



RIVERHEAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Agriculture-Farmland Preservation Meeting – April 27, 2022



Meeting Agenda

Presentation

- Project Status
- Summary of Issues
- Overview of Goals

Community Input

Next Steps

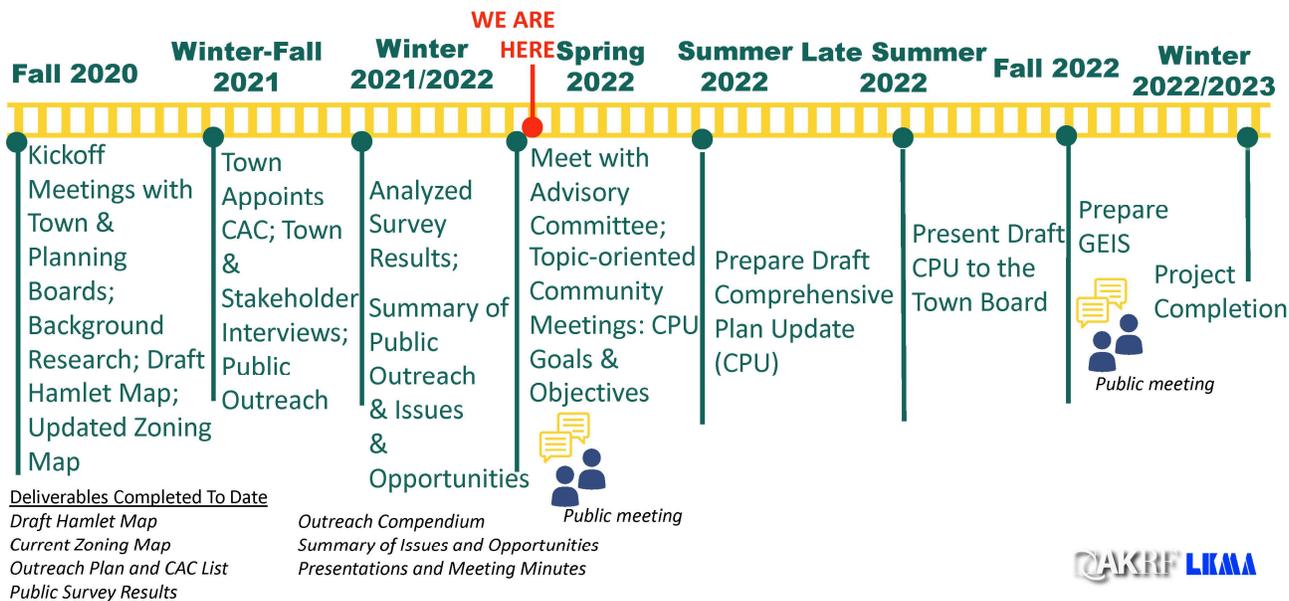


Source: Riverhead Local



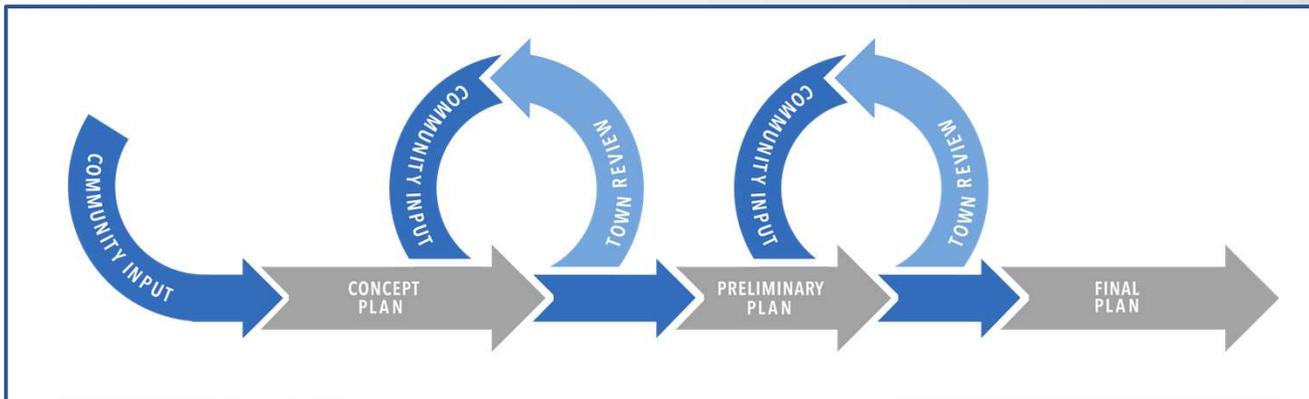


RIVERHEAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE TIMELINE



3

Comprehensive Plan Update (CPU) Planning Process



4

4

Vision Statement – Agriculture Element



TOWN OF RIVERHEAD
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
NOVEMBER 2003

PURSUANT TO SECTION 272-B OF THE TOWN LAW



Riverhead's agricultural industry will continue to play a leading role in the Town's economy and shape the town's character and way of life. The Town will work with farmers and landowners to support farm business and promote farmland preservation, and the Town will strive to do so in a manner that respects private property rights, protects landowner equity, and ensures flexibility and choice in the use of farm property.

2003 Comprehensive Plan: Agriculture Goals

Goals

1. Protect the agricultural land base, while maintaining equity value for landowners
2. Foster the local agricultural economy
3. Maintain and preserve the rural character and heritage of Riverhead
4. Reduce the amount of development in those areas of Riverhead where agricultural activity is currently concentrated
5. Target farmland preservation efforts to Riverhead's agricultural greenbelt, located between Sound Avenue and Route 25 and Middle Road, along with certain actively tilled farms north of Sound Avenue and south of Route 25 at Jamesport
