
**1994
MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, NJ**

**Adopted:
April 17, 1995**

**P. David Zimmerman
Township Planner**

Planning Board Members

Robert Best
Mike Eagles, Vice-Chairman
Clifford Gibbs
Robert Giordano
Jean Greco
James Kelsey
Pete Miller
Linda Percussi
Robert Saville
Stephanie Van Pelt, Mayor
Ron Zuckerman, Chairman

Committee Members

John Cummins
Bonnie Kelsey
Peter Miller
Chris Saville
Stephanie Van Pelt, Mayor

Borough Officials

William Edleston, Esq., Township Attorney
Jodee Grosinski, Township Administrator
P. David Zimmerman, P.P., Township Planner

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
POPULATION	7
Population History - Warren County Population	7
Population History - Independence Township	7
Regional Population Trends	9
Future Population	10
ECONOMIC BASE	12
Property Tax Characteristics	12
EXISTING LAND USE	15
Residential Uses	16
Business Use	16
Industrial Uses	17
Public Land	17
Quasi Public Land	17
Agricultural	17
Vacant	18
Conclusions	18
EXISTING ZONING ANALYSIS	19
1990 Housing Profile	19
1994 Housing Profile	19
Ultimate Zoning Housing Profile	20
Conclusion	20
CONSERVATION PLAN ELEMENT	22
Wetlands	22
Recommendations	23
Slope	24
Recommendations	24
Topography and Geology	25
Geology and Water Supply	25
Recommendations	26
Soils	26
Recommendations	28
Watercourses	28
Recommendations	29
HISTORIC PLAN ELEMENT	31
UTILITIES	32

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
CIRCULATION	33
HOUSING PLAN ELEMENT	34
Municipal Housing Stock Inventory	34
Municipal Housing Stock Projection	39
Municipal Demographic Characteristics	41
Existing and Future Employment Characteristics	44
Fair Share Housing Need	46
LAND USE PLAN	47
STATEMENT OF PLANNING RELATIONSHIPS	49
RECYCLING PLAN ELEMENT	50

TABLE OF TABLES

	<u>Page No.</u>
TABLE 1: POPULATION 1960 - 1980 WARREN COUNTY AND SELECTED NEW JERSEY COUNTIES	7
TABLE 2: POPULATION HISTORY INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, NJ 1940 - 1990	7A
TABLE 3: POPULATION AGE GROUPS IN INDEPENDENCE AND WARREN COUNTY (BY PERCENT), FOR 1970 AND 1980	9
TABLE 4: POPULATION GROWTH COMPARISONS 1950 - 1990 INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES AND WARREN COUNTY	9A
TABLE 5: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE POPULATION FOR INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP AND WARREN COUNTY	10
TABLE 6: COMPARISON OF TAX PARCELS AND ASSESSED VALUE 1988 AND 1993, INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, NJ	13
TABLE 7: EQUALIZED TAX RATES FOR INDEPENDENCE AND SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES, 1988, 1993 AND 1994	13
TABLE 7: EQUALIZED TAX RATES FOR INDEPENDENCE AND SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES, 1988, 1993 AND 1994	13
TABLE 8: COVERED EMPLOYMENT IN INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, NJ 1972 - 1999	14
TABLE 9: LAND USE IN INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1994	15
TABLE 10: LAND USE IN INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP 1976, 1980 & 1988	17A
TABLE 11: ULTIMATE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING ZONING, INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, WARREN CO., NJ 1994	21
TABLE 12: GROUNDWATER YIELD OF GEOLOGIC FORMATIONS INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, N.J. 1994	30
TABLE 13: AGE OF HOUSING, INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP AND MORRIS COUNTY	35

TABLE OF TABLES
(Continued)

	<u>Page No.</u>
TABLE 14: HOUSING RENTAL AND VALUE DATA INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP AND WARREN COUNTY, 1990	36
TABLE 15: OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING VALUES BY COHORT INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1990	37
TABLE 16: GROSS RENT BY COHORT INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1990	37
TABLE 17: HOUSING UNITS BY SIZE INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1990	38
TABLE 18: RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMIT SUMMARY INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1980 - 1992	40
TABLE 19: HOUSEHOLD BY SIZE INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1990	41
TABLE 20: AGE DISTRIBUTION INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1990	42
TABLE 21: INCOME CHARACTERISTICS INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP AND WARREN COUNTY, 1990	43
TABLE 22: HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY COHORT, 1989 INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP	44
TABLE 23: COVERED EMPLOYMENT HISTORY INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP 1972 - 1992	45
TABLE 24: COAH FAIR SHARE HOUSING NEED 1993 - 1999 INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP	46

TABLE OF CHARTS AND MAPS

	<u>Following Page No.</u>
PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE POPULATION: 1950 - 2010, INDEPENDENCE TWP., NJ	11
ZONE DISTRICT MAP	21
CIRCULATION PLAN	33
LAND USE PLAN	48

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

INTRODUCTION

Independence Township is a relatively large municipality of 19.1 square miles in size located in eastern Warren County. The Township is crossed by one major roadway: U.S. Route 46. Most land in Independence is agricultural or single family residential. The Township is best described as rural-suburban.

Historically, Independence Township has been an agricultural based community. Two villages: Vienna and Great Meadows have long existed along Route 46, the main roadway through the Township. Recently, suburban expansion, the physical setting and attributes of Independence have attracted growth. As a consequence, there are demands for improved community facilities, recreation space, better traffic control, and local retail facilities.

One function of this Master Plan Reexamination process is to reconcile and coordinate the conflicting demands on land use in the Township.

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires that all New Jersey municipalities reexamine their master plans every six (6) years. The last Independence Township Master Plan was adopted July 29, 1988. The MLUL requires each municipality in this reexamination process to assess its planning objectives, problems, etc. by addressing the following four (4) topics in the reexamination report.

- a. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
- b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- c. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, and changes in State, County and Municipal policies and objectives.
- d. The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development

regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.

This reexamination document is the result of a coordinated and comprehensive effort undertaken by the Township Planning Board, its professionals, Township officials and the public.

In concert with these joint efforts, the Planning Consultant undertook several planning and zoning studies necessary to complete this Master Plan Reexamination. First, a survey of land use of the municipality was completed, consisting of noting the use of each property in the Township. This information has been tabulated and is contained in both narrative and table form in this document. Second, the Consultant undertook various population studies. Third, special studies for several areas in the Township were undertaken by the Planning Consultant and discussed by the Planning Board. Lastly, a new housing plan element is presented in this reexamination report. This element addresses new fair share numbers recently published by the New Jersey Council On Affordable Housing (COAH).

The Master Plan Reexamination process undertakes to synthesize all this information and present it in an organized fashion. This report consists of a series of chapters concerning particular elements of this process, such as housing, population, etc. The last chapter is the land use plan for the Township. It is the objective of this last chapter to present policies and recommendations that express the goals and objectives of the Borough as they relate to land use and development.

The first element in this reexamination report addresses the four (4) items required of a Master Plan Reexamination by the MLUL.

- a. **The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.**
 1. Concern was expressed regarding impact of development on wetlands.
 2. Concern was expressed over development near stream corridors which may impact their ability to sustain wildlife, protect water resources and maintain landscape beauty.
 3. Concern was expressed about the maintenance of quality and quantity of the Township's groundwater resources.
 4. A percentage of the Township's population, about 18 percent were estimated to be "overhoused" due to the lack of small housing options available within the community.
 5. Future housing policy should recognize that demographic and economic forces

will continue to move in the direction of a demand for small homes.

6. Concern was expressed regarding the loss of farms to development and the means to retain agricultural land.

7. The Plan expressed a need for more acreage of municipal parkland.

8. Sidewalks should be required in all developments of a density of one or more units per acre.

9. There should be bicycle paths through the Township.

10. There is a need for an Historic District Commission and a Historic Preservation Plan Element to recognize and protect the significant historic resources of Independence.

11. All future higher density residential developments in either the PRD or RM zones should contain a certain amount of low and moderately priced units.

12. The Township should allow intra-family housing arrangements, allow congregate care and communal care housing and accessory housing in certain non-residential situations.

13. Pristine streams should be protected by creating buffer setbacks for development or grading along stream corridors of 50 to 150 feet.

14. Creation of a Town Center of 160 acres to be located in the Village of Vienna was recommended.

15. Strip commercial type of development should be avoided.

b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.

1. Development near wetlands and near stream corridors is still a concern.

2. The quality of the Township's groundwater resources has become a major problem in the Asbury Road area due to groundwater contamination by Area Lighting, an electronic industry located on that road.

3. The development of multi-family housing in the Hills of Independence and Oakhill projects has significantly broadened the range of housing choices available in the Township.

4. There is a continuing loss of farmland as a result of continuing housing development.

5. There still remains a paucity of municipal recreation areas and parkland.
6. Neither a Historic District Commission nor a Historic Plan Element have been established.
7. The Township has chosen not to create a Town Center as proposed in the 1988 plan.

c. **The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, County and Municipal policies and objectives.**

1. The New Jersey State Planning Commission adopted "The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan" on June 12, 1992. This Plan designates Independence Township:

- PA4B Rural/Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area, and
- PA5 Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area.
- Alphano is identified as an existing Village.
- Great Meadows and Vienna are identified as existing Hamlets.

By way of brief explanation, PA4B is the designation for the major farming areas of the State and which have the greatest potential of sustaining continued agricultural activities in the future. Any development in this Planning Area must be sensitive to the intent of the State Plan to protect agricultural lands.

The PA5 designation outlines large contiguous land areas with valuable ecosystems and wildlife habitats. These lands are somewhat undeveloped and remain rural. Any development within this Planning Area should be guided into appropriate centers to preserve open space and natural resources.

Village designation as a Community of Place is identified in The State Plan as a compact, primarily residential community that offers basic consumer services for their residents and nearby residents.

Hamlets are the smallest places eligible for center designation in the State Plan. Existing hamlets are found primarily in rural areas, often at crossroads.

2. Since 1988, the Warren County Planning Board has published the following reports:

- a. Solid Waste Management Plan (1993 and 1994)
- b. Air Quality Discussion Report (1992)
- c. Warren County Cross Acceptance Comparison Phase Report (1990)

3. The above State and County documents have been reviewed as part of this 1994 Master Plan Reexamination.

4. Since the publication of the 1988 plan, residential development has continued. Some of the major issues consequent of that development include: impact upon taxes and rateables, heightened traffic volumes and increase in school age population. Additional important concerns continue to center around: impact of development upon sensitive environmental areas and buffering between residential and non-residential uses.

A major new planning concern is the groundwater pollution in the Asbury Road area. Neither the geographic extent of that pollution or the long range impact upon the area's water supply are exactly known at this time. In all likelihood, some form of a public water system will have to be provided to that area.

There is continuing concern over the lack of public open space and municipal recreation areas.

5. In general the goals and objectives identified in the 1988 Master Plan remain operative in this 1994 Master Plan Reexamination.

