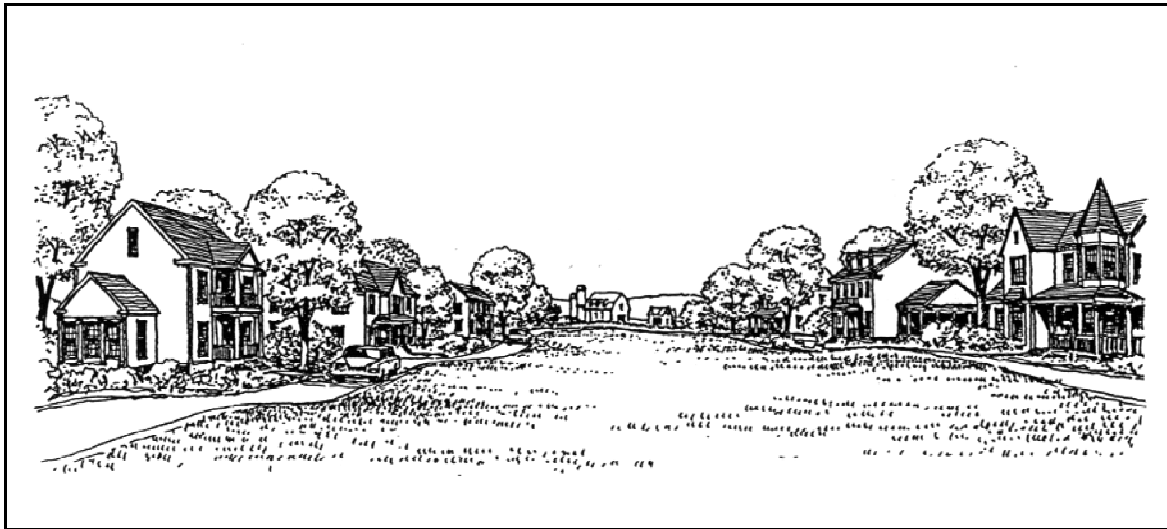
Minimum Site Size:	20 acres
Maximum Site Size:	100 acres
Minimum Open Space:	30% of gross acreage
Minimum Distance between Hamlet Developments:	No minimum.

C. LARGE LOT RURAL SUBDIVISION MODEL



1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Large Lot Rural Subdivision Model is to allow for large lots whether or not connected to public utilities to be organized in a plan surrounded by open space which is part of the plan. The setting could include actively farmed land and farm structures, tree lines, walls and farm lanes. A second purpose is to allow an owner of a large tract of land to continue farming while subdividing a portion of the tract for new housing.



2. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

Large Lot Rural Subdivisions shall incorporate to the following land use characteristics and design guidelines as a condition of approval:

Form: The area to be subdivided should be located to permit a viable farming operation on the open space while minimizing site grading and tree removal and optimizing rural character.

Utilities: Public water and public sanitary sewerage are not required.

Streets: Access streets and those within the developed part of the plan should take advantage of existing natural features.

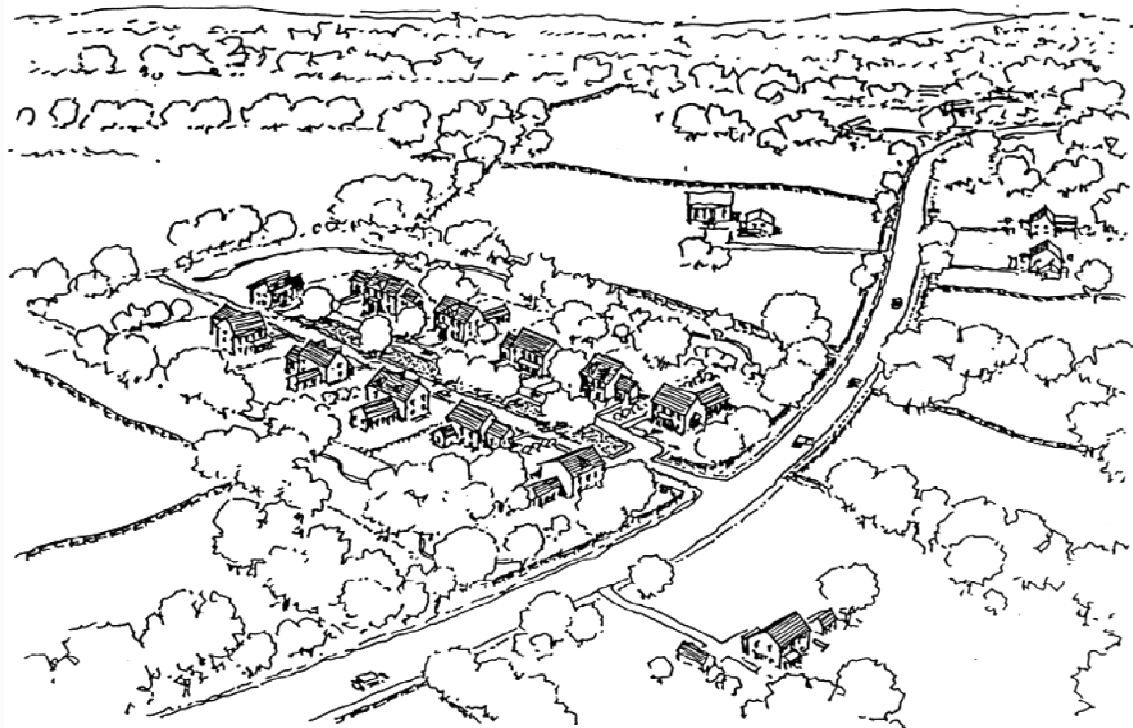
Open Space: Farm fields, active and fallow, interspersed with farm structures, tree lines and fencing should comprise the bulk of the open space, which could also include wooded areas, steep slopes, wetlands and open meadows or fields.