6. In Riverhead's agricultural greenbelt, concentrate development into compact nodes, while preserving the surrounding open space for agricultural use
7. Implement a Transfer of Development Rights ("TDR") program to reduce development pressure on Riverhead's APZ and certain parcels zoned RA-80, north of Sound Avenue
8. Use public funding to purchase development rights in Riverhead's agricultural greenbelt for the purpose of open space preservation
9. Help promote Riverhead's agricultural industry and products
10. Reduce the potential for excessive golf course development in Riverhead's agricultural greenbelt, and ensure that golf courses are environmentally friendly
11. Protect the family farm

Community Outreach – Summary of 2022 Issues and Opportunities for Agriculture, Farmland, and Historic Preservation



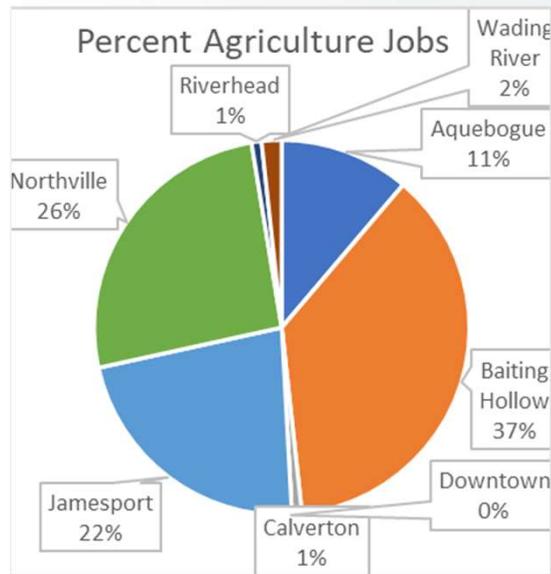
- Agriculture industry is an important employment generator in the Town
- Farmland Preservation is a priority
- There is a need to update the Town's Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program
- Agritainment is an important economic driver but there is a need to mitigate adverse effects (e.g., noise, traffic)
- Emerging issues and trends
 - Agrivoltaics
 - Recreational cannabis
- Scenic corridors

Results of Community Survey and Outreach-Key issues

- **Farmland and open space preservation** (70 percent);
- Reuse of vacant retail space on Route 58 (56 percent);
- Reduced traffic congestion (54 percent);
- Downtown revitalization (50 percent); and
- Natural resources and environmental protection (50 percent).

