

ORDINANCE NO. 415

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FORKS, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 200, ZONING, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FORKS, AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT HEREWITH.

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the Township of Forks has deemed it necessary to amend Chapter 200, Zoning, of the Code of the Township of Forks.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED AND ENACTED by the Board of Supervisors of the Township of Forks, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, as follows:

SECTION 1. Article I, General Provisions, §200-3, Purpose, Subsection B is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“B. Giving effect to the community objectives, policies and proposals of the Forks Township Comprehensive Plan of 2022, as amended, and incorporated therein as the Comprehensive Plan required by Section 606 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, as amended.”

SECTION 2. Article I, General Provisions, §200-3, Purpose, Subsection K is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“K. Fostering agricultural and other industries; to preserve prime agricultural and farmland considering slopes, soil type and classification, and present use.”

SECTION 3. Article I, General Provisions, §200-3, Purpose, Subsection O is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“O. Serving the goals and objective of the Forks Township Comprehensive Plan.”

SECTION 4. Article II, Terminology, §200-7, Definitions, definition of “*Agricultural Soils, Prime*” is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“AGRICULTURAL SOILS, PRIME — Soils classified by the United States Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) within Agricultural Capability Classes I, II, or III.”

SECTION 5. Article II, Terminology, §200-7, Definitions, is hereby amended by adding the definition of “*Agricultural Conservation Easement*” as follows:

“AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT — A legally binding deed restriction that landowners place on their property to permanently protect productive agricultural land and/or natural resource areas by restricting non-agricultural development such as commercial or residential subdivision in perpetuity while allowing the land to remain in private ownership and available for on-going farming or open space conservation.

Type 1 – Non-Northampton County related: Agricultural conservation easements that are legally recorded between a landowner, Forks Township and, from time to time, may involve a third-party participant such as a non-local governmental entity such as a registered land trust or

land conservancy.

Type 2 – Northampton County related: Agricultural conservation easements legally recorded between a landowner, Forks Township and a designee of Northampton County and may also address compensation, tax benefits and access requirements.”

SECTION 6. Article II, Terminology, §200-7, Definitions, definition of “*Alluvial Soil*” is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“ALLUVIAL SOIL — Soils classified by the United States Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as being alluvial or otherwise subject to periodic flooding.”

SECTION 7. Article II, Terminology, §200-7, Definitions, definition of “*Cluster Development*” is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT — An optional type of residential development that involves the permanent preservation of open space (common and/or agricultural) and that places dwellings on the most suitable portions of a tract, on lots that are typically smaller than would otherwise be allowed with conventional development.”

SECTION 8. Article II, Terminology, §200-7, Definitions, definition of “*Density*” is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“DENSITY — The total number of dwelling units proposed on a lot divided by a specified land area as per the below:

GROSS DENSITY - total number of dwelling units proposed on a lot divided by the total acreage of the lot.

NET DENSITY- total number of dwelling units proposed on a lot divided by the net developable acreage permitted by this Ordinance.”

SECTION 9. Article II, Terminology, §200-7, Definitions, definition of “*Lot Area*” is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“LOT AREA —

- A. The horizontal land area contained within the lot lines of a lot (measured in acres or square feet).
- B. For the purposes of determining compliance with the minimum lot area, the following shall be excluded:
 - (1) Areas within the existing legal rights-of-way of any proposed or existing public streets or alleys, or any proposed or existing commonly maintained private streets that serve more than one lot. (NOTE: Other sections of this chapter, such as townhouse development, may specifically permit proposed streets to be included in determining density for a specific use.)
 - (2) Areas that are currently or will be required to be dedicated as common or agricultural open space on a separate lot. (NOTE: Other sections of this chapter,

such as open space development, may specifically permit proposed common open spaces to be included in determining density for a specific use.)”

SECTION 10. Article II, Terminology, §200-7, Definitions, definition of “*Open Space, Common or Preserved*” is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“OPEN SPACE, COMMON—

