

**Topic:** Clustering & Cluster Development  
**Resource Type:** Regulations  
**State:** New Jersey  
**Jurisdiction Type:** Municipal  
**Municipality:** Township of Readington  
**Year** (*adopted, written, etc.*): 1998-2002  
**Community Type – applicable to:** Suburban; Rural  
**Title:** Agricultural Residential Zone for Readington Township in Hunterdon County  
**Document Last Updated in Database:** March 21, 2016

### ***Abstract***

Readington Township passed this Agricultural Residential Zone Ordinance to preserve open space and farmland. This ordinance requires that within the designated Agricultural Residential (AR) zone, any lots over 40 acres must be developed as 1.5 acre open space clusters. Land tracts that are 30 acres or greater adjacent to deed restricted farmland or open space within the AR zone must also be developed as 1.5 open space clusters.

### ***Resource***

CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON, NEW JERSEY Updated 1-15-2003 (LUL,6)  
PART II GENERAL LEGISLATION  
Chapter 148, LAND DEVELOPMENT  
ARTICLE IV, District Regulations  
§ 148-15. AR Agricultural Residential Zone.  
[Added 12-21-1998 by Ord. No. 43-98]

§ 148-15. AR Agricultural Residential Zone. [Added 12-21-1998 by Ord. No. 43-98]

A. Permitted principal uses - AR Zone. One of the following:

- (1) Farms (see § 148-9 for definition of farm) and agricultural uses, including crops, nurseries, poultry, small animals and livestock raising and training, including outdoor parking of farm vehicles and equipment.
- (2) Detached single-family dwelling units.
- (3) Public and private open space and parks.

B. Accessory uses - AR Zone.

- (1) Private residential swimming pools, tennis courts and other usual recreation facilities that do not create a nuisance factor as regulated in Article VI.
- (2) Residential toolsheds, garages and storage buildings not to exceed the height of the principal structure and as regulated in Article VI.

- (3) Off-street parking.
- (4) Fences and walls as regulated in Article VI.
- (5) Signs as regulated in Article XII.
- (6) Outdoor barbecue structures.
- (7) Essential services.
- (8) Farm storage sheds and barns.
- (9) The sale and processing of agricultural products, the majority of which are raised or grown on the farm or same farming operation on which the accessory sale or processing is conducted.
- (10) Home occupations as regulated in § 148-53.

C. Conditional uses - AR Zone (subject to regulations set forth in Article V.) [Amended 5-20-2002 by Ord. No. 14-2002]

- (1) Cemeteries.
- (2) Home occupations.
- (3) Shelters, community residences.
- (4) Public utilities.
- (5) ECHO housing.
- (6) Previously converted agricultural buildings such as barns, wagon sheds and chicken coops for storage and warehousing prior to the effective date of this chapter.
- (7) Agricultural commercial villages to provide a concentration of agricultural services and retail village atmosphere.

D. Maximum building height - AR Zone. No building shall exceed 35 feet in height and 2 1/2 stories except that churches and farm structures shall not be limited in height.

E. Area and yard requirements - AR Zone.

(1) [Amended 6-19-2000 by Ord. No. 23-2000] Tracts of land less than 40 acres in size either at the time of adoption of this chapter or that are assembled after the adoption of this chapter:

- (a) Minimum lot size: six acres.
- (b) Minimum lot circle: 350 feet.
- (c) Maximum floor area ratio per building lot: .04.
- (d) Minimum setback from street line: 75 feet.
- (e) Minimum setback from side or rear line: 40 feet.
- (f) Minimum frontage on a street: 50 feet.
- (g) Circumference of the minimum lot circle may not be more than 150 feet from the street right-of-way.
- (h) Each lot shall have a minimum 75,000 square feet of contiguous usable land. This standard is established to provide a minimum area on each lot to support a residence, accessory buildings and structures, usable yard area and adequate space for on-site wells and septic systems and space for future replacement system.

(2) [Amended 6-19-2000 by Ord. No. 23-2000] Tracts of land 40 acres or greater in size either at the time of the adoption of this chapter or that are assembled after the adoption of this chapter and tracts of land 30 acres or greater in size either at the time of the adoption of this chapter or that are assembled after the adoption of this chapter and located adjacent to land which has been deed restricted for farmland or open space preservation shall develop as 1.5 acre open space clusters, and tracts of land 30 acres or greater in size but less than 40 acres either at the time of the adoption of this chapter or that are assembled after the adoption of this chapter and not located adjacent to land which has been deed restricted for farmland or open space preservation may elect to develop as 1.5 acre open space clusters with the following requirements:

- (a) Minimum tract area: 40/30 acres.
- (b) Minimum open space set-aside: 70% of tract.
- (c) Minimum residential lot size: 65,000 square feet.
- (d) Minimum lot circle: 200 feet.
- (e) Maximum floor area ratio per building lot: 12.
- (f) Minimum front yard setback: 60 feet.
- (g) Minimum rear yard setback: 35 feet.
- (h) Minimum side yard setback: 35 feet.
- (i) Minimum frontage on a street: 50 feet.
- (j) Circumference of the minimum lot circle may not be more than 125 feet from the street right-of-way.

