

From: [Tim Flaig](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Crooker rezoning
Date: Sunday, August 9, 2020 3:18:33 PM
Attachments: [1597000297798_TimFlaigLettertoPlanningBoard.pdf](#)

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I've attached a letter to the planning board about Crookers rezoning proposal as public comment

Thanks

Tim Flaig
528 River Road

From: [Daniel Flaig](#)
To: [Andrew Deci](#)
Cc: [Planning](#)
Subject: Rezoning Public Comment
Date: Friday, August 14, 2020 10:56:55 AM

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Hi Andrew,

I reviewed the applicant's workshop materials to be presented on Tuesday evening and wanted to make a few observations as public comments.

The proposed new Industrial zone is an extensive area within the Suburban Residential zone with significant road frontage proposed on River Road, abutting residential development, and the proposed Industrial zone extends all the way to Route 196 where the Rural Commercial Use zone currently exists. It seems unusual to break up the Rural Commercial Use zone with a section of new Industrial zoning. Visually, the scale of the proposed new Industrial zone appears to dwarf the large Ivanhoe subdivision area shown on their proposed zoning map.

As you may know, the Rural Commercial Use zone was envisioned in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan as well as expansion of the Industrial zone toward the westerly end of the existing Industrial zone to Route 196. The 2013 Route 196 corridor study reaffirmed this planning direction, which led to the current zoning configuration in this area of Topsham. The Comprehensive Plan has focused on creating a rural gateway within the inner corridor of Route 196, allowing rural commercial business that is compatible with residential development. Comprehensive Planning in Topsham has steered industrial development to the outer corridor of Route 196 in the more rural and undeveloped part of town where the applicant maintains a large area of Industrial zoned property next to the Industrial Park.

The 2019 Plan update is also consistent with prior planning and zoning for this area, which is not consistent with this new Industrial zone proposal. I also noticed that the applicant has left the quarry property within the existing Industrial zone as opposed to adding it to the new Industrial zone as previously discussed with the board in June and July.

They are also proposing what seems to me to be a very complicated ordinance for a new Industrial zone involving some sort of planned Industrial development process. They model this idea from the Mixed Use Commercial MUC-1 zone that is located in the area west of I295 abutting the Blueberry Lane neighborhood and I295. One major disconnect with adopting the MUC-1 ordinance approach is that the MUC-1 zoning came out the Topsham Comprehensive planning process from 2005, where the area was highlighted on the growth map. Planning for the MUC-1 zone near the interstate occurred over a long period of time while flowing from the comprehensive plan process to guide future commercial development areas in Topsham. The MUC-1 zoning area is incorporated into the 2019 Update as part of the Route 196 Special District (Page 133), whereas the proposed new Industrial zone is within the Rural-Suburban Limited Growth Sector (not consistent with Industrial zoning).

In the case of the applicant's rezoning request, there is no basis in the Comprehensive Plan for rezoning this suburban residential and rural commercial use area to Industrial with adoption of a planned industrial development ordinance that applies only to the new zone, which includes existing residential and undeveloped property that the applicant does not own.

Daniel Flaig Jr
32 Beechwood Drive

From: [Daniel Flaig](#)
To: [Andrew Deci](#)
Cc: [Planning](#)
Subject: Planning Board Public Comment
Date: Friday, August 14, 2020 9:37:47 AM
Attachments: [PublicCommentMaps8-14-20.pdf](#)

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Hi Andrew,

I've attached maps that I'd like to share with the planning board and submit for public comment in regards to the rezoning matter.

thank you,

Dan

From: [lee mcmanus](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: 1597401090202_LeeMcManusLettertoPlanningBoard.pdf
Date: Friday, August 14, 2020 9:07:26 AM
Attachments: [1597401090202_LeeMcManusLettertoPlanningBoard.pdf](#)

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From: [kjkkel2](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Crooker Expansion
Date: Friday, August 14, 2020 1:10:44 AM

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As a Brunswick neighbor across the Androscoggin River from this proposed new move against this move into the existing residential neighborhood. This asphalt plant and all the extra noise, dust, and traffic will ruin the quality of life for residents on both sides of the river. We believe the impact is too great for nearby residential neighborhoods.

Before you consider ruining the real estate values of residential neighborhoods on both sides of the river, please look for a more true industrial zone away from residential properties. The blasting and crushing noises are bad enough now. Please be considerate of our remaining quality of life and reject this plan. Kerry and Lenore Kells Brunswick, ME.

Sent from my

From: [Juanita Dyer](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Crooker rezoning
Date: Thursday, August 13, 2020 9:09:03 PM

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As we try to keep up with the Crooker rezoning, we have a few concerns:

We are concerned about a pond on the River Road & also for the neighbors who have a dug well and how this will affect things. There are springs that run to the pond also.

We have an artesian well and can't drink the water anymore due to Crooker blasting, we suspect. It is now full of granite granules and we have a filter that is full of fine granules every time we change it.

We are also concerned about the batch plant and the dust, fumes, and noise also any tar fumes which can be toxic.

We are also concerned about the value of our property going down due to all of the noise etc.

Also it would probably put our taxes up which we do not need any more taxes.

As a neighborhood we hope you will hear our concerns and not let Crooker have the rezoning they want just doesn't sound fair.

Thank you for listening,

Raymond & Juanita Dyer
407 River Road
Topsham, ME

From: [Andrew Deci](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: FW: Letter to Planning Board
Date: Thursday, August 13, 2020 12:25:12 PM
Attachments: [Three Problems with Rezoning Request.pdf](#)

Andrew H. Deci
Assistant Town Planner

Planning, Development & Codes
Town of Topsham
100 Main Street
Topsham, ME 04086
(207) 725-1724

Per 1 MRSA § 402(3), correspondence to/from municipal offices/officials (with limited exceptions) is a public record and available for review by any interested party. This means if anyone asks to see it, we are required to provide it. There are very few exceptions. We welcome citizen comments and want to hear from our constituents, but please keep in mind that what you write in an email is not private and will be made available to any interested party.

