

Long Lake Township Village Plan Overview & Update

Issued August 12, 2009

Project Overview

Early in 2009, TCAPS began a process to design the full reconstruction of Long Lake Elementary. Knowing that there exist potential for coordination between the two areas such as road connections, pedestrian connections, and shared utilities and facilities, the Township and TCAPS joined together to look at long range planning together. In June, a Village Planning Steering Committee was formed that included representatives from the Township's Planning Commission, business and property owners in the Village Plan area and representatives from TCAPS. After issuing a formal Request for Proposals and holding interviews in late July, the Township hired a consultant team to work with the Steering Committee and the Planning Commission to devise a conceptual design plan and implementation plan for the future development of the Plan area. The Steering Committee began meeting at the end of July to begin preparing information to bring before the public.

Often Asked Questions

Why a Village Center?

- The Long Lake Township Comprehensive Plan (Master Plan) calls for a Village Center in this location. The Plan suggests a special area plan for the area. Most of the land is already zoned Commercial or has a prior standing approval for a mixed use development.
- There is currently a mixture of uses here including retail, a larger lot subdivision, apartments and a mobile home park, commercial uses, a regional park, a school, and farmland. The first ingredient in a Village-style center is a mixture of uses. People now often attempt to walk around this area and to cross North Long Lake Road. Creating a safe and inviting pedestrian area is a second ingredient in a Village-style center.

- “Village Center” suggests a certain level of intensity to most people. While a compact, walkable pattern is generally preferred for the area, a high intensity of development is not necessarily preferred. In the final analysis, “hamlet” or “rural cross roads” development may be a better description of the vision for the area.
- The region’s recent planning effort, the Grand Vision, encourages the development of compact village centers in strategic locations throughout the region. As a TC TALUS partner community, Long Lake Township should address whether this is a development pattern that makes sense somewhere in its boundaries.

Why undertake an area plan right now?

- The most significant reason to do this now is because TCAPS is currently planning for the reconstruction of Long Lake Elementary School – coordinating the plan for our Village Area may save duplication, improve efficiencies, and allow the Township a means to tell TCAPS what is important to the community as they reconstruct the school.
- Usually, our Planning Commission is busy working with developers and reviewing their plans. With the economic slowdown, we have the luxury of time to do our real job – long term planning for the community.
- Also, without the pressure of an imminently proposed development here, the community can take a more long term and thoughtful look at this plan.
- There may be grant opportunities for some of the road improvements tentatively called for under this Village Plan. The timing of this planning effort may make the Township well-positioned for granting programs in conjunction with the Grand Traverse County Road Commission.
- While the upfront part of this effort is being “fast tracked”, the Township has ample time to fully consider the area plan prior to adoption. The fast tracking is necessary to coincide with TCAPS construction schedule. Also, it is often the

case that a concentrated effort yields more momentum and public involvement than a planning effort that produces in dribs and drabs over a long period of time.

What are the goals of the Plan at this time?

- Create a design that is reflective of the agrarian tradition in the area and the rural character of the Township in conjunction with a compact and walkable form
- Create a design for a true pedestrian oriented village center
- Create appropriate and meaningful vehicle and pedestrian connections to nearby businesses, residential developments, and the school
- Provide locations for identified preferred land uses and public services which may include a post office, a library, a public gathering space/passive recreational area, a local bank branch, convenience commercial uses, and housing options
- Lower infrastructure costs for the property owners through shared facilities where feasible (including water, septic, fire suppression, storm water facilities, etc.)
- Integrate Low Impact Design elements consistent with the Township's soon-to-be adopted Watershed Management Plan and recognized standards
- If appropriate, integrate roadside tree planting in the design consistent with the Township's soon-to-be adopted roadside tree planting plan
- Create a design that meets the needs and desires of the property owners within and immediately adjacent to the village plan area
- Create a design that is practicably feasible (i.e., conceptual engineering that could meet outside agency approvals and that is not cost prohibitive for the school and the private developer)
- Create a design that is consistent with the tenants of the Congress for New Urbanism and recognized standards promoting sustainable development

What part of this effort is pre-decided or “cast in stone”?

Nothing. That’s why public involvement and input is so important and meaningful. The work that has so far been done has been designed to give the public something to consider and to react to. Every part of every design scenario alternative may be changed, in any way.

Please come to the public input meeting on August 20th, at 6:00 pm at Long Lake Elementary to give your input.

Some alternative design alternatives have already been developed. Below are the significant elements of these scenarios.

