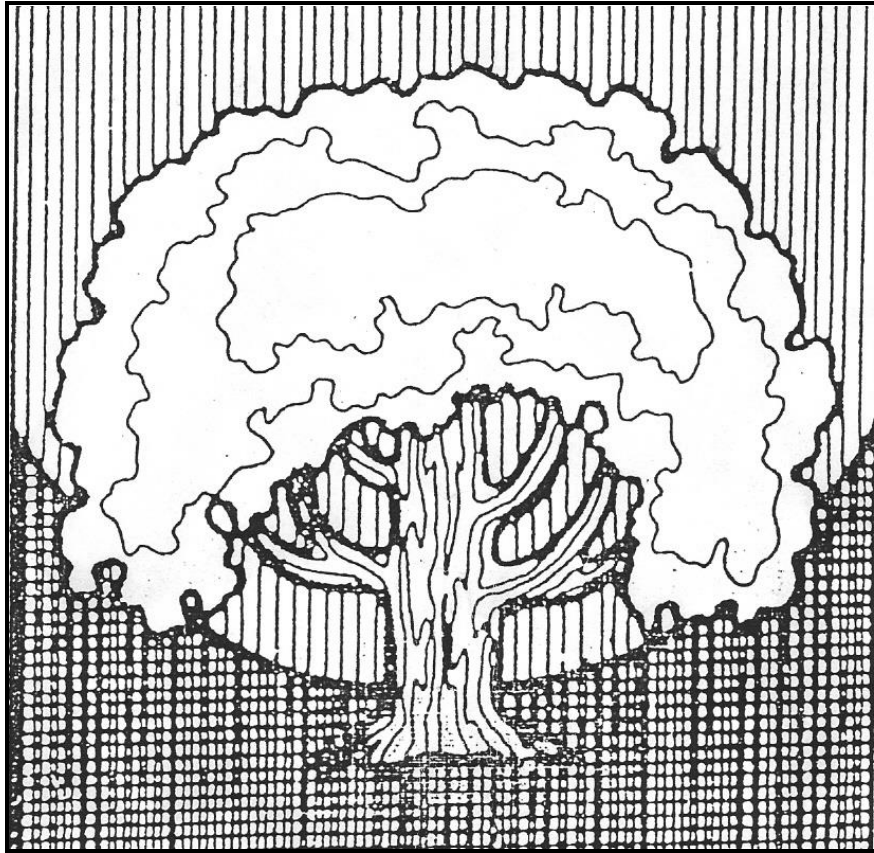


VILLAGE OF BULL VALLEY

Facts Concerning the Village and Annexation Procedures



Prepared by: Brian Miller, President (1992)

Updated December, 1, 2007, by Emily Berendt, Plan Commissioner.

Updated May 9, 2012 by Emily Berendt, Trustee.

Updated December 10, 2015 by Emily Berendt, Village President

Updated November 12, 2018 by Emily Berendt, Village President

Updated December 14, 2022 by Emily Berendt, Village President

Updated July 10, 2023 by Emily Berendt, Village President

Updated April 1, 2024 by Emily Berendt, Village President

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PART ONE: ANNEXATION TO THE VILLAGE

WHY SHOULD YOU CONSIDER ANNEXATION INTO THE VILLAGE?

When you moved to Bull Valley, you selected this area for a reason. You probably liked the open space, woods, streams, wildlife, and rural life style and were trying to get away from the inevitable pressures of metropolitan growth. Maybe you wanted to have horses and a place to ride, enjoy a small farming operation, have room to garden, enjoy a quiet, dark night and fresh air and raise your family in this atmosphere.

If this describes you and your motive for living here, you can help preserve this lifestyle by extending the Village's sphere of influence and protection. The Village of Bull Valley has influence over many land use activities both in the Village and within 1-1/2 miles of the Village boundaries. By annexing your property into the Village you may also be giving contiguity to other properties that wish to annex into the Village of Bull Valley. There are numerous parcels that want to come into the Village and cannot because they are not contiguous.

Some of the nearby municipalities are annexing closer and closer to the Village limits. Many of these municipalities allow high-density residential zoning. This type of zoning dramatically affects the open space, and brings the metropolitan growth close to your doorstep. This will also decrease your property values. Bull Valley residents currently enjoy some of the highest resale values in the county.