- d. **The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.**

1. The 1995 Master Plan reexamination has examined the intensity of residential zoning through the Township and no changes are recommended.

2. Review of existing townhouse type development in the Township reveals they are assets to the community.

3. Existing townhouse zoning will soon be built out in Independence. As this type development can be an asset to the Township vacant areas with water and sewer service may be appropriate for future townhouse use.

4. Commercial and business development along Route 517 have proved to be assets and their further development should be encouraged at appropriate locations in this area.

5. The presence of groundwater contamination in the Asbury Road area is of continuing concern. Long range solutions will probably involve public water being supplied to the effected households and neighborhood.

6. Recent court decisions require the Township to examine the critical areas section of the zoning ordinance.

7. The Township should study the State Plan's designations of Vienna, Great Meadows and Alphano as to whether the Township should petition for their official designation.

8. The development regulations ordinances should be reviewed. Particular rezoning recommendations made in this Master Plan reexmaination should be implemented in the development regulations of the Township.

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

POPULATION

The foundation for planning--public and private--is based on people: the number to be served now and in the future. Knowing the extent of the future population is important in determining future needs for various land uses. Business men need to know the size for future markets. Utilities have to know how many people will require service. Governments must know how many people will be needing schools, sewers, hospitals, water, parks, highways and other public services.

Recently, the US Bureau of Census published 1990 population data and that information is presented and analyzed herein.

Population History - Warren County Population

Examining 1990 Warren County population and comparing its population growth to other counties in northwestern New Jersey is shown on Table 1, "Population 1960 - 1990 Warren County and Selected Northwestern New Jersey Counties." The table shows steady population growth since 1960. The greatest numerical growth occurred in 1960 - 1970 and 1970 - 1980 when the County grew about 10,500 persons in each decade. Growth in 1980 - 1990 was 7,178, a lesser number than in previous decades. Of the five counties shown in the table, Warren County had the lowest numerical growth and the second lowest percent growth. The larger growth amounts in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties are a function, in part of the accessibility provided by the newly completed I-78. Whereas, growth in Morris, Sussex and Warren was more substantial in the 1970's and 1980's due again, in part, to the accessibility then provided by I-80 and I-287.

Population History - Independence Township

The decade 1980 - 1990 witnessed the largest population growth in Independence Township: both numerical growth and percent growth. Indeed, the population of the Township has just about doubled in twenty years since 1970. This information is shown on Table 2.

This growth is a function of several major factors. In the latter years of the 1980's, two multifamily projects, Oak Hill and Hills of Independence, were introduced. Throughout the decade many single family homes were also developed.

The Township has been discovered as a very desirable living environment as it still contains a substantial amount of open space and farmland, it is proximate to shops and stores in Hackettstown and is in commutation distance to employment in Hackettstown and Morris and Somerset Counties.

TABLE 1:
POPULATION 1960 - 1980
WARREN COUNTY AND SELECTED NEW JERSEY COUNTIES

County	1960		1970		1980		1990		Change 1980-1990	
	Number	Percent Change	Number	Percent Change	Number	Percent Change	Number	Percent Change	Number	Percent
WARREN	63,220	+16.3	73,879	16.9	84,429	14.3	91,607	14.3	7,178	8.5
Hunterdon	54,107	+26.6	69,718	28.9	87,361	25.3	107,776	25.3	20,415	23.4
Morris	261,620	+59.2	383,813	46.7	407,630	6.2	421,353	6.2	13,723	3.4
Somerset	143,913	+45.3	198,372	37.8	203,129	2.4	240,279	2.4	37,150	18.3
Sussex	49,255	+43.1	77,528	57.4	116,119	49.8	130,943	49.8	14,824	12.8

SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population, 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990.

**TABLE 2:
POPULATION HISTORY
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, NJ 1940 - 1990**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Numerical Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
1940	1,046	--	--
1950	1,169	+123	12.0
1960	1,509	+340	29.1
1970	2,057	+548	36.3
1980	2,829	+772	37.5
1990	3,940	+1,111	39.3

SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990.

Table 3 is a presentation of population in Independence Township compared to Warren County for different age cohorts or age groups. It reveals that the percent of children, persons 14 years old or less is greater in Independence Township than in Warren County, indicating continued demands on schools and classrooms. The number of young adults and people in their early family formation years, ages 25-34 is percentagewise significantly higher in Independence Township than Warren County. This group as well as the elderly are typically apartment and townhouse occupants. The age bracket 35-44 has somewhat higher percent figures than the County. This indicates that Independence Township is also populated at this time by single family homeowners in this age category.

Independence has a younger population than the County. Witness to this conclusion is the fact that the median age in the Township is younger (32.0) than that of the County (34.4).

The percent senior citizens age 55-64 and 65+ is lower in Independence Township than Warren County. These observations reflect the newly suburbanizing nature of the Township, whereas the County has a more heterogeneous and diverse population including greater percentages of the elderly.

The persons per household is similar to Warren County and much smaller than in 1980, indicating trends in smaller size families are continuing.

**TABLE 3:
POPULATION AGE GROUPS IN INDEPENDENCE AND
WARREN COUNTY (BY PERCENT), FOR 1970 AND 1980**

<u>Age</u>	<u>Independence Twp.:</u>		<u>Warren County:</u>	
	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>
0-4	7.7	8.6	6.6	7.5
5-9	8.7	7.0	7.4	6.9
10-14	9.1	7.3	8.5	6.4
15-19	8.8	6.5	8.9	6.3
20-24	7.1	6.2	7.8	6.4
25-34	18.0	20.3	15.8	17.5
35-44	13.7	17.8	12.0	16.7
45-54	10.2	10.3	10.6	10.2
55-64	8.1	6.9	10.3	8.8
65+	<u>8.6</u>	<u>9.1</u>	<u>12.1</u>	<u>13.3</u>
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Median Age	30.5	32.0	31.9	34.4
Persons per Household	2.95	2.75	2.83	2.70

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 and 1990.

Regional Population Trends

A comparison of population trends of Independence and abutting municipalities was undertaken. Information in Table 4 show all municipalities growing over the 1950 - 1990 period. Lately, between 1970 and 1990 Hackettstown lost population. The remaining municipalities have all gained substantially. In the decade 1980 - 1990 Independence gained 39.3 percent; more than all other municipalities except Liberty Township.

Numerically, Independence gained 1,111 persons which was more than the other municipalities, except Mansfield. It is noted that Mansfield is fifty percent larger than Independence which accounts for, in part, the larger growth number.

It is also observed that the more western communities such as Frelinghuysen and Hope have small

TABLE 4:
POPULATION GROWTH COMPARISONS 1950 - 1990
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES AND WARREN COUNTY

	<u>Area in</u> <u>Sq. Miles</u>	<u>1950</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>1960</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>1970</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>1980</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>1990</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>Numeric</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Change</u>
Allamuchy	20.10	736	973	32.2	1,084	11.4	2,560	131.2	3,484	+924	36.1
Frelinghuysen	23.60	779	845	8.5	1,118	32.3	1,435	28.4	1,779	+344	23.9
Hackettstown	3.30	3,894	5,276	35.5	9,436	78.8	8,850	-6.2	8,120	-730	-8.2
Hope	18.80	681	833	68.0	1,140	36.9	1,468	28.8	1,719	+251	17.1
INDEPENDENCE	19.10	1,169	1,509	29.1	2,057	36.6	2,829	37.5	3,940	+1,111	39.3
Liberty	12.40	529	760	43.7	1,229	61.7	1,730	40.8	2,493	+763	44.1
Mansfield	30.10	1,497	2,130	42.3	3,546	66.5	5,780	65.0	7,154	+1,374	23.8
Warren County	362.00	54,374	63,220	16.3	73,879	16.9	84,429	14.3	91,607	+7,178	8.5

SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990.

numerical growth numbers. In contrast, the more eastern rural-suburban communities have high numerical growth numbers: Independence, Allamuchy and Mansfield.

Future Population

The County of Warren Planning Board has recently published population projections for both Independence Township and Warren County. They are shown herein below in Table 5:

**TABLE 5:
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE POPULATION FOR
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP AND WARREN COUNTY**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Independence Township</u>			<u>Warren County</u>		
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Numerical Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Numerical Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
1960	1,509	340	29.1	63,220	8,846	13.9
1970	2,057	548	36.6	73,879	10,659	16.3
1980	2,829	772	37.5	84,429	10,550	14.3
1990	3,940	1,111	39.3	91,607	7,178	8.5
2000	4,767	827	20.9	99,530	7,923	8.6
2010	5,227	460	9.6	106,995	7,465	7.5

SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990.
Warren County Planning Board (March 1, 1993)

Similar information is presented herein in graph form. Two lines for the period 1990 to 2010 are shown. The lines are extension of recent growth trends and the County projections.

The two graphic lines show the following figures:

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>
1. County Projection:	3,940	4,767	5,227
2. Recent Growth Trend Line:	3,940	5,270	6,260

These projections are extremely helpful in arriving at a future population figure. However, it is also useful to introduce known local growth factors. For example, in 1990 only a small portion of Oak Hill was occupied as was the case with Hills of Independence. If Oak Hill in 1990 had 400 units out of 570 yet to build, that could add 800 persons to the population. Similarly, if Hills of Independence had 100 units out of 124 to build that could add 200 persons to the population. Stone Mill, a multifamily project of 230 units could produce 500 persons if that project is built out in this decade. These figures only account for the multifamily projects and do not include single family housing. In the decade 1980 - 1990, 542 housing units were developed in the Township. If approximately the same number were built in the 1990 - 2000 year decade, they would generate 1375 (500×2.75) persons.

