

Frank

**INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN
REEXAMINATION REPORT AND REVISED
LAND USE PLAN**

**Prepared by John A. Madden, Jr.,
Licensed Professional Planner 1452**

**MADDEN/KUMMER, INC.
62 Pennsylvania Avenue
Flemington, New Jersey 08822**

1988

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN
Table of Contents

Independence Township Personnel	1
INTRODUCTION	2
GOALS OF THE 1982 MASTER PLAN	4
REVISED GOALS	5
Conservation	6
Wetlands	10
Steep Slopes	13
Wildlife Habitats	13
Groundwater	13
POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS	16
EXISTING LAND USE	20
AGRICULTURAL USE	24
WOODED OR OPEN LAND	32
CIRCULATION	34
RECREATION AND PARKS	37
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	39
HISTORIC SITES LIST	42
HOUSING	46
UTILITIES	49
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT	55
RECYCLING	57
STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN	62
Background	62
Strategy	62
Key Recommendations	66
Key Recommendations - Growth Tiers: 1 through 4	66
Limited Growth Tiers: 5 through 7	67
Relationship of Independence Township to the State Plan	68
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	68
THE LAND USE PLAN	71
Introduction	72
Town Center	73
Housing in the Town Center	73
Higher Density Residential	77

Growth Management	77
Pequest River Park System	78
Medium Density Residential	78
Low Density Residential	78
Conservation/Very Low Density Residential	78
Employment Areas - Industrial/Office	79
Highway and Neighborhood Commercial	80
Public Services	82
Recreation	82
Areas for Further Study	83

MAPS

Map 1	Zoning Changes since 1982	7
Map 2	Development Constraints Plan	8
Map 3	Available Residential and Non-Residential Land	9
Map 4	Wetlands	11
Map 5	Slope	14
Map 6	Rare Species & Natural Communities	15
Map 7	Development Activity	22
Map 8	Existing Land Use	23
Map 9	Prime Agricultural Soils	27
Map 10	Farmland Preservation	28
Map 11	Prime Forestland	33
Map 12	Circulation Plan	35
Map 13	Development Constraints and Circulation Plan	36
Map 14	Historical Sites	41
Map 15	Sewer and Water Service Areas Map	51
Map 16	Sewer and Water Lines	52
Map 17	Pristine Waters	56
Map 18	Zoning in Independence and Surrounding Municipalities	60
Map 19	Warren County General Development Plan	61
Map 20	State Plan Proposals	63
Map 21	Public Buildings and Land	70
Map 22	Concept Plan	72
Map 23	Land Use Plan	76

TABLES

Table 1	Percent of Persons Over 65 Years of Age (1980)	17
Table 2	Projected Housing Types in Independence Township	19
Table 3	Residential Development Activity, 1980-1988	24
Table 4	Land Use in Independence Township	23

TOWNSHIP OF INDEPENDENCE
Warren County, New Jersey

Planning Board Members

Robert Best
Jay Davis
Michael Eagles
James Kelsey
Emmett Landiak
Frank Lombardo
Robert Palestri
Robert Schubert
Peter Miller, Chairman

Alternate Members

Joyce Caughey
Stephanie Van Pelt
James Flock

Clerk

Joanne George

Planning Board Professionals

James Moen, Attorney
Charles Biggs, Engineer
John Madden, Planner

Township Council

Robert Giordano
Joseph Kennedy
Robert Palestri, Mayor
Roger Thomas, Township Attorney
Linda Wells, Township Clerk

June, 1988

This Reexamination Report and Revised Master Plan was adopted by the Independence Township Planning Board on July 29, 1988.

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN RE-EXAMINATION

INTRODUCTION

The Municipal Land Use Law, Chapter 291, Laws of New Jersey 1975 provided for the preparation and adoption of a master plan and development regulations and the periodic re-examination of them. The section of this law concerning the re-examination is recited below to serve as the basis for this report.

C 40:55D-89 Periodic examination.

The governing body shall, at least every six (6) years, provide for a general re-examination of its master plan and development regulations by the Planning Board which shall prepare a report on the findings of such re-examination, a copy of which shall be sent to the County Planning Board and the municipal clerks of each adjoining municipality. The six (6) year period shall commence with the adoption of termination of the last general re-examination of such plan and regulations. The first such re-examination shall be completed by August 1, 1982. The next re-examination shall be completed by August 1, 1988. Thereafter, a re-examination shall be completed at least once every 6 years from the previous re-examination.

Such report shall state:

- a. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of such adoption, last revision or re-examination, if any.
- 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 assumption, policies and objectives forming the basis for such plan or regulations as 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, municipal policies and objectives.

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

In order to be in full compliance with the municipal Land Use Law, the Independence Township Planning Board has authorized this report on the findings of the re-examination of its master plan and development regulations with a copy to be sent to the County Planning Board and the municipal clerks of each adjoining municipality.

The current Master Plan of Independence Township was adopted on July 19, 1982. It contains nine basic elements - a statement of goals, natural features, population, existing land use, a housing plan, a circulation plan, a utilities plan, and a land use plan.

This re-examination report will summarize the findings of each element of the 1982 Master Plan, note what changes in conditions have occurred since 1982 and then propose new policies to implement new community planning goals and responses to changed conditions. The re-examination report will also present policy recommendations for plan elements which are not considered in the 1982 Master Plan such as parks and recreation, economic development, historic preservation, stormwater management and recycling. In addition, the re-examination report will review the land use implications of new State Laws adopted since 1982 such as the State Planning Commission Act, the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act of 1987, the Agriculture Retention and Development Act of 1983 and the Fair Housing Act of 1985.

Finally, a revised Land Use Plan element will synthesize the policies and recommendations developed by the Re-examination Report.

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



GOALS OF THE 1982 MASTER PLAN

The 1982 Master Plan proposed the following eight community planning goals:

- To provide adequate open space, light, air and otherwise a clean environment;
- To ensure that development of Independence is in harmony with its neighbors.
- To provide for the appropriate housing requirements for residents of the Township as well as the region;
- To encourage conservation of open space and the preservation of natural resources;
- To encourage the use of the best features of design and layout of each particular site whether for residential, commercial, industrial or recreational purposes.
- To protect and encourage the continuation of agricultural activities where they now exist in the community;
- To protect historical and scenic areas through the preservation of stream valleys and selected wooded areas for permanent open space.

These goals indicate an emphasis on protecting the natural environment and historic features while providing for a balanced development of land uses and housing needs.

AVAILABLE RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL LAND

-  AVAILABLE LAND IN RESIDENTIAL ZONE THAT IS NOT CONSTRAINED OR BUILT ON
-  AVAILABLE LAND IN NON-RESIDENTIAL ZONE THAT IS NOT CONSTRAINED OR BUILT ON



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
 COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
 FLEMINGTON, N.J.
 JUNE 1988

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
 WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCES

- 1988 INDEPENDENCE ZONING MAP
- 1988 LAND USE MAP
- 1988 DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS MAP

It is with these areas that the fate of Independence Township as a balanced community will be decided for these areas represent the best lands for community services, job centers, shopping and residential development.

Wetlands

The 1982 Master Plan barely mentions wetlands as a development constraint.

Since that time there has been a significant change in the regulatory atmosphere such that it appears that no development or disturbance will be permitted in wetlands.

This is important to the planning of Independence Township since much of the land area here is encumbered with wetlands. It is estimated that 6721 acres of 54 percent of Independence Township consists of wetlands which could be regulated by State Law enacted in 1987. Map 4 indicates the wetlands identified in the National Wetlands Inventory and those areas with hydric soil conditions which are likely to qualify as wetlands. The Master Plan should be revised to reduce development densities on tracts encumbered by wetlands and emphasis should be placed on clustering development to leave wetlands permanently reserved in open space.

no map 4
included

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. State permits under this act will be required as of July 1, 1988. State regulation of wetlands transition or buffer areas will be effective as of July 1, 1989.

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.

National Wetlands Inventory Maps are available at every municipal clerk's office. These maps are for the purpose of indicating the general location of wetlands. The actual presence and boundaries of a wetland must be determined using the three parameter approach as described in the USEPA "Wetlands Identification and Delineation Manual". Proposed freshwater wetlands boundaries must then be confirmed with DEP through a letter of interpretation or permit application before any construction can begin.

If a permit is granted, mitigation will be required as a permit condition. Unless the mitigation results in the replacement of wetlands of equal value, DEP requires a 2:1 replacement of wetlands acreage lost or adversely impacted, with a replacement of wetlands on-site if possible. If both on-site and off-site mitigation are found to be impractical, DEP will consider donations of land or money to the Wetlands Mitigation Bank. Independence Township should petition the DEP to consider using mitigation funds to acquire permanent development rights to the Great Meadows mucklands which is a massive wetlands resource of regional impact.

The transition area requirements, which will be effective in July of 1989, require the classification of wetlands based on resource value. Classification will be used to consider alternatives to the proposed regulated activity, to determine the size of a transition area, and to assess mitigation measures. Wetlands will be 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 75 to 150 feet, and intermediate value wetlands will require a transition area of 25 to 50 feet. Ordinary value wetlands will not require a transition area.

Steep Slopes

The 1982 Master Plan dealt extensively with the planning implications issue of steep slopes. Slopes over 15 percent are highly constrained to development. Such slopes are potentially unstable usually found in combination with a thin soil and vegetative cover which when disturbed causes accelerated erosion and sedimentation, increased runoff and flooding. Approximately 3000 acres or 25 percent of Independence Township's land area falls into the 15 percent or greater slope category. See Map 5.

Wildlife Habitats

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has broadly identified areas of Independence Township which contain wildlife habitats of endangered or threatened plant and animal species. See Map 6 .

Wildlife can only co-exist with human settlements if their habitat is retained undisturbed. Toward that end, a section of each property to be developed should be left undisturbed for wildlife habitat. These undisturbed areas should be connected together to form continuous habitat systems. Finally, all undisturbed habitats should be linked to flowing water which sustains all wildlife.

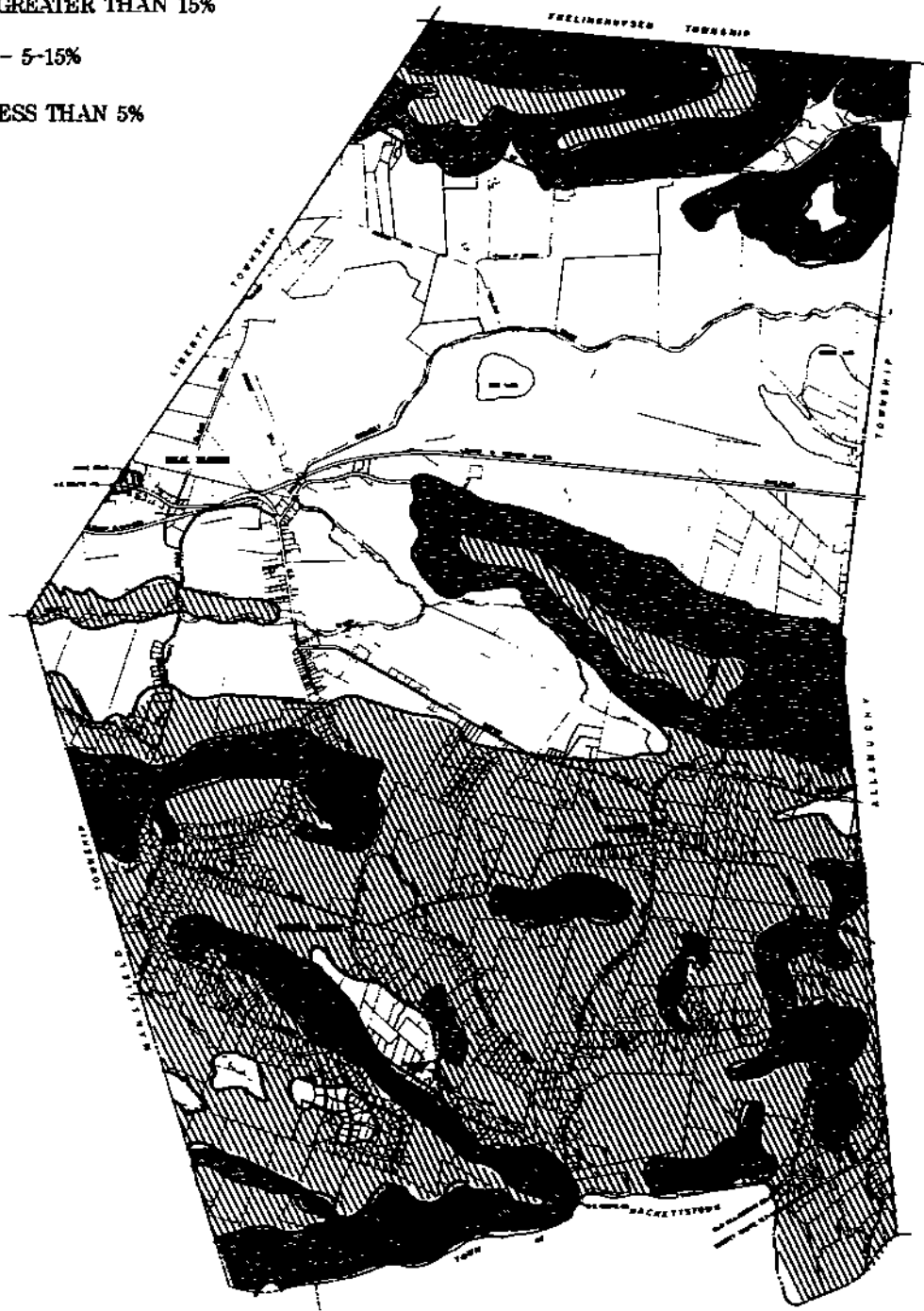
All stream corridors should be left in their natural state not only to sustain wildlife and protect water resources but also because these areas often possess unusual landscape beauty.

Groundwater

The most critical environmental issue which has evolved since 1982 is the protection of groundwater resources. The incidences of

SLOPE

- STEEP-GREATER THAN 15%
- ▨ GENTLE- 5-15%
- FLAT-LESS THAN 5%



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
FLEMINGTON, N.J.
MAY 1988

SCALE
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

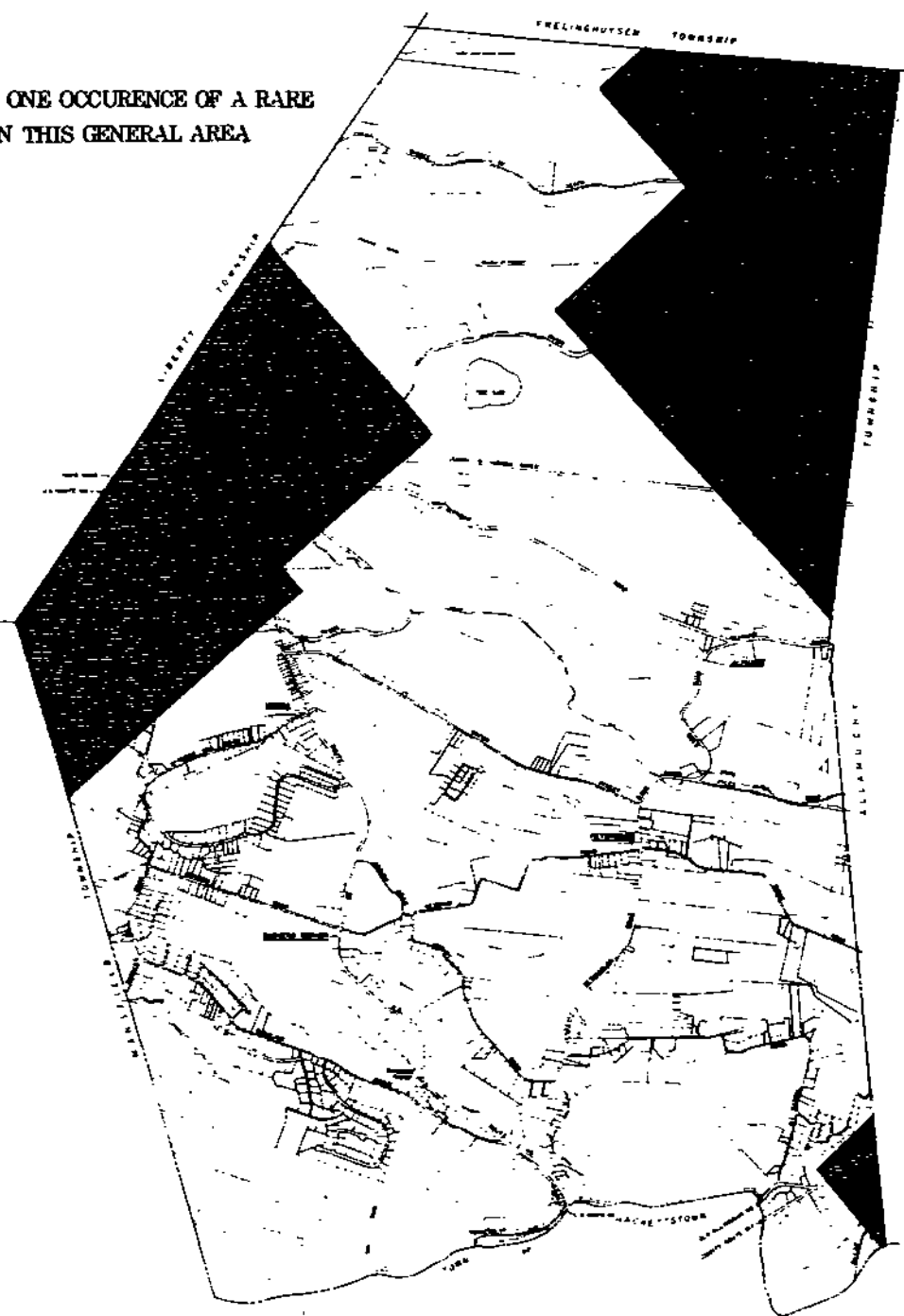
SOURCE WARREN COUNTY PLANNING OFFICE
 TOPOGRAPHY MAP 1982

RARE SPECIES & NATURAL COMMUNITIES (WILDLIFE HABITATS)

⑥



AT LEAST ONE OCCURENCE OF A RARE
SPECIES IN THIS GENERAL AREA



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER, INC.
COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
FLEMINGTON, N.J.
JUNE 1968

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCE

N.J. OFFICE OF STATE PLANNING, 1968

groundwater contamination in New Jersey in recent years has alerted us to the need to preserve this vital resource.

