

Plan Commission Project Request for Approval

Chair Ken Bosworth has requested that the Village Board provide approval for the Plan Commission to begin a project for more definitive planning for one of the Focus Areas identified in the Village's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan currently identifies ten focus areas, and provides suggested plans for two of them (Focus Areas 7 & 9). The request is that the Plan Commission be allowed to begin the project, with guidance on which of the eight remaining Focus Areas should be the first to receive consideration.

The Chair's request stems from concerns related to the legal challenge of the Duda disconnection. In the legal challenge, the Village argued that the fourth LaSalle factor (that the proposed disconnection does not unreasonably disrupt the municipalities growth prospects and plan and zoning ordinances) was not met. Our Comprehensive Plan was used to support our position. However, the court found that reliance on the Comprehensive Plan was insufficient to show that the fourth LaSalle factor was not met, in part because there was no specific plan described for the property at issue.

Chairman Bosworth thought that perhaps if there was a more concrete suggested plan for each of the identified Focus Areas, it would help combat future disconnection attempts.

I have suggested that if the Plan Commission receives approval for such a project, that Focus Area 3 be looked at first, especially in light of the recent activity in East Dundee. At this time, no funds for an outside Planning Consultant would be utilized. Rather, the Plan Commission would work on developing a conceptual plan on their own.

I have been requesting that this project be approved for at least a year, as requested by our Chair; and this is now I believe the fourth time it has appeared as an agenda item, without receiving a definitive response. I believe that it would be a good use of our Plan Commission's time, particularly as they do not have many new outside proposals to review due to the economic downturn.



Land Use

Focus Areas

From a planning perspective, Barrington Hills may have more in common with first ring suburbs than it does with the communities which form the suburban/rural growing edge of the metropolitan area. It is, for the most part, a mature community where change may occur as infill and redevelopment. Many mature communities recognize the existing conditions of the majority of properties as the likely conditions of the future, and through their planning process focus on a limited number of properties most likely to be subject to redevelopment pressure. The Barrington Hills planning area encompasses four general areas, listed below in an increasing order of vulnerability to change:

- Areas within the Village boundaries, including existing residential (five acres and over) uses that are, in near term and long term, the most appropriate use of such property.
- Forest Preserves and environmentally sensitive sites and open water governed by permanent conservation easements.
- Areas outside the Village which fall within the joint planning jurisdiction of Barrington Hills, adjacent municipalities, or the surrounding county.
- Property of a size and geography which make them subject to development pressures.

This plan for the future use of property cannot anticipate all of the influences on land use decisions made by property owners, but it can foresee patterns of use most likely to yield long term compatibility and continuity of the existing attractive village character and quality of life. This plan, as initially adopted, includes a broad characterization of land use for all properties in the “Future Land Use Plan” (see page 34). The land use designations reflected in the “Future Land Use Plan” are amplified by the recommendations of the environmental corridor overlay described previously in this document. Over time, the Village will evaluate each of the properties most vulnerable to change, and where appropriate, may adopt amendments to the plan which supplement this land use plan with greater detail. In the appendix, two such more specific plans are included for Focus Area Seven and Nine. These two focus areas on the periphery of the Village have been subject to significant development pressure, motivating their owners to seek de-annexation and development outside the Village. The land use plans for these two focus areas show how their development can be accommodated while compatible and supportive of Barrington Hills community character and quality of life.

Focus Area One: Nearly 670 acres straddling Spring Creek, directly north of the Spring Creek Nature Preserve, these lands are predominantly outside the Village boundary though wholly surrounded by the Village. The property is maintained as equestrian facilities by a family well known for its connections to the equestrian community. Proximity to the creek, its floodplain, tributaries and wetlands make the site both visually attractive and particularly sensitive.

Focus Area Two: Nearly 535 acres, also straddling Spring Creek and Beaver Lake, sandwiched between the large expanses of the Spring Creek Nature Preserve and the fork formed by Highways 62 and 68. The property is currently under active agricultural use.



2030 Comprehensive Plan

Focus Area Three: Approximately 110 acres, south of Healy Road, toward the southwest corner of the village, adjacent to ComEd rights-of-way and near the gravel mining areas in East Dundee.

Focus Area Four: Approximately 200 acres, north of Highway 62, directly west of the Spring Creek Nature Preserve, and lying east of the ComEd rights-of-way.

Focus Area Five: Generally bound by State Highway 62 to the north and east, Bolz Road to the south, and State Highway 25 to the west, this approximate 215 acre focus area may be affected by the potential Bolz Road Bridge over the Fox River and the resultant realignment of Bolz Road.

Focus Area Six: Just under 185 acres, at the intersection of County Line Road and State Highway 62. Along with multiple properties adjacent to School District 220's property, this property may be affected by a potential Bolz Road Bridge, if constructed.