A. A parcel or parcels of land within a tract which meets all of the following standards:

- (1) Is designed, intended and suitable for active or passive recreation by residents of a development or the general public;
- (2) Is covered by a system that ensures perpetual maintenance, if not intended to be publicly owned;
- (3) Will be deeded to the Township and/or preserved by a deed restriction or conservation easement to permanently prevent uses of land other than “common or preserved open space” and noncommercial recreation or a golf course; and
- (4) Does not use any of the following areas to meet minimum common open space requirements:
 - (a) Existing street rights-of-way;
 - (b) Vehicle streets or driveways providing access to other lots;
 - (c) Land beneath building(s) or land within 20 feet of a building (other than accessory buildings and pools clearly intended for noncommercial recreation and other than agricultural buildings and a farmstead which are permitted within land approved by the Township for agricultural preservation);
 - (d) Off-street parking (other than that clearly intended for noncommercial recreation);
 - (e) Area(s) needed to meet a requirement for an individual lot;
 - (f) For land intended to be open to the public, that does not have provisions for entry with a fifteen-foot minimum width by pedestrians from a street open to the public or from adjacent open space that has access to such a street;
 - (g) Land that includes a stormwater detention basin, except for a basin or portions of a basin that the applicant proves to the satisfaction of the Board of Supervisors would be reasonably safe and useful for active or passive recreation during the vast majority of weather conditions or would serve as a scenic asset resembling a natural pond;

- (h) Portions of land that have a width of less than 50 feet;
- (i) Areas that are under water during normal weather conditions; and
- (j) 50% of areas that are under electric transmission lines that are designed for a capacity of 35 kilovolts or greater.

B. Each square foot of common open space that is of 25% or greater slopes and each square foot within the one-hundred-year floodplain shall not count for the purposes of determining the amount of open space except in the FP District. Wetlands shall not count towards common open space except in the FP District.”

SECTION 11. Article II, Terminology, §200-7, Definitions, is hereby amended by adding the definition of “*Open Space, Agricultural*” as follows:

“OPEN SPACE, AGRICULTURAL —

- A. A parcel or parcels of land within a tract which meets all of the following standards:
 - (1) Preserves lands consisting of fertile prime agricultural soils inclusive of Classes I and II as defined by the United States Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).
 - (2) Is intended for on-going agricultural use: as pasture or meadow; for crop or timber propagation and harvesting; or as habitat restoration related to the conversion of fallow fields to new growth woodlands.
 - (3) Will be preserved by a deed restriction or conservation easement to permanently prevent uses of land other than as “agricultural open space”.
 - (4) Is not used to meet the minimum common/preserved open space requirements as defined by this Ordinance.”

SECTION 12. Article II, Terminology, §200-7, Definitions, is hereby amended by adding the definition of “*Zoning Map*” as follows:

“ZONING MAP — The Official Zoning Map of Forks Township, Northampton County, Pennsylvania. inclusive of Map 1: Base Zoning Districts and Map 2: Growth Management Overlays.”

SECTION 13. Article III, Zoning Districts, §200-8, Establishment, is hereby amended as follows:

§ 200-8. Establishment.

The Township of Forks is hereby divided into base zoning districts and growth management overlays of different types, each type being of such number, shape, kind and area, and of such common unity of purpose and adaptability of use, that are deemed most suitable to carry out the objectives of this chapter and the Comprehensive Plan.

SECTION 14. Article III, Zoning Districts, §200-9, Classes of Districts, is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“§200-9. Classes of Districts

For the purpose of this chapter, Forks Township is hereby divided into a series of base zoning districts and growth management overlays, which should be designated as follows:

A. Base zoning districts.

District	Title
FP	Farmland Protection
OR	Open Space Residential
CR	Country Residential
SR	Suburban Residential
SR-1	Suburban Residential/Mobile Home
TC	Town Center
TC-1	Town Center-1
EC	Employment Center
EC-1	Employment Center/Mobile Home
EC-2	Employment Center/Landfill
EC-3	Employment Center/Apartment
RC	Riverfront Conservation
HC	Heritage Corridor
REM	Recreational/Educational/Municipal
ID	Industrial Designation

B. Growth Management Overlays.

Overlay	Title
DGA	Designated Growth Area
RRA	Rural Resource Area”

SECTION 15. Article III, Zoning Districts, §200-10, Zoning Map, is hereby amended as follows:

“200-10. Zoning Map

Base zoning districts and growth management overlays are bounded and defined as shown in the map set entitled "Zoning Map of Forks Township" which accompanies and which, with all explanatory matters thereon, is hereby made a part of this chapter. The Zoning Map of Forks Township includes both Map 1: Base Zoning Districts and Map 2: Growth Management Overlays.”

SECTION 16. Article III, Zoning Districts, §200-10, Zoning Map, Subsection A is hereby amended to add a new subsection (5) to read as follows:

“(5) The Zoning Map of Forks Township is hereby amended by delineating two (2) Overlays as illustrated by Map 2: Growth Management Overlays.”

