

PUBLIC WORKSHOP: COMMERCIAL RECREATIONAL ZONES IN FLORENCE TOWNSHIP AND THE FUTURE OF VILLA MARIA

December 14, 2024 – Florence Town Hall



Objectives

- ▶ Obtain input from the community on which uses are appropriate for Florence Township in Commercial Recreational Zones (the Villa is our only one right now)
- ▶ Educate township and commission on PUDs in general
- ▶ Assess and apply community values in the Comprehensive Plan to the question of Commercial Recreational uses - learn about each others' perspectives
- ▶ Learn about Villa options and prospective plans - township weighs in to support evolving plans which enhance the values and quality of life of the township

Presented by members of the ad-hoc committee of the Florence Township Planning Commission: Jim Anderson, Bob Carlson (Planning Commission member), Kristen Eide-Tollefson, Tom Johnson, and Nathan Oppedahl (moderator and Planning Commission member).

40 people attended.

Introduction

The workshop was designed to ground township leaders and residents in the township's Comprehensive Plan (created in 2003) and community values and to see how those might help us prepare for development in Commercial Recreational (CR) zone, for potential PUDs (Planned Unit Developments) in the township, and for the future of the Villa Maria property.

From this workshop, the ad-hoc committee will bring recommendations back to the township Planning Commission, then to the Town Board for eventual decision-making. Nathan Oppedahl: "We're not making decisions today but are collecting opinions and ideas. Recommendations could help us tweak some language in our township ordinances to help support our values and encourage good development. Development is not a bad thing, but we need to be ready for any change." In addition, this meeting will serve as a springboard for refreshing our township's

Comprehensive Plan, which is now due for its 10-year review. The Planning Commission will be taking a look at it next year.

Nathan Oppedahl: "This meeting isn't quite as urgent as it was a month ago. That's because Goodhue County denied Mr. John Rupp's request to add PUDs to Commercial Recreational zones in the county after concerns were raised by us as well as by two other townships. However, the Planning Commission can't imagine this subject won't come back in the future. So, let's use this opportunity to prepare ourselves."

Agenda

- 1) Welcome, introductions, objectives, review agenda
- 2) The County's permitted uses in the Commercial Recreational zones and how Florence Township residents rank them
- 3) PUDs as a tool for allowing increased density and project development: learnings so far
- 4) Florence Township Comprehensive Plan priorities: *How should they influence development in Commercial Recreational zone?*
- 5) Update on Villa Maria and discussion of ideas, aspirations, and how they may align with township priorities
- 6) Wrap up and next steps

Members of the ad-hoc committee introduced themselves:

Jim Anderson: Has lived in Lake City or Frontenac for many years, Frontenac since 1995, first on Westervelt Way, now on Winona Avenue. Wife, Kristine, is a lifelong resident of Goodhue County. "My hope is to find what our shared values are and to be proactive, not reactive. Change is a constant, but how can we look at change while staying with our values?"

Bob Carlson: Thanked the rest of the committee for its work. Lives on Lakeview Drive for a fourth year, has been blessed to live in a lot of places, but "we're home here." "I volunteer out of a sense of community." "My learning curve right now is damn near vertical."

Kristen Eide-Tollefson: Former member of the planning commission. Lives on Lake Ave Way. "I'm here to support the process and to answer questions on historical context."

Tom Johnson: Moved with wife to Old Frontenac 24 years ago, raised children here, is "passionate about the river, both sides." Is a realtor. "I love this community. This is my final resting place."

Nathan Oppedahl: He and wife, Jeneann, live on Leroy Avenue in Old Frontenac, but he's been "hanging out down here for 30-some years and moved down here permanently after remodeling the old Alverna and Bill Miller house." Very much invested in this community.

Commercial Recreational Zones

Goodhue County has zoning ordinances, and our township is one of five in the county that also has its own, which apply some additional restrictions. Our zoning ordinance for the most part adopts county provisions for zones, such as for Commercial Recreational, but some zones have further restrictions. Example: County allows four-plexes and higher-density dwellings. Township only allows duplexes, and only single-family dwellings in the historic district.

Permitted uses in Commercial Recreational zones - Context

- ▶ Florence Township zoning ordinance adopts Goodhue County ordinance provisions for Commercial Recreational (CR) districts, without restrictions
- ▶ Township can restrict uses if desired - e.g. residential districts
- ▶ Villa Maria property is currently the only CR district in the township

Use	A-1	A-2	A-3	R-1	CS
Residential					
Single-Family Dwelling	P	P	P	P	P
Two, Three, Or Four Family Dwellings	NP	NP	NP	P	NP
Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) (Art. II § 31)	P	P	P	P	P
Residential Accessory Buildings ≥ 7,200sf ¹ (Art. II § 6)	C/I	C/I	C/I	NP	C/I
Mobile Home Park (Art. 16)	NP	NP	NP	C/I	NP
Agricultural					
Feedlots (Art. 13)					
New Feedlot (Art. 13)	P	P	NP	NP	NP
<small>Non-Residential outside of Incorporated (Art. 16)</small>	C/I	C/I	NP	NP	NP

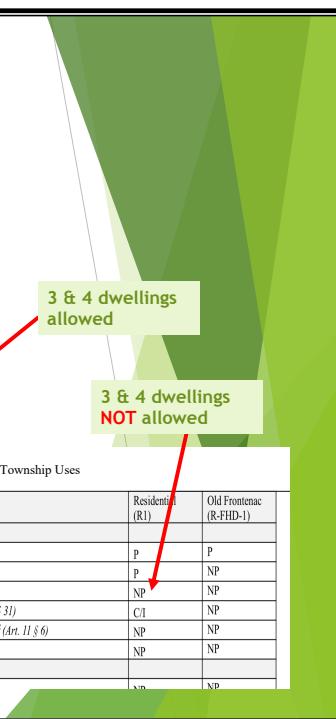
GOODHUE COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE
Table of Uses