From: Gary W. Fogg <gwfogg@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2020 12:20 PM
To: Rod Melanson <rmelanson@topshammaine.com>; Andrew Deci <adeci@topshammaine.com>
Subject: Letter to Planning Board

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Rod and Andy:

Please find attached to a letter to the Planning Board concerning the Crooker Rezoning Request. As you can see from the letter, I have attempted to confine the discussion to zoning issues in order to keep it as brief as possible.

In the future I might send along other thoughts, but in the meantime thank you for including it in the Planning Board packet or online in time for the meeting Tuesday night.

Gary

Gary W. Fogg
20 Coville Road
Topsham, ME 04086
Email: gwfogg@comcast.net
Phone: (207) 837-5546

From: [A.J. Denis](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Crooker rezoning proposal
Date: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 4:58:48 PM
Attachments: [Dear Topsham Planning Board.docx](#)

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From: [Jean Denis](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Crooker Construction Zoning Amendment Request
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 1:39:09 PM
Attachments: [Letter to Topsham Planning Board.docx](#)

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Please see attached letter,
Thank you
Best, J
Jean Denis

From: [Patricia Maloney](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Cc: [Daniel Flaig](#); [Robin Brooks](#)
Subject: Crooker Zoning Request Public comment files
Date: Sunday, August 9, 2020 9:32:30 PM
Attachments: [To the Topsham Planning Department.docx](#)

WARNING: This is an external email that originated outside of our email system. DO NOT CLICK links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know that the content is safe!

Dear Planning Bd members and Rod Melanson,

Please accept the following letter with same attachment in opposition to the Crooker Rezoning request which is found in your agenda as: Crooker Construction Zoning Amendment Request. I request that my letter be added to your comments received through the Planning, Development and Codes Enforcement Department to be posted and maintained on the following section entitled "PUBLIC COMMENT FILES."

Sincere thanks, Patricia Maloney
31 Bridge Street, Topsham, ME 04086

August 10, 2020

Dear Mr. Melanson and Topsham Planning Board Member:

Although I do not live in the Pejepscot neighborhood and community, I am a long time resident of Topsham and grateful to be here because of the neighborhoods and the genuine concern that people have for this place. These are values that attract growth and weave into the fabric of our lives a care for the environment. We want to live where our children are safe, where the air is clean, where noise and light pollution are checked, and where there is respect for the land. I believe that the Topsham Comprehensive Plan addresses these qualities that make our town a livable and an appealing place to settle and to participate in our system that allows dialogue and debate about protecting these values.

Building out an industrial zone alongside (encroaching upon) an existing neighborhood seems anathema to a town that attracts families, retired people, and young working people. Last week when leaving Reny's at the Topsham Fair Mall I looked over at Crooker's and saw a haze hanging over the site. Years ago the surrounding community complained about the air pollution and dust from the plant. There were minor adjustments made because families with young children complained about a higher rate of asthma. With growth from industry we, in America, too often see that environmental laws and rules are watered down or glossed over. The proposed new plant will be no different and I'm sorry to say that.

There has been a proliferation of new and huge trucks that Crooker has been buying and sending out to our roads. Anytime I go by Rts. 196 and Main Street, there are always Crooker trucks passing by or waiting at the traffic lights – there will be a greater number of trucks if a new plant is built. And a tunnel? What a preposterous idea! With the size of those new and increasingly large trucks, the proposed tunnel would need specs similar to the Holland Tunnel. But, of course, the very idea of a tunnel would also mean blasting unlike any we've seen in town but, of course, just what Crooker does best - blasting.

As mentioned earlier in this letter, noise, light and air pollution are huge concerns that every resident of the town should consider as a detriment to our living and healthy community, to our forests, waters and wildlife – and for this proposal – to a great degree to our residents.

Sincere thanks for adding my letter, as a Topsham taxpayer and land owner, opposing the Crooker Proposal to rezone and build a new plant in Topsham.

Patricia Maloney

31 Bridge Street, Topsham, Maine

From: [Tim Flaig](#)
To: [Planning](#)
Subject: Crooker rezoning
Date: Sunday, August 9, 2020 3:18:33 PM
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I've attached a letter to the planning board about Crookers rezoning proposal as public comment

Thanks

Tim Flaig
528 River Road

August 8, 2020

To the Planning Board:

I live at 528 River Road, and I'm writing to oppose Crooker's plan to rezone the residential area including my property to a new industrial zone to relocate their entire operation to the neighborhood. My parents built my house in 1977 and I plan to live here for the foreseeable future. Crooker is proposing to rezone my property and my uncle's properties as part of the new industrial zone, which effects my property value. Who would ever buy my house if it's in Crooker's industrial zone?? We don't need more industrial in our River Road neighborhood, and it doesn't even follow the Comprehensive Plan for our area of Topsham.

My parents and I have always allowed Crooker to monitor blast vibrations from their quarry at our house to be good neighbors. My house has been damaged by their blasting over the years. Crooker has installed crack monitors in my foundation that they routinely check. They also had to put a sleeve in my well years ago after the blasting caused water quality problems and only after my parents complained for several years.

They have other options to relocate such as Jack's Pit to avoid moving into our residential zone.

Please consider the neighbors in our area of Topsham.

Timothy Flaig

528 River Road

August 8, 2020

Planning Board
Town of Topsham
100 Main Street
Topsham, ME 04086

Re: Crooker Rezoning Proposal

Dear Topsham Planning Board Members:

My name is Lee McManus and my husband and I live at 49 Meadow Cross Road. I'm writing to express my opposition to Crooker's rezoning proposal and its impact on our property and the neighborhood. We own 4 Meadow Cross Road including acreage and the farmhouse where my husband grew up and my in-laws lived and farmed for many years.