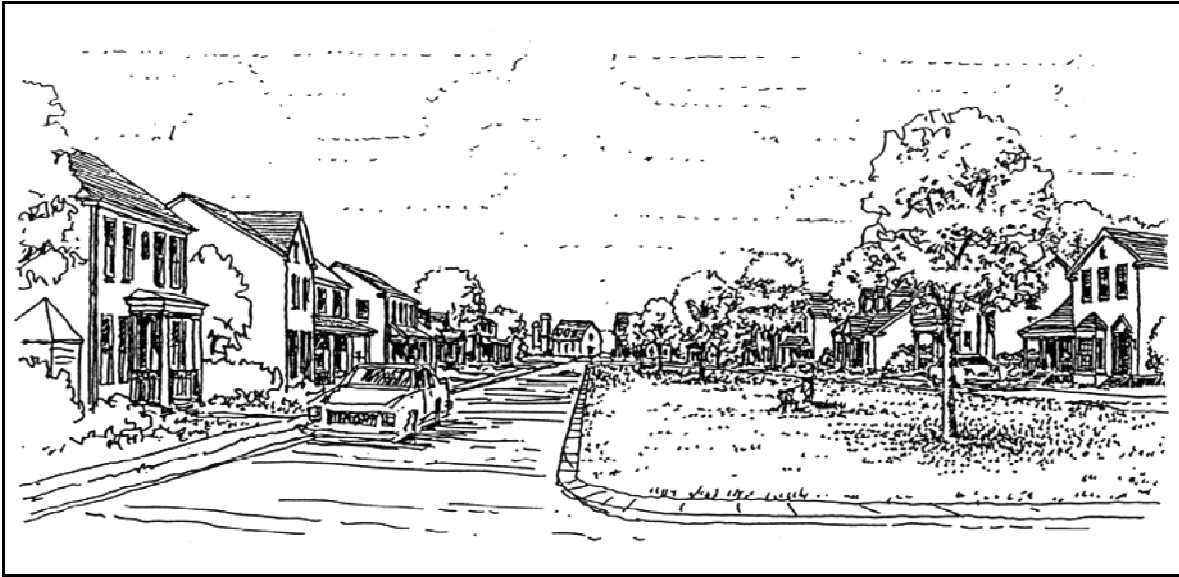
Bufferyards: No planted buffers are contemplated although existing tree lines and hedgerows may be used to enhance the setting of the development and to mitigate the effects of severe weather.



3. SITE REQUIREMENTS

Minimum Site Size:	No minimum
Maximum Site Size:	No maximum
Minimum Open Space:	30% of gross acreage





2. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

Small Property Subdivision Models shall incorporate to the following land use characteristics and design guidelines as a condition of approval.

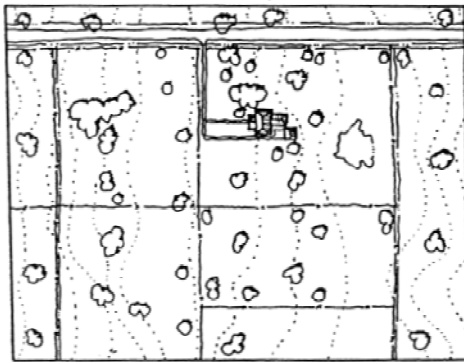
Form: The plan of lots should be compact, with homes facing a central green. Rear yards may be deep, extending to the tract boundary.

Utilities: All buildings with plumbing shall be connected to public water and public sanitary sewer systems.

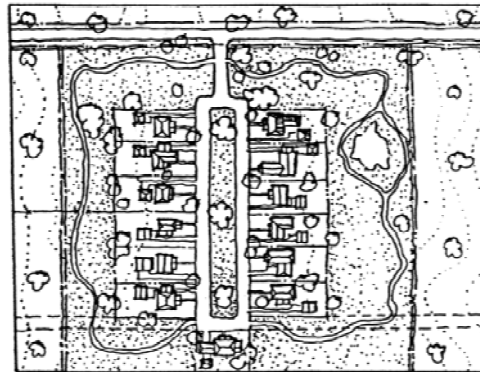
Streets: Houses should front on the plan streets, which may be enhanced by street trees, a sidewalk on one side of the vehicular way, planting strips and pedestrian scaled lighting.

Open Space: Common open space or the back parts of deep rear yards protected by conservation easements should extend to the edges of the tract on at least three (3) sides of the plan. This open space, when combined with abutting open space in adjacent plans, could form significant open areas to reinforce rural character.

Bufferyards: Where the edges of a tract abut, or provide a busy road, buffering should be used to cloak or soften the view from the plan.



Before



After

3. SITE REQUIREMENTS

Minimum Site Size: 20 acres

Maximum Site Size: 50 acres

Open Space Development Ratio: No minimum.

Utility Connection: Both public water and sewer connections must be available to all lots.