

Section IV: Growth, Housing Strategies, and Housing Typologies



Growth, Housing Strategies and Typologies

Introduction

This section of the report deals with a variety of housing development strategies appropriate to the town's expressed needs and desires as evidenced by the written and visual surveys administered during the Fall of 2005. These may be summarized as:

- A desire to maintain open space and rural character in the outlying areas of the town;
- The development of a modestly scaled downtown core area with some mixed retail and office uses along with some denser housing;
- A clear desire to limit growth of the community to a size supportable by low-tax, limited service government. This "build-out" population target over a twenty-year period was defined as approximately 4,000 citizens, effectively limiting growth to just under a doubling of the town's size in 2005. This represents a much lower rate of growth than is currently evident in surrounding areas, a total of 600 to 700 new homes during the twenty-year period of the plan, and will require stringent zoning controls on developable land within the town.

There are two parts to these housing recommendations:

- An overall map of the town illustrating suggested locations and development types for different types of housing to meet the objectives noted above; and
- Six different types of housing development (housing typologies) that represent the best options for managing growth while providing for housing choice and preservation of the town's rural character. The six typologies are, in ascending order of intensity:

Rural areas:

- Farmhouse Group (1 house per 20+ acres)
- Rural Subdivision (1 house per 5-20 acres)
- Large-Lot Subdivision (1 house per 3-5 acres)
- Conservation Subdivision (Density varies: approx. 1 acre lots, but with extensive preserved open space for a typical overall density of 1 house per 2 acres)



Sites close to town center:

- Traditional Neighborhood (2 – 4 houses per acre)
- Urban Cottage Housing (5 – 8 houses per acre)

The drawings demonstrating these different typologies are illustrative only. None of the typologies are "pure". In reality, the typologies could be tweaked and redesigned to fit unique parcels. However, the density suggestions are firm. If Mineral Springs wants to achieve its goals the density specifications should be followed. Two of typologies, the Cottage Housing and the Traditional Neighborhood, are specific to sites close to the village center. By meeting growth demands using some denser, medium and small-lot single family housing on sites nearer the town center, developmental pressure on rural sites around the edge of town is reduced. Meeting housing demand with smaller single-family homes close to the town center is a very important part of the overall housing strategy. This provides a range of housing types and lifestyle choices for future Mineral Springs' residents, and substantially reduces the pressure for development on precious and beautiful rural sites around the edge of town. Development can occur in the countryside, but with low to very low densities and increased attention to proper design. This decreased density of development



around the rural fringe of the town is essential to maintain the desired rural character. *The current ubiquitous 1-acre lot zoning classification will not preserve this character, and as noted elsewhere in this report should be changed as a matter of urgency.*

A brief discussion of land economics is required at this point. Critics of the vision will contend that attempts to limit the scope and scale of development constitute a “taking.” That is, the economic value of their land has been arbitrarily and negatively impacted by implementation of the vision. We believe this is false. However, in the long-term, the value of land will rise because supply is at a premium. If Mineral

Springs can maintain its unique quality of life, the value of land will be driven up to reflect the value of open space, wildlife and small town living.

The four “rural” typologies are illustrated on a single piece of land on the northern boundary of the town (Fig. 39). This parcel (197 acres) was chosen simply for its usefulness as a demonstration project for the different types of housing in terms of its physical characteristics -- rolling, wooded terrain dissected by small streams -- which are typical of sites in the area. The Housing Strategy Map (Fig. 46) shows the actual recommendations for this particular site.

