



PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

August 1st, 2022

7:00 pm

Afton City Council Chambers
3033 St. Croix Trail
Afton, MN 55001

Please Note: This meeting will be held in-person, as well as remotely using the Zoom video conference application.

Instructions for Participating in the Meeting Remotely Via Zoom

Options for Joining the Zoom Meeting:

- RECOMMENDED: Use your computer, tablet or smart phone to join the meeting by logging on to https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81981313510?pwd=pqFny-4mQ2HhkPh8LB2zMtoDNQxU_D.1
- (Meeting ID: 819 8131 3510)
Passcode: 943536
- Dial-in Number (to call in to the meeting) +1 312 626 6799
When prompted, enter Meeting ID: 819 8131 3510

AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER –**
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE –**
3. **ROLL CALL -**
 - a) Scott Patten
 - b) Sally Doherty
 - c) Kris Kopitzke (Chair)
 - d) Jim Langan
 - e) Roger Bowman
 - f) Justin Sykora
 - g) Christian Dawson
 - h) Doug Parker
 - i) Kuchen Hale
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA –**
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES –**
 - A. June 27, 2022 Meeting Minutes
6. **REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS – None**
7. **PUBLIC HEARINGS – None**
8. **NEW BUSINESS –**
 - A. Draft Ordinance Amendment to Define the Nature Center Use
 - B. Draft Ordinance Amendment Regarding Simple Subdivisions
 - C. Agriculture Preservation Committee Report
9. **OLD BUSINESS -**
 - A. Groundwater Protection
 - B. Update on City Council Actions – Council Highlights from the July 19, 2022 Council meeting - attached.
10. **ADJOURN –**

A quorum of the City Council or Other Commissions may be present to receive information.

The meeting was held in-person, with participation via Zoom also available.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Kopitzke called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
3. **ROLL CALL** – Present: Chair Kris Kopitzke, Roger Bowman, Doug Parker, Justin Sykora. James Langan, Christian Dawson. Absent were Sally Doherty, Kuchen Hale, Scott Patten; all excused A quorum was present.
ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – City Administrator Ron Moose, City Clerk Julie Yoho (via Zoom), Council member Randy Nelson.
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** –
Motion/Second Bowman/Parker To approve the agenda for the June 27, 2022 Planning Commission meeting. Roll call: all aye, Passed 6-0.
5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** –
A. Motion/Second Parker/Sykora To approve the minutes of the June 6, 2022 Planning Commission meeting. Roll call: all aye, Passed 6-0.
6. **REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS** – none
7. **PUBLIC HEARINGS** – none
8. **NEW BUSINESS** – none
9. **OLD BUSINESS** –
A. William Kaye Application for Conditional Use Permit for an amendment to the Kaye Hill Farm PAUD at 1754 Neal Ave
 Administrator Moose summarized the application. The City Council has referred the William Kaye conditional use permit application back to the Planning Commission with additional information that was not available for the Planning Commission’s initial review of the application. The application is for a conditional use permit for an amendment to the Kaye Hill Farm Planned Agriculture Unit Development (PAUD) Subdivision that included the lot at 1754 Neal Avenue. The owner of the property to the west of the subject property has agreed to allow a driveway easement through his property to provide access to the proposed new lot through Majestic Pines, so a shared driveway is not needed.
 Chair Kopitzke reviewed the conditions for an amendment. No negative impact, no change in duration of easement; if no longer a vineyard the land would return to natural state.
 Bowman asked if a long-term lease would violate the easement. (no)
 Parker stated that if the parents sell the whole property to him, the issue goes away.
 Chair Kopitzke asked about the lease option
 Bowman suggested a capital lease
 Chair Kopitzke stated there may be borrowing rules, but since the lot is not residential not much value to borrow against anyway.
 Parker asked what intent was for the development when it was created.
 Bowman asked if Cody had looked into a loan based on a lease (has not)
 Parker thinks it should be explored
 Parker stated that the issue is bigger than just this case, sets precedence. Could be changed again in the future. Similar to spot zoning.
 Langan stated the entire premise is because he can’t buy the whole parcel. No one else benefits.

