

CHAPTER 7

FUTURE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

At present, Cross Village Township is primarily a rural residential Township, with a small commercial core and approximately seven (7) miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. Forests typically cover steeply sloped hillsides while wetland vegetation and lowland woods are found in the low areas. Lakeshore living is available along the shore of Lake Michigan. Although current agricultural uses are primarily limited to pasture at this point in history, farmland (and open space) continue to be highly valued by the local residents, according to the 2003 Cross Village Township Community Survey.

Through land use planning and land use controls, Cross Village Township intends to work with the County to promote the continuation of existing rural residential, forested/agricultural land and recreational uses while allowing reasonable growth to be accommodated with minimal land use conflicts or negative environmental impacts. Commercial growth is encouraged to be located in the area identified as the downtown commercial core for mixed use. Based on the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the Township, five (5) general categories of land use have been identified to serve existing and future development needs. These categories are listed below and are mapped in Figure 7-1:

- Recreation / Conservation
- Forest / Agricultural
- Waterfront Residential
- Residential
- Commercial Core – Mixed Use

Recreation / Conservation

The Recreation/Conservation category is designed to accommodate existing recreation property, areas for future recreation use, or other sensitive resource areas. This land use category will allow for low intensity recreation development, as well as low density residential uses consistent with recreational and conservation uses.

The Recreation/Conservation category incorporates the State-owned property surrounding the western portion of Wycamp Lake. This public property is a highly valued asset for the residents, businesses and visitors of Cross Village Township, and it is the Township's desire that it remain in the public domain as an undeveloped tract of land. The portion of the State-owned land which fronts on Sturgeon Bay of Lake Michigan, within the Township, is also highly prized by the Township residents, businesses and visitors and should be kept in public ownership. Also included in this category is the township-owned port/park on Lake Michigan, and three preserves owned and protected by the Little Traverse Conservancy.

The Recreation/Conservation land use category is consistent with the Township's goals presented in Chapter 6, including the goals to "Maintain an ecologically sound balance between human activities and the environment to retain the Township's scenic and rural character" and to "Protect

and preserve groundwater, surface water, woodlands, wetlands, open space, wildlife habitat, steep slopes and sand dunes". Primary uses proposed in the Recreation/ Conservation area include public and private forestry, wildlife habitat, parks and recreation, as well as similar open space uses. Secondary uses include low density residential development. Due to the environmentally sensitive nature of the property in this category, the preferred approach to residential development is clustered residential, thus maintaining some protected open space within the development. The Township encourages the establishment of conservation, parklands and open space, including wetlands and riverine habitats for scenic, recreation and wildlife protection especially as a part of any proposed residential uses. The tools include donations, acquisition, and cooperative efforts with other units of government and landowners, conservation easements and zoning provisions that support the use of conservation easements and sound conservation developments.

Forest / Agricultural

Forest / Agricultural land use category has been designated consistent with the Township's goal to recognize the importance of agricultural lands. Cross Village Township also recognizes that the presence of forested and agricultural lands contribute significantly to the scenic and rural character valued by the Township residents. The Forest/Agricultural area designation is intended to encourage the continued forestry and agricultural uses of areas on prime soils. The primary area designated as Forest/Agricultural is at the southern portion of the Township, see Figure 7-1.

While the designation of Forest/Agricultural land use category will not prevent the conversion of forestland and pasture land to other uses, it can help to control the scale and rate of conversion and direct attention to areas where conversion may be an issue.

The citizen survey for Cross Village township (2003), indicated support for the protection of natural resources, open space and the rural character of the Township. The methods include innovative zoning provisions that allow for the preservation or conservation of essential natural resources, farmland or open space. Additional methods which other communities have employed or are investigating to help protect and preserve agricultural land include the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR), Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), Agricultural Security Areas (ASA), clustering requirements for non-agricultural uses and tax breaks or incentives for continuing agricultural use. Cross Village may wish to pursue some of these tools either with surrounding townships and/or with Emmet County.

