

SECTION 5A: “EC” Ecology Campus

5A-1 Ecology Campus District. *2010-11-15*

- (a) **Purposes.** The purposes of the “EC” Ecology Campus District are to provide areas where an ecology campus may be located. The site should be a setting that contains or abuts sensitive or unique natural areas, as identified in a Natural Resources Information Report prepared by the McHenry County Soil and Water Conservation District, including areas identified as having prime farmland soils, high quality wetland areas and native woodlands. These natural attributes support university programs related to studying, conserving, restoring, and teaching about the community’s prime farmland, woodlands and wetlands within the broader field of sustainable ecology. The ecology campus is also appropriate for allowing agricultural and related uses conducted in furtherance of the university’s mission to impart the values of stewardship and sustainable ecology.
- (b) **Campus Plan Required for Designation.** In connection with the application to the Planning and Zoning Commission for classification of any property to the “EC” Ecology Campus District, the owner of the property shall submit a plat, herein referred to as the “Campus Plan”, to be reviewed and approved as provided below. The Campus Plan shall be drawn at an original scale of 1” = 200 feet (but may be reproduced in a reduced scale to be suitable for recording). The Planning and Zoning Commission shall transmit its report concerning the proposed district classification and Campus Plan to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees shall not classify property to the “EC” Ecology Campus District, unless it shall approve the Campus Plan, in which case the approved Campus Plan shall be made part of the ordinance classifying land to the “EC” Ecology Campus District and recorded in the McHenry County Recorder’s Office. The Campus Plan shall contain or depict the following information:
- (i) Existing property lines, a district area of least 80 acres, and adjacent roads.
 - (ii) Front, rear and side yards and any additional building setback requirements as may be required to alleviate any adverse impact to adjacent property owners or protect sensitive or unique natural areas. Such additional building setbacks may be shown as building envelopes to specify the location for expansion of existing buildings or construction of new principal and accessory buildings.
 - (iii) Existing buildings (also indicating number of stories), parking and paved areas.

Building envelopes shall comply with district building setbacks except as modified by the Board of Trustees, which may modify the minimum yard setbacks in the approved Campus Plan from those required in this district upon a showing that measures will be taken to alleviate adverse impacts to adjacent property owners, such as height limits and screening. The modified building setbacks shall apply only to those building envelopes where expressly identified on the Campus Plan. New buildings and related parking areas may be constructed and existing buildings expanded only within the building envelopes shown on the

Campus Plan, except when otherwise approved by the Village Board in an annexation agreement.

- (c) **Standards for Classifying Property.** Property shall not be classified in the “EC” Ecology Campus District unless it meets the following standards:
- (i) Minimum District Size. The district must be applied to an area of 80 or more acres under single ownership and/or unified control.
 - (ii) Minimum Lot Size. The minimum lot size in the district is 80 acres.
 - (iii) Minimum Frontage. Property included in the district must have direct access to a county or state highway and a minimum of 900 feet of frontage along such highway.
 - (iv) Natural Features. At least 20% of the area designated in the district must contain sensitive or unique natural areas, as identified in a Natural Resources Information Report prepared by the McHenry County Soil and Water Conservation District.
 - (v) Maximum Number of Rooms. A retreat center shall contain not more than 112 retreat sleeping rooms, with all retreat sleeping rooms, congregate dining facilities, kitchen, chapel and meeting rooms located in a single building. The dining facility shall be properly licensed to sell alcoholic beverages for on-site consumption only by the State of Illinois and the Village, if services include sale of alcoholic beverages.
 - (vi) Principal and Accessory Buildings. Not more than two principal buildings, seven major accessory buildings and 10 minor accessory buildings shall be located on the ecology campus, which shall be deemed a single zoning lot. Any retreat center and any building on the ecology campus having more than 10,000 square feet of floor area shall be considered a principal building in this district. In this district, accessory buildings are classified as “major accessory buildings” if they have more than 500 square feet of floor area, and “minor accessory buildings”, if they have up to 500 square feet of floor area. For purposes of this district, the term “building” means a building enclosed by substantial walls and roof, with a permanent location on the site, and entirely separated on all sides from any other structure by space or walls in which there are no communicating doors, windows, openings, and which is designed or intended for the shelter, enclosure, or protection of persons, animals or chattels. Any structure with interior areas not normally accessible for human use, such as gas holders, water tanks, storage silos and similar structures shall not be considered as buildings, but rather classified as “structures”. Any building in this district which is not a principal building and which is used for any accessory use allowed in the district shall be considered an “accessory building” and shall include, by way of example, a caretaker’s residence, greenhouse, barn, storage shed, and detached garage. A “field station” is not an accessory building but rather a structure not fully enclosed which is used for observation and research. A field station may have a platform or deck to

protect the underlying land from damage, a roof or overhead cover and protective bracing. A field station may be a stand located in the tree canopy or above the ground. Boardwalks and similar structures for accessing wetland or sensitive ecological areas may also be used as field stations and also are not accessory buildings. Other than a caretaker's residence, accessory buildings shall not be used for overnight accommodation. Accessory buildings must be oriented on the site when feasible and/or shielded by landscape screening/fencing when the existing vegetative buffer is insufficient to provide a landscape buffer for adjacent residential properties.