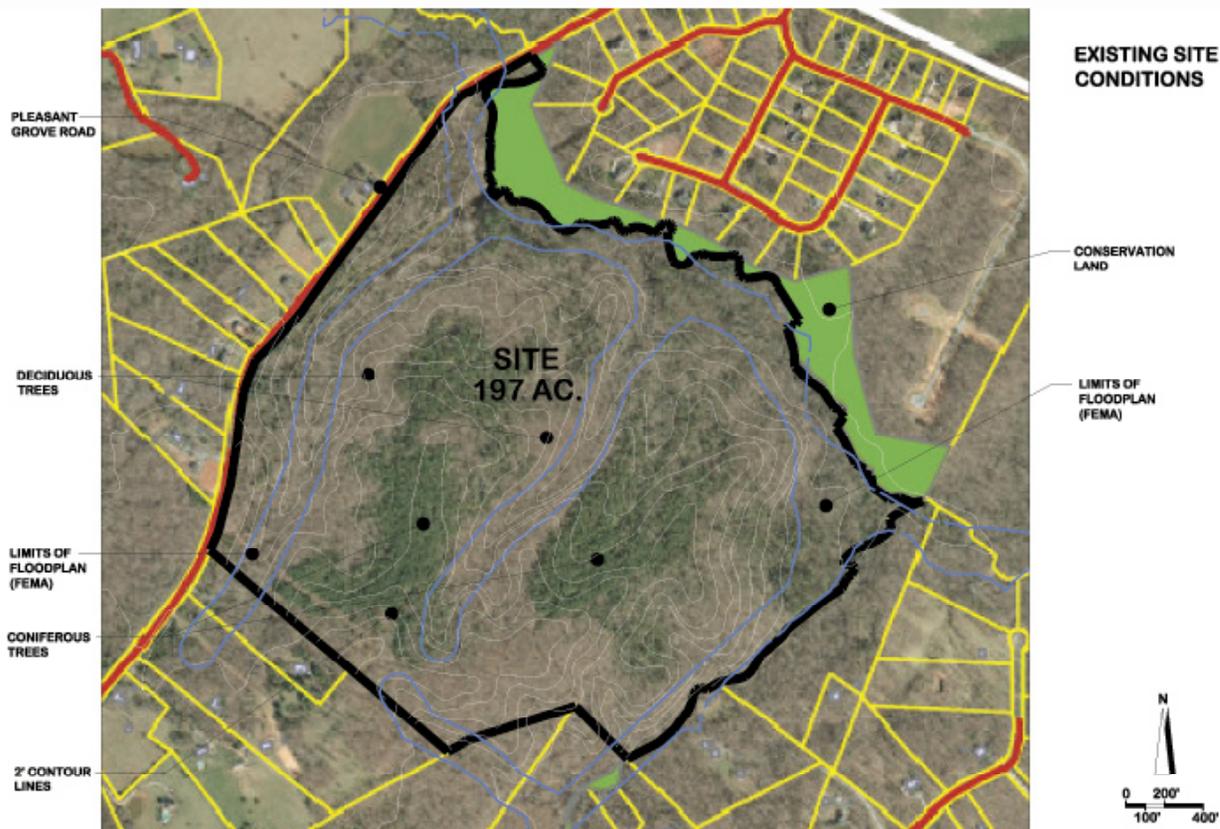


Fig. 39 (4 typologies use a specific parcel of undeveloped land as an example for study.)



Farmhouse Group (1 house per 20+ acres)

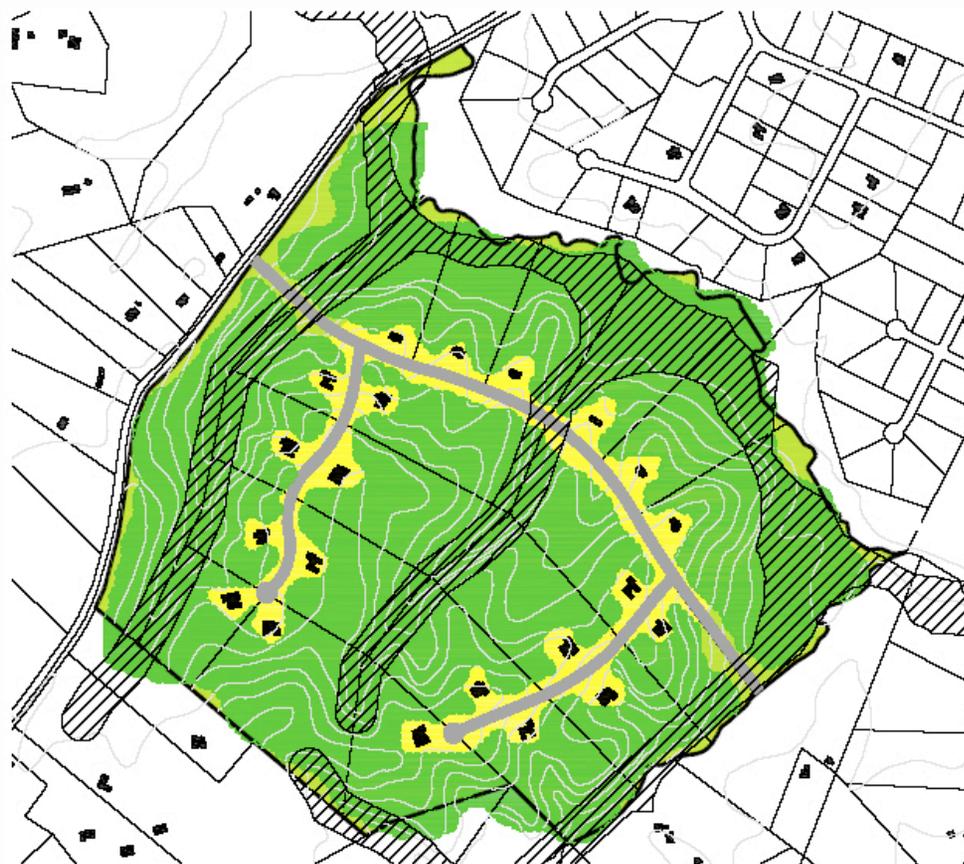
- Maximum 5 – 6 houses on very large lots are grouped together around the head of a single private drive, rather like a collection of traditional farm buildings.
- Almost all the landscape features on the site can be saved, including all stream buffers.
- No street connectivity with adjacent developments. Limited impervious surfaces.