1. Non-Residential outside of Incorporated (Art. 16)

Appendix A: Table of Uses Florence Township Uses

Florence Township	Residential (R1)	Old Frontenac (R-FID-1)
Residential		
Single-Family Dwelling	P	P
Two Family Dwellings	P	NP
Three Or Four Family dwellings	NP	NP
Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) (Art. II § 31)	C/I	NP
Residential Accessory Buildings ≥ 7,200sf ¹ (Art. II § 6)	NP	NP
Mobile Home Park (Art. 16)	NP	NP
Agricultural		
Feedlots	NP	NP

1. Non-Residential outside of Incorporated (Art. 16)



The Villa is in a Commercial Recreational zone. The following slides define the zone and the permitted uses within the zone. Note all uses are “conditional” and must be approved by both the township and county (and require the necessary building and other permits for actual development). Currently the Villa Maria property is permitted under the first three uses: as a resort facility, an on-site tavern, and an on-site restaurant (although all three uses are not currently operational).

Permitted uses in Commercial Recreational zones

ARTICLE 30 CR, COMMERCIAL RECREATIONAL DISTRICT

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

The intent of the CR Commercial Recreational District is to provide suitable locations for, and to encourage the development of, commercial recreation facilities in those areas of the county which benefit the recreational needs of both residents and tourists and restrict incompatible commercial and industrial uses. The Commercial Recreational District shall not be an overlay district, but shall be an exclusive district when used.

SECTION 2. PERMITTED USES

Subd. 1. None.

Permitted uses in Commercial Recreational zones

SECTION 3. CONDITIONAL USES AND INTERIM USES

All condition and interim uses are subject to zoning and building permits.

- Subd. 1. Resort facilities to include lodges, guesthouses, cabins and retreat facilities.
- Subd. 2. On-site taverns where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational development.
- Subd. 3. On-site restaurants where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational development.
- Subd. 4. Golf courses and clubhouses.
- Subd. 5. Dinner theaters.
- Subd. 6. Ski areas, ski jumps, related lifts, lodges, and maintenance facilities.
- Subd. 7. Yacht slips, service and storage marinas, harbor and docking facilities subject also to all approved regulations and ordinances of governmental agencies for the same.
- Subd. 8. Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle sites.
- Subd. 9. Nature trails, snowmobile trails, ski trails, and similar facilities.
- Subd. 10. Museums and commercialized historical attractions.
- Subd. 11. Accessory uses to be determined through the CUP process.
- Subd. 12. Outdoor recreational uses including, but not limited to: zip lines, rope or disc golf courses and mountain bike trails.
- Subd. 13. Outdoor concert facilities.

Which uses do you believe are the most and least appropriate in Florence Township?

Workshop participants were asked to give their opinions and indicate via a tally sheet which uses they deemed to be not appropriate (0 points), maybe appropriate (1 pt), appropriate (2 pts), and highly appropriate (3 pts). A weighted score was derived based on the point values.

The uses deemed the most appropriate included the Villa's currently permitted restaurant, tavern, and resort uses, as well as nature trails and museums/commercialized historical attractions.

Comments on the uses associated with the Villa were generally supportive – "Need to use the Villa." "Good use for Villa." "Attracts visitors." — however also include cautions – "Concerns for

sensitive natural areas and conservation of land.” “Should not include development of undeveloped part of property.”

The top use of nature trails received the most comments, that vast majority of which supported trails, but not for snowmobiles. 9 out of the 30 voters, almost a third, were against snowmobile trails.

The uses of campgrounds, ski areas, golf courses, and yacht slips/marinas consistently fell to the bottom of the appropriateness scale.

See the full results and comments in the appendix section at the end of this overview.

Weighted Results – listed from most appropriate to least	
Subd. 3. On-site restaurants where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational dev.	53
Subd. 9. Nature trails, snowmobile trails, ski trails, and similar facilities.	52
Subd. 2. On-site taverns where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational development.	51
Subd. 1. Resort facilities to include lodges, guesthouses, cabins and retreat facilities.	47
Subd. 10. Museums and commercialized historical attractions.	44
Subd. 11. Accessory uses to be determined through the CUP process.	37
Subd. 5. Dinner theaters.	33
Subd. 12. Outdoor recreational uses including, but not limited to: zip lines, rope or disc golf courses and mountain bike trails.	29
Subd. 13. Outdoor concert facilities.	29
Subd. 4. Golf courses and clubhouses.	27
Subd. 7. Yacht slips, service and storage marinas, harbor and docking facilities subject also to all approved regulations and ordinances of governmental agencies for the same.	24
Subd. 6. Ski areas, ski jumps, related lifts, lodges, and maintenance facilities.	21
Subd. 8. Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle sites.	15

The results will be used to inform potential future restrictions or “guardrails” to help prevent the type of development the residents believe wouldn’t fit in the township.

Additional points made during the discussion and completion of the tally sheets:

- Other zoning districts such as Ag also allow uses such as ski areas, ski jumps and golf courses.
- Township has ability to impose further restrictions on uses per public process. Examples include the township disallowing multi-family dwelling units in the historic district or the requirement that large gatherings have permits.
- Uses that are appropriate in the greater township might not be appropriate in Old Frontenac, and vice versa.
- Property owners will interpret each use differently, thus all proposed conditional uses must be reviewed and approved by the township (and county) which ultimately will

determine appropriateness. For example, using the Villa as a “resort” might mean having Marian Hall as a boutique hotel and event center with other buildings as rentals or “vacation cabins.”

Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)

Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)

- ▶ PUD is a form of development that, although conceived decades ago, can be used today to advance a number of important smart growth and sustainability objectives.
- ▶ PUD has a number of distinct advantages over conventional lot-by-lot development.
- ▶ Governed by **Minnesota Administrative Rules, Chapter 6120, Shoreland and Floodplain Management**

Subpart 1: Scope of Planned Unit Development Provisions

Subpart 2: Land use district designation

Subpart 3: Information requirements

A site plan showing property boundaries, surface water features, existing and proposed structures, sewage treatment systems, topographic contours at ten-foot intervals or less, and other facilities; and

Documents that explain how the project is designed and will function. These ordinarily include covenants that require membership in a property owners association, various easements, a concept statement describing the project, floor plans for structures, and various other drawings or plans.

