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July 24, 2020

Via Electronic Mail
Municipal Boundary Review Program
Incorporation Review Board
c/o Chairperson Dawn Vick
101 E. Wilson Street
PO Box 1645
Madison, WI 53701
wimunicipalboundaryreview@wi.gov

Re: Village of Wrightstown's Opposition to the Town of Wrightstown's Petition to Incorporate Greenleaf

Dear Chairperson Vick:

The Village of Wrightstown (the "Village") opposes the Town of Wrightstown's (the "Town") Petition to Incorporate the Hamlet known as Greenleaf and lands nearby into the Village of Greenleaf.[1] In addition to not meeting the statutory standards for incorporation, Greenleaf has stated inconsistent motives for the incorporation. Although Greenleaf now claims it wants to incorporate to protect its borders and rural character, it has also made public its intention to perform a "Harrison Two-Step" border modification to effectively annex the entire Town of Wrightstown into the newly incorporated Village of Greenleaf to block annexations from the Town into the Village of Wrightstown. However, the Village of Wrightstown has only annexed Town land upon request from property owners at a minimal rate over the last 20 years. (See Map 7). Your approval of this incorporation would be detrimental to the property rights of the residents in the town and complicate development opportunities for the region as a whole.

The IRB should deny the Petition due to the devastating impact the incorporation will have on the remnant Town, its residents, the Village, and surrounding region. Accordingly, the Village of

[1] The party wishing to incorporate will be referred to generally as "Greenleaf" or "Petitioner" throughout this letter.

Wrightstown respectfully requests that the IRB dismiss Greenleaf's Petition for Incorporation and decline to extend to Greenleaf an invitation to modify and resubmit its Petition.

I. The proposed incorporation does not meet statutory standards under Wis. Stat. § 66.0207.

In addition to the many negative impacts that approving the Incorporation Petition will have on the surrounding region, discussed in more detail below, Greenleaf's Petition fails to meet several standards under Wis. Stat. § 66.0207. It is well-established that in order to qualify for incorporation, an area must meet all of the statutory requirements, and as such, the Petition must be denied. *Walag v. Wisconsin Dep't. of Admin.*, 2001 WI App 217, ¶ 33, 247 Wis. 2d 850, 634 N.W.2d 906.

a. The proposed incorporation does not have the required characteristics.

Wis. Stat. § 66.0207(1)(a) requires the entire territory of the proposed village or city be reasonably homogenous and compact. A reasonably homogenous territory must have a consistent and uniform composition. *Town of Pleasant Prairie, Kenosha Cty. v. Dep't. of Local Affairs & Dev.*, 113 Wis. 2d 327, 334, 334 N.W.2d 893 (1983). Based on Greenleaf's proposed boundaries, this requirement is not met.

First, there is a distinct difference between the area traditionally known as the Census Designated Place (Hamlet of Greenleaf) and the undesignated residential subdivision along the "Ledge."[2] The Ledge is separated from the Hamlet by 0.4 miles of quarry and open space and an elevation change of 100-150 feet. None of the "community center" businesses listed in Greenleaf's Application in Support of Incorporation (the "Application") are located on the Ledge. Further, the Ledge has significantly different property values, housing stock, and lot sizes than the Hamlet. (*See* Appendix A).

The Hamlet also has a public sewer and water system, while the properties on the Ledge have private on-site septic and well systems. In 2018, the Town hired a consultant who determined the cost of extending water and sewer services to the Ledge would cost $4.6 million. (Application at 86). Thus, if Greenleaf's Petition is approved, the properties on the Ledge will likely remain on private septic and well systems for the foreseeable future. Further, some properties currently served by the existing public water and sewer system in the Hamlet are *not* included in the

[2] The "Ledge" refers to a residential area within the proposed incorporation boundary that sits adjacent to the Niagara Escarpment.

proposed incorporation boundary. These inconsistencies in the proposed boundary not only demonstrate that the proposed village is not a homogenous community, but that the Ledge was included not for its homogenous relationship to Greenleaf, but as a means to bring the most expensive homes in the Town into the proposed Village's tax roll to fund the newly formed layer of government. Thus, the proposed incorporation does not have "a reasonably consistent and uniform composition" as is required by the statute. (*See, e.g., Town of Pleasant Prairie, supra,* at 333.) In fact, it is difficult to imagine a set of residential characteristics less homogenous than those existing between the traditional Hamlet core area and the exurban and rural area beyond the core in the Ledge. In sum, Greenleaf has not provided any objective, fact-based reasons for including the Ledge in its boundaries nor provided any objective fact-based reasons as to why the Ledge is homogenous with the rest of the Hamlet. Thus, Greenleaf has failed to meet the statutory homogeneity requirement.

Second, if the IRB accepts that Greenleaf is an isolated community, Wis. Stat. § 66.0207 requires a "reasonably developed community center" that is simply not present in Greenleaf. Businesses within the proposed incorporation boundaries employ only 63 full-time employees, and businesses in the defined "community center" include: one church, one post office, a bank, a convenience store/gas station, and a few bars. Such establishments are insufficient to meet the standard. Namely, the proposed Village's community center "lacks various stores and services generally utilized by residents of the area on a day-to-day basis." *Town of Delavan v. Dep't. of Dev.*, 1994 WL 44287, *2, 514 N.W.2d 878 (Ct. App. 1994). For example, the Court of Appeals upheld the Department of Administration's denial of an incorporation petition where "the Department found that there are no businesses which attempt to meet the day-to-day needs of the residents such as grocery stores, auto repair shops, banks, professional offices, pharmacies, medical clinics or barber shops." *Walag v. Wisconsin Dep't. of Admin.*, *supra*, at ¶ 17; *see also, Schmidt v. Dep't. of Local Affairs & Dev.*, 39 Wis. 2d 46, 62, 158 N.W.2d 306 (1968) (upholding determination that there was no reasonably developed community center where "a full range of community facilities such as banks, medical services and modern shopping centers are not available within any part of the area that could be described as its community center"). Accordingly, although Greenleaf's community center may be developed so as to meet the statutory requirements in the future, or may have met the requirements in the distant past and since declined (as testified to by long-time Hamlet residents at the July 14, 2020 public hearing), it does not meet them now. Therefore, the Petition must be denied.

b. The proposed incorporation does not meet statutory density requirements.

Wis. Stat. § 66.0207(1)(b) requires the territory beyond the most-densely populated half square mile to meet a minimum average density of 30 housing units per quarter section (160 acres) or

0.1875 housing units per acre. This requirement is not met. There are only 50 housing units in 283.35 acres, or 0.1746 dwelling units per acre, in the proposed territory beyond the most densely populated half square mile. This falls short of the statutory requirement by 0.0129 housing units per acre, or four additional housing units. In order to meet the requirement, Greenleaf is requesting a waiver of the 46.1-acre quarry because "water, terrain, or geography prevents development." At the same time, Greenleaf wants to include the quarry in its proposed borders because of the need to provide "village-level resources to the planning of the quarry's long-term future [which is] likely to yield development aligned with that of an incorporated community." (Application at 94). Thus, Greenleaf seeks to "double-dip" by including the quarry in its borders for future development, while at the same time waiving the quarry so it can meet the statutory density requirement. Further, even if the quarry is waived, the Petition only narrowly meets the requirement by a margin of 0.0205 housing units per acre, or five total housing units.

Additionally, it should be noted that the Town's recently-adopted Comprehensive Plan's[3] Future Land Use Map recommends the quarry area for industrial land use, rather than permanent open space as would be appropriate for wetlands or floodplains. (Comprehensive Plan at 25). Greenleaf's proposed approach is to request a waiver based on the inability to develop the quarry, while at the same time planning to develop the quarry in the long-term. The Town cited the Town of Lisbon's unsuccessful incorporation application as a reason for the IRB to waive the quarry area because Greenleaf fails to meet density requirements without this waiver. However, the Town of Lisbon is located in metropolitan Milwaukee while Greenleaf is a rural area. Therefore, the Town of Lisbon case is not relevant to this case and a waiver should not be granted.

While there is no methodology stated directly in Section 1(B) of the Application, it is apparent that the Petitioners used Census Block density-per-square-mile data to determine the most-dense half square mile possible. (Application at 21, Map F). This method is not an accurate measure of housing density because the Census Block boundaries do not align with the proposed incorporation boundaries. Specifically, there are at least eight different Census Blocks split by the proposed incorporation boundary. This is not an appropriate method for finding the "most-dense half square mile" because of the inevitable inaccuracies incurred by split Census Blocks. An accurate and current dwelling unit inventory on a lot-by-lot basis is the most accurate method to determine density – particularly where, as here, the current census data is more than ten years out of date. Additionally, by the Petitioner's own admission in a different portion of the

[3] The Town's Comprehensive Plan can be found here: https://townofwrightstown.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Final_T_Wrightstown-2018-Comp-Plan-Update.pdf.

Application, "[b]ecause the Greenleaf Census Designated Place (CDP) boundaries are close but not the same as the boundaries of the proposed village, data using these boundaries are not included in the demographic analysis in the following sections." (Application at 31). Despite this assertion, Greenleaf contradicts itself by using the very same data to perform its density analysis.

Overall, Greenleaf's analysis found the most-dense Census Blocks in the Town of Wrightstown as of April 2010. However, this approach does not prove that the proposed boundaries include the most-dense half square mile of the proposed Village of Greenleaf's boundary, nor does the proposed core area include a half square mile. Specifically, the proposed core area should contain a full 320 acres of a 640-acre square mile, while the actual proposed core area in the petition contains merely 285 acres. Thus, the proposed incorporation puts 35 acres of the most-dense core area into the peripheral area – and steals the core's dwelling units in a failed attempt to meet the required minimum density in the peripheral area.

The most-dense half square mile possible was determined by Vandewalle & Associates using the housing unit density per acre of each parcel. (*See* Map 1, attached). This boundary follows existing parcel lines, the most contiguous boundaries, and alignment with right-of-way crossings. A detailed methodology of how the analysis was conducted is provided in Appendix B. (*See also* Maps 1-4). Based on the more accurate determination, the area beyond the most-dense half square mile comes to a total of 284.699 acres and 49 housing units, or 0.1721 housing units per acre. (Map 4). The proposed peripheral area does not meet the requirement by 0.0154 housing units per acre, or five housing units. If the two parcels that make up the quarry are removed (per the Petitioner's request), the area beyond the most-dense half square mile comes to a total of 238.595 acres and 49 housing units, or 0.2054 housing units per acre. With the quarry waiver, the Petitioners meet the requirement by only 0.0205 housing units per acre, or five housing units.

If a proposed incorporation boundary does not meet the density requirement, Wis. Stat. § 66.0207(1)(b) requires the territory beyond the most densely populated half square mile to meet a minimum assessed value for real estate tax purposes, more than 25% of which is attributable to existing or potential mercantile, manufacturing, or public utility uses. Greenleaf also fails to meet this standard, whether or not the quarry is included in the calculation, with only 2.4% of the total assessed values being attributable to existing or potential mercantile, manufacturing, or public utility uses – a shortfall of more than 22%. (Appendix C). This approach has less than one-tenth of the required nonresidential tax base (which further demonstrates the failure to meet the reasonably developed community center standard). In total, the IRB should deny the Petition for Incorporation because, by Greenleaf's own admission, the minimum density requirements are not met.

c. The proposed incorporation will not have a sufficient tax base to defray the anticipated costs of government.