Fig. 40



- Small-scale local streets with ditch and drainage swale cross-section.
- Street system provides a minimum of one stubbed-out connection at one edge of the property.
- All stream buffers protected along with many natural landscape features.

Fig. 41



Large-Lot Subdivision (1 house per 3-5 acres)

- Small-scale local streets with ditch and drainage swale cross-section.
- Street system provides a minimum of one stubbed-out connection at one edge of the property.
- All stream buffers protected along with several natural landscape features.

Fig. 42



Conservation Subdivision (Density varies: approx. 1 acre lots, but with extensive preserved open space for a typical overall density of 1 house per 2 acres)

- Homes are grouped together on modestly sized lots to preserve large tracts of permanently protected open space.
- Small-scale local streets with ditch and drainage swale cross-section.

- Street system provides a minimum of two stubbed-out connections at edges of the property (increased density requires extra connectivity).
- All stream buffers protected along with several natural landscape features in permanently protected landscape.

Fig. 43



Traditional Neighborhood [sites close to town center only] (2 – 4 houses per acre)

- Homes are grouped together on smaller lots to preserve key tracts of permanently protected open space as greenway and/or neighborhood park system.
- Traditional housing types with garages set back a minimum of 15 feet behind the main façade of the houses. Detached garages to rear of homes preferred.

- Slow speed local streets with sidewalks both sides and regular street tree planting at 30 ft. intervals.
- Street system forms and interconnected local network and provides a minimum of three stubbed-out connections at edges of the property (increased density requires extra connectivity).
- All stream buffers protected along with many major natural landscape features associated with streambeds.

Fig. 44



Urban Cottage Housing [town center sites only] (5 – 8 houses per acre)

- Homes are grouped together on smaller lots to create an “in-town” neighborhood.
- Traditional housing types with detached garages to rear accessed by alleys.
- Slow speed local streets with sidewalks both sides and regular street tree planting at 30 ft. intervals.
- Street system forms an interconnected local network and provides a minimum of two stubbed-out connections at each edge of the property (increased density requires extra connectivity).