(Copies of Map 1: Base Zoning Districts and Map 2: Growth Management Overlays are attached as Exhibit “A” to this Ordinance.)

SECTION 17. Article III, Zoning Districts, §200-11, Interpretation of District Boundaries, is hereby amended to add new subsections “O” and “P” to read as follows:

“O. DGA Designated Growth Area Overlay. The growth management overlay mainly contains portions of the Township that are in general consistency with the permissions of the PA Municipalities Planning Code as well as the public sanitary sewer infrastructure service areas of the Township Act 537 Plan, as amended.

P. RRA Rural Resource Area Overlay. The growth management overlay mainly contains portions of the Township that are in general consistency with the permissions of the PA Municipalities Planning Code not containing public sanitary sewer infrastructure service areas in accordance with the Township Act 537 Plan, as amended.”

SECTION 18. Article III, Zoning Districts, §200-12, Purposes of Districts, Subsection A and B are hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“A. FP Farmland Protection District. Traditionally, farming practices and residential uses have been incompatible because of conflict between traffic, noise, dust and odor. The FP District is intended to protect agriculture as an important economic activity in the community, particularly in areas characterized by the presence of prime agricultural soils and active farming operations and to restrict the expansion of public sewers. The FP District, as such, conserves agricultural land within the Township by discouraging the residential consumption of the highly fertile and productive agricultural soils and by providing voluntary development incentives to preserve fields, woodlots and other open space areas. The FP District promotes the preservation of the agricultural heritage and provides large areas and an interconnected network of open space with which to interconnect residential neighborhoods and employment

centers.”

B. OR Open Space Residential District. The intent of the district is to preserve the low-density residential conservation district located along the top of the palisades of the Delaware River and to protect and preserve the viewsheds and rural character of this area in the form of conservation open space, agriculture, parkland and/or golf courses. In addition, this district could function as the Township's principal open space and recreational area and would be linked through preserved agricultural lands, open space trails and recreation paths to the existing Township and county parks, schools and the Town Center. This district would also help reinforce the RC District along the Delaware River.”

SECTION 19. Article IV, District Regulations, §200-13, FP Farmland Preservation District, Subsection A. Use Regulations, (1) Uses by right, is hereby amended by deleting the following use:

“C-6 Golf Course”

SECTION 20. Article IV, District Regulations, §200-13, FP Farmland Preservation District, Subsection B. Performance Regulations, is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“B. Performance regulations. The following regulations shall apply within the FP District unless a more restrictive provision is established by another section of this chapter (such as but not limited to Articles VI and V):

	Maximum Imperious Surface Ratio (per lot area)	Minimum Lot Area (per Dwelling Unit) (acres)	Minimum Open Space Dedication/ Agricultural Conservation Requirement Ratios	
Intensive agriculture	0.20	25	—	
Single-family detached dwelling unit in a cluster development, with a 2-acre minimum gross site area	0.20	1	0.50 total	
			Maximum Common Open Space Ratio	Minimum Agricultural Open Space Ratio
			0.1	0.4
Other allowed use	0.20	3	—	—
			Agricultural Conservation Ratio	
Single-family dwelling unit	0.20	2	.35	

SECTION 21. Article IV, District Regulations, §200-13, FP Farmland Preservation District, Subsection C. Area and Dimensional Regulations, is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“C. Area and dimensional regulations. The following regulations shall apply within the FP District, unless a more restrictive provision is established by another section of this chapter:

	Minimum Lot Width at Minimum		Minimum Yards:		
	Building Setback Line (feet)	Maximum Building Height (feet)*	Front	Side (<i>each</i>)	Rear
Intensive agriculture	400	35	100	100	100
Single-family detached dwelling unit	130	35	50	25	25
Single-family detached unit in a cluster development****	130	35	25	15	25
Other allowed use	200	35**	50	25	50

NOTES:

* Or 3 stories, whichever is more restrictive. See exceptions for agricultural buildings.

** For commercial communications towers, the provisions of § 200-28 shall apply.

*** In addition to the yards, a three-hundred-foot minimum building setback shall apply from any lot line of a lot that is zoned RC, HC, OR, CR, SR or SR-1.

**** See also § 200-40A(3).”

SECTION 22. Article IV, District Regulations, §200-13, FP Farmland Preservation District, Subsection D is hereby added:

“D. Agricultural conservation easement. Where a perpetual Type 2 Agricultural Conservation Easement has been acquired by Northampton County, and the terms of that easement specifically allow a second dwelling unit on the lot, then a second dwelling unit on the lot shall be allowed under this chapter.”