We also own land at 496 Lewiston Road that abuts Whitehouse Crossing, the power line, and Crooker's property. We have allowed the Topsham Trail Riders to use our property at 496 Lewiston Road for an ATV trail for several years, and we have fields on the property. Crooker has approached us several times about selling our land to them and we have refused each time and we have no intension to sell our property to them in the future. We do not support this project and we don't believe this rezoning follows the comprehensive plan.

I reviewed Crooker's rezoning map that will be presented to the Planning Board on 8/18/2020. Crooker is proposing to rezone our land noted on their plan as lot R02-043 to be included in the new industrial zone. We don't support rezoning our property to an industrial zone for Crooker.

I appreciate your careful review of this proposal and please consider the interests of the other property owners and the residents of the neighborhood.

Regards,

Lee McManus

49 Meadow Cross Road

Dear Topsham Planning Board,

August 12,2020

I purchased my property over 26 years ago on the River Rd in Topsham. The property was occupied by a small trailer and a garage, but I saw the potential in a nice area to build a home and raise a family. I have been very happy here. I live just over one mile from Crooker's pit on the River RD and just about ¼ mile from the Whitehouse Crossing /196 intersection. **I strongly oppose the rezoning from residential to industrial for this area.**

I have read the letters from others opposing this proposal as well and I agree with the arguments and the potential impacts to our community health and our environment health.

I believe there is still a lot of unanswered questions concerning the impact of water runoff from the proposed asphalt plant to our wells and the river. Also, how does the air quality and the noise levels impact the neighboring residents. This proposal has already caused much stress and anxiety impacting resident's health.

I have seen an increase of traffic on the River Road over the years from people wanting to avoid RT196 and to access the Topsham Fair Mall through the rear entrance. The cars and trucks go by my house so fast it is dangerous to get my mail. At a meeting I attended earlier this year there was a proposal by Crooker to put a rotary on RT196 at the intersection on Whitehouse crossing Rd and 196. I do not see how that will help the town. I believe more people will avoid commuting 196 and the traffic on the River Rd will increase as well as the traffic through the Covell and Ivanhoe neighborhoods. This goes against what the Topsham Comprehension Plan states. ***"What we learned from Plan Your Topsham is that people are interested in change that creates a more cohesive and connected community that nurtures and supports children, families, singles, and retirees alike."*** This increase of traffic will negatively impact the condition of these road creating more repair expenses resulting in higher taxes to cover these expenses.

When Crooker purchased the land from the Fogg family they knew it was zoned residential. If we as a community approve this proposal to change the zoning what's next? What is their 5, 10, 15, year plan with this property?

There is a beautiful piece of property across the street from me that would make a nice residential community bringing more families into the area, adding to our tax revenue. If this change of zoning is approved, which would only benefit Crooker, what incentive will there be to develop this land.

I don't see how this proposal will positively impact the Town of Topsham. It only benefits Crooker. *I do appreciate all the contributions that the Crooker has given the town.* I'm sorry that I cannot support this request. **Once again, I strongly oppose this change of zoning request.** I have worked too hard for too many years to create a home that one day I could pass on to my children. I leave you with one final question...Would you want an Asphalt plant in your back yard?

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely

Amy Laffely Denis

351 River Rd

Topsham, Maine 04086

's

From: Jean Denis
To: Topsham Planning Board
Subject: Crooker Proposal to Rezone
Date: August 11, 2020

Dear Planning Board Members,

I am writing to you to express my concerns with Crooker Construction moving within a short distance of my home. Let me be clear, I oppose the move. My wife and I moved to Topsham in 1992 because we both wanted to live in a small town that was quiet and safe for us to raise our children. Topsham did not disappoint us, and we were happy with our decision and now we want the same thing as we enter the thought of retiring here.

In our opinion, the proposal that Crooker Construction has presented to the Topsham Planning Board is not a good idea for the residents that live around the proposed site. I witness everyday the vast number of Crooker trucks that leave the pit on the upper end of River Rd and I can tell you firsthand that it does have a negative impact on us. Traffic gets backed up and it's very challenging to merge onto Rt 196 when you are looking at the back end of a dump truck. I don't want to deal with the additional trucking if they are granted permission to move their operation close to my backyard.

I have read the letters of concerned citizens regarding the smell and safety concerns with Crooker making asphalt. I can tell every time they are in asphalt production when I drive close to their existing site on Rt. 196. I deem that the air quality is poor, and I feel bad for the residents that live close to their operation. I don't want to deal with that in the home that I have lived in for almost 28 years. I may be presumptuous in thinking this, but I don't believe any one of you would want to deal with that either.

In conclusion, I don't understand why Crooker would want to impact a large number of local residents when they have a perfect opportunity to move their operation to an existing and approved industrial zoned location. This does not make sense to me! I know you have a tough decision to make, but please consider the voices of the people that this decision impacts the most and not just the voice of Crooker.