The highest priority in municipal land development review and enforcement should be maintenance of the quality and quantity of Independence Township's groundwater resources. Toward that end, Independence Township should work with adjoining municipalities and higher governmental agencies to create ordinances designed to protect groundwater resources.

All applicants on properties occupied by commercial and industrial uses seeking to expand or involved in a transfer of ownership should be required to obtain a continuing certificate of occupancy based upon Board of Health review and approval of documentation submitted by the applicant that the property is free from surface or subsurface contamination. An annual inspection of all properties with nonresidential uses should be instituted in cooperation with adjacent rural municipalities and the County Health Department to determine if material handling and property maintenance is being carried out in a manner conducive to the preservation of groundwater quality.

Independence Township in cooperation with the County Health Department should encourage periodic hazardous household waste cleanup to discourage residents from disposing in their septic systems common but hazardous materials such as paint.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The 1982 Master Plan presented a thorough examination of population characteristics in Independence Township since 1970 based on the 1980 census data. Population forecasts for the years 1990 and 2000 were projected.

The 1977 Master Plan had projected a population of 5,371 persons by the year 1990. The 1982 Master Plan foresaw a much lower total 1990 population of 3,500 persons. It was anticipated Independence Township would add 226 new homes and 671 persons in this decade.

Population growth in Independence is progressing at a slightly faster pace than forecasted in 1982. From 1980 until April 1988, Independence Township added 268 single family homes and 40 senior citizen apartment units housing an estimated population of 850 persons. This brings Independence Township to an estimated current population of 3680 persons placing population growth slightly ahead of prior forecasts for the year 1990. It is likely that population growth in Independence Township will exceed the optimistic forecasts of the 1977 Master Plan. By 1990 with the expected completion of just six residential projects (Stone Mill, Hills of Independence, Oak Hills, Highlands of Independence, Forest Ridge and Pondview), Independence Township should have an estimated population of 5,880 persons. If Independence Township adds only 40 homes each year in the next decade (the annual average development rate it experienced from 1980 thru mid-1988), the community should top 6,280 persons by the year 2000.

The 1982 Master Plan concluded that Independence Township's major population characteristic reflected a new suburbanizing community of first-time home-buying adults with younger children. What was overlooked was Independence Township's elderly population of 65 years and older. The percentage of senior citizens here exceeds that of the County and the State, both of which are high in comparison to national averages.

TABLE 1

Percent of persons over 65 years of Age (1980)

Independence Twp.	13.5%
Warren County	12%
State of New Jersey	11%

This data does not reflect the construction of Liberty House. An increasing elderly population creates the need to plan for medical services, social services and congregate and nursing facilities similar to what is found in Heath Village in Washington Township (Morris County).

Another household and housing characteristic overlooked in the 1982 Master Plan is the latent demand for smaller housing units such as townhouses and garden apartments. Of the 953 households in Independence Township, 464 or 49% are one- and two-person households. Yet, 67 percent (695/953) of the community's 1980 housing stock consisted of homes with 5 and 6+ rooms more appropriately sized for family-style households. In general terms, one could speculate that 18% of the households in Independence Township were "overhoused" due to a lack of small housing options available within the community.

TABLE 2

PROJECTED HOUSING TYPES IN INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP

SINGLE FAMILY UNITS		MULTI-FAMILY UNITS	
695	Dwelling units with 5-6+ rooms (1980 Census)	40	Liberty House
274	single family units added since 1980, all assumed to be 5-6+ rooms	570 124 230	Oak Hill Hills of Independence Stone Mill
<hr/> 969	Single family units with 5-6+ rooms	<hr/> 964	Multi-family units

This condition has been addressed since 1982. Four of the approved multi-family projects, when constructed, will equal in total units the estimated number of single family homes in Independence Township today. See Table 2. From a community perspective, population and housing balance will be achieved in Independence Township in the near future.

Future housing policy should recognize that demographic and economic forces will continue to move in the direction of a demand for small houses.

The following trends in society encourage smaller household sizes and a need for small houses:

- A zero population rate of 1.8 persons per household nationwide since 1973 means trend toward small households continues
- Non-standard households, such as the elderly, divorced, and female-headed households, predominant in society over husband-wife-children households
- High housing costs as a percent of household income
- High land costs
- More women in the labor force resulting in a more likely occurrence of smaller household sizes.

EXISTING LAND USE

The 1982 Master Plan presented an analysis of the land uses in existence in 1980 and compared changes in land use over the previous four years. The 1982 Master Plan concluded that Independence Township retained much of its rural form community character. Development was concentrated along existing roads, particularly at the intersections of major roads and the areas adjoining Hackettstown.

The pace of land development activity has increased since the 1982 Master Plan. In the years 1976 to 1980 (the interval studied in the 1982 Master Plan), only 151 acres were used for residential development. From 1980 to 1988, 320.25 acres on 134 lots were consumed for residential construction and another 357.47 acres on 112 new lots were approved for future residential development. The 677.72 acres representing lands both built on or approved for residential use since 1980 equals 47.8 percent or nearly one half of the 1415 total acres used for single family residential uses in 1980. See Table 3. With approximately another 800 acres proposed for residential development in phases of varying forms currently before the Planning Board it means within the near future more than a doubling of the total land area devoted to single family residential use in Independence Township in the brief period since 1980. See Map 7, Development Activity.

By contrast, there has been no substantial development in commercial, industrial or public facility uses since 1980. Table 4 entitled Land Use in Independence Township shows the changes in land uses from 1976 to 1988. Map 8 shows Existing Land Use Conditions as of April 1988.




TABLE 4
LAND USE IN INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP
1976, 1980 & 1988

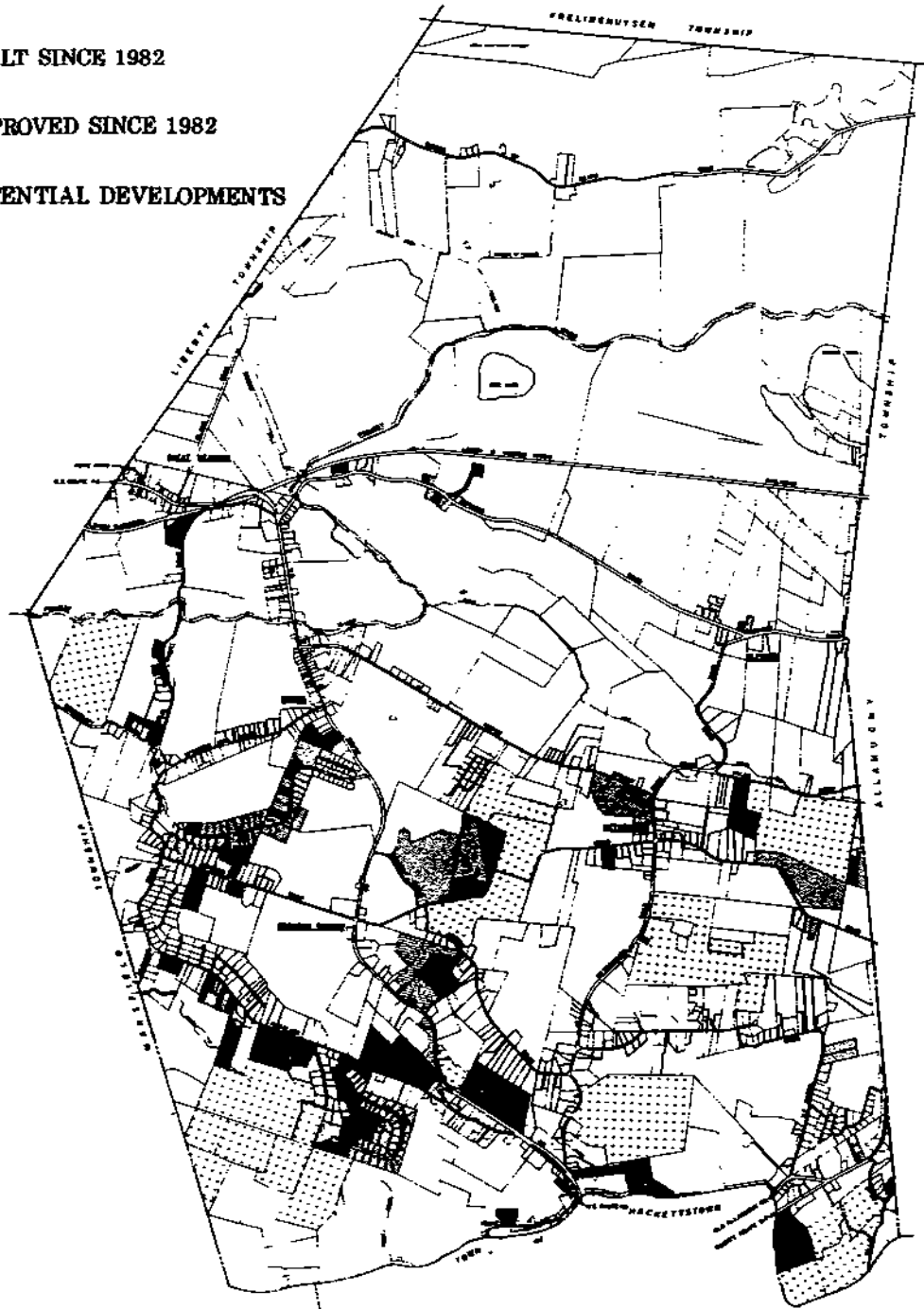
<u>LAND USE</u>	<u>Acres</u>			<u>% of Total Area</u>		
	<u>1976</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1988</u>
Single-Family Residence	1,264	1,415	1,688	10	11.6	14.0
Trailer	4	4	4	*	*	*
Apartment	51	51	97	*	*	*
Business & Residential	62	62	62	*	*	*
Business	815	815	866	7	6.7	7.0
Industrial	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

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

-  BUILT SINCE 1982
-  APPROVED SINCE 1982
-  POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS



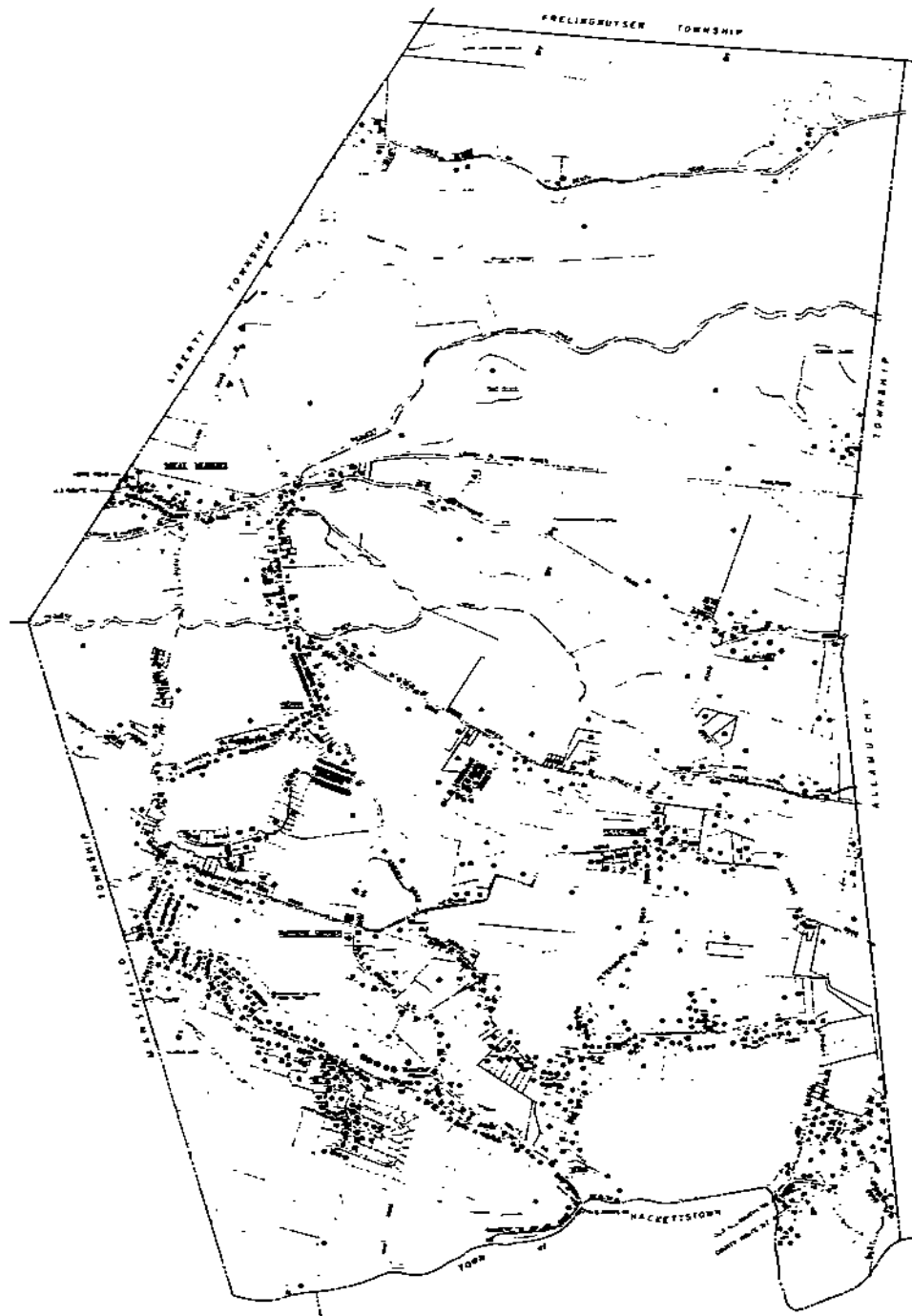
PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
 COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
 FLEMINGTON, N.J.
 APRIL 1983

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
 WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCE

CONSULTANT

EXISTING LAND USE



- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| • SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL | • AGRICULTURE |
| • MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL | • BUSINESS/INDUSTRIAL |
| • COMMERCIAL | • PUBLIC |
| • PARKS | • CHURCH |

Scale 1:1000

TOWNSHIP OF INDEPENDENCE
WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

PREPARED BY
MADDER KUMMER INC.
COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
20 DEERFIELD AVE.
PLAZA, N.J.
JUNE, 1988

SOURCE

1988 INDEPENDENCE TAX DUPLICATE BOOKS
CONSULTANTS WINDSHIELD SURVEY, MAY 1988

TABLE 3

**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY, 1980 - 1988
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP, N.J.**

	320.25 Acres	Residential Construction (134 lots)
	357.47 Acres	Approved for residential construction (112
lots)		
	794.19 Acres	Potential residential construction
<hr/>		
since	1471.91 Acres	Estimated Acreage for new residential use 1980.

AGRICULTURAL USES

The 1982 Master Plan reported that the largest land use category was for farming at 6,520 acres or 53.3 percent of the Township. The mucklands of Great Meadows were highlighted as a unique resource capable of productive high intensity agriculture.

