

1. Land Use

The regulations meet land use objectives of the Comprehensive Plan through improvement standards and land development standards. Site layout and design, landscaping, parking, lighting and other related site elements are all addressed with sufficient guidelines. Also incorporated are techniques to mitigate conflicts between commercial and industrial uses with residential neighborhoods.

2. Housing

The Subdivision and Land Use Regulations primarily deal with the development of residential areas, specifically their design and layout. With regards to the Comprehensive Plan, housing objectives for the study area are to maintain suburban-style developments. The regulations support this through street layout, buffering and lot design.

3. Natural Resources

Development is to complement natural features of a site, with strict guidelines regarding building, street and landscaping layout and their effect on adjacent land uses. The incorporation of best management practices is encouraged whenever possible for drainage systems. Areas are highlighted that should be preserved as open space such as water resources, significant trees or stands of trees, flood plains, steep slopes and scenic vistas. Also addressed in the regulations are wastewater disposal, stormwater management, and erosion and sediment control.

A. Summary of Development Controls

Overall, the three land use control devices are consistent with each other. There is a desire to maintain the rural character of the Town, and concentrate future commercial and industrial development along Route 102. This development will be reviewed by the standards established in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. The study area is also the focus of conventional residential subdivisions subject to the same review standards. The Comprehensive Plan advocates for a PUD strategy be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance that is not in effect; however, the Town is in the process of developing guidelines. There are still references to sprawl-like development patterns in the Zoning Ordinances, which the Comprehensive Plan states should be avoided to keep the character of the Town.

III. Public Participation

In an effort to develop a popular new plan for Route 102 that protects open space, stimulates development, enhances the community, and improves the tax base the public was invited to participate and voice their opinion at various stages of the process. Meetings were publicly advertised and open to the public throughout the project. A written request to all Burrillville residents asking them to describe the uses that they would most or least like to see as part of the development of Route 102 was presented in the Bargain Buyer and the Providence Journal.

A. Study Committee – Monthly meetings

The Route 102 Committee met on the forth Monday of every month in council chambers. All meetings were open to the public and meeting minutes were kept for the record.

B. Public “Visioning Session – March 26, 2002

The primary goal of the community visioning session held on March 25, 2002, was to provide the public with an opportunity to define the direction of development along Route 102. The presentation focused on the need for action, previous actions undertaken by the town, and a review of existing data.

The need for action is derived from the Town’s desire to take a pro-active approach to finding tax funding sources in preparation for expected decreases under current tax contract agreements. This need is further supported by the fact that the Town has almost used up all of its readily available industrial space, therefore eliminating the opportunity to make up much needed tax base. Actions currently being undertaken by the town also must take into account protection of the environment and the rural character of Burrillville. As previously stated this is of particular concern due to the significant amount of land along Route 102 which currently remains undeveloped but is actively being advertised “for sale” as commercial and industrial.

Primary concerns expressed at the Visioning Session include the following:

- Maintain rural character along Route 102 “favorite color is green”
- Promote Route 102’s close proximity to routes 295, 395, 495, and 146
- Incorporate specific Development Management District guidelines into the existing subdivision review process design guidelines.
- Develop main access points to Route 102 (access restrictions)
- Examine the projected growth to water supply and sewer disposal
- Promote industrial development
- Propose zoning amendments

C. Workshop – August 26, 2002

Local town officials and board members were invited to a workshop at Town Hall on August 26, 2002. This meeting was intended as an informational meeting to present the work of the Route 102 Committee to date. A draft of the public hearing presentation was presented.

D. Public Hearing –September 23, 2002

This public participation opportunity involved the presentation of a concept plan and vision for the development of Route 102 over the next twenty years. Participants were provided with a brochure outlining the committee’s recommendations and concept plan. The back of the brochure was formatted to encourage written comment on the vision. Additional copies of the brochure were made available at the town hall. As with the previous Visioning session, the presentation reviewed the need for action and previous actions undertaken by the town.