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Bowman asked if a building / pole barn will be built (Yes, size to be determined)

Motion/Second Kopitzke/Bowman move to recommend approval with staff conditions, with additions below:

- Item #1 add “agricultural use or natural preservation”
- no buildings may be added after acceptance/date
- no further subdivision will be allowed
- all conservation easement conditions are met
- no further amendments concerning lot 6 will be allowed

Conditions of Approval

1. The existing conservation easement on the property shall be amended to allow the creation of the additional lot, but shall continue to require the lot to be used only for agricultural use, shall prohibit a residential dwelling from being constructed on the lot, shall prohibit further subdivision of the lot, and shall be recorded on the property along with the recording of the subdivision.
2. The consent of Belwin shall be obtained for the amendment of the conservation easement.
3. The proposed 5-acre lot shall be accessed from Majestic Pines Trail using a private driveway easement through the property to the west.

Motion vote: 3 Aye, 2 Nay (Parker, Langan), 1 abstain (Sykora) Passed.

B. Groundwater protection

The commission members discussed the groundwater protection items on which they would like the Commission to focus its efforts. Items included: a moratorium on automated irrigation systems for lawns for new construction, looking at salting practices on roadways, septic tank inspection criteria and triggers for inspection, revisiting impervious surface and offsets, developing a list of specific vegetation to plant, swimming pools. The commission will develop a prioritized list for discussion.

C. Update on City Council actions

Administrator Moorse provided a summary of the June 21, 2022 City Council meeting.

10. ADJOURN

Motion/Second Parker/Bowman To adjourn. Passed 6-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Julie Yoho, City Clerk

To be approved on August 1, 2022 as (check one): Presented: _____ or Amended: _____

City of Afton
3033 St. Croix Trl, P.O. Box 219
Afton, MN 55001

Planning Commission Memo

Meeting: August 1, 2022

To: Chair Kopitzke and members of the Planning Commission
From: Ron Moore, City Administrator
Date: July 27, 2022
Re: Draft Ordinance Amendment to Define the Nature Center Use

The Zoning Code includes "Nature Center" as an allowed use with a conditional use permit, but does not include a definition of "Nature Center". Staff has prepared the attached draft ordinance amendment with a proposed definition of Nature Center for review and feedback by the Planning Commission.

Planning Commission Feedback Requested

Motion regarding feedback to staff and the City Council regarding the draft ordinance amendment that provides a definition of Nature Center, to guide the finalizing of the ordinance amendment for a public hearing and Planning Commission recommendation at the next Planning Commission meeting.

ORDINANCE XX-2022
(Draft)

COUNTY OF WASHINGTON
CITY OF AFTON

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 12-55 DEFINITIONS TO ADD A DEFINITION OF NATURE CENTER

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AFTON, MINNESOTA HEREBY ORDAINS:

The following sections of the Afton Code of Ordinances shall be amended by adding the **bold and underlined** language and deleting the strike-through language.

Sec. 55-Definitions

Municipality means the City of Afton.

Nature Center means an area of land that is set aside and managed as a non-commercial, not-for-profit facility by a governmental jurisdiction or non-profit organization for the purpose of protecting and preserving the open space, including the conservation of wildlife, flora, fauna or features of geological or other special interest, and to provide opportunities for study, research, or public outreach including outdoor experiences such as hiking and biking trails. A nature center may include an interpretive center designed to educate people about nature and the environment.