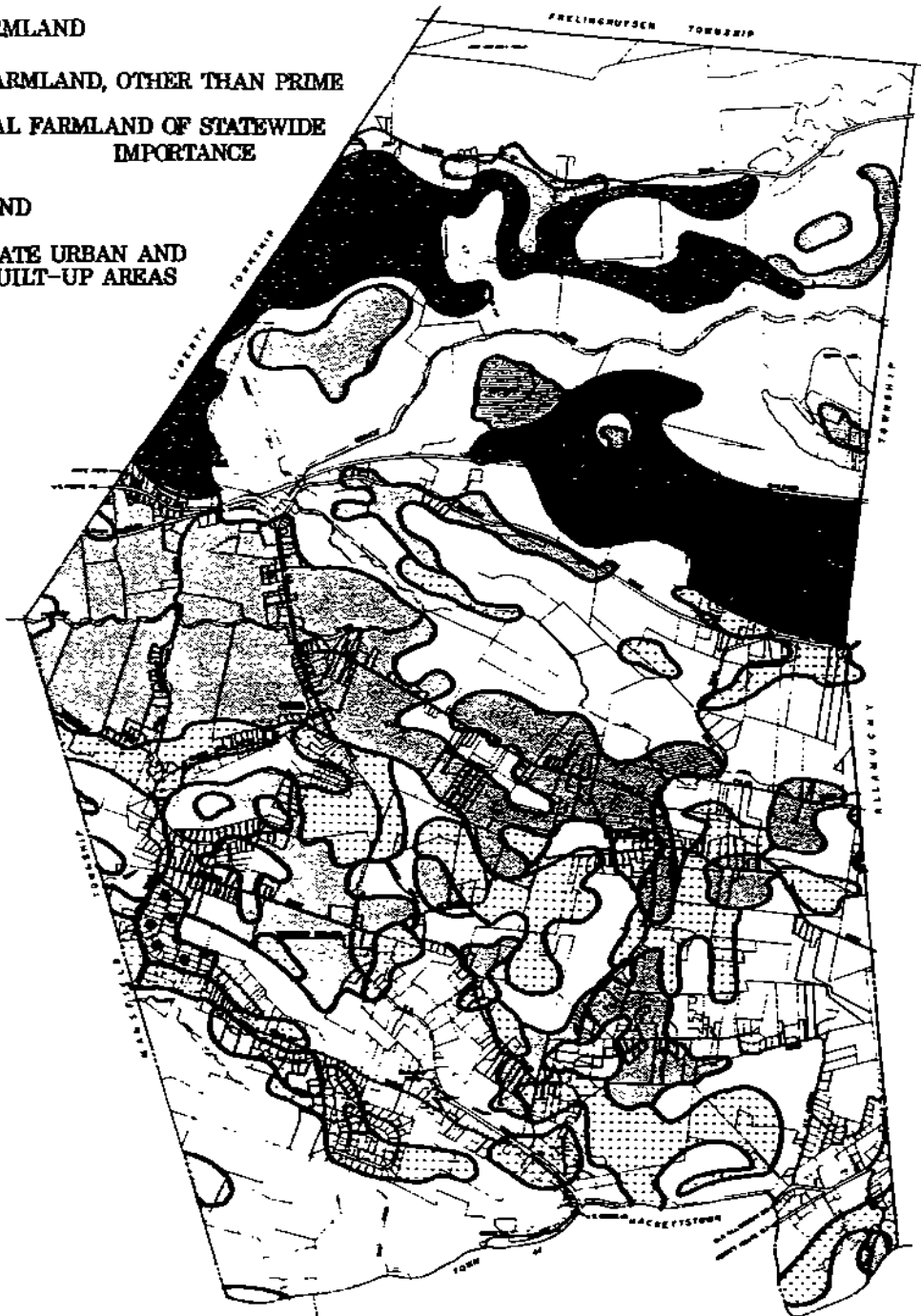
Since 1982 approximately 500 acres of agricultural land has been converted to suburban development. The pressures to convert prime farmland to suburban land uses will continue and should grow in intensity as Warren County becomes a more attractive market for residential living. Declining national economic conditions for agriculture, conflicts between the suburban newcomer and the farmer, and the diminishing support structure for farming, i.e. the loss of equipment parts suppliers, have all acted as forces to hasten the decline of farming in Independence Township at the same time developers are offering attractive financial inducements to sell prime farmland.

Since 1982, there have been legislative and administrative efforts to preserve agriculture in the Garden State.

The Agriculture Retention and Development Act of 1983 allows the establishment of state and county organizations to coordinate the development of farmland preservation programs. This act permits

PRIME AGRICULTURAL SOILS

- ☐ PRIME FARMLAND
- ☒ UNIQUE FARMLAND, OTHER THAN PRIME
- ☒ ADDITIONAL FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE
- ☐ OTHER LAND
- ☐ APPROXIMATE URBAN AND BUILT-UP AREAS



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
FLEMINGTON, N.J.
APRIL 1988

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCE WARREN COUNTY SCS
 IMPORTANT FARMLANDS MAP, 1980

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

10

IN 8 YEAR FARMLAND PROGRAM



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
FLEMINGTON, N.J.
MAY 1988

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCE

WARREN COUNTY SCS, MAY 1988

These applicants did not apply for additional benefits, and therefore, municipal approval of these applications was not required. One of these farms, a 290 acre dairy farm located south of the Pequest River, has applied to the easement program, which will permanently restrict this farm to agricultural use. It is expected that there will be additional applicants accepted into both programs as long as funding is available.

Greater attention is being paid to the policy of farmland retention. The most serious is the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, which, in draft form as of this writing, proposes as one of its main policy objectives to stem the loss of farming statewide. Farming is a quickly shrinking resource in New Jersey. Between 1950 and 1985, the State lost half of its farmland to development - 830,000 acres. The State Plan proposes to significantly limit development in agricultural areas and prod the State Legislature into enacting new laws authorizing land-saving activities like transfer of development rights and new funding sources for acquiring development rights to permanently retain farmland.

The State Plan places 4,412 acres or 36 percent of Independence Township in areas planned for permanent agricultural uses. Correlation of areas planned for future farming in the State Plan with lands currently built on, approved or committed to future development shows that much of the prime agricultural lands in Independence Township is no longer available for retention.

Unless a continuing funding source can be created for agricultural land acquisition in the near future which can match the financial offers of developers, the State Plan proposals will be met with resistance by the farming community or become futile policy declarations.

The Planning Board should explore the possibilities of retaining some of the remaining farms, or at least significant portions of a farmstead through such techniques as clustering and transfer of development credits.

It is possible through residential clustering - the redistribution of an entire parcel's development potential to a portion of the same parcel - that 75 percent of a farm could be preserved in open space. New technologies in on-site central sewage facilities now permit tighter development arrangements which can free up significant areas of a

property for farming. The end result could be the creation of developments with a small town village atmosphere within an active farm setting.

Under the clustering technique, a deed restriction is placed on the farmland portion to permanently restrict development (its "development rights" have been utilized in the cluster development), and the land is sold to a farmer at its agricultural production value. The advantages of clustering include: no cost to the municipality, compensation is made to the original land owner, lower cost agricultural land upon resale, permanent protection from development, and the familiarity of the concept. Disadvantages include the creation of potential nuisance conflicts which can be overcome by buffering. New Jersey municipalities have significant experience with cluster options as a means for preserving open space, but usually not for the preservation of farmland. A variation on clustering is to make it mandatory in areas deemed critical from an agricultural perspective, such as prime agricultural soils.

Transfer of development credits (TDC) is an extension of the cluster concept in which the development potential of a farm parcel is transferred to an entirely different parcel capable of supporting the increased density; essentially, a deed restriction is placed on a farm parcel preventing any future development and in return, increased densities are permitted on another site more suitable for development.

Advantages and disadvantages of TDC are similar to those for clustering, except that since the development has been moved off the farmland, it can be directed to planned growth centers. This eliminates the problem of scattered cluster, as well as the problems of nuisance conflicts and farmland loss.

Development rights purchase is the purchase of the development value (development rights) of a parcel. Essentially, this is an easement purchase with a deed restriction being placed on the parcel to preserve it as farmland. The parcel retains its agricultural value and its original ownership. Advantages of development rights purchase include: permanent preservation of farmland, lower cost agricultural land upon resale, compensation to the landowner, no loss of farmland, and retention of land management by landowner. Disadvantages include: cost to the municipality or the county or private party (in developing areas, the development right may be

the main value of land), the fact that it is optional, the small size of the area which is usually involved.

The Township should give consideration to the transfer of development credits/rights for permanently preserving prime agricultural land or other environmentally sensitive lands of high priority such as the Pequest River floodplains and prime forestland.

One of the indirect benefits of agricultural land retention is the preservation of the visual heritage of rural life which is too often swept away with suburban development. Independence Township should take action to protect its rural features from the forces of change. The following steps are suggested to guide future development.

1. Encourage the design of residential developments that will provide identity and individuality in housing and site layout in order to prevent the sprawling formlessness of urban development;
2. Require an undisturbed setback from every stream of at least seventy-five feet;
3. Require architectural compatibility for any new development adjacent to historic or architecturally significant structures identified in an adopted historic preservation element of the Master Plan;
4. Discourage developments along road frontages which destroy panoramic views of the countryside and encourage new developments to be built on private roads perpendicular to existing major public roads;
5. Allow and encourage the conversion of attractive unutilized old farm structures as a way of retaining the flavor of the area's rural architectural character. (This practice is being allowed in Delaware Township, Hunterdon County.) Old restored structures make excellent single family and multi-family residences. Because of the expense involved in restoring and refitting these farm structures for human living, the municipality should provide an economic incentive in the form of permission for additional residential units

in restored structures or increased density in a residential project.

6. Require dense buffers of vegetation or earthen berms, in combination with fences where appropriate, to screen incompatible views.

WOODED OR OPEN LAND

The 1982 Master Plan reported that the second largest land use category was wooded and open land not in farming, amounting to 2,625 acres or 21.5 percent of the Township.






Since 1982, the amount of wooded and open land has remained relatively stable. These lands tend to be less developable than agricultural lands due to steepness, stoniness or poor conditions for septic systems. Nonetheless, these lands will continue to be lost to suburban development. In recent years, there has been an increased interest in the role that forestlands play in the healthy environmental functioning of communities and regions, particularly in the preservation of groundwater resources.

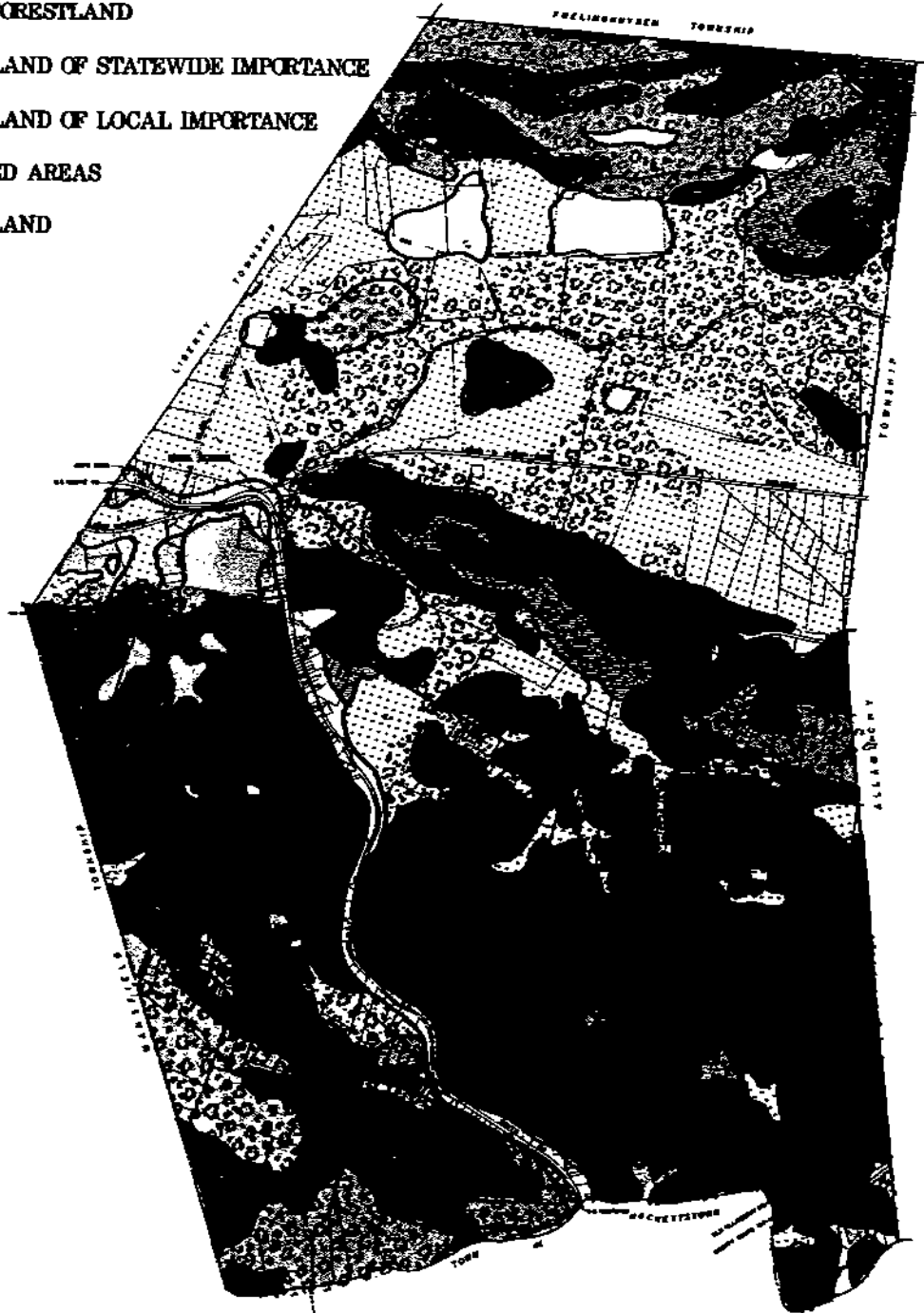
Forestlands are generally defined as forested areas of larger than 20 contiguous acres. Forestlands retard runoff, minimize erosion and filter out pollutants before they reach ground or surface waters. Forested areas also have a moderating effect on climate by reducing local temperature, retaining moisture, and minimizing the effects of wind and storms. Forests provide a haven for wildlife, and provide recreational areas. Forestlands are also necessary for the production of timber. Most importantly, forestlands serve as "sponges" which feed rainwater slowly to replenish the underlying aquifers.

Map 11 indicates the various classifications of forestland. Prime forest land is that land which has soil capable of growing wood at the rate of 85 cubic feet or more per acre per year in natural stands. Forestland of statewide importance is land on which soils are capable of growing wood at the rate of 50 to 84 cubic feet per acre per year. Forestland of local importance are lands which have soils capable of growing wood at the rate of less than 50 cubic feet per acre per year, but which play a role in supplying local areas with the many benefits of forestland, such as recreation and wildlife habitat use.

PRIME FORESTLAND

11

-  PRIME FORESTLAND
-  FORESTLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE
-  FORESTLAND OF LOCAL IMPORTANCE
-  FORESTED AREAS
-  OTHER LAND



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
 COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
 FLEMINGTON, N.J.
 APRIL 1986

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
 WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCE WARREN COUNTY SCS
 FORESTLAND CAPABILITY MAP, 1986

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AND CIRCULATION PLAN

13

■ AREAS CONSTRAINED BY STEEP SLOPES,
WETLANDS, PRESERVED LAND, FARMS,
STREAMS, AND HISTORICAL SITES

□ OTHER LAND

— PRIMARY ARTERIAL

▲▲ MAJOR ARTERIAL

■ MINOR ARTERIAL

●● COLLECTOR

○ INTERSECTION
IMPROVEMENTS

--- NEW ROADWAY



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
FLEMINGTON, N.J.
JUNE 1988

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCES

1988 DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS MAP
1988 CIRCULATION MAP

accurately measure the traffic impact of a development project throughout the entire road network and assign road improvement costs for each off-tract road segment and intersection. The expense of preparing and administering this program should be included as part of the off-tract improvement costs assigned to each development.

2. A collector road should be planned paralleling Route 46 through the non-residential zones from the new roadway planned between Barkers Mill Road and Water Street to Ketchum Road. This proposed road would provide some relief for Route 46 by permitting trucks and automobiles to leave the highway and search for their destination within this future business and industrial area.
3. The Planning Board should adopt a policy of requiring sidewalks in developments along all major roads and in all residential developments with a residential density of one acre or greater.
4. A bicycle path should be planned using both wide paved road shoulders and linkages through future parkland. A committee of school board, recreation commission, police and Planning Board members should be formed to determine a desirable bicycle path network.

RECREATION AND PARKS

The 1982 Master Plan did not address recreation and public open space and parkland facilities.

Independence has had a recreation program for the past fifteen years emphasizing sports programs for children aged 6 through 14. The only recreational facilities available in Independence Township are the 5 1/2 acres of outdoor fields and the gymnasium at Central School in Vienna. The school expansion program will eventually eliminate the outdoor sports fields. The Independence Township Recreation Commission, in the face of the loss of Central School facilities and the growing demand for recreation programs, is seeking, at minimum, a 13 acre level grassy area capable of

accommodating a range of outdoor sports fields and recreational courts.

