

Town of Moreau  
Task Force Public Meeting 1  
Thursday, June 27, 2024  
**Summary of Public Meeting**

**Discussion/ Task**

The Zoning Task Force scheduled an Open-House format Public Meeting for Thursday June 27<sup>th</sup>, from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. The public meeting started at 4:00pm and lasted until about 7:20pm. Approximately thirty (30) members of the public attended.

As mentioned above the Meeting was formatted as an Open House and residents could spend as much or as little time as they desired at the event. There was no formal presentation, attendees were asked to visit stations which were intended to provoke thoughts on each zoning district and elicit comments. Five stations were provided across the Town Board Meeting room; one for each category of zoning as well as a general map for comments. Specific stations were as follows:

- Manufacturing/ Industrial (M1; M1A; M2 Zoning Districts)
- Residential (R1; R2; and UR Zoning Districts)
- Agricultural/ Residential (R3-R5)
- Commercial (C1; C2; C3; CC1)
- Resource Protection and Discussion of Agriculture in General
- Zoning Map Station

**Task Force Members Present**

If able, Task Force members were asked to attend and assist Town Staff in facilitation of the event. The following members were present on night of the Open House:

- Maureen Jones-Jackson
- Bradley Toohill
- Jesse Fish *Ex-officio*
- John Donohue *Ex-officio*

**Also, Present (Town Staff)**

- Josh Westfall, AICP Building Planning & Development Coordinator
- Katrina Flexon Building Department Clerk

**Public Participation & Meeting**

The Town Board has made it clear that it is highly desirable to involve the public in the development of zoning updates. As such, the Task Force has established a framework of engagement for the public to access factual information; ask questions; make comments; and develop a clear understanding for the process for updating zoning.

The June 27<sup>th</sup> Meeting was the first of at least two public meetings programmed into the Task Force's schedule.

### **Review of Public Meeting #1 of the Zoning Task Force**

The Building, Planning and Development Office presented the public with 5 zoning stations, as mentioned above. These were set up as follows:

- Board of Use and Dimensional Requirements
- Interactive Board

Interactive Board Featured the following:

- Statements Specific to the Respective Zoning District from the Comp Plan
  - Attendees were presented with the Comp Plan Statements and asked if they felt these were still valid. If Attendees agreed, they were asked to signify agreement by planning a sticker next to the corresponding statement.
- Prompt Questions on Specific Uses
  - Specific uses were questions as detailed below. These were related to current trends, unclear items in code, or statements in the Comprehensive Plan. Applicants were asked if they 1) agreed with the appropriateness of a use via placing a sticker if it was or was not appropriate, or 2) to briefly comment using a sticky note.
- Card Box for Responses to Questions
  - The Boxes were provide for attendees who wish to write longer statements as they relate to zoning districts and allowed uses.

### **Individual Boards:**

#### **Support has been calculated as follows:**

A sticker shall signify support for an statement, idea, or policy. Lack of a sticker shall indicate no support. Total support will be calculated by adding the total of all stickers placed on a respective Board and the proportion of stickers placed under one statement. It will be broken down to the following: No Support; Minimal Support; Moderate Support; Strong Support.

Comments were transcribed as written. The Town Building, Planning and Development staff shall not be liable for errors in spelling, syntax, grammar. Those comments which are not useful in this effort have not been included.

### **Agriculture Districts/ Agricultural Residential Districts**

The following statements were presented to the public and feedback was requested via sticker dots for attendees to apply to the board under that Comprehensive Plan recommendation or goal when the attendee was in support of the statement.

- ***Protect farmland and open spaces. Farmland in this care serves a dual benefit because it proves open spaces that contribute to the rural feel of the Town while also serving an economic benefit by supporting crop production.***

Received 7 dots in support

- ***Maintain the presence of the agricultural district as well as the protection it affords to farmers and growers in the Town.***

Received 8 dots in support

- ***Restrict development on prime farmland soils and soils of statewide importance when possible.***

Received 2 dots in support

- ***Address main challenges for farmers including property taxes, production costs, and environmental regulations.***

Received 6 dots in support

- ***Support local farmers markets and make roadside stands and other ways of selling products more feasible.***