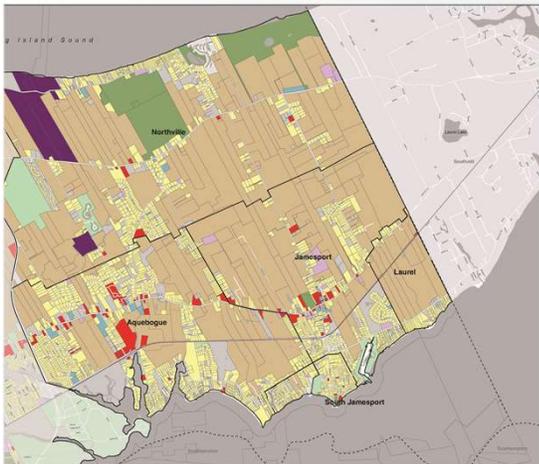


Agricultural Economy



- Agriculture supports approximately 4 percent of the Town's direct employment
- Agriculture is an important employment generator in Aquebogue, Baiting Hollow, Jamesport, and Northville.
- Additional direct and indirect economic benefits for local character and tourism

Status of Agriculture and Farmland Preservation



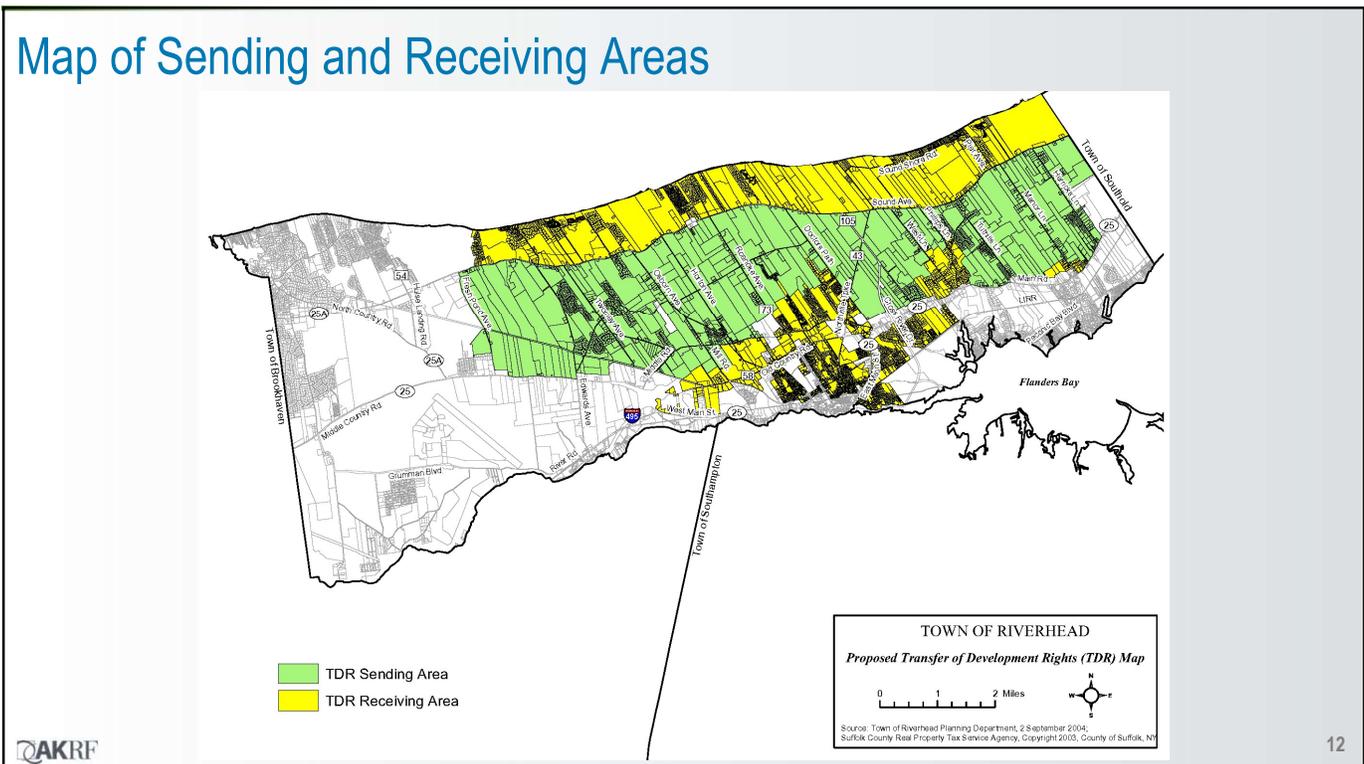
- Riverhead has an agricultural character and importance that is unique to the Suffolk County
- Approximately 15,000 acres of agricultural land (Source: Town GIS)
- Approximately 8,900 acres of farmland in the Agricultural Protection Zone (APZ) (Source: Town GIS)
- 300+ acres have been preserved through Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) (Source: Town of Riverhead 2020)
- Nearly 6,400 acres have been preserved through the County's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program (Source: Suffolk County 2021)

