

Dear Members of the Richmond Planning Commission,

The Richmond Housing Committee appreciates the opportunity to offer input on the Future Land Use (FLU) mapping process. As the town looks to plan for responsible, equitable growth, we recommend an approach that prioritizes density where housing demand already exists and where infrastructure and services can reasonably support it. Avoiding sprawl and protecting rural areas is essential, and mapping tools can help us direct development in a way that aligns with Richmond's values and goals.

General Recommendations:

When evaluating FLU mapping updates, we encourage the town to prioritize:

- **Areas with existing transportation corridors, public utility access, and proximity to commercial activity.**
- **Infill development over rural expansion**, in order to protect open space and preserve the rural character of outlying areas.
- **Smaller-scale housing options** that meet the needs of entry-level buyers, renters, and seniors.

We offer the following comments on specific parcels that merit closer consideration:

1. 360 Gov. Peck Road

- This parcel sits adjacent to an area already identified for transition and infill housing.
- Its location suggests potential for future housing, particularly if municipal water and sewer service extend through the Gateway area and toward the mobile home park.
- While topography will make parts of the lot difficult to build on, the pending development of an adjoining Jericho neighborhood could offer alternate access routes.
- This site is well suited to a **Transition/Infill** designation and could accommodate **smaller, more affordable homes** in a walkable setting over time.

Recommendation: Reclassify this parcel from Rural Ag/Forestry to **Rural General** or **Transition/Infill** in anticipation of future infrastructure investment.

2. Farr Farm

- Ideally located adjacent to a **planned growth area**, with **public utilities (water/sewer) accessible at or near the road**.
- Proximity to Volunteers Green—an area increasingly at risk from seasonal flooding—raises the possibility of **repurposing Farr Farm as a new community space** surrounded by housing.
- The site is suited for **multi-family housing** and could support a **Village Extension**, with walkable access to nearby commercial activity.

Recommendation: Consider reclassifying this parcel to **Village Neighborhood** or another designation supportive of mixed-use, walkable development with **higher-density housing options**.

Broader Considerations:

- Richmond should seek to concentrate housing growth in areas that are already **partially developed or well-situated for public services**, avoiding piecemeal rural developments that strain infrastructure and isolate households.
- As seen in towns like Williston, excessive rural subdivision has led to **fragmented development**, driving up service costs and reducing connectivity.

By applying these principles to FLU mapping, Richmond can create a more efficient, inclusive, and environmentally sound growth strategy. Thank you for your attention and consideration to these recommendations and welcome further conversation as the FLU mapping process advances.

Sincerely,
Richmond Housing Committee
May 28, 2025