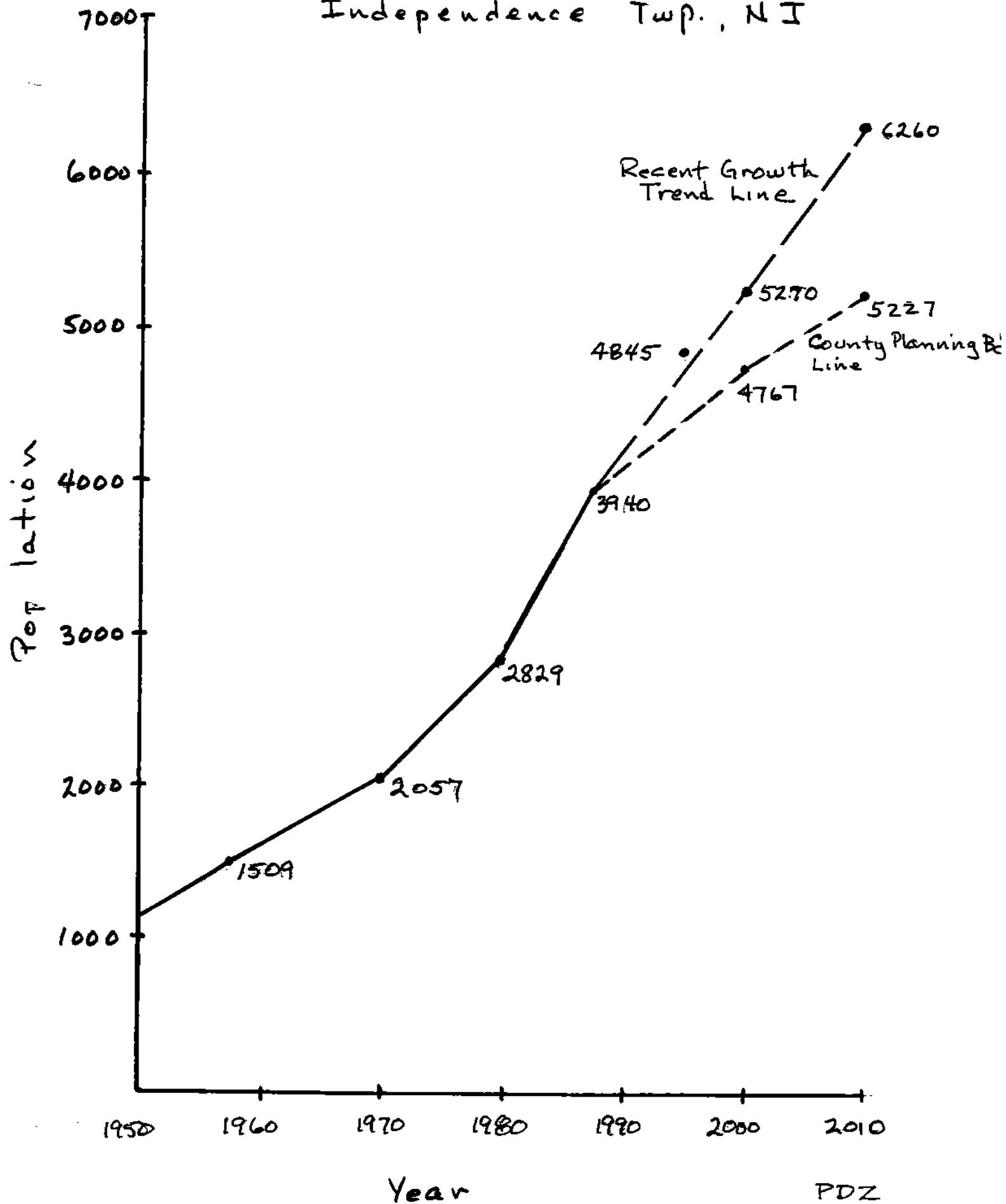
Thus, new multifamily and single family housing could produce 3000 new persons in the Township by the year 2000. This would bring the total population in year 2000 to 6940 persons. This figure is significantly higher than any County projections or graphic growth trend lines.

For the purposes of this Master Plan document, the Recent Growth Trend Line population projection is concluded to be the most useful. It has population numbers that are greater than County projections but less than the robust housing construction figure (6,940) would generate as population for the Township. Thus, the operative year 2000 population figure is 5,270 and 6,260 for the year 2010.

A review of the number of residential tax parcels shows 1,188 in 1990 and 1,517 in 1994. There, thus, has been an increase of 329 residential units to 1994 from 1990. If each residential unit was occupied by 2.75 persons, this 329 increase translates into 905 persons or a 1994 Township population of 4,845. Plotting this figure on the graph places it close to the Recent Growth Trend Line. Thus, this trend line appears to be closer to actual population than the lower County Planning Board estimates.

There are obviously many unknowns and variables that influence population. The economy, for example, is one major influence wherein a thriving economy which creates new jobs will see new housing and population increases. Conversely, an economic recession will retard or even halt job growth, housing and population. Other factors also directly or indirectly influence future population such as availability of utilities such as sanitary sewers and public water supply, changes in transportation routes and social trends such as birth and death rates.

Past, Present & Future
Population: 1950-2010
Independence Twp., NJ



MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

ECONOMIC BASE

The economic characteristics of a community are an important consideration in a Master Plan Reexamination study. This section of the Master Plan Reexamination deals with the employment and property tax characteristics of the Township as two significant economic base issues.

Property Tax Characteristics

Table 6 below provides data on the property tax base of the Township. It shows first in 1994 slightly more than 80 percent of all rateables in the Township came from residential parcels. This 1994 number represents a substantial increase in both number of parcels and rateables from the 1988 data. This increase is due to substantial growth in both single family and multifamily housing. Other changes in each tax class have taken place, however none are as dramatic as that with residential.

There has been a substantial decline in the valuation of vacant land. Portions of this decline are the result of vacant land being developed for housing. There has been an increase in commercial rateables which has been counter-balanced by a slight decrease in industrial rateable value.

Table 7 shows the equalized tax rates for Independence and surrounding municipalities. In 1993, the Township equalized rate was the lowest, comparable to that of Mansfield Township. This comparison shows a somewhat improved tax situation from 1988. This tax rateable situation is due, in part, to the previously mentioned increase in residential rateables to 1993 from 1988.

**TABLE 6:
COMPARISON OF TAX PARCELS AND ASSESSED VALUE
1988 AND 1993, INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, NJ**

<u>Tax Class</u>	<u>1988 Number Of Parcels</u>	<u>1988 Valuation (Percent)</u>	<u>1993 Number Of Parcels</u>	<u>1993 Valuation (Percent)</u>
1. Vacant	421	\$ 42,473,400 (17.6)	368	\$ 14,146,000 (5.3)
2. Residential	911	158,769,622 (65.6)	1,517	214,505,600 (80.6)
3a. Farm (Reg.)	80	13,528,280 (5.6)	79	10,257,700 (3.9)
3b. Farm (Qual.)	134	981,176 (0.4)	163	1,502,560 (0.6)
4a. Commercial	47	10,151,220 (4.2)	51	12,502,600 (4.7)
4b. Industrial	4	3,465,200 (1.4)	4	1,731,700 (0.7)
4c. Apartment	<u>8</u>	<u>12,613,400 (5.2)</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10,851,100 (4.1)</u>
	1,605	\$241,982,298 (100.0)	2,190	\$265,932,360 (100.0)

Source: Township tax lists for 1988 and 1993.

**TABLE 7:
EQUALIZED TAX RATES FOR
INDEPENDENCE AND SURROUNDING
MUNICIPALITIES, 1988, 1993 AND 1994**

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>
Allamuchy	1.938	2.038	2.157
Frelinghuysen	2.261	2.136	2.398
Hackettstown	2.412	2.275	2.522
Hope	2.249	2.200	2.271
Liberty	2.777	2.111	2.207
Mansfield	2.309	1.883	2.353
INDEPENDENCE	2.132	1.882	2.164

Source: Warren County Abstract of Rateables for 1988, 1993 and 1994.

The Table 8 below shows the history of covered employment in Independence Township. As this information is compiled by the State Department of Labor by address of employer, it is at best an indice of local employment. This is due to the use of a Hackettstown address by employers who may actually be located in Independence Township. The table does show generally increasing local employment. Most of these private jobs are assumed to be retail sales and service and industrial. It is concluded that there is few employment jobs in the Township.

**TABLE 8:
COVERED EMPLOYMENT IN
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, NJ
1972 - 1999**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Employment</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Employment</u>
1972	106	1982	203
1973	138	1983	220
1974	85	1984	217
1975	81	1985	244
1976	54	1986	226
1977	66	1987	241
1978	171	1988	338
1979	171	1989	281
1980	212	1990	219
1981	233	1991	207
		1992	375

SOURCE: N.J. Department of Labor, Covered Employment

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

EXISTING LAND USE

A detailed knowledge of how the land is used, together with the interrelationship of the various land uses, is an indispensable tool in the planning process. This information, used in conjunction with other basic data assembled for this study, provides the basis for developing a Master Plan to guide the future growth of Independence Township.

Information relating to land use has been assembled using the Township tax maps, assessment records and a field survey. A statistical analysis of structures is shown in the table: "Land Use in Independence Township, 1994."

It is evident, from this information, that Independence Township is only partially developed and retains much of its rural farm community character. Development has taken place along existing roads with concentrations at strategic locations along these roads and at cross roads, including Great Meadows, Vienna, Petersburg, the intersections of Russling Road and Barkers Mill Road, Petersburg Road and Asbury Road, Mount Rascal Road and Route 517 and the area adjoining the Town of Hackettstown.

TABLE: 9
LAND USE IN INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1994

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Single Family Residential	2,444	19.9
- Detached	(2,368)	(19.4)
- Attached	(76)	(0.5)
Apartment	59	0.5
Business	118	0.9
Industrial	300	2.5
Public	484	3.9
Quasi Public	<u>267</u>	<u>2.2</u>
Developed	3,672	30.0
Agricultural	6,769	55.4
Vacant	<u>1,783</u>	<u>14.6</u>
Total	12,224	100.0

SOURCE: Consultant field study and tax list.

Residential Uses

Single family use accounts for accounts for 2,444 acres or 19.9 percent of the Township. This amount of acreage has been ever increasing as the Township has been developing. In 1988, the figure was 1,688 acres or 13.8 percent of the Township.

When this 2,444 acre figure is subdivided into detached and attached use, the calculations show 2,368 acres or the overwhelming majority is detached and only 76 acres is attached.

Single family detached has developed in the main in new subdivisions. Attached housing has developed at two locations: Hills of Independence (120 units completed) and Oakhill (254 units completed). In the two categories, detached and attached, there are 1,517 single family housing units.

It is reasonable to assume the amount of land use in both the detached and attached use categories will continue to increase as approved projects are completed and as development continues in the Township.

The second residential category of land use is apartments. Although a small amount of the total Township land is in apartments, only 59 acres or 0.5 percent of Independence. There are a significant number of apartment units in this category: 367 units. The majority of these units are located in the Towpath apartments with 236 units on 46.42 acres. The second apartment project, the senior citizen units on Route 46/Petersburg Road contains 40 units on 5.53 acres. Third, there are five small apartment buildings on Old Allamuchy Road which in aggregate contain 20 units. The remaining units are scattered about the Township in 2-4 unit structures.

Business Use

Independence Township, due to its large size, almost 20 square miles, its sparse development, approximately 206 persons per square mile and its comparatively low population, only 3,940 (1990) persons, has not witnessed any substantial amounts of commercial or business development in the municipality.

There are 188 acres in the business use category which represents 51 business or commercial parcels in the Township. This compares with 46 such parcels in 1982.

Business land use is generally found in two locations. Most businesses are located along Route 46 with a clustering in the Township's villages or hamlets, namely Vienna and Great Meadows. The second location is on Route 517 which has witnessed a new small shopping plaza in addition to existing business and office uses.

Industrial Uses

The number of activities within the Township that may be classified as industrial are quite limited with the major facility being Southland Chemical in the northeastern portion of the Township near the Allamuchy Township boundary. This industrial use is inoperative due to pollution problems.

The second major industry is Area Lighting Research which occupies about seven acres on Asbury Road and employs approximately 94. This facility has been identified as a source of groundwater pollution which has contaminated local residential potable water wells.

In total there is only 300 acres of industrial land use in the Township. This amounts to only 2.5 percent of the Township.