SECTION 23. Article V, Use Regulations, §200-28, Additional Regulations for Specific Uses, Subsection G. Industrial Uses, (6) G-6 lumberyard, is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“(6) G-6, lumberyard. Such use shall include a lumberyard and may include mill working as an accessory use, provided:

- (a) Such use, if located in a planned industrial district, shall have a permanent screen of stockade fencing and buffering.
- (b) Parking. No less than 10 off-street parking spaces for every nine employees, or one space for every 470 square feet of gross floor area, whichever requires the greater number of spaces, plus one space for each company vehicle normally stored on the premises.”

SECTION 24. Article V, Use Regulations, §200-28, Additional Regulations for Specific Uses, Subsection G. Industrial Uses, (8) G-8 planing mill, is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“(8) G-8, planing mill. A planing mill shall include facilities where wood products are processed to finished items such as molding, trim, etc., provided that no less than 10 off-street parking spaces for every nine employees, or one space for every 470 square feet of gross floor area, whichever requires the greater number of spaces, plus one space for each company vehicle normally stored on the premises.”

SECTION 25. Article VI, Environmental Performance Standards, §200-31, Site Capacity Calculations, Subsection B is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“B. The following sections to promote sound development practices by limiting, restricting and prohibiting development from areas of a tract or lot that are not appropriately suited for said development activity or contain un-replenishable natural resources that impact the economic vitality, agricultural heritage and environmental resiliency of the community; by guiding said activities in other areas within the same tract or lot, which are intrinsically suited for site disturbance and/or development activities.”

SECTION 26. Article VI, Environmental Performance Standards, §200-31, Site Capacity Calculations, Subsection C. Calculations, is hereby deleted and replaced with the following:

“C. Calculations.

- (1) Applicability. The following calculations in this § 200-31 shall be submitted with all preliminary and final plans by an applicant for any subdivision or land development, unless otherwise provided in this section. In addition, see requirements in § 200-35C(1) for each lot. The calculations in this § 200-31C(1)(b) and (d) shall only apply to a performance subdivision, age-restricted development, single-family detached dwelling unit in the FP District, single-family detached dwelling unit in a cluster development in all residential zoning districts, or mobile (manufactured) home park. The calculations shall be completed to at least three decimal points.

(a) Calculation for gross site area.

[1] Determine the acreage by actual property Survey: _____ acres

[2] Subtract the following:

[a] Land within existing roads and their ultimate rights-of-way and 50% of land within preexisting overhead electric transmission rights-of-way: _____ acres

[b] Land without development opportunities due to preexisting restrictions such as restrictive conservation easements: _____ acres

[3] Equals gross site area: _____ acres

(b) Calculation for resource protection lands:

[1] In the event two or more resources overlap, only the resource with the highest resource protection ratio shall be used.

[2] Table of Natural Resource Protection Restrictions:

Natural Resources	Minimum Required Resource Protection Ratio (I)	Acres of Land in Natural Resource (II)	Resource Protection Land (Column I x Column II) (III)
100-year floodplains	1.00	_____	_____
Lakes or ponds	1.00	_____	_____
Wetlands	1.00	_____	_____
Shorelines (areas within 50 feet of the permanent pool elevation of a natural lake or pond)	0.70	_____	_____
15% slopes to 25% slopes	0.80	_____	_____
Greater than 25% slopes	0.90	_____	_____
Prime agricultural soils, Class I (this line only applies to lots situated	0.45	_____	_____

within the FP district)			
Prime agricultural soils, Class II (this line only applies to lots situated within the FP district)	0.40	_____	_____
Woodlands	0.25	_____	_____
Total acreage of resource protection land (total of Column III) = ____			

- (c) Recreation land. Recreation land may overlap common open space, provided the requirements for each are met. The requirements for recreation land are established in Chapter 175, Subdivision and Land Development.
- (d) Open Space Dedication. The required common open space and agricultural open space dedications, as determined below, shall apply to the entire site and not on a lot-by-lot basis, provided that the total allowable net buildable portion of the site, as determined below, is not exceeded. In no case is a lot owner required to provide more than the maximum percentage of resource protection as Open Space even though the Table of Natural Resource Protection Restrictions may itemize more acres to be protected than the minimum open space percentage required by this Chapter.
- [1] A. Determine common open space based upon total site area multiplied by common open space ratio.