Sincerely,

Jean Denis

351 River Rd

Note

This is the Official Zoning Map referred to in Section 225-7 of the Topsham Zoning Ordinance as adopted at the May 20, 2015 Town Meeting

Date: _____

Attested, Town Clerk



2006 Hydrological Features - Aerial Analysis - Bradstreet Consultants INC
 Map Produced by - Topsham Planning Office
 Official Update - May 2015

NAD_1983_StatePlane_Maine_West_FIPS_1802_Feet
 Projection: Transverse_Mercator
 GCS_North_American_1983
 Datum: D_North_American_1983

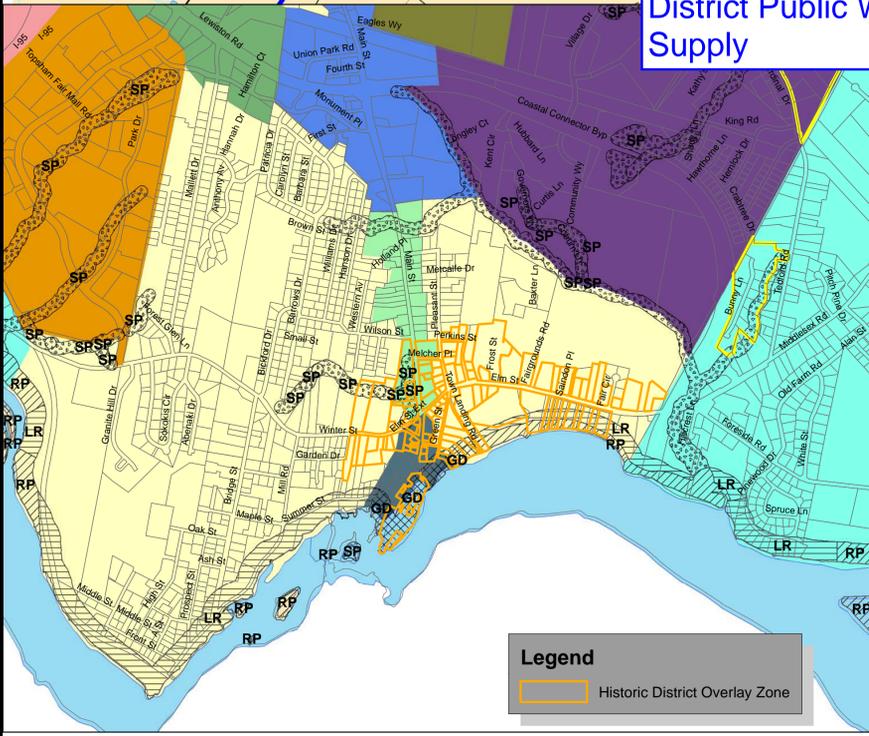
Note

For Planning, Codes, and Assessing purposes only
 Not to be used for property conveyance

Proposed New Industrial Zone

Village Inset

Brunswick & Topsham Water District Public Water Supply



Legend

Historic District Overlay Zone

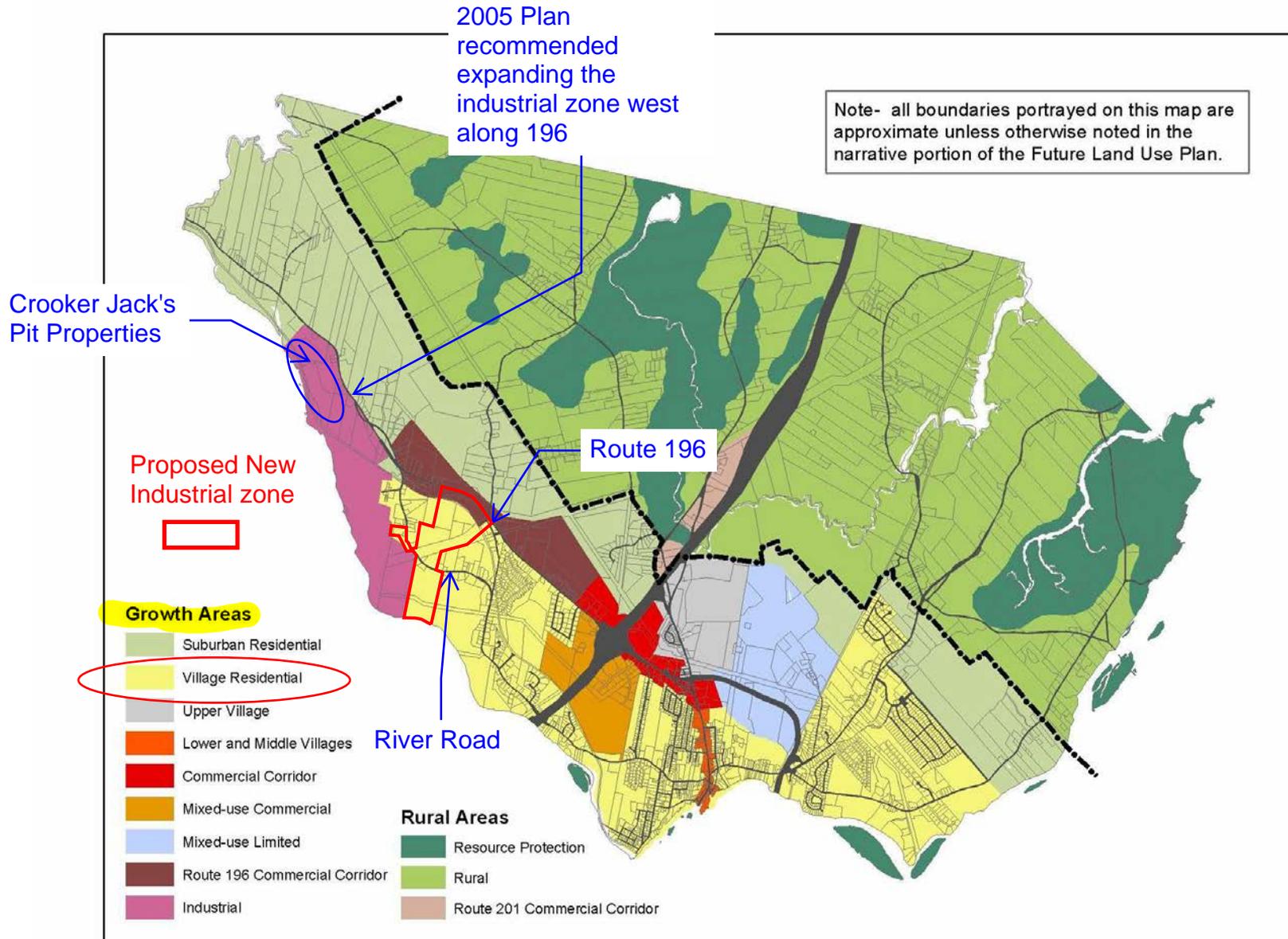
**Official Zoning Map
 Town of Topsham
 May 20, 2015**