Waterfront Residential

To preserve the scenic beauty, property value and environmental integrity of areas adjacent to Lake Michigan a "Waterfront Residential" designation is recommended. With such a specialized designation it will be possible to develop residential standards specific to the unique environment found in waterfront areas. The Waterfront Residential designation is utilized along Lake Michigan in areas of existing lakefront residential development. Development regulations within the waterfront residential area should be designed to address Township residents' concerns regarding congestion of the local roads and view preservation, as well as concerns regarding water quality and shoreline protection. Keyhole development or high-density second-tier development with private waterfront

access is recommended for some restriction within this land use category.

Rural Residential

The Rural residential future land use category is intended to direct future residential growth to specific areas of the Township. The areas designated for rural residential use are located in the central portion of the Township in the vicinity of the downtown area and extending east along Levering Road, see Figure 7-1. The rural residential area is adjacent to the proposed downtown Commercial Core- Mixed Use area.

The designated rural residential areas should be retained for low density residential use during the present planning period, since the Township is not currently served by sewer and water. Additionally, low density residential use is also compatible with the adjacent Recreation/ Conservation and Forest/Agricultural land uses.

Commercial Core – Mixed Use

The Commercial Core-Mixed Use area is designated to accommodate a variety of commercial businesses in the area most residents consider the “downtown” area, according to the 2003 survey (see Appendix A).

The Commercial Core-Mixed Use category is designed to accommodate a mix of residential, commercial and some public service uses. The existing commercial uses are primarily retail and service types of uses. The designated area incorporates both existing commercial enterprises and provides for additional area for expansion. It is desired that new development be located in the heart of the designated area, primarily along N. Lake Shore between State and Stone Church Road initially and gradual expand out as growth pressures warrant.

Current zoning and the pre-existing small platted lots located in the area planned as Commercial Core-Mixed Use have impeded the redevelopment of this area. It is recommended that the central area be re-zoned as a phased Planned Unit Development to provide more flexibility and options regarding such standards setbacks, shared parking and utilities. A conceptual block design, (Figure 7-2) to illustrate the concept of designing an entire block as a planned unit development is provided. To aid in visualizing what such commercial development in this area might look like, a few compatible architectural options (Figures 7-3 and 7-4) are presented, based on a study of the existing facades in the downtown area (see Appendix B).

The Planning Committee and the Township Board are not promoting growth and development, but have prepared this plan to better respond to growth pressures as they arise. The intent of the Planning Committee is to outline a framework through the downtown study, to accommodate growth in the downtown commercial core area.



Figure 7-2: Downtown Block – Schematic Design graphics by J. Prote



Figure 7-3: Compatible Architectural Option 1



Figure 7-4: Compatible Architectural Option 2

Other Land Use Considerations

Public Service

Public services were considered in the development of this Future Land Use plan. However, no distinct public services category is designated. As discussed in the Chapter 5 - Community Services, the existing facilities are adequately meeting the Township's needs. It is anticipated that additional public service facilities may be compatible with many of the proposed land use areas and could be allowed in the associated zoning districts either by right or by special approval depending on the use and the district. Public service facilities are not considered to be compatible and should

not be allowed in the Waterfront Residential areas.

Scenic Corridors

The designation of the State route M-119 as the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route is an important recognition of the significance of scenic corridors.

Cross Village Township is fortunate to have roadways that traverse significant scenic corridors. These corridors contribute to the township's character and identify by affording views of Lake Michigan, significant scenic vistas from the township's higher elevations, woodlands, open space and pastured land.

Development along scenic corridors should be consistent with the objectives, guidelines, and policies established in this plan.

Steep slopes

Cross Village Township has an abundance of moderate to steeply sloped land, as seen in Figure 3-2. In order to protect the environmentally sensitive nature of these sloped areas, development standards for areas with steep slopes should be incorporated into the zoning ordinance and apply to development in any zoning district.