Public Land

The total amount of land devoted to public use is 484 acres or 3.9 percent of the Township. Of that total, most or 301 acres (62.2 percent) is part of Jenny Jump State Park. The remainder is municipal land (94.3 acres), Board of Education land (24.6 acres) and green acres land (64.1 acres).

Quasi Public Land

The total acres in this category is 267 acres. The largest quasi-public parcel is 99 acres owned by the Audobon Society. The second largest is land owned by the NJ Society of Crippled Children at the Mansfield border (86.06 acres). The third largest is 42.0 acres owned by the Pequest Union Cemetery. The remainder of quasi-public land is used by various houses of worship, utility companies and quasi-public groups such as first aid and fire engine station.

Agricultural

The largest land use category in Independence is agriculture which amounts to 55.5 percent of the Township. This land is divided into two categories: the Great Meadows farmland and the rest of the Township. Most of the active farmland is concentrated in the extremely fertile Great meadows area wherein intensive farming methods produce a variety of vegetable and special crops and produce. Farming in the remaining areas of the Township is devoted to field crops.

It is not likely that the Great Meadows farmland will or even can be used for anything but farming due to both the continued viability of the farming industry in that area and the unique soils of that area. Elsewhere however, farmland can more easily be developed for suburban uses.

TABLE 10
LAND USE IN INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP
1976, 1980 & 1988

<u>LAND USE</u>	<u>Acres</u>			<u>% of Total Area</u>		
	<u>1976</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1988</u>
Single-Family Residence	1,264	1,415	1,688	10	11.6	14.0
Trailer	4	4	4	*	*	*
Apartment	51	51	97	*	*	*
Business & Residential	62	62	62	*	*	*
Business	815	815	866	7	6.7	7.0
Industrial	304	304	304	32	2.5	2.5
Public & Quasi-Public	428	428	440	4	3.5	3.6
TOTAL DEVELOPED LAND	2,928	3,079	3,461	24	25.2	28.0
Farm (Assessed)	-	6,520	6,044	-	53.3	49.5
Other: WOODED OR OPEN LAND	-	2,625	2,719	-	21.5	22.5
TOTAL LAND	<u>12,224</u>	<u>12,224</u>	<u>12,224</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>

*Less than 1%

Source: Warren County Planning Board, 1976
Planning Consultant Survey, 1980
Independence Township Tax List

Vacant

There are 1,783 acres or 14.6 percent of the Township classified vacant. For the most part these areas are hilly and characterized by forest cover.

Conclusions

The most substantial land use changes that have occurred in Independence Township since the last Master Plan (1988) have been in the single family residential category, and vacant categories. Due to the development of housing, land utilized for single family residential increased to 2,444 acres from 1,688 acres for a 756 acre increase or 44.8 percent increase. Correspondingly, the amount of vacant land has declined to 1,783 acres from 2,719 in 1988. This represents a 936 acre decline or 34.4 percent.

Other land use categories such as public, quasi-public, and agriculture are little changed from 1988. Industrial has not changed at all in the six year interval.

It is reasonable to assume that these same trends will continue for the next six years. Namely, there will be continued residential development and consequent loss of vacant and agricultural land. There may be some increase in business land use on Route 517 and Route 46. The development of this land use, however, is highly dependent upon the economy.

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

EXISTING ZONING ANALYSIS

An analysis of existing residential zone districts in Independence was undertaken to show, upon ultimate residential development of the Township, what type of community it will be. No time frame has been attached to the ultimate development figures.

The results are tabulated in the enclosed table. At ultimate development, the total number of dwelling units will be 4347. Of this number, 924 or 21.3% will be attached units and 3038 units or 69.9% will be detached single family units. The bulk of the remainder will be multifamily apartments.

The following narrative tabulates the shifts and changes in the Township's housing profile in 1990 (census), 1994 (tax list) and at ultimate development.

1990 Housing Profile

In 1990, according to the census there were 1,575 housing units in Independence Township. These were subdivided into the following basic three classifications:

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Single Family	1,190	75.6
- Detached	(982	(62.3)
- Attached	(208	(13.2)
Multifamily - Apartments	367	23.3
Other	<u>18</u>	<u>1.1</u>
Totals	1,575	100.0

1994 Housing Profile

In 1994, there are 1971 residential units in the Township. It is assumed there is the same number of multi family as in 1990. According to the tax list there are 1586 single family parcels. The current numbers are thus the following:

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Single Family	1,586	80.5
- Detached	(1,133)	(57.5)
- Attached	(453)	(22.9)
Multifamily - Apartments	367	18.6
Other	<u>18</u>	<u>0.9</u>
Total	1,971	100.0

Ultimate Zoning Housing Profile

Consistent with present zoning, the full or ultimate development of the Township will result in the following housing profile.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Single Family	3,925	91.5
- Detached	(3,001)	(70.2)
- Attached	(924)	(21.3)
Multifamily	<u>368</u>	<u>8.5</u>
Total	4,293	100.0

Conclusion

Based upon this zoning development analysis it is concluded that in the future, Independence will be a predominantly single family community. However, the housing stock will also be well balanced with approximately 21.5 percent attached and 8.6 percent multifamily apartments. Further, the overwhelming major of single family housing will develop on 2.0 acres homesites as most of the Township is characterized by the R-2 zone district.

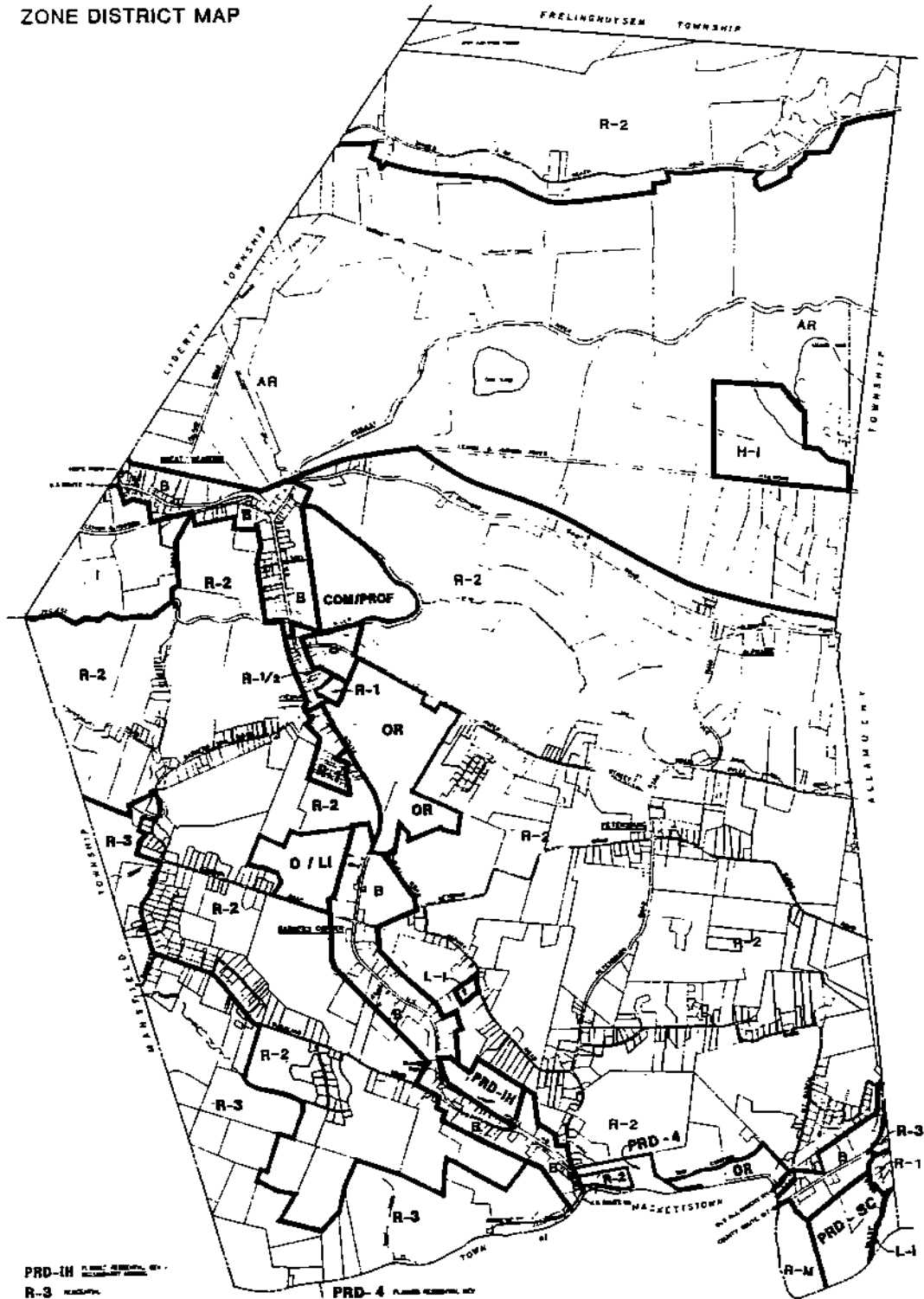
TABLE: 11
ULTIMATE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING ZONING
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, WARREN CO., NJ 1994

<u>Zone District</u>	<u>Minimum Lot Size</u>	<u>Acres In Zone</u>	<u>Ultimate Dwelling Units</u>	<u>Ultimate Population</u>
AR	10.0 ac.	3,109	233	641
R-3	3.0 ac.	818	204	561
R-2	2.0 ac.	6,619	2,482	6,826
R-1	1.0 ac.	50	38	105
R-1/2	20,000 s.f.	29	44	121
PRD-IH	5 units/acre	45	230	464
PRD-5	5 units/acre	25	124	250
PRD-SC	8 units/acre	76	570	1,151
RM	8 units/acre	<u>46</u>	<u>368</u>	<u>743</u>
		10,817	4,293	10,862

Population is based on:

1. Loss factor of 25 % for oversized lots, critical areas factor, waterways, road rights-of-way, lot suitability and other environmental factors.
2. Single family housing population is calculated at 2.75 persons per unit from the 1990 median household size.
3. Multiple family housing population is calculated at 2.019 persons per unit from "The New Practitioner's Guide To Fiscal Impact Analysis" (1986).
4. Public land has not been accounted for in the above acreage figures.

ZONE DISTRICT MAP



PRD-1H PLANNED RESIDENTIAL REV -
 R-3 RESIDENTIAL
 O / LI OFFICE - LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
 R-2 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
 R-1 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
 R-M HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
 R-1/2 RESIDENTIAL VILLAGE
 AR SPECIAL AGRICULTURAL
 PRD PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

PRD-4 PLANNED RESIDENTIAL REV -
 OR OFFICE - RESIDENTIAL
 COM / PROF COMMERCIAL - PROFESSIONAL
 PRD-SC PLANNED RESIDENTIAL REV - SENIOR CITIZEN
 H-1 HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
 I INDUSTRIAL
 L-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
 B BUSINESS

BASE MAP PREPARED BY WARREN COUNTY PLANNING OFFICE
 WARREN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD BELVIDERE, N. J.
 P DAVID ZIMMERMAN, TOWNSHIP PLANNER

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
 WARREN COUNTY, N. J.