Subpart 4: Dwelling unit or site density evaluation

Subpart 5: Residential planned unit development density evaluation steps and design criteria

Subpart 6: Commercial planned unit development density evaluation steps and design criteria

Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)

- ▶ PUDs are broadly defined at the state level.
- ▶ The county is responsible for following state guidelines and defining any additional, more restrictive considerations.
- ▶ This language is then reviewed at the local level (e.g. township or city), where, again, additional considerations may be put in place.
- ▶ Management and enforcement of the PUD language would be the responsibility and managed by the level of government that puts in place such rules that define and govern the PUD.

PUDs were established in the 1920s and '30s and are a tool that can be used for good or bad, but very useful if managed well. Developed to try to avoid a cookie-cutter approach to development in an area. It starts being administered by the state, can be very broad at that

level, and gets more and more specific until it gets to the township level. The thing to keep in mind is, at each level of implementation, there needs to be oversight.

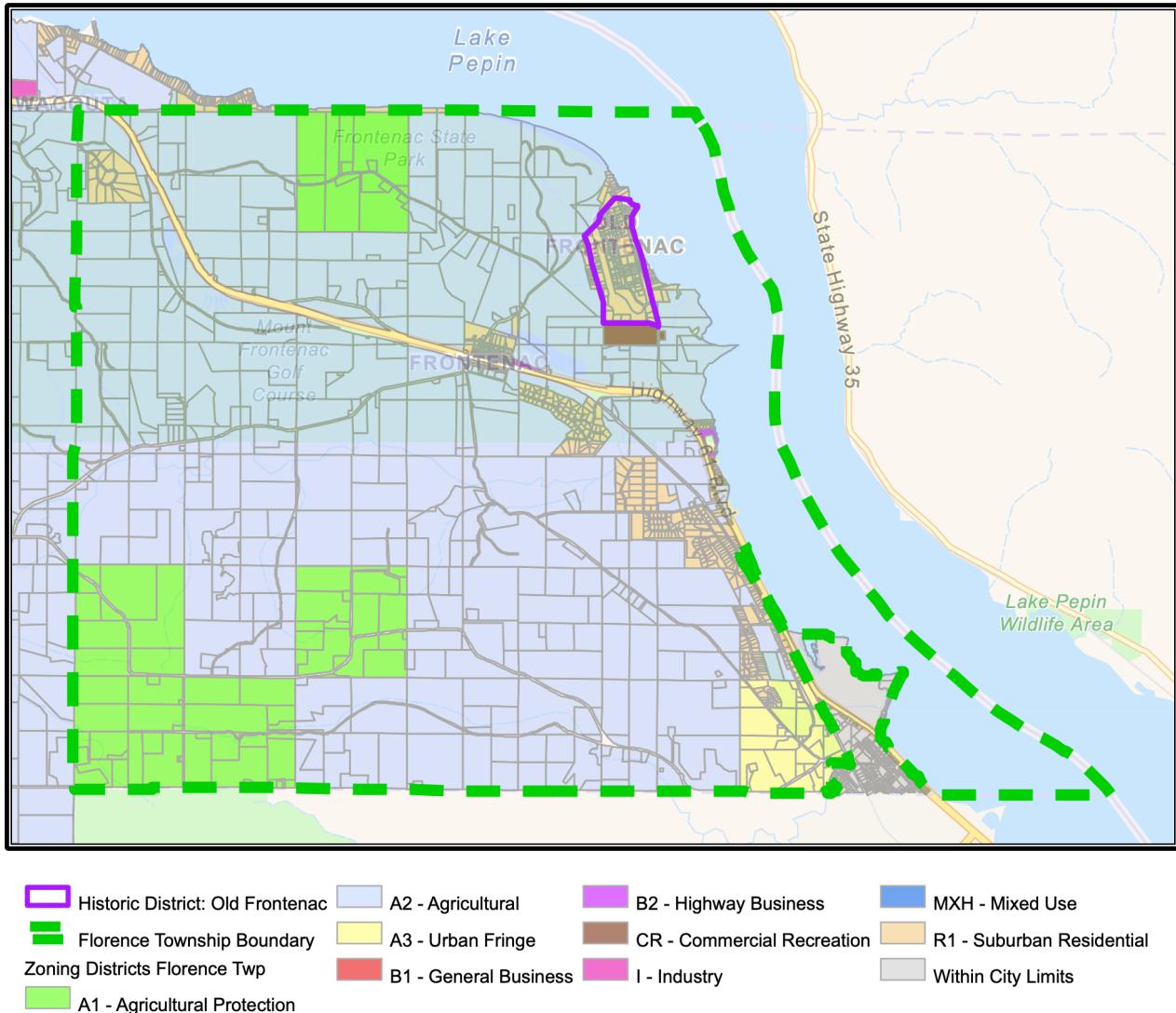
Florence Township already has one PUD: Chateau Frontenac. PUDs are actually required for shoreline areas. Chateau Frontenac thus went through this planning and approval process to develop the houses there. A PUD sometimes means higher density development with a variety of services. Sometimes there are shared septic and wells.

The proposed PUD provisions for Goodhue County Commercial recreational zones did not allow for residential occupancy – thus could not be homesteaded. Dwellings could be used as a part-time residence (less than 180 days per year) and/or vacation rentals, but not full-time, permanent residential. This was one reason the county rejected the PUD amendment.

Nathan Oppedahl: “Residential is a huge part of our township values. We value neighbors!” He noted that the township cannot be more permissive in its ordinances than the county. And although the PUD updates to the county zoning ordinances are no longer being considered, he stated that the Planning Commission wants “to get on top of this for the future in case the county changes its mind down the line. I see this as a period of discovery and getting input for what might be desired in the township.” Workshop feedback will inform our next steps, including potential PUD ordinance language. “If we have a strong community sentiment going in one direction, that tells us something.”