Noise means one, or a group of loud, harsh, non-harmonious sounds or vibrations that are unpleasant and irritating to the ear.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AFTON THIS XX DAY OF XX, 2022

SIGNED:

Bill Palmquist, Mayor

ATTEST:

Ronald J. Moorse, City Administrator

City of Afton
3033 St. Croix Trl, P.O. Box 219
Afton, MN 55001

Planning Commission Memo

Meeting: August 1, 2022

To: Chair Kopitzke and members of the Planning Commission
From: Ron Moore, City Administrator
Date: July 27, 2022
Re: Draft Ordinance Amendment Regarding Simple Subdivisions

The current simple subdivision ordinance allows a simple subdivision for a lot line rearrangement (exchanging land between two existing parcels that does not result in the creation of an additional lot.) However, the simple subdivision process can only be used if both parcels are fully conforming to all zoning requirements both before and after the simple subdivision. Otherwise, a minor subdivision is required. The minor subdivision requires a public hearing at the Planning Commission. The simple subdivision goes directly to the City Council.

While the requirement of full conformity is reasonable in most cases, staff believes it is not necessary in cases where one of the lots involved in the subdivision is smaller than required, and/or has less frontage on a public road than required, but is going to be made more conforming by the simple subdivision. For example, if a one-acre parcel with a house is involved in a simple subdivision through which it would be made larger, this change does not rise to the level of requiring a public hearing or a Planning Commission review and recommendation.

The attached draft ordinance amendment allows a simple subdivision that includes a parcel that does not meet the minimum lot size requirement and/or the minimum frontage requirement, but the subdivision would result in the parcel becoming more conforming to the lot size and/or the frontage requirement and would not result in the parcel becoming less conforming to any requirement.

Planning Commission Feedback Requested

Motion regarding feedback to staff and the City Council regarding the draft simple subdivision ordinance amendment, to guide the finalizing of the ordinance amendment for a public hearing and Planning Commission recommendation at the next Planning Commission meeting.

ORDINANCE XX-2022
(Draft)

COUNTY OF WASHINGTON
CITY OF AFTON

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 12-1261 SIMPLE SUBDIVISION TO ALLOW A SIMPLE SUBDIVISION
IN SPECIFIC CASES THAT INVOLVE A PARCEL THAT DOES NOT MEET THE MINIMUM LOT SIZE AND/OR
MINIMUM FRONTAGE REQUIREMENT

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AFTON, MINNESOTA HEREBY ORDAINS:

The following sections of the Afton Code of Ordinances shall be amended by adding the **bold and underlined** language and deleting the strike-through language.

Sec. 12-1261. Simple subdivision.³³⁹

- A. A simple subdivision is the resubdivision and transfer of property for the purpose of combining it with an adjoining property which does not result in a new buildable lot. Such transfer must occur between two parcels which meet all the requirements of article II of this chapter without the need for a variance before and after the simple subdivision. **An exception to this requirement is in the case of a simple subdivision that involves a parcel that does not meet the minimum lot size requirement and/or the minimum frontage requirement, but the subdivision would result in the parcel becoming more conforming to the lot size and/or the frontage requirement and would not result in the parcel becoming less conforming to any requirement.** The creation or alteration of a private easement shall be considered a simple subdivision.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AFTON THIS XX DAY OF XX, 2022

SIGNED:

Bill Palmquist, Mayor

ATTEST:

Ronald J. Moorse, City Administrator

City of Afton
3033 St. Croix Trl, P.O. Box 219
Afton, MN 55001

Planning Commission Memo

Meeting: August 1, 2022

To: Chair Kopitzke and members of the Planning Commission

From: Ron Moore, City Administrator

Date: July 27, 2022

Re: Agriculture Preservation Committee Report

The Agriculture Preservation Committee (APC) and its goals have been referenced in recent Planning Commission meetings. However, the Planning Commission has not been provided detailed information regarding the APC's purpose and goals, or its recommendations related to achieving its goals. The APC has researched and discussed ag land preservation efforts in other counties and other states, and has prepared a report to the City Council that includes a general roadmap for ag land preservation and a number of potential tools that could assist in ag land preservation. Some of the tools involve amendments to the zoning code, which would come to the Planning Commission for feedback, public hearings and recommendations. The Committee's report to the Council is attached.