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Legend

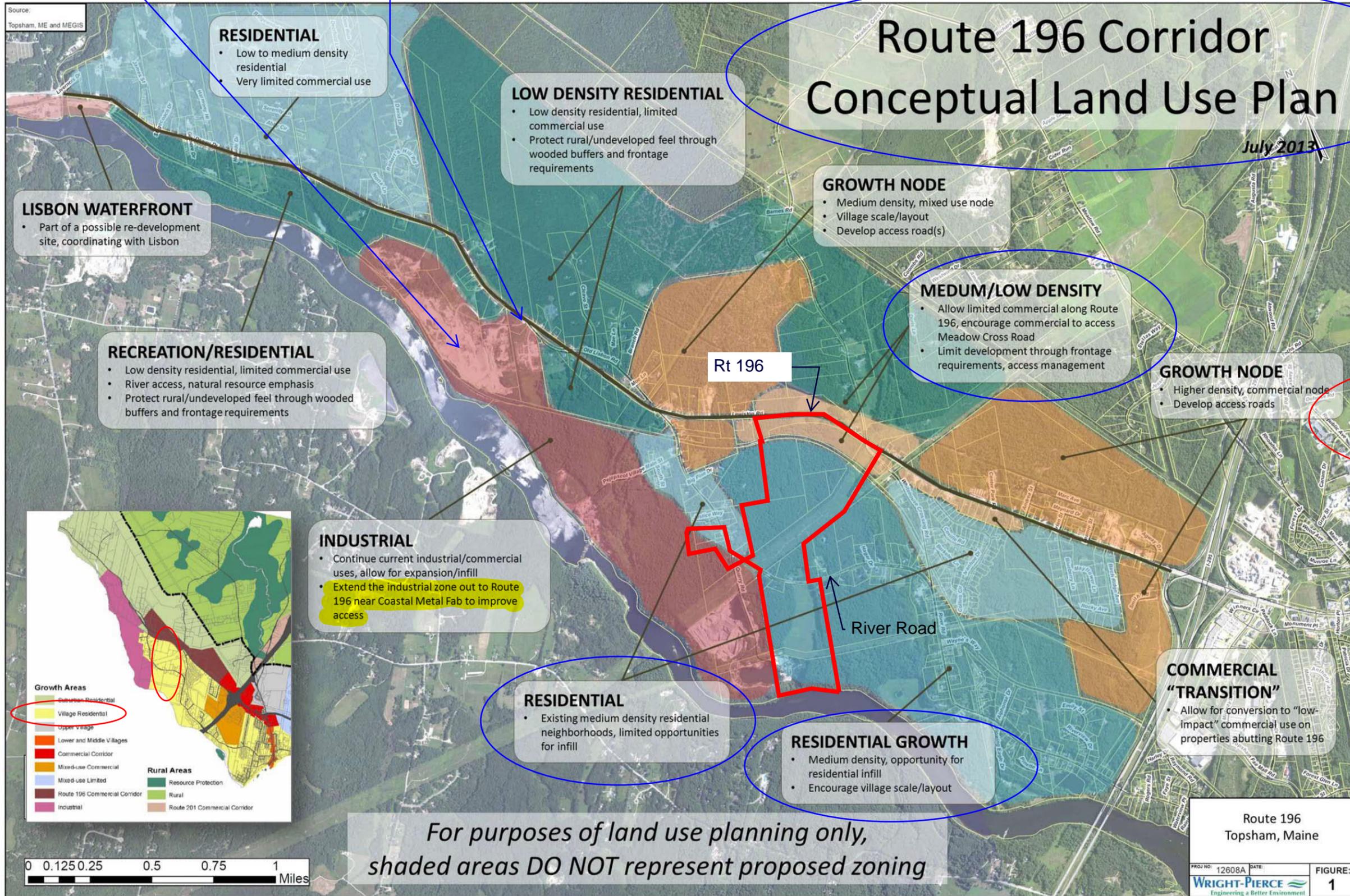
- Historic District Overlay District
- Parcels
- Mobile Home Park Overlay Zone
- Bald Eagle Buffer
- ShorelandZoning
- ZoneCode
- GD - General Development
- LR - Limited Residential
- RP - Resource Protection
- SP - Stream Protection
- Wellhead Buffer
- Aquifer Protection Overlay Zone
- zoning
- ZONE_ABBR
- R2B
- RCU - Rural Commercial Use
- BP2 - Business Park 2
- MUL - Mixed Use Limited
- R4 - Village Residential
- CC196 - Commercial Corridor 196
- BP - Business Park
- CC - Commercial Corridor
- I - Industrial Zone
- LI - Limited Industrial
- LV - Lower Village
- MUC - Mixed Use Commercial
- MUC 1 - Mixed Use Commercial One
- MV - Middle Village
- R1 - Urban Residential
- R2 - Suburban Residential
- R3 - Rural Residential
- VC - Village Center