Tom Johnson: “Being a realtor, I can tell you that demand is going through the roof in this area and also across the river in the Stockholm [Wisconsin] area. Look at a map: You see Rochester, the Twin Cities, then Lake Pepin. People want to come here, and sometimes say, why would we go up north, we can go here. That will just continue; demand will grow. So, if we can get our arms around what we want our community to be like, that would be wise. How do we manage growth and maintain integrity? Yes, this is about the Villa now, but [we must consider] also an overall canopy approach.”

Florence Township Zoning Map



Jim Anderson: "Let's take our destiny into our own hands in a positive way." He then described his research into how Afton handled a similar situation. Afton, at 25 square miles and 3,000 residents, is "across the street" from booming Woodbury but wanted to retain its own rural values, so was proactive rather than reactive, and now if people buy property there, they're well aware of what they're getting into. "If you don't want something to happen in your area but don't do anything ahead of it, it will happen for you. I'm not saying we need to become Afton, but we can learn from what they've done." Afton replaced their former PUD ordinance with what they call a PLCD, or Preservation and Land Conservation Developments ordinance. It applies to their Agricultural districts and requires at least fifty percent of a property go into land conservation to be perpetually maintained, with the remainder available for development. Generally, Afton requires a minimum of 5-acre lots for single-family dwellings, however lot sizes can be reduced to around two acres in a PLCD. A homeowners' association is required primarily to ensure the preserved land is cared for. And shared septic and wells are not allowed. Afton's primary value is to maintain residential privacy; they don't want dense development. One Afton councilor said they're not opposed to economic development but there's a misnomer that

economic development brings money into a community. He pointed out Woodbury across the street has property taxes four times as high as Afton's because Afton controls its infrastructure. "Big developments can mean higher property taxes." It was also noted that Afton is also looking at adding an agricultural development ordinance to help maintain its legacy of agriculture and ensure continuation of viable farming by requiring at least half of a proposed development be set aside and continue to be farmed.

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan was created in 2003 by a subcommittee of the Planning Commission after a county planner noted that our township differed from other townships and the county in its priorities and approach to land uses. The county invited us to create this plan, which articulates our values and priorities, and serves as basis for our ordinances and decisions. The subcommittee obtained grants and worked with consultants to make the jump from the Comprehensive Plan to enforceable ordinances. Kristen Eide-Tollefson: "This was called 'The Florence Model' for years." In 2013 the Plan was updated.

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan - Land Use Goals & Priorities

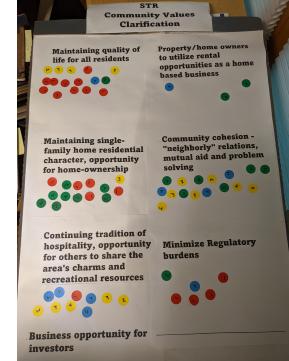
- ▶ 2003 - Florence Township Board of Supervisors approved the township's first comprehensive land use plan following a planning process that began in December 2002.
- ▶ The original comprehensive plan identified the goals, priorities and strategies for land use activity, heritage protection, and community concerns throughout Florence Township.
- ▶ 2012-2013 - Planning Commission and participating residents reviewed and discussed the plan with a view toward clarifying and strengthening goals, priorities and strategies for sensitive natural areas, agricultural areas, residential areas, and heritage zones.
- ▶ This process concluded in affirming that all of the original guiding goals and priorities voiced by residents and property owners were not only still valid but should be strengthened to prevent this township from becoming an industrialized and heavily trafficked area.

The Comprehensive Plan was used to inform the values which supported the creation of the Short-Term Rental (STR) ordinance in 2023. Our STR (Short-Term Rental) ordinance preceded Red Wing's. Kristen Eide-Tollefson: "For a small township, we've done really remarkable work. I want to congratulate you all on that."

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan - Land Use Goals & Priorities

- In 2022 and 2023 these goals and priorities informed the development of the township's Short-term Rental (STR) ordinance.

Value	# of Votes	Weighted Votes
Maintaining quality of life for all residents	16	52
Maintaining single-family home residential character – opportunity for home ownership	14	46
Community cohesion – maintaining "neighborly" relations, mutual aid and problem solving	16	35
Minimize regulatory burdens	6	20
Continuing tradition of hospitality – opportunity for others to share the area's charms and recreational resources	10	18
Property/Homeowners to utilize rental opportunities – as home-based business	3	7
Business opportunity for investors	3	3



Red Dot, #1 priority = 4 pts
Green Dot, #2 priority = 3 pts
Yellow Dot, #3 priority = 2 pts
Blue Dot, #4 priority = 1 pt

The Comprehensive Plan has eight land use goals and priorities. Each has a set of strategies (not shown here – see plan for details) for realizing the priorities. The goals and priorities are the basis for the township ordinances and inform "who we are" and "what we care about" as a township:

1. Sensitive natural areas.
2. Established parks and open spaces.
3. Agricultural areas.
4. Community and public service.
5. Florence Township heritage.
6. Hwy. 61 corridor and transportation.
7. Quality of life and recreation.
8. Residential development.

The following slides provide details on each priority. As we go into next year, the Planning Commission will revisit these and revise as appropriate, with public discussion and input, and bring them up to date as necessary. But today' workshop is focused on the Commercial Recreational district and the Villa Maria property: What do these land use priorities say about what we want for our community?

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan - Land Use Goals & Priorities

SENSITIVE NATURAL AREAS

- ▶ To protect and conserve the sensitive natural areas, endangered species and habitat of Florence Township, which include the Wells Creek Watershed, bluff lands, wetlands, forests, trout streams, Frontenac State Park, Mississippi River shorelands, floodplains, karst features, driftless areas and archaeological sites.
- ▶ To prevent any environmental damage or degradation to sensitive natural areas and habitat of Florence Township.
- ▶ To require all new or expanded land use development to consider the cumulative environmental impact of such development on sensitive natural areas.
- ▶ To provide for appropriate forest and timber management, and wood harvesting under National Timbering practices and U of M Woodland Manager.