Received 5 dots in support

- ***Identify and permit diversification of farming operations.***

Received 4 dots in support

- ***Prepare and adopt a local Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) ordinance (NYS Agriculture & Markets currently provides funding for creation of a local TDR program)***

Received 0 dots in support

- ***Prepare and adopt a conservation subdivision ordinance that allow for existing or future farming operation to be created.***

Received 5 dots in support

**Below are comments left by the public for consideration:**

- *Update to conform with agricultural district laws. Clarify the uses to match NYS DAM so farmers can expedite their business proposals and reduce cost.*
- *Abolish all "special permit" uses or include the allowances as part of the overall designated uses.*
- *Encourage farm owners to begin a Moreau Farmers Market, allow outside farmers to participate.*
- *Allow and encourage solar farming. Allow solar but use of incentive zoning to conserve farmland.*
- *Create a fund to conserve farmland. Start a conservation fund that developers contribute to that the Town can use to conserve farmland.*
- *Protect Farm rights outside the formal Agricultural District.*
- *Maintain integrity of R5 Zone. No housing developments, no residential tie ins to high pressure sewer line. Consider letting existing businesses on line tie in.*
- *Clarify Right to Farm to allow all farm activities including agricultural tourism , agricultural manufacturing.*
- *Start a property/ school tax fund where farmers take a contract for a period of time – prohibiting them from developing their land in exchange or a tax break.*
- *Zero consideration for any lot size in R5 district less than 5 acres.*

### Summary of Statements, Questions, Comments:

Response at this station mainly focused on agricultural uses. Highest support of statements from the Comprehensive Plan included **protecting farmland that contributes to the rural feel of the Town; maintenance of the agricultural districts; seeking methods to address problems farmers face such as taxes and environmental regulations. Low or No Support was found on restricting development on prime farm soils and on Transfer Development Rights (TDR).** Moderate support was found on all other statements as outlined above

Discussion. TDR was a more popular idea at the time of the drafting of the Town's Farmland Protection Plan. This is has not been widely implemented in New York State amongst municipalities and requires a great deal of tracking on the municipal side. Further there was little context provided in the prompt and as such, attendees may not have been familiar with this concept. Given these factors, this could be the reason that there was little support for this statement. It also seems that soil type should not be seen as an impediment to development, but looking at what was supported development should be residential (large lots) or agricultural in nature as well as uses that support or are complementary to that.

Analyzing this a bit further, people generally support farming in Moreau and see it as a benefit to the community. In the comments, attendees desired better funding mechanisms for farmland protection including the use of solar to offset expenses. Other comments which should be considered include clarification of Ag and Markets laws and how they relate to local zoning regulations.

Possible Action Item: **In this district it seems little change is desired** except in ways to better support farmers and to bring town zoning laws in better compliance with Ag and Markets Law. This should be examined and considered in any code updates to these districts.

### Manufacturing (Industrial Uses) Districts

The following statements were presented to the public and feedback was requested via sticker dots for attendees to apply to the board under that Comprehensive Plan recommendation or goal when the attendee was in support of the statement.

- ***Moreau Industrial Park will thrive as an industrial center of the 21st century by having recruited diverse, innovative companies to meet today's changing markets.***

Received 3 dots in support

- ***Revise and update the zoning chapter of the Town code so that:***

- ***The Land use schedule and discretionary approval of commercial and industrial projects is up-to-date and based upon sound definition of permitted uses.***

Received 5 dots in support

- ***The use schedule for designated industrial areas which are in the midst of or nearby residential neighborhoods is adjusted to remove industrial uses that could have a potential adverse impact to these residential areas. (e.g. excessive noise, odors, heavy traffic, extended hours.)***

Received 5 dots in support

- ***Any further expansion of industrial uses and or zones or logically limited to areas in close proximity to the Northway.***  
Received 3 dots in support
- ***Zoning boundaries to follow parcel boundaries and where appropriate employ the use of buffer zones to mitigate the adverse effects of conflicting land uses.***  
Received 5 dots in support