Wis. Stat. § 66.0207(2)(a) requires that the present and potential sources of tax revenue appear sufficient to defray the anticipated costs of government services. However, Greenleaf has not stated how it plans to pay for the cost of incorporation. As of May, 2020, Greenleaf already owes Graef at least $26,700 for its assistance in Greenleaf's incorporation efforts. (Appendix D at 8). Greenleaf also necessarily paid the state required incorporation review fee of $25,000. Thus, Greenleaf has already expended at least $51,700 in its incorporation efforts and has not addressed how that money will be repaid. Further, the Town's 2018 financial statement lists an expense for incorporation of $100,409. (See Application, page 29 of 2018 financial statement). In addition to the incorporation costs, Greenleaf has not addressed how it plans to maintain its estimated proposed tax rate of $2.95 per $1,000 assessed as the proposed Village continues to grow (and effectively annex the entire Town). Although Greenleaf provided a table comparing assessed tax rates of comparable communities in its Application as evidence that "the tax rate for the proposed Village is relatively low[,]" all this table proves is the likelihood that Greenleaf will need to increase its tax rates in the future. (*See* Application at 104).

II. Greenleaf intends to do a "Harrison Two-Step" annexation of the entire Town of Wrightstown.

Although repeatedly and vehemently denied at the incorporation public hearing by Town officials, it has been publicly reported that Greenleaf intends to use its incorporated status to perform a "Harrison Two-Step" border modification to effectively annex the entire Town of Wrightstown in numerous local news articles dating back to 2018. (*See* Appendix D at 1, 3-4, 7-8). Generally, the "Harrison Two-Step" refers to the process by which two adjacent municipalities may change all or a portion of their boundary lines by mutual written agreement pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 66.0301(6). Essentially, the process allows the municipalities to bypass all state oversight of the annexation process; instead of following traditional annexation procedures, the municipalities must simply adopt resolutions of the written agreement, which in this case would effectively annex the entire Town into the proposed Village of Greenleaf. If successful, the new Village of Greenleaf would be over 32 square miles (the Town of Wrightstown is currently 21,093 acres), a tremendous area given the proposed Village's available resources. For reference, the City of Appleton is 25.22 square miles, the City of Green Bay is 55.77 square miles, and the City of Oshkosh is 28 square miles. A map showing the current Village of Wrightstown, the proposed Village of Greenleaf, and the proposed post-"Harrison Two-Step" Village of Greenleaf is attached. (Map 6).

a. The proposed incorporation's impact on the remnant town will devastate development in the region.

At the July 14, 2020 public hearing on the incorporation, Greenleaf argued that the IRB should not consider its post-incorporation plans as relevant to its Petition to Incorporate. However, Wis. Stat. § 66.0207(2)(c) requires the IRB to consider the impact of the incorporation on the remnant Town, and to only approve petitions where the impact is found to be in the public interest. Greenleaf has made its intention to perform the "Harrison Two-Step" well-known, and as such, the impact of its plan to do so should be considered by the IRB.

First, despite its assertions that it wants to incorporate to protect its borders and rural character, Greenleaf has not brought any evidence indicating its borders or rural character are in danger of changing. As noted above, the Village has only annexed a total of just over 571 acres of land from the Town over the past 20 years (a rate of 29 acres per year). All of the annexations were requested by property owners and were directly adjacent to the Village. (*See* Map 7). Further, the Village has its own concerns about adding an additional layer of government in the region that will take away the rights of landowners in the Town. The Village takes great pride in providing opportunity to the region through its non-predatory growth; the Village has always looked to provide new opportunities from which landowners may benefit if they so choose. Approving this Petition will take that right away from landowners in the remnant Town. Further, the Town's Comprehensive Plan expressly advocates for protecting its rural character (*see* Comprehensive Plan at 4, 111), while also stating that it wishes to, "grow, develop, and expand services" and "discourage annexations from the Town of Wrightstown." (S*ee* Comprehensive Plan at 4). This is also reflected by the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map, which promotes urban sprawl along Highway 96 from the Hamlet to the Village. (Comprehensive Plan at 25). Thus, Greenleaf's failure to bring forth any evidence that its borders or rural character are in danger of substantial change makes clear Greenleaf's true intentions for incorporating.

Second, if Greenleaf were to incorporate and subsequently acquire the entire Town, the impact would be devastating for regional development. For example, in 2015 the Village invested nearly $7 million to make Green Bay water available to Village residents. In 2008, the Village invested $5.5 million to upgrade its wastewater treatment plant. These two developments put the Village in a position to continue its modest, compact, and efficient growth pattern that benefits property owners throughout the region. If Greenleaf is allowed to incorporate, it will subsequently acquire the entire Town, and any further compact and efficient Village development will be halted. This will result in a tremendous waste of resources and substantially hinder governmental cooperation in the region; this is in direct contrast to the Town Comprehensive Plan's call to "[c]onsider and explore opportunities for cost savings through consolidation of government services with other

municipal units of government." (Comprehensive Plan at 149). The Village has also consistently offered to help the Town with roadway projects and invested in roadway infrastructure in the region. For example, The Village paid for both the Village's and Town's portion of the County U/Broadway Street roundabout, recognizing that need for it was driven largely by Village growth. The Village also absorbed the Town's portion of the cost of a ditching project to solve drainage problems on the County U corridor, the vast majority of which is located on Town land. In light of the Village's efforts to improve the utilities and services offered to residents and its history of non-predatory growth, it becomes clear that Greenleaf is more motivated to preserve the Town's borders than to protect individual property owners' rights or its rural character.

In sum, the Village has consistently made efforts to bring opportunity to the region through utility and infrastructure investments, and has provided financially beneficial opportunities for property owners through its non-predatory annexations. In contrast, Greenleaf's plan to perform a "Harrison Two-Step" will diminish property owners' rights by taking away their ability to be involved in the annexation process or be annexed by the village of their choice. If Greenleaf's petition is granted, it will result in a tremendous waste of Village investments to the detriment of the region, and only hinder further consolidation of government services. As such, the IRB should deny the Petition for Incorporation.

b. The proposed incorporation's impact on the metropolitan community should be considered because "the context requires otherwise."

Greenleaf argues that the IRB need not consider impacts on the metropolitan community pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 66.0207(2)(d) because Greenleaf is an isolated community as defined in Wis. Stat. § 66.0201(2)(bm). However, this ignores Wis. Stat. § 66.0201(2)'s assertion that the definition of "isolated community" is only applicable "unless the context requires otherwise." In addition to the reasons described above, if and when Greenleaf performs the "Harrison Two-Step" and incorporates the entire Town, the newly formed Village will meet the definition of a "metropolitan community" under Wis. Stat. § 66.0201(2)(c).[4] Thus, the present context requires otherwise. The legislature inserted that language into the statutory scheme to grant the IRB discretion to make the correct decision in light of all of the circumstances surrounding an incorporation. Accordingly, the IRB should apply the requirements of Wis. Stat. § 66.0207(2)(d) to Greenleaf's Petition.

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[4] Once the "Harrison Two-Step" is completed, the new Village's northernmost boundary (i.e. the current Town's northernmost boundary) would be 3.5 miles from the Village of De Pere, and the aggregate populations of De Pere and the newly formed Village would be greater than 25,000. (*See* https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/deperecitywisconsin *and* Comprehensive Plan at 13).

Wis. Stat § 66.0201(2)(d) requires the effect upon the future rendering of government services within the metropolitan community be in the public interest and requires "an express finding that the proposed incorporation will not substantially hinder the solution of governmental problems affecting the metropolitan community." For all the reasons described above, it is difficult to imagine a scenario where Greenleaf's incorporation and subsequent "Harrison Two-Step" acquisition of the remnant Town would not substantially hinder the solution of governmental problems in the region. Accordingly, Greenleaf's Petition does not meet this statutory requirement and must be denied.

III. The proposed incorporation improperly splits parcels.

In addition to the aforementioned statutory problems with Greenleaf's Incorporation Petition, there is another glaring issue: the proposed Village of Greenleaf boundary divides four real estate parcels in two, leaving them partially within the Proposed Village and partially within the remnant Town. A map highlighting the four parcels is attached. (Map 8). If the Incorporation Petition is approved, there will be a question as to which municipality can tax and govern the parcels. Besides the logistical nightmare that splitting parcels between municipalities will inevitably cause, this oversight provides further evidence that Greenleaf drew its borders not based on a sense of community, but to attempt to meet minimum statutory density standards. The proposed parcel-splitting border could also be viewed as further evidence of Greenleaf's plan to perform a "Harrison Two-Step" acquisition of the entire Town. As such, the IRB should not approve Greenleaf's Petition for Incorporation.

IV. The proposed incorporation lacks local government and services.

In addition to all the foregoing reasons, the proposed Village of Greenleaf lacks an adequate plan to provide necessary government and local services to residents. First, there are currently no members of the Town Board living in the proposed Village of Greenleaf. (Application at 114). Thus, the Town Board is seeking incorporation despite not having a single representative living within the proposed incorporation boundary. Further, the fact that the Town Board members live in the remnant Town is indicative of their intent to enter into a border agreement with Greenleaf, if it becomes incorporated, to effectively annex the entire Town. The creation of this new level of Village government is also in direct contrast to the Town's Comprehensive Plan, which seeks to "[c]onsider and explore opportunities for cost savings through consolidation of government services with other municipal units of government." (Comprehensive Plan at 8). In sum, adding an additional layer of government with no governing experience may well lead to chaos, competing interests, and a lack of competent governance in the area.

Further, in addition to the issues related to water and sewer service in Greenleaf and the substantial Village of Wrightstown investment in the utilities described above, Greenleaf's wastewater treatment plant ("WWTP"), built in 1995, is already older than its designated life span of 20 years. (Comprehensive Plan at 88). Additionally, the WWTP's Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("WPDES") permit is expiring in 2022, and obtaining a renewed WPDES permit will require upgrades to the WWTP to meet new effluent limits for phosphorus imposed by the Department of Natural Resources. (Comprehensive Plan at 88). Notwithstanding these needs and despite the Comprehensive Plan's call to "prepare and use a Capital Improvements Program to prioritize and calculate the cost of continued maintenance and expansion of the [WWTP]" Greenleaf's Incorporation Petition states that "[t]here are no current plans or needs to expand the water and/or sewer service." (Application at 116). These competing goals are further evidence of Greenleaf's inability to provide adequate services, and highlight how the additional layer of Village government will hinder regional development. This is particularly apparent in light of the Village of Wrightstown's efforts to bring Green Bay water to the region. Accordingly, if Greenleaf is incorporated, it will lack sufficient government and public services to meet the needs of its residents.