How might this apply to the Commercial Recreational zone and influence uses?

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan - Land Use Goals & Priorities

ESTABLISHED PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

- ▶ To protect and preserve the established parks and open spaces within Florence Township for the scenic beauty they provide and the recreational opportunities.
- ▶ To prevent any environmental damage or degradation to the established parks and open spaces with Florence Township.
- ▶ To identify potential areas for trail corridors.
- ▶ To seek opportunities for the future establishment of additional parks and open spaces within Florence Township.
- ▶ To preserve scenic vistas associated with established parks and open spaces.

How might this apply to the Commercial Recreational zone and influence uses?

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan - Land Use Goals & Priorities

AGRICULTURAL AREAS

- ▶ To encourage and support all levels of farming on agricultural property, including livestock production, production of crops, orchards, vineyards, apiaries, raising of specialty animals, hobby farms, forest and timber management, and hunting preserves.
- ▶ To encourage and promote the conservation of soil and water resources through the reduction of soil erosion and stormwater drainage.
- ▶ To reduce the potential for industrial or other land use activity that conflicts with farming and other agricultural activity.
- ▶ To develop, repair and maintain township roads and bridges for transporting (i) agricultural supplies to local farms, and (ii) agricultural crops, products and livestock from local farms.

How might this apply to the Commercial Recreational zone and influence uses?

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan - Land Use Goals & Priorities

COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE

- ▶ To develop and maintain a safe, thriving rural community that sustains the historic integrity of the township and enables our citizens to live together with respect for one another.
- ▶ To create and maintain an atmosphere of cooperation between the township elected officials, Frontenac, Frontenac Station, and rural areas, and the private needs of township citizens.
- ▶ To increase township services as township population grows.
- ▶ To reduce land use conflict as township population grows.
- ▶ To make public safety a priority of township government and citizens.

How might this apply to the Commercial Recreational zone and influence uses?

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan - Land Use Goals & Priorities

FLORENCE TOWNSHIP HERITAGE

- ▶ To preserve and protect historic sites, landscapes and buildings in Florence Township.
- ▶ To remain primarily a rural and scenic residential, agricultural and recreational community with historic integrity.

How might this apply to the Commercial Recreational zone and influence uses?

HIGHWAY 61 CORRIDOR AND TRANSPORTATION

- ▶ To assure Florence Township influence in Highway 61 corridor site plans, rail and highway development decisions.
- ▶ To develop, enhance and maintain Florence Township road and transportation network.
- ▶ To assure public safety concerns are met in highway design, expansion and improvement.

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan - Land Use Goals & Priorities

QUALITY OF LIFE AND RECREATION

- ▶ To encourage, preserve and protect recreational assets and resources in Florence Township.
- ▶ To preserve and protect sensitive natural areas from excessive and destructive recreational use.
- ▶ To encourage and improve resident and business involvement in environmental review and permitting decisions affecting proposed site developments and expansions.
- ▶ To protect water quantity and water quality available to residents, farmers, businesses, visitors, and natural habitats.
- ▶ To protect the air quality environment of Florence Township.

How might this apply to the Commercial Recreational zone and influence uses?

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan - Land Use Goals & Priorities

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ To ensure that new residential developments are coordinated and compatible with existing township transportation corridors and road infrastructure.
- ▶ To assure the priorities of residential land use over industrial land use.
- ▶ To encourage and maintain residential population diversity of age, income and ethnic background with varying price ranges of housing stock.
- ▶ To coordinate residential service infrastructure development with housing development.
- ▶ To preserve sensitive natural areas, open spaces, parks and agricultural areas free of excessive residential development.
- ▶ To preserve natural drainage systems and landforms.
- ▶ To preserve dark skies through control of outdoor lighting.
- ▶ To maintain scenic vistas and visual beauty.

How might this apply to the Commercial Recreational zone and influence uses?

Florence Township Comprehensive Plan - Land Use Goals & Priorities

- ▶ SENSITIVE NATURAL AREAS
- ▶ ESTABLISHED PARKS AND OPEN SPACES
- ▶ AGRICULTURAL AREAS
- ▶ COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC SERVICE
- ▶ FLORENCE TOWNSHIP HERITAGE
- ▶ HIGHWAY 61 CORRIDOR AND TRANSPORTATION
- ▶ QUALITY OF LIFE AND RECREATION
- ▶ RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Should any of the appropriateness rankings of the Commercial Recreational Condition Uses be changed?