Primary concerns expressed at the Public Hearing included the following:

- Proposed zoning amendments
- Maintain rural character along Route 102
- Maintain existing traffic levels along Route 102

- Develop main access points to Route 102 (access restrictions)
- The impact of proposed improvements on Victory highway
- Examine the projected growth to water supply and sewer disposal
- Promote industrial development

E. Public Comments Forms

Burrillville residents were invited to submit written comment related to the development of Route 102. They were asked to document the five most and least desirable uses that they would prefer to see developed over the next 5, 10, or 20 years. There was also an opportunity for any additional comment related to the study. A total of seventy-eight (78) public comment forms were completed by the residents of Burrillville. Of the forms received, representation from the following villages of residence were recorded: 10 Glendale, 30 Harrisville, 11 Mapleville, 6 Nasonville, 5 Oakland, 13 Pascoag, and 3 undetermined.

VI. Committee Recommendations

A. Recommendations

At the request of the Town Council, the Committee has studied the potential future development of property in the vicinity of Bronco Highway. The Committee, working with the public in a series of meetings, workshops and hearings, has prepared a future zoning land use plan for the vicinity of Bronco Highway.

1. Adopt the Development Management District plan for property in the vicinity of Bronco Highway to encourage responsible development, protect open space, enhance the community, and improve the local tax base.

Bronco Highway is the route of entry to Burrillville for many residents and visitors. It is mostly a two lane rural arterial highway, with a third lane added for slower vehicles on steep grades. It traverses forested land, with limited commercial and residential development near historical village centers. The mix of forest and village centers is an important part of the identity of Burrillville. Several large tracts of land are presently for sale. Development of these tracts should not be undertaken randomly, but in a systematic program of orderly development, in accordance with a comprehensive plan that protects natural and cultural resources and maintains free flowing traffic conditions on Bronco Highway.

The Town will shortly begin updating its Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances in accordance with state requirements that these documents be updated every five years. The plan for Bronco Highway should be included in the updated Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances.

2. Adopt design guidelines to preserve the rural character, protect sensitive environmental and cultural resources, and minimize traffic impacts along Bronco Highway.

The Planning Board should be encouraged to incorporate into their existing design guidelines specific Development Management District guidelines for use within the subdivision review process. New development should be required to conform to at least the following guidelines:

- Avoid impacts on wetlands, floodplains, aquifers, historic sites and public properties.
- Maintain a minimum 50' forested buffer wherever practicable along Bronco Highway.
- Minimize lot clearance and maintain forested cover wherever practicable
- Provide erosion and sedimentation controls for all land clearing activities
- Interrupt parking areas with landscaping and planted islands
- Direct runoff to stormwater treatment prior to discharge.
- Design multiple lot developments with internal road systems accessing all lots with only one or two curb cuts on Bronco Highway.
- Lots that front on both Bronco Highway and Victory Highway should obtain access via Victory Highway rather than Bronco Highway where practicable.
- Lots which front on both existing cross-streets and on Bronco Highway should obtain access via the cross streets where practicable.

3. Concentrate retail development at commercial nodes in existing and proposed village centers. Avoid strip commercial development and commercial sprawl.

The village centers have traditionally been at the very heart of Burrillville. When asked where they live, residents will often respond with a village name before the Town's name. Preserving the village centers is critical to preserving the character of Burrillville. Development of auto oriented strip commercial retail or "large box" retail stores along Bronco Highway has the potential to threaten the vitality of the smaller scale businesses that are fundamental to the fabric of the village centers. Further, service oriented retail developments with convenience stores, drive up tellers, coffee and donut shops, service stations, etc. generate multiple traffic turning movements which are acceptable within village centers, but unacceptable along Bronco Highway.

Therefore retail development should be discouraged along Bronco Highway and instead should be directed into the village centers. In the village centers, retail development can be concentrated and managed, its traffic impacts can be controlled, projects can be kept to human scale, and stores can be kept accessible to pedestrians.

4. Concentrate industrial and commercial office development within industrial and commercial office parks.

The Town wishes to encourage industrial and commercial office development within the Development Management District. To preserve the rural character of the district and protect Bronco Highway, these uses should be concentrated in proposed industrial parks and office parks. This will offer the "campus like" environment that businesses prefer,

prevent industrial sprawl, minimize traffic impacts and make it easier to provide sewer and water service.

5. Extend and improve water and sewer service to village centers, industrial parks, and commercial office parks.

Burrillville is already working on extensions to existing water and sewer systems. This will include providing sewers in some of the village centers along Route 102. Studies of Burrillville's water and sewer systems indicate that there is capacity available for additional water service and sewer service extensions beyond those currently proposed. Sewer and water service are strong incentives for development that can be used to enhance the community's tax base.

