

## CRITERIA FOR THE REZONING OF THE ALMOND TOWNSHIP

The Town Board and Plan Commission addressed 5 areas of concern to make the final decisions about amending the zoning map in the Town of Almond. They include: traffic and infrastructure, ground water, open space, loss of rural character and the results of a local survey conducted in 2004.

Protecting public safety is the primary concern regarding existing and future road infrastructure and traffic patterns. There are a number of small roads in the Town that are curving, hilly and narrow. A large amount of traffic on these facilities may be dangerous. Any areas that include hilly or winding roads are to be zoned for lower density to alleviate the potential for heavy traffic generation. Smaller lot sizes were suggested for areas near county roads or where the infrastructure was better. Lands within the vicinity of County Roads D, J, and BB were considered to be better suited for greater development. As a general rule, the closer an area is to the Village of Almond or a county road, a greater density of population or allowance for smaller lot sizes is recommended.

The ground water issue has several components. A high density of population will negatively impact our groundwater because we live in an area that has porous sand and gravel especially around Wolf Lake. Septic tanks are not guaranteed to protect ground water and currently there is no water system available to Town residents if the ground water is contaminated. Soils to the west of Wolf Lake are known to be very porous and that area is the water shed for the lake. The Town Board and Plan Commission, therefore, suggest very limited density around the Wolf Lake and Patterson Lake areas.

Open space is a limited resource and once it is gone it can never be regained. This is directly tied to the issue of hunting and loss of habitat for animals. Residents of this community value both. We therefore suggest that interior spaces of large tracts of land or sections be retained as open space. Currently the county does not have a category that allows for 40 acres with only one non-farm residence as a permitted use. *The Town Board and Plan Commission want to request that the county create a new zoning district that would create a 40 (35) acre minimum lot size with one non-farm residence allowed as a permitted use.*

Loss of rural character was one of the most important concerns addressed by our town residents in the original surveys done by the commission. That concern was also expressed in the most recent surveys, where only 8% of the town residents stated a preference for two-acre lots. Therefore, when decisions were made about lot sizes, the Plan Commission decided to err on the side of less density rather than more. If problems arise, they can be taken to the town board and addressed on an individual basis. At this time, the smallest lot size recommended for certain portions of the Town is 5 acres.

The results of the surveys of 2004 were divided up to create 5 sections of the township. People in the 5 sections had different wishes and the Town Board and Plan Commission tried to establish appropriate zoning according to the majority of those residents' wishes. The results showed that as a general rule people living close to the Village Almond or county roads wanted smaller lot sizes while people who lived on smaller roads and were farther from the Village wanted larger lot sizes. The Plan Commission followed this general format and combined it with the original four areas of concern to generate a new zoning map.