Concept A

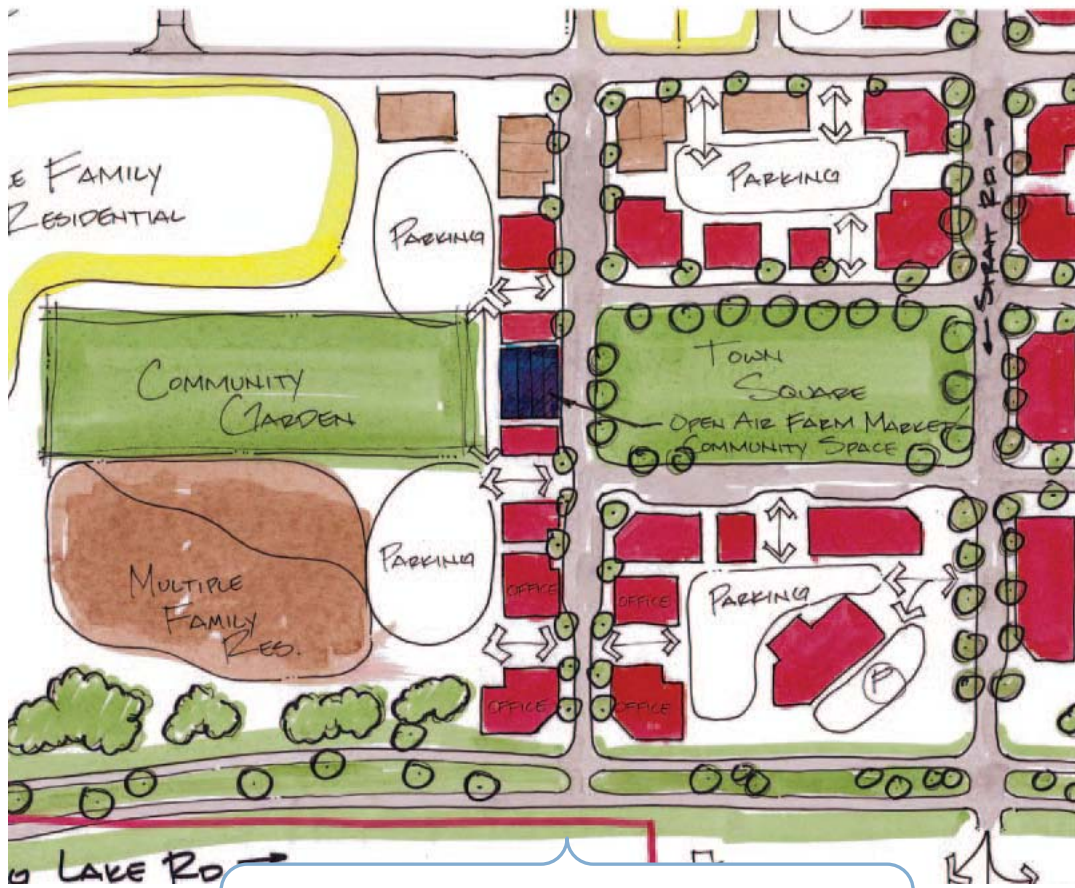
- Commercial and mixed-use core concentrated on North Long Lake Road with on-street parking and pedestrian activity provided on North Long Lake Road
- Traffic circle slows traffic on North Long Lake Road
- Provides grid road network for future development north of North Long Lake Road
- Provides a center square and parks within residential areas
- Provides recreational fields over septic drain fields
- Relocates mobile home park to the northeast within sub area
- Provides multiple family and small lot single family residential areas with pedestrian access to the commercial core and school



Detail from Design Concept A: traffic circle and infill of commercial on North Long Lake Road

Concept B

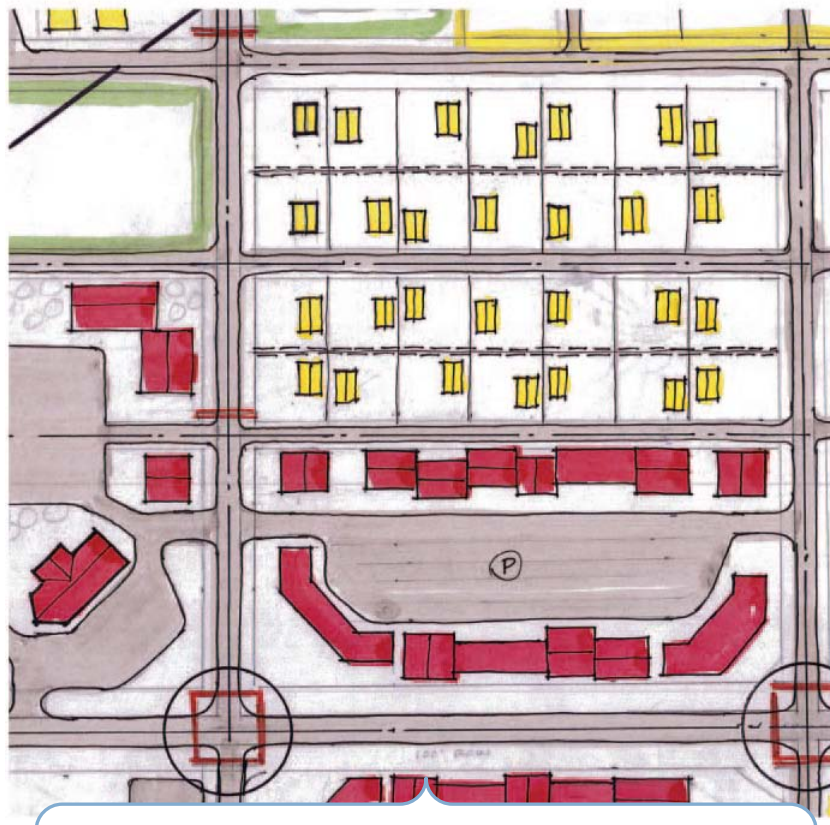
- Commercial and mixed-use core concentrated on Strait Road with pedestrian activity and on-street parking provided
- Provides community open space through the incorporation of a central town square and community garden
- Mobile home park replaced with small lot single family residential
- Boulevard used to slow traffic on North Long Lake Road
- Grid street pattern provided north of North Long Lake Road