- (vii) Maximum Floor Area. The maximum floor area of all buildings in the district (principal and accessory buildings combined) shall not exceed 130,000 square feet.
- (viii) Front, Side and Rear Yard Setbacks. The minimum front, side and rear yard setbacks where this district abuts any other zoning district are as follows: the front yard setback shall be 140 feet from the street line; the minimum side and rear yard setbacks shall be 100 feet from the property lines except as may otherwise be shown on the approved Campus Plan.
- (ix) Height. The maximum height for principal buildings shall be three stories or 40 feet (whichever is less), and for accessory buildings, the maximum height shall be two stories or 25 feet (whichever is less), except that a building mounted wind energy turbine may extend up to 15 feet above the tallest point of the roof of a principal building.
- (x) Exterior Lighting. The objective of this district is to minimize the amount of light pollution while maintaining light levels that provide for safe and efficient use of the facilities. To that end, the following standards apply:
 - 1. All floodlights, spotlights, security lights or other form or type of outdoor light fixture in this district shall be installed as fully shielded fixtures, except for the following which are exempt from shielding requirements: 1) decorative lights with the illumination intensity of each light fixture of 1,200 lumens or less, such as coach lights above garage doors, lanterns, driveway entry light features, and accent lighting, including bollards, for driveways and walkways, 2) the temporary use of low wattage or low voltage lighting for festivals, celebrations, special events and the observance of holidays, and 3) security or motion detector activated lights which cycle off within five minutes and meet the following conditions: security lights must be directed and shielded so that the center beam of the light source is aimed at a point more than 30 feet inside any property line and no higher than 45 degrees below the horizontal. The illumination intensity of any security light shall be 2,800 lumens or less.
 - 2. Light fixtures that are required to be fully shielded shall incorporate light directing and/or shielding devices, such as

shields, visors, skirts, or hoods, and shall be located, aimed, or shielded so as to minimize stray light. For example, shielded light fixtures mounted on the principal or accessory structures shall be directed downward or in towards the structure. Lighting fixtures installed in the ground shall be directed in towards the principal structure or toward landscaping features but in any event away from the property line. The maximum illumination provided by any light source located on any lot in this district, when measured at a point which is 30 feet inside any property line (except at the street entrance), shall not exceed 0.5 foot candles. Exterior lighting shall be illuminated based on the operating hours of the facilities and shall be of the minimum reasonably necessary to meet security and safety standards at all times.

- (xi) Parking. The objective of this district is to minimize the need for impervious pavement area for off-street parking areas. The minimum parking standard of one parking space per four students or guests in this district shall be supplemented, when feasible, by methods to minimize the need for impervious parking areas, including programs for transporting students and other guests through arranged transportation, such as, but not limited to, buses, car pools, student drop-off/pick-up scheduling. Other programs for special event parking arrangements may include valet parking, tandem parking and special event parking arrangements. Future alternatives for additional parking shall include use of permeable paving wherever such paving can be reasonably employed given the site conditions and intensity of use.
- (xii) Signs. The objective of this district is to limit the scale of signage and to allow signage that is consistent with the rural, noncommercial character of the Village. No flashing or internally illuminated signs are allowed in the perimeter front, side or rear yards of the property. The maximum height of any free-standing ground sign shall not exceed 10 feet above the ground level. The maximum area for any one face of a ground sign shall not exceed 32 square feet. There shall be a maximum number of two permanent ground signs located at the main road entrance leading into the site; such signs and sign structures abutting a public road right-of-way shall consist of primarily natural materials, such as wood or stone. Temporary signs for roadside stands or special events shall be removed when the event is concluded and shall be limited two ground signs, with the face thereof not exceeding 16 square feet. Landscaping shall be included at the base of any ground sign or sign structure abutting a road right-of-way. Signs internal to the property, which are intended to be viewed from locations within the property only, shall also be of a character that is consistent with the rural, noncommercial character of the Village while also providing, informational and educational material consistent with the purposes of the district.