The Independence Township Recreation Commission has set forth the following specific requirements to meet recreational needs of the community.

- 13 acres of level, flat, grassy land area
- 4 baseball fields, (3 for young people and 1 for adults)
- 1 football field
- 4 soccer fields, (3 standard size and 1 small size) and a practice soccer board
- 1 outdoor basketball court
- playground equipment
- an ice skating area
- horseshoe pits and a shuffleboard court
- a conditioning trail with exercise stations
- an access road and associated parking area
- an expansion area for future tennis courts, handball courts, etc.
- an all purpose building which will eventually be expanded to provide storage field maintenance equipment, sports equipment, toilets, telephones, a refreshment stand, office, hall and field house

Independence Township should plan for short and long term recreational needs. The Master Plan should identify specific techniques for encouraging the reservation of lands useable for active recreation and the construction of recreational facilities. The construction of public recreational facilities should be a part of all residential developments of 10 lots or greater. Increased densities in all residential developments should be based on the creation of public recreational facilities as one major condition of approval.

There is a need for 66 acres of municipal parkland in Independence Township using the projected 1990 population as a target and comparing that with the recommended standards of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) for local developed open space of 10.5 acres per 1000 population.

This open space could be planned or arranged in the following local park system:

- Two (2) community parks of 25 acres each located in separate sections of the municipality.
- Three (3) neighborhood parks and playgrounds of 5 acres each dispersed in three developed areas of the municipality.

The list below presents minimum active recreational facilities appropriate for the recommended 66 acres of parks and playgrounds based upon suggested NRPA Facility Development standards for a community of 6,280 persons.

- 1 Badminton (1620 SF)
 - 1-3 Basketball courts (10,000 SF)
 - 1-3 Tennis Courts (1/2 AC)
 - 1 Volleyball courts (4000 SF)
 - 1 Official baseball field (3-4 AC)
 - 1 Little league field (1-2 AC)
 - 1 General purpose playfield for football, soccer (2 AC)
 - 1 Softball field (2 AC)
 - 1 Multiple recreation court (10,000 SF)
-

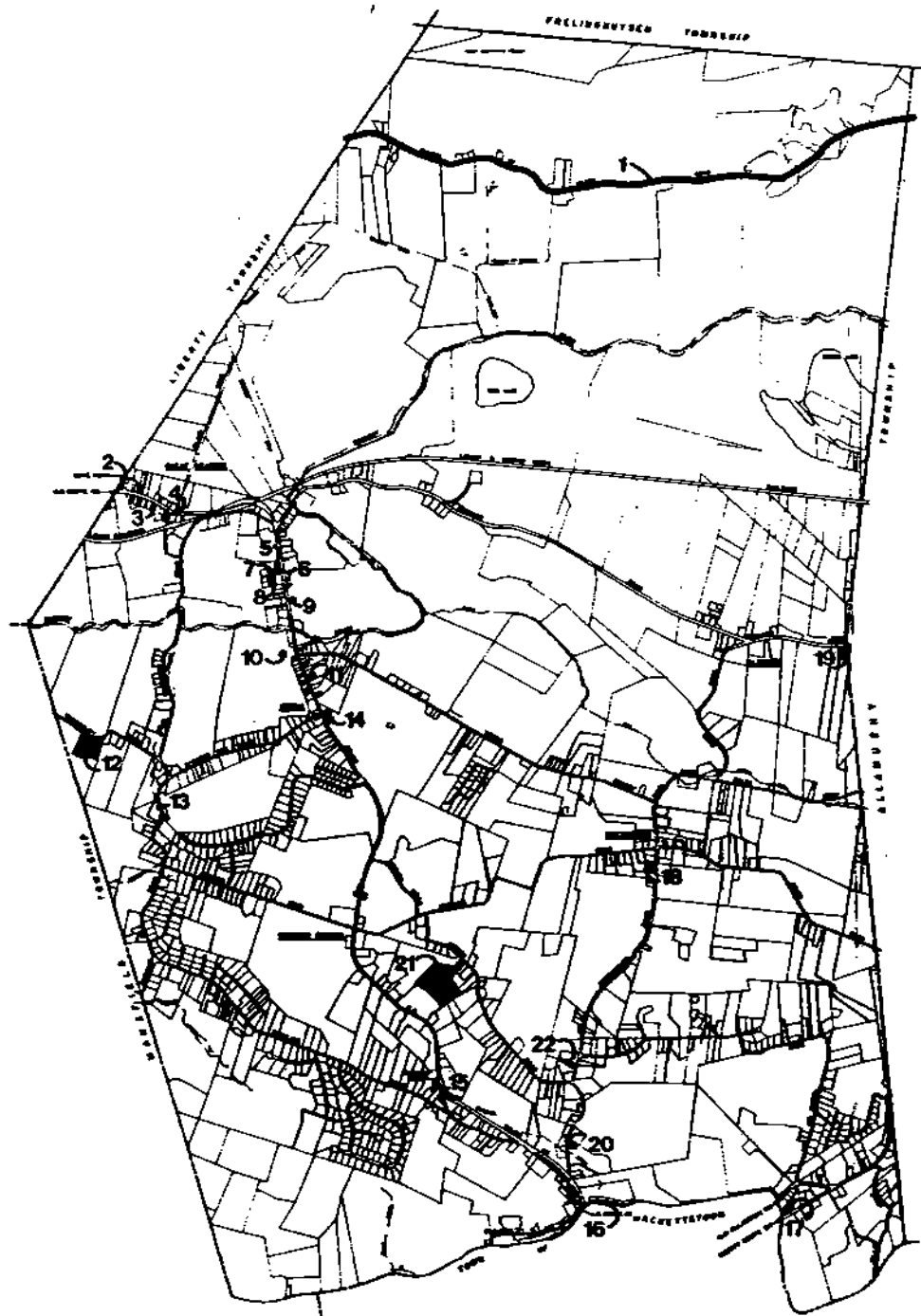
8 to 9 Acres of developed recreational facilities.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The 1982 Master Plan did not address the historic resources or cultural assets of Independence. The Municipal Land Use Law now allows for the inclusion of a Historic Preservation Plan Element within the Master Plan and authorizes the creation of an historic district commission. This element indicates the location, significance, proposed utilization and means for preservation of historic sites and historic districts, and identifies the standards used to assess the worthiness of a historic site or district designation.

The historic preservation plan element must identify the standards that were used for designation, indicate the location and significance of sites or districts, recommend the means for preserving them, and

HISTORICAL SITES



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
 COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
 FLEMINGTON, N.J.
 JUNE 1968

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
 WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCE

INDEPENDENCE BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE, 1976

HISTORIC SITES LIST

Map Number

- 1 The Shades of Death Road is located between the southern base of the Jenny Jump Mountain and "The Great Meadows". It connects the Great Meadows-Hop Road with the road from U.S. Route #46 to Longbridge and Johnsonburg. There are many legends concerning the name given to the road and the area surrounding it. One reason may be that the dense growth of trees and the closeness of glacial boulders prevented the sunshine from ever reaching a large section of the area even at midday, thus The Shades.
- 2 The first Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church. This church was the old one room school building at Great Meadows. The building was converted into a church and the first Mass was celebrated on the Feast of the Assumption on August 15, 1921. The present edifice was dedicated on August 27, 1967 under the pastorship of the Reverend Father Michael J. Kseniak.
- 3 The Saint Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church. This church was built on land donated by Mr. and Mrs Andrew Nykun, Sr. It was completed in the spring of 1923 and the first Holy Mass was said by the Reverend Father Eugene Bartosh. A grand opening of a Parish Hall was held on July 12, 1936.
- 4 Independence Hall. This building was formerly the Danville Presbyterian Church which was erected in 1824. In 1955 the church was closed when the parish merged with its parent congregation at Hackettstown. The building was not used until 1962 when the members of the Holy Cross Orthodox Catholic Church leased it for worship services for five years.

The cemetery behind the church is the resting place of many of the people who were prominent in church work and in the early history of Independence Township. Some of the family names are Vliet, Fleming, Albertson, Freeland, Leigh, and Runyon.

- 5 The Firehouse, U.S. Route #46. The Independence Fire Company was organized in 1944. By May 31, 1948 a firehouse had been built and dedicated. Since then a kitchen and another bay has been added.
- 6 United Jersey Bank Northwest, U.S. Route #46, Great Meadows. Independence Township's first commercial bank, a branch of the People's National Bank of Hackettstown, opened on November 22, 1965, with Earl S. Harris as manager. After a merger it was named the Peoples Trust of New Jersey. Now, after a second merger, it is the United Jersey Bank Northwest.
- 7 Municipal Building, Regina Lane, Great Meadows. The records of Harvey Bartow, long time Township Clerk and Road Supervisor, show that the much needed municipal building was first used as a meeting place by the Independence Township Committee on July 12, 1966.
- 8 First Aid Squad Building. The Independence First Aid Squad became a reality on July 15, 1972 with 15 active members and one 1969 ambulance. The building was completed for occupancy for equipment on March 8, 1975. Its dedication to the people of its service area was held on April 25, 1976.
- 9 The Vienna Methodist Church, U.S. Route #46. The church originated when the famed Bishop Asbury preached at the home of Philip Cummins in 1789. A church building was begun in 1810, and was completed in 1824. In 1854 the old church was town down and th present structure replaced it at a cost of \$2060. From 1864 to the present it has been part of a two point Vienna - Janes Chapel charge sharing a common pastorate for nearly one hundred years.
- 10 The Cummins House, U.S. Route #46, Vienna. Philip Cummins and his brothers, Christian and John, were the first settlers in what is now Independence Township. It was Philip who cleared the valley and built the stone house in 1794. It is believed that the stone barn was built prior to the house and that the family lived in a log cabin near the present driveway while the house was being erected. The sand stone and iron ore stone used in construction were

from the local area. The walls of the home are two feet thick in the basement and a little more than a foot on the second floor. Once two rooms with corner fire places in each, the present living room is now one large room. All of the ceilings of the stone portion are of hand-hewn beams. Between 1860 and 1870, a fire partially destroyed the house and the repairs resulted in a Victorian style which it still reflects. The house is still occupied by Cummins family members.

- 11 The old Vienna School, U.S. Route #46, Vienna. On March 19, 1838 the inhabitants of Pequest met to propose the building of a schoolhouse for the village of Vienna. It was completed the following summer at a cost of \$391, including the land, a stone, an outhouse, and a gate. Its use as a school was discontinued in 1919. In the 1930's Father John Kata organized the church of the Resurrection of Christ (according to the rite of the Old Catholic Church) and used the old school for worship services. It is now a private home.
- 12 An 1840 stone burr mill, Great Meadows.
- 13 Site of Barker's Mill, Barker's Mill Road. All roads seemed to lead to the grist mill. It was built in 1815 by Charles Barker and was renovated in 1840. Later it was known as the Gibbs' Mill. In the 1930's it was destroyed by fire.
- 14 Site of the Fleming and Car Foundry, Vienna. McCarty's 1855 map of Warren County shows the foundry at the foot of Vienna Hill. Subsequent owners were Simon Cummins, John Green, Morris Parks, and finally Dan Wolfe who made miscellaneous castings.
- 15 James Martin's Tannery, U.S. Route #46. Phil Bell bought the building and used it for a cider mill. In the late 1940's John Cottingham remodeled it for The Old Tannery Restaurant. Now it is a private home.
- 16 Site of the Morris Canal near Hackettstown. On November 4, 1831 the first boat trip on the Morris Canal from Newark to Philipsburg was completed. In 1836 it was extended to Jersey City, making the canal 102.15 miles long. The canal through Independence was chosen as the dividing line when

Hackettstown was separated from Independence Township in 1853. In 1924 the State of New Jersey authorized the closing and drainage of the canal.

- 17 Holy Cross Orthodox Catholic Church, Route #517, Hackettstown. In 1962 the Reverend Father F. Constantine Costello organized an eastern rite parish. Meetings were held in his home on Asbury Road and in the Presbyterian Chapel in Hackettstown. Worship services were said in the Danville Presbyterian Church at Great Meadows for five years. Land for a church of their own was purchased in 1968. The new church was dedicated on October 6, 1972.
- 18 Site of the school at Caddington (Petersburg). A Christian Church was built in 1839 near the junction of Petersburg and Ketchum Roads. The basement was used for the school until 1858 when a new church building was erected in Vienna.
- 19 Meadville (Alphano) School, Meadville. The one-room stone school was probably built in the second quarter of the 19th century when several other stone buildings were erected in the area. Church services and the Singing School were conducted in the last quarter of the century. The school was closed around 1918. After renovation and enlargement it became a private home.
- 20 White Hall. The part of the Township known as White Hall is located northwest of Hackettstown just off U.S. Route #46 on Petersburg Road. Now there are a few homes here, but according to early maps of Warren County it was a center for several industries. The Ayers family operated mills here for about one hundred years. Robert Ayers operated a grist mill and was engaged in the tanning and wool manufacturing business. William Rea operated a water powered grist mill, which had been built in 1820 and had been used previously as a woolen and carding mill. C.M. Titus had tannery as early as 1848 and R. Day had a large lime kiln.
- 21 Mastodon Pond, Asbury Road. This is the site where the skeleton of an extinct animal was found. In 1844 during a severe drought Abraham Ayers found the complete remains

of a large mastodon while digging marle from the bottom of a pond that had gone dry. The skeleton is now called the Cambridge Mastodon and is on display in the Harvard Museum of Comparative Anatomy.

- 22 An Old Barn, also known as the Heaslip House. This building is located north of the junction of Asbury and Petersburg Roads. At one time it was the home William J. Heaslip, a prominent artist. Tradition states that during the American Revolution the large stone structure was once occupied by Hessian prisoners of war on their march from Boston to the South. It is now a private home.

HOUSING

The 1982 Master Plan concluded that Independence Township was not a developing community under the criteria set forth in the State Supreme Court's landmark Mount Laurel decision. Independence Township did not have an obligation to provide for lower cost housing or to zone for attached housing to create affordable housing opportunities in 1982. Nonetheless, The Master Plan set forth a housing policy of providing for townhouses or attached single family housing to increase the mix and variety of housing and create a more balanced housing stock in Independence Township.

Townhouses are seen in the Master Plan as a means of serving households with small house space needs, as a design technique enabling tighter building arrangements to preserve environmentally sensitive areas on difficult-to-build sites; and as a suitable transitional use for areas between more intensive nonresidential activities and lower intensity single family homes. The Master Plan set forth criteria for townhouse development: public water and sewer service, access to a collector type street and compatibility with surrounding land uses. Two areas were considered appropriate in 1982 for townhouses: the northwestern intersection of Route 46 and Petersburg Road and on the south side of Bilby Road. These areas were subsequently zoned for townhouses and approved for construction within a planned residential development district (PRD and PRD&SC)

There have been significant changes in housing policy due to State legislative and administrative decisions made since 1982. Although Independence Township may not have been vulnerable to a challenge of its housing policies under the Mount Laurel decision, it now has specific obligations to comply with State law dealing with affordable housing.

The Fair Housing Act of 1985 established an independent nine member Council on Affordable Housing. The Council is required to determine housing regions of the state, estimate the state and regional fair share for the present and prospective need for low and moderate income housing in the housing regions, and adopt guidelines and criteria for a municipality's housing element.

The municipality must determine its fair share need and any adjustments using the Council's criteria, and prepare a housing element which allows a realistic opportunity for the adjusted fair share of lower income units to be provided.

Once the municipality has filed the housing element with the Council, the municipality may petition the Council to review the housing element and ordinances to certify that the municipality's determinations of and adjustments to its fair share are consistent with the Council's rules, and that the fair share may realistically be met. Downward adjustments to the fair share are based on the current stock of low and moderate income units of adequate standard, the lack of sufficient and buildable land, the inadequacy of public utilities and infrastructure capacities, and the prohibitive cost to the public of improving the facilities and capabilities; the impact on environmentally sensitive lands, historic sites or districts, open space, conservation and recreational needs, and the need for land for agricultural and farmland preservation purposes.

The housing plan element now requires an inventory and 6-year projection of the housing stock, analysis of demographic and employment characteristics, determinations of fair share of low and moderate income housing, capacity to accommodate housing needs, and a consideration of existing structures and lands for low and moderate income housing.

Since 1982, Independence Township has prepared and adopted an updated housing plan element which complies with the Municipal Land Use Law (Section 52:27D-310, amended 1985). The Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) determined that Independence Township has an indigenous housing obligation to provide for 27 dwelling units. Independence Township accepted COAH's determination and proposed a range of actions: taking credit for Liberty House, the 40 unit lower-income senior citizen apartments constructed in 1981; zoning for a lower income housing set aside in one PRD zone; and a housing rehabilitation program using public funds. As of this writing, COAH has indicated that the Liberty House project alone satisfies Independence Township's lower cost housing obligation. Additional inclusionary housing activities, if consistent with COAH's regulations (namely the affordability controls), would be credited against any future housing obligation of the municipality.

