

TOWN OF TROY

ST. CROIX COUNTY, WISCONSIN



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2009-2029

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Town of Troy residents are committed to managing residential development in a manner that preserves some of the best farmland in western Wisconsin and encourages the creation of permanently protected, environmentally sensitive open spaces. This is accomplished through a unique Farmland Transfer of Development Rights program (TDR) and through a subdivision ordinance that promotes cluster development.

The Town of Troy has been recognized by the State of Wisconsin as a leader in the preservation of farmland. This preservation is being accomplished through a market driven Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program that uses no public funding. To date, the Town has over 900 acres of farmland under permanent conservation easement. This is land that will be green space forever. If the Town can implement its long term plan, without intervention from surrounding cities, the Town will ultimately preserve over 10,000 acres of prime farmland, parks, open space, and conservation areas. This permanent preservation program is succeeding where many others have failed. By addressing the concerns of all stakeholders, residents have embraced a common vision for a unique blend of residential and agricultural land use.

In addition to our premium farmland, the Town of Troy is blessed with tree covered rolling hills and over six miles of lower St. Croix River shoreline. It is a community where people want to live because of this natural beauty. Because Troy is located within 25 miles of the Twin Cities (Minneapolis – St. Paul) there is significant pressure for developing new residential subdivisions. During the last five years, Troy has been one of Wisconsin's fastest growing communities, and also has the highest per capita income in St. Croix County. This residential growth has been managed within the framework of an outcome based Subdivision Ordinance that promotes cluster development and the permanent preservation of open space. The Town's Comprehensive Plan projects a final population of between 13,000-15,000 residents. The present equalized value of the Town is over \$700,000,000. In addition, the Town takes its stewardship of the scenic Lower St. Croix River very seriously and administers its own River Way Ordinance.

Troy is a planned community, with a unique vision. It is a vision that builds on the natural beauty of the area. It saves the best farmland. It promotes vibrant cluster development, with large areas of open space; and its vision has been and will be financially supported by market forces, not local tax payer dollars.

Setting

The Town of Troy is located in western Wisconsin and is bordered on its western edge by the St. Croix River. The Town is part of St. Croix County, which has an area of 729 square miles and a 2000 population of 63,155 persons. Troy encompasses over 37 square miles and has a 2008 population of just over 5,000 and an equalized value of \$ 743,434,900. The County is predominantly rural in

character and is known for its natural beauty and productive dairy farms. There are 21 towns, 9 villages, and part or all of 4 cities in the County.

The Town of Troy is the southwestern-most town in the County, bordering Pierce County and the City of River Falls to the south, the St. Croix River to the west, the Town and City of Hudson to the north, and the Town of Kinnickinnic to the east. The Town is approximately a 30-minute drive to the Twin Cities.

The unique landscape of the Town of Troy is characterized by rich farmland, rolling hills with dramatic tree covered features and the scenic St. Croix River as its western boundary. Much of Troy's farmland is being permanently protected by conservation easements, funded by a market driven transfer of development rights. Clustered residential communities are buffered against and amongst the rolling topography and tree lines. Residential growth is managed by an outcome based subdivision ordinance. Land along the scenic St. Croix River slopes sharply downward to the river and is the location for many homes overlooking the river. Land management activities along the scenic river are administered by the Town under its own Lower St. Croix River Way Ordinance, developed in partnership with the Wisconsin DNR. The Kinnickinnic River which passes through the southeast corner of the Town is nationally recognized for its excellent fly fishing.

The Town of Troy is a unique place with beautiful topography and excellent farm land. This setting is one that residents and elected officials are committed to preserve.

Historical Overview

The Town of Troy was organized in the 1850's. The Perrine brothers, early settlers from New York, first called the town Malone, but the name was later changed to Troy. It is believed the name Troy was chosen because of the many early town settlers, who had emigrated from Troy, New York.

Early settlers found a rich and fertile land, mostly rolling with some ridges and highlands. The first settler in Troy was James Chinnoch in 1850. In that year, he raised the first crop and erected a house. Other early settlers include John and Nathaniel Mann after which the Mann Valley was named.

