

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE  
TOWN OF RAMAPO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IN CONNECTION WITH PASCACK RIDGE**

The following constitute the proposed text and map amendments to the Town's Comprehensive Plan in connection with the Pascack Ridge petition.

1. **TEXT AMENDMENTS**

**"B. HOUSING**

***Summary of Planning Issues***

The majority of the housing stock within the unincorporated area of the Town of Ramapo consists of single-family detached homes. While the diversity of the housing stock has increased since the 2004 Comprehensive Plan~~slightly over the last decade~~, there is still a growing need in 2019 to significantly increase the variety of housing within the unincorporated area of the Town, particularly within certain areas such as Monsey. Many families simply cannot afford to purchase or rent a home within the unincorporated area of Ramapo, partly due to the relatively little diversity in the housing stock.

The Courts have held, such as in *Berenson v. Town of New Castle*, that in enacting a zoning ordinance, consideration must be given to regional and local housing needs and requirements. "There must be a balancing of the local desire to maintain the status quo within the community and the greater public interest that regional [and local] needs be met." A municipality that has been found to be zoned in an exclusionary fashion can be required by the courts to amend its zoning ordinance to meet its fair share of housing needs.

According to the 2000 Census, the median value of owner-occupied dwellings within the Town as a whole (i.e., including the incorporated villages) was \$229,600. The median value of owner-occupied dwellings within the unincorporated area of the Town is even higher. For example, the median value of a home in the Monsey area was \$251,000; while the median value in the Viola area was \$321,600. More recent studies indicate that housing prices have continued to escalate. For example, the average selling price in Rockland County has increased from \$291,987 in December 1999 to \$341,320 in November 2001. Home ownership is a goal for many families, and a greater variety of housing options will help more families achieve it.

The availability of reasonably-priced rental opportunities appears to be an even greater issue in the unincorporated area of the Town. The median monthly rent in the Town as a whole of

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Ramapo was \$833 according to the 2000 Census. The median monthly rent in Monsey (which has the largest number and percentage of renter-occupied units of any area in unincorporated Ramapo) was even higher at \$982. In line with owner-occupied housing, rental costs have continued to rise. As a result, renters in Ramapo are paying an inordinate amount of their monthly income on housing costs. For example, in Monsey, 53% of renters spent 35% or more of their household income towards rent, whereas it is generally recommended that households spend no more than one-third of their monthly income towards housing. Spending a high percentage of monthly income towards rent makes it difficult for such families to save to purchase a home, and makes them more vulnerable to changes in the economy.

In addition to the general issue of housing diversity for the general population, providing affordable housing opportunities for particular segments of the population, such as young families, seniors and "empty-nesters," and municipal employees and public safety volunteers is becoming an increasingly important issue in Ramapo (as it has throughout the country). The cost of detached single-family homes has continued to increase since the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, keeping them out of the range of many households through 2019, which reinforces the original goal of a diversified housing supply including higher density housing, as appropriate, as described below. While the need for multi-family housing has continued to grow, it does not appear that the development of such housing has kept pace with this growth.

***Goals and Objectives***

<p><b>Goal: Address the Town's housing needs and provide for a diversity of housing opportunities for the Town's growing and changing population</b></p>
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- 1. Objective:** Provide a diversified housing supply that consists of residential development at appropriate densities and in appropriate locations in consideration of relative proximity to community shopping, community facilities and services, and public transportation, and in consideration of the adequacy of existing infrastructure.
- 2. Objective:** Allow higher density housing in appropriate areas if such housing meets local needs and is balanced with the objective of maintaining the integrity and appearance of Ramapo's residential neighborhoods.
- 3. Objective:** Promote a range of rental and home ownership opportunities in varied densities, housing types and prices for Town residents, especially senior citizens, singles and families.

4. **Objective:** Encourage inclusion of housing to meet identified housing needs in the development of large parcels of land.