V. Conclusion.

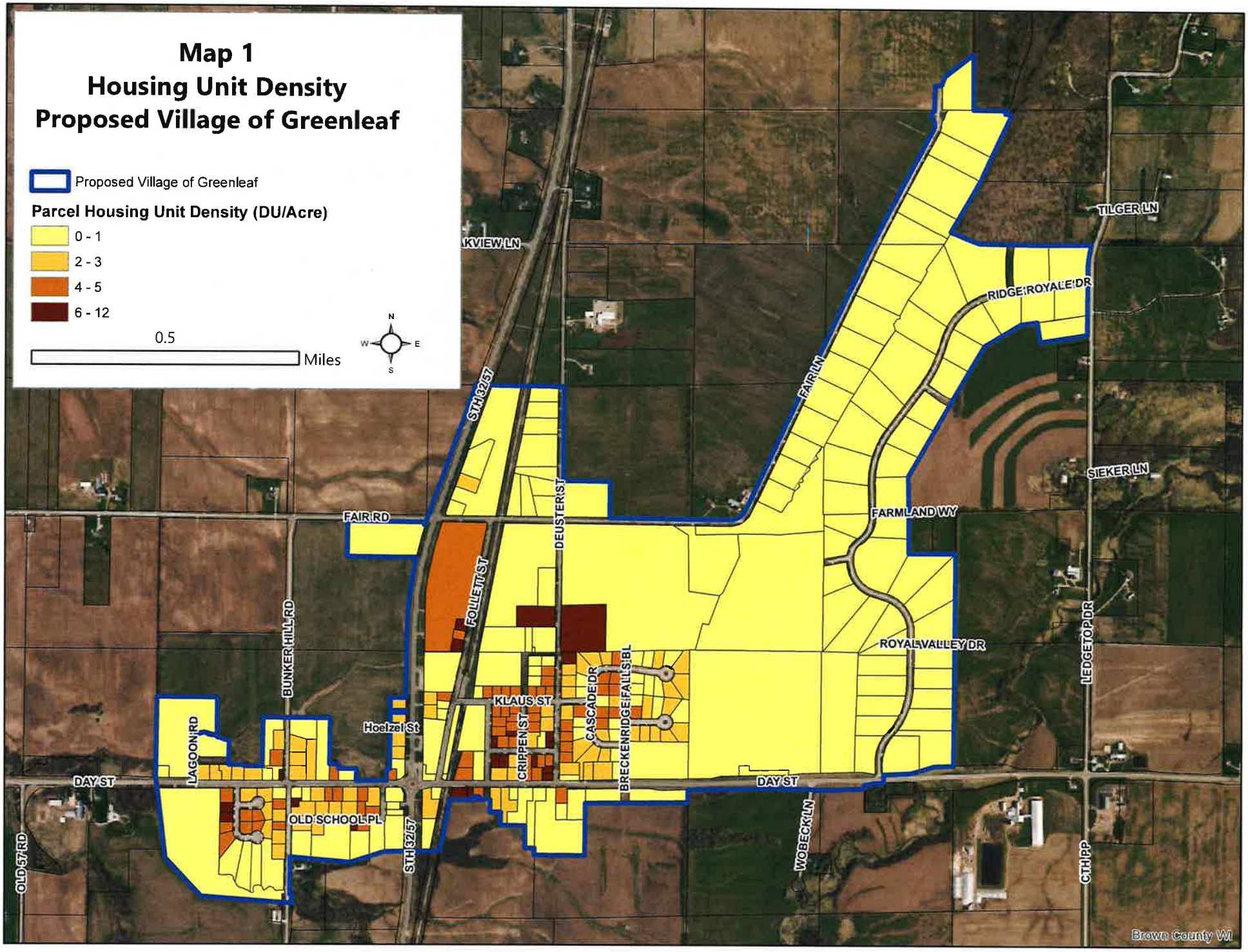
For the reasons set forth above, the IRB should deny Greenleaf's Petition for Incorporation for its failure to meet statutory requirements under Wis. Stat. § 66.0207 and for the detrimental impact that incorporating will have on the surrounding region. The Village opposes the incorporation of Greenleaf and respectfully requests that the IRB deny Greenleaf's Petition to Incorporate and decline to extend to Greenleaf an invitation to modify and resubmit its Petition.

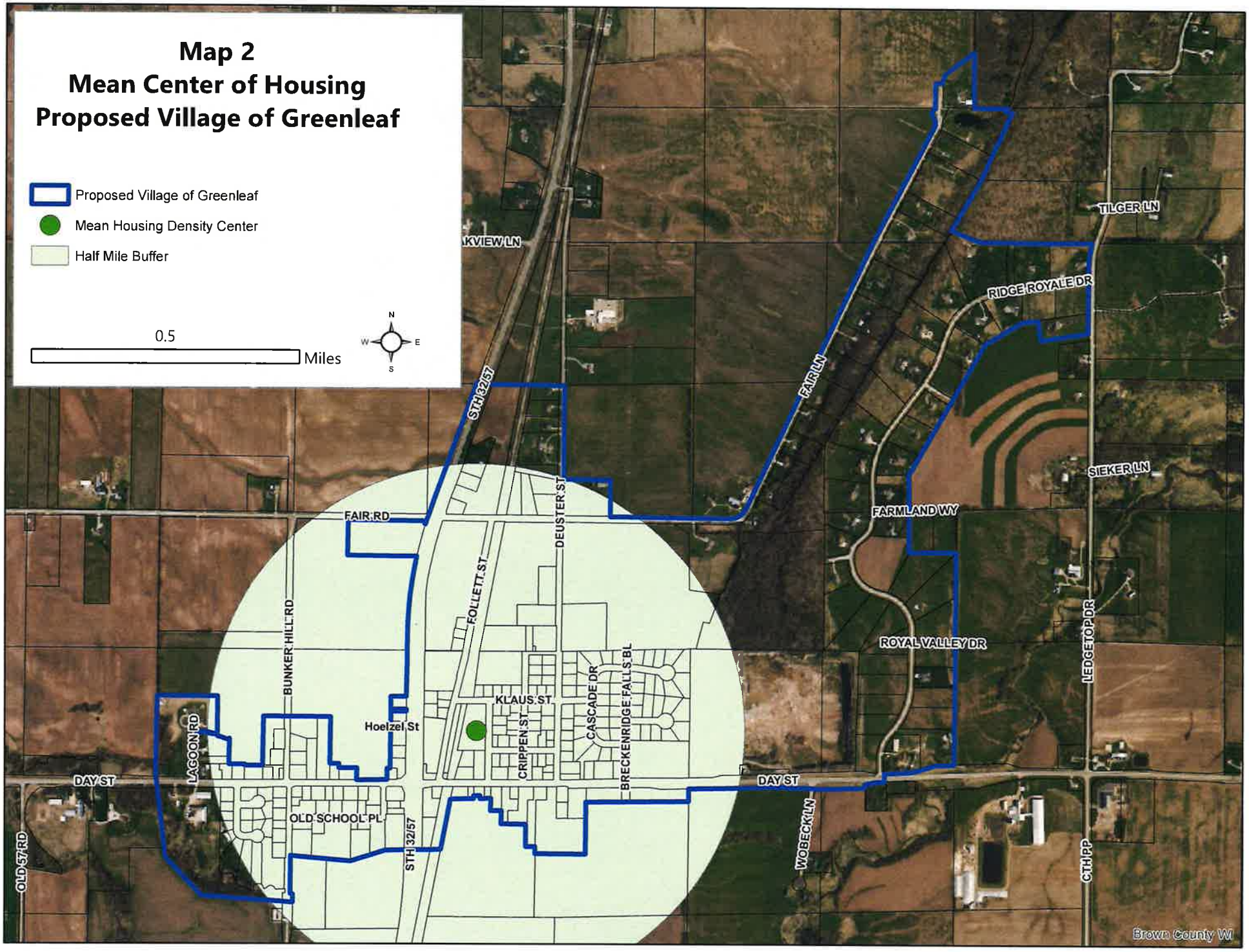
Sincerely,

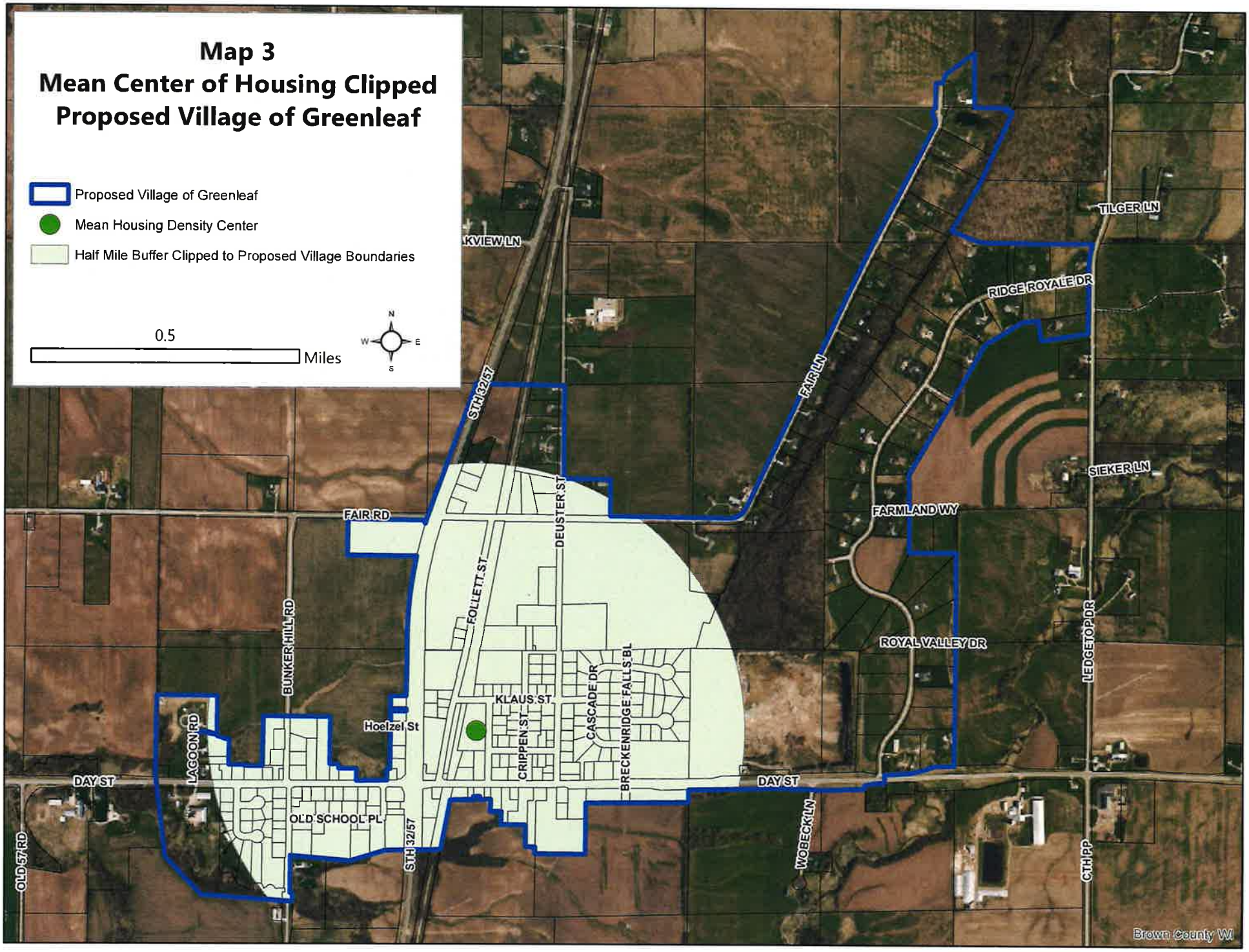
LAW FIRM OF CONWAY, OLEJNICZAK & JERRY, S.C.