HOW DOES ANNEXATION HELP PROTECT LAND?

- Gives the Village more jurisdiction over unincorporated lands in terms of zoning review before the County.
- Puts the Village in a better negotiating position in terms of influencing the zoning and subdivision design in neighboring municipalities.
- Gives the Village more control and influence over the designation of local roads by the County and neighboring municipalities.
- Protects more properties from rezoning to greater densities.
- Opens up more opportunity to annex other parcels which are not currently contiguous.
- Provides greater environmental protection.

OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNMENT

If you are interested you may also decide to participate in local government, which is another way to actively be involved in maintaining the land use in and around the Bull Valley area. Many Village residents have served, or still participate in some form of local government as Trustees, or as members of the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Finance Committee, Road Committee, Stickney House and Parks Committee, and Ways and Means Committee. The Village Board and all the committees work together to help protect the valley's open space, woods, streams, and wildlife. The Village's in depth Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Ordinance provides the guidelines to protect and control these land uses.

VILLAGE'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The Village has a right under Illinois law to influence the development of land that has not been annexed to other municipalities and is within 1-1/2 miles of the village boundaries.

Within this 1-1/2 mile area, the Village can oppose a county rezoning request, forcing the County Board to a 3/4 vote to override the Village's opposition. The Village has adopted a Comprehensive Land Use and Preservation Plan which recommends land use policy within 1 1/2miles."

The Village has affected the rezoning and subdivision design of over 30 different development proposals, some it has effectively caused to be denied; some it has caused to be designed in a more environmentally sensitive manner.

The closer Bull Valley is able to annex to neighboring Municipalities, the more effective our negotiating influence will be, in respect to our land uses. This negotiating influence depends on the Village maintaining a good relationship with its neighboring municipalities.

BULL VALLEY'S FACILITY PLANNING AREA (FPA)

In the early 1980's the Village applied for and was given a Facilities Planning Area ("FPA") from the Illinois E.P.A. The Village is responsible for managing programs related to insuring the quality of sewage disposal and storm water runoff. This responsibility is related to septic systems, land treatment systems, and landscape management& design to clean storm water. The village does not have or presently plan to have a municipal water supply or waste water treatment facility. All village structures are on private wells and septic.

Over the years, the Village has expanded beyond its approved FPA boundaries. Properties west of Cold Springs Road are no longer within our FPA, but are in the Woodstock FPA. This makes these properties potentially subject to city sewer and water, should the City of Woodstock annex them. Property owners who want to remain rural and continue to use well and septic systems should annex to the Village.

If Woodstock's sewer lines are located in close proximity to property within in the Woodstock FPA that is on well and septic, the County Health Department has the authority to allow Woodstock to connect their sewer line to the property. In addition to the connection fee the homeowner would then incur an additional annual expense for sewer and water. This would eventually force annexation to Woodstock because the annual fee is less expensive if the property has been annexed to Woodstock.

PROCESS FOR ANNEXATION

The process is simple. Once the necessary paperwork is prepared, the Village attorney will draft an annexation ordinance for your property. The Village Board will consider the ordinance at its next regular meeting and if approved, you will join this unique, environmentally friendly community. You will also enjoy the added benefit that your property will have highest resale value in all of McHenry County.

PART TWO: HISTORY AND VISION OF THE VILLAGE

Settlers in the area wanted to protect the Valley's open space, woods, streams, and wildlife against the inevitable pressures of metropolitan growth. In 1942, a group of neighbors organized the Countryside Improvement Association and became involved in questions of land use. In 1955, about 3000 acres (1/2 of the Bull Valley area at that time) was put into 3-acre zoning by concerned property owners. It was the lowest density residential zoning in the County zoning ordinance. This single, voluntary action by individual property owners established the future character of the community.

In 1960, residents raised money by subscription to pay for a land use study and professional planning advice. They continued to oppose spot development that threatened farms, forested hills, and wetlands. They bore the costs of legal representation at endless zoning hearings, until it became obvious that private efforts could not win the fight. In 1977, their association was reorganized as the Bull Valley Association, which initiated and campaigned for a referendum on incorporation. In 1977, the referendum passed at an election giving residents authority to formulate land use policy, plan growth, and pass laws to regulate development.

