



Carlisle | Wortman
ASSOCIATES, INC.

117 NORTH FIRST STREET SUITE 70 ANN ARBOR, MI 48104 734.662.2200 734.662.1935 FAX

Date: July 17, 2026

Area Plan Amendment Review For Superior Township, Michigan

Applicant:	Willow Run Acres
Project Name:	Clay Hill Farm Market
Location:	1850 Harris Road and 9051 Macarthur Blvd (J-10-35-200-003, 004 and 009)
Plan Date:	July 16, 2026
Current Zoning:	PC, Planned Community
Action Requested:	Amendment to Area Plan Petition Approval

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

An application has been submitted by Willow Run Acres for an amendment to the approved Area Plan in the PC, Planned Community District. The applicant provided a full site plan for use as the area plan, which illustrates the proposed layout of a community garden and educational center, including composting and vermiculture sheds, hoop house, multi-purpose building, sheds, detention basin, parking area, and gardens throughout. The property is owned by the Township and Willow Run Acres was issued a 15 year lease.

The applicant previously received area plan approval from the Board of Trustees on October 16, 2023, which was extended on June 16, 2025. Following this extension, the applicant submitted a site plan for consideration by the Planning Commission. The site plan substantially deviated from the approved area plan. As such, an area plan amendment is required.

The Planning Commission recommended approval of an area plan amendment at the April 22, 2026, regular meeting, with the following conditions:

Benjamin R. Carlisle, *President* John L. Enos, *Vice President*
Paul Montagno, *Principal* Megan Masson-Minock, *Principal* Laura Kreps, *Principal* Brent Strong, *Principal*
David Scurto, *Principal* Sally M. Elmiger, *Principal* Craig Strong, *Principal* Douglas J. Lewan, *Principal*
Richard K. Carlisle, *Past President/Senior Principal* R. Donald Wortman, *Past Principal*

1. Pending comprehensive soil testing by duly qualified professionals
2. Pending a due care plan or any remediation necessary by duly qualified professionals.

Michigan State University researchers assisted the Township as part of their ongoing work through MSU's College of Agriculture and Natural Science, which focuses on soil health, agricultural impacts, and PFAS-related environmental research. Their team regularly partners with local governments, communities, and landowners to investigate soil conditions, interpret environmental data, and develop science-based recommendations.

The project included collection of soil samples using established scientific sampling methods and specialized equipment. Prior to sampling, Dr. Jones reviewed historical information related to the Clay Hill sites to identify potential areas of concern and inform the testing parameters. The samples were analyzed by Metiri Group Laboratory, after which Dr. Jones and the MSU team evaluated the laboratory results and prepared recommendations based on their findings.

The investigation did not identify any significant soil health concerns or contamination requiring additional action. The testing results did not reveal PFAS or other environmental issues at levels warranting further investigation. The findings and supporting documentation were compiled into a summary report for presentation to the Township Board of Trustees.

Following receipt of these results, the Board of Trustees directed that the project scope be further reduced and phased. Improvements intended for completion by the end of 2026 using ARPA funding and a USDA grant were designated as Phase 2, while additional project elements were deferred to a future phase.

Willow Run Acres has conducted work on the property that was previously approved under "Phase 1" of the area plan.

Phase 1:

- J-10-35-200-009 (Harris Road)
 - Remove vegetation and plant crops, orchard, vineyard
 - Install a fence
 - Add a 12' x 12' shed (dirt floor)
 - Water spigot from well
 - Store a food cart on wheels
- J-10-35-200-003 (MacArthur Blvd West Parcel)
 - Install a well, which will include a pipeline to the Harris Road property
 - Pump House
- J-10-35-200-004 (MacArthur Blvd East Parcel)
 - Remove vegetation at eastern most border and plant a u-pick garden

The amended area plan petition includes three additional phases. The following structures and uses are in Phase 2, intended to be completed before 2027:

Phase 2:

- J-10-35-200-003 (MacArthur Blvd West Parcel)
 - Composting shed with solar array
 - Cargo shed
 - Interior walkways
 - Farmbot
 - Outdoor classroom area
 - Landscaping
 - Beehives
- J-10-35-200-004 (MacArthur Blvd East Parcel)
 - Remove any contaminated soil
 - Grading, detention basin, and other stormwater network features
 - Interior walkways
 - Pavement striping

Uses and structures to be included in Phase 3 are indicated below:

- Additional composting and cargo sheds
- Vermiculture shed
- Tea Tank
- Rainwater storage tank

Uses and structures to be included in Phase 4 are indicated below:

- Principal Building: Farmers Market Educational Center
- Additional rainwater storage tank

Features that were included in the original Area Plan approval which do not appear in the amended Area Plan application are listed below.