The next step in the APC's process is to have a mapping analysis of land characteristics prepared to enable the identification of quality ag land. The mapping analysis is underway and should be complete within the next month. The mapping analysis will enable the committee to prioritize ag land for preservation and to better determine the most effective methods of preserving the priority ag land.

Staff can respond to questions from Planning Commission members regarding the APC's report, and/or the commission members can take more time to review the report for discussion and questions at the August 29 Planning Commission meeting.

Afton Agricultural Land Preservation Committee Report March 2022

Agriculture Preservation: Roadmap, Options and Evaluation

Introduction

The City of Afton needs to consider and clarify what it means to preserve agricultural land in Afton. We believe this can best be done by evaluating which tools identified within this committee's report to invest in and further investigate. These actions can propel the city forward by putting forth a framework that will enable proactive planning and consensus building that will effectively impact decisions by farmland owners regarding their property, as well as decisions on future land use proposals that come before the planning commission or city council.

The Afton Agricultural Land Preservation Committee has prepared the findings of a 5 month exploration period where we heard from county officials, reviewed plans & lawsuits, and explored what governments in similar situations have done. With that experience, came an understanding that there is a limited expectation that Federal, State and County level guidance or funding will help Afton preserve farmland in meaningful ways. It is also clear to this committee that the goal of preserving agriculture in our community is challenging on many fronts. This is why changes at the city level, through ordinances and intent, that match a comprehensive plan, is the most likely course of action.

The completion of a survey to evaluate parcels the City of Afton has an opportunity to preserve for farmland, is an essential part of choosing what options will fit best. The committee recommends this as the first step towards building a decision framework and comprehensive plan to inform the most suitable ordinances. The survey has an opportunity to explore a scoring system for the quality of a parcel (including soils & productivity features), desirability to be developed for residential, and size. Examples of these surveys done at the Township, or city level are included in the resource page.

The existing conservation easements and development ordinances in Ag zoned areas, available to land owners and developers, do not adequately promote the preservation of Afton's rural farming heritage, but do offer a framework for improved incentives. A combination of time horizons and incentives attached to parcels should be considered in pioneering new farming easements. Considerations for the number of potential homes or lot sizes mixed with extended (50 year) terms or permanent terms for farming easements is also recommended. Additionally important, and part-and-parcel of developing improved tools/incentives for Ag land preservation, is an evaluation mechanism that can help guide the City Council in an effort to build consensus around change.

Roadmap

A Comprehensive Agricultural Preservation Plan, including a land survey, is an important precursor to any viable effort to substantially change the trajectory of agricultural land loss in Afton. However, since this committee was convened to make initial recommendations; defining with broad brush strokes, various options is an important process. Without a guiding plan however, these strategies are more corruptible and thinly defended should they be adopted. *Furthermore, supportive revisions to the language in our Afton Comp Plan should be considered. If we are going to codify new agricultural preservation strategies, we should state clearly and passionately our commitment to protecting our farm land for farming, embracing and inviting new and aspiring farmers and celebrating farming in all its best forms.*

The options listed in this document should be considered with the input and inclusion of farmers, ag landowners, and the broader community, should they be recommended for further action. Because this is a very complex and challenging issue, Afton's leaders must be persistent, deliberate, creative and committed to support potentially controversial options if we are to make meaningful progress towards protecting our agricultural lands. It cannot be overstated that **no agricultural preservation plan will get traction without the support of farmstead landowners and a thorough and robust commitment from the city council to champion the public benefits and act boldly.**

The following examples offer a sampling of tools for further consideration. Some have been used with varying degrees of success in other communities, others are untested ideas generated through this committee's work. It is by no means an exhaustive list but does start the "build-out" of strategies to consider for a range of parcels. Tools that have a more mission, philosophy, or idea-driven component should also be worked into the City's Comp Plan statements regarding the value of agriculture in our community. Additionally, if we value farming in all its forms, we must generate and expand a more community centric agricultural base.

The lack of federal, state or county funding programs is a disappointing reality that will have to be overcome. Alternatives such as the donations of land, funds derived from grants, or other strategies utilized by individual landowners are not detailed in this document but should be identified and promoted by the city through some type of community resource mechanism.