The Village is located within four Townships, McHenry, Dorr, Nunda, and Greenwood, and has Boundary Agreements with the City of Woodstock, and the City of McHenry.

In 1979, the first Official Comprehensive Plan of the Village of Bull Valley was adopted. In 1992, a new Official Comprehensive Plan of the Village of Bull Valley was adopted. The current revision of the plan was adopted in December 2011.

PART THREE: THE VILLAGE TODAY

Today the size of Village is approximately 9 square miles but quite spread out. There are 29.5 miles of road within the village that we are responsible for. The number of residents as of the 2020 census is 1128. There are approximately 450 homes in the Village. Based on the size of our Village (4679 acres), this calculates to an average of one (1) home every 10 acres.

PARCEL SIZES

True to our historic purpose, the Village works to protect native resources and control metropolitan growth. We have a basic philosophy of five-acre residential zoning, with a feathering of density when appropriate, where village boundaries approach other municipalities. Three-acre residential sites under planned developments that provide ample open space and environmental protections are considered where appropriate.

There are several smaller parcels within the village. Most of these parcels were annexed into the village as part of multiple large parcel annexations, or existed prior to the incorporation of the Village and are not intended to be precedent for smaller lot sizes other than in planned developments.

OPEN SPACE/NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION

Open space and habitat preservation/restoration are essential factors in Village character and philosophy. Our glacial topography includes sensitive wetlands, remnant oak woodlands, steep slopes and other natural features that must be protected.

Several landowners in our area have voluntarily placed large parcels of their land into the Illinois Nature Preserve Restoration program. These areas will be managed by the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission and restored to their natural state. These areas will always remain undeveloped, as dedicated conservation area. High-density development as promoted by other municipalities threatens all of these environmentally sensitive areas that we fight so hard to preserve.

Subdivision developers are required to protect any environmentally sensitive areas, wetlands, or open space during construction, and they are also asked to dedicate these types of conservation easements. Land title to these sensitive areas has and should be assigned to some locally recognized land trust or nature preserve in order to make sure they are properly cared for. The developer is also asked to set up some type of perpetual fund, in order to continually maintain the sensitive area that is located within the subdivision.

Our overall vision for Bull Valley is to continue to maintain a unique municipality characterized by low-density residential development, rural roads, dark skies at night and a respect for native landscapes. We seek to provide a rural lifestyle, respect our natural resources and act as a natural buffer between surrounding municipalities for the protection of the regional resources.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Commercial, industrial and urbanized developments present a challenge to protection of the natural resources, and are amply provided by the surrounding municipalities. However, some compatible commercial development is desirable to serve our residents. In the new comprehensive plan, the Village has designated some properties along state route 120 and Walkup Road for potential commercial development.

The Bull Valley Farm Store, the first retail establishment in the Village opened in the fall of 2022

There are two Golf Courses within the village, the Boone Creek Golf Course, on Mason Hill Rd, and the Woodstock Country Club, on Country Club Rd. The Village also encourages home based businesses and small farming operations on parcels larger than 5 acres.

WATER

There is a direct correlation between density of development and an adequate, fresh water supply required to sustain life. Bull Valley is unique in that over half of our current land mass is included in the vulnerable Boone Creek Watershed area that provides recharge for the aquifers that we and the surrounding communities depend on for clean drinking water.

Long-term protection of these special natural areas is crucial. The McHenry County Conservation District and Illinois Department of Natural Resources have acquired some of the most important natural areas in the creek's headwaters. The village takes its stewardship of this watershed very seriously. Bull Valley residents have worked with the support of the Boone Creek Watershed Alliance and other conservation organizations to protect a total of ten private properties so far, as permanent Illinois Nature Preserves.

ROADS

The village lies within an area bounded by four State highways and the Village roads are routinely used as shortcuts between surrounding municipalities. Village roads are often unlit, narrow, winding, and hilly. They present drivers with stray wildlife, equestrians and pedestrians. Therefore reasonable speed limits and other traffic safety measures are maintained and enforced. The natural condition of rural roadsides is maintained to the greatest extent possible for good road maintenance and safe driving. Village roads must be consistent with the rural character of the community.