Detail from Design Concept B: Expansive open areas surrounded by small footprint commercial buildings organized on an internal grid-style street system. North Long Road is a boulevard.

Concept C

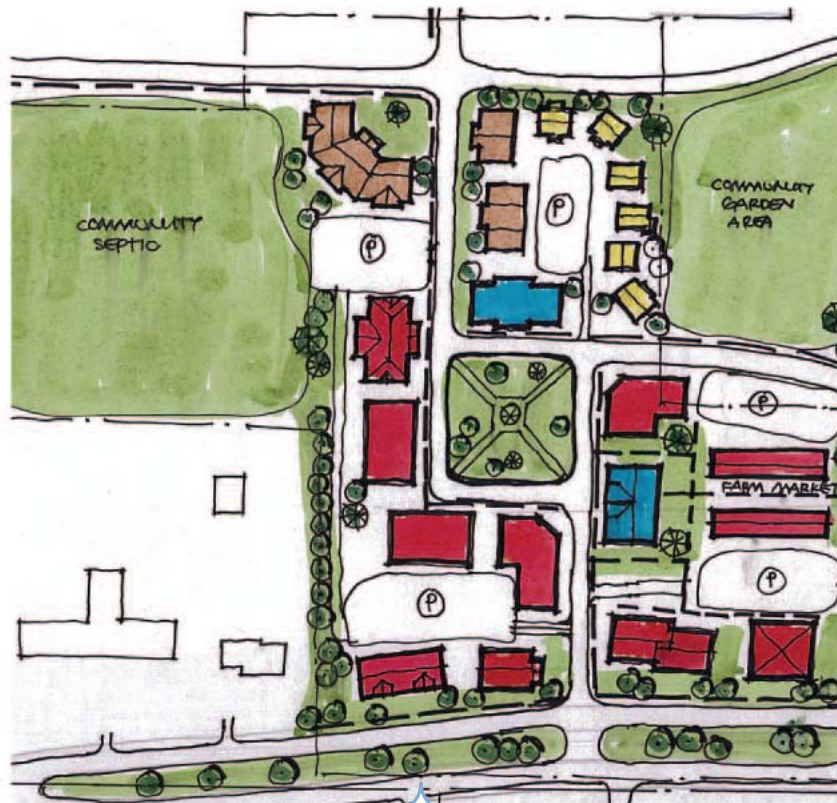
- Traffic slowed on North Long Lake Road with two potential traffic signals at the Strait Road and East Long Lake Road intersections
- Provides multiple family residential on east and west sides of sub area north of North Long Lake Road
- Relocates mobile home park to the northeast within sub area
- Commercial and mixed-use core concentrated in pods to the north and south of North Long Lake Road with access and parking provided to the rear of the development pods



Detail from Design Concept C: Showing existing mobile home park replaced with some commercial buildings along North Long Lake Road and cottage-style homes on a grid street system, which partially exists now.

Concept D

- Commercial, mixed-use, and civic core concentrated north of North Long Lake Road around a town square with on-street parking
- Existing storage units converted in to community farm market space
- Relocates mobile home park to the northeast within sub area
- Provides small lot single family and multiple family residential uses with pedestrian access to commercial core and school



Detail from Design Concept D: The core commercial area is shown west of Fieldstone Deli. Re-uses existing self storage buildings as farm market stalls. Jogged roadway frames a central green, provides access to the school, and discourages cut-through traffic.

North Long Lake Road Corridor Concept A

- Boulevard with lane shifts and planted median slows traffic
- May necessitate right of way acquisition on the north side of North Long Lake Road
- Potential for left turn lanes within wide median exists
- Median allows for safer pedestrian crossing of North Long Lake Road
- Elevations both to the north and south sides of the road make boulevard construction more difficult and costly at the west end of the sub-area



North Long Lake Road Corridor Concept B

- A series of lane shifts at major intersections cause traffic to slow
- Medians provide an opportunity for left turn lanes
- Medians allow for safer pedestrian crossing of North Long Lake Road