Independence Township should continue to provide realistic opportunities for housing affordable to low and moderate income households, particularly for existing residents of the community such as the elderly. A range of housing options are available for consideration.

1. Independence Township should require all future higher density residential developments in either the PRD or R-M zones or those created through use variance action to include a certain amount of low and moderately priced units. In the absence of a governmental subsidy, provision of lower cost housing in a community requires its inclusion in a higher density development where a builder possesses sufficient economies of scale to underwrite the costs of below market housing.

The percentage of lower income housing in the mandatory setaside should vary depending on the density of units permitted in the project. The Council on Affordable Housing rules require an overall project density of six dwelling units per acre as the threshold for a twenty percent inclusionary lower cost housing set-aside. Independence Township should

allow developers the option of contributing monies to a fund for rehabilitating existing dilapidated housing in place of including lower income housing in their project.

2. Independence Township should allow within a single family residence the inclusion of a separate kitchen and bathroom but not a separate, independent apartment to accommodate "mother-daughter" and other intra-family housing arrangements.
3. Independence Township should allow new forms of housing for the elderly, particularly those living beyond 85 years of age, such as congregate housing, continuing care facilities, and other forms of communal care arrangements. The zoning ordinance should be amended to allow congregate and communal care housing arrangements by right in all high density residential zones or a conditional use in all residential zones on a major collector road with public or central water and sewer.
4. Allow the creation of housing units in unconventional settings. The municipality could allow housing as a permitted accessory use in certain non-residential situations. For example, housing could be allowed on site or within a structure for security or maintenance personnel. Employees of restaurants or other retail uses could be housed in suitable accommodations on site.

UTILITIES

The 1982 Master Plan briefly addresses utilities, since only a very small area of the township was then served by public water and sanitary sewer.

Since 1982, approximately 1,975 acres within Independence Township have been within the jurisdiction of the Hackettstown Municipal Utilities Authority (HMUA). The Independence Township Municipal Utilities Authority (IMUA) was formed in 1975 to provide public water and sewer service to the area of the municipality outside the HMUA jurisdiction. The potential ability to bring public

water and sewer service to any area of the community through these two utility authorities gives a considerable tool to implement creative land development policies.

Independence Township is located in the Upper Delaware 208 Water Quality Management Area. The accompanying Water Quality Management Plan (Map 15) indicates those areas which are within the public wastewater treatment service area. The plan indicates that, while a very small portion of the township is currently being served by public sewers, none of the township is within the plan's Facility Planning Area.

Independence is served by both the Independence Municipal Utilities Authority (IMUA) and by the Hackettstown Municipal Utilities Authority (HMUA). It is the policy of HMUA to provide both public water and public sewer service simultaneously. The only public sewers within the township are under HMUA jurisdiction. Currently, there are 55 connections which serve the houses along Old Vienna Road and Liberty House on Route 46, and the Morris Knolls and Towpath apartment complexes off of Route 517. The sewer lines currently in place are all 8 inches in diameter, and it is expected that any new sewer lines will be larger. (See Map 16)

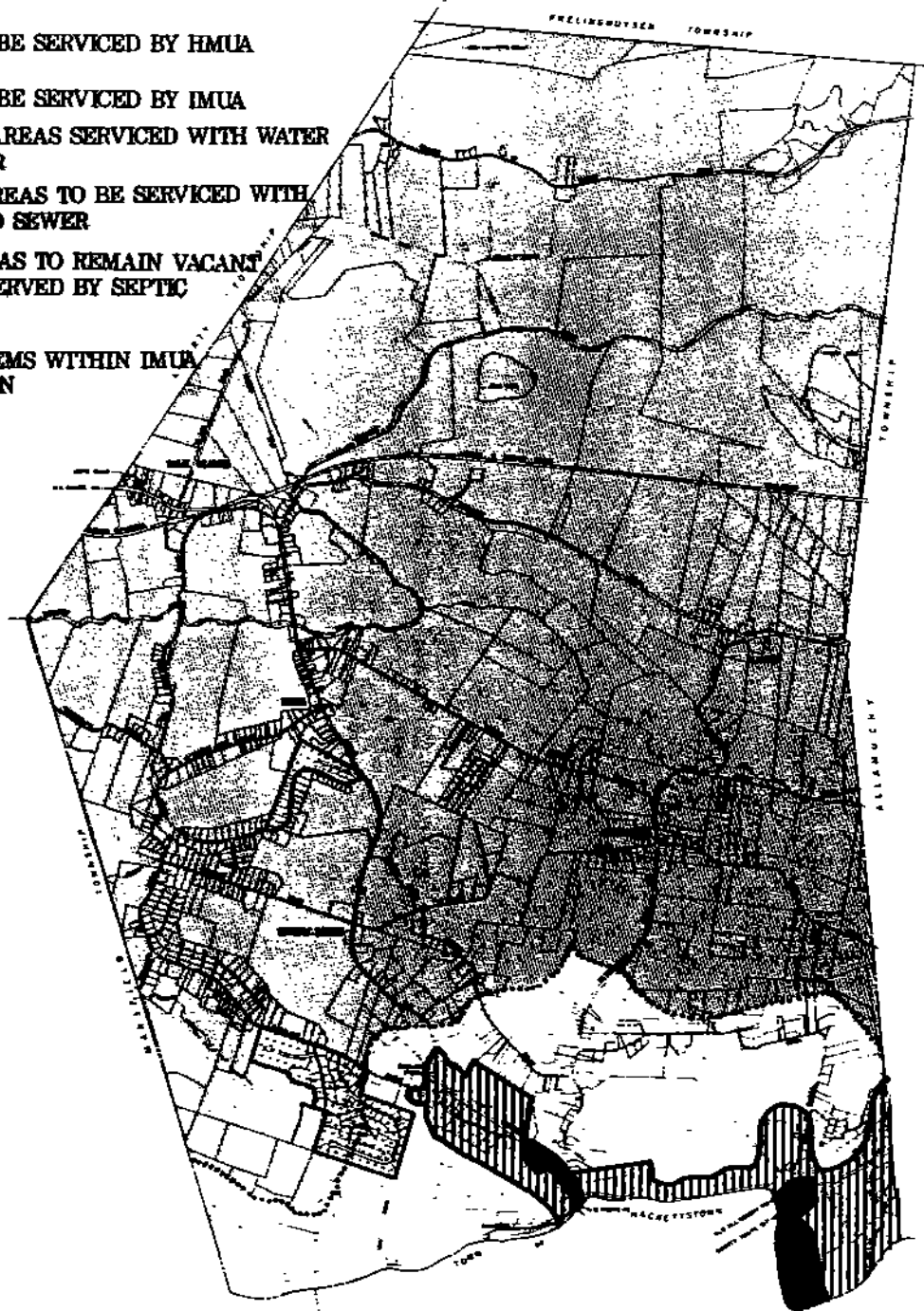
HMUA owns and operates a municipal wastewater treatment plant located on Esna Drive in Washington Township, Morris County. The plant discharges into an area of the Musconetcong River which is classified as FW-2 Trout Maintenance Surface Waters. This facility provides secondary treatment with a design flow capacity of 1.65 MGD. Current Average daily flows at the plant are estimated at 1.5 MGD.

Since the plant is rapidly reaching design capacity, HMUA authorized a study for upgrading the treatment plant capacity. This study resulted in the Hackettstown Municipal Utilities Authority Wastewater Management Plan, dated April 1987 and prepared by Elson T. Killam Associates. The plan recommends an expansion of the facility to a design capacity of 3.3 MGD in order to provide the sewer service necessary for the projected population increase to the year 2000. It is expected that the treatment plant expansion will be completed by 1991.

Killam Associates estimated that , in April of 1987, the estimated population within the Independence HMUA service area was 910,

SEWER AND WATER SERVICE AREAS MAP

- ~ AREAS TO BE SERVICED BY HMUA
- AREAS TO BE SERVICED BY IMUA
- EXISTING AREAS SERVICED WITH WATER AND SEWER
- ▨ FUTURE AREAS TO BE SERVICED WITH WATER AND SEWER
- OTHER AREAS TO REMAIN VACANT OR TO BE SERVED BY SEPTIC SYSTEMS
- ▤ WELL SYSTEMS WITHIN IMUA JURISDICTION



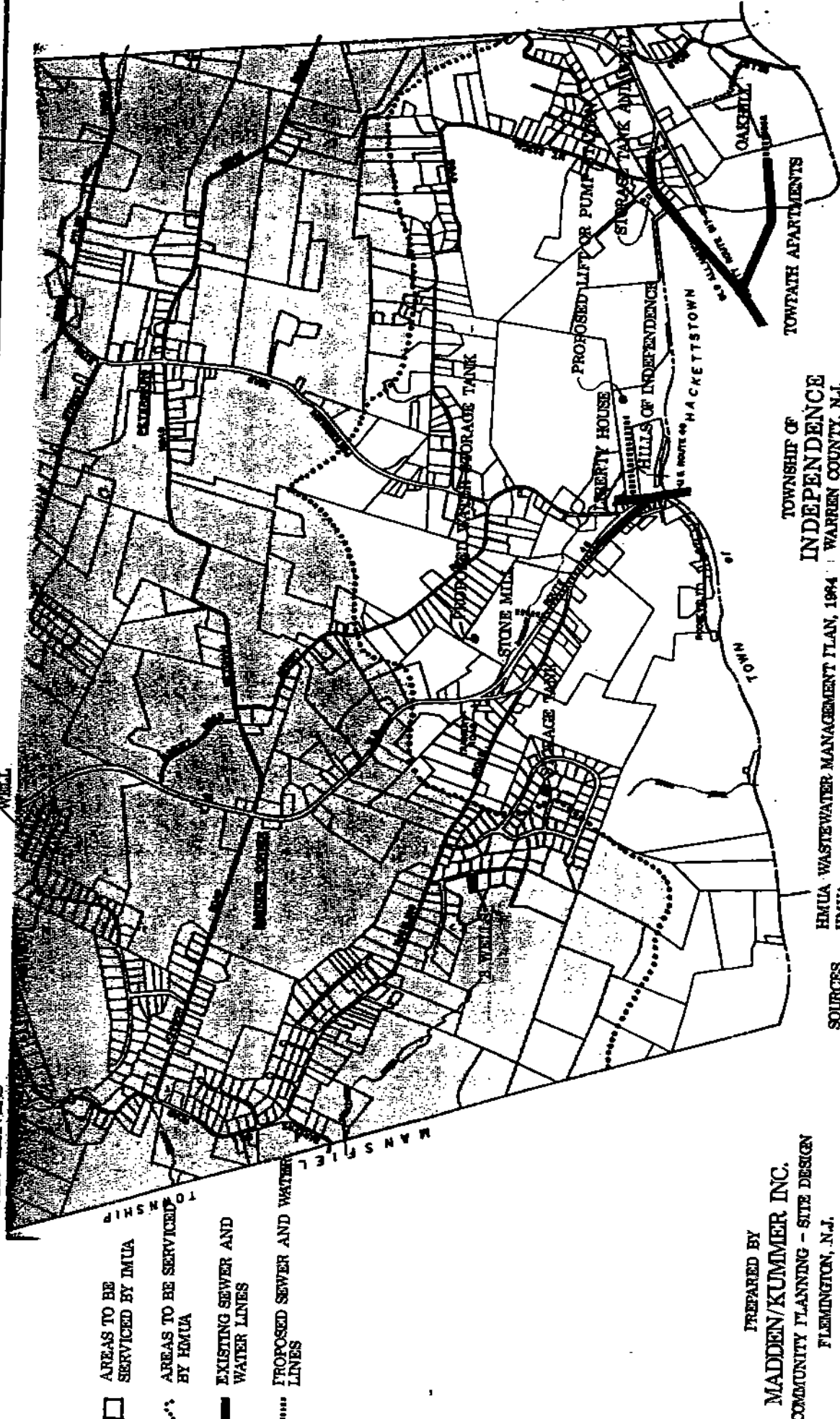
PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
 COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
 FLEMINGTON, N.J.
 JUNE 1988

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
 WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCES

HMUA WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1984
 HMUA
 IMUA

SEWER AND WATER LINES



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
 COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
 FLEMINGTON, N.J.
 JUNE 1988

SOURCES
 HMUA
 HMUA
 HMUA

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
 HMUA WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1984
 WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

and the estimated flow to their treatment plant was 0.09 MGD. It is projected that the service area population will increase to 3000 people in the year 2000, including industrial and commercial development. This will increase the estimated flow from Independence to 0.340 MGD. Wastewater flows for this report were based on 3.51 persons per single family unit, 2.68 persons per multi-family unit; 100 gpd per person and 0.125 gpd per square foot for commercial and industrial uses.

The projected flow estimates in the report are based on previous zoning, which at the time included an R-1 (medium density residential) zoning. This area has since then been rezoned to R-2, low density residential, which would reduce the projected population and average daily flow.

Within Independence Township, the plan assumes that all present and future development with zoning of two acre minimum lot size or greater will use on-site wastewater disposal methods. The plan also recommends that development within the R-1 zone above the HMUA water service area elevation of 750 feet use on-site disposal, while the 135 acres in the R-1 zone below the 750 foot elevation and within the HMUA water service area be sewerred.

Future public water and sewer service within HMUA jurisdiction will be oriented towards serving the planned residential developments and accompanying increase in adjacent small businesses. Public water and sewer lines are being extended to provide service to Oak Hill on Bilby Road, The Independence Mini Mall, on Rt. 517, and the Hills of Independence and Stone Mill, both planned developments off of Rt. 46. Both Stone Mill and Hills of Independence are above the 750 foot elevation; however, a water storage tank is proposed to be located on the Stone Mill development at an elevation of 804 feet. A pump station or lift station is also proposed at the Hills of Independence. The accompanying map indicates the location of present and proposed water and sewer lines and other facilities under HMUA jurisdiction. There are currently no interceptor mains or pumping stations in the township.

Within the jurisdiction of the Independence Municipal Utilities Authority, there are no public sewer systems at the present time although the Authority has the power to construct and manage sanitary sewer systems. There is a well system in the Highlands which a number of homes are tied into and which could handle

additional connections, and a well system at the Rockefeller Estates, near Vienna, which could not handle additional connections. These wells are located on the accompanying map. IMUA regulations require the provision of a water supply system for any subdivision which, when added to contiguous properties, would add up to 50 or more units. If less than 50 homes are proposed, a connection to or construction of a public water supply system will be required when a public system is within reasonable distance and capacity is available, untreated groundwater is not potable, or an individual well cannot produce at least 5 gallons per minute. If the supply is entirely derived from groundwater, duplicate wells and pumping equipment will be required.

In order to protect the township's groundwater resources, IMUA may require a communal sewerage system in a proposed subdivision. This communal sewerage system will be required when the percolation test rate is unacceptable or when cluster homes are being built. The Planning Board should work with the IMUA reviewing the utility's water and sewer standards toward the goals of providing the maximum feasible protection of groundwater resources and implementation of the Master Plan.

The ability to provide public or centralized on-site water and sanitary sewer service through either of the two utility authorities permits Independence Township a wide range of development and conservation opportunities not possible with conventional on-site systems.

These opportunities include:

- Creating cluster development situations where as much as three-quarters of a site could be freed up in permanently deed-restricted open space to be used for farming, recreation, wildlife habitat, woodland management and other conservation purposes.
- Allows more intensive development for such urban land use activities as an industrial park or a shopping center to occur with on-site central water and sewer services at locations chosen by the Planning Board because of suitable access conditions and other physical features which are otherwise far from public utilities service. Independence Township should

recommend the respective utility authorities amend the 201 and 208 Water Quality Plans to indicate the use of on-site water and sewer systems throughout Independence Township to accommodate greater diversity of development design, to assure groundwater resource protection and to implement the land use and housing policies of the Master Plan.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The 1982 Master Plan briefly discusses stormwater management in reference to environmentally sensitive lands such as steep slopes which require protection to avoid contributing to even greater flooding problems.