REVISIONS
 DEC 28, 1983
 DEC 27, 1982
 NOV 28, 1980
 NOV 25, 1977

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

CONSERVATION PLAN ELEMENT

There are important natural resources in Independence Township. Each is described herein. Land use policies for these resources is also presented.

Wetlands

Wetlands are vital natural resources which provide for natural flood control, recharge of aquifers, natural purification of waters, stabilization of stream flows, and habitats for a diversity of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife. Wetlands act as a sediment and pollution trap, and remove nutrients from water under certain conditions.

The Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act of 1987 was adopted to preserve and protect the purity and integrity of freshwater wetlands from random, unnecessary or undesirable alteration or disturbance.

A Freshwater Wetlands Permit is required for virtually any activity proposed within the boundaries of a freshwater wetland. Areas under the jurisdiction of the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission, the Pinelands Commission and DEP's Coastal Wetlands Protection Program are exempt from these regulations. Normal farming, silviculture and ranching activities, and the normal harvesting of forest products in accordance with an approved forest management plan are also exempt from the regulations.

The Act defines a freshwater wetland as "an area that is inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, commonly known as hydrophytic vegetation, provided however that a wetland be designated using a three parameter approach which involves the analysis of vegetation, hydrology and soils to delineate wetlands."

Wetlands are classified as exceptional, intermediate or ordinary. Exceptional freshwater wetlands are those which discharge into F-1 or F-2 trout production waters or their tributaries, or those wetlands which present habitats for threatened or endangered species. Ordinary value freshwater wetlands are those which are drainage ditches, swales or detention facilities, or certain isolated wetlands. Exceptional value wetlands will require a transition area of 150 feet, and

intermediate value wetlands will require a transition area of 50 feet. Ordinary value wetlands does not require a transition area.

It is estimated that 6,721 acres or 54 percent of Independence Township is wetlands according to the National Wetlands Inventory. These wetlands are identified as characterizing three identifiable areas in the Township.

The largest wetland area is in the area between Alphano Road and Shades of Death Road and is locally known as Bear Swamp. It extends into Allamuchy Township to the north and Liberty Township to the south. This area is in the primary watershed of the Pequest River which flows approximately in the middle of Alphano and Shades of Death Roads. Most of the wetlands in Independence Township is located in this area. Currently, about one-half of this large wetland area is used for intensive farming. The remainder is in a natural wooded state.

The second major wetland area is located between Water Street and Alphano Road. This area also drains into the Pequest River. This area is used in part for field crops and the remainder is in a natural wooded state.

The third large identifiable wetland area is along Route 46 between this roadway and Russling Road. This wetlands forms the headwaters of Hatchery Brook. Use of this area is divided between farming of field crops and natural woodland.

Fourthly, other smaller isolated wetland areas are located throughout the Township.

Recommendations

Regulation of wetlands is under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Environmental Protection and Energy (NJDEPE). A freshwater wetlands permit is required for virtually any activity proposed within a freshwater wetland area. This agency also inspects and classifies wetland areas as to their resource value: exceptional, intermediate or ordinary.

It is recommended that all subdivisions, site plans and development applications first obtain a Letter Of Interpretation (LOI) from NJDEPE prior to submission of an application to the Township. The effect of this LOI is to establish the location of the wetlands, their resource value and the extent of transition or buffer thus needed. Once this information is known, the development application can be properly processed and reviewed.

Wetlands, its resource value and commensurate transition area requirements impact upon the density of development and the layout or design of the development. In these cases, creative design

can be introduced to further protect these important natural resources. The municipal board can play a constructive role in this process.

Slope

The degree and extent of slope significantly influences the ability of property to sustain development. Slope influences septic effluent disposal, house or structure location, driveway grades and site landscaping. Substantial grading of sloped property will create erosion problems to the detriment of not only the subject site but run-off onto surrounding properties and into proximate streams.

Analysis of slopes in Independence Township was undertaken and slopes were divided into three categories: 0-5 percent, 5-15 percent and slopes over 15 percent. Land which falls into 0-5 percent category is, generally, the best land for development, provided good soil conditions exist. 4,889.6 acres or 40 percent of all land in the Township lies in this slope range. But, 2,500 acres or 50 percent of this land is muckland. Therefore, proper site locations for industrial, residential and commercial land uses in this slope delineation are limited.

Land falling into the 5-15 percent category is, generally, considered to be developable, but there are constraints and definite design standards which should be required. Approximately 4,278.4 acres or 35 percent of all land in the Township lies within this range of slope. Generally, this land is suited for lower density development than would be the case in flatter land.

Except for rare instances, slopes over 15 percent are not developed to any great degree of intensity. Approximately 3,056 acres or 25 percent of the land in the Township falls into this category.

Slope analysis, therefore, is important not because it hampers development, but because different degrees of slope indicate different types and intensities of land use. Essentially, the steeper the slope of property the larger the lot needed for building purposes.

Recommendations

Development in sloped areas must be guided by the principle that allows appropriate density on flat land but requires lower density on steep sloped land. Review of the critical areas requirements of the Independence Township land Development Ordinance implements this principle. It is thus recommended that this regulation be maintained as an appropriate means to address the

wide variety of slopes in the Township.

Topography and Geology

The Township is located in the New Jersey Highlands, which consist of several broad, hilly to rolling-topped ridges of gneiss rising 800 to 1,200 feet above mean sea level. Jenny Jump Mountain, which has several ridges of precambrian crystallines rising over 1,000 feet above mean sea level, is a rugged, isolated ridge that encompasses over 10 percent of the Township. The remaining topographical features that make up the Township are the Mucklands, composed of unconsolidated glacial material, and the Pequest River Valley, which runs east-west through the northern part of the Township, composed of limestone and unconsolidated glacial material. Lastly, the southern portion of the Township, from approximately Petersburg and Vienna south, is characterized by precambrian crystalline formation.

Geology and Water Supply

Independence Township is predominantly underlain with precambrian crystalline, limestones and hardyston sandstone, each of these formations running, generally, southwest-northeast.

The precambrian crystalline rocks are the oldest of the rock formations existing in New Jersey. They were formed from sediments weathered from older formations, lava flows and intrusive igneous rocks. Formations of granite, gneiss and marble make up this unit, along with the hardyston sandstone which is of Cambrian age.

The rocks in this group have been subjected to much folding and faulting, and the yield of a well tapping in these formations depends largely on the size and number of intersecting fractures encountered by the well. These fractures tend to get tighter as depth increases and it is seldom worthwhile to drill deeper than 300 feet for a well in this formation. If sufficient yield is not obtained within the first 300 feet, serious consideration should be given to drilling a second well with the hope of intersecting more fractures. Yields from the precambrian are moderate in volume.

The hardyston sandstone is a thin formation approximately 200 feet thick and is exposed in narrow bands in the central portion of the Township in a northeast-southwest direction. It consists of sandstone of variable hardness usually containing feldspar with local beds of conglomerate and slate.

The central and easterly portion of the Township is underlain with limestone. The dominant

underlain formation of limestone is Kittatinny Limestone with a small portion of Franklin Limestone on the easterly edge of the Township. This formation is, at the present time, a productive aquifer.

Because of the necessity of adequate zoning in rural areas such as Independence Township, where homes and industries must depend on individual wells and septic systems, estimates of water availability and pollution probability of the various formations have been made by the Bureau of Geology and Topography in Bulletin 73.

The Bureau of Geology and Topography has recommended, for each single-family dwelling unit, that 500 gallons of water per day be available. This figure is based on the availability of any geologic formation to recharge and store rainfall. Withdrawal beyond the maximum productive capacity of a geologic formation will result in the drying up of rivers, streams and lakes because of a serious drop in the groundwater level.

In using this figure, 500 gpd/DU, for Independence Township, along with the maximum productive capacity and acreage of each geologic formation, a maximum number of dwelling units was calculated for each geologic formation. This information is presented in the table: Groundwater Yield of Geology Formations - Independence Township, N.J. 1982. This maximum number of dwelling units would not apply where a public water supply and/or a central sewage system is installed. Interpretation of the Groundwater Yield table indicates that approximately 50 percent of Independence Township is characterized by geology with a poor yield to support even moderate density homes or non-residential uses which would make demands on groundwater supply. In general, this geology, precambrian crystalline, can support one home on 3.2 acres. The Kittatinny Limestone and glacial deposit areas can support 1.3 and 1.6 acre parcels for a single-family home, respectfully.

Recommendations

In large part, the land development regulations and base density/intensity of development in Independence Township is mandated by the geology and potential groundwater supply. Thus, most of the Township is developable at one homesite on two acres. This base density will insure adequate water supply for both present and future generations of Independence residences.

Soils

One of the most significant factors associated with soils is its ability to absorb or handle

septic effluent disposal from individual septic tanks. This is particularly important in Independence Township as most property is served by individual wells and individual septic tanks. Public sewers are not anticipated to serve the Township except for parcels abutting Hackettstown. The Warren County Soil Survey has classified all soils in Independence Township and has listed their properties and capabilities for a variety of purposes: agricultural production, engineering use and town and country planning. Concerning limitations of the soils for town and country planning, all soils are categorized into three groups of limitations for septic tank absorption fields: slight, moderate and severe. Soils with moderate or severe limitations are usually characterized by frequent flooding, seasonal high water table, slow permeability, lateral seepage above fragipan, steep slope, etc. Essentially, these soils do not have the capability to easily handle septic tank absorption fields. One method to accommodate development on these soils is to ensure that population is at lower densities.

Significant areas of the Township are categorized by soils with severe limitations. Relatively minor areas of the Township have slight limitation. To ensure the safe and healthful functioning of septic fields, it is therefore recommended that problem areas only be developed at lower densities: at least two (2) acres per home site.

Significant, from a planning standpoint, is the extensive deposit of organic soils, commonly known as the "muckland." These soils occupy approximately 20 percent of the Township and are, generally, deeper than 20 feet except along the perimeter of the old glacial lake which is approximately located by Shades of Death Road and Alphano Road. At the perimeter, the organic material becomes shallow enough to permit building to take place.

The muckland is an unusual natural resource and provides an opportunity for intensive agriculture to be carried on. The area is subject to high water table and some of the area is designated as Flood hazard area. The soils are subject to wind erosion unless the water table is maintained at a high level and adequate erosion control measures are employed.

These soils are, generally, not suitable for construction of buildings because of the poor foundation support that is characteristic.

Lastly, it is recognized that there are other soil factors which impact upon development including depth to bedrock and height of the water table.

There are two types of prime agricultural soils found in Independence Township. The largest amount and most significant is the special soil or muckland in the Great Meadow area. This flat highly organic soil is actively farmed for both vegetables like lettuce, celery, onions and cabbage as

well as for sod. Frankly, this soil is a natural resource that should continue to be utilized for agricultural pursuits. Also, throughout the Township are prime agricultural soils used for field crop and vegetable production. These soils are also a valuable natural resource which if developed for subdivision homes or other suburban uses will be lost to farming, forever.