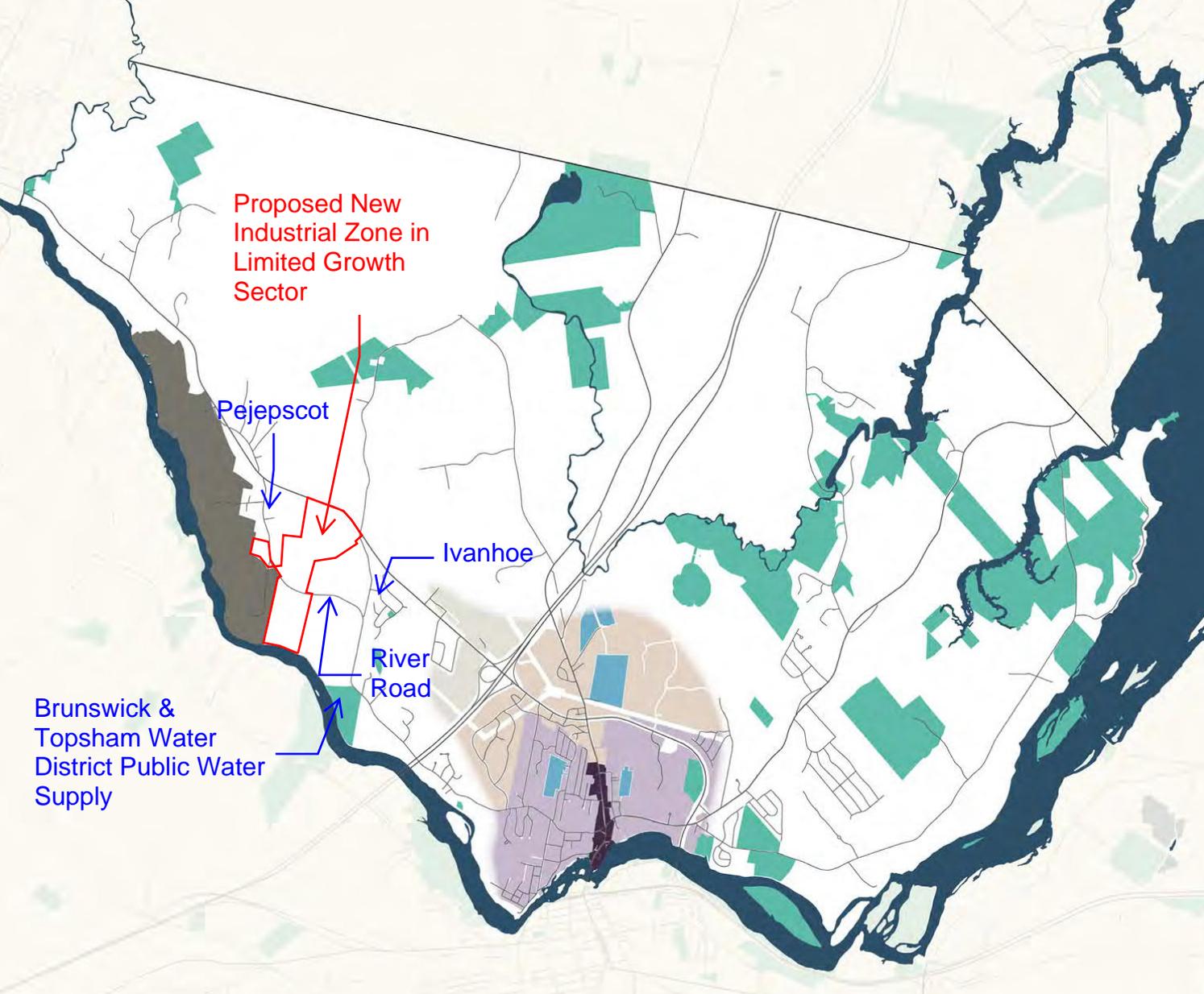


Route 196 Corridor Conceptual Land Use Plan

July 2013

This conceptual land use diagram summarizes the envisioned general land use types within the project study area, indicating the envisioned growth in terms of the relative development density (e.g. growth areas versus low density).





Conservation, Preservation, and Growth

2019 Comprehensive Plan Update





CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION - NO GROWTH SECTOR

This sector comprises all parcels of land that have been permanently protected for conservation, recreation and open space, agricultural or forestry purposes. While the sector is identified as “No Growth”, this plan recognizes that legal instruments such as deeds, easements, covenants and/or agreements may contain parcel-specific permissions or restrictions governing the use or development of the subject property. As development rights are purchased, land is acquired or farm preservation easements are secured, those lands would ultimately become part of the No Growth sector.



RURAL - SUBURBAN LANDS - LIMITED GROWTH SECTOR

In order to realize the goals of the 2010 Natural Areas Plan and this Comprehensive Plan, land in the “Limited Growth” sector should be prioritized for lower density, rural compatible development in order to strengthen working farms, forests and rural-based business economies, and to preserve rural character.

Limited growth recognizes that the Town’s current zoning ordinance permits landowners rights to build residential housing on 1 and 2-acre lots. This plan suggests adopting zoning regulations to incentivize new housing to organize in an intentionally rural-compatible pattern as opposed to developing in a conventional suburban sprawl pattern. Examples of rural-compatible patterns include hamlets or crossroads building groups, described in further detail later on in this chapter. Further, this plan recognizes that rural and land-based businesses may continue to grow, and performance standards may need to be evaluated as part of future zoning amendments to ensure protection of natural resources, and compatibility with working farms and existing residential neighborhoods.



NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION - INTENTIONAL GROWTH SECTOR

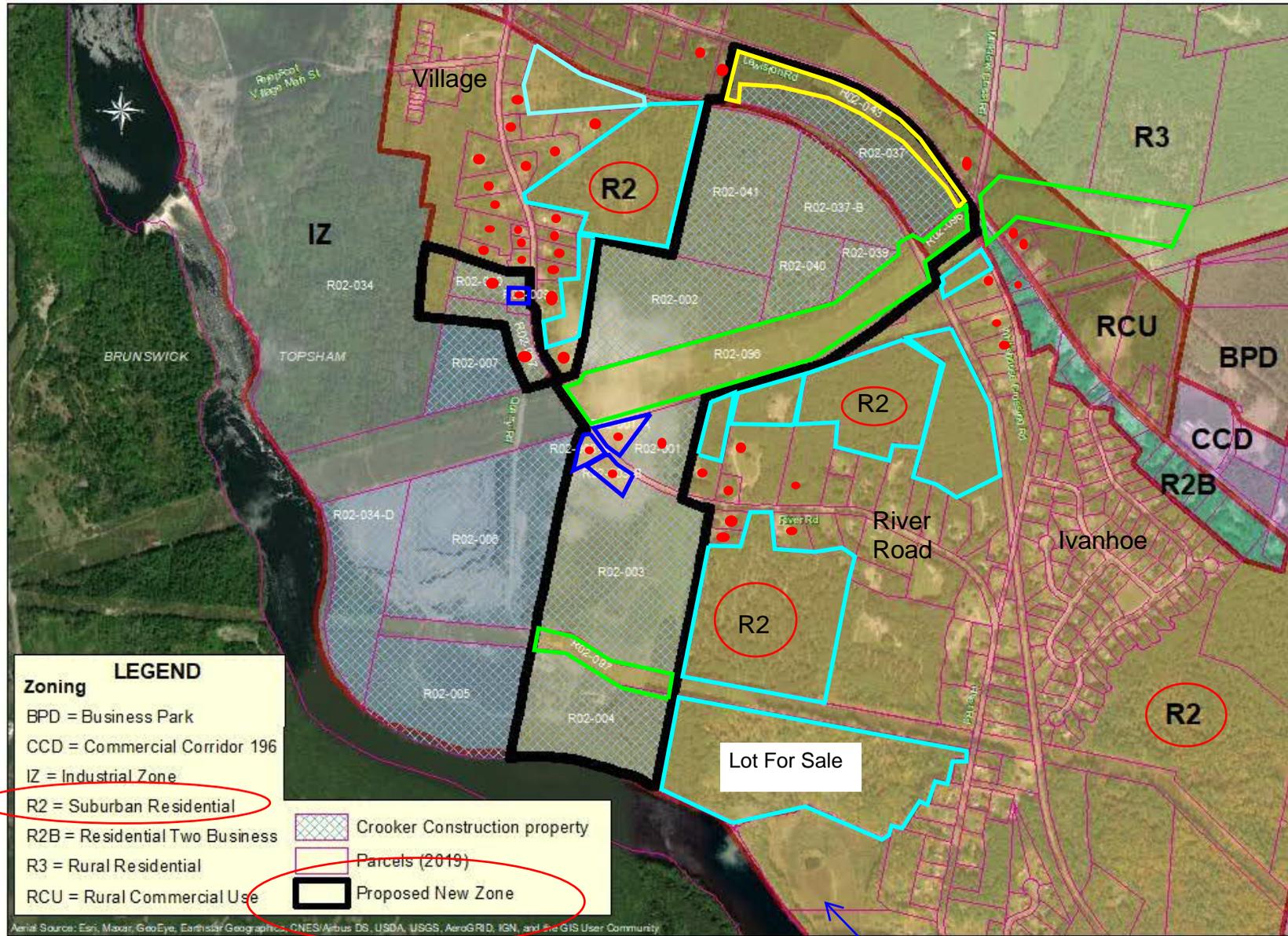
Existing places identified for continued protection of historic structures include the historic neighborhoods surrounding the Lower Village Main Street. Ideas expressed about the future use and potential for development at the Topsham Fairgrounds were mixed and broad, ranging from creating a regionally-significant agricultural food hub to basic ongoing maintenance and some expanded community programming, but making no substantial change, keeping the fairgrounds as-is.



NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT - INTENTIONAL GROWTH SECTOR

This sector is assigned to the Lower Village Main Street, recognizing that the existing character of Lower Village is historical in its layout of streets and blocks, mix of historical buildings and contemporary buildings. This sector has the highest proportion of mixed uses in Topsham and represents the most identifiable downtown “Main Street” condition. New growth should enhance the Lower Village through sensitive rehabilitation of buildings, carefully designed and placed new buildings, and public space improvements (streets, sidewalks, parks). Development should support town goals of creating a walkable, mixed use Main Street district.

Proposed Zoning



Zoning LEGEND

BPD = Business Park
 CCD = Commercial Corridor 196
 IZ = Industrial Zone
 R2 = Suburban Residential
 R2B = Residential Two Business
 R3 = Rural Residential
 RCU = Rural Commercial Use

Crooker Construction property
 Parcels (2019)
 Proposed New Zone

- Central Maine Power
- Developed residential property owned by others in the Suburban Residential zone
- Undeveloped property owned by others in the Rural Commercial Use zone
- Suburban Residential land abutting Proposed Industrial Rezoning that is available for subdividing and development
- Residential House/Mobile Home in immediate area of proposed new Industrial Zone

CURRENT ZONING

Map created by LatLong Logic, LLC (August, 2020)

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

Brunswick & Topsham Water District Property

Gary W. Fogg
20 Coville Road
Topsham, ME 04086

Phone: 207-837-5546
Email: gwfogg@comcast.net

Don Spann, Chair
Topsham Planning Board
Topsham Municipal Offices
100 Maine Street
Topsham, ME 04086

Subject: Three Problems with the Boundaries of the Crooker Rezoning Request

August 12, 2020

Dear Don and Members of the Board:

As you know, zoning is used to maintain the orderly use of property within the community. It protects businesses and residents alike from land uses that are incompatible with each other, ensuring a stable environment in which money, time and effort can be invested safely in order to achieve landowner objectives. Unfortunately, in any rezoning request there is often a trade-off between one set of landowners and another, but our duty is to make sure that any sacrifices one side makes are not unreasonable relative to the benefit of the people requesting the change in district boundaries.