Because we are so spread out, the Village has a lot of road miles. These roads are supported by our Village resident property taxes, but used daily by residents and non-residents alike. By annexing to the Village, you will help make the Village a more cohesive unit, increase efficiency for maintenance purposes and police protection, and contribute your share to these costs.

The Village has been aggressively pursuing road money for improvements. In the summer of 2014 the Village received two federal transportation grants that allowed resurfacing of portions of Country Club and Bull Valley Road west of Valley Hill. In 2015 Crystal Springs Road and Bull Valley Road east of Valley Hill were approved for funding with construction completed in 2017. Upon Village application to IDOT, Mason Hill Road was designated eligible for federal funding and we successfully pursued a grant for it. In October of 2018, parts of Ridge Road, Cherry Valley Road and Mason Hill Road were resurfaced. In 2022, Mason Hill Road was resurfaced from Village limits to Crystal Lake Road. A large portion of Valley Hill Road was resurfaced in 2023. In 2026, Queen Ann Road will be resurfaced and in 2028, North Thompson Road will be added to this list. We have also forged cooperative agreements with our townships and have completed two smaller joint projects in the past year. We look forward to continuing that part of our roads program as well.

TAXES

You may hear that Bull Valley has high taxes. In reality Bull Valley's municipal tax rate is only a small portion of your overall tax bill, holding fourth place in the example below. In this example the taxpayer is in Dorr Township, District 200 School District and the Woodstock Fire and Rescue District. The rankings on your particular bill will vary depending on which taxing bodies you are in. However, the largest amount of tax you pay will always be to your local school district, followed by the county.

Taxing Body	Rate	Percent	Tax This Year	Tax Last Year
MCHENRY COUNTY	0.970598	7.90	\$686.49	\$684.82
MCHENRY COUNTY PENSION	0.170622	1.39	\$120.68	\$109.06
MCHENRY CO CONSV	0.283996	2.31	\$200.87	\$199.03
COLLEGE DISTRICT 528 MCC	0.444371	3.62	\$314.30	\$311.29
COLLEGE DISTRICT 528 MCC PENS	0.000901	0.01	\$0.64	\$0.63
SCHOOL DIST 200	7.859881	64.03	\$5,559.22	\$5,388.37
SCHOOL DIST 200 PENSION	0.355416	2.90	\$251.38	\$219.32
WOODSTOCK FIRE RESCUE	0.810310	6.60	\$573.13	\$548.65
WOODSTOCK FIRE RESCUE PENSION	0.123110	1.00	\$87.07	\$78.19
RURAL WOODSTOCK LIBRARY	0.126660	1.03	\$89.59	\$86.25
DORR TOWNSHIP	0.154700	1.26	\$109.42	\$105.24
DORR TWP RD & BR	0.291960	2.38	\$206.50	\$195.04
BULL VALLEY VILLAGE	0.683635	5.57	\$483.53	\$481.29

COMMUNICATIONS

The Village maintains an email database of residents that can only be accessed by the Village President and Village Administrator. Email addresses are not shared between residents or used for any purpose other than Village information. The list is used to communicate important events in the Village, provide updates to ongoing programs and send notices generated by the Village Watch Program. Residents on the list also use it to email the Village directly with questions and concerns.

The Village also has an independently maintained web site that carries basic information about the Village, including municipal and zoning ordinances, building permit information and a link to a site for payment of traffic fines. That site address is www.thevillageofbullvalley.com

VILLAGE PROPERTY

Stickney House

The Village owns the Stickney House and 5+ acres of land that surround the Stickney House. The Stickney House was donated to the Village of Bull Valley in 1985 by the owners of the 712 acre farm adjoining it to the east. The Village has operated its police department and Village clerk's office in the building since then. The structure was built in 1856 by George Stickney, one of the first settlers in Nunda Township. Italianate in design, which was popular in the 1850's- 1870's, it is on the National Register of Historic Places. The not-for-profit Stickney House Foundation was created in 1994 to finance and manage restoration and maintenance of the building. When restored, the house will be used for art and historic exhibits as well as a community group meeting space.