Agricultural Lands Acreage by Zoning District

Zoning District	Total Acreage (15,137 acres)
Agriculture Protection District (APZ)	8,893.8
Business Center Zoning Use District (BC)	2.7
Hamlet Center Zoning Use District (HC)	3.2
Hamlet Residential Zoning Use District (HR)	136.0
Industrial A Zoning Use District (Ind A)	365.5
Industrial C Zoning Use District (Ind C)	531.8
Multifamily Residential Professional Office Zone Zoning Use District (MRP)	22.6
Natural Resources Protection Zoning Use District (NRP)	36.4
Open Space Conservation Zoning Use District (OSC)	0.5
Planned Industrial Park Zoning Use District (PIP)	91.3
Peconic River Community Zoning Use District (PRC)	0.3
Residence A-40 Zoning Use District (RA40)	432.1
Residence A-80 Zoning Use District (RA80)	1,903.6
Residence B-40 Zoning Use District (RB40)	144.8
Residence B-80 Zoning Use District (RB80)	2,325.2
Residence RC Zoning Use District (Retirement Community) (RC)	0.6
Riverfront Corridor Zoning Use District Arts District (RFC)	52.9
Rural Corridor Zoning Use District (RLC)	34.2
Other	160.0

11

Map of Sending and Receiving Areas



12

Results of Community Survey

Uses and activities that were identified as supportive of the local agricultural economy, farmland preservation, and agribusiness included:

1. Expanding farm to table and healthy food programs;
2. Specialty crop businesses; and
3. Improved product distribution.

Approximately 27 percent of the respondents felt that expanding agri-tourism and agricultural events and programs is not needed.

Source: Town of Northford News Review

Goals Statement for the Comprehensive Plan Update (draft)

- Prioritize farmland preservation and support for the agricultural economy;
- Provide flexibility of uses that support the business of farming;
- Expand farm-to-table and healthy food options;
- Encourage specialty crop businesses;
- Facilitate improved product distribution;
- Support agritourism and address adverse effects (e.g., noise, traffic);
- Strengthen Rural Corridor (RLC) Zoning/scenic corridor requirements; and
- Update the Town's Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program to reflect TDR economics.