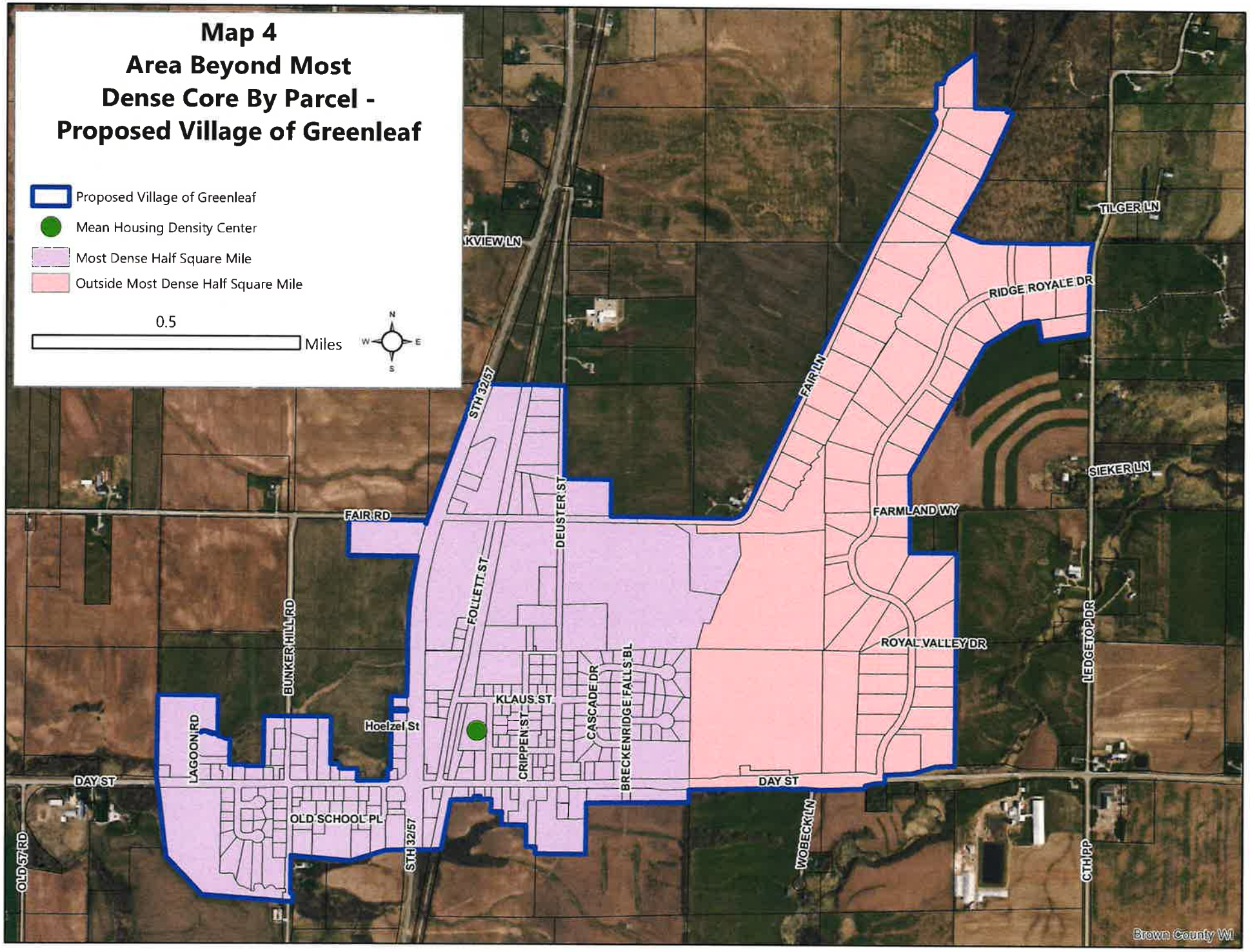
By: _____
Robert R. Gagan

RRG:lps
3469293_3


Map 1
Housing Unit Density
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Parcel Housing Unit Density (DU/Acre)
0 - 1
2 - 3
4 - 5
6 - 12
0.5
Miles
N
W
E
S
KVIEW LN
TILGER LN
RIDGE ROYALE DR
FAIR LN
STH 32/57
SIEKER LN
FAIR RD
DEUSTER ST
FARMLAND WY
FOLLETT ST
BUNKER HILL RD
ROYAL VALLEY DR
LEDGETOP DR
CASCADE DR
BRECKENRIDGE FALLS BL
KLAUS ST
Hoelzel St
CRIPPEN ST
LAGOON RD
DAY ST
DAY ST
OLD SCHOOL PL
STH 32/57
WOBECK LN
CTH PP
OLD 57 RD
Brown County WI


Map 2
Mean Center of Housing
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Mean Housing Density Center
Half Mile Buffer
0.5
Miles
N
W
E
S
KVIEW LN
TILGER LN
RIDGE ROYALE DR
FAIR LN
STH 32/57
SIEKER LN
FARMLAND WY
FAIR RD
DEUSTER ST
FOLLETT ST
BUNKER HILL RD
ROYAL VALLEY DR
LEDGETOP DR
KLAUS ST
CASCADE DR
BRECKENRIDGE FALLS BL
Hoelzel St
CRIPPEN ST
LAGOON RD
DAY ST
DAY ST
OLD SCHOOL PL
STH 32/57
WOBECK LN
CTH PP
OLD 57 RD
Brown County WI


Map 3
Mean Center of Housing Clipped
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Mean Housing Density Center
Half Mile Buffer Clipped to Proposed Village Boundaries
0.5
Miles
N
W
E
S
KVIEW LN
TILGER LN
RIDGE ROYALE DR
FAIR LN
STH 32/57
SIEKER LN
FARMLAND WY
FAIR RD
DEUSTER ST
FOLLETT ST
BUNKER HILL RD
ROYAL VALLEY DR
LEDGETOP DR
KLAUS ST
CASCADE DR
BRECKENRIDGE FALLS BL
CRIPPEN ST
Hoelzel St
LAGOON RD
DAY ST
DAY ST
OLD SCHOOL PL
STH 32/57
WOBECK LN
CTH PP
OLD 57 RD
Brown County WI


