

Outline of Proposal

General Concept:

Limit the types of materials that may be placed by-right in the Rural Areas to natural materials.

Inert materials such as concrete, block etc., may still be placed by-right in zoning districts other than the Rural Areas. In the Rural Areas inert materials may be placed only by special use permit.

Establishes new performance standards for the placement of material. These new regulations address issues such as: setback, access, hours of operation, area of activity, volume of material, placement of material in sensitive locations.

Allows some tree cutting in the development areas in order to facilitate the placement of material in the development areas instead of the Rural Areas and to account for the restriction of by-right placement of inert material in the Rural Areas.

Benefits of the proposed regulations:

Limiting the by-right use of the Rural Areas to natural materials limits the total amount of fill activity in the Rural Areas. This reduces the total volume of truck traffic in the Rural Areas associated with fill activity. This reduction in traffic in the Rural Areas may help to improve safety and reduce truck miles which helps to reduce the County's environmental impact. The use of only natural materials in the Rural Areas may help to preserve land for future agricultural production.

The proposed performance standards will help protect properties adjacent to fill activities and the view from public streets. Limitations on the volume of fill will help to reduce unsightly mounds or stockpiles of materials and is consistent with the goals of the County to respect terrain. Restricting the placement of material on critical slopes or hydric soils is consistent with goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Permitting some tree cutting in the development areas may assist in the preparation of land for future development. This may allow for the creation of pad ready sites. The lack of pad ready sites has been identified as a concern by the Economic Development Office.

Potential negative impacts of proposed regulations:

Limiting the by-right use of the Rural Areas to natural material only will increase pressure on using the Development Areas for the placement of inert material. This may result in the partial development of property that sits idle until full development of property occurs.

Additional regulations may result in increased requests for special use permits or special exceptions. This may result in increased cost to the community and the County.

Increased regulations may result in increased administrative cost. Staff is not able to fully estimate cost until the extent of the regulations is known. Based on the proposed regulations the anticipated increase in administrative cost is minimal. This assumption is based on the fact that currently most fill operations are associated with a permit application and that the cost of reviewing any increase in the number of permitted operations will be partially offset by fees. These fees do represent an increased cost to the development community.