Goal – Prioritize Farmland and Open Space Preservation

- Allow solar with TDR
- Develop conservation opportunities subdivision (COS) procedures
- The Town needs to work with Suffolk County & non-profit organizations such as the Peconic Land Trust to assist farmers who want to preserve their property
- Planned Development District (existing)
- Voluntary preservation (existing)
- Formalized cluster subdivisions (existing)
- Community Preservation Fund (existing)
- TDR / TDR Bank (existing/potential)
- Consider ordinance that requires purchased farmland to remain as farmland
- Continue to pursue NYS Agricultural & Markets and state funding for open space and farmland



Source: Riverhead News Review

15

TDR Program (status through 2021)

- The Riverhead TDR program has been in effect since 2003
- Approximately 313 acres have been preserved through TDR
- Approximately 163 residential credits have been redeemed
- ~45% of the Town's agricultural lands have been preserved through TDR or PDR

16

Current TDR Program – Issues and Constraints

- Existing ratios:
 - 1 TDR = 1 Dwelling Unit
 - 1 TDR = 1,500 sf commercial
 - 1 TDR = \$65,000/unit
- Adequacy of Receiving Districts
 - Is there a market in the receiving areas for increased development?
 - Is there a market for different uses that should be allowed with TDR (e.g., solar, assisted living, larger/taller residential buildings)?

Goal – Provide Flexibility in Use of Protected Agricultural Lands

- Expand the range of allowable uses on farmland to reflect the evolution of agricultural technology (e.g., agrivoltaics)
- Allow controlled recreational cannabis while addressing potential adverse issues such as lighting, security, and traffic.
- Continue to allow agricultural worker housing on farmland
- Expand opportunities for hops to pint farming



Source: National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Goal – Expand farm-to-table and healthy food options

- Coordinate with the BID to expand farmer's markets
- Work with Chamber of Commerce to attract specialty farm to table restaurants
- Market Riverhead's agricultural heritage and identity
- Farmland preservation is food security



Goal – Encourage specialty crop businesses



- Recreational cannabis
 - Legalization of recreational cannabis
 - As an agricultural use, potential issues include lighting, security, and traffic issues
 - Cannabis growers are investing in Riverhead farms
- Hops; farm-to-pint brews

Goal – Facilitate Retail Sales and Improved Product Distribution

- Allow farmers and growers to market their agricultural products directly to consumers, which bolsters the local economy.
- Support farm stands and expedite farm stand review for a limited number of direct farm marketing techniques
- Continue to sponsor the indoor weekly farmer’s market on Main Road in Riverhead



Goal – Support Agritourism

- Define “agritourism” and “agritainment” (e.g., a farm-based business or establishment open to visitors – tours, educational programs, products) in the Town Code
- Build upon established Agriculture Business/agritourism activities, including:
 - Roadside stands
 - Pick-your-own crops
 - Farm tours
 - School field trips
 - Riding lessons
 - Hay rides
 - Wind/hard cider tastings
- Continue Farm Stand Review - Town of Riverhead Town Code, Chapter 301, Article LIIA, Farm Stand Review (Policy 3.9A in 2003 Comprehensive Plan)
- Support agritourism while addressing adverse effects (e.g., noise, traffic)



Source: <https://harbesfamilyfarm.com/harbes-orchard/>

Goal – Strengthen Rural Corridor Zoning

- Strengthen Rural Corridor (RLC) Zoning/scenic corridor requirements
- Tighten zoning/special permit requirements for farm stands, wine tasting, and other agritainment uses along the corridor
- Prohibit off-street parking along Sound Avenue
 - As part of an overall strategy to facilitate safe and efficient traffic flow and further the purpose of Sound Avenue as a scenic and historic corridor

