



TOWN OF DUNN - 4156 COUNTY ROAD B, McFARLAND, WI 53558

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Dane County Board of Supervisors  
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd  
Madison, WI 53703

August 15, 2011

RE: Ordinance Amendment (OA) # 8, 2011-12

Dear Board of Supervisors,

The Town of Dunn Town Board wishes to express its concern over OA #8, 2011-12 regarding the requirement that building sites be established by a certified survey map or subdivision plat. If adopted as currently proposed, OA 8 would be problematic for the Town in the following ways:

- 1) The passage of this ordinance would interfere with how the Town's Comprehensive Plan density policies are carried out. If a residential area must be divided by CSM, the Town would be forced to either prohibit a property owner's final homesite (which the Town had previously agreed a landowner is entitled to by spot rezone) or amend the Comprehensive Plan to allow for more land divisions than the Town has previously permitted. Both options are a significant departure from the way the Town has carried out its density policy since 1979 and would undermine the compromise the Town reached with its residents many years ago.
- 2) The Town believes that vacant lots lead to confusion. There is a widespread perception that all vacant parcels are buildable. Creating more vacant parcels only adds to this confusion. When there is already a home on a parcel, it is clear that an additional home cannot be constructed. However, when the home is separated, many buyers perceive this land to be buildable. This could lead to dishonest sales, where a seller claims that more can be built on the land than is actually allowed. The Town has already witnessed these types of sales and does not wish to see an increase in these transactions.

- 3) Vacant lots also lead to a greater potential for a more intensive uses of the property and are detrimental to farmland preservation. If a person lives on the parcel, they may not want intensive activities conducted on their property, but on a vacant parcel, the landowner would not reside there and would not be affected by the negative aspects of more intensive uses. OA 8 will also result in more fragmentation of farmland, creating towns that are peppered with vacant parcels that can be more easily annexed. Farmland preservation funding programs also prefer that residences be included in the easement area so the Town's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program would be negatively impacted.
- 4) Conservation easements purchased through the Town's PDR program would be severely undermined. Some Town conservation easements allow for a future building site to be created by a spot rezone, but prohibit land divisions from occurring on the property. If building sites must be divided by CSM, as OA 8 proposes, the Town (only with the approval of any cooperating organization that contributed funds to the purchase of the easement) would be forced to amend its easements. This action would weaken the existing and future efforts of the PDR program and would create very serious problems for a number of existing conservation easements.
- 5) Finally, OA 8 would not change development patterns, a key argument for its adoption. Farmland density would remain the same, only homes would not be attached to farmland. Why pass this amendment if it does not meet its objective and causes loss of buildable homesites, confusion, absentee landownership, and fragmentation of farmland in Towns?

We hope you take these arguments into consideration and choose to either amend OA 8 to address our concerns or to abandon this amendment proposal altogether.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ernest A. Miller". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Town of Dunn Town Board