_____ acres x _____ acres = _____ acres

Gross site
area

Common
open space
ratio*

Minimum/maximum
required common open space

NOTES:

* Where an open space dedication is required under the applicable zoning district.

- [2] Determine agricultural open space based upon total site area multiplied by agricultural open space ratio.

_____ acres x _____ acres = _____ acres

Gross site area	Agricultural open space ratio	Minimum/maximum required agricultural open space ratio
	x	_____ acres = _____ acres

NOTES:

* Where open space dedication is required under the applicable zoning district.

- (e) Agricultural conservation easement. An agricultural conservation easement shall be recorded as a means of protecting important farmland and natural resources in conjunction with the development of single-family dwelling units (non-cluster development). The area of the agricultural conservation easement (both Type 1 and Type 2) shall be determined as per the below calculation and shall apply to the entire site and not on a lot-by-lot basis, provided that the total allowable net buildable portion of the site, as determined below, is not exceeded. In no case is a lot owner required to provide more than the maximum percentage of resource protection as an Agricultural Conservation Easement even though the Table of Natural Resource Protection Restrictions may itemize more acres to be protected than the minimum agricultural conservation percentage required by this chapter.

[1] Determine agricultural conservation easement area based upon total site area multiplied by the agricultural conservation easement ratio.

_____ acres x _____ acres = _____ acres

Gross site area	Agricultural conservation easement ratio	Minimum/maximum required agricultural conservation easement
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NOTES:

* Where an agricultural conservation easement is required under the applicable zoning district.

- (f) Net buildable site area, maximum number of dwelling units and maximum impervious surfaces. The following calculations determine the net buildable site area, the maximum number of dwelling units and the maximum impervious surfaces permissible within the net buildable site area of the overall site.

[1] Determine net buildable site area:

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ acres } \times \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ acres } = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ acres}$$

Gross site area	Resource protection land (from Column III above)	Net buildable site area
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[2] Determine maximum number of permitted dwelling units, unless otherwise stated in the applicable zoning district regulations:

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ acres } \times \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ acres } = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ acres}$$

Net buildable site area	Maximum permitted density	Total number of permitted dwelling units (round up if figure is equal to or greater than 0.5; round down if under 0.5)
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[3] Determine maximum permitted impervious surfaces.

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ acres } \times \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Gross site Area	Maximum impervious surface ratio (unless the applicable zoning district regulations state that	Maximum impervious surface On Site
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maximum impervious
surface is based upon
each individual lot”

SECTION 27. Article VI, Environmental Performance Standards, §200-32, Natural Resource Restrictions, Subsection B. Requirements for All Uses, is hereby amended to add a new subsection (5) Prime Agricultural Soils as follows and renumbering the existing subsection (5) Woodland and all subsequent paragraphs:

“B. (5) Prime agricultural soils.

(a) In areas where Class I and Class II prime agricultural soils exist, the following standards shall apply:

1. 100% of such areas shall be permitted to be farmed inclusive of row crops, grazing, tree farms, orchards, hedge rows, or reserved for land conservation activities inclusive of fallow fields, meadows, etc.
2. No more than 40% of the acreage calculated as part of Column (III) in 200-31.C.(b)[2] on line items associated with Prime agricultural soils, Class I and with Prime agricultural soils, Class II soils shall be developed for non-agricultural uses and/or regraded or stripped of the existing topsoil or filled to conceal the natural topsoil.
3. The preserved prime agricultural soils shall be protected through a recorded perpetual conservation easement(s) held by a land trust or conservancy or by the property owner. No future development of this perpetual conservation easement shall be permitted.
4. The minimum parcel size for a recorded perpetual conservation easement shall not be less than five (5) contiguous acres in size.
5. The minimum width of any portion of an agricultural open space area shall not be less than 100’.
6. Shall be physically and/or visually connected to other adjoining agricultural open space areas if they exist. A separation created by a road, lane, driveway, woodlots, streams, steep slope complex, etc. is permissible but should be minimized as much as possible. Agricultural open space areas on adjoining lots shall overlap by a minimum of 50’.
7. Land area used to satisfy the Township’s agricultural open space requirement shall not be used to also satisfy the Township’s common open space requirement.
8. Prime agricultural soils, Class I and Class II, may be used to satisfy the Township’s common open space requirement.
9. Development plans shall show the extent of prime agricultural soils to

be removed or developed versus areas to be maintained and preserved. At any time in the future following the preservation of an agricultural open space area, if the area's soil is developed, regraded, removed or concealed outside of normal agricultural operations and methods, and was required to be preserved by the Township or was shown on an official site plan approved by the Township as being preserved, then the zoning approval for those affected areas shall be revoked by the Township."