Options

#1-Purchase of Agricultural Easements

The City of Afton could purchase the development rights to an agricultural parcel directly from a landowner. That parcel would then be held in a permanent agricultural easement. The landowner would be able to continue to farm the parcel, would have funds in hand from the sale of those development rights and at the time of transfer would sell the parcel with the permanent easement attached. A fair market value would be established on the parcel based on its current status and paid to the landowner using a farmed value vs developed value calculation. The landowner would be paid the difference between the two or some negotiated amount. This option has been the primary tool used by communities to preserve larger parcels. Funding from either the State or County has been the primary resource mechanism. Considering the current lack of funding sources available to Afton, under most circumstances this would be a very cost prohibitive option. However, Afton would be smart to reach out to landowners to gauge interest in this type of arrangement. It may even be smart to flush out and document a plan to pursue these easements. Should funds or interest from a surprising or unknown source become available the City would be positioned to act swiftly.

#2-1:1 Offset

1:1 Offset is a concept that allows for the transfer of development rights from one parcel to another in exchange for the protection of further development on one of the parcels. In other words, if a developer wants to buy and develop an 80-acre parcel that currently allows for 8 subdivisions and 50% conserved land (parcel A), they can purchase an additional 80 acre parcel (parcel B), transfer those 8 subdivisions to the initial parcel (A), buildout on one parcel with 16 subdivisions while preserving the entire 80 acres (parcel B) in an agricultural easement. This strategy would be part of a larger more defined development plan. The city would need to identify highest priority land for agricultural preservation, areas to focus development and design a robust strategy for long term growth and preservation. This can be a very effective tool but is rarely used due to its potential for a perceived negative impact to some landowners and a potentially complicated purchasing process. A Comprehensive Agricultural Preservation Plan would certainly be needed to guide this process.

#3-PLCD Incentives/Requirements

While PLCD's (Preservation and Land Conservation Developments) in the past have only focused on the "open space" benefits through use of conservation easements, the set aside land may have more present and future value in agricultural production and should be prioritized as a first option. The city could adopt a set of provision that would encourage the open space be put into agricultural easement, rather than conservation easement. Where appropriate, an incentive could be offered such as a reduction in parcel size, an additional parcel or infrastructure flexibility. There would be a potential rental income to cover the city's management cost. Alternatively, requirements could be instituted such as buffer zones to support the continuation of farming amongst non-farming homesteads, platting that requires conservation easement land be contiguous or platting that considers future adjacent land use and prioritizes continued agricultural production options. Communities have utilized this type of planned use zoning to help protect agricultural land.

#4-City Agricultural Preservation Fund- tax, levy or community foundation

A Tax, levy or establishment of a community foundation could be used to generate funds held for the specific purpose of acquisition and enforcement of agricultural easements, grants for farming enterprises or the funding of other community based agricultural preservation. This would require a long-term commitment, creative thinking and/or engaging with partners in order to create a meaningful program designed to enhance agricultural opportunities for the citizen of Afton.

#5-Agricultural Easement- Agricultural Zoning Bonus PID

One additional (unbuildable PID) subdivision could be allowed on Ag Zoned lands to preserve current, or encourage future, agricultural enterprises. A permanent or long term (think MFL- 25-50 year) agricultural easement would be applied to the parcel regardless of its transfer in ownership. In this scenario, a 3 per 40 could be maintained, with the additional parcel held in an agricultural preservation easement, thereby being unbuildable. This would have minimal impact for years to come to the current philosophy regarding subdivision options in Ag zoned areas. It does, however, offer an additional option to landowners who wish to have their land retain most of its market value, but do not just want to sell out to a developer. In effect, this relieves the city from having to purchase easements now, in the hopes that there are funding options down the road for larger impact projects. While it could allow quarter quarters an additional PID, it also provides a middle ground for the 8 per 80 now available for PLCD development. Many details would have to be worked out, but with a 25-50 year preservation option, any future tax forfeiture burden that the city may incur would eventually have a buildable value that the city holds, thereby reducing the city's risk for being responsible for fallow property. An appeal to landowners to consider this option would likely help determine its viability.