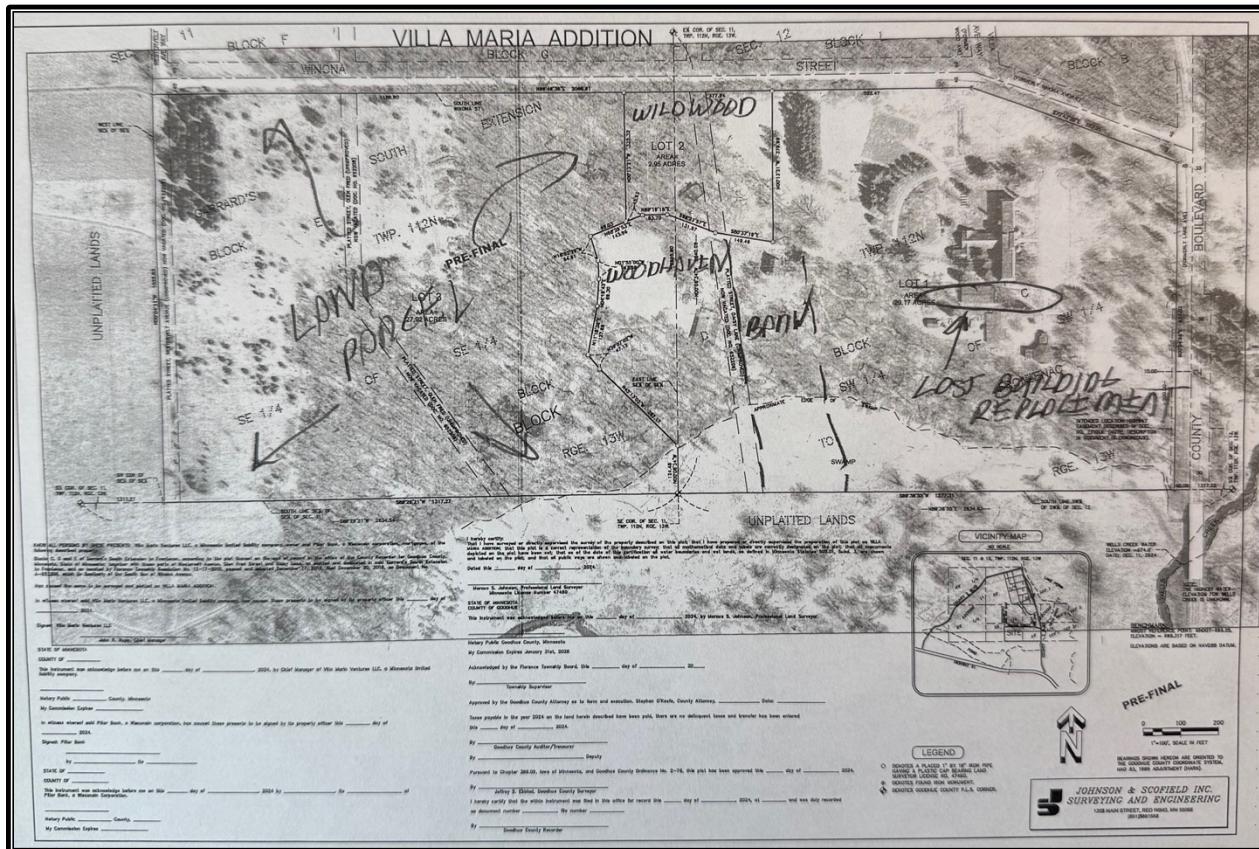
Future of the Villa Maria Property

The future of the Villa property – John Rupp

Open discussion forum on the future of the Villa property: ideas, aspirations, and how they may align with priorities as expressed in the township comprehensive plan.

The discussion began with an update from Jeff Bolin, who lives in the house known as St. Hubert's Lodge in Old Frontenac, with his wife Ann. They have recently entered into a purchase agreement with John Rupp for 27 or so acres comprising the western most part of the Villa lot. This also includes the Starwood site which they may rehab pending septic, well, and other estimates. They plan on donating a handful of acres abutting the state park to Parks & Trails which will then go through the process of bestowing it to the park. The donated acres will eventually allow a connection between the upper part of the state park and the Sand Point Trail parking lot and trail area. In addition, the Bolins and Rupp will donate a conservation easement to the park on the edge of their properties to help with this development. The connection could be made at the bottom of the ravine area in which Wells Creek meanders through west of County Road 2. There was once a snowmobile trail in this area, which had more forest then, but the area now is prone to flooding and erosion. Frontenac State Park Manager Jake Gaster: "We would find a way for a connecting trail to cross Wells Creek, but probably not close to the highway." Access to the Bolin's property would be via an entrance along Winona Ave.

Rupp distributed the following map to further aid in the discussion and invited folks to “feel free to wander the property.”



Rupp then reviewed the history of his ownership of the Villa property and his former plans to make it a hotel/resort/event center operation, which did not come to fruition. He said he has deep financial problems and needs to act, therefore he has been looking to sell portions of the property to the west of the main Villa building, Marian Hall. At the time of the workshop, the Villa property was in receivership to be auctioned at a sheriff's sale the following Wednesday (December 18, 2024).

In addition to the pending sale to the Bolins, Rupp provided the following updates:

- There is a purchase agreement with an individual from the Twin Cities for the approximate 3-acre lot with its cottage (Wildwood). The buyer's intent is for periodic personal use as well as offer it as an STR. Access to the Wildwood likely would be via Winona Ave.
- There are three possible buyers for the approximately 5–6-acre Woodhaven property. One is interested in it as a house, another as some kind of “Nordic spa” spa open to the public and people living in the Villa building, and the third's intentions are not known. I don't believe there are any purchase agreements as of yet. Access to the Woodhaven property likely would be via the Villa entrance.

With the money from these sales Rupp can exit the foreclosure process by paying off the amount he owes on the Villa building. In addition, the new lots will need to be platted and

require public hearings and township approval. The above map which Rupp distributed indicates this process is already in the works with Johnson & Scofield.

Rupp continued: "What I'm hoping to do is get support for idea that the Villa building would be a condo structure so apartments could be individually owned, and some units could be occupied full-time by owners." Thus, abandoning the original boutique hotel and event center plan, as well as the recent "vacation cabins" approach for which he was proposed the PUD amendment language. He stated he believes a residential ownership approach (which was not supported by the PUD proposal) is more aligned with Comprehensive Plan because "real residents would be more likely to be neighbors with a stake in township values." Under his proposal, the Villa would have a combination of residences with some STR units in the building.

Rupp: The kind of person buying or renting here will share your values, being attuned to being surrounded by state park. In my original plan, each room in the hotel would have had a bathroom with a tub and shower, then had a kitchenette, sitting area with gas fireplace, and bedroom space for a king bed and built-in wardrobe. There would have been 30 to 34 units, around 500 square feet, very small. But [for condos or apartments] some people will say they want a different configuration combining two or more of those units, so I think we'll end up with several bigger units [within the current Villa Marian Hall].

If there is a demand for amenities such as reopening the old swimming pool, other common areas, fitness facilities and even pickleball areas, he would need to expand the number of units in order to support the investments and costs. This is where the idea of adding a building with 30-50 additional units comes in (ostensibly on the site of the old dormitory). Some amenities may also be able to be financed through a "social membership club" model.