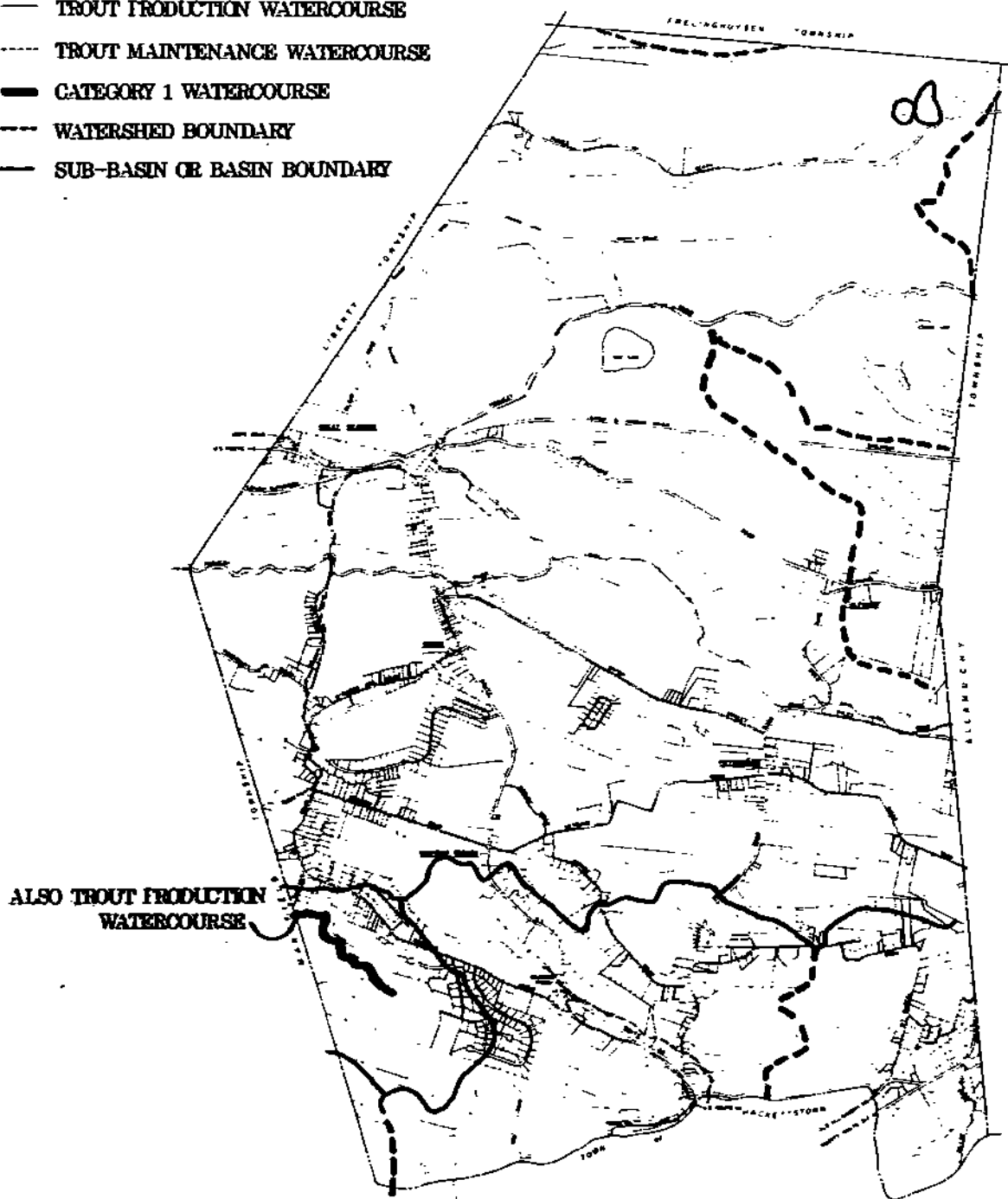
The Municipal Land Use Law now requires every municipality to prepare a storm water management plan and storm water control ordinances, provided that State funding is available to prepare the plan. The storm water management plan must be an integral part of the master plan, and must be coordinated with the soil conservation district, and any storm water management plan prepared by the county, state, regional agencies or other municipalities relating to the river basin of that municipality.

Independence Township has not yet adopted a stormwater management plan and is awaiting available funding for preparation of the plan pursuant to the municipal Land Use Law. Grants to a municipality shall provide for 90% of the cost of preparing storm water management plans. The township adopted a surface water management ordinance in July, 1983 which implements the intent of the law. The Warren County Soil Conservation Service has undertaken studies towards a regional stormwater management plan and information from this study should be integrated into the stormwater management plan.

Stormwater Management is a necessary technique for assuring water quality. The State Plan identifies three highly sensitive water courses in Independence Township which need water quality protection. Map 17 entitled Pristine Waters identifies the watersheds of Category I water courses, either Trout Production watercourse or Trout Maintenance watercourse. The headwater tributary of the Pohatcong Creek originating in the Highlands of

PRISTINE WATERS

- TROUT PRODUCTION WATERCOURSE
- - - TROUT MAINTENANCE WATERCOURSE
- CATEGORY 1 WATERCOURSE
- - - WATERSHED BOUNDARY
- SUB-BASIN OR BASIN BOUNDARY



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
FLEMINGTON, N.J.
MAY 1988

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCE

N.J. OFFICE OF STATE PLANNING, 1988

Independence property has been designated a trout production watercourse. The two trout maintenance watercourses are: a tributary of the Pequest River paralleling Cemetery Road from its intersection with Johnson Road and a tributary of the Musconetcong River which parallels Route 46 from its origin near Rusting Road.

To protect these pristine streams, the following actions are recommended.

1. Residential densities within these watersheds should be reduced, organized septic system maintenance, or more sophisticated control sewage disposal systems should be required for future development to reduce the impact of nitrates and other pollutants associated with on-site septic systems.
2. Design stormwater controls such as retention ponds and grass swales which will filter out pollutants suspended in stormwater.
3. Require sufficient buffer setbacks for development or grading along stream corridors of 50 to 150 feet.
4. Enforce strict soil erosion and sediment control during construction.
5. Practice continual water quality maintenance such as frequent street cleaning in the Category I watersheds.

RECYCLING

The 1982 Master Plan had no mention of recycling or solid waste handling. The Statewide crisis in solid waste disposal in recent years has necessitated municipal actions to reduce the waste load to sanitary landfills and incinerators.

The Utilities Plan element of the Master Plan should be amended to incorporate the recycling policies of Independence Township which are a response to State laws enacted since 1982.

The Mandatory Statewide Source Separation and Recycling Act of 1987 was adopted to reduce the amount of waste currently disposed of as solid waste at any remaining landfills or at transfer stations which ship waste out of New Jersey.

The Act established the Office of Recycling within the State DEP and assigns implementation to the counties and municipalities. As of October, 1987 counties were required to prepare and adopt a district recycling plan for leaves and at least three other recyclables.

Warren County's proposed recycling plan is presently being reviewed by the State DEP for approval and certification. The proposed recycling plan provides for mandatory recycling of four materials: tin cans, aluminum cans, glass and plastic. While newspapers are a common recyclable material, they are not included in the present proposed plan.

Each municipality must adopt ordinances requiring the source separation of recyclable material. Within thirty days of the effective date of the municipal recycling ordinance, the master plan and zoning ordinance must be revised to require that proposals for new developments of 50 or more single family units, 25 multi-family units or 1000 square feet or more of commercial or industrial space must incorporate provisions for recycling. A recycling ordinance was adopted in Independence township on May 10, 1988. This ordinance requires the mandatory recycling of glass, aluminum, plastic and newspapers, and will become effective on July 9, 1988.

The Municipal Land Use Law incorporates the authorization for a recycling plan element in the master plan, which must be updated every three years.

Municipalities will need to adopt ordinances which, if requiring provisions for centralized recycling, must allow for enough space for the safe separation, storage, and pick-up of at least the three required recyclables, four in Warren County, in a location that is easily accessible to most or all of the residents. The size and number of the containers should be oriented to accommodate bi-monthly pick-up, and there should be a sufficient amount of land set aside (or "land-banked") to accommodate the addition of containers for additional materials which may be required to be recycled in the near future.

A recycling committee has been formed in Independence Township which is in the process of creating administrative and design techniques to implement recycling in the community.

Compatibility with Surrounding Municipalities, County and State Plan

The 1982 Master Plan indicated that the Land Use policies of Independence Township were compatible with the planning and zoning of the five surrounding municipalities: Hackettstown, Allamuchy, Frelinghuysen, Liberty and Mansfield. See Map 18.

The Warren County Plan proposed rural residential, a low density single family housing category for most of Independence, the creation of village clusters in the Great Meadows and Vienna areas and an extension of the Hackettstown/Allamuchy Town Center or higher density development into the portion of Independence Township within the Hackettstown Municipal Utilities Authority service area. The Independence Township Master Plan was consistent with the generalized County development guide. See Map 19.

The State Development Guide Plan proposed for Independence Township is comprised of two general categories of low density, rural conservation-oriented development: Agricultural and Limited Growth. Independence Township's Master Plan which was broadly designed to keep the community in low density residential and agricultural use was in conformance with the State Plan.

The Master Plan is still compatible in 1988 with the planning and zoning policies of surrounding municipalities. The Warren County Plan remains unchanged. The major change occurring since 1982 is with the new State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The 1982 Master Plan for Independence Township is not compatible with the broad policies of the State Plan. See Map 20. Before we explore these differences in plan policies, a summary of the State Plan would be instructive.

ZONING IN INDEPENDENCE AND 'SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES

PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
COMMUNITY PLANNING-SITE DESIGN
FLEMINGTON, N.J.








SOURCE

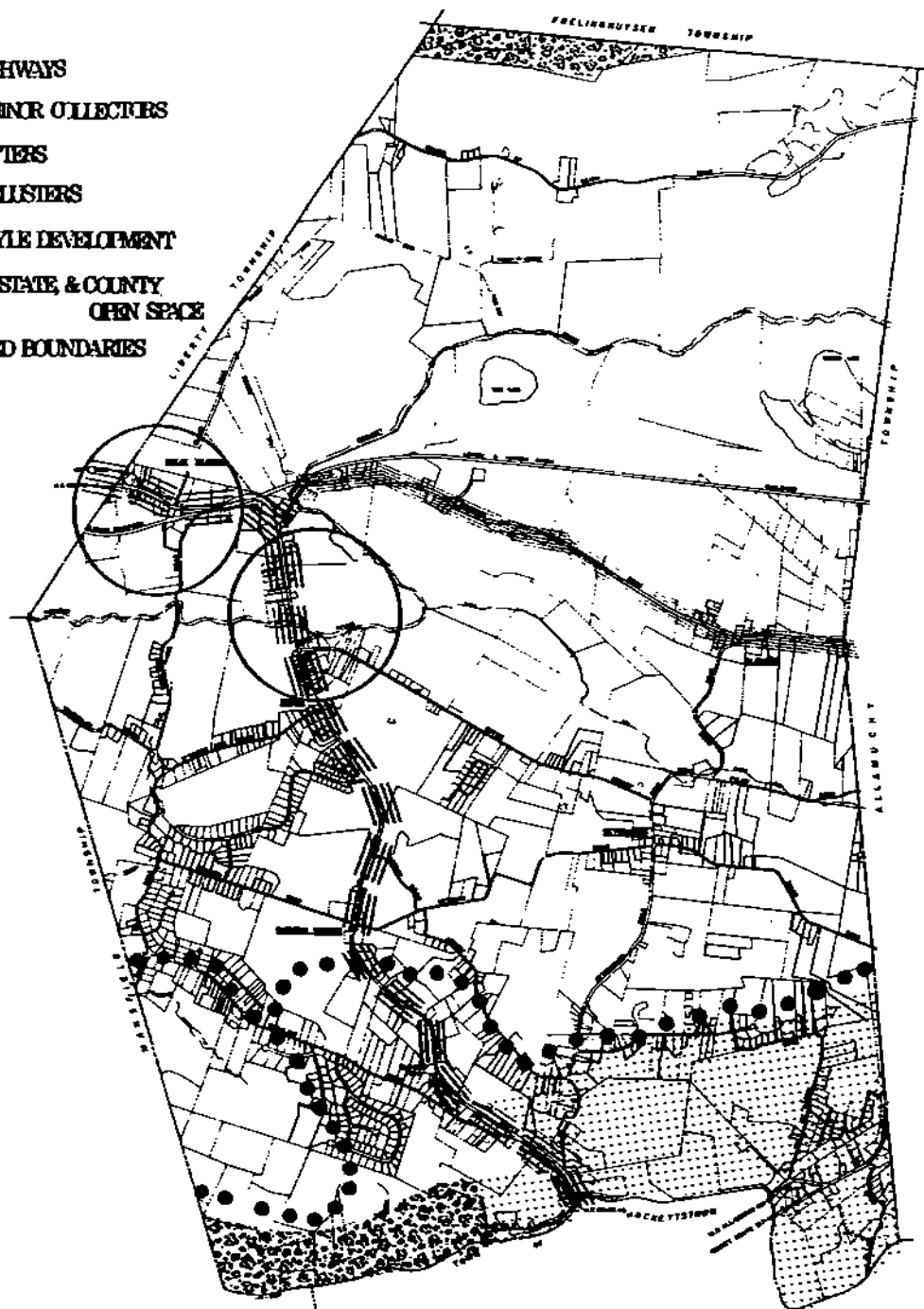
1988 INDEPENDENCE ZONING MAP
1988 ALLAMUCHY ZONING MAP
1993 FRELINGHUYSEN ZONING MAP

1968 LIBERTY ZONING MAP
1968 MANSFIELD ZONING MAP
1968 HACKETTSTOWN ZONING MAP

WARREN COUNTY GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

19

-  STATE HIGHWAYS
-  COUNTY MINOR COLLECTORS
-  TOWN CENTERS
-  VILLAGE CLUSTERS
-  RURAL STYLE DEVELOPMENT
-  FEDERAL, STATE, & COUNTY OPEN SPACE
-  WATERSHED BOUNDARIES



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
FLEMINGTON, N.J.
APRIL 1968

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCE

WARREN COUNTY MASTER PLAN, 1979

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Background





The State Planning Act of 1985 directs the Planning Commission to adopt a State Development and Redevelopment Plan "which shall provide a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive plan for the growth, development, renewal, and conservation of the state and its regions...". It further directs the Commission to produce a plan which encourages "development, redevelopment and economic growth in locations that are well situated with respect to present or anticipated public services and facilities, giving appropriate priority to the redevelopment, repair, rehabilitation or replacement of existing facilities and to discourage development where it may impair or destroy natural resources or environmental qualities that are vital to the health and well-being of the present and future citizens of this State."

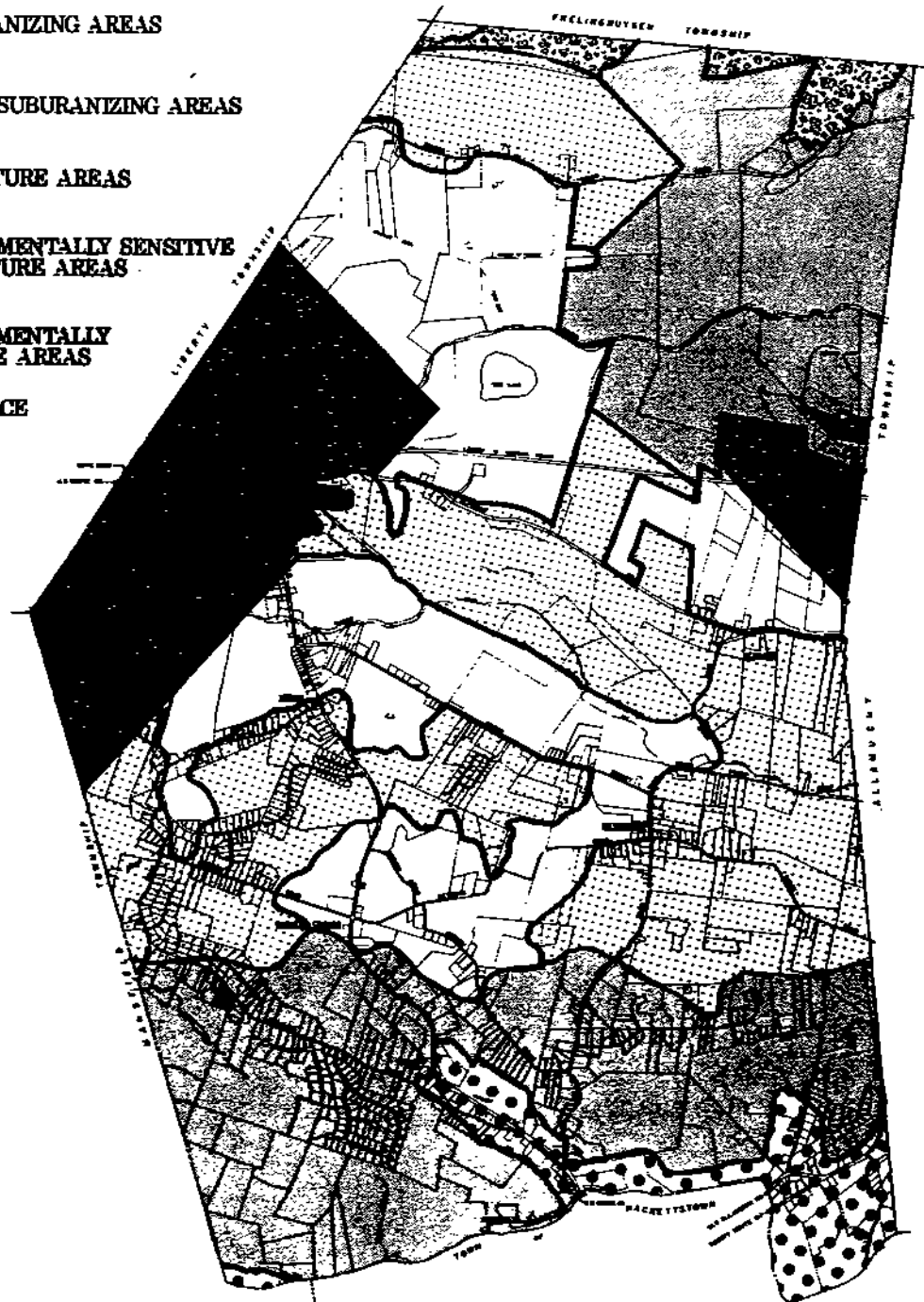
Strategy

The general approach taken by the Planning Commission was to identify a strategy to guide growth in ways that make the most efficient use of existing public services, meet the demand for future services and protect the environment. The system adopted is referred to as the Tier concept and is the underlying foundation of the Plan. The Draft Plan is designed to accommodate the current population and employment forecast to the year 2010, while at the same time produce less need for public services than unplanned (trend) growth. The Tier system would promote timed and sequenced public services extensions such that services would be extended outward from a first tier of already intensely developed area to the least developed outlying tier to accommodate growth. The classification of land areas into tiers was intended to demonstrate 1) where there are existing facilities and services capable of serving new growth, 2) where facilities are operating overcapacity and need to be expanded, 3) where there are facilities which have deteriorated and need to be repaired, and 4) where facilities and services do not now exist. The Tier approach also allows for designation of areas that must be protected to preserve the environmental quality and economic vitality of the future of the State.