6. Revise zoning within the Development Management District to eliminate the existing strip commercial development zone, establish new commercial and industrial parks, and correct problems caused by zoning boundaries that split properties.

Zoning revisions are necessary on sixty (60) properties to fully implement the plan. Six of these properties would be down zoned from strip commercial uses to less intensive residential or commercial uses. This would accomplish the goal of preventing strip commercial development and avoiding commercial sprawl along Bronco Highway. Nine properties would be up zoned. These properties would provide office park and industrial park sites northwest of Bronco Highway as well as local service retail sites in the Village Centers east of Bronco Highway. Zoning boundaries on forty-two (42) properties would be adjusted to eliminate problems caused by zones, which divide parcels.

7. Adopt a Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinance allowing compact mixed use developments designed to reduce sprawl and encourage pedestrian transportation.

The existing Burrillville zoning code provides only limited opportunity for mixing land uses in a given area. Most areas are zoned for a limited number of uses (such as residential, retail, office, or industrial uses). Some are zoned for only one use. However, mixing land uses is one way to encourage interaction between properties and maintain a vibrant community. Adding a retail component to a residential development can be effective, for example, if the stores meet the residents' consumer needs and therefore the residents support the stores. Placing these generally compatible uses in proximity to one another can enhance the value of property and encourage pedestrian circulation. Compact mixed use developments must conform to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinance and must demonstrate in the subdivision review process that they are planned self-sustaining complementary uses and that the development will protect natural and cultural resources.

8. Provide density bonus incentives to planned developments that include improvements to public facilities in excess of those required to sustain the development.

Private developments place demands on public facilities such as water supplies, sewer systems, schools, recreation facilities, parks and open spaces. Planned developments should be encouraged to contribute to public facilities and rewarded for doing so with density bonus incentives of up to 20%. To qualify for such bonuses, developments must include public open spaces, public recreational facilities, or other infrastructure in excess of that required to sustain the development. Examples include developments, which provide the town with parks, ball fields, tennis courts, water well sites, wastewater pumping stations, etc.

B. Vision Plan for Bronco Highway

The Bronco Highway Vision Plan is intended to build the community tax base while establishing the right balance between development and conservation. Figure 14, see insert pocket, shows an example of how the study area could be developed in accordance with the vision plan development by the Route 102 Study Committee. This concept plan shows examples of the types of uses that the Committee members feel are appropriate along Route 102 and the various locations where those uses might be developed. This plan is not intended to represent the way land **MUST** be developed, but rather to show how the land **COULD** be developed. To be effective, the plan must be flexible enough to allow Town officials to prevent sprawl, avoid commercial strip development, and protect the character of the Route 102 corridor.

The implementation of this concept plan for Route 102 would begin with the establishment of a “*Development Management District*” by the Town Council. Guidelines for development, as approved by the council, would serve as a tool for use by the Planning Board in the review of any project within the district. The purpose of establishing such guidelines is to ensure that the town has a prepared and agreed upon plan for the development of Route 102. This plan will assist developers in proposing projects that the town desires while providing the Planning Board with the tools necessary to achieve the Town’s vision for the future of Route 102.

F. Public “Visioning Session – March 26, 2002

The primary goal of the community visioning session held on March 25, 2002, was to provide the public with an opportunity to define the direction of development along Route 102. The presentation focused on the need for action, previous actions undertaken by the town, and a review of existing data.

The need for action is derived from the Town’s desire to take a pro-active approach to finding tax funding sources in preparation for expected decreases under current tax contract agreements. This need is further supported by the fact that the Town has almost used up all of its readily available industrial space, therefore eliminating the opportunity to make up much needed tax base. Actions currently being undertaken by the town also must take into account protection of the environment and the rural character of Burrillville. As previously stated this is of particular concern due to the significant amount of land along Route 102 which currently remains undeveloped but is actively being advertised “for sale” as commercial and industrial.

Primary concerns expressed at the Visioning Session include the following:

- Maintain rural character along Route 102 “favorite color is green”
- Promote Route 102’s close proximity to routes 295, 395, 495, and 146
- Incorporate specific Development Management District guidelines into the existing subdivision review process design guidelines.
- Develop main access points to Route 102 (access restrictions)
- Examine the projected growth to water supply and sewer disposal
- Promote industrial development
- Propose zoning amendments

G. Workshop – August 26, 2002

Local town officials and board members were invited to a workshop at Town Hall on August 26, 2002. This meeting was intended as an informational meeting to present the work of the Route 102 Committee to date. A draft of the public hearing presentation was presented.