In addition to the dots vote this station had another poll

- ***Based on the current use schedule, do you feel the following are appropriate in Moreau given the goals of the comprehensive plan.***
  - **Cement Manufacturing (permitted in M1 / M1A)**  
Yes, in M1/M1A **1 dot in support**  
Yes in both M1 – M2 **2 dots in support**  
No, not appropriate in Moreau **2 dots in support**
  - **Auto Salvage (Permitted in M1 / M1A)**  
Yes, in M1/M1A **3 dots in support**  
Yes in both M1 – M2 **1 dot in support**  
No, not appropriate in Moreau **2 dots in support**
  - **Sand / Gravel Processing (Permitted in M1 / M1A / R4)**  
Yes, in M1/M1A **2 dots in support**  
Yes in both M1 – M2 **3 dots in support**  
No, not appropriate in Moreau **0 dots in support**
  - **Power Plant ( Permitted in M1 / M1A)**  
Yes, in M1/M1A **0 dots in support**  
Yes in both M1 – M2 **0 dots in support**  
No, not appropriate in Moreau **2 dots in support**

Prompt questions were provided, below are the questions and responses provided by the public.

- **Is 60 feet too tall in the M1 / M1A districts?**  
60 feet height is okay if approved, maybe limit to 40fett without approval.
- **Should lighter industrial uses be permitted in the M1 / M1A districts?**  
100% lighter industrial uses should be allowed and considered.  
Maybe depends on what types of light industry.
- **Should there be noise regulations in the manufacturing districts?**  
Noise should be regulated.  
Yes to noise regulation.
- **Is there any allowed uses which you feel are not appropriate in Moreau?**  
Yes, No pollution.  
No combustion power generation – alternatives are encouraged.
- **How could industry be in better harmony with nearby residential uses?**

- **Should the Town scale industry with expected traffic?**  
Minimal traffic would be best.
- **Would other uses be beneficial in this district?**  
Sports facilities could be a good use in the M areas.

**Below are comments left by the public for consideration:**

- *Moreau Industrial Park is not thriving, the plan needs to be changed.*
- *Industrial districts should not be near residential districts.*
- *Zoning Code needs to be unambiguous*
- *The industrial park is a failure, build affordable housing with amenities like gyms, daycares and restaurants.*

**Summary of Statements, Questions, Comments:**

Response at this station mainly focused on manufacturing uses. **The majority of the statements from the Comprehensive Plan were well supported.** Highest support was found among the following three statements:

- ***Use schedule updated for industrial areas in the midst of neighborhoods to remove uses that have potential adverse impacts.***
- ***Definition updates related to industrial uses.***
- ***Zoning should follow parcel boundaries and employ buffer zones.***

On additional prompt questions, attendees were seemingly thoughtful on the distinction of M1 and M2 zoning districts and identified that certain uses should remain M1, and M2 should be lesser intensity. This is evident in the following examples:

- Cement Manufacturing and Gravel Operations were seen as appropriate in the M1 and M2. Similarly, there was moderate support that these uses not be permitted in either district.
- Auto salvage was supported strongly in M1, but equally unsupported in either district.
- **Power Plant was not supported.**

Other meaningful comments include:

- Allowing lighter industrial in both districts.
- **Noise regulations are supported.**
- **No combustion power generation, alternatives should be considered.**
- Uses to industrial uses should consider traffic and minimal traffic is ideal.
- **Sports facilities should be permitted in industrial districts.**
- **Repurposing of Industrial Park which may include residential/ commercial uses.**

Discussion. From the Comprehensive Plan, the above highly supported statements as well as the other statements (which received moderate approval) generally make sense when examining any zoning in a community in relation to the separation of uses. Generally, attendees seemed comfortable with incorporating lighter, less intensive uses on industrial zoned lands.

Possible Action Item: The Task Force may wish to look at uses permitted as a Special Use in the C1 zoning district, many of which are compatible with industrial uses or would be good uses for vacant lands in the industrial zoning district. **The Task Force would be appropriate in using the Comprehensive Plan as a frame for revisions to the zoning code, which generally supports less intrusive uses in relation to residences.** There may be uses that would be appropriate only to the industrial park which would not be suitable elsewhere. Likewise, this may be true for areas adjacent to already industrialized uses. **The Task Force may also wish to consider the quarry and future uses there.**

As there is no support for a Power Plant, **the Task Force should review the definition and may wish to propose multiple definitions in consideration of solar, battery storage, etc.**

### Commercial Districts

The following statements were presented to the public to receive feedback using sticker dots to apply when they were in support of the statement.