#6-Conversion of existing “Open Space” or Parkland to Ag production

The city could evaluate the viability of current property held in the Park and Open space inventory being converted to ag production such as pasture land or high value crop production. Additionally, we should investigate if there is any legal option to convert a conservation easement to an agricultural easement, as there may be options should that be possible. The city could lease the land out for the establishment of a productive agricultural enterprise. This would give the Afton some experience in managing ag land without the overhead cost of acquisition.

#7- 1:1 Offset + PLCD + Ag Zoning Bonus PID= PALD (Combine these three concepts to create a Preservation of Agricultural Land Development Ordinance)

Example: A landowner wants to sell an 80-acre parcel based on the availability of utilizing the PLCD ordinance. Instead of selling the entire 80 as a single PID, the 40 acres that are required to be preserved to get an additional 2 parcels, is held in an agricultural easement. Rather than being part of the Homeowner’s Association, that parcel has a separate PID and can be held and farmed by the landowner, rented by the landowner to another farmer, sold by the homeowner to another farmer or donated to the city to be rented or sold to a farmer. This should in theory not substantially influence the overall value of the property and may even be a preferred option to both seller and buyer. The Ag easement would be permanent and could be encumbered with some “best practice” farming requirements. Like conservation easement requirements, the agricultural practice requirements would follow a set of guidelines that are the product of an agency such as NRCS. The primary focus would be in sustainable practices that protect groundwater, soil health and wildlife.

Evaluation: Priority Dashboard

Any of the mechanisms considered for the preservation of agricultural land, should ideally have a set of “test” metrics that guide the committee’s discussion. This could take the form of a Priority Dashboard or similarly high-level evaluation tool. Characteristics might include things such as: long term impact, scale or high impact, can be achieved “In-house”, has an obvious “stacked” public good, can be done without public \$, can be done without private \$, can be achieved near term, has positive impact on environment and minimal “losers vs winners”. A green, red or yellow check would be assigned to help the committee build a “funneled” list of priorities, both for general concepts and specific projects going forward. The priority dashboard should be deliberated and refined in order to get a clear and focused set of recommendation and help minimize bias.

Example

Preservation Option	long term impact	large scale	in-house	public benefits	no public \$	near term impact	positive environmental impact	minimal city management	minimizes "winners and losers"
Purchase of Agricultural Easements	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
1:1 Mitigation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PLCD Incentives/Requirement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
City Tax or levy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Agricultural Easement- Ag Zoned Land bonus PID	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Conversion of existing “Open Space” or Parkland	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
1:1 Mitigation + PLCD + Ag Zoning Bonus PID= PALD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Once the proper framework for making decisions about land that has the potential to exit production is complete, the city can decide if further actions need to be explored in helping the entry of new farmers. This can be of value to the residents and the surrounding community. The form and details of the evaluation tool has endless possibilities.

Questions for further discussion

Assuming the burden to preserve farm land is primarily the city's responsibility, how can we best partner with farmers to identify possible avenues- Survey, focus group, etc.

How might feedback from people help understand if Afton residents favor open space or farm fields?

Should Afton consider a rezoning plan that promotes ag preservation and what would that look like?

Do PLCD's give farmers/landowners more incentive to sell to developers than to another farmer?

Should preferential treatment be given to certain types of farming?

Should landlords be incentivized to hold farmers to a "best practice" standard if given incentives? Crop rotation, no till, spot spraying and fertilizing, erosion control, etc.?