H. Public Hearing –September 23, 2002

This public participation opportunity involved the presentation of a concept plan and vision for the development of Route 102 over the next twenty years. Participants were provided with a brochure outlining the committee’s recommendations and concept plan. The back of the brochure was formatted to encourage written comment on the vision. Additional copies of the brochure were made available at the town hall. As with the previous Visioning session, the presentation reviewed the need for action and previous actions undertaken by the town.

Primary concerns expressed at the Public Hearing included the following:

- Proposed zoning amendments
- Maintain rural character along Route 102
- Maintain existing traffic levels along Route 102

- Develop main access points to Route 102 (access restrictions)
- The impact of proposed improvements on Victory highway
- Examine the projected growth to water supply and sewer disposal
- Promote industrial development

I. Public Comments Forms

Burrillville residents were invited to submit written comment related to the development of Route 102. They were asked to document the five most and least desirable uses that they would prefer to see developed over the next 5, 10, or 20 years. There was also an opportunity for any additional comment related to the study. A total of seventy-eight (78) public comment forms were completed by the residents of Burrillville. Of the forms received, representation from the following villages of residence were recorded: 10 Glendale, 30 Harrisville, 11 Mapleville, 6 Nasonville, 5 Oakland, 13 Pascoag, and 3 undetermined.

VI. Committee Recommendations

C. Recommendations

At the request of the Town Council, the Committee has studied the potential future development of property in the vicinity of Bronco Highway. The Committee, working with the public in a series of meetings, workshops and hearings, has prepared a future zoning land use plan for the vicinity of Bronco Highway.

1. Adopt the Development Management District plan for property in the vicinity of Bronco Highway to encourage responsible development, protect open space, enhance the community, and improve the local tax base.

Bronco Highway is the route of entry to Burrillville for many residents and visitors. It is mostly a two lane rural arterial highway, with a third lane added for slower vehicles on steep grades. It traverses forested land, with limited commercial and residential development near historical village centers. The mix of forest and village centers is an important part of the identity of Burrillville. Several large tracts of land are presently for sale. Development of these tracts should not be undertaken randomly, but in a systematic program of orderly development, in accordance with a comprehensive plan that protects natural and cultural resources and maintains free flowing traffic conditions on Bronco Highway.

The Town will shortly begin updating its Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances in accordance with state requirements that these documents be updated every five years. The plan for Bronco Highway should be included in the updated Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances.

2. Adopt design guidelines to preserve the rural character, protect sensitive environmental and cultural resources, and minimize traffic impacts along Bronco Highway.

The Planning Board should be encouraged to incorporate into their existing design guidelines specific Development Management District guidelines for use within the subdivision review process. New development should be required to conform to at least the following guidelines:

- Avoid impacts on wetlands, floodplains, aquifers, historic sites and public properties.
- Maintain a minimum 50' forested buffer wherever practicable along Bronco Highway.
- Minimize lot clearance and maintain forested cover wherever practicable
- Provide erosion and sedimentation controls for all land clearing activities
- Interrupt parking areas with landscaping and planted islands
- Direct runoff to stormwater treatment prior to discharge.
- Design multiple lot developments with internal road systems accessing all lots with only one or two curb cuts on Bronco Highway.
- Lots that front on both Bronco Highway and Victory Highway should obtain access via Victory Highway rather than Bronco Highway where practicable.
- Lots which front on both existing cross-streets and on Bronco Highway should obtain access via the cross streets where practicable.

3. Concentrate retail development at commercial nodes in existing and proposed village centers. Avoid strip commercial development and commercial sprawl.

The village centers have traditionally been at the very heart of Burrillville. When asked where they live, residents will often respond with a village name before the Town's name. Preserving the village centers is critical to preserving the character of Burrillville. Development of auto oriented strip commercial retail or "large box" retail stores along Bronco Highway has the potential to threaten the vitality of the smaller scale businesses that are fundamental to the fabric of the village centers. Further, service oriented retail developments with convenience stores, drive up tellers, coffee and donut shops, service stations, etc. generate multiple traffic turning movements which are acceptable within village centers, but unacceptable along Bronco Highway.