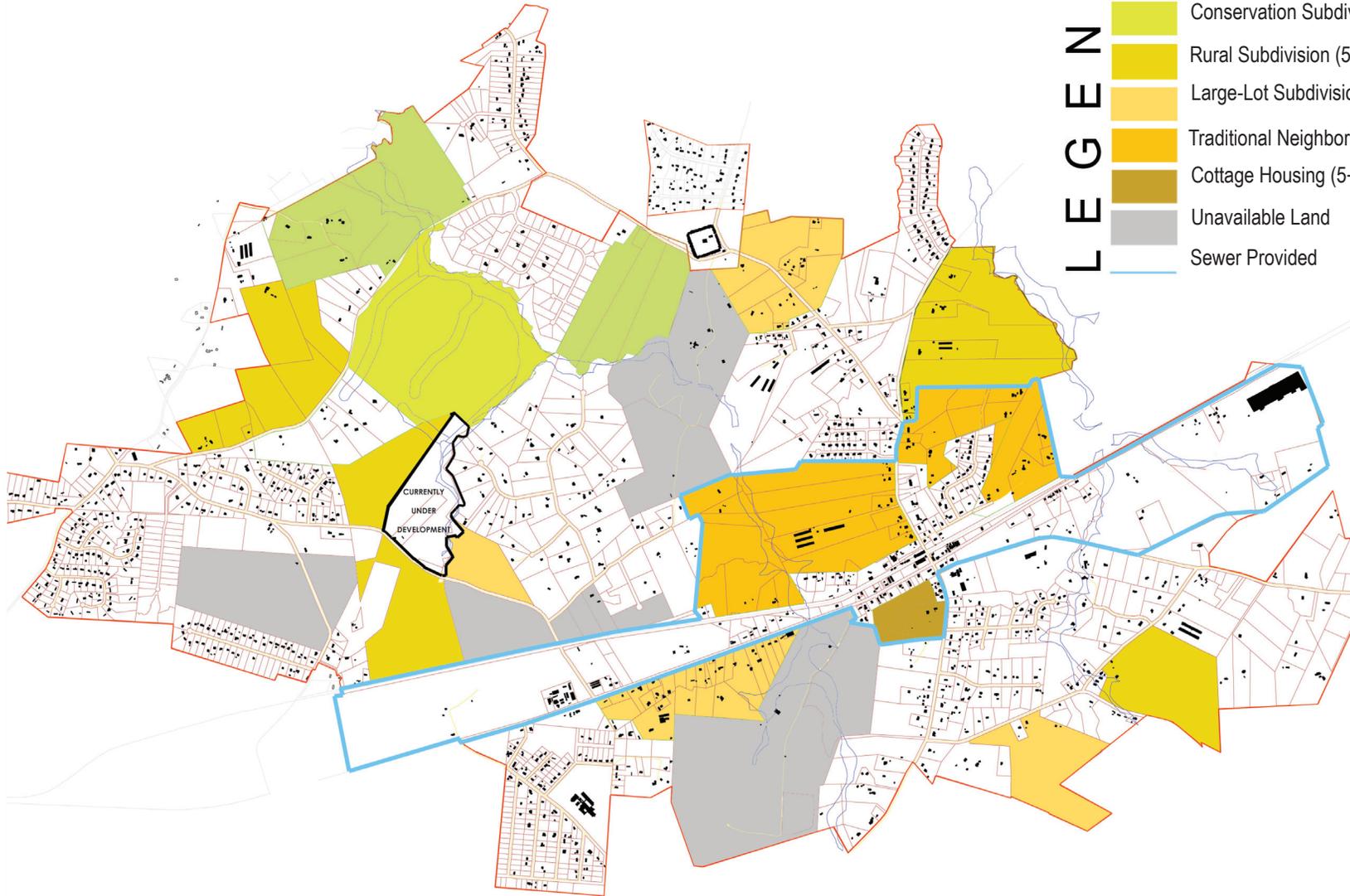
Fig. 45



This map is a culmination of the work and ideas generated by local residents, city leaders, and the project team. Using information that was gathered from the land capacity map, demographic analyses, resident surveys, and input from public forums, a growth strategy was devised to meet town goals for a low-growth scenario, that meets town desires for organic, non-intrusive growth. To reach this goal, the town must have plans in place to show where the growth will go, and the following map illustrates what the project team considers the most effective option.

The Future Housing Strategy Map shows suggested types of housing development for particular areas within the town limits. The typologies as displayed by this example can accommodate between 600 and 700 new houses, but it is the responsibility of Mineral Springs to determine the ultimate build-out. The following 6 typologies, in ascending order of density from very low to medium-high, are the most appropriate for achieving the clearly expressed goals of the town residents; farmhouse groups, rural subdivision, large-lot subdivision, conservation subdivision, traditional neighborhood, and urban cottage housing.

Mineral Springs : Future Housing Strategy Map



- LEGEND**
- Farmhouse Groups (20 + acres)
 - Conservation Subdivision (Varies)
 - Rural Subdivision (5-10 acres)
 - Large-Lot Subdivision (3-5 acres)
 - Traditional Neighborhood (2-4 D.U.A.)
 - Cottage Housing (5+ D.U.A.)
 - Unavailable Land
 - Sewer Provided