Map 4
Area Beyond Most
Dense Core By Parcel -
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Mean Housing Density Center
Most Dense Half Square Mile
Outside Most Dense Half Square Mile
0.5
Miles
N
W
E
S
TILGER LN
RIDGE ROYALE DR
FAIR LN
STH 32/57
SIEKER LN
FARMLAND WY
FAIR RD
DEUSTER ST
FOLLETT ST
ROYAL VALLEY DR
BUNKER HILL RD
LEDGETOP DR
KLAUS ST
CASCADE DR
BRECKENRIDGE FALLS BL
Hoelzel St
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CRIPPEN ST
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OLD SCHOOL PL
STH 32/57
WOBECK LN
CTH PP
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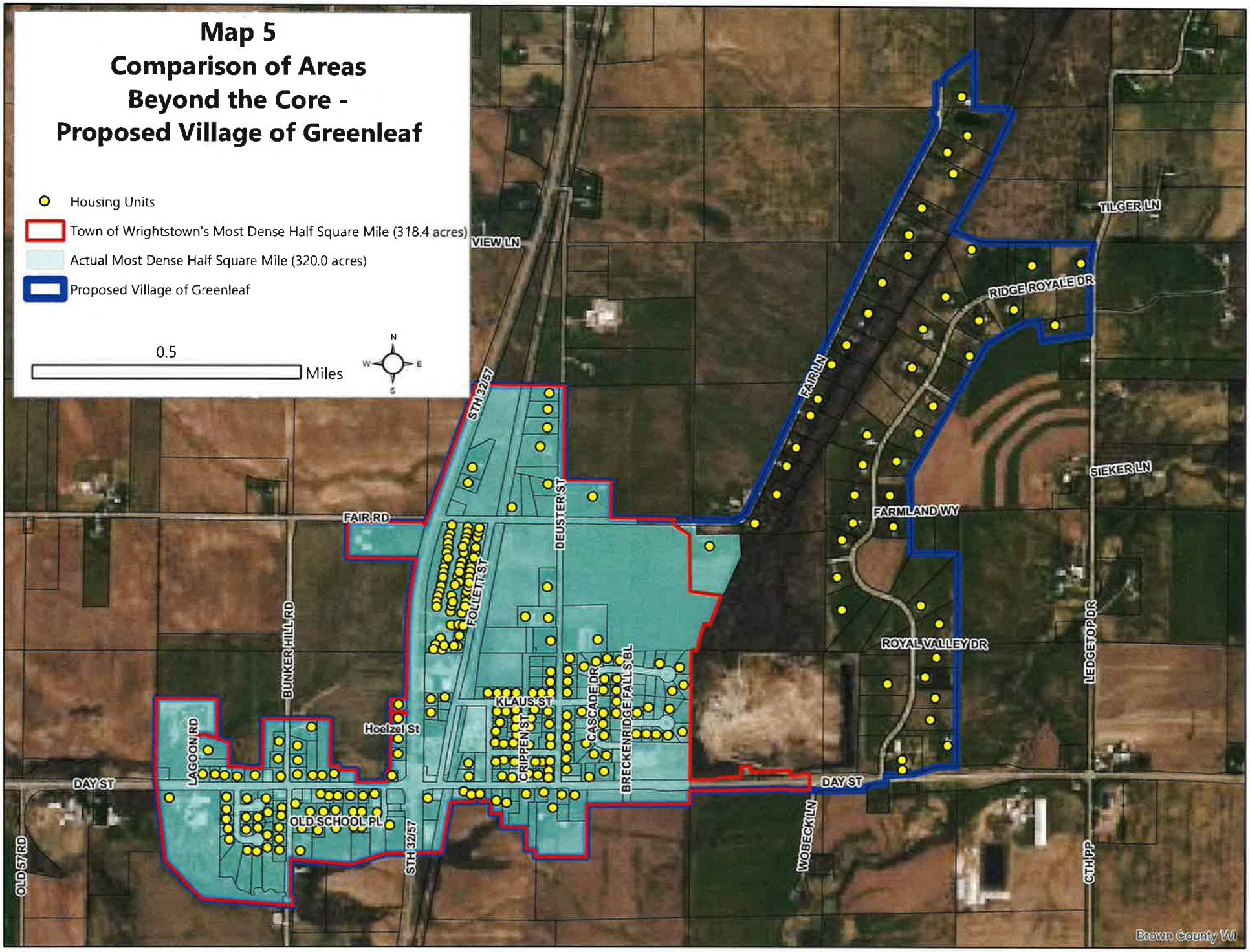
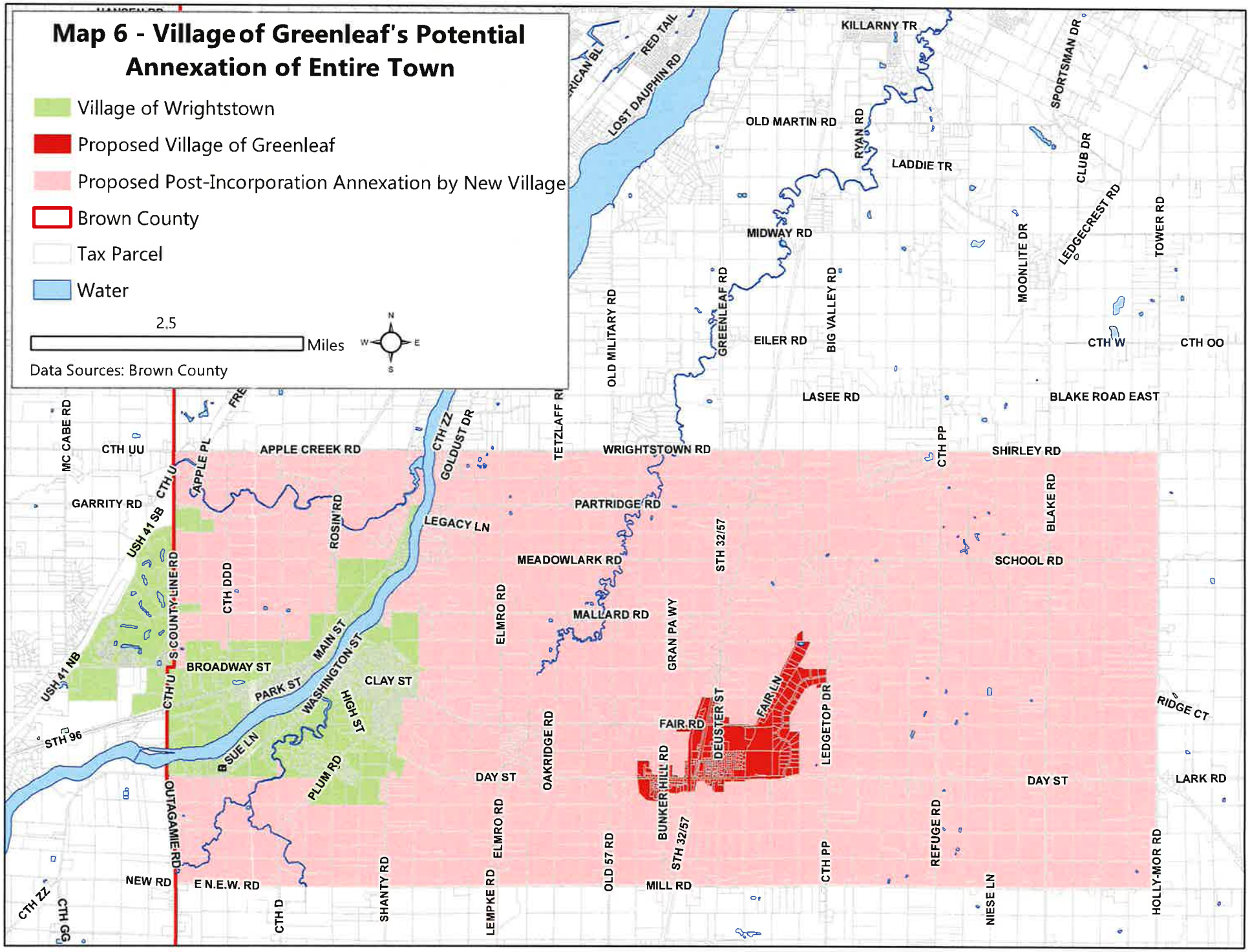
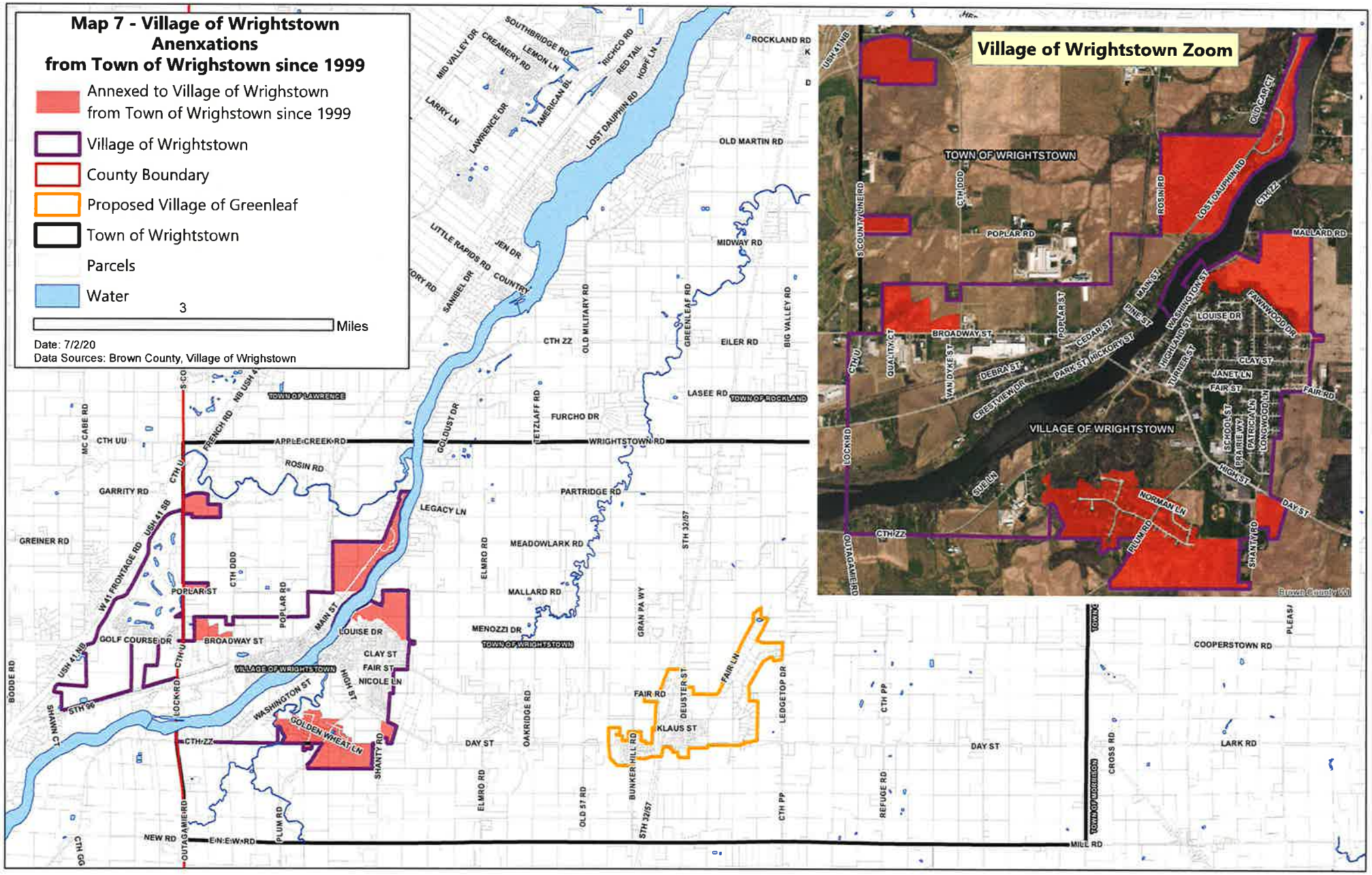
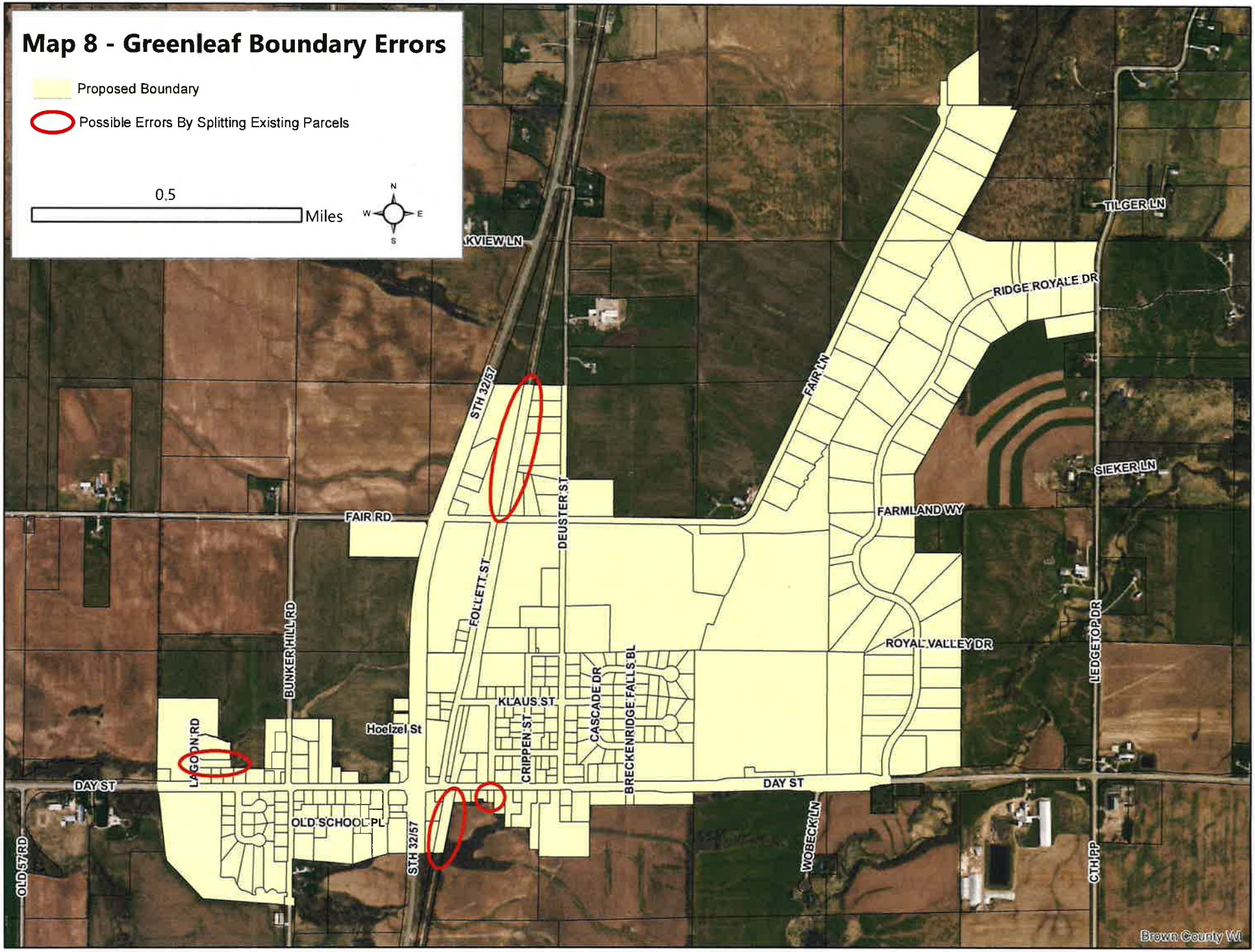
Brown County WI