Focus Area Seven: On approximately 565 acres of rural land in the Northwest periphery of the community, this site has been the subject of court action to permit de-annexation from the Village of Barrington Hills and potential development within McHenry County. It includes properties outside the Village and property south of Spring Creek road that is still within the village. The Villages of Barrington Hills and Algonquin opposed a petition to develop the property (within the village, and later outside the village) at suburban densities with lot sizes of less than one acre. The property is within an area of McHenry County which is subject to very heavy development pressure, and where water supply is limited and threatened by continued mining of the shallow aquifer at rates which exceed their capacity. As proposed by the property owner, the development would have placed a burden on existing school and road capacity not sized or suitable to accept the stresses of suburban density.

The village supports the reasonable use of the property for residential uses, but considers the environmental features of the site and the capacity to support development as important influences on the most appropriate use of the property. The site is shown (in the appendix depicted as the "Duda Properties") in a plan reflecting a "conservation design" concept of 86 single-family home sites arranged to enhance and maintain the existing wetlands, woodland, floodplain, subsurface aquifer, and other natural features as site amenities. As has become the desired practice within the village, the lots are in a layout which leaves no "common area" ownership. However, private open spaces with an interwoven equestrian trail system with equestrian access easements and links to the larger village of Barrington Hills trail system would enhance the marketability and utility of the property as an extension of the equestrian community. The Village has identified this site as an example on the periphery of the community in which the deviation from minimum lot size can be accommodated yet still maintaining the average density of one lot per five acres.

Key features of the successful development of this site would include:

- Protection of the ground water resources.
- Incorporation of the existing wetlands, floodplain, woods, and other natural features as site amenities.
- Maintain an overall density of not exceeding one dwelling per five acres of land
- Interconnection to existing equestrian trails on the periphery of the site with supporting private equestrian easements.
- Stewardship of natural areas.



Focus Area Eight: Oak Knoll Planned Unit Development. Directly east of the Barrington Hills Country Club and south of the Union Pacific railroad, the approximate 85 acre property is a mixed use district subject to an existing Planned Unit Development ordinance within the Village of Barrington Hills. By nature of the light industrial uses, its limited accessibility and other conditions make it vulnerable to change.

Focus Area Nine is generally located at the Northwest corner of Illinois Route 72 and Illinois Route 59, between the Forest Preserve of Cook County and the former Klemm Nursery with portions of the property currently being developed for residential and commercial uses in the Village of South Barrington. This approximate 340 acre property, more than any other in the village, is influenced by its accessibility, its proximity to regional shopping, nearby employment, and rapid growth in the adjacent urbanizing Metropolitan Chicago, to the southeast. It is also less influenced by the residential and equestrian community than most properties in the village. Across the EJ&E RR right-of-way to the west, the Cook County Forest Preserve is adjacent to the site, providing potential transition between a more intense use oriented to Illinois Route 59 and Illinois Route 72 and the core of the community. Illinois Route 59 is a principal gateway into Barrington Hills, enhanced by high capacity interchange with Interstate 90, just ½ mile south of the site. Redevelopment of the more than 900 acre Poplar Creek (Neiderlander) property as part of the Sears Headquarters/ Prairie Stone Business Park has accelerated with recent additions of “big box” retailing, a proposed arena, and continued employment and distribution centers. The Klemm Nursery property immediately east of the site on Illinois Route 59 is being subdivided for higher density single family homes and a “lifestyle” retail center. Each of these surrounding uses provide both a connection to the pattern of the greater metropolitan area and a distinction from the pattern of five acre minimum lot size and predominant land use of the core of the Village of Barrington Hills.

Rather than disassociate the site and use from the Village, this site presents an opportunity to encourage a mixed commercial retail and residential development in the context of the Village, and of a quality and character reflective of the high standards of the Village of Barrington Hills. If developed solely responsive to trend of development and proximity to the Interstate interchange, the site is likely to yield a conventional strip retail use and potentially high density housing that, at best, will be indistinguishable from development in other corridors; at worst, an unattractive, disruptive entry to the Village. In preparing a concept plan for Focus Area Eight, shown in the appendix as “The Stables of Barrington Hills”, the Village attempts to integrate key natural features of the site and surroundings in an effort to leverage the greatest village character and quality. Dubbed “the Stables of Barrington Hills”, the concept integrates equestrian facilities including paddocks, trail access, and equestrian social spaces into a retail lifestyle center of over 450,000 square feet of retail floor area. The site is mixed use, integrating office, residential and multiple forms of retail uses into the natural physical features of the site.

Key features of the successful development of this site would include:

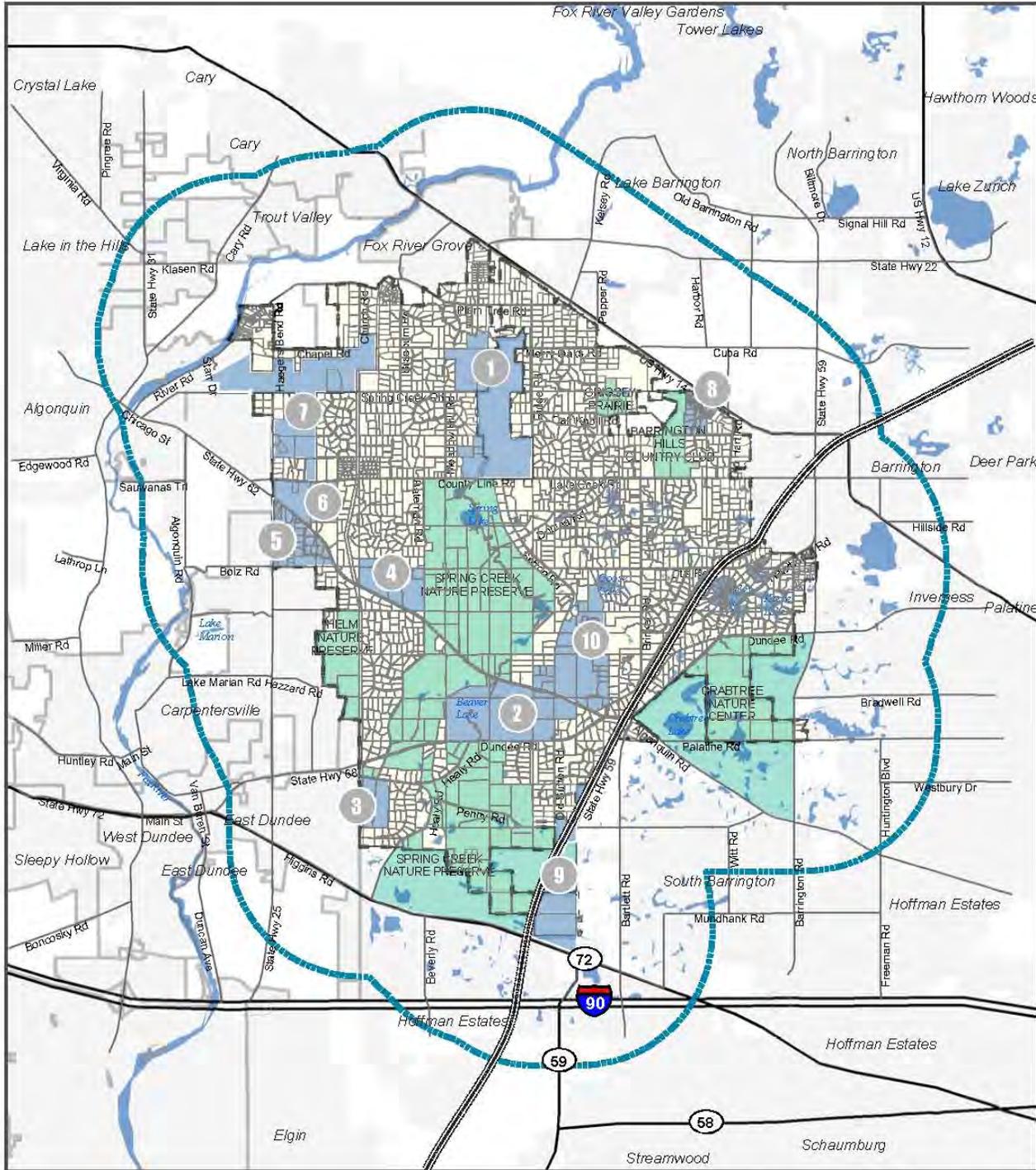
- Incorporation of the two unnamed Spring Creek tributaries, and on-site detention as natural amenities in the site and use.
- Connection, extension and incorporation of the equestrian trail system and equestrian activities into the design of the facility.
- Controlled and convenient access to Illinois Route 59, with the diversion of Old Sutton Road into the site so as to minimize through traffic.



Focus Area 10, Horizon Farms, a 420-acre agricultural property located in the heart of the Village, north of Algonquin Road (Route 62) and straddling Sutton Road, is the first property in Barrington Hills to be protected from development through the use of a “conservation easement”. Through the desire of the land owners working in partnership with the BACT, most of the farm will be preserved as natural areas in consideration for very limited development rights (eight homesites located on 40 acres). Horizon Farms will be privately owned with oversight of the easement administered by BACT. Long-term maintenance of the Horizon Farms conservation easement will be subject to a natural areas management plan. The “conservation easement” program provides land owners the opportunity to preserve natural and scenic areas by forgoing development rights in return for savings accrued through lower tax rates, property assessments, and income tax adjustments. This program serves as a model for the other Focus Areas.

Focus Area 11, the Cook County Forest Preserves, at over 4,000 acres is more than 20% of the total area of the village, and has a significant influence on the health and quality of the natural environment throughout the village. At the present time there are no clear long term plans for further development of the forest preserve district property within Barrington Hills. Because the forest preserve district is such a large landholder whose open space is critical to the character of the area, the village should work closely with the Forest Preserve District to ensure that long term plans for the forest preserves are in keeping with the village’s comprehensive plan.

Focus Area 12, unincorporated property within one and one half miles of the Village Boundary.



Planning Focus Areas

Comprehensive Plan

Village of Barrington Hills

- Planning Focus Areas
- 1.5 Mile Planning Limits
- Incorporated Land
- Unincorporated Land
- Village Limits
- EJ&E Railroad



NORTH

0 0.5 1 2

Scale in Miles

Base Map Data Provided by
Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc.

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