STATE PLAN PROPOSALS

20

-  TIER 4
SUBURBANIZING AREAS
-  TIER 5
FUTURE SUBURBANIZING AREAS
-  TIER 6A
AGRICULTURE AREAS
-  TIER 6B
ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE
AGRICULTURE AREAS
-  TIER 7
ENVIRONMENTALLY
SENSITIVE AREAS
-  OPEN SPACE



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
FLEMINGTON, N.J.
APRIL 1988

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCE N.J. OFFICE OF STATE PLANNING, 1988

There are seven tiers. Each are characterized by distinguishing criteria.

Tier 1 contains all of the older urban centers, some of which are the most distressed municipalities in the State. The primary goal of the Plan for municipalities included in this tier is the reinvestment in and revitalization of these deteriorating suburbs and cities.

Tier 2 contains communities that emerged in the post-war period on the periphery of the older urban centers. These cities and suburbs have not experienced financial distress and continue to grow. The average residential population density in this tier is 1,000 or more persons per square mile. The primary goal of the plan in these stable cities and suburbs is to sustain some growth while preserving community character.

Tier 3 contains suburban and rural towns which are centers within a larger suburban or rural area and which include sufficient developable land and redevelopable sites to accommodate a variety of housing and economic development opportunities. The area has existing or planned public sewer service. The resident population of each center is less than 60,000 and is separated from other centers by at least 2 miles.

The primary goal in Tier 3 is to concentrate development which would otherwise spread into surrounding suburban, rural, and environmentally sensitive areas.

Tier 4 municipalities are those which are experiencing or are about to experience and significant residential and commercial growth. These municipalities are sewered or planned to be sewered and still contain large tracts of vacant, undeveloped land despite a decade of dramatic suburbanizing growth. The primary goal in this tier is to develop corridor centers, residential uses and related commercial activities adapted to existing or planned public services to stem development pressure on nearby rural areas.

Tier 5 begins the first of the limited growth tiers. Tier 5 areas are rural and do not contain adequate infrastructure to support intensive development. The area does not have or plan public sewer service; the land is not best suited to agricultural intensification, and is not environmentally sensitive. The primary goal in Tier 5 is to preserve developable land for growth by the year 2010. Development,

therefore, is recommended to be at low intensities with concentrated development in corridor centers, villages and rural clusters.

Tier 6 currently encompasses the preponderance of the State's agricultural land or woodland currently in agricultural production or forestry. The tier is divided into 2 subtiers: 6A and 6B. Agricultural areas in Subtier 6B contain environmentally sensitive features. The primary goal in Tier 6 areas is to ensure that new development is supportive of agriculture. Non-agricultural development is encouraged to concentrate into corridor centers, towns and villages.

Tier 7 remains relatively undeveloped. It contains pristine watershed, reservoir watershed, habitats of endangered plants and animals and should be protected in the future as a natural resource. The primary goal in Tier 7 is to limit the extent to which these lands are subjected to growth. Environmentally sensitive areas should remain predominantly low density residential, low intensity recreational and undeveloped.

Located throughout the tiers there are networks of transportation routes and growing commercial centers. These are recommended to be delineated and expanded to optimize the efficient use of infrastructure and minimize the disruption of the natural environment.

The network of transportation routes which are targeted for expansion will be designated as corridors. They are typically a primary transportation route anchored by an urban area, with a strong real estate market demand and sufficient supply of real property to accommodate projected growth.

Commercial activities should be concentrated along the corridors in "corridor centers". Corridor centers are distinguishable by their location near a transportation interchange; strong demand for higher intensity development; capacity to absorb growth; lower density surroundings and their accessibility to residential areas which could provide housing and labor supplies to the corridor center.

Villages, usually found at the convergence or intersection of transportation routes, also provide opportunities for rural development and redevelopment. They are distinguishable as a place generally within one municipality containing a resident population of less than 500 persons. The area is not sewered and is

located in a limited growth area not sharing a boundary with any growth area.

Key Recommendations

General strategies which guided the development of specific recommendations are the following:

- Guide growth toward areas where public services and facilities now exist or can be efficiently provided.
- Improve air quality throughout New Jersey by providing mechanisms to offset and to compensate for the generation of pollutants incidental to urban and suburban development and redevelopment.
- Focus development toward existing public water systems which do not threaten major public aquifers.
- Anticipate cycles in the development marketplace that produce opportunities for urban redevelopment.
- Promote greater use of public transit.

Key Recommendations - Growth Tiers: 1 Through 4

1. The State should establish levels of public investment in redeveloping municipalities adequate to maintain and improve infrastructure and transportation facilities, encourage economic development, preserve and rebuild housing stock, increase education job training opportunities and improve public safety.
2. Corridor development plans should be prepared by the pertinent municipalities. Minimum development use, density and intensity standards should be established in corridor centers commensurate with the scale of the corridor and its projected real estate market demand. Development should be compact and support a variety of uses. The costs of growth should be apportioned equitably among those who benefit from the improvements.
3. Municipalities should comply with the regulations and obligations promulgated by the New Jersey Council on

Affordable Housing pursuant to the Fair Housing Act in meeting their affordable housing obligations.

Limited Growth Tiers: 5 Through 7

1. Densities should conform to what is necessary to protect ground and surface water quality. This will be determined using a nitrate dilution model. The highest grown density on environmentally sensitive lands and agricultural areas is recommended not to exceed 1 unit per 5 acres in cluster development.
2. It is recommended in the limited growth tiers that municipalities plan to maintain a gross density of 1 unit per 20 acres; clustering at 1 unit to 5 acres where appropriate balanced by open space acquired through farmland preservation, conservation easements and outright land purchases.
3. If development is not clustered, the draft plan recommends a gross density of 1 unit per 20 acres, including undevelopable land.

Relationship of Independence Township to the State Plan

Independence Township contains within it five separate tiers: one growth area and four limited growth areas. The accompanying map shows the location of the following tiers within Independence Township.

ONE (1) GROWTH AREA

1. Suburbanizing - Tier 4 (544 acres)

FOUR (4) LIMITED GROWTH AREAS

2. Future Suburbanizing Tier 5 (3314 acres)
3. Agricultural Area Tier 6A (2910 acres)
4. Environmentally Sensitive
Agricultural Areas Tier 6B (1502 acres)
5. Environmentally Sensitive
Areas, plus, Public Open
Space (Jenny Jump Mt.
State Park) Tier 7 (3974 acres)

Independence Township Planning Board will work with the State Planning Commission in the cross-acceptance process. The subcommittee created by the Planning Board will use this updated Master Plan as its guide in cross-acceptance.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Since the 1982 Master Plan, the Municipal Land Use Law has authorized the inclusion of an economic plan element as part of the Master Plan. This element is to consider all aspects of economic development, including a comparison of the types of employment expected to be provided through economic development and an analysis of the stability and diversity of the economic development to be promoted.

In the county, generally, further expansion of manufacturing is not anticipated. Future job expansion is expected in the construction, trade and service industries. The increasing number of residential units near Hackettstown is creating an immediate demand for conveniently located retail services. The closest major employment center to Independence is Hackettstown which has been experiencing an expansion of light industrial, corporate and professional service uses. M&M/Mars, located at the southeastern border of Independence, employs about 1,500 people. Other large employers in the county which are located in Hackettstown include Amerace Corp., with 600 employees, and BP Performance Polymers, with 300 employees. Another employment center which may impact Independence Township's development is the International Trade Center in Mount Olive, which provides on-site customs clearance, and defers, eliminates or reduces U.S. duties. This complex is being developed on 670 acres.

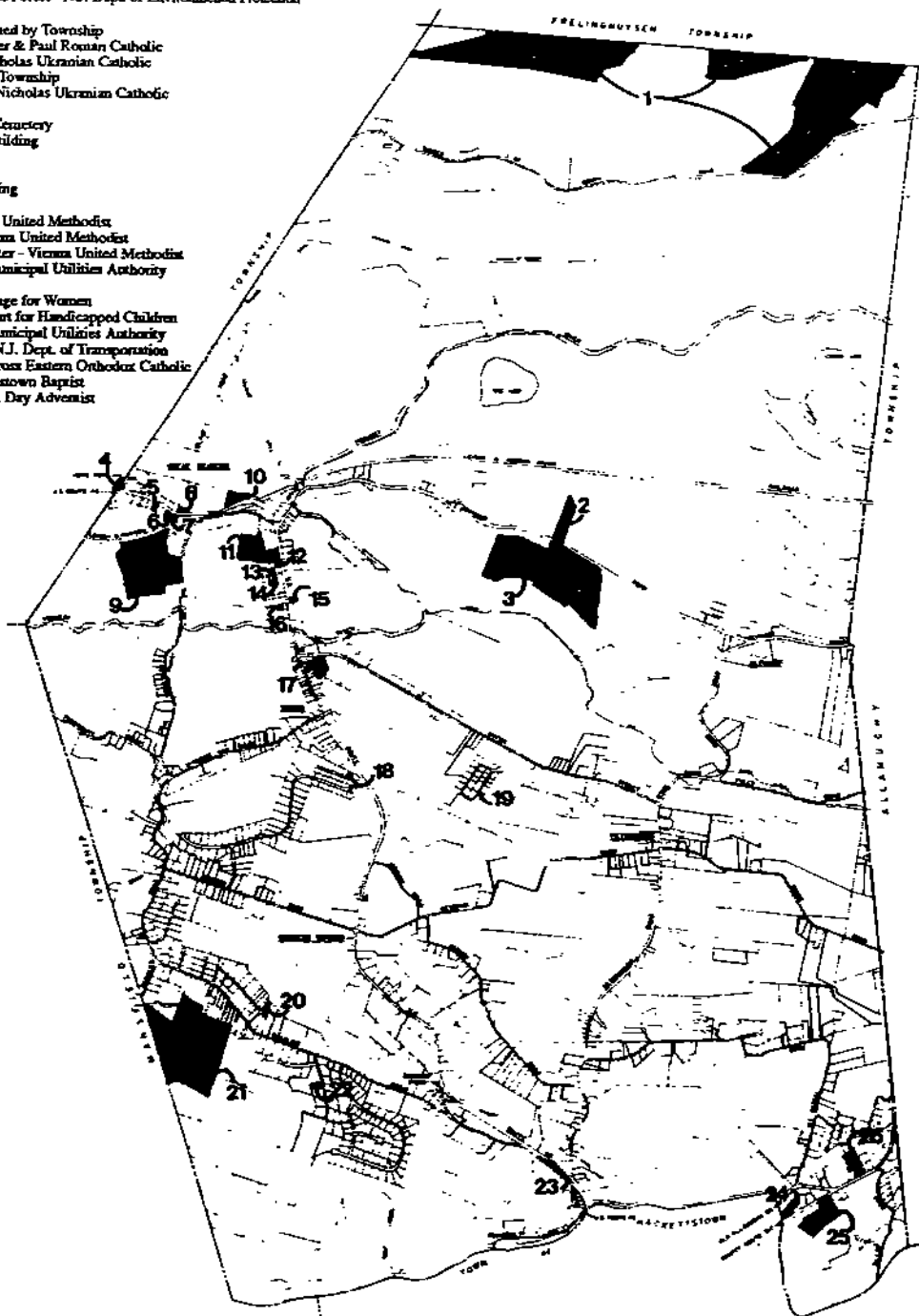
The effect of these neighboring industrial, and commercial uses on Independence Township's own economic base and labor pool as well as other economic trends, should be studied in order to implement a realistic economic development plan for the township.

The 1982 Master Plan recognized that, as population grows, there will be a growing demand for retail sales and services and professional offices. Adequate land for these uses should be conveniently located for the residential population it will serve.

The Township should consider ways in which small businesses can be assisted. For example, application fees (not escrow fees) should be reduced for small businesses.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND LAND

1. Juny Jump State Forest - N.J. Dept. of Environmental Protection
2. Landfill
3. Open Space owned by Township
4. Church - St. Peter & Paul Roman Catholic
5. Church - St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic
6. Land owned by Township
7. Parsonage - St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic
8. Post Office
9. Pogost Union Cemetery
10. Public Works Building
11. School
12. Fire Company
13. Municipal Building
14. Rescue Squad
15. Church - Vienna United Methodist
16. Parsonage - Vienna United Methodist
17. Community Center - Vienna United Methodist
18. Independence Municipal Utilities Authority
19. Township Land
20. Cemetery Collage for Women
21. Camp Merry Heart for Handicapped Children
22. Independence Municipal Utilities Authority
23. Land owned by N.J. Dept. of Transportation
24. Church - Holy Cross Eastern Orthodox Catholic
25. Church - Hackensack Baptist
26. Church - Seventh Day Adventist



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
 COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
 FLEMINGTON, N.J.
 MAY 1988

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
 WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

SOURCE

EXISTING LAND USE PLAN, 1988

THE LAND USE PLAN

Introduction

The land use plan consists of: 1) a concept plan which broadly depicts the land use policies recommended for Independence Township, and 2) a detailed plan which would serve as the basis for zoning.

The detailed plan takes a shorter time perspective of six years. It can be modified to phase in development proposals of the concept plan which takes in a longer range view of the community's development.

Town Center

The major land use proposal in this revised Land Use Plan Element is the creation of a town center area of approximately 160 acres located in the Village of Vienna.

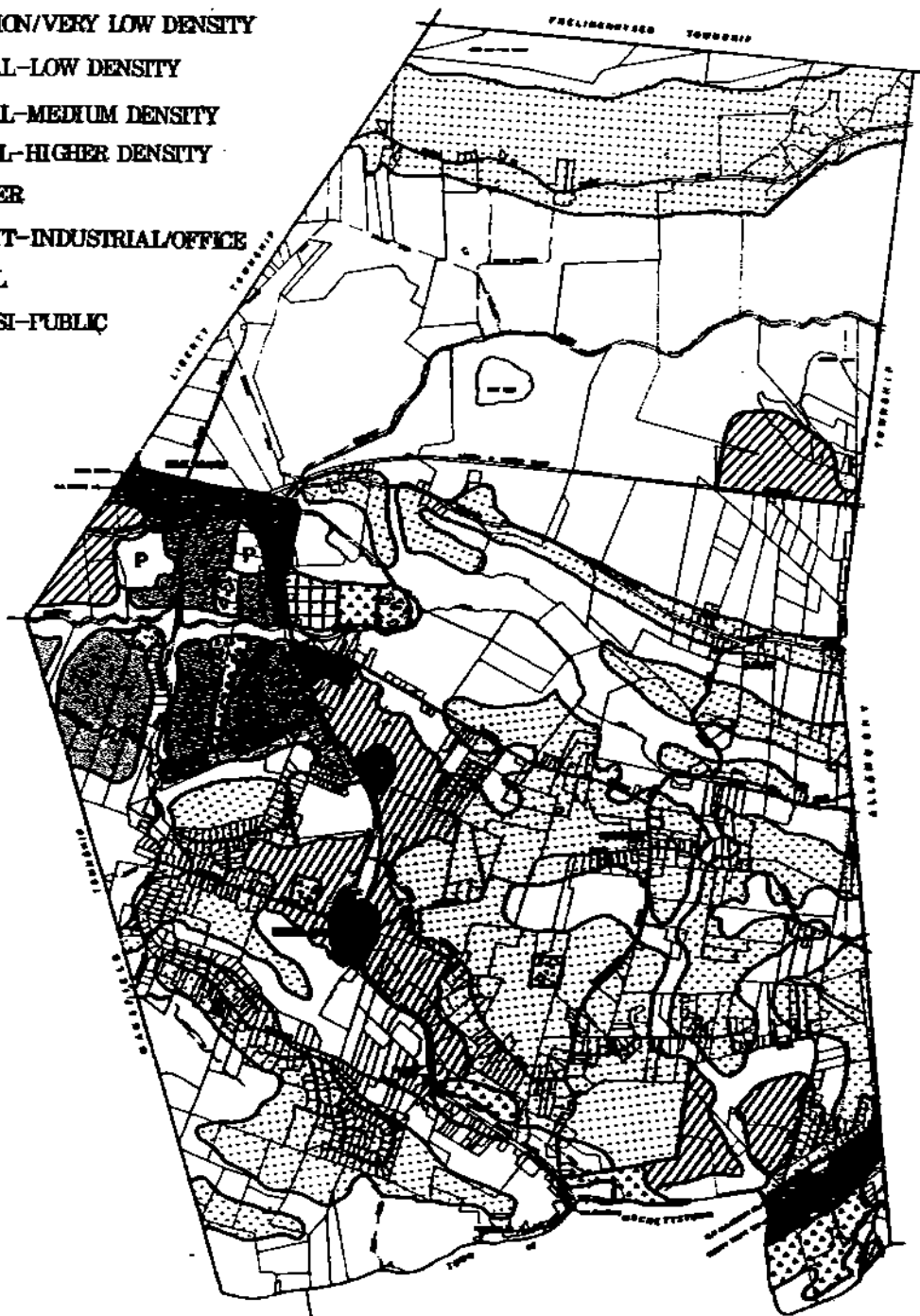
It will consist of a mixture of retail commercial and business offices, community services, higher density housing including a variety of senior citizen housing accommodations, park and recreation facilities and naturalistic open space.