***Planning Recommendations and Implementation Strategies***

1. *Creation of Multi-Family Housing Districts*

[The three paragraphs under this heading and Section 1.a shall remain intact.]

b. Considerations~~Criteria~~ for placement within a multi-family district. Properties considered for rezoning to a multi-family district should possesse~~contain~~ most if not all of the following characteristics, which should be balanced with relevant social, economic and environmental considerations and other needs of the Town:

- Sufficient property size and dimensionsu to accommodate the density permitted in the zone;
- Access to, and/or frontage on, a roadway/roadway system that can accommodate the anticipated traffic (when feasible, consideration~~emphasis~~ should be given to~~placed on~~ locating such developments on State roadways such as Route 59);
- Convenient access to opportunities for mass transit use (e.g., bus), including pedestrian access to existing and future sidewalks;
- Location within, or within proximity to, an area that contains existing high density residential or commercial development;
- Access and close proximity to community shopping, including pedestrian access to existing and future sidewalks;
- Readily connectable to existing sewer and water infrastructure;
- Adequate land area appropriate for development so as to sufficiently avoid, or so as to provide adequate mitigation for, significant adverse~~Unencumbered~~ by environmental impacts to resources such as steep slopes, wetlands, streams, and floodplains, or other factors that would otherwise suggest that the property is not suitable for the intensity of development proposed; and
- Location within an area of the Town with a need for such housing.

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As mentioned below, properties considered for placement within a multi-family zoning district would likely differ from one another in significant ways (e.g., lot sizes, lot dimensions and other factors that may affect the appropriate development of the site, local traffic conditions and access considerations, surrounding land uses, location within the Town, etc.). These differing site and locational characteristics of the properties considered for rezoning should guide the determination as to the appropriate multi-family district for each property considered.

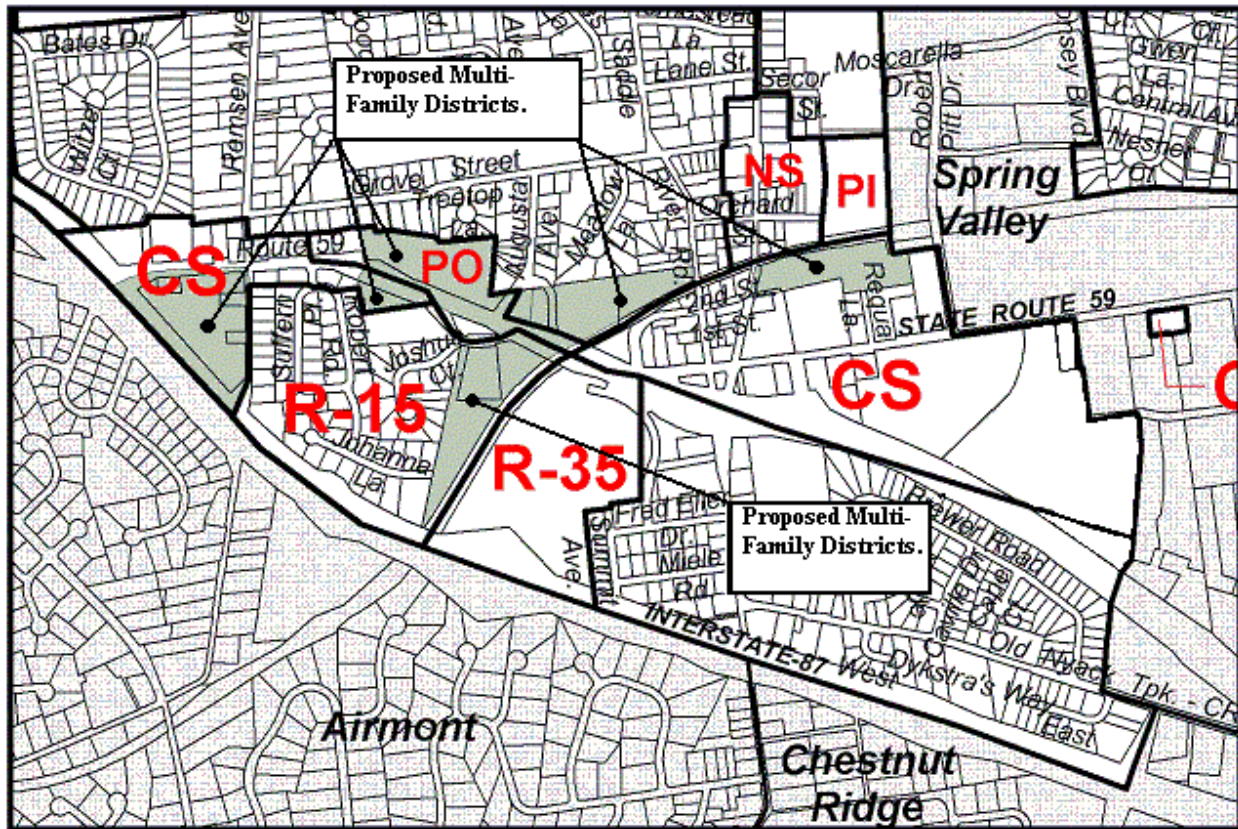
c. *Areas specifically recommended for placement within a multi-family district.* Based on the placement-balancing analysis criteria above, the 2004 Comprehensive Plan recommended that the most appropriate locations for multi-family districts would, for the most part, be within and around the Route 59 corridor in central Monsey. The following areas were specifically identified as particularly suitable for rezoning to a multi-family district:

- The “Faber Cement” property located on the east side of Route 306, just north of its intersection with Route 59 and located within the CS District. In the 15 years following the adoption of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, this property was rezoned to MR-16 and has been developed with multi-family housing.
- The undeveloped, Planned-Office (PO)-zoned property located on the north side of Route 59, west of its intersection with Augusta Avenue and the properties located along the north side of Route 59 east of Augusta Avenue. In the intervening 15 years, the property west of Augusta Avenue was rezoned to MU-1 and is being developed as the Hearthstone Village mixed-use project. Further, the property immediately to the east of Augusta Avenue was rezoned to MR-12 and has been developed with multifamily housing. The property to the east of that is zoned R-15A and is underdeveloped.
- The triangular-shaped area located to the south of Route 59 and directly opposite the above-mentioned properties. Subsequent to the adoption of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, this property was rezoned to MR-12 and has been developed with multifamily housing.
- The “self-storage property” located along the south side of Route 59, west of its intersection with Remsen Avenue (while the current use of the property as a self-storage facility is not detrimental, multi-family

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development of the property would a better use of the property). This property was rezoned to MR-12 and remains a self-storage facility.

Given that the above mentioned properties have been largely developed, and since the need for multi-family housing remains unfulfilled in 2019, additional areas proposed for multifamily districts are identified in the "Housing" chapter of this Plan.



One of the most appropriate areas location for multi-family districts is would be within and around the Route 59 corridor in central Monsey. The areas indicated in the figure above were have been specifically identified in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan as particularly suitable for rezoning to a multi-family district. (Map not to scale; zoning districts indicated were are existing at the time of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan).

**[Note: These areas are identified as "Multi-Family Residential" on the "Land Use Plan" in the "Future Land Use" section.]**

As indicated above, the properties listed above were have been identified as those that were are particularly suitable for rezoning to a multi-family district. However, it is likely there are may be other sites that meet the above placement balancing analysis

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~~above~~criteria that ~~were~~have not specifically ~~mentioned above~~identified since only larger properties (e.g., above approximately 4 acres in size) in the Route 59 corridor were specifically identified. One such property would be the “drive-in theater” property located on the south side of Route 59 and within the Community Shopping (CS) District. While the “Land Use Plan” referenced in the “Future Land Use” chapter herein identifies this property within the “Community Business” land use category (reflective of its existing commercial zoning) this property is consistent with the ~~placement~~balancing analysiscriteria described above. Due to its site characteristics (i.e., very large, flat, deep and wide lot dimensions) the “drive-in theatre property” may be suitable for multi-family development at the highest end of the suggested range (i.e., 16 units per acre). Alternatively, this site could be developed as a mixed-use (i.e., a mixture of residential and commercial) development.

As the Town continues to grow in the future, the Town ~~will~~may find it necessary to rezone other properties in the Town to a multi-family district in order to meet housing needs in terms of diversity and overall supply. However, as indicated above, when considering properties for rezoning to a multi-family district, the ~~placement~~balancing analysiscriteria listed above should be followed. Based on the ~~placement~~balancing analysiscriteria, it is anticipated that ~~many~~most, ~~but~~if not all, of the properties to be rezoned to a multi-family district would be located within the central Monsey area, near and along the Route 59 corridor.

Redevelopment of many of the parcels recommended in this Plan for multi-family housing, ~~such as the “Faber Cement” property~~, will help address the Town’s housing needs in terms of diversity and overall supply, while at the same time helping to revitalize these areas of the Town.