In looking at the new industrial zone proposed by Crooker Company for the River Road area, it appears to me that the trade-offs between Crooker's goals for relocating its operations to this area and the impacts to the residents are unbalanced. The Crooker Proposal represents a very aggressive approach to rezoning that is harmful to the River Road neighborhood, to residents on White House Crossing Road and to property owners on Lewiston Road. It also sets a bad precedent for future rezoning decisions town wide, especially if the proposed industrial district becomes a floating zone that can be imposed on rural residential areas anywhere in Topsham.

Among the many reasons why I think this conclusion is justified, three are most important. They are explained briefly below.

1. The Size of the Area to be Rezoned Exceeds Community Norms.

In most rezoning requests of the past, a landowner has been granted relatively small changes in a zoning boundary on their property in order to facilitate the use of an existing business or home. One of the examples of such a change that I remember was the rezoning of about half an acre at Goodwin's Volvo from the Middle Village District to the Upper Village District on Main Street. This was done in order to provide Goodwin's Volvo with some additional parking and display area. Even so, the rezoning request was controversial at the time. In contrast, the Crooker rezoning request for the River Road area dwarfs the impacts of small projects like this and sets a new standard for what is possible anywhere in the community.

2. The Rezoning Proposal engulfs neighborhoods.

For many residents on River Road between Pejepscoot Village and the intersection of White House Crossing Road, the rezoning proposal does not simply mean the rezoning of vacant land somewhere nearby for an incompatible use. In fact, the new industrial zone surrounds many of these homes on all sides. Some homes are even included within the boundaries of the new industrial zone, an idea that seems grossly unfair and one that would seem preposterous to Planning Board members and Town Officials in the not so distant past.

There is also an imminent threat to a number of properties at the new intersection proposed on Lewiston Road. For some residents at the end of White House Crossing Road and on Lewiston Road it appears that eminent domain

might be used to take land needed to build these improvements. Among some old families in Topsham, there are bitter memories of their land being taken away for the Topsham Navy Annex and for the construction of Interstate 295. These were major national defense and infrastructure projects. In comparison, taking land simply to allow Crooker to move from one location to another hardly rises to this level of public benefit. Indeed, I suspect that if this rezoning request is granted it will almost certainly increase resentment within the community toward Crooker and Town government in the future.

3. The inefficient use of land within the proposed industrial zone increases negative impacts.

Crooker's operations within the new industrial zone would be scattered over a wide area. Quarrying, rock crushing equipment, haul roads, stone piles, the batch plant and so on will all occupy different sites within the new industrial zone. Development areas would include the existing quarry, the old Flaig Farm, the woods behind homes on both sides of River Road, a tunnel under River Road, the woods on both sides of the CMP power line and a major new intersection on Lewiston Road.

In comparison, the existing Crooker site on Route 196 is a better use of land. The project area is compact. It has access onto both Route 196 and Route 201. Access from the facility onto Route 196 is already controlled by a large, signalized intersection. Even better, the facility is located right next to the highway, a benefit that most companies hauling heavy loads by truck desire.

It is possible that obstacles to development present at River Road are driving Crooker in this direction. These obstacles include existing homes, streams, wetlands, the power line and so on. Perhaps another reason is that Crooker has other plans for the site sometime in the future and wishes to keep its options open. Nonetheless, given what we currently know about the project it would seem that Crooker's existing location is a better fit for the company than River Road.

I found Tom Sturgeon's recent letter to the Planning Board very helpful in shedding light on this rezoning proposal. From Tom's letter we learn that Crooker Company remains profitable, it does not need to move from its existing site and the company is quite to content to remain there indefinitely if need be. These are very sensible conclusions.

Sincerely,

Gary W. Fogg

August 10, 2020

Dear Mr. Melanson and Topsham Planning Board Member:

Although I do not live in the Pejeboscot neighborhood and community, I am a long time resident of Topsham and grateful to be here because of the neighborhoods and the genuine concern that people have for this place. These are values that attract growth and weave into the fabric of our lives a care for the environment. We want to live where our children are safe, where the air is clean, where noise and light pollution are checked, and where there is respect for the land. I believe that the Topsham Comprehensive Plan addresses these qualities that make our town a livable and an appealing place to settle and to participate in our system that allows dialogue and debate about protecting these values.

Building out an industrial zone alongside (encroaching upon) an existing neighborhood seems anathema to a town that attracts families, retired people, and young working people. Last week when leaving Reny's at the Topsham Fair Mall I looked over at Crooker's and saw a haze hanging over the site. Years ago the surrounding community complained about the air pollution and dust from the plant. There were minor adjustments made because families with young children complained about a higher rate of asthma. With growth from industry we, in America, too often see that environmental laws and rules are watered down or glossed over. The proposed new plant will be no different and I'm sorry to say that.

There has been a proliferation of new and huge trucks that Crooker has been buying and sending out to our roads. Anytime I go by Rts. 196 and Main Street, there are always Crooker trucks passing by or waiting at the traffic lights – there will be a greater number of trucks if a new plant is built. And a tunnel? What a preposterous idea! With the size of those new and increasingly large trucks, the proposed tunnel would need specs similar to the Holland Tunnel. But, of course, the very idea of a tunnel would also mean blasting unlike any we've seen in town but, of course, just what Crooker does best - blasting.

As mentioned earlier in this letter, noise, light and air pollution are huge concerns that every resident of the town should consider as a detriment to our living and healthy community, to our forests, waters and wildlife – and for this proposal – to a great degree to our residents.

Sincere thanks for adding my letter opposing the Crooker Proposal to rezone and build a new plant in Topsham.

Patricia Maloney

31 Bridge Street, Topsham, Maine