Recommendations

As most of Independence Township is characterized by soils having problems for septic effluent disposal, it is appropriate to require lower density development. This low density mandate corresponds to the recommended base density established through analysis of the Township's geology and groundwater yields.

Those properties that exhibit unique characteristics such as shallow depth to bedrock or are in a flood hazard area are particularly problematic for the installation and proper functioning of septic systems. In these areas, larger lots, as required in the critical areas section of the Land Development Ordinance, are necessary.

Watercourses

Independence is characterized by several important watercourses that traverse the Township. These include:

- Pequest River which flows westward into the Delaware River
- Hatchery Brook which flows eastward into the Musconnetcong
- Smaller streams, brooks and creeks which are found throughout

Concomitant to all these watercourses is the potential for flooding and degradation by erosion, pollution or other factors.

The most effective manner of flood protection is to maintain flood plains in a natural state and restrict development thereon.

In addition to flooding, other major problems caused by improper development to surface water are erosion and sedimentation. Erosion involves the wearing away of soil or rock by moving water and sedimentation involves the transportation of these eroded materials in suspension and their deposition in other areas. Erosion usually becomes a problem when undesirable changes are created in graded areas. Erosion is more active in areas of steep slopes than in flatter areas.

Sedimentation problems usually pick up where erosion problems leave off. The transported

material may be a source of contamination in streams, raising water treatment costs and even affecting public health. Siltation may occur in areas where it is undesirable or even a hazard. Sedimentation problems are a function of slope, relief, soil, rock type, the surface water flow and the watershed involved. Changes, such as new development, that effect the velocity of running water will affect the rate of sedimentation. Erosion and sedimentation are also regional problems in that they affect areas far removed from where they begin.

A small portion of the eastern section of the Township is within the Musconetcong River watershed. The Soil Conservation Service is instituting a Federal program to control uses and practices in this watershed which have the potential to generate byproducts which can infiltrate to this river. Township agricultural uses in this area are cooperating with this program.

Recommendations

To maintain the integrity of the Townships watercourses, it is recommended that first, development be prohibited in flood prone areas. This is achieved in part by the critical areas section of the Land Development Ordinance. Additional watercourse protection can be achieved by requiring a minimum buffer of 75' to the watercourse. This buffer should be retained in its natural state.

**TABLE 12:
GROUNDWATER YIELD OF GEOLOGIC FORMATIONS
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, N.J. 1994**

<u>Geologic Formation</u>	<u>Area: Acres</u>	<u>Sq. Miles</u>	<u>Max. Prod. Capacity (gdp/sq.mi.) Normal Period</u>	<u>Dwelling Units</u>	<u>Dwelling Unit</u>
Precambrian Crystallines	6,477	10.12	100,000	2,024	3.2
Kittatinny Limestone	1,517	2.37	250,000	1,167	1.3
Glacial Deposits	<u>4,230</u>	<u>6.61</u>	200,000	<u>2,644</u>	1.6
Totals	12,224	19.1		5,835	

Source: N.J. Bureau of Geology and Topography - Bulletin 73.

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

HISTORIC PLAN ELEMENT

The 1988 Plan identifies and describes 22 historic sites in the Township. The Morris Canal is also identified as a major historic element in Independence. All sites in the Township should be preserved and protected.

The 1988 Plan recommends that a complete Historic Preservation Plan Element be prepared. This recommendation is reiterated in this 1994 Plan.

The 1988 Plan recommends architectural guidelines be established for the Villages of Great Meadows and Vienna. This recommendation is also reiterated in this 1994 Plan.

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

UTILITIES

Since 1982, approximately 1,975 acres within Independence Township are within the jurisdiction of the Hackettstown Municipal Utilities Authority (HMUA). The service area of HMUA in Independence is located in the southern portion of the Township from Hackettstown up to an elevation of 750'. HMUA supplies both public water and public sewer services. All other areas of the Township are served by individual wells and septic systems.

These individual systems normal function well for residences on lots of two acres or greater. Recently, the groundwater serving the residences and uses around Asbury Road has been found to be contaminated. The full extent of this pollution is unknown. To complicate this problem, the polluted groundwater area seems to be expanding.

The long term solution is to provide public water to this area. For this service a water storage tank is needed near the Stone Mill development off Route 46 as this location has the appropriate elevation height. A pump or lift station may also be needed near the Hills of Independence project to pump the public water up to the new water service area.

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

CIRCULATION

The current circulation plan is the one prepared by Garmen Associates (1988) and was included in the 1988 Master Plan. Review of this circulation plan shows it is still the operative document for Independence Township.

A copy of this circulation plan map follows.

MAXIMUM
AVERAGE
DAILY
TRAFFIC

ACCESS
CONTROL

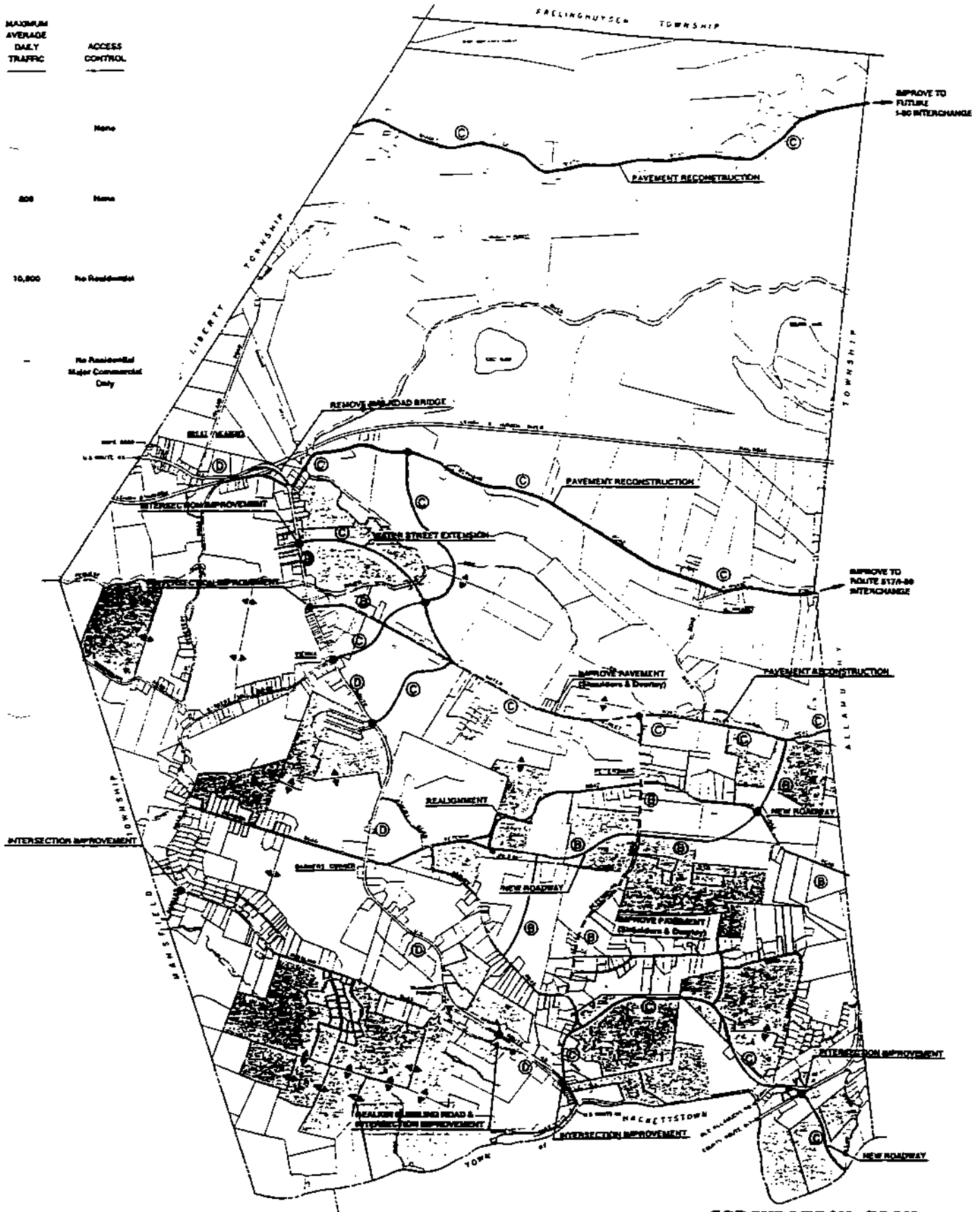
None

None

10,000

No Residential

No Residential
Major Commercial
Only



CIRCULATION PLAN



GARMEN ASSOCIATES

150 RIVER ROAD
MONTVILLE, NEW JERSEY 07045
201-299-7510

SUGG

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

HOUSING PLAN ELEMENT

This section of the Master Plan Reexamination provides the Housing Plan Element required under the Municipal Land Use Law and the Fair Housing Act of 1985. The Housing Element is to "be designed to achieve the goal of access to affordable housing to meet present and prospective housing needs, with particular attention to low and moderate income housing." The Fair Housing Act requires the inclusion of at least the following items in the Master Plan Housing Element:

- a. An inventory of the municipality's housing stock;
- b. A projection of the municipality's housing stock for the next six years;
- c. An analysis of the municipality's demographic characteristics;
- d. An analysis of the existing and probable future employment characteristics of the municipality;
- e. A determination of the municipality's present and prospective fair share for low and moderate income housing and its capacity to accommodate its present and prospective housing needs, including its fair share for low and moderate income housing; and
- f. A consideration of the lands that are most appropriate for construction of low and moderate income housing and of the existing structures most appropriate for conversion to, or rehabilitation for, low and moderate income housing.

The purpose of this report is to meet the requirements for municipal housing elements under the Municipal Land use Land and the Fair Housing Act as they pertain to Independence Township.

Municipal Housing Stock Inventory

The municipal housing stock inventory is required to include information and data on the age, condition, purchase or rental value, occupancy characteristics and type of housing in the municipality. The inventory also must quantify the number of housing units affordable to lower income households and the substandard housing existing in the municipality capable of rehabilitation.

**TABLE 13:
AGE OF HOUSING
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP AND MORRIS COUNTY**

<u>Year Housing Unit Built</u>	<u>Independence Number of Units</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>County of Warren Number of Units</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1980 - 1990	573	36.3	6,250	17.0
1970 - 1970	360	22.9	6,464	17.7
1960 - 1969	167	10.6	4,854	13.3
1950 - 1959	110	7.0	4,333	11.8
1940 - 1949	93	5.9	2,558	7.0
Before 1940	272	17.3	12,130	33.2
Median Year Built	1974		1950	
TOTAL	1,575	100.0	36,589	100.0

NOTE: Figures may not add due to rounding.

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

As indicated in Table 13, the Independence Township possesses a relatively new housing stock. Of the housing units in place as of March 1990, 70 percent were built after 1960 and only 17 percent were added prior to 1940. The median year of construction for housing in Independence is 1974, compared to a County-wide median year built of 1958.