Summary

Preserving and promoting Afton's rural farming heritage in all its forms is deeply important to the members of this committee. The members of this committee brought a variety of perspectives, ideas, personal experiences and priorities, to this discussion. Much of those perspective center around what does it mean to "preserve a sustainable farming community". Should we focus on encouraging and attracting new small farming operations? Should we address this issue primarily as an anti- development strategy? Should we be thinking in terms of "environmental" impacts when a parcel changes hands? We considered these questions and many others as we sought to gain a consensus of ideas to prioritize. This report is an attempt to boil down some of our discussions into an actionable plan. Further work may be best suited for smaller "break-out groups" that can dive deeper into more niche areas of interest once the City Council has a more clear-eyed vision for next steps. We look forward to engaging the City Council in a cooperative effort moving forward.

Resources: Agencies that Support Agricultural Preservation

Minnesota programs

Unfortunately, Minnesota does not have a robust program to support and encourage local government agencies with their efforts for protect and preserve their agricultural lands

<https://www.lrl.mn.gov/docs/2018/mandated/180302.pdf>

- Minnesota FarmLink – a web-based tool connecting prospective farmers with retiring farmers.
- Beginning and Transitioning Farmer Resource website – a directory of programs and services offered by farm-related organizations in Minnesota, including services for all sizes and types of farming and farmers. Services range from assisting in finding land, finances, farm management planning and scholarships, legal services, networking and mentoring.
- Technical assistance on planning and zoning issues concerning diversified agricultural operations in the urban fringe areas, including issues affecting immigrant farmers.

Federal programs are explained in the two links below

- These docs highlight available grant programs: Managed thru NRCS: EQIP, ACEP, CRP

<https://bwsr.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/2018-11/Appendix%203%20-%20Farm%20Bill%20Opportunities%20for%20Working%20Lands%20Final%20Report.pdf>

<https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R40763.pdf>

Foundations and Organizations that support preservation of Agricultural Lands- Others certainly exist and should be included

<https://farmland.org>

<https://landstewardshipproject.org>

<https://mosesorganic.org/farming/farm-finances/funds/>

Resources and Examples of Comprehensive Agricultural Preservation Plans

<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/home/genpub/comprehensiveplans.html>

<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/home/genpub/franklinsomersetplan.pdf>

<https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/sadc/home/genpub/Bedminster%20Somerset%20plan.pdf>

<https://www.co.eau-claire.wi.us/home/showpublisheddocument/2574/635503479178170000>

City of Afton
3033 St. Croix Trl, P.O. Box 219
Afton, MN 55001

Planning Commission Memo

Meeting: August 1, 2022

To: Chair Kopitzke and members of the Planning Commission

From: Ron Moore, City Administrator

Date: July 27, 2022

Re: Priority Groundwater Protection Items for the Planning Commission's Efforts

At the June 27, 2022 Planning Commission meeting, the commission members identified a list of potential items for the commission's groundwater protection efforts. The list is attached for prioritization at the August 1 commission meeting.

At the June 27, 2022 Planning Commission meeting, commissioners identified potential Groundwater Protection items to potentially pursue. These items are listed below with the intent of prioritizing them at the August Planning Commission meeting.

- 1) Irrigation and Lawn Watering
- 2) Salt usage on roadways (or private salt usage, where impactful)
- 3) Herbicide/Lawn chemical usage
- 4) Nitrates and farming practices
- 5) E. coli as it is impacting creeks and well-casings
- 6) Septic tank and triggers for improvement
- 7) Impervious surface ordinance – including offsets to impervious surface allowances
- 8) Planting guidance for screening and ground cover
- 9) Pools, water usage and disposal
- 10) PFC levels
- 11) Outreach to adjacent communities for coordinated action.

July 19, 2022 City Council Meeting Highlights

The Council:

- Denied the application for a Conditional Use Permit at 1745 Neal Avenue to amend the Planned Agricultural Unit Development (PAUD) subdivision.
- Approved a revised speed limit and signage plan on the Oakgreen Ave cul-de-sac south of 15th St.
- Appointed new members to the Natural Resources & Groundwater Committee Approved
- Appointed a new member to the Heritage Preservation Commission
- Acknowledged the volunteer efforts of Scott Hawley and Holly Melroe for maintaining plantings at city hall and in the city's medians.