

May 26, 2011

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Agricultural Resources Management Division
WORKING LANDS
P.O. Box 8911
Madison, WI 53708-8911

Dear DATCP staff:

Enclosed please find the Jefferson County Zoning Ordinance Amendment application for DATCP certification under Chapter 91 Wisconsin Statutes. The Jefferson County Board has directed me to forward the ordinance for certification at this time. As you know, the County (and affected towns) must adopt a recertified ordinance by the end of 2011.

Summary of Zoning Ordinance:

The County is amending its Zoning Ordinance to assure continued compliance with Chapter 91 of Wisconsin Statutes and to assure consistency with its updated Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan (the County's farmland preservation plan), also being submitted for certification under separate cover. DATCP last certified the County's Zoning Ordinance was in 2000.

I have included both the County's existing zoning ordinance, plus a 25 page ordinance amendment. The enclosed ordinance amendment proposes the following key changes related to farmland preservation from the County's last certified ordinance:

- Amends the A-1 Exclusive Agricultural district text to continue certification as "farmland preservation" district, using the State's model text as a starting point but also reflecting Jefferson County's unique values and interests.
- Amends the County's existing N Natural Resource district text to enable that district to serve as the second (of two total) "certified" districts for the County.
- Creates a new A-T Transitional Agricultural district as a non-certified agricultural district for mapping in those areas planned for development in the next 15 years that are not currently zoned in a development-based zoning district already. All areas proposed for A-T zoning are within "15 Year Growth Areas" on the farmland preservation maps in the County's updated Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan. In general, this new A-T district has the same regulations as the soon-to-be-former A-1 district, in order to minimize changes for affected land owners.
- Amends the County's nonconforming use regulations to create unique standards for prior nonconforming non-farm residences in the A-1 district to both meet Chapter 91 requirements and maintain flexibility for additions, as allowed under Wisconsin Statutes.
- Adds new definitions and amends existing definitions according to Chapter 91.
- Amends the standards for rezoning according to Chapter 91.

Summary of the Relationship between the Ordinance and the Plan

The County is submitting amendments to its Zoning Ordinance to DATCP for certification simultaneous with its updated Plan. The County intends to formally adopt both the Plan and zoning ordinance following certification. There are no material inconsistencies between the amended Zoning Ordinance and the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan. The effort of assuring consistency between the Plan and ordinance was greatly aided by their simultaneous preparation.

Nearly 96 percent (308,148 out of 321,370 acres) of the unincorporated lands in the County are identified as “Farmland Preservation Areas” in the updated Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan. The following table includes a breakdown of proposed zoning districts proposed for these planned “Farmland Preservation Areas.” Nearly 97 percent of such lands are proposed for zoning within one of the County’s two proposed certified zoning districts—A-1 and N.

District	Acres within “Farmland Preservation Area” Planned Lands	Percent of “Farmland Preservation Area” Planned Lands
A-1 (certified)	285,162	92.5
A-2	1,414	0.46
A-3	6,801	2.2
B	324	0.11
C	64	0.02
I	226	0.07
N (certified)	12,442	4.03
R-1	11	0.0
R-2	1,503	0.49
W	201	0.07

Zoning Ordinance Amendment Development Process and Participation

The County started developing the Zoning Ordinance amendment following completion of the first draft of the updated Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan. The planning and zoning development process included a range of participation opportunities and explored policy options. A general timeline for zoning ordinance amendment development is outlined below.

- Zoning Ordinance amendment development: Fall 2010—Winter 2011
- Held Open House and Towns Association Meeting: February 21, 2011
- County Steering Committee (comprised of County representatives and other stakeholders) recommendation on draft Zoning Ordinance amendment: April 7, 2011
- County Zoning and Planning Committee recommendation on draft Zoning Ordinance amendment: April 18, 2011
- Jefferson County Towns Association meeting to endorse Zoning Ordinance amendment: April 26, 2011
- County Board action to submit Zoning Ordinance amendment to DATCP for certification: May 10, 2011
- County Board adoption of Zoning Ordinance amendment: To be completed following DATCP certification

Primary Contact Person:

Rob Klotz, Jefferson County Director of Planning and Zoning
Jefferson County Courthouse
320 S. Main St., Room 201
Jefferson, WI 53549
(920) 674-7130
RobK@jeffersoncountywi.gov

Please contact me with any questions you have about the Zoning Ordinance amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Klotz", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rob Klotz
Jefferson County Director of Planning and Zoning