The condition of the Township's housing stock is relatively good. According to detailed statistical studies by the Council On Affordable Housing (COAH), only 40 of the 1,575 housing units in the Township are considered substandard. This estimate is based upon a comprehensive analysis of census data of housing characteristics that are typically indicative of housing deterioration. While these factors do not present clear evidence of deficient housing, the presence of certain combinations of these factors is usually adequate confirmation of the deficient housing. The fact that so few of the Township's housing units are classified as deteriorated is clear evidence as to the generally good condition of the local housing stock.

**TABLE 14:
HOUSING RENTAL AND VALUE DATA
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP AND WARREN COUNTY, 1990**

	<u>Independence</u>	<u>Warren County</u>
Owner Occupied Housing Units		
Median value	\$143,500	\$169,100
Mean value (all units)	152,951	180,342
Mean value (mortgaged units)	185,581	186,011
Mean value (unmortgaged units)	129,666	160,874
Occupied Rental Units		
Median Gross Rent	\$552	\$624

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

The 1990 Census data provided in Table 14 indicates that housing stock has relatively high purchase and rental values. As shown in Table 14, the 1990 mean value of owner occupied units in the Township was \$165,581 while the median value was \$143,500. Mortgaged units had a higher mean value at \$185,581 than unmortgaged units, at \$129,666. The gross median rental in Independence in 1990 was \$552 per month.

Housing costs in the Township are lower than they are at the County level. Also as indicated in Table 14, the mean value of all owner occupied units in the County was 18 percent higher than the Township, rents were 13 percent higher at the County level.

**TABLE 15:
OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING VALUES BY COHORT
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1990**

<u>Housing Value</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Under \$100,000	32	3.5
\$100,000 - 150,000	270	30.0
\$150,000 - 200,000	359	39.9
\$200,000 - 249,999	140	15.5
\$250,000 or more	99	11.0
TOTAL	900	100.0

NOTE: Figures may not add due to rounding.

SOURCE: 1990 Census of Population and Housing.

The data in Tables 15 provides a more detailed look at housing prices in the Township. In 1990, one-third of all owner housing was valued under \$150,000 while another 40 percent was valued between \$150,000 and \$200,000. One in four units was valued over \$200,000.

Table 16 provides a similar cohort analysis for the rental market in Independence. As indicate, nearly six in ten units rented for between \$500 and \$700 monthly. One quarter of all rentals exceeding \$700 a month.

**TABLE 16:
GROSS RENT BY COHORT
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1990**

<u>Rent</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Under \$250	36	9.7
\$250 - \$499	21	5.7
\$500 - \$700	217	58.6
\$700 or more	<u>96</u>	<u>25.9</u>
TOTAL	370	100.0

NOTE: Figures may not add due to rounding.

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

In 1990, Independence had 143 vacant housing units in the Township's total inventory of 1,575 units. This vacancy rate of 9.1 percent is relatively high; a healthy housing market typically has a vacancy rate of under five percent. Of the vacant units, 35 were rental, 60 were "for sale" and 48 were classified as "seasonal, recreational, or occasional use" or "other vacant."

Most of the Township's occupied housing units are owner occupied. In 1990, nearly three of every four units were owner units, the balance were rentals.

**TABLE 17:
HOUSING UNITS BY SIZE
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1990**

<u>Housing Unit Size</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 - 3 rooms	186	11.8
4 rooms	192	12.2
5 rooms	299	19.0
6 rooms	262	16.6
7 rooms	165	10.5
8 rooms	249	15.8
9 or more rooms	<u>222</u>	<u>14.1</u>
TOTAL	1,575	100.0

Mean rooms per unit 6.2

NOTE: 1. Figures may not add due to rounding.
 2. Room is generally defined by the census as space used for living purposes.

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

With respect to size, the local housing stock has an average unit size of 6.2 rooms per unit. Reflecting the mix of housing types in the Borough, the unit size breakdown is fairly even.

Housing affordability to local lower income residents can be estimated using 1990 Census data and widely accepted affordability standards. Under these standards, local households earning less than \$19,964 in 1990 would be considered low income residents, while households earning between \$19,964 and \$31,943 would be classified as moderate income. These levels are based on Warren County's 1990

median household income of \$39,929 (see Table 22) and the COAH standard that low and moderate income households earn less than 50 and 80 percent of median income, respectively.

The Township's owner housing units available to lower income residents can then be determined assuming a household can afford a unit price at 2.5 times its median income. Using this standard, homes priced under \$49,910 in the Township would be available to low income residents, and homes priced under \$79,857 would be available to moderate income residents. According to the data in Table 15 and related Census data, no units are priced to be available to low income households and only 26 units are available to moderate income residents.

A similar assessment can be made of Independence rental market using the standard that rent levels should not exceed 30 percent of gross income. Under this standard, low income households could afford units renting for under \$499 monthly, while moderate income households could afford units under \$799 monthly. This indicated the 1990 availability of 57 rental units for low income households and up to 252 additional units for moderate income households.

Under these tests a total of 26 owner units and 309 rental units were available to the Township's lower income residents in 1990. This represents 23 percent of the Township's occupied housing units in 1990.

In summation, housing inventory of Independence is a relatively new one, in good condition, and owner and rental values are relatively low when compared to Warren County. The housing stock is largely owner occupied. Roughly 23 of every 100 occupied homes in the Township were available from a price perspective to low or moderate income residents in 1990.

Municipal Housing Stock Projection

Housing elements are also required to provide information regarding projection of the local housing inventory including a discussion of the probable future construction of housing for lower income households.

**TABLE 18:
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMIT SUMMARY
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1980 - 1992**

	Number of Units Authorized By Permit			
	<u>Single Family</u>	<u>Multifamily</u>	<u>Demolition</u>	<u>Net Increase</u>
1980	5	0	0	5
1981	11	40	1	50
1982	5	0	0	5
1983	15	0	0	15
1984	20	0	0	20
1985	55	0	4	51
1986	63	0	0	63
1987	76	0	1	75
1988	169	4	0	169
1989	66	219	0	285
1990	70	0	0	70
1991	13	0	2	11
1992	<u>69</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>69</u>
TOTAL	637	259	8	888

SOURCE: New Jersey Residential Building Permits; Annual Summaries,
NJ Department of Labor

As shown in Table 18, recent building permit data show a very strong level of home construction in Independence. From 1980 through 1992, in fact, 888 housing units were authorized by permit, 637 of which were for single family homes and 259 for multifamily units in the Oak Hill and Hills of Independence projects. This level of construction, equating to 68 units per year on average, continues to expand the local housing stock with new mostly owner occupied housing.

Similarly, high levels of construction activity can be expected throughout the 1990's. This assumption is based upon past trends and the recognition that development pressures will continue to move westward in the state.

Municipal Demographic Characteristics

Housing element guidelines also call for an analysis of a municipality's demographic characteristics, including but not limited to, household size, income level and age.

Independence's 1990 population of 3,977 was spread among 1,435 households for an average household size of 2.77 persons per household. In 1980, the Township had a population of 2,829 persons spread among 953 households for an average household size of 2.97.

**TABLE 19:
HOUSEHOLD BY SIZE
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1990**

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Number of Households</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1 person	295	20.6
2 persons	432	30.1
3 persons	273	19.0
4 persons	276	19.2
5 persons	88	6.1
6 persons	61	4.2
7 persons	<u>10</u>	<u>0.7</u>
TOTAL	1,435	100.0

Mean Household Size 2.77

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing

As shown in Table 19, the Township is composed primarily of one to four person households. These households represent 89 percent of all Township households, with three in ten represented by the two person household group.

**TABLE 20:
AGE DISTRIBUTION
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, 1990**

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
0 - 4	344	8.6
5 - 9	279	7.0
10 - 14	291	7.3
15 - 19	258	6.5
20 - 24	245	6.2
25 - 29	417	10.5
30 - 34	386	9.7
35 - 44	707	17.8
45 - 54	410	10.3
55 - 59	141	3.5
60 - 64	135	3.4
65 and over	<u>364</u>	<u>9.1</u>
TOTAL	3,977	100.0

NOTE: Figures may not add due to rounding.

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

The median age of local residents is 32.0 years. This is significantly younger than the Warren County population, which had a 1990 median age of 34.4 years, and also younger than the State median age of 34.5 years.

The age distribution data in Table 20 indicate a fairly even age distribution, except for a relatively small population over 55 years of age. Also, like many communities throughout the State, a noteworthy increase in pre-school children is evident when compared to the school age cohorts.

**TABLE 21:
INCOME CHARACTERISTICS
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP AND WARREN COUNTY, 1990**

<u>Income Category</u>	<u>Independence</u>	<u>Warren County</u>
Median Household Income	\$45,250	\$39,929
Median Family Income	\$51,714	\$45,770
Per Capita Income	\$18,825	\$16,716
Percent of Persons:		
Below Poverty Level	1.48	5.44
Percent of Families:		
Below Poverty Level	1.02	2.58

NOTE: Household is defined as an occupied housing unit. Family is defined as a group of related individuals living together in a housing unit.

SOURCE: 1990 Census of Population and Housing

The data in Table 21 and 22 show that Independence Township's income levels are somewhat higher than those of the County. The Township's median household income in 1989 was \$45,250, 13 percent higher than Warren County as a whole. A similar relationship exists with family income levels, with the Independence median of \$51,714 exceeding the County level of \$45,770. It is also observed that the percent of persons and families below the poverty level in the Township is far less than County levels.

**TABLE 22:
HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY COHORT, 1989
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP**

<u>Annual Household Income</u>	<u>Number of Households</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Under \$25,000	325	22.6
\$25,000 to \$34,999	190	13.2
\$35,000 to \$44,999	198	13.8
\$45,000 to \$54,999	180	12.5
\$55,000 to \$74,999	267	18.6
\$75,000 to \$99,999	169	11.8
\$100,000 or more	<u>106</u>	<u>7.4</u>
TOTAL	1,435	100.0

NOTE: Figures may not add due to rounding.

SOURCE: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing.

Table 22 examines household income data by income cohort. From this perspective, the Township had just over one-third of its households earning less than \$35,000 in 1989 annual income, and approximately 45 percent earning between \$35,000 and \$75,000.

In summation, this demographic profile of the Township has identified the Independence population as being younger and more affluent than the County as a whole. Total population and household levels are increasing rapidly. Household size continues to decline.

Existing and Future Employment Characteristics

An analysis of existing and future employment characteristics is also required for a municipal housing element. This requirement is based on the direct relationship between employment growth and housing demand in a community.

An analysis of local covered employment trends is provided in Table 23. As shown in this table, employment in Independence has been relatively stable in recent years, ranging from 212 in 1980 to 207 in 1991. By 1992, however, employment had jumped to 375 jobs.

It is anticipated that future job growth will be relatively modest; employment expansion substantially above present levels is unlikely.

**TABLE 23:
COVERED EMPLOYMENT HISTORY
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP
1972 - 1992**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Units</u>	<u>Number of Jobs</u>
1972	—	106
1973	--	138
1974	--	85
1975	—	81
1976	—	54
1977	--	67
1978	—	171
1979	—	171
1980	—	212
1981	19	233
1982	17	203
1983	17	220
1984	17	217
1985	17	249
1986	19	226
1987	21	241
1988	32	338
1989	32	281
1990	40	219
1991	45	207
1992	45	375

NOTE: Unit counts were not available prior to 1981.

