


To: Amsterdam/Churchill Community Planning Group:  
From: Warren Vaughan, County Planning   
Date: 9/29/08

**Re: Standards for Rural Amsterdam/Churchill**

***Note:** The following is not formal policy language. These are the highlights being discussed by the rural landowners re: policy for rural AC.*

**Uses**

As with any zoning district, there are three general categories of uses. In the RAC, however, we're trying a different approach than the Town Core:

*Principal Uses.* There are no designated principal uses. A landowner can do anything he wants, as long as he meets the performance standards discussed below. Agriculture is exempt from the performance standards. There are, however, two exceptions to this general rule:

*Conditional Uses.* A small number of uses will require public hearings. For now, uses being discussed include gravel pits, electrical sub-stations, and any use generating more than 500 trips per day.

*Prohibited Uses.* There are two primary uses that are prohibited: alcohol and gambling establishments, and sexually-oriented businesses.

*Agricultural Uses.* Generally, agricultural uses are exempt from all standards and permitting requirements. There is discussion, however, about establishing a line which, when crossed, agriculture will be treated as commercial or industrial. For now, that line is the federal definition of a Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) and a wholesaling operation. *This is still up for plenty of debate!!*

**Density**

*Base Density.* Base density is established at one lot per 160 acres.

*Clustering Bonus.* If development is clustered, development will be allowed at up to one lot per 40 acres average. This means that, if a landowner owns 160 acres, he may be permitted 4 lots, but those lots must be clustered. The percentage of open space is still up for debate.

**Performance Standards**

*Transfer of Development Rights.* A standard is being discussed allowing landowners to trade development rights to each other within the RAC.

*Canals and Ditches.* All uses shall be required to contact the canal company if they are located within XXX feet of a canal or ditch. Anyone seeking to build anything within the designated distance will be required to provide evidence from the canal or ditch company that the construction is okay when they turn in their permit. Also, prohibit channeling of stormwater runoff into a canal or ditch without express permission.

*Connections.* New subdivision and commercial development should be required to provide connections to adjacent property, developed or not, in order to ensure that appropriate connections are provided.

*Trash receptacles.* Trash receptacles for new commercial construction/development shall be screened from view.

*Runoff and Erosion Control.* New subdivision, and new construction clearing 1/2 acre of ground (excluding single-family residences), will be required to turn in a runoff and erosion control plan.

*Setbacks to watercourses.* For now, the standard has been set at a 150-foot setback to watercourses for new residential, commercial, and industrial construction.

*Setbacks to wetlands.* For now, the standard requires new subdivision to locate open space around wetlands rather than on lots.