About 1857, the area where Glenmont road met the St. Croix River became a busy sawmill community. It produced dimension lumber under ownership of a Mr. Olds. In 1872, new owners enlarged the mill and a large dock was adapted to shipping. The mill closed about 1900 when timber reserves were becoming limited, but the dock, a wharf 1000 ft. long, remained active for shipping until the 1930s.

Early transportation routes included the "Old Trail" that originated at Prairie du Chien and followed northward up through St. Croix County. There was also a stagecoach route that traveled from Ellsworth to Hudson around 1870. The Hudson-River Falls Railroad, now abandoned, was built with local capital about 1878 and was later sold to the Omaha Railroad.

Methodology

The Town of Troy, in the early 1950's, adopted a model comprehensive zoning code, the first zoning code adopted by an unincorporated municipality in the State of Wisconsin. Later, in the early 1970's the Town recognized the need to begin developing policies and ordinances in anticipation of the inevitable growth that would occur with the expansion of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. The Town adopted its first Comprehensive Management Plan in 1979. In 1982, a major map and text zoning revision was adopted by the Town and approved by the County. The Town later that year also agreed to opt into regulation under the newly revised County Zoning ordinance. Also, in 1982, a revised subdivision ordinance was adopted. In 1992 the Town extensively revised the Comprehensive Management Plan.

The greatest period of change occurred from 1995 through 2000. The Town again revised the Comprehensive Management Plan to reflect dramatic revisions to the Town subdivision ordinance, including the adoption of a transfer of farm development rights program as part of an extensive farm preservation ordinance. Also adopted was the inclusion of cluster design requirements to encourage the permanent protection of open spaces and conservation areas in new residential development.

Currently, the Town is updating the (now relabeled) Comprehensive Plan to reflect the direction the Town believes best reflects and anticipates the hopes and wishes of the residents for future development within the Town.

The Town of Troy, has for decades, nurtured citizen involvement in Town affairs.

At Town meetings, residents are encouraged to speak on any and all issues before the Town. During the years when the Town was substantially revising the Town subdivision ordinance and creating a farm development rights program, Town Plan Commission and Town Board meetings routinely lasted until midnight or longer in order to accommodate public input.

The Town has also used in-depth surveys describing a range of future development options, in order to both educate and receive valuable input from Town residents. The survey reply rate from Town households has averaged a remarkable 40%.

Recent Developments

The Town conducted monthly meetings from 2000 to 2006 with the City of River Falls in hope of creating a 20 year cooperative boundary agreement regulating an area of Town lands adjacent to the City. After many concessions by the Town, an agreement was unanimously adopted by the committee and referred to the Troy Town Board and River Falls City Council for approval. Last minute opposition developed at the City and an agreement was never reached.

The Town has convened a special committee to develop a comprehensive zoning code. The committee has been charged with developing a code that specifically

addresses the unique development needs and opportunities existing within the Town.

The Town's goal is to provide an option to County zoning. In addition, future pressures to commercially develop land located in the State Highway 35 corridor will be addressed. The Plan Commission has tentatively agreed that the area adjacent to the Highway 35 corridor would be the sole area for future commercial or industrial development in the Town. The implementation of a Town zoning code is predicated on County approval or Town incorporation.

The Town over the last 4 years, with the cooperation of the Wisconsin DNR, has developed, and adopted (and revised) a Lower St. Croix Riverway ordinance consistent with the intent of Wisconsin administrative code N.R. 118. Differences in interpretation and application between the Town and St. Croix County Riverway ordinances continue to create obstacles for Town Riverway applicants that must be cooperatively resolved.

Future Developments

As future growth pressures increase, the Town may rely on the recommendations contained in this plan in order to allow appropriate, beneficial development while preserving open acres and desirable farmland.

It is anticipated that the adjacent cities of Hudson and River Falls will eventually encourage some Troy landowners to agree to annexation in order to expand the commercial base of each city. This annexation process could legally negate any or all of the land development outcomes proposed by the Town in this Comprehensive Plan. Consequently, the Town will, in the future, explore the option of incorporation as a village.

TOWN OF TROY

St. Croix County, Wisconsin

LOCATION

MAP 0-1