The Village also owns the Still Farm Park and Restoration Area, 51 acres that includes the Village Dog Park and approximately 12 acres of Oak Savannah under restoration.

Living With The Land

A recent partnership with the School of the Art Institute of Chicago Departments of Historic Preservation and Architecture has resulted in a rejuvenation and expansion of the Stickney House Restoration plans. Graduate students from the School have developed concept plans that will result in a holistic approach, creating a neighborhood park, community center and destination hub for the Village complete with multi-use trails.

The project, entitled “Living With The Land” merges the geographic, architectural and cultural aspects of living in Bull Valley. The web site is <https://www.livingwiththelandinbullvalley.com/>

Thompson Road Farm

In late summer of 2021, a group of concerned residents organized as The Thompson Road Farm Project (TRF) to stop development on 323 acres of rolling glacial topography that had been farmed for over 150 years on Thompson Road. The property includes a headwaters of Boone Creek, acres of old Oak forest and over 5 miles of equestrian trails. TRF was able to purchase the property through its fiscal agent The Land Conservancy of McHenry County. Under that agreement, the property will become fully owned by the Village as part of the Village Park Department. The wetlands, woodlands and prairies will be fully restored and the trails will be open to the public.

Still Farm Dog Park and Restoration

The Village also owns 51 acres of land at Queen Ann and Bull Valley Roads. The Still Farm, named for one of the earliest landowners of the property, contains the Bull Valley Dog Park and the Still Farm Savannah and Wetland Restoration area.

RIDING TRAILS WITHIN THE VILLAGE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The Bull Valley Riding Club maintains a network of over 60 miles of private horseback riding trails through Bull Valley by permission of those property owners whose land is involved. The Village strongly encourages subdivision developers to include an equestrian easement for trails in their plans. For information about membership in the club and trail rules contact the Village for referral to the riding club president.

TREE TRIMMING ALONG THE ROADWAY

The Village continually monitors Commonwealth Edison tree trimming in an effort to prevent them from doing excessive cutting. The owners of the property fronting the road where the trimming is to be performed are informed of the type of trimming and the date the work is to be performed.

ROADSIDE BEAUTIFICATION AND RESTORATION

The Bull Valley Association, Bull Valley Garden Club and Bull Valley residents have been planting daffodils along the roadsides for 25 years, resulting in a burst of yellow throughout the Village each spring.

The Village has an ordinance against removing trees, shrubs, plants or flowers from along the roadway. The penalty is not less than \$25.00 or more than \$500.00. This ordinance however, does not preclude homeowners from trimming, transplanting, or removing trees, shrubs, plants or flowers within the confines of their property, even though the property may be part of the right of way.

Mayor’s Monarch Pledge

The Village took Roadside Restoration step farther in the summer of 2022 with two roadside restoration projects developed as part of the Federal Wildlife Foundation's Mayor’s Monarch

Pledge. These two locations and several others throughout the Village are intended to provide habitat for the Monarch Butterfly. This project will continue to expand in future years. Any homeowner interested in creating a Monarch Habitat is encouraged to call the Village for materials and support.

VOLUNTEERS: In a Village this small, volunteers are the lifeline of the Village. The Village Board consists of seven unpaid volunteers who are hands-on in their areas of responsibility. In 2024 they are Emily Berendt, President; Trustee Ed Ellinghausen, Roads; Trustee Nancy Sobol, Planning and Zoning; Trustee Peg O'Brien, Finance; Trustee Mark Kersten, Public Safety; Trustee Mark Newton, Parks; Trustee Steve Thomas, Communications and Community Development.

The Village Planning and Zoning Commission consists of seven resident volunteers, the Village dog park is maintained by volunteers and most Village events rely heavily on volunteers to make them happen. The Stickney House Foundation manages Living With The Land and the Thompson Road Farm Project welcomes new member volunteers. To volunteer please call the Village and talk with our Village Clerk for referral to the correct committee liaison.

VILLAGE DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE:

(Digital copies available at no charge)

The Bull Valley Zoning Ordinance Cost \$ 25.00

The Bull Valley Subdivision Regulation Cost \$25.00

The Bull Valley Comprehensive Plan: Cost \$ 45.00 Includes detailed maps and a full addendum.