- c. *Creation of different multi-family districts and considerations for placement within a particular multi-family district.* As indicated above, one of the main reasons for the creation of multi-family districts ~~in the Town~~ is to accommodate housing needs in the Town at appropriate densities in a manner that would allow for more attractive and functional multi-family housing development. Thus, the proposed density range for the multi-family land use classification on the “Land Use Plan” in the “Future Land Use” section is between 8 and 16 dwelling units per acre. Consistent with the density range recommended on the “Land Use Plan” and considering that properties considered for rezoning to a multi-family district would likely have different site and locational characteristics, the Town should consider the ~~utilization~~creation of two or more multi-family zoning districts that would permit 8 units per acre (i.e., the lowest density multi-family districts), 12 units per acre, and 16 units per acre (i.e., the highest density multi-family district).

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In addition to permitted density, the multi-family districts may need to differ in terms of bulk and dimensional requirements (e.g., permitted floor area ratio, building coverage, building separation, setbacks, yards, etc.) and yard and setback requirements depending upon the characteristics and location of the properties considered for rezoning.

As mentioned above, properties considered for placement within a multi-family zoning district would likely differ from one another in significant ways (e.g., lot sizes, lot dimensions and other factors that may affect appropriate development of the site, local traffic conditions and access considerations, surrounding land uses, location within the Town, etc.). These differing site and locational characteristics of the properties considered for rezoning should guide the determination as to the appropriate multi-family district for each property considered.

Properties that directly abut existing residential neighborhoods (e.g., the properties to the east and west of Augusta Avenue along the north side of Route 59 and the properties located to the south of Route 59 directly opposite these properties), for example, should be at the lower end of the density range (i.e., no more than 8 or 12 units per acre). It is noted too, that the relatively shallow lot depth and relatively large yard and setback requirements that should be required where multi-family developments abut residential neighborhoods would preclude development of these properties at densities greater than 12 units per acre. Similarly, a number of properties located near the terminus of Summit Avenue are similarly recommended for multi-family development at the low end of the density range (no more than 8 units per acre).

The “self-storage property” should be developed at a density no greater than 12 units per acre.

Properties, such as the “Faber Cement” property that do not abut such sensitive land uses and which would have excellent access to Route 59 could be placed in one of the multi-family districts that permit higher densities (i.e., between 12 and 16 dwelling units per acre). However, as suggested above, in addition to the nature of adjacent land uses and access considerations, the nature of the site itself (e.g., lot size, lot dimensions and other factors, such as slopes, that may affect appropriate development of the site), should be considered in the determination of the appropriate multi-family district.

The above factors should be considered not only in determining the appropriate multi-family zoning district for the properties specifically identified for multi-family development on the “Future Land Use Plan” referenced in the “Future Land Use”

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~~chapter herein~~ but for any other properties considered for multi-family development in the future. The Town should seek consistency in its rezoning actions (i.e., properties with similar site and locational characteristics should be placed in similar zones).”

[Section 1.d shall remain intact.]

**“D. FUTURE LAND USE**

[The text from the beginning of the chapter until the heading Residential Development shall remain intact.]

“Residential Development

As suggested above, the overall pattern of development density recommended in this Plan generally mirrors the existing pattern in the Town – with the highest densities existing and recommended to remain primarily in Monsey (particularly in proximity to Route 59) and with generally decreasing densities in roughly concentric circles around this area. The appropriate residential density results from an examination of many factors including:

- The form and intensity of residential development in relation to the nature of the surrounding neighborhood and the ability of a site to mitigate potential impacts by a project design that incorporates landscaping and other mitigation measure to avoid or minimize such impacts;
- The capacity of the land and surrounding area to accommodate additional residential development in consideration of: the surrounding road system and opportunities for use of public transportation; sanitary sewer and public water systems; accommodation of increased stormwater runoff; and minimization of impacts to natural resources;
- The secondary impacts of residential uses in terms of demand for public services such as schools, places of worship, ~~and~~ recreational facilities, and protective services.

The following residential land use categories are reflected on the “Land Use Plan:”

*[The text regarding the Rural Residential, Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Medium-High Density Residential categories shall remain intact.]*



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- *Multi-Family Residential* - As discussed in the “Housing” chapter, in lieu of extending the R-15C district onto undeveloped properties (or large properties proposed for redevelopment) for the purpose of meeting the Town’s housing needs in terms of diversity and overall supply, the creation of standard multi-family districts (that would permit multi-family residential development such as garden apartments and/or townhouses) is proposed. Such housing is usually developed at densities between 8 to 16 dwellings per acre.

