

APPENDIX 5

South County Small Area Committee suggestions for Rural Design Guidelines

Urban

An urban setting is one in where buildings and pavement dominate, and green space is the focal point. Usually the green space is intensively maintained, furnished with manicured grass and exotic trees and shrubs as well as paved areas. There are no urban settings within the South County RA Zone.

Rural

A rural setting is one where land, either cropland, pasture, woodland or wetland, dominates, and built objects or small clusters of objects are focal points, ideally distant ones. This is the setting of the South County Small Area's RA zone.

Suburban

A suburban setting is one in which built objects of similar size and massing are evenly distributed over a green but man made and intensively maintained green landscape at densities that allow neither the built object nor its setting to predominate. This is the Setting that threatens South County's RA zone.

Rural Villages

Separate design studies and guidelines are to be prepared for each of the historic rural villages, which shall be designated as design review districts. These guidelines will deal with village boundaries and buffers, land use, lot size, setbacks, and architectural style elements such as massing, roof slope, fenestration and materials, for new construction as well as for renovation and additions. There will be no **new** "rural villages".

Site Analysis Requirements for New Subdivisions in the RA Zone

New Subdivision applicants will be required to present the following site analysis documents (at the concept level of the application and review process under the proposed new regulations, or at the sketch level of the current regulations).

- a. Locate, and classify all environmentally sensitive land (streams and wetlands within 100 foot buffer area, slopes in excess of 25%.)
- b. Locate, and classify all prime farmland.
- c. Locate, and describe all open (unforested land) areas.
- d. Locate, and classify all woodland areas and identify surrounding root system protective buffer area (1.5 times the extent of the canopy overhanging in any direction).
- e. Inventory, locate, and describe all historic sites and structures, and archeological areas.
- f. Locate all areas of previous development buildings, sites, and roadways.
- g. Inventory, locate and describe all special natural and cultural features including special wildlife habitat and corridors, endangered plant and animal species, and unique vegetation and landform.

Site Design Requirements for New Subdivisions

Site design requirements for all new subdivisions in the Rural Overlay District focus on the following 5 principles.

A. Protect Environmentally Sensitive Land and Mature Woodlands

1. Set aside all environmentally sensitive land, mature woodlands with root system buffers, and areas with special features.
2. Reuse former house sites and other areas of existing site disturbance for new house sites wherever possible. Create incentives for adaptive re-use of existing structures.

B. 80% of Each Site Shall Remain in Permanent Open Space (Woodland, Cropland, Pasture, or Wetlands)

1. Open space areas shall be contiguous within the project to the maximum extent possible.
2. Open space shall establish wherever applicable and feasible contiguity with open space on adjacent properties.
3. Preserve scenic vistas over open land. Do not locate houses or other site improvements in these viewsheds.
4. The integrity and usefulness of open fields, croplands and pasture lands should be preserved to the maximum extent possible. Locate new houses and roadways at the edges of fields rather than in the middle of them.
5. Contiguous farmland shall be maintained under one ownership to the maximum extent possible, with a management plan in effect for agricultural production.
6. Contiguous woodland shall be maintained under one ownership with a forest management plan in effect to the maximum extent possible.
7. Land that is maintained as part of a community open space tract shall be required to have a management plan in effect for agricultural and/or woodland production.
8. Golf courses shall not be considered open space in the RA Zone.

C. New Houses Shall Be Concealed from View to the Maximum Extent Possible

1. New houses shall be concealed from view from public roads. Use existing landform and vegetation to conceal houses. If these do not exist in sufficient quantity or quality on a given site, new buffers or native trees and shrubs will be required.

D. New House Siting and Landscaping Shall Avoid Suburban Patterns

1. Vary lot sizes and building setbacks. Flag lots are encouraged.
2. Vary house orientation.
3. Public landscaping shall be native plant materials.

E. New Roads Shall Resemble Historic Country Roads or Private Driveways

1. No entry monuments, signs, fences, gates. A temporary small sign may be permitted while property is being sold similar to a real estate sign advertising an individual house. Country road signs only will identify new roads. (requires sign code change.)
2. Site roads to be not more than 18 feet in width at a maximum, with no curbs and gutters, and no sidewalks. Through roads (resembling typical county rural roads) are preferable to dead end roads. The typical suburban cul-de-sac ending is to be avoided in favor of a larger turn-around loop.
3. Private roads and gravel roads to be encouraged (with maintenance agreements). Multiple small roads to be preferable to single larger wider roads. Long driveways are encouraged as a means of hiding houses from public view and varying setbacks.
4. No new acceleration/deceleration lanes.
5. Reuse existing cleared alignments of existing roads and farm roads wherever possible, to minimize site disturbance.
6. Locate new roads at edges of fields and woodland wherever possible, and to fit into existing topography to the maximum extent possible, to prevent excess grading and minimize site disturbance.
7. No street lights.