Rupp further shared ideas of using the old tennis courts could be used for parking and/or garages or even developing an indoor parking garage with a short tunnel and an elevator to the residential building. He also continues to explore finding a tenant or owner to develop Ursuline Hall into a restaurant. And the barn area is not listed and as he wants to see what people think should be done with that area.

In response to a question as to whether the grounds would be open to the public, Rupp indicated probably not, as residents wouldn't "want strangers walking around [their] private grounds. But the restaurant would be open to the public." He also indicated the historic architectural façade of Marian Hall won't change.

In response to a question regarding whether he can find workers for both construction and staffing when all is developed, Rupp said: "I have a very preliminary list of subcontractors. In the next few months, I will look deeper into who does sheet-rocking, plumbing, etc. I'll be doing some work to get some references." In regard to operational staff, Rupp mentioned he has experienced how hard it's been to find people "who understand the quality needed" to run his Wisconsin resort. However, he said that "a couple of people who of course I can't name" who work at the St. James Hotel in Red Wing have told him they'd like to work with him at the Villa, if plans proceed toward fruition.

Rupp acknowledged all this development would likely require at least a zoning variance but would like to “work backwards from what the community wants” and then figure out the process and what may be needed in terms of zoning. He mentioned he would expect a Common Interest Community (CIC) plat would be needed and approved, and it would address density and other provisions, and likely potential floor plan options. He needs to work through those details and be assured of approval before actually offering units for sale, which in turn would provide the funds for the actually building of the units.

Also, he recognized that one of the first steps for the selling of the lots to the Bolins and others will be a plat which requires public hearings are township approval. It appears he is already working with Johnson & Scofield on this as his handout is from them and include potential parcels.

Rupp concluded: “I’m sobered by the risks so will be very conservative. There’s demand here, as I found out when I stumbled on Jeff and Ann’s interest. I’m trying not to bite off more than I can chew [as I move through this process]. I’ve done that once already.”

Participants were generally supportive of Rupp’s plans, although concerns remain regarding the necessary investment needed. One participant noted “I personally find all of this exciting and positive” and another, “We have a say in how this happens.”

Oppedahl noted: “Yes, as we go forward, we will have more say. There may be zoning changes, variances, and re-platting, and all of that has to go through our Planning Commission and eventually the Town Board.” Continuing, he thanked Mr. Rupp for attending and said, “We want this to be successful. The Villa is an important property for our township, and we want to see it preserved and used.”

Appendix – Workshop Feedback on Conditional Uses in Commercial Recreational Districts

		# of Votes				Weighted Score
		NOT Appropriate	Maybe Appropriate	Appropriate	Highly Appropriate	
Conditional Use & Participant Comments						
Subd. 1. Resort facilities to include lodges, guesthouses, cabins and retreat facilities.		4	10	11	5	47
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to use the Villa. • Concerns for sensitive natural areas and conservation of land. • Retreat center similar to “The Marsh” in Minnetonka. • Should not include development of undeveloped part of property. • In Villa area. • Low density. • Low density – yes. • Villa project only – not remainder of Old Town. 						
Subd. 2. On-site taverns where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational development.		2	11	11	6	51
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should not be visible from the road (signage). • Attracts visitors. • Public • Appropriate size for community. • Should not include development of undeveloped part of property. • At Villa. • Villa project. • Absolutely not more people more trouble. 						
Subd. 3. On-site restaurants where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational dev.		1	11	12	6	53
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good use for Villa. • Public • Should not include development of undeveloped part of property. • At Villa. • Villa 						
Subd. 4. Golf courses and clubhouses.		14	7	7	2	27
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts visitors. • Limited – one already established. • More? Have one, no more. • Disc golf OK. • Don’t need any more in area. • Too many golf courses spreading poisons. 						
Subd. 5. Dinner theaters.		7	16	4	3	33

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be well attended here. • Should not include development of undeveloped part of property. • At Villa. 					
Subd. 6. Ski areas, ski jumps, related lifts, lodges, and maintenance facilities.	16	8	8	1	21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mt. Frontenac used to be one. • Mt. Frontenac ski area should be reopened. • What a joke. 					
Subd. 7. Yacht slips, service and storage marinas, harbor and docking facilities subject also to all approved regulations and ordinances of governmental agencies for the same.	15	7	7	1	24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One is probably enough. • Should not be a storage facility for yachts. • For township residents, but where? 					
Subd. 8. Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle sites.	19	8	2	1	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very popular – i.e. State Park • State Park only. • Use the State Park – no additional needed. • Only with appropriate separation from SP prairie. • Too much noise. • Offer State Park pass. 					
Subd. 9. Nature trails, snowmobile trails, ski trails, and similar facilities.	3	9	11	7	52
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No motorized vehicles – no snowmobiles • Very popular – i.e. State Park • No snowmobile trails – nature priority. • No snowmobile trails. • Use the State Park. • No snowmobile. • No snowmobile trails. • Nature trails - not snowmobile – x-county skiing. • No snowmobile (too much noise). • No motorized vehicles. • No snowmobile trails. • Offer State Park pass. 					
Subd. 10. Museums and commercialized historical attractions.	3	14	9	4	44
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontenac has a lot of history. • Should not include development of undeveloped part of property. • Museums – yes. • We have the Town Hall for that. • On a small scale – SHOULD HAVE. 					
Subd. 11. Accessory uses to be determined through the CUP process.	9	11	4	6	37
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No CUP • Depends on CUP. • Not sure. • I do not know what CUP is. • Conditional use should be articulated. 					
Subd. 12. Outdoor recreational uses including, but not limited to: zip lines, rope or disc golf courses and mountain bike trails.	11	11	6	2	29
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We approved this some years ago. 					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too small for zip lines. • No motorized vehicles (e.g. snowmobiles). • But not Old Town. 					
Subd. 13. Outdoor concert facilities.	9	15	4	2	29
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be a noise issue. • With appropriate permit process. • At Villa. • Limited – not daily. • Protect environment. 					