The “Land Use Plan” indicates several areas particularly suitable for such multi-family development within this land use category based upon the considerations outlined in the “Housing” chapter. As identified in the “Housing” chapter in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, the following areas were designated within the “Multi-Family Residential” land use category: the undeveloped, Planned-Office (PO) zoned property located on the north side of Route 59, west of its intersection with Remsen Avenue; and, several properties located to the east and west sides of Route 306, north of its intersection with Route 59 and mostly located within the CS district. In the 15 years following the adoption of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, most of these areas have been rezoned to multi-family districts and have been or are being developed/redeveloped. Given the need for multi-family housing remains unfulfilled, additional areas proposed for multifamily districts include:

- **Blueberry Hill** - In keeping with the density of the Blueberry Hill apartment complex, it is proposed to extend the multi-family zone further to the west on both sides of Kearsing Parkway. This multifamily zone is proposed as 12 dwelling units per acre and will result in additional public parkland and new and rehabilitated drainage facilities. This is expected to solve a number of flooding and drainage issues downstream.
- **Summit Avenue** - This area is proposed as a new multifamily zone close by to Spring Valley High School. The concept here is to site a preference for multifamily development over the option of extending the R-15C zone. This is again compatible with the surrounding densities.
- **Area adjacent to Monsey Glen Park** – This development is proposed at a density of 8-12 dwellings units per acre based upon its proximity to the Monsey downtown area, the availability of water and sewerage facilities, its access to public transportation and the access to the Town’s proposed pedestrian/bike path/park. In addition, the property is segregated by the slope of the land to buffer the adjoining residential areas (site specific review including impacts to adjacent County park may justify a different density).

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- Pascack Ridge Area – This is the area bounded by Ewing Avenue on the north and west, Pascack Road on the east, the Village of Spring Valley on the west, and the Town of Clarkstown on the south. There are existing areas of higher density residential development in relatively close proximity to the subject area. The Town has considered petitions and has initiated on its own a rezoning of the subject area to allow multi-family development, including the review of a conceptual plan submitted in support of the rezoning petition for this area. Environmental review of the proposed rezoning indicates that the carrying capacity of the subject land and surrounding area appears adequate to accommodate additional multi-family residential development. If the rezoning is approved, as with any project, a detailed site plan will be required and it will be evaluated during the site plan review process to confirm its consistency with all applicable requirements, including zoning regulations and stormwater management standards. In any event, the density of the multi-family zoning placed on this area should not exceed 12 dwelling units per acre.

Since properties recommended for rezoning to a multi-family district have different site and locational characteristics, the “Housing” section recommends the utilization ~~ereation~~ of two or more (e.g., up to 4) multi-family zoning districts that would permit between 8 units per acre (i.e., the lowest density multi-family district) and 16 units per acre (i.e., the highest density multi-family district). The differing site and locational characteristics of the properties considered for rezoning should guide the determination as to the appropriate multi-family district for each property considered. Based on such factors, the “Housing” section makes specific density recommendations for the properties specifically included in the “Multi-Family Residential” land use classification on the “Land Use Plan” referenced in the “Future Land Use” chapter herein. In addition, the “Housing” section recommends that such factors also be considered for any other properties considered for multi-family development in the future and recommends that the Town should seek consistency in its rezoning actions (i.e., properties with similar site and locational characteristics should be placed in similar zones).

**[Note: Refer to the “Housing” section for a discussion of balancing analysis ~~criteria~~ for placement of properties within a multi-family district.]**

- *Specialized Housing* - This land use category corresponds to those properties currently located within the Specialized Housing Residential (RSH) District which permits a limited variety of senior housing facilities. The “Housing” chapter recommends zoning amendments to expand the variety of housing

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options available to seniors. Such amendments may or may not include expansion of the RSH District.

**[Note: While the residential land use categories discussed above are based on the recommended overall density of residential development within these areas, other non-residential uses such as places of worship and schools would continue to be permitted in residential areas subject to appropriate requirements.]”**

**2. MAP AMENDMENTS**

The “Land Use Plan” referenced in the “Future Land Use” chapter of the Comprehensive Plan shall be amended as shown on Exhibit A entitled, “Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments Associated with Pascack Ridge Petition,” dated July 9, 2019 and attached hereto, which shows the Pascack Ridge area described above in the Multi-Family Residential (8-16 dwelling units per acre) category.

Attachment: Exhibit A

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