- Observational Tower
- Alpaca and fainting goat for children's entertainment and education
- Changes to the site layout

Aerial Photograph



The Zoning and existing land uses for the subject site and surrounding parcels are identified in the following table:

Direction	Zoning	Existing Use
North	A2 – Agriculture District	Vacant
South	R7	Multiple Family Residential
East	RC, and PD	Vacant
West	PSP and R4	Park, Stormwater, Single Family Residential

PROCESS

The Area Plan amendment procedure reflects the general Area Plan procedure outlined in 7.100. At this point in the process, the applicant is seeking approval of the Area Plan which area already zoned PC, Planned Community. The Planning Commission held the public

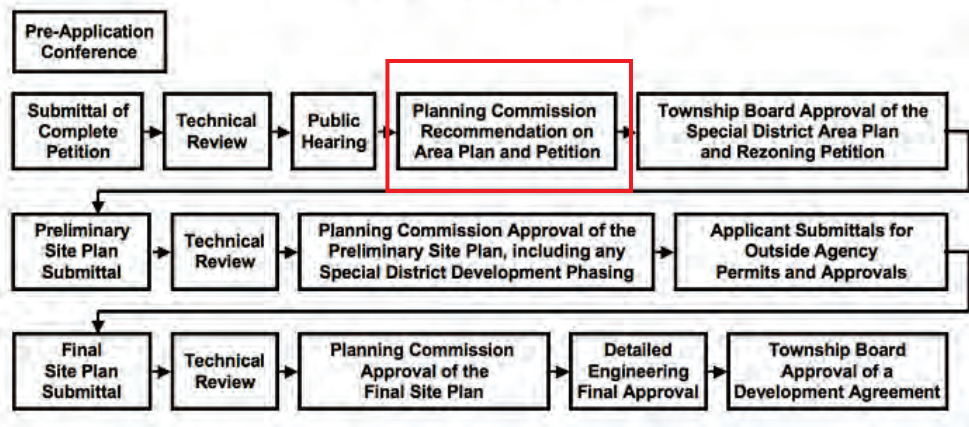
hearing and is the recommending body on the Area Plan. The Township Board has ultimate authority or approval or denial upon the Area Plan.

MASTER PLAN

Effective Date: August 14, 2008

Article 7
Special District Regulations

SECTION 7.100 REVIEW PROCEDURES



The site is located in the Geddes Road Urban Sub-area of the Township Growth Management Plan. As described in the Plan (Page 6-9 through 6-10):

This area of about one mile by four and one-half miles contains about 65% of the Township population in a mix of single-family, multi-family, and manufactured housing. There is also a small commercial area along the southern border of Superior Township, adjacent to the northern edge of the City of Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township, and another small commercial area across from the Township Fire Hall on Harris near MacArthur. This sub-area also includes the majority of land designated as the Urban Service Area of the Township (see Map 6-3).

Existing dwelling unit densities in some locations within the designated Urban Service Area range up to eight dwelling units per acre. Most of the undeveloped land is planned at a maximum density of approximately four dwelling units per acre to stay within available utility capacity, based on:

- 1) the amount of developable land in the Urban Service Area; and*
- 2) the size and capacity of utility infrastructure and the main sewer interceptor pipe;*
- 3) anticipated flow rates and infiltration of groundwater into the system.*

Housing ranges in age from many decades old to new construction and also varies in size from small apartment units to large homes. This subarea is very important to the Township as it provides a variety of housing types in a range of densities with public sewer and water service. This option is not available elsewhere in the Township. The Township will continue to focus on improvements in this area. Among the most immediate of these improvements will be stabilizing and strengthening existing residential neighborhoods. This will be accomplished through:

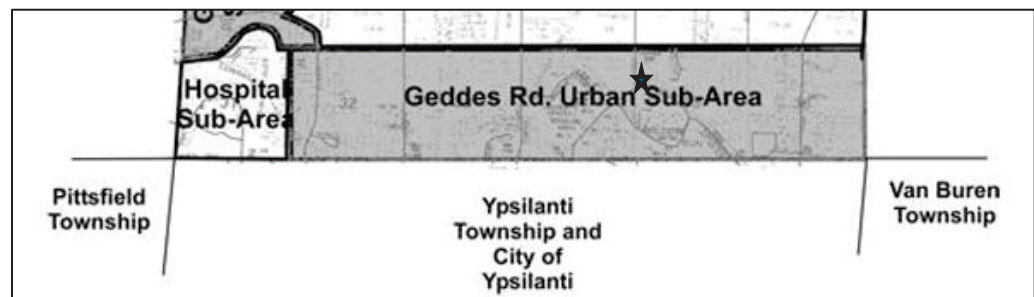
- *enforcement of property maintenance and building codes;*
- *support for resident-led initiatives to form or reactivate neighborhood groups or homeowners associations; and*
- *encouragement of public and private sector projects to remove blighted structures, rehabilitate older dwellings, and construct new infill dwellings on vacant lots.*

In addition, the Township expects that stalled or partially completed housing developments in this sub-area, which have already received preliminary or final approval from the Township, will be completed before development of additional urban residential lots may be approved.

The Township will also focus on further installation of sidewalks and paved bicycle/pedestrian pathways in those developed parts of the subarea that do not have them, and requiring all new development in the sub-area to put in sidewalks or an acceptable pedestrian/bike trail system.

The Future Land Use Plan (page 6-20) identifies this area as a Mixture of Urban Residential Development. The principal purpose of the Mixture of Urban Residential Development is to promote new residential development is expected at a density of four dwelling units per acre and is likely to occur via the Planned Community zoning classification (a form of planned unit development) where there are sensitive natural features, and via traditional subdivision or site condominium development designs in other areas.

The corresponding Zoning Plan (page 7-3) designates the area as Urban Residential Development.



The principal purpose of the Urban Residential District designation is to provide for a range of residential dwelling types at urban densities within individual zones tailored for that specific use. Densities range from two (2) to eight (8) dwelling units per acre. The bulk of land zoned into one of these districts is located in the designated Urban Service Area south of Geddes Road.

The Township's Master Plan is a comprehensive document that includes many other elements that should be considered these include community character/quality of life, impact/preservation of natural features, growth management, and housing and neighborhood design. These other elements should be considered by the Planning Commission.

PREVIOUS PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW

The Planning Commission previously recommended approval of the Clay Hill Farm Area Plan and Rezoning on June 28, 2023. The proposed Area Plan amendment includes a reduction in the project scope beyond Phase 1.

The Planning Commission recommended approval of the reduced-scope Area Plan on April 22, 2026. The Board of Trustees subsequently referred the Area Plan back to the Planning Commission and requested a further reduction in scope, along with a phasing plan, which the applicant has now provided. As part of the review of the Area Plan, the Planning Commission may recommend any conditions they deem necessary to meet the required standards of the PC, Planned Community district. Each phase will require separate site plan approval, with Phase 2 site plan review anticipated in August 2026.

DISTRICT INTENT

Special Districts

As set forth in Section 7.001, the Authority to Establish Special Districts as defined in Article 2.0 (Zoning Districts), is established in accordance with Section 503 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. These Special Districts are designed to accomplish the objectives of this Ordinance through a development review process intended to achieve integration of the proposed development project with the characteristics of the project area. These Special Districts are intended to permit flexibility in the regulation of land development; encourage innovation in land use and variety in design, layout, and type of structures constructed; achieve economy and efficiency in the development and use of land, natural resources, energy, and the provision of public services and facilities; encourage useful open space; and provide better housing, employment, and shopping opportunities particularly suited to the needs of the residents of the Township. The intent of these special districts is to:

- Provide for increased flexibility and encourage innovation in design and layout of land development, subject to proper administrative standards and procedures.
- Lessen the burden of traffic on streets and highways, and provide for an integrated system of sidewalks, pedestrian pathways, and other non-transportation facilities.
- Provide for a compatible mix of land uses in each Special District.
- Establish planning, review, and approval procedures that properly relate the type, design, and layout of development to the site and surrounding area.