Map 5
Comparison of Areas
Beyond the Core -
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Housing Units
Town of Wrightstown's Most Dense Half Square Mile (318.4 acres)
Actual Most Dense Half Square Mile (320.0 acres)
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
0.5
Miles
N
W
E
S
VIEW LN
TILGER LN
RIDGE ROYALE DR
FAIR LN
STH 32/57
SIEKER LN
FARMLAND WY
FAIR RD
DEUSTER ST
FOLLE IT ST
BUNKER HILL RD
ROYAL VALLEY DR
LEDGETOP DR
KLAUS ST
CASCADE DR
BRECKENRIDGE FALLS BL
CRIPPEN ST
Hoelzel St
LAGOON RD
DAY ST
OLD SCHOOL PL
WOBECK LN
CTH PP
OLD 57 RD
Brown County WI


Map 6 - Village of Greenleaf's Potential Annexation of Entire Town
Village of Wrightstown
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Proposed Post-Incorporation Annexation by New Village
Brown County
Tax Parcel
Water
2.5
Miles
N
W
E
S
Data Sources: Brown County
KILLARNY TR
SPORTSMAN DR
RED TAIL
LOST DAUPHIN RD
OLD MARTIN RD
RYAN RD
LADDIE TR
CLUB DR
LEDGECREST RD
TOWER RD
MIDWAY RD
MOONLITE DR
OLD MILITARY RD
GREENLEAF RD
BIG VALLEY RD
EILER RD
CTH W
CTH OO
LASEE RD
BLAKE ROAD EAST
MC CABE RD
CTH UU
APPLE PL
APPLE CREEK RD
CTH ZZ
GOLDUST DR
TETZLAFF RD
WRIGHTSTOWN RD
CTH PP
SHIRLEY RD
GARRITY RD
CTH U
USH 41 SB
ROSIN RD
LEGACY LN
PARTRIDGE RD
STH 32/57
BLAKE RD
MEADOWLARK RD
SCHOOL RD
CTH DDD
COUNTY LINE RD
ELMRO RD
MALLARD RD
GRAN PA WY
MAIN ST
WASHINGTON ST
BROADWAY ST
USH 41 NB
CTH U
PARK ST
CLAY ST
HIGH ST
FAIR LN
DEUSTER ST
LEDGETOP DR
RIDGE CT
STH 96
FAIR RD
SUE LN
OAKRIDGE RD
BUNKER HILL RD
PLUM RD
DAY ST
DAY ST
LARK RD
OUTAGAMIE RD
ELMRO RD
STH 32/57
OLD 57 RD
REFUGE RD
CTH PP
NEW RD
E N.E.W. RD
SHANTY RD
LEMPKE RD
MILL RD
NIESE LN
HOLLY-MOR RD
CTH ZZ
CTH GG
CTH D


Map 7 - Village of Wrightstown Anenxations from Town of Wrighstown since 1999
Annexed to Village of Wrightstown from Town of Wrighstown since 1999
Village of Wrightstown
County Boundary
Proposed Village of Greenleaf
Town of Wrightstown
Parcels
Water
3
Miles
Date: 7/2/20
Data Sources: Brown County, Village of Wrighstown
Village of Wrightstown Zoom
TOWN OF WRIGHTSTOWN
VILLAGE OF WRIGHTSTOWN
TOWN OF LAWRENCE
TOWN OF ROCKLAND
TOWN OF WRIGHTSTOWN
ROCKLAND RD
OLD MARTIN RD
MIDWAY RD
EILER RD
LASEE RD
FURCHO DR
WRIGHTSTOWN RD
APPLECREEK RD
ROSIN RD
PARTRIDGE RD
MEADOWLARK RD
MALLARD RD
MENOZZI DR
GARRITY RD
GREINER RD
GOLF COURSE DR
BROADWAY ST
POPLAR ST
LOUISE DR
CLAY ST
FAIR ST
NICOLE LN
GOLDEN WHEAT LN
DAY ST
KLAUS ST
FAIR RD
NEW RD
EINEIWARD
MILL RD
COOPERSTOWN RD
LARK RD
CTH ZZ
CTH UU
CTH DDD
CTH PP
STH 96
STH 32/57
USH 41 SB
USH 41 NB
W A1 FRONTAGE RD
OUTAGAMIE RD
LOCK RD
S CO
SHANTY RD
PLUM RD
NORMAN LN
MAIN ST
WASHINGTON ST
HIGH ST
MALLARD RD
LOST DAUPHIN RD
ROSIN RD
MAIN ST
PINE ST
CEDAR ST
HICKORY ST
PARK ST
DEBRA ST
CRESTVIEW DR
VAN DYKE ST
QUALITY CT
BROADWAY ST
POPLAR ST
LOUISE DR
FAIRWOOD DR
CLAY ST
JANET LN
FAIR ST
FAIR RD
DAY ST
SHANTY RD
PLUM RD
SUE LN
OLD CAR CT
MC CABE RD
BODDE RD
SHAWN CT
CTH GG
LEGACY LN
ELMRO RD
OAKRIDGE RD
OLD 57 RD
BUNKER HILL RD
DEUSTER ST
FAIR LN
LEDGETOP DR
REFUGE RD
CROSS RD
TOWNLINE RD
GRAN PA WY
GREENLEAF RD
OLD MILITARY RD
GOLDUST DR
FETZLAFF RD
BIG VALLEY RD
SOUTHBRIDGE RD
MID VALLEY DR
CREAMERY RD
LEMON LN
AMERICAN BL
RICHCO RD
RED TAIL
HOPE LN
LOST DAUPHIN RD
LARRY LN
LAWRENCE DR
LITTLE RAPIDS RD
JEN DR
COUNTRY
SANIBEL DR
PLEASI
Brown County WI


Map 8 - Greenleaf Boundary Errors
Proposed Boundary
Possible Errors By Splitting Existing Parcels
0.5
Miles
N
W
E
S
KVIEW LN
TILGER LN
RIDGE ROYALE DR
FAIR LN
STH 32/57
SIEKER LN
FARMLAND WY
FAIR RD
DEUSTER ST
FOLLETT ST
ROYAL VALLEY DR
LEDGETOP DR
BUNKER HILL RD
KLAUS ST
CASCADE DR
BRECKENRIDGE FALLS BL
Hoelzel St
CRIPPEN ST
LAGOON RD
DAY ST
DAY ST
OLD SCHOOL PL
STH 32/57
WOBECK LN
CTH PP
OLD 57 RD
Brown County Wi

Appendix A: Difference Between the Hamlet of Greenleaf and the "Ledge"

Hamlet of Greenleaf	**The "Ledge"**
Housing Stock Dates Back to Early 1900's	Housing Stock Dates Back to Early 2000's
Average Residential Property Value = $143,264	Average Residential Property Value = $286,464
Average Residential Lot Size = 0.8 acres	Average Residential Lot Size = 2.9 acres
Zoning = Mostly R-1, with some B-1 and I-1	Zoning = Mostly A-R (Ag. Residential)

Source: Brown County GIS

Appendix B: Recalculated Density Beyond the Most-Dense Half Square Mile

This methodology is a combination of sophisticated geographic analysis. The following details the steps utilized to determine the most-dense ½ square mile and subsequently the area outside of the most-dense ½ square mile.

1. Housing unit locations and totals for each parcel within the proposed incorporation boundary were determined using Google Maps aerial photographs and "Street View", in addition to Brown County GIS parcel assessment data and the County's most recent aerial photographs (2017). These numbers and locations were confirmed through field research conducted by Village of Wrightstown Police Chief Greg Deike in September 2019 and June 2020.
2. The housing unit density per acre of each parcel was calculated by dividing the housing units on each parcel by the parcel's size. (Map 1)
3. Using the ESRI ArcGIS Tool "Mean Center" the center of the housing unit density within the proposed incorporation boundaries was calculated.
4. A ½ mile buffer around the "Mean Center" point was calculated using the ESRI ArcGIS Tool "Buffer." (Map 2)
5. To determine which areas of the ½ mile buffer were within the proposed incorporation boundaries, the ESRI ArcGIS Tool "Clip" was run. This produced an area that was not yet a full half square mile (including right-of-way) within the proposed incorporation boundaries. (Map 3)
6. The area needed to be expanded to reach the ½ square mile threshold, so the boundaries were adjusted to fit existing parcel boundaries, create a contiguous boundary, and most closely cross existing right-of-way. Three determinations were made: (Map 4)
   (a) If any portion of the parcel overlapped the area determined in 5. above, the boundary was expanded to include the entire parcel, outside of two parcels (see below).
      - To note, two parcels that overlapped the area determined in 5. above were removed from the most-dense ½ square mile boundary because they were not developed. If added to the calculation, in their entirety, these parcels would create a total calculated area that far exceeded the ½ square mile.
   (b) If any parcel with a dwelling unit was directly adjacent to a parcel overlapped by the area determined in 5. above, the boundary was expanded to include the entire parcel.
   (c) If any parcel was contiguous to the selection of the entire parcel as determined in 5., 6(a), or 6(b) above, the boundary was expanded to include the entire parcel.
      - To note, following the steps 6(a), 6(b), and 6(c), the parcel at 1810 Fair Lane was removed from the area beyond the most-dense half square mile because of the parcels which were added throughout adjacency, it's centroid was furthest from the Mean Center Half Square Mile. (Map 2)
7. The total housing units, acres, and square miles of the entire proposed incorporation boundary (including right-of-way), inside the most-dense ½ square mile (including right-of-way), and outside the most-dense ½ square mile (including right-of-way) were compiled.
8. The housing units per acre of the entire proposed incorporation boundary (including right-of-way), inside the most-dense ½ square mile (including right-of-way), and outside

the most-dense ½ square mile (including right-of-way) were calculated by dividing the number of housing units in each area by the total number of square miles in the respective area.

Appendix C: Assessed Value for Real Estate Tax Purposes (Beyond the Most-Dense Half Square Mile)

	Assessed Value	**Acres**
Residential Beyond the Core	$14,078,400	155.644
Non-Residential Beyond the Core	$343,500	106.901
Total Beyond the Core	$14,421,900	262.545

APPENDIX D

24 pages Free Serving the communities of Wrightstown, Greenleaf, Morrison, Wayside, Hollandtown, Rural Kaukauna and Rural De Pere Vol. 14, No. 12 • March 21, 2018

Could there be a Village of Greenleaf?

By Brian Roebke
Editor

The Town of Wrightstown board dropped a bomb at last week's board meeting, discussing the possibility of incorporating as a village since the town and Village of Wrightstown have failed to come up with a border agreement over the past year.

At Wednesday's meeting at the town hall in Greenleaf, Attorney James Kalny and Planner Tanya Fonseca of GRAEF explained the many options the town has at its disposal in an attempt to either come up with an agreement with the village or incorporate as a village, essentially keeping the village from annexing any land from the town.

With the Town of Wrightstown surrounding most of the village, the only growth area the village would have is a small sliver of land bordering the Town of Kaukauna on the west side of the Fox River.

Due to state statutes, this would likely be a two-step process to turn the entire town into a village.

Initially, the state must approve a petition based on a number criteria based on population density. The hamlet of Greenleaf would fit that bill, but the state does not approve incorporations that are too large.