- (d) **Future Development under Campus Plan.** The owner of property in the “EC” Ecology Campus District may apply for and receive building permits to enlarge existing buildings or construct new buildings within the applicable building envelopes for principal buildings and accessory buildings as shown on the Campus Plan without need of any zoning hearing, subject to the maximum floor area of all principal and accessory buildings in the district. The zoning provisions of this district are intended to control in the event of any conflict with other provisions of this Ordinance.
- (e) **Changes in the Campus Plan.** A change to the Campus Plan shall require submission of an application for amendment of the Campus Plan to be considered by the Planning and Zoning Commission in the same manner as an application for zoning classification of the property. The Board of Trustees shall not approve any change in the Campus Plan without finding that the proposed amendment is in harmony with the stated purposes and intent of the Comprehensive Plan, the “EC” District Regulations and this Agreement and that it will not (a) impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property, (b) increase the hazard from fire, flooding or other dangers to adjacent property, or violate state and local fire laws, rules and regulations, (c) diminish the value of adjacent land and building or of land and building in the Village, (d) impede, inhibit or decrease the enjoyment, use or development of adjacent property and property in the vicinity for purposes allowed by law and this Ordinance, (e) substantially conflict with the prevailing character of land use of adjacent property and property in the vicinity so long as such character is allowed by law and this Ordinance, (f) cause traffic hazards on adjacent public streets, or (g) otherwise impair the public health, safety, comfort, morals and general welfare of the inhabitants of the Village. Any change shall be approved by ordinance adopted by the Board of Trustees; provided that the amendment of a Campus Plan of any property which is the subject of an annexation agreement shall not be effective unless the annexation agreement is amended to include the amended Campus Plan.
- (f) **Cessation of University Programs.** If the university discontinues its use of the ecology campus and conveys ownership thereof to a single owner, that owner may continue to operate the retreat center on a minimum lot size of 80 acres. If neither the university nor the retreat center is in operation on the ecology campus, then, upon application of the owner submitting the Property or portion thereof for subdivision approval, and provided the application conforms to all requirements of the zoning, planning and subdivision regulations of the Village then in effect, the Board of Trustees shall be authorized to approve the subdivision of the Property and to grant a special use for single family dwellings on the resulting lots provided such lots conform to the bulk standards of the “E” Estate District and in any event contain not less than five acres.

5A-2 **Uses Permitted.** All buildings or land within an “EC” Ecology Campus District shall be used only for the following purposes: *2010-11-15*

- (a) Ecology campus;

- (b) Retreat center;
- (c) Structures and equipment for generating renewable energy, which may include a single building-mounted wind energy turbine (no free-standing turbine shall be installed except if approved as a special use), bio-diesel conversion equipment, solar panels, and geothermal and hydro-electric energy systems, provided that the scale of such energy production systems shall be limited by design primarily for on-site energy consumption needs, with only incidental sale of surplus energy to a utility company being allowed;
- (d) Farming of field and garden crops, and incidental retail sales of produce grown thereon;
- (e) Field studies and field stations (including use of biological, botanical, meteorological and similar field station type facilities, which may include camp stations for night observation), research and restoration projects, including use of field stations to conduct scientific research, specimen tagging, identification and observation, woodland and wetland restoration projects, groundwater monitoring, soil conservation and similar studies;
- (f) The keeping of not more than two dairy cows to be used for educational purposes on pasturage set aside for this purpose and the raising of egg-laying poultry to provide locally sourced eggs, dairy products and other agricultural-based food products for use primarily in the on-site dining facilities, but including incidental retail sales of such products produced on-site;
- (g) Orchards, nurseries, greenhouses, apiaries and mushroom barns, to provide fruit, vegetables, herbs, honey and other agricultural-based food products for use primarily in the on-site dining facilities, but including incidental retail sales of such products produced on-site;
- (h) Roadside stand for incidental sales of agricultural-based food products grown, harvested or produced in the "EC" Ecology Campus District and any byproducts thereof (such as soap);
- (i) Recreational activities for persons participating in university or retreat functions, including, but not limited to, archery (conducted at least 500 feet from the nearest property line and directed away from any adjoining property), basketball, camping, fishing, hiking trails, outdoor fire pit, outdoor fitness or skills courses, playing fields, ropes courses, tennis, racquet, volleyball or other playing courts, but no shooting ranges or hunting shall be allowed on the site;
- (j) One caretaker's residence, which may be included in the retreat center as separate living quarters, or maintained in a detached single family dwelling containing not more than 2,000 square feet of floor area;
- (k) Accessory buildings for uses accessory to the permitted uses, such as tool and equipment sheds, field stations, one bulk storage silo (not to exceed a height of 40 feet and a base diameter of 20 feet), and customary farm outbuildings and structures, but specifically excluding trailers, mobile homes and motor vehicles with indoor living quarters;

- (l) Off-street parking in accordance with the standards of this district;
- (m) Signs in accordance with the standards of this district;
- (n) Fences for privacy and security purposes or for protecting crops and/or restraining animals (but not barbed wire fences), provided that fencing to restrain animals shall be set back a minimum of 15 feet from the lot line of any adjacent property, and from roads or access easements; and
- (o) Special use for single family dwellings, provided the conditions in Section 5.2-5(f) are satisfied.