- Encourage innovation in residential and nonresidential development so that greater opportunities for better housing, recreation, and shops conveniently located to each other may extend to all citizens and residents of Superior Township; and so that the growing demands of the Township's population may be met by a greater variety in type, design, and layout of buildings and by the conservation and more efficient use of open space ancillary to these buildings.

Planned Community District

The Township Zoning Ordinance has multiple "special districts", one of which is the PC, Planned Community District. The intent of the PC, Planned Community District is as follows:

The Planned Community (PC) Special District option encourages greater collaboration between the developer and the Township in the development process, and allows additional freedom for the developer to take an even more creative approach to land use and development than otherwise permitted under this Ordinance. The PC Special District option offers greater flexibility in the design of land development, maximizing the developer's ability to take advantage of natural topography, vegetation, watercourses, and other site features in designing the development.

STANDARDS

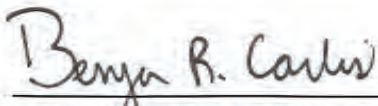
As set forth in Section 7.102.C, when reviewing an Area Plan amendment petition, the Planning Commission shall determine and provide evidence in its report to the Township Board that the petition meets the following standards:

- 1. Growth Management Plan policies.** The proposed development shall conform to the adopted Growth Management Plan.
- 2. Ordinance standards.** The proposed development shall conform to the intent, regulations, and standards of the proposed Special District and this Ordinance.
- 3. Public facilities.** The proposed development shall be adequately served by public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, drainage courses, water and sanitary sewer facilities, and refuse disposal, or that the persons or agencies responsible for the proposed development shall be able to provide, in a manner acceptable to the Township Board, such facilities and services.
- 4. Open space and recreation areas.** The common open space, any other common properties, individual properties, and all other elements of a Special District are so planned that they will achieve a unified open space and recreation area system, with open space and all other elements in appropriate locations, suitably related to each other, the site, and the surrounding land.

- 5. Common areas and improvements.** The petitioner shall have made satisfactory provision to ensure that those areas shown on the plan for use by the public or by occupants of the development will be or have been irrevocably committed for that purpose. Provisions shall have been made to provide for the financing and maintenance of improvements shown on the plan for open space areas, and common use areas which are to be included within the development.
- 6. Location and layout.** The location of the proposed uses, layout of the site, and its relation to streets giving access to it, shall be such that traffic to, from, and within the site, and assembly of persons in connection therewith, will not be hazardous or inconvenient to the project or the neighborhood. In applying this standard, the Planning Commission shall consider, among other things, convenient routes for pedestrian traffic, particularly of children, relationship of the proposed project to main thoroughfares and street intersections, and the general character and intensity of the existing and potential development of the neighborhood.
- 7. Compatibility of land uses.** The proposed use(s), mix of housing unit types and densities, or mix of residential and non-residential uses shall satisfy the intent of the proposed Special District, conform to applicable use standards and limitations, and be acceptable in terms of convenience, privacy, compatibility, and similar standards.
- 8. Minimize adverse impacts.** That noise, odor, light, or other external effects from any source whatsoever, which is connected with the proposed use, will not adversely affect adjacent and neighboring lands and uses.
- 9. Preservation of natural features.** The proposed development shall create a minimum disturbance to natural features and landforms.
- 10. Streets.** Streets shall follow topography, be properly spaced, and be located and aligned in accordance with the intended function of each street. The property shall have adequate access to public streets. The plans shall provide for logical extensions of public streets and shall provide suitable street connections to adjacent parcels, where applicable.
- 11. Pedestrian facilities.** Major pedestrian circulation shall be provided for within the site and shall interconnect all use areas, where applicable. The pedestrian system shall provide for logical extensions of pedestrian ways outside the site, and pedestrian connections to the site boundaries, where applicable.

SUMMARY

We recommend that the Planning Commission consider the area plan amendment and have drafted a Resolution of Approval.



CARLISLE/WORTMAN ASSOC., INC.
Benjamin R. Carlisle, AICP, LEED AP
President



CARLISLE/WORTMAN ASSOC., INC.
Michelle Marin, AICP
Associate Planner

cc: Emily Dabish Yahkind, Township Supervisor
Angela Robinson, Township Clerk
Dan Kimball, Fire Marshall
George Tsakof, Township Engineer
Mariah Cummings, Township Engineer