The Comprehensive Plan is a very detailed set of plans describing the Village's History, Organization, Plans, Principles and Objectives and Goals.

Annual Operating Budget and Monthly Financial Reports Cost \$.10 per page

For other documents please call Village Clerk at 815-459-4833. These documents may be reviewed or purchased at the Village Hall (Stickney House).

THE VILLAGE WORKS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO MAINTAIN THE COUNTRYSIDE AND TO KEEP THE PUBLIC INFORMED:

The Bull Valley Association (BVA)

Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources (IDNR)

Bull Valley Garden Club (BVGC)

The Land Conservancy of McHenry County (TLC)

Boone-Dutch Creek Watershed Alliance (BDCWA)

Bull Valley Riding Club (BVRC)

Neighborhood Organizations and Homeowner's Associations

ATTEND A MEETING

The Bull Valley Village Board of Trustees meets the fourth Monday morning each month at 10:00 a.m. The Planning and Zoning Commission meets the first Thursday evening each month at 6:30 p.m. You are invited to attend any of these meetings. Public speaking opportunity is provided at the beginning of each regular meeting. Please call ahead to confirm the date and time. 815-459-4833

CONTACT US:

Village Staff:

Village Clerk: 815-459-4833

Village Attorney: Michael Smoron Esq., Zukowski, Rogers, Flood and McArdle, 815-459-2050

Village of Bull Valley 815-459-4833

Hours: Monday 9-3

Tue closed

Wednesday 9-3 5-7 by appointment

Thursday 9-3

Friday 9-3

Bull Valley Village Hall at Stickney House

1904 Cherry Valley Rd.

Village of Bull Valley Illinois 60098

FAQ'S

What will it cost me to annex? There is currently no fee to annex voluntarily to the Village. You will be responsible for the cost of a plat of annexation and any incidental costs that are incurred by you.

Will my zoning have to be changed to annex in to the Village? Generally not. You should discuss this with the Planning Commission or the Village President.

Does the Village prohibit metal barns? No. Building permits and information sheets are available from the Village clerk or on-line at www.thevillageofbullvalley.com and will have more detailed information.

My property is less than the three-acre village minimum. Can I still annex in? Yes. Please call the Village clerk for any special restrictions that may need to be considered.

Will the Village take over my private road? No, the road will remain the responsibility of the homeowner or homeowners currently responsible for it.

Can I continue to keep horses? Horses are permitted in reasonable numbers if you are on five acres or more. Call the Village for a copy of the relevant section of the zoning code.

Other questions? Please call 815-459-4833.

IN SUMMARY

Why Should I Annex to Bull Valley?

1. You probably like the open space, woods, streams, wildlife, and rural life style. Annexing your property to the Village can extend our sphere of influence to help maintain this rural life style.
2. By annexing your property into the Village you may also be giving contiguity to other properties that wish to annex into the Village of Bull Valley. There are numerous parcels that want to come into the Village and cannot because they are not contiguous.
3. You can influence decisions in the Village by your participation on a committee or commission. You can also run for Village Board if you choose after you have been a resident for one year.
4. Annexation will enhance your property resale value. Being in Bull Valley is a plus for the resale value of your home.
5. You will become part of a unique, caring, environmentally friendly community.
6. You will be able to remain on well and septic for your water and sanitation. City water is already expensive, and news headlines are all about the infrastructure breaking down or lead in the deteriorating pipes. Replacing the infrastructure costs money that is passed on to the end user. If you want to remain on well and septic you should annex to Bull Valley. The Village does not have, and does not plan to have a municipal water and sewer system.
7. You can help stave off high density development that threatens our Village character. By annexing you can expand the Village's statutory planning area and give the Village a voice in future development adjacent to Village borders.
8. You will be contributing to the maintenance and upkeep of a Village whose protection you currently enjoy, whose roads you currently drive on, and whose philosophy matches your own.
9. Yes, your property taxes will go up, reflecting the additional municipal tax for the Village. Bull Valley's tax rate extension is currently 0.597. In 2024, a property assessed at 100,000 will incur a Bull Valley municipal tax of approximately \$597 payable in 2025. The Village does not have any control over the other taxing bodies on your tax bill.