- ***Encourage dense commercial activity which yield the highest and best commercial uses that meet the needs of the residents and the wider region while generating sales tax and yielding maximum property value.***  
Received 5 dots in support
- ***Undertake a zoning plan and corridor design guidelines for development that provide a cohesive and welcoming appearance to the public and private uses along the corridor.***  
Received 7 dots in support
- ***Reviews that are conducted according to a sound and well-conceived set of review criteria.***  
Received 4 dots in support
- ***Prioritize development away from open land and agricultural district to preserve those qualities by taking advantage of open lots in already developed areas.***  
Received 6 dots in support
- ***Infill and utilize existing structures as well as adopt higher density building practices.***  
Received 6 dots in support
- ***Employ buffer zones to mitigate the adverse effects of conflicting land uses.***  
Received 4 dots in support
- ***Support commercial development along Old Saratoga Road as a way to economically benefit from visitors to Moreau Lake State Park and the Northway.***  
Received 2 dots in support

Prompt questions were provided, below are the questions and responses provided by the public.

- **Would you support greater residential and or mixed uses in the commercial district?**  
*No support for residential in C1.*  
*Highly encourage mixed use.*
- **Should greater than 30 feet height be allowed?**  
*Greater than 30 feet only when necessary.*
- **Are there any uses that you feel are inconsistent with your community vision?**  
*No*
- **Do you feel that storage facilities, quarrying and light manufacturing is appropriate for use in the C1 commercial district?**  
*No*
- **Are you concerned there is no max size in these districts?**
- **Is the requirement for 1-acre lots too restrictive?**  
*No 1 Acres lots size is correct.*  
*Consider less than 1 acres if decent project.*  
*Yes, it's a barrier to small business ad dense infill.*
- **Would other uses in these districts be beneficial?**
- **Should the Planning Board require sidewalks and cross- vehicular connections for commercial uses on parcels along Route 9?**  
*Yes to sidewalks and crosswalks.*  
*No required sidewalks and crosswalks.*  
*Yes*

**Below are comments left by the public for consideration:**

- *Make Moreau welcoming.*
- *All future development should be reviewed separately but integrated using the master plan as a guide with clearly defined infrastructure requirements.*
- *Additional parallel roads should be built to support Route 9 commercial corridor.*
- *C1 should be commercial use not retail.*

**Summary of Statements, Questions, Comments:**

Response at this station mainly focused on commercial uses. **The majority of the statements from the Comprehensive Plan were well supported**, excepting development on Old Saratoga Road.

Attendees commented more on the shape and form of development over the uses. Generally, attendees desired well considered and appropriate development.



Discussion From the Comprehensive Plan, the above highly supported statements generally make sense when examining any zoning in a community in relation to the separation of uses. Generally, attendees felt that the look and feel of the commercial district should be considered.

Possible Action Item: The Task Force may wish to focus on this separately as more input may be beneficial in determining a greater vision of the commercial zone. The Task Force would be appropriate in using the Comprehensive Plan as a frame for revisions to the zoning code.

**The Task Force may wish to look at those uses which are permitted by Special Use and determine if they are compatible with the intent and vision (as in the Comp Plan) for this zoning, particularly C1.**

It may also be beneficial to clarify the bulk and area table for **C2 which does not have water and sewer services available.**

**The Task Force should also look at allowed uses and definitions to tighten up permitted uses eliminating ambiguous allowed uses such as “Business which primarily service highway traffic”**

### Residential Districts

The following statements were presented to the public to receive feedback using sticker dots to apply when they were in support of the statement.