Therefore retail development should be discouraged along Bronco Highway and instead should be directed into the village centers. In the village centers, retail development can be concentrated and managed, its traffic impacts can be controlled, projects can be kept to human scale, and stores can be kept accessible to pedestrians.

4. Concentrate industrial and commercial office development within industrial and commercial office parks.

The Town wishes to encourage industrial and commercial office development within the Development Management District. To preserve the rural character of the district and protect Bronco Highway, these uses should be concentrated in proposed industrial parks and office parks. This will offer the "campus like" environment that businesses prefer,

prevent industrial sprawl, minimize traffic impacts and make it easier to provide sewer and water service.

5. Extend and improve water and sewer service to village centers, industrial parks, and commercial office parks.

Burrillville is already working on extensions to existing water and sewer systems. This will include providing sewers in some of the village centers along Route 102. Studies of Burrillville's water and sewer systems indicate that there is capacity available for additional water service and sewer service extensions beyond those currently proposed. Sewer and water service are strong incentives for development that can be used to enhance the community's tax base.

6. Revise zoning within the Development Management District to eliminate the existing strip commercial development zone, establish new commercial and industrial parks, and correct problems caused by zoning boundaries that split properties.

Zoning revisions are necessary on sixty (60) properties to fully implement the plan. Six of these properties would be down zoned from strip commercial uses to less intensive residential or commercial uses. This would accomplish the goal of preventing strip commercial development and avoiding commercial sprawl along Bronco Highway. Nine properties would be up zoned. These properties would provide office park and industrial park sites northwest of Bronco Highway as well as local service retail sites in the Village Centers east of Bronco Highway. Zoning boundaries on forty-two (42) properties would be adjusted to eliminate problems caused by zones, which divide parcels.

7. Adopt a Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinance allowing compact mixed use developments designed to reduce sprawl and encourage pedestrian transportation.

The existing Burrillville zoning code provides only limited opportunity for mixing land uses in a given area. Most areas are zoned for a limited number of uses (such as residential, retail, office, or industrial uses). Some are zoned for only one use. However, mixing land uses is one way to encourage interaction between properties and maintain a vibrant community. Adding a retail component to a residential development can be effective, for example, if the stores meet the residents' consumer needs and therefore the residents support the stores. Placing these generally compatible uses in proximity to one another can enhance the value of property and encourage pedestrian circulation. Compact mixed use developments must conform to the Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinance and must demonstrate in the subdivision review process that they are planned self-sustaining complementary uses and that the development will protect natural and cultural resources.

8. Provide density bonus incentives to planned developments that include improvements to public facilities in excess of those required to sustain the development.

Private developments place demands on public facilities such as water supplies, sewer systems, schools, recreation facilities, parks and open spaces. Planned developments should be encouraged to contribute to public facilities and rewarded for doing so with density bonus incentives of up to 20%. To qualify for such bonuses, developments must include public open spaces, public recreational facilities, or other infrastructure in excess of that required to sustain the development. Examples include developments, which provide the town with parks, ball fields, tennis courts, water well sites, wastewater pumping stations, etc.

D. Vision Plan for Bronco Highway

The Bronco Highway Vision Plan is intended to build the community tax base while establishing the right balance between development and conservation. Figure 14, see insert pocket, shows an example of how the study area could be developed in accordance with the vision plan development by the Route 102 Study Committee. This concept plan shows examples of the types of uses that the Committee members feel are appropriate along Route 102 and the various locations where those uses might be developed. This plan is not intended to represent the way land **MUST** be developed, but rather to show how the land **COULD** be developed. To be effective, the plan must be flexible enough to allow Town officials to prevent sprawl, avoid commercial strip development, and protect the character of the Route 102 corridor.

The implementation of this concept plan for Route 102 would begin with the establishment of a “*Development Management District*” by the Town Council. Guidelines for development, as approved by the council, would serve as a tool for use by the Planning Board in the review of any project within the district. The purpose of establishing such guidelines is to ensure that the town has a prepared and agreed upon plan for the development of Route 102. This plan will assist developers in proposing projects that the town desires while providing the Planning Board with the tools necessary to achieve the Town’s vision for the future of Route 102.