"If ultimately this community wanted to cooperate, and wanted a larger area to be part of it, annexation (of the remaining town) would be a process that you would follow," Fonseca said.

A large portion of land currently in the town between Highway U and Highway DD that's been targeted for development by the Village of Wrightstown could become part of the new village.

That's a CliffsNotes summary of the process that can be very complicated and take several years to complete.

Fonseca gave town board members information about towns she worked with that went through this process, but none in the immediate area.

Area towns that have recently completed the process are the Town of Harrison in Calumet County turning into the Village of Harrison, and the Town of Menasha in Winnebago County turning into the Village of Fox Crossing.

Brian Roebke photo

Attorney James Kalny (right) gave town board members a background of the Town of Wrightstown's boundary issues with the Village of Wrightstown at last week's meeting. Pictured are Treasurer Jeanette Roskom, Chairman Bill Verbeten, and Supervisors Jesse Juedes and Ron Diny.

She recommends the town do that process "pretty swiftly" because there's excitement in the community after passing a referendum ~~of the~~ voters that ultimately turns the proposed area of the town to become a village.

Fonseca noted generally the relationship between cities and villages and towns are adversarial.

"Even though you may be friendly at initial go of becoming a village if you were to pursue it with the best of intentions, that can become adversarial even with

Greenleaf

continued from page 1

the best intentions," she said. "It is best to move forward with annexation quickly if that is the ultimate goal of the territory."

The process legally starts once the town files an application with the state. It's at that time that the annexation process to bring any town land into the village stops while the process proceeds.

Kalny reviewed the history of the boundary discussions going back to 2016. Several areas were annexed into the village, but when the boards meet in March of last year to discuss options and formulate discussion points, the boards came to a standstill.

In May, the town formulated an intergovernmental agreement generally proposing:

- An area where only unanimous annexations could occur
- An area where the town would not challenge any annexations
- An area where the town and village would cooperatively develop
- An agreement for the village to extend services to the town on the east side and to limit village development to commercial.

The parties met in June and discussed the proposal, with the village raising several concerns.

The town put together another draft in August for discussion, proposing four territorial zones:

- Village development zone
- Unanimous annexation zone
- Cooperative development zone
- No annexation zone

The village continued to have concerns and briefly cut off talks. Once those talks resumed, the agreement seems to be at a standstill.

Now the town has brought incorporation as a possible resolution. Incorporations may not be an immediate protection, it's a costly and complicated process, a considerable planning and expertise is required, but GREAF and Associates is able to help.

The board also discussed working on its comprehensive study, and decided that could be done in conjunction with the possible incorporation.

This will be part of the plan commission's meeting on Monday, April 2.

The board approved a rezoning request submitted by Casey and Sara Laabs. They requested to rezone three acres from Ag-Res to B-1 Commercial Business. They plan to remodel the barn at the property located at 6324 County W and open it for parties and banquets.

Board members also approved a rezoning of 44 acres from Ex Ag to Ag Res from Peter Van Noie on Birch Creek Road.

Brian Roebke photo

Planner Tanya Fonseca gives her presentation at last week's Town of Wrightstown board meeting in Greenleaf. Fonseca presented

provides encouragement

By Ed Byrne
The Brillion News

GREENLEAF – The railroad is gone but in Greenleaf, it is "full steam ahead" as the Town of Wrightstown moves to incorporate the urbanized area of Greenleaf as a village.

At a special meeting last week, the town board heard from Mark Mommaerts, the Village of Harrison's planner, who was a key part of incorporating the Town of Harrison into the Village of Harrison.

The town board also appointed a Greenleaf Incorporation Committee to handle the incorporation process. All of the committee's meetings will be subject to the state's Open Meetings Law, and so each meeting will be public noticed at least 24 hours before the meeting takes place.

Mommaerts – who grew up in the Wrightstown area - described the Harrison experience.

The town defined a compact urban area for incorporation, but once incorporation took place, the new village proceeded to annex almost all of the remaining township.

The interest in incorporating Greenleaf came out of failed boundary agreement talks between the Town of Wrightstown and the Village of Wrightstown.

Once a portion of the Town of Wrightstown is incorporated as the Village of Greenleaf the Village of Wrightstown would no longer be able to annex any of its land.

At the July 11 meeting at the Wrightstown Town Hall, the village had its development consultant – former trustee Mark Leonard – attend as an observer.

On the Wrightstown Village Board's agenda for its July 17 meeting was consideration of contracting with Vandewalle and Associates, of Madison and Milwaukee, for planning services related to the proposed incorporation by the Town of Wrightstown.

Kristan Sanchez, a planning consultant with Graef USA, who specializes in crafting municipal incorporations, held a map of the proposed Village of Greenleaf. (Ed Byrne/BN)

The Village of Wrightstown is concerned that Greenleaf's incorporation could land lock the village and prevent it from growing in Brown County on both the east and west sides of the Fox River.

Town Chairman Bill Verbeten said the Town of Wrightstown wants to protect itself from the Village of Wrightstown – and thus the incorporation plan.

"We are protecting our boundaries, our borders and our tax base," Verbeten said. "The Village of Wrightstown wants to get larger ... [and] we just want to keep what we have. That's all."

The committee

The town board appointed itself and 13 other people to the Incorporation Committee.

They are: William Verbeten, town chairman; town supervisors Ron Diny and Jesse Juedes; town clerk Donna Martzahl; town treasurer Jeanette Roskom; zoning administrator Rick Gerbers; public works director Bob Brick; sanitary district clerk Stephanie Owen; and citizens William Ehnerd, Bob Stephany, Chris Ehnerd, Mike Zirbel, John Brittnacher (Greenleaf Vol. Fire Department), Matt Brick and Zach Rutter.

The first meeting of the Greenleaf Incorporation Committee will take place on Wednesday, July 25, at 5:30 p.m. at the Wrightstown Town Hall, 1527 Day Street in Greenleaf. It may include a closed session to allow the committee to discuss legal strategy with Town Attorney James Kalny.

Harrison's story

Mommaerts said that when incorporation takes place, both the new village and town are governed by the town board, until a special election takes place and a permanent village board is elected.

He said that it is important for a town to plan for incorporation well so the incorporation referendum passes on the first vote.

Mark Mommaerts

Mommaerts said Harrison struggled as a town, in part because of annexation pressures from neighboring cities and villages.

"We tried to protect our borders by working out agreements, non-annexation agreements, but that just wasn't working," Mommaerts said.

By becoming a village, Harrison was able to protect its borders and begin doing some serious long-range planning.

The whole process of incorporation took about 18 months for Harrison.

Mommaerts said the biggest, and most time-consuming, part of the process was building the documents to submit to the state in the incorporation petition.

"It took us four to six months to put that together," he said.

It was worth the effort, though, according to Mommaerts. It was comprehensive enough that, although Appleton and Menasha opposed the incorporation, they had little in the plan to criticize.

The Town of Wrightstown's incorporation effort is being made easier because the town is just finishing up work on a new comprehensive plan, which will provide a lot of the information for the incorporation documents.

"border agreements" between the old Town of Harrison and the cities of Menasha and Appleton. That would not be a problem for the Town of Wrightstown, which has no border agreements.

Once the Village of Harrison was created, it and the remaining Town of Harrison worked out a deal where the village would supply services to the "remnant town."

Eventually, the entire town was made a part of the Village of Harrison, and the town ceased to exist.

Work in progress

The current work plan for the incorporation process includes a flyer that answers frequently asked questions. It was mailed out to all residents within the Greenleaf Sanitary District. Bill Verbeten said the flyer should be mailed to everyone in the town, in case large areas of the town are annexed into the Village of Greenleaf once incorporation goes through.

Incorporation Committee member John Brittnacher and retired town clerk Faye Wierschke are working on a community history document to be included in the incorporation packet.

The committee is expected to choose between two options for boundaries of the Village of Greenleaf. They are based primarily on the sanitary district's service area.

Committee members will then go door-to-door in the area proposed for incorporation, to meet with residents and answer their questions.

Kalny asked that the Incorporation Committee members put their best efforts into the process.

"You'd hate to go through this and then lose the [incorporation referendum]," he said.

Committee members said they have heard a lot of positive comments about the plans for incorporation – and no negative comments.

The Brillion News - 7/19/18

Town of Wrightstown appoints members to incorporation committee

By Brian Roebke
Editor

Town of Wrightstown board members are receiving overwhelmingly positive comments on the process to incorporate a portion of the town into the Village of Greenleaf following a nearly two-hour meeting last week.

Kristan Sanchez, a planner and project manager with Greaef, went through the process during last Wednesday's meeting that included a visit from Mark Mommaerts, the Village of Harrison planner went through the process that the town went through to first incorporate a portion of the town into a village, then bring the town remnant into the village.

"He basically gave us ideas on what we can do and what we can't do," Town Chair Bill Verbeten said.

The town board unanimously voted to form an incorporation committee, consisting of Verbeten, Supervisor Jesse Juedes, Supervisor Ron Diny, Treasurer Jeanette Roskom, Secretary Donna Martzahl, and residents Stephanie Owen, Bob Stephany, Mike Zirbel, John Brittnacher, Matt Brick, Bob Brick, Rick Gerbers, Zach Rutter, and Bill Ehnerd.

The committee's next meeting is set for July 25 at 5:30 p.m. at the town hall.

A lot of research of the historical background of the proposed village is already completed.

A representative from Schenck presented the financial data for the two boundary options they have so the town and village can both financially stand on their own.

"Because of where Harrison is and where they border other villages and how much opposition there was, very little," Diny said. "They had a couple lawsuits that came up after but they won everything."

Juedes doesn't think the town of Wrightstown's situation is nearly as complicated as Harrison, since they broke multiple border agreements and the number of municipalities the town bordered.

"The separation that we have should make this a lot easier," Diny said.

Board members said they would not contest any town residents that wanted to annex into the Village of Wrightstown instead of the Village of Greenleaf.

"We just want to protect the long term" Diny said.

Even after the incorporation process is complete, there are possibilities for the two villages to swap properties subject to a negotiation process, allowing landowners to switch into the other village.

Victims identified in Morrison crash

Townspeople warm to Greenleaf incorporation idea

By Ed Byrne
The Brillion News

GREENLEAF – At the Town of Wrightstown's Annual Meeting last week, there was an hour-long presentation, including a question-and-answer period, where the possibility of incorporating the Greenleaf area as a village was explained.

By the end of the meeting, there were signs that the idea might have some interest, even though most of the people at the meeting live in rural areas outside of the proposed "village" of Greenleaf.

That's important, because the initiative for incorporating the hamlet or borough of Greenleaf into an official village depends on how the people living within the boundaries of the proposed village feel.

Town attorney James Kalny estimated that the cost of incorporation could run between $80,000 and $100,000 – in addition to the $25,000 non-refundable application fee the state requires.

Town Chairman Bill Verbeten said the town has $110,000 it received as a refund from the Brown County Stadium District sales tax fund – and that money hasn't been earmarked for use. Verbeten said he will check to see if incorporation of Greenleaf would be a permissible use of the money.

The impetus for incorporation came after boundary talks between the town and the Village of Wrightstown failed to reach an agreement.

At last week's meeting, two consultants from the planning firm of Graef USA outlined the process.