General comments

- Sensitive natural areas priority
- Density is important - not to exceed
- Villa building could be residential – condos (appropriate).
- Keep Frontenac the way it is. Keep it conserved. Looks like this dev is in financial trouble. Be careful. Thx you – good mtg.
- The reason most of us live in Old Frontenac is for peace and quietness. The more traffic the more problems – we don't want resorts etc. Just say no!! Thank you for your time. How many more meetings do we waste our time on??

Note: Weighted Score derived from assigning the following points to the appropriateness indication for each use:

- Not Appropriate = 0
- Maybe Appropriate = 1
- Appropriate = 2
- Highly Appropriate = 3

Weighted Results – listed from most appropriate to least	
Subd. 3. On-site restaurants where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational dev.	53
Subd. 9. Nature trails, snowmobile trails, ski trails, and similar facilities.	52
Subd. 2. On-site taverns where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational development.	51
Subd. 1. Resort facilities to include lodges, guesthouses, cabins and retreat facilities.	47
Subd. 10. Museums and commercialized historical attractions.	44
Subd. 11. Accessory uses to be determined through the CUP process.	37
Subd. 5. Dinner theaters.	33
Subd. 12. Outdoor recreational uses including, but not limited to: zip lines, rope or disc golf courses and mountain bike trails.	29
Subd. 13. Outdoor concert facilities.	29
Subd. 4. Golf courses and clubhouses.	27
Subd. 7. Yacht slips, service and storage marinas, harbor and docking facilities subject also to all approved regulations and ordinances of governmental agencies for the same.	24
Subd. 6. Ski areas, ski jumps, related lifts, lodges, and maintenance facilities.	21
Subd. 8. Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle sites.	15

Ranked by Votes for Highly Appropriate	
Subd. 9. Nature trails, snowmobile trails, ski trails, and similar facilities.	7
Subd. 2. On-site taverns where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational development.	6
Subd. 3. On-site restaurants where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational dev.	6
Subd. 11. Accessory uses to be determined through the CUP process.	6
Subd. 1. Resort facilities to include lodges, guesthouses, cabins and retreat facilities.	5
Subd. 10. Museums and commercialized historical attractions.	4
Subd. 5. Dinner theaters.	3
Subd. 4. Golf courses and clubhouses.	2
Subd. 12. Outdoor recreational uses including, but not limited to: zip lines, rope or disc golf courses and mountain bike trails.	2
Subd. 13. Outdoor concert facilities.	2
Subd. 6. Ski areas, ski jumps, related lifts, lodges, and maintenance facilities.	1
Subd. 7. Yacht slips, service and storage marinas, harbor and docking facilities subject also to all approved regulations and ordinances of governmental agencies for the same.	1
Subd. 8. Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle sites.	1

Ranked by Votes for Appropriate	
Subd. 3. On-site restaurants where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational dev.	12
Subd. 9. Nature trails, snowmobile trails, ski trails, and similar facilities.	11
Subd. 2. On-site taverns where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational development.	11
Subd. 1. Resort facilities to include lodges, guesthouses, cabins and retreat facilities.	11
Subd. 10. Museums and commercialized historical attractions.	9
Subd. 7. Yacht slips, service and storage marinas, harbor and docking facilities subject also to all approved regulations and ordinances of governmental agencies for the same.	7
Subd. 4. Golf courses and clubhouses.	7
Subd. 12. Outdoor recreational uses including, but not limited to: zip lines, rope or disc golf courses and mountain bike trails.	6
Subd. 6. Ski areas, ski jumps, related lifts, lodges, and maintenance facilities.	5
Subd. 5. Dinner theaters.	4
Subd. 13. Outdoor concert facilities.	4
Subd. 11. Accessory uses to be determined through the CUP process.	4
Subd. 8. Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle sites.	2

Ranked by Votes for Maybe Appropriate	
Subd. 5. Dinner theaters.	16
Subd. 13. Outdoor concert facilities.	15
Subd. 10. Museums and commercialized historical attractions.	14
Subd. 2. On-site taverns where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational development.	11
Subd. 3. On-site restaurants where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational dev.	11
Subd. 11. Accessory uses to be determined through the CUP process.	11
Subd. 12. Outdoor recreational uses including, but not limited to: zip lines, rope or disc golf courses and mountain bike trails.	11
Subd. 1. Resort facilities to include lodges, guesthouses, cabins and retreat facilities.	10
Subd. 9. Nature trails, snowmobile trails, ski trails, and similar facilities.	9
Subd. 6. Ski areas, ski jumps, related lifts, lodges, and maintenance facilities.	8
Subd. 8. Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle sites.	8
Subd. 4. Golf courses and clubhouses.	7
Subd. 7. Yacht slips, service and storage marinas, harbor and docking facilities subject also to all approved regulations and ordinances of governmental agencies for the same.	7

Ranked by Votes for Not Appropriate	
Subd. 8. Campgrounds and Recreational Vehicle sites.	19
Subd. 6. Ski areas, ski jumps, related lifts, lodges, and maintenance facilities.	16
Subd. 7. Yacht slips, service and storage marinas, harbor and docking facilities subject also to all approved regulations and ordinances of governmental agencies for the same.	15
Subd. 4. Golf courses and clubhouses.	14
Subd. 12. Outdoor recreational uses including, but not limited to: zip lines, rope or disc golf courses and mountain bike trails.	11
Subd. 11. Accessory uses to be determined through the CUP process.	9
Subd. 13. Outdoor concert facilities.	9
Subd. 5. Dinner theaters.	7
Subd. 1. Resort facilities to include lodges, guesthouses, cabins and retreat facilities.	4
Subd. 9. Nature trails, snowmobile trails, ski trails, and similar facilities.	3
Subd. 10. Museums and commercialized historical attractions.	3
Subd. 2. On-site taverns where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational development.	2
Subd. 3. On-site restaurants where the main function is servicing a resort or recreational dev.	1