SOURCE: New Jersey Covered Employment Trends, 1972 - New Jersey Department of Labor.

Fair Share Housing Need

Independence Township received substantive certification from N.J. Council On Affordable Housing (COAH) on October 17, 1988. It was determined that the Township had an obligation at that time of 27 units at that time. The Township has satisfied that obligation in full with the Stone Mill inclusionary housing rezoning and approvals.

COAH now calculates the new Independence Township fair share housing need for 1993 - 1999 at a total need of 5 units, as shown in Table 24. The Township recognized the October 19, 1994 date. Since the Planning Board is completing the Reexamination, the Township requested from COAH, as permitted, interim certification to allow it time to prepare a new Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.

**TABLE 24:
COAH FAIR SHARE HOUSING NEED 1993 - 1999
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP**

	<u>Number of Units</u>
Indigenous Need	37
Reallocated Present Need	9
Prospective Need	2
TOTAL NEED	48
Adjustments for: prior cycle (1987-1993)	
Prospective Need	8
Demolitions	0
Filtering	-7
Conversions	-2
Rehabilitation	-2
Reductions	0
Credits	-40
TOTAL CALCULATED NEED	5

SOURCE: New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing.

This indigenous need can be addressed by requiring a development impact fee to be used for rehabilitation of housing which would address the indigenous need obligation as identified by COAH. The Board should study this approach to the indigenous need.

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

LAND USE PLAN

The land use plan for 1994 duplicates the existing zone districting of the Township. However, four districts are recommended for change as shown on the accompanying map and as explained herein.

1. H-I change to L-I. The current H-I zone is a heavy industry zone that was long used by Southland Chemical. Presently, this industry is vacant and the property is polluted with toxic chemicals. Extensive and lengthy cleanup must precede any reuse of the property and zone.

As there is extensive infrastructure on the property: buildings, sewer treatment plant and roadways it is still, at some time in the future appropriate for industry although not heavy but a light manufacturing and assemble type use.

2. R-3 to B. This property fronts Route 517 and is used for logging and log storage. The zoning of all property fronting Route 517 in Independence is B Business. This zone district should be modified to include this property also.

3. OR and R-2 to PD. This large property which fronts Old Allamuchy Road is presently zoned Office Research (lower area) and Residential (remainder). The very top is isolated from the main property due to the steep slope and lack of public sewer and water service and should remain zoned R-2.

The bulk of the property is recommended to be changed to a new planned development zone district.

This PD zone designation would allow office, retail and wholesale business, commercial and multi-family housing.

The property is in the HMUA sewer service area and can be served by public water. It is recognized that, while office designation was appropriate in the 1988 master Plan Reexamination, the downturn in regional and state economics makes it unlikely that office use will be developed in the foreseeable future.

There are business and multi-family housing uses already in the neighborhood and thus planned development would be compatible with existing uses, both in Independence Township and Hackettstown. It is also recognized that business uses and multi-family uses in Independence have been net tax rateables. Many of the multi-family projects are built out or will be built out in the next

several years. There are also opportunities for certain business uses, to develop in this area, which serve other businesses. Thus, it is prudent to plan to introduce new business and multi-family housing development opportunities to come on line in the next couple of years.

The more desirable mix of uses of the property would allow for significant portions to be developed for non-residential. Any development of this property will of necessity require careful circulation planning such that new traffic can directly access Route 517.

4. O/LI and B to a New Zone District. The Johnson Road, Asbury Road and Route 46 intersection area generally zoned O/LI and B should be examined with the objective of rezoning to possibly a new district which would allow present permitted uses but also allow for light industry, construction business offices and construction businesses, import/export businesses and other similar and compatible uses.

Non-Zone Specific Recommendations.

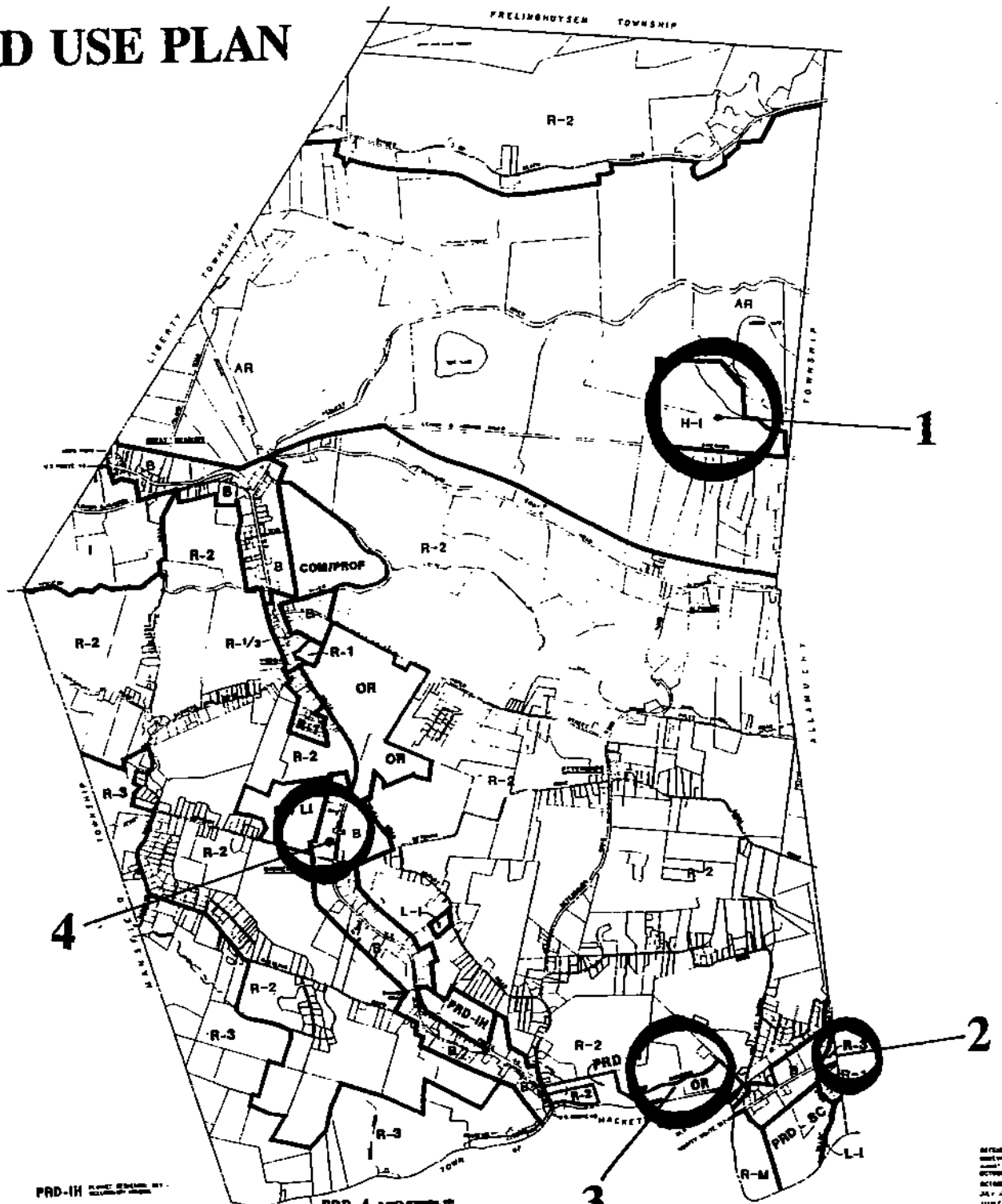
1. Other recommendations not specific to a particular zone, for the Land Use Plan include are: allowing accessory apartments on larger acreage properties and bed and breakfast use as a conditional use in certain zone districts.

2. The State Development and Redevelopment Guide Plan have designated Vienna, Alphano and Great Meadows as hamlets. The Planning Board should explore the advantages and disadvantages of petitioning the State to have these officially designated as places.

3. The critical areas section of the Land Development Ordinance should be examined in light of recent court decisions regarding this type Zoning.

4. The current Land Development Ordinance should be reviewed and brought up-to-date with particular reference to amendments to the Municipal land Use law and recent court decisions.

LAND USE PLAN



PRD-1H PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEV.
 R-3 RESIDENTIAL
 O / LI OFFICE - LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
 R-2 LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
 R-1 MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
 R-M HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
 R-1/2 RESIDENTIAL VILLAGE
 AR SPECIAL AGRICULTURAL
 PRD PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

PRD-4 PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEV.
 OR OFFICE - RESEARCH
 COM / PROF COMMERCIAL - PROFESSIONAL
 PRD-SC PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEV. - SEMI-CITIZEN
 H-1 HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
 I INDUSTRIAL
 L-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
 B BUSINESS

BASE MAP PREPARED BY WARREN COUNTY PLANNING OFFICE
 WARREN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD DELVIDERE, N. J.
 P DAVID ZIMMERMAN, TOWNSHIP PLANNER

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
 WARREN COUNTY, N.J.



RECEIVED 9 1984
 MAY 10, 1984
 OCTOBER 2, 1984
 RECEIVED 20, 1984
 JULY 2, 1984
 JUNE 8, 1984
 DEC. 20, 1984
 MARCH 22, 1984
 JAN 8, 1984
 DEC. 27, 1984
 MAY 10, 1984
 NOV 22, 1984

REVISIONS

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

STATEMENT OF PLANNING RELATIONSHIPS

Preparation of the Independence Township Master Plan has included a review of the plans of other government agencies. By law, the Township must include a policy statement on the relationship of the Township Plan to these plans. The municipalities for which a policy statement is required are Allamuchy, Hackettstown, Mansfield, Hope, Liberty, Frelinghuysen and Warren County Planning Board. Statement is also required for the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

The policy of the Township is to ensure that the Township development of Independence does not conflict with the development and welfare of neighboring municipalities, the County, and the State as a whole. An analysis of the Independence Plan shows that it is compatible with the plans of adjoining municipalities, the County, and the State.

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

RECYCLING PLAN ELEMENT

The goals of the State Recycling Plan promote the collection, disposition and recycling of all recyclable materials. The objectives of this plan require the collection, disposition and recycling of recyclable materials in any development proposal for the construction of 50 or more units of single-family residential housing or 25 or more units of multi-family residential housing and any commercial or industrial development proposal for the utilization of 1,000 square feet or more of land.

Consistent with these goals and objectives, the Township adopted a recycling ordinance on June 25, 1988. This ordinance requires all occupants of both residential and non-residential property to separate recyclable material for the purpose of their collection and recycling. A recycling coordinator position is established.

It is recommended that recycling regulations be incorporated into the Township site plan ordinance to be applicable to development proposals that come before the Township Boards.

**Master Plan Reexamination
Prepared by:**

**P. David Zimmerman
Professional Planner
21 Western Avenue
Morristown, NJ 07960
Tel. (201) 539-9616**