Kristan Sanchez said the process involves:

- Beginning grassroots conversations in the community
- Identifying leadership from within the area to be incorporated

(GREENLEAF/page 15)

Attorney James Kalny told citizens at the Town of Wrightstown Annual Meeting that the possibility of incorporating the town came up after talks over a boundary agreement with the Village of Wrightstown failed to bear fruit. (Ed Byrne/BN)

Planning consultant Kristan Sanchez, of Graef Inc., explained the benefits of incorporating the borough of Greenleaf into a village. The top benefit is protection from annexation by another village or city. (Ed Byrne/BN)

GREENLEAF
(from page 4)

- Conducting a feasibility study
- Drafting the formal documents
- Publishing a notice of the intent to incorporate
- Circulating a petition, which will be reviewed by a county circuit court
- Submitting an incorporation docket to the state incorporation review board, and then if it is approved,
- Holding a referendum with people living within the proposed village allowed to vote.

There would be at least one public hearing held during the process.

"You have to prove that you meet the [standards for a new village as outlined in] the statutes," Sanchez said.

Graef planner Tanya Fonseca said Greenleaf has what the state looks for – compactness, density and community identity.

"You have a really strong cultural identity [as a community] that's been there for a long time," Fonseca said. "This history and this culture and all the commerce you have in the center of your community really helps support that argument that you could qualify to be a village if you choose to do so."

She said the proposed Village of Greenleaf would have to be financially viable, and the remainder of the township would also have to be a viable town.

A specialist in incorporating new villages in Wisconsin, Tanya Fonseca said the community of Greenleaf has the density and population that the state looks for when it approves new incorporations. Her presentation dominated the Town of Wrightstown's Annual Town Meeting last week. A decision to proceed toward incorporation could come as soon as May. (Ed Byrne/BN)

"You want to sleep well at night knowing that everybody is going to be taken care of," Fonseca said. "No one would be forgotten."

She said new villages often are formed, and then begin annexing large areas of the remaining township.

Fonseca said the threat of Greenleaf incorporating, even if it doesn't go through, could be positive in itself.

"With the potential incorporation of Greenleaf, as part of that there could be a simultaneous process of a boundary agreement with the Village of Wrightstown," Fonseca said.

She said the Village of Wrightstown might be willing to take boundary agreement talks more seriously.

Town resident Eric Chaet, whose homestead is along the Fox River just outside the Village of Wrightstown, doesn't consider the growth of Wrightstown friendly. But he said a new Village of Greenleaf could be just as offensive to rural neighbors.

"The town is not going to be the same whatever happens," Chaet said. "The town is changing right this minute. It's going from a laid-back place ... to becoming a fighter for land and money, which is what the village [of Wrightstown] is. If you win, you're going to become like they are. ... Neither one of you want to preserve what is; what you want is land and money."

Gary Pahl, a member of the town Plan Commission and the Brown County Planning Commission, said he favors the incorporation of Greenleaf as a village.

"If we get Greenleaf incorporated, we annex the rest of the town in," Pahl said. He said the members of the current town board would likely be elected to the new village board.

Attorney Kalny advised the town board to have a good plan before going forward to consider incorporating Greenleaf.

"We have looked at all the different options," town chairman Bill Verbeten said. "If the people want to have [incorporation of Greenleaf] done, we'd like to get it done as soon as possible."

Although the cost of incorporation was estimated at as much as $125,000, town Supervisor Jesse Juedes said that the town has spent tens of thousands of dollars on legal fees in two failed attempts to reach a boundary agreement with the Village of Wrightstown to limit annexations of land from the town – and all of that money is gone with nothing to show for it.

Chaet, who began the night opposed to the incorporation idea, changed his mind by the end of the presentation and discussion.

"I think this sounds like the least miserable option," he said.

Committee gets start on 'Greenleaf' incorporation

By Brian Roebke
Editor

It's becoming more apparent that the Town of Wrightstown's discussions to incorporate into a village are more than a negotiating ploy over a border agreement with the Village of Wrightstown.

Town officials held a special meeting last week to consult with Kristan Sanchez, a planner and project manager with Greaef, a professional consulting services firm.

Town Chairman Bill Verbeten and supervisors Ron Diny and Jesse Juedes met with Sanchez and residents Zack Rutter, Bill Ehnerd, Bob Brick, and Stephanie Owen.

They looked at three maps that showed potential boundaries for the village that incorporate assessed value and land area, since the town must prove the new village and town remnant can support themselves financially after the split.

The group reviewed two residential areas along "the ledge," with agreement that people living below the ledge feel more a part of the hamlet of "Greenleaf" than those who live on top of the ledge.

Including the lower part of the ledge seems more appropriate to include in the proposed village.

Among the discussion was the state requirement that the village be at least a half square mile in size and include at least 150 residents.

The state requires that areas to be incorporated be more urban and compact in character and any open areas included must be demonstrated to be developable within three years.

Towns choose to incorporate into villages for many reasons.

Among those are gaining direct control of the planning and use of land, protect boundaries from annexation from surrounding villages, and protecting current and future revenue sources/

The town and village of Wrightstown have been unable to come up with a border agreement, leading to this proposal.

The incorporation process consists of community outreach, identifying leadership of the effort, conducting a feasibility study, and proceeding to draft a petition document.

There are three public events held in the town in the upcoming few weeks for community outreach, so a "frequently asked questions" sheet is being developed, along with a dedicated page on the town's website, for town residents to get consistent information about the proposal.

If the town incorporates a portion of its land into a village, it would create a "donut," with the village portion on the inside and the town remnant on the outside. If incorporation is ultimately approved by the state, there would be two governmental entities: the Town of Wrightstown and Village of Greenleaf that are governed independently. The boards would likely enter into an agreement that would combine operations into one. It should be noted all three of the town's elected officials live in what would remain in the town. At some point, the new village government could add the remaining portion of the town into the village, creating a hard-village to village border with the Village of Wrightstown.

One question residents have had is the effect on taxes, but Verbeten noted taxes in the Village of Harrison went down following the process to turn the town into a village.

Town official stress the services should remain the same whether people live in the town or village.

The state charges a $25,000 fee for towns to petition for annexation, and that expense would be borne by the new village if successful, and the town if unsuccessful.

Enherd asked what could stop the Village of Wrightstown from annexing land from the town before this goes into effect, but Verbeten and Diny told him the village cannot force anyone to annex unless the village purchases the property and annexes itself.

Verbeten and Town Clerk Donna Martzahl believe most of the property owners in question would like to stay out of the Village of Wrightstown.

The only way a village can force someone to annex is if their land is bordered on three sides by the village.

"When we first sat down with the border agreement, we wanted to protect them from coming to Greenleaf, so ultimately if we do lose some portions (across the Fox River) during the process, we still do what we wanted to do in our initial agreement that they didn't want to do," Juedes said.

The state requires a referendum among the residents within the proposed annexation area. People residing outside of the proposed village would not get to vote.

Town residents will have plenty of opportunity to be involved in the process, and town officials want to be extremely transparent in the process

This can be a 1-2-year process, but the town is aggressively pursuing this proposal.

Brian Roebke photo

From left, Bill Verbeten, Jesse Juedes, Ron Diny, Zack Rutter, Bill Enherd, Kristan Sanchez, Bob Brick, Stephanie Owen, and Donna Martzahl met last week about a proposal to turn a portion of the Town of Wrightstown into a village. A second step would be to add the remnant of the town into the village.

Sisters receive their

Town of Wrightstown hopes to hold incorporation meeting next month

By Brian Roebke
Editor

The Town of Wrightstown has finally had its request for incorporation submitted to the state Department of Administration.

The request to take a portion of the town, the hamlet known as Greenleaf, and incorporate that area into a separate government entity, known as the village of Greenleaf, now faces a hearing in front of the incorporation review board. Town supervisors hope that meeting can be held in June at Alleliuia Lutheran Church, with a virtual opportunity for residents to "attend" the meeting.

Town Attorney James Kalny said the hearing is open to the public, and anyone can speak on the merits of the petition at that time. The town will make a presentation and the review board will record all testimony. Following the hearing, there is a 10-day period where written comments can be added to the request.

He said the town received correspondence from the Village of Wrightstown, which still hopes to mediate the situation, but after a closed session of the town board, no action was taken.

The village has registered as a "party of interest" and can provide its own testimony at the hearing that will likely last several hours.

The town has a desire to do what is called the "Harrison two-step" at the state level, where a portion of the town is incorporated, followed by an agreement between the new village and the remaining town to combine. That would effectively eliminate any annexation requests by property owners wishing to join the Village of Wrightstown.

During the payment of bills portion of the meeting, supervisors expressed concern with a bill for $26,700 from Graef, who is assisting in the effort to incorporate.

Supervisors have been frustrated with the speed Graef has operated, and then to see an invoice of this amount for recent work was concerning.

The board accepted bids from companies for road repairs. Scott Construction was low for cold mix, chip seal, and wedging. BEST Enterprises was low for gravel, and MCC won the bid for hot mix.

Roads slated to be receive maintenance this year are Blake Road, Elmro Road, Partridge Road, and School Road.

Town Chairman Bill Verbeten also suggested looking at Shanty Road, and board members will review the condition of a portion of that road prior to the next meeting.

Greenleaf Greenscapes was awarded the bid for cutting ditches in the town at a price of $17,452.

America in Hard Times

The global influenza outbreak added misery and death to a war-torn world

By Tom Collins

The so-called Spanish Flu outbreak during and just after World War I has some parallels to our modern COVID-19 or coronavirus outbreak. It was a disease that knew no borders and it often was deadly for victims as it spread around the world

Today, some use the term "Chinese flu" with the current outbreak. The 1918-19 flu earned the nickname "Spanish Flu" but it also was a misnomer. That name came from one of the flu outbreaks that received early publicity and the fact the Spanish King Alfonso, famously dealt with the virus.

The 1918-19 outbreak came in two stages. There were smaller with the flu virus.

In the World War I era, ocean travel was still the primary method of taking people, animals and cargo between nations. Because of the need to move troops and cargo, it was impossible to limit ship traffic.

In that war-ravaged era, basic health systems were overwhelmed in combat zones like France. And people from all over the world literally joined together in the war effort. France became a crucible of diseases and the perfect incubator for what became the Spanish flu super virus strain.

Adding to the mix of troops and workers from around the world were refugees from various ... wartime France, it blended into a super virus.

Port cities in the United States like Boston, Brest, France and Freeport in West Africa experienced the stronger flu outbreak that began in the fall of 1918 and continued through the winter.

Scientists studying the 1918-'19 flu outbreak discovered the earlier, smaller outbreaks in the United States.

One of the American spring flu outbreaks happened in rural Haskins County, Kan. A young recruit came from that county to train at Ft. Riley, Kan. He was assigned to the camp's cooking detail. Soon the majority of those in the camp were crippled by the flu. The Ft. Riley incident was only a preview of what came later that year.

Someone recently used the example of the current virus spreading like fire in dry grass. That was true with the 1918-19 Spanish flu.

Recently, a Harvard scientist offered a stark example. He said an estimated 200,000 people crowded together for a Philadelphia parade. Soon 15,000

See Influenza, page 15

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