(k) Each building lot shall have a minimum of 65,000 square feet of contiguous usable land. This standard is established to provide a minimum area on each lot to support a residence, accessory buildings and structures, usable yard area and adequate space for on-site wells and septic systems and space for future replacement system.

(l) A minimum 50-foot-wide buffer shall be provided between residential uses and any land utilized for agricultural purposes. This buffer area shall be deed restricted from development and shall contain at a minimum a staggered double row of evergreen plantings, five feet in height or equivalent as approved by the Planning Board.

(m) The open space parcel shall contain a minimum of 70% of the gross tract area which shall contain a minimum of 65% of the unconstrained tract area. The "unconstrained tract area" shall be defined as the area of the tract that does not contain floodplains, wetlands, 90% of the slopes between 15% and 25% and all slopes greater than 25%, easements (excluding sight triangles), and right-of-way areas. The stormwater management system for the proposed subdivision may be located in the open space parcel; however, the land area of any detention or retention basin(s) shall not be counted toward the minimum area requirements in this section.

(n) The open space parcel shall contain a minimum lot circle of 500 feet.

(o) Rights-of-way or cartways of any existing or proposed public or private streets shall not be included in the calculation of the minimum required open space area.

(3) Lots within the AR Zone that were approved as agricultural cluster subdivisions under previous agricultural cluster requirements, prior to the adoption of this chapter, shall be permitted to continue as approved.

F. [Amended 10-4-1999 by Ord. No. 24-99] Open space regulation - AR Zone.

Open space in one-and-one-half-acre cluster developments shall be permanently deed restricted from further development and shall be utilized either for agriculture, conservation/passive open space or recreation as approved by the Township's approving authority and shall be subject to the following regulations:

(1) At the time of subdivision application for voluntary cluster developments under § 148-15E(2), the applicant shall designate whether the proposed open space shall be owned and maintained by an open space organization or be offered for acceptance by the Township or other governmental agency. If the open space is not to be dedicated to the Township or other governmental agency, then the developer shall provide for an organization or trust to own and maintain the open space for the benefit of owners or residents of the development. Documents establishing and governing the open space organization or trust shall be in a form that is consistent with § 148-59 of this chapter and the Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-43.

(2) At the time of subdivision application for mandatory cluster developments under § 148-15E(2), the applicant shall designate whether the proposed open space shall be owned and maintained by an open space organization or be offered for acceptance by the Township or other governmental agency. If the open space is not to be dedicated to the Township or other governmental agency, then the developer shall provide for an organization or trust to own and maintain the open space for the benefit of owners or residents of the development. Documents establishing and governing the open space organization or trust shall be in a form that is consistent with § 148-59 of this chapter and the Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-43.

(3) It is the intent of this chapter to preserve open space and farmland within Readington Township. Open space parcels shall either be devoted to agriculture, recreation or conservation/passive open space. Mandatory cluster provisions affect only parcels which have a high potential for farming: parcels of 30 acres or more that are within the Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Area (ADA) and are adjacent to preserved farmland. Therefore, in development subject to the mandatory cluster provisions, agriculture is the preferred open space use.

Tracts that are subject to the voluntary cluster provisions have sizes of 30 acres to 40 acres that are not within the ADA nor adjacent to preserved farmland. Therefore, on parcels subject to the voluntary cluster provisions, passive recreation and conservation of sensitive environmental features are the preferred uses for open space. Where practical, to the extent that land intended for open space uses is presently being farmed, it should remain as farmland.

(4) New agricultural construction (e.g., barns, shelters and greenhouses) shall not result in an F.A.R. of greater than 4% nor an impervious surface coverage in excess of 10% of the total acreage of the preserved open space parcel.

(5) The deed of any single-family dwelling sold as part of a cluster development under this section shall contain a notification that the Township Zoning Ordinance specifically includes farming as a permitted use in the AR Zone and that the open space in the development may be deed restricted for farming use. Furthermore, the developer and/or landowner who plans to sell the dwellings referenced above shall inform prospective purchasers in writing of the protection the Township ordinance conveys to agricultural operations.

(6) The set-aside of common open space shall comply with § 148-60.

G. Minimum off-street parking - AR Zone. Each individual use shall provide parking spaces according to the following minimum provisions. No parking area or driveway shall be located within 15 feet of any property line, except where common driveways are approved by the Board.

(1) Dwelling units shall provide parking spaces in accordance with the Residential Site Improvement Standards N.J.A.C. 5:21-4.14.

(2) Farm stands shall provide a minimum area for parking to accommodate two parking spaces for customers plus one for each employee at maximum shift if not residing on the premises.

H. Street setback. New streets shall be located no closer than 50 feet to the original tract boundary of any development, except at the point at which a new street intersects an existing street for the purpose of providing access to the development. [Added 5-20-2002 by Ord. No. 13-2002]

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