- ***Assess current housing type needs and develop a plan to meet these needs while using “smart growth” principles such as infill, repurposing and reutilizing existing homes.***  
Received 8 dots in support
- ***Address the need for senior living facilities by building housing facilities of varying assistance levels including senior apartments, assisted living, and nursing homes.***  
Received 6 dots in support
- ***Take advantage of subsidies to bring down housing costs by reaching out to the county and state for funding opportunities.***  
Received 3 dots in support
- ***Regulation of home-based businesses should be developed to encourage the application of the business format and accommodate the various forms that such business can take.***  
Received 4 dots in support

**In addition to the dots vote this station had another poll**

- **Accessory dwellings** (apartments, guest cottage, etc..) Smaller independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a stand-alone single-family home.  
Yes – **8 dots**  
No – **0 dots**  
Maybe – **1 dot**
- **Tiny Homes** – typically 400 sq ft or less and stand alone on a lot.  
Yes – **6 dots**  
No – **0 dots**  
Maybe – **3 dots**

- **Single-Family on large lot** – Single family homes with acreage  
Yes – **8 dots**  
No – **1 dot**  
Maybe – **0 dots**
- **Duplex / Two family homes** – one attached structure for two families. Typically side by side and owned as compared to leased.  
Yes – **5 dots**  
No – **0 dots**  
Maybe – **2 dots**
- **Apartments** – Several dwellings within one structure, shared utilities such as water and sewer.  
Yes – **5 dots**  
No – **4 dots**  
Maybe – **1 dot**
- **Town homes** – connected homes for multiple families, similar to a duplex.  
Yes – **3 dots**  
No – **1 dot**  
Maybe – **1 dot**
- **Mixed use** – typically found in urban area and features retail or business on lower floor, residential renter or owner-occupied units above.  
Yes – **6 dots**  
No – **0 dots**  
Maybe – **0 dots**

**Below are comments left by the public for consideration:**

- *Dense housing is good tax revenue for the Town. It helps keep housing affordable.*
- *Press the County to resume tax foreclosures to clean up the Town.*

**Summary of Statements, Questions, Comments:**

Response at this station mainly focused on Residential uses. While recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan were limited, varying degrees of support were found when attendees were asked about their relevance. Generally, attendees supported infill and provision of a variety of housing types. There was lesser support for exploring subsidies related to housing.

In the prompts residents were asked what type of housing may be appropriate. It seems attendees are supportive accessory dwelling units, something not permitted by code without classifying the housing type as a “2-family” permitted in the R-2 District. This is similar to common questions asked of the Building Department.

Mixed Use also scored highly in the prompt questions. It should be clarified as to the intent of the mixed use housing as the Town Code only allows for such use in limited districts and is generally restrictive as in one unit.

Residents generally seemed to support the housing types typical in Moreau. It should be noted there were several emails sent to the Building, Planning and Development Coordinator opposing more apartment complexes. This is shown above where responses to apartments were mixed.

**Discussion:** More information should be gleaned on this topic as it will have great affect on the population of the community going forward. Each district should be individually reviewed, and appropriate housing uses should be determined. It should be noted that most of the large-scale rental housing is PUD, which is a special district. The PUD chapter may need to be reviewed to ensure an appropriate scale is considered.

**Possible Action Item:** The Task Force may wish to seek more information for this use, dependent on individual districts. Due to the support and demand for accessory dwelling units the Task Force may wish to consider the appropriateness of this.

### **Zoning Map Participation Station**

This station consisted of the current Town zoning map. It was encouraged for the public to use the tracing paper provided and indicate any changes they wish to see.

**Below are comments left by the public for consideration:**

- *Connections between business creating alternative travel parallel to Route 9 between sites.*
- *Utilize the recommendations in the Adk/ GF Transportation Council study for site plan related to business entrances and driveways. Require/ cause sidewalk development along Route 9 corridor.*

### **Summation**

Revisions are needed within the zoning chapter and across all zoning districts. Particularly for residential and commercial areas, additional information may be necessary to facilitate a solid community vision for these districts as espoused by the Comprehensive Plan and based on discussions from those attending the Open House.

Based on the comments and the clear direction of the Comprehensive Plan, it is appropriate to reconsider the M1, M1A, and M2 districts. Based on the above, generally those in attendance desired less intrusive and/or adverse uses as they related to Industrial Uses and Residential Uses.

The Task Force should discuss uses in the district, clarify uses in the district in consideration of definitions, and curtail certain uses which may not be supported in the Comprehensive Plan and the feedback received at the Open House event.

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