SECTION 28. Article VI, Environmental Performance Standards, §200-33, Environmental, Hazard and Nuisance Restrictions, Subsection A. Requirements for All Uses, is hereby amended to add a new subsection (5) Agricultural Nuisance Disclaimer as follows:

"A (5) Agricultural nuisance disclaimer. Lands within the Farmland Protection District are intended to be used for commercial agricultural production in accordance with Pennsylvania Act 133 of 1982, "The Right to Farm Law" (as amended). Township lot owners, residents, and other users/visitor to the vicinity of the Farmland Protection District may be subjected to inconvenience, discomfort, and the possibility of injury to property, health or even death arising from normal and accepted agricultural practices and operations, including, but not limited to, noise, odors, dust, the operation of machinery of any kind, including aircraft, the storage and disposal of manure, the application of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides. All Township lot owners, residents, and users/visitors should be prepared to accept these conditions and are hereby put on official notice that Section 4 of the Pennsylvania Act 133 of 1982, "The Right to Farm Law" (as amended) may bar lot owners, residents, users/visitors from obtaining a legal judgment against such normal agricultural operations."

SECTION 29. Article VII, General Standards, §200-40, Common open space standards, Subsections A through D(1) are hereby amended as follows and with the renumbering subsequent remaining sections/subsections as applicable.

"§ 200-40. Open space standards.

A. General provisions.

- (1) It is mandatory that the recorded plan and the deeds and/or a conservation easement shall indicate that there shall be no additional development and subdivision of common open space or agricultural open space, except for improvements as may be specifically approved by the Township for a preserved agricultural lot, a golf course open to the public, noncommercial recreation or similar approved use. All common open space and agricultural open space areas shall be restricted against any future building, development, or activity that is contrary to the Township-approved use of the land. The approved plans may provide for buildings and improvements for noncommercial recreation, golf course, equestrian or agricultural purposes compatible with the approved use of the common open space and/or agricultural open space.
- (2) Conveyance, use and maintenance.

- (a) Common open space. All documents pertaining to the conveyance, specific use and maintenance of common open space shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Supervisors, prior to recording of the final plan, and after review by the Township Solicitor.
 - (b) Agricultural open space. All documents pertaining to the recordation and general use of agricultural open space shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Supervisors, prior to recording of the final plan, and after review by the Township Solicitor.
- (3) Common open space specific requirements.
 - (a) Layout.
 - [1] A minimum of 75% of the required common open space shall be in one lot or two contiguous lots that are only separated by one street or a creek.
 - [2] To the maximum extent feasible, in the determination of the Township, the required common open space shall be placed in one of the following locations, unless another alternative is specifically approved by the Township.
 - [a] On a lot that has a configuration and physical characteristics that are suitable for an allowed agricultural, plant nursery, tree farm or equestrian use.
 - [b] On a lot that is suitable for public recreation and which the Board of Supervisors is willing to accept as a public recreation land, or on a lot that is adjacent to existing or proposed public recreation land or public recreation trail.
 - [c] On a lot that is on the perimeter of the tract in a location that could be interconnected with existing, planned or potential common open space on an adjacent tract.
 - [d] Adjacent to a creek or river.
 - [e] Adjacent to active farmland in a manner that the common open space serves as a buffer between homes and agricultural uses.

B. Common open space design standards.

- (1) Areas set aside for common open space shall be suitable for the designated purpose and shall be laid out to connect with existing or potential common open space on any adjacent tract. Where structures relating to common open space or recreational activity are located in approved common open space, no more than 5% of that area, or 10,000 square feet, whichever is greater, may be converted to building areas. Structures relating to agricultural uses shall conform to the provisions of Uses A-1 through A-9 in § 200-28.
- (2) Any land set aside as common open space must be made subject to a deed restriction or conservation easement in a form acceptable to the Township and duly recorded in the

office of the Recorder of Deeds of Northampton County.

C. Agricultural open space design standards.

- (1) Any land set aside as agricultural open space shall generally delineate the natural resources areas to be protected in accordance with Section 26 of this chapter.
- (2) Any land set aside as agricultural open space must be made subject to a deed restriction or conservation easement in a form acceptable to the Township and duly recorded in the office of the Recorder of Deeds of Northampton County.