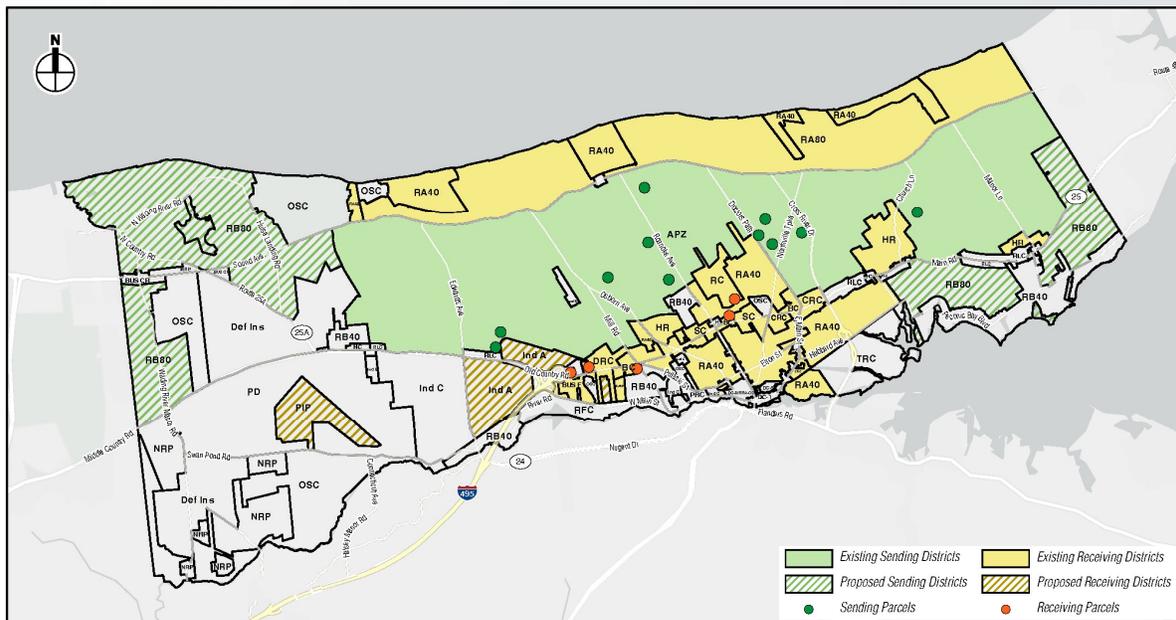


Source: Redfin

Goal – Update Town's TDR Program - Article XLII §301-199-210

- Add the following sending districts: RB80 in Laurel
- Add the following receiving districts: Community Benefit District [CBD], Planned Industrial Park [PIP], Industrial
- Allow solar or certain types of Downtown housing units only with TDR
- Increase unit to credit ratio to 2:1 or 3:1

Existing and Proposed* TDR Sending/Receiving Districts



AKRF

* Proposed Changes by the Agricultural Advisory Committee/TDR Subcommittee

25

25

Agricultural Advisory Committee/TDR Subcommittee Recommendations

- Agricultural Advisory Committee advises the Town Board on legislative and regulatory issues related to agriculture.
- Remove the 500 residential preservation credits redemption cap
- Added new receiving districts (Community Benefit District [CBD], Planned Industrial Park [PIP], Industrial A)
- Residential units by special permit in Business F, and as permitted uses in Business C and Shopping Center Districts, and additional densities with credits in the Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC), Retirement Community (RC)
- New Incentive Zoning

AKRF

26

26

Discussion Format

- Let us know your vision, goals, and recommendations for the future of agriculture, farmland, and historic preservation in the Town.
- Comments on goals presented.
Provide additional goals, recommendations, and projects.
- Comments and suggestions can also be submitted in writing at www.TownofRiverheadComprehensivePlanUpdate.com

Thank You and Next Steps

- **Summer 2022**
 - Prepare the draft Comprehensive Plan Update (CPU)
 - Present draft CPU to Town Board
- **Fall 2022**
 - Prepare CPU GEIS
 - SEQRA Hearing
- **Winter 2022/2023**
 - Project Completion