D. Methods of conveyance and maintenance. All common open space and agricultural open space shown on the final development plan as filed with the Township and subsequently recorded in the office of the Recorder of Deeds of Northampton County must be conveyed in accordance with one or more of the following methods:

(1) Dedication in fee simple to the Township:

- (a) The Township may, at the discretion of the governing body, accept any portion or portions of the common open space, provided:
 - [1] If, upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, it is determined that such land is suitable regarding size, shape, location, and access, the governing body may determine that such lands will benefit the general public of the Township;
 - [2] The Township agrees to and has access to maintain such lands; and
 - [3] The titles are conveyed to the Township without cost.”

SECTION 30. If any provision, sentence, clause, section or part of this ordinance is for any reason found to be unconstitutional, illegal or invalid, such unconstitutionality, illegality, or invalidity shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared as the intent of Forks Township that this Ordinance would have been adopted had such stricken provisions not been included herein.

SECTION 31. All Ordinances and parts of Ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION 32. This Ordinance shall be effective immediately after its enactment.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED at a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Township of Forks, County of Northampton on this 2nd day of July, 2026.

ATTEST:

FORKS TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

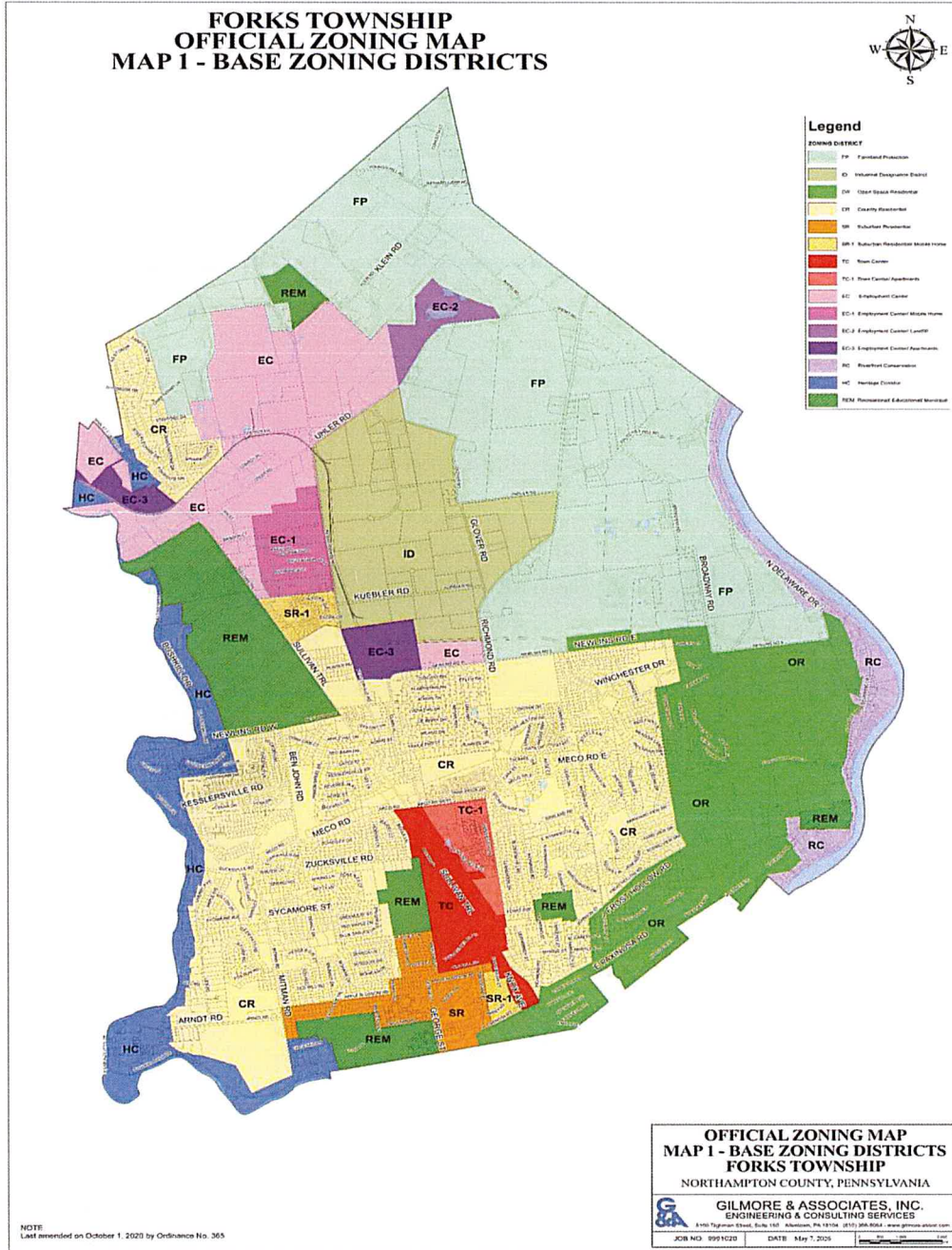
By: 
John O'Neil, Secretary

By: 
Dean Turner, Chairman

EXHIBIT "A"

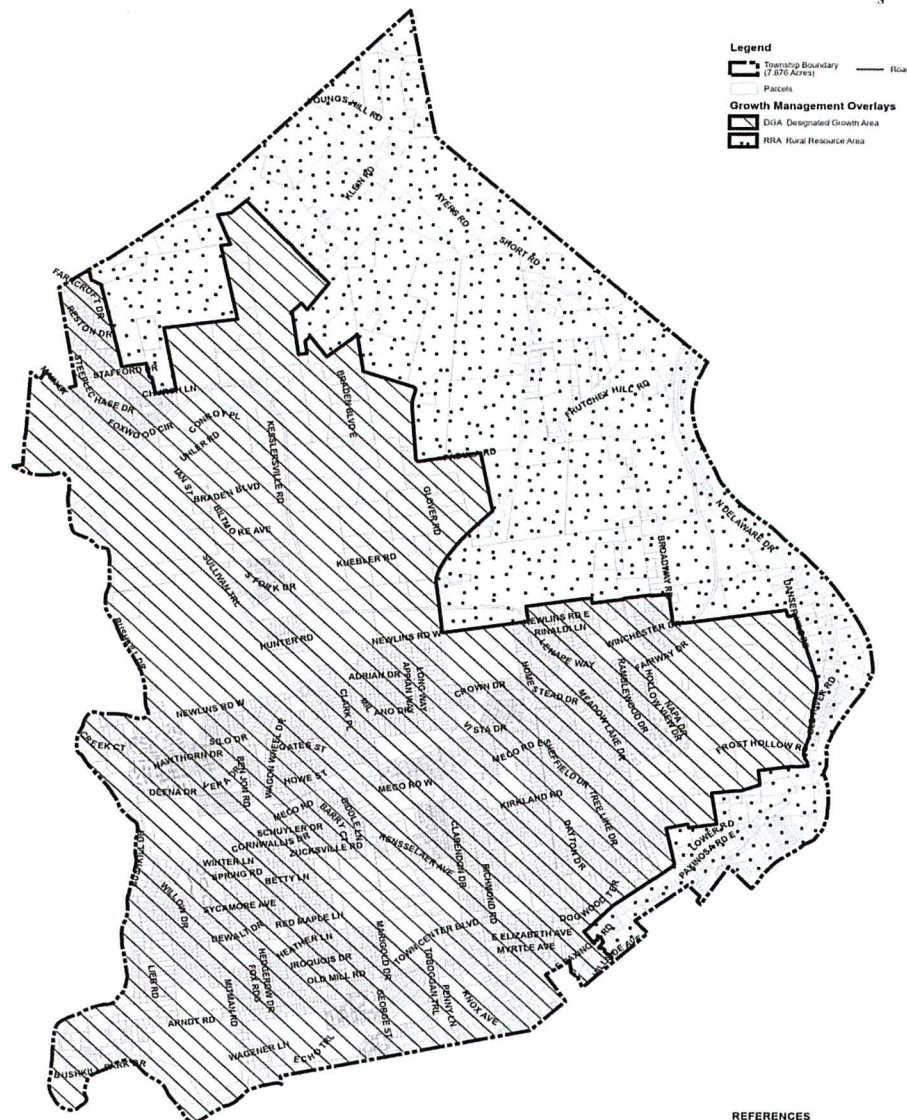
ZONING

200 Attachment 1

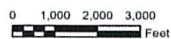


200 Attachment 1:1

Supp 7, May 7 2026



1 Township Boundary: Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
2 Parcels: Northampton County & Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
3 Roads: Northampton County & Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
4 Growth Management Overlays: The Growth Management Overlays
are based on the 2022 Forta Township Comprehensive Plan's Sewer
Service Area Map, July 2022.



**OFFICIAL ZONING MAP
MAP 2 - GROWTH MANAGEMENT OVERLAYS
FORKS TOWNSHIP
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**