The Town Center is proposed on Block 21, Lot 38 which fronts on Route 46 and is nearly surrounded by the Pequest River. Retail shopping including a supermarket and possibly a junior department store is envisioned along with professional and business offices, municipal facilities, religious uses and quasi-public services such as a day-care center. The Town Center is intended to be small, easily accessible by the residents of the entire community and serve as the focal point of much of the community's commerce and social activity. It would be frequented regularly by most residents of Independence and help bond the entire community together. The commercial center would be designed not as a typical highway commercial shopping center, but as a village business area. It would feature an architectural style compatible with its setting of town greens, public services such as a day care center or a post office, and possibly a farmer's market. Existing features in the commercial center such as

CONCEPT PLAN

22

- ☐ CONSERVATION/VERY LOW DENSITY
- ☒ RESIDENTIAL-LOW DENSITY
- ☒ RESIDENTIAL-MEDIUM DENSITY
- ☒ RESIDENTIAL-HIGHER DENSITY
- ☒ TOWN CENTER
- ☒ EMPLOYMENT-INDUSTRIAL/OFFICE
- ☒ COMMERCIAL
- ☒ PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC
- ☒ RECREATION



PREPARED BY
MADDEN/KUMMER INC.
 COMMUNITY PLANNING - SITE DESIGN
 FLEMINGTON, N.J.
 JUNE 1988

TOWNSHIP OF
INDEPENDENCE
 WARREN COUNTY, N.J.

old homes along Route 46 should be restored and church property should be designed as a focal point in the Town Center design.

The Town Center should also be visually distinctive, its physical characteristics identifying it as an area of relatively intense activity. It would be compact in scale and provide a comfortable and attractive setting for a variety of activities. Buildings rich in design would include details such as cupolas, towers and ornate windows. Appropriately-scaled and attractive fencing would be encouraged. Substantial porches would be found on many residences. The visually rich streetscape would contain shallow building setbacks, short blocks and ornate buildings. These buildings often would provide the visual terminations which help create a special sense of place.

Natural and open space features integrate with the built environment in the Town Center. Along the streets, trees would be planted in steady rows which define the street system and bring additional shade and color to the area, lessening the impacts of asphalt and concrete. Common greens and open spaces designed as "public rooms" are to be provided and linked by a series of pedestrian pathways which serve all activities. Community access would be provided by the surrounding road network, which automatically leads drivers to the village center. Shared parking and on-street parking are encouraged.

A mixture of uses is essential to the Town Center. Civic, private community services and religious buildings would share the area with retail and residential uses. A wide variety of housing types will be encouraged to provide for a balanced mix of households.

Housing in the Town Center

A Town Center functions better if it has its own neighborhood community. Indeed, the Town Center needs a critical mass of residential units of varied types to live and breathe as a center. For a neighborhood to engender life and vitality of its own, it needs around 1000 persons. At this population, some retail businesses in the center can be supported and it assures life on the streets at all hours. The mix of housing types which generates that population level is also important. You need a sufficient number of persons who want to live in a center. These people are usually found in smaller

households, not the family-style characteristic of a single family detached unit.

The Town Center is an appropriate place for higher density residential development because it possesses the best development conditions in Independence Township. The Town Center would permit a variety of residential densities depending on the type of unit. Single family detached housing could be permitted in village home lots of 10,000 to 15,000 square feet at a net density of up to 2.5 dwelling units per acre.

Senior citizen or age-restricted housing in the Town Center area could be permitted in patio homes on 5,500 square foot lots and duplexes on 10,000 square foot lots at a net density of 7.5 units per acre.

A continuing care facility for elderly persons and households is recommended for the Town Center. A continuing care facility is a residential facility designed to house persons over the age of 65 or handicapped persons whose health requires that special services and support systems be available on-site to enable such persons to live outside of an institution. The assisted-living residential facility both adjoins and has access to the services of a nursing home and other on-site services provided to the residents. The elderly, as a component of the population, is increasing at a faster rate in the state, and the special needs of this population group requires consideration in community planning and zoning.

Continuing care housing should be closely tied into a nursing home complex with which it has a financial and synergistic relationship. They are part of a parcel of a natural association that should be kept together and planned together. From an economic, management and specialized support service standpoint, nursing homes and continuing care facilities go together. Also, from a social standpoint, because people age differently and become incapacitated at different ages, there is a humane reason to link them. As one partner becomes in need of a nursing home facility, the other partner can reside nearby on the same grounds so that their life together can continue.

It is understood from State regulations that there is a minimum requirement of 240 units in a continuing care facility. Planning literature states that the optimal size of a continuing care facility/nursing home should be around 400 beds per unit in total.

This coincides with the Township's desire to keep the facility small in size.

The basic housing density in the Town Center would remain at one acre. An increase in development density to 3.5 units per gross acreage would be dependent on meeting conditions which would further the community planning goals of the Master Plan.

The following could be incorporated in the zoning of the Town Center Area as conditions for obtaining additional development density up to the maximum permitted amount:

1. Agricultural preservation

One additional unit per acre would be allowed in exchange for the permanent reservation of 10 acres of farmland in Independence Township. Proof of permanent deed restriction for agricultural use would be required for the density credit.

2. Park and Recreation Facilities

One additional unit per acre would be allowed for the creation of a park of 10 acres or greater developed with ballfields and recreation courts and other park facilities.

3. Affordable Housing

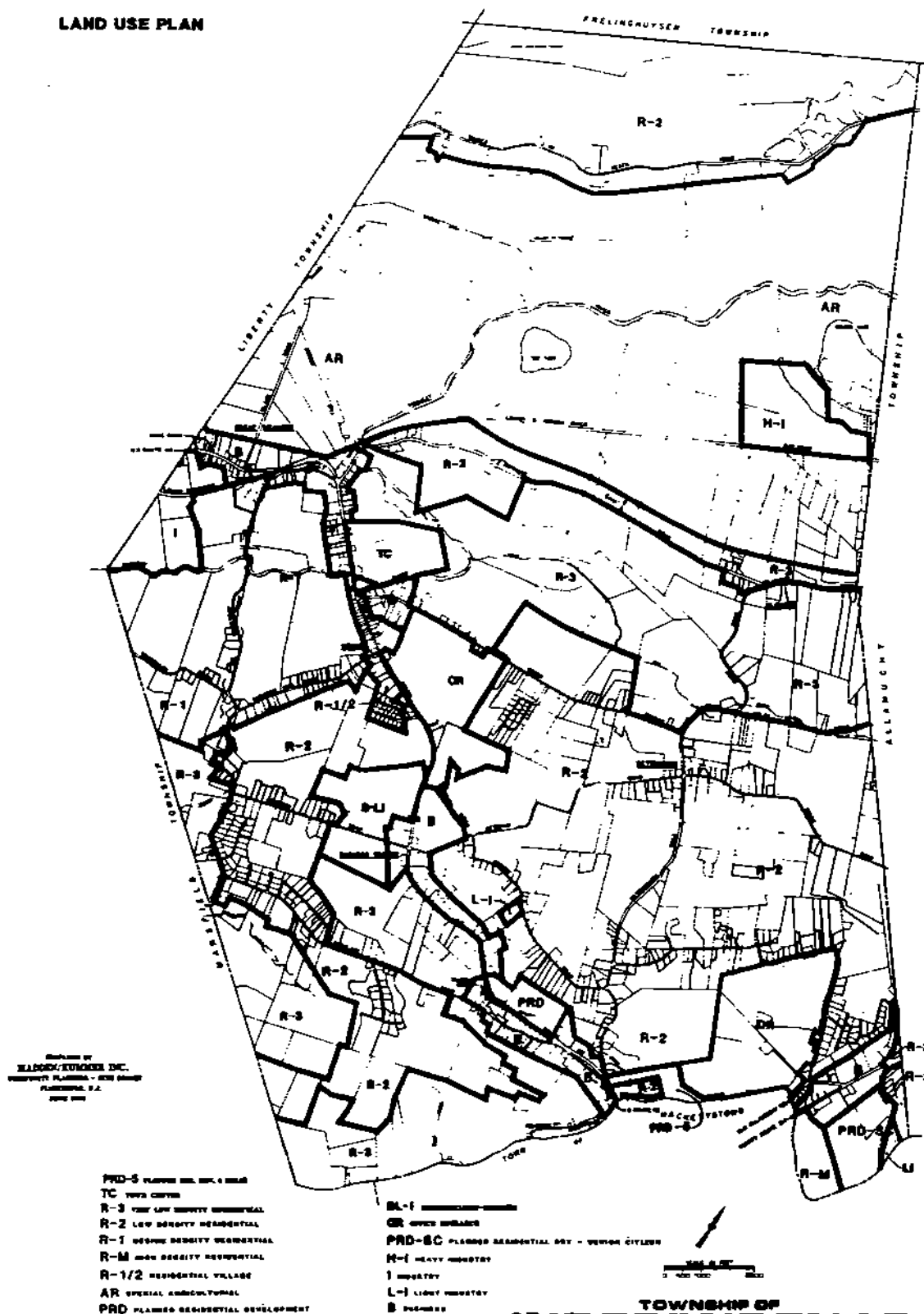
A ratio of two additional units per acre would be allowed for the construction of one/half unit per acre of moderate cost housing including senior citizen housing.

4. Community Facilities

Two additional units per acre would be allowed for the construction of basic facilities for a municipal services building such as a library or other community service like a day-care center.

Community on-site sewerage and water systems will be required to implement each project which makes up the Town Center.

LAND USE PLAN



Higher density Residential

The town center is an appropriate place for higher density residential development because it possesses the best development conditions in Independence Township. Housing densities throughout the rest of Independence Township are proposed in the Land Use Plan to remain as is or to be decreased due to critical environmental conditions.

The existing PRD and R-M districts are retained in the Plan under the higher density residential category.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Independence Township can employ growth management techniques to control the pace and character of development. There is need in an undeveloped municipality like Independence Township for a bridge between the two scales of planning: the Master Plan at the broad, community-wide scale and the individual project at the detailed site scale. Areawide plans are needed to provide the context for individual projects so that the varied infrastructural systems affecting neighboring properties can be coordinated and the cumulative impacts of projects, which over time will affect a portion or all of the municipality, can be anticipated and planned for.

The Planning Board should prepare areawide plans for watersheds, for blocks bounded by the major roads and, for corridors along roadways which are under pressure of development. These areawide plans of several adjoining properties would propose a general layout for a continuous pattern of open space and trails, roadway connection, centralized stormwater management, and the extension or sharing of infrastructure. All developers would pay an off-tract improvement assessment for the costs involved in preparing and reviewing these areawide plans. A mechanism would be adopted whereby the initial developer in a section of Independence without an areawide plan would be repaid by subsequent applicants for their pro-rata share of planning and review costs.

The first areawide plan recommended for preparation is the Town Center and the area within the HMUA service jurisdiction.

Pequest River Park System

All lands along the Pequest River and its tributary streams including all wetlands, flood plains, and useable land to a depth of 75 feet from the river bank should be permanently preserved in open space through public acquisition or conservation easements. Additional lands within these stream corridors may be included in order to comply with state laws or environmental conditions.

A series of four major parks approximately 15 acres each featuring active recreation facilities such as ballfields are planned on developable flatlands in the Town Center and R-1 areas. These parks are planned to be linked together by bikeways and contiguous protected areas along the Pequest River. The facilities can be acquired and developed using Green Acres funds or can be created as part of a planned development project.

Medium Density Residential

To provide for medium density residential, the Plan proposes to retain the existing one unit per acre zoning (R-1) in the area between Cemetery Road and Barker's Mill Road and the smaller residential lot zoning in the older section of Vienna (R1/2). It is recommended that all new residential development at a one acre density be encouraged to cluster down to 25,000 square foot lots, using community sewer and water systems, in order to create active recreation parks.

Another new area for R-1 zoning are the properties fronting on Cemetery Road which are currently in the I zone. This is proposed to keep a compatible residential character along Cemetery Road. A buffer along the proposed R-1/I district rear lot boundary is proposed to soften the effects of activities in the I district.

Low Density Residential

The low density residential areas of Independence Township correspond to the existing R-2 zoning districts. The Plan finds after extensive analysis that the R-2 zoning is based on fundamentally sound land use policies.

Conservation/Very Low Density Residential

The Plan recommends an R-3 area, a new residential category for very low density development in areas currently zoned R-2 where warranted by the concentration of critical environmental features. A minimum density of 1 unit per 3 acres or more is recommended in R-3 as a means of reducing environmental disturbance. An R-3 designation is proposed for those lands where resource analysis has indicated the need for greater water quality protection such as a trout maintenance or production stream watershed.

The Plan also recommends the retention of conservation areas which appear on the concept plan as either continuous open space corridors or the extensive area generally north of Water Street dominated by wetland and steep slope conditions.

The Plan recommends that all stream valleys be left undisturbed in future development no matter what zone they occur in and that conservation areas be linked up in a continuous band to serve as wildlife habitats.

The Plan retains the Agricultural-Residential zone of 10 acres and supports efforts to retain all of the AR zoned lands in permanent agricultural use.

Employment Areas - Industrial/Office

The Plan retains all the I, IH, IL, and OR zones to accommodate the need for future areas of employment and sources of tax revenue. The only exception is in I zone properties fronting on Cemetery Road which are proposed to be rezoned R-1.

The Plan also recommends the addition of new areas for industrial and business office development.

The Plan recommends the inclusion in the IL zone of a 5.53-acre parcel (Block 305, Lot 1) on Bilby Road adjacent to Hackettstown industrial area. This property is more appropriate for industrial use than residential use due to its narrow triangular shape, extensive road frontage and adjacent industrial land use potential in Hackettstown.

The Plan places Block 4, Lots 1, 3, 28 and 29 on Old Allamuchy and Mt. Rascal Roads in the OR zone. This area is potentially attractive to

corporate, professional and business office users due to its excellent regional accessibility, proximity to Hackettstown services, potential for HMUA water and sewers service and good future access due to proposed bypass road through Independence from Route 517 to Route 46 around Hackettstown.

The Plan revises the current residentially zoned properties on Johnson Road near the Route 46 intersection to create a new industrial-commercial zone (B-LI) which is less intense than the current OR and LI zones. The primary use in this new zone would be the so-called "flex buildings" where office, light warehousing and light manufacturing activities can occur. The intention of this new zone would be to encourage the creation of a campus-like industrial-office zone featuring limited traffic access at controlled points and a unified design theme of landscaping, building architecture and signage under a planned unit development approach. This district would be an appropriate place for small businesses as well as a large corporate user. This area would also permit, as a minority use, trucking and heavy equipment activities in recognition of the existing land uses.

The area of the H-1 zone will remain as is. The Township will consider reducing the size or eliminating the H-1 zone altogether once ECRA cleanup at the Southland plant is completed and an assessment is made of the best future use of this property.

The Plan suggests Independence Township concentrate on small business development in its efforts to attract non-residential tax ratables. Nearly all new jobs are created by small businesses consisting of twenty employees or less. The primary concerns of a small business in choosing a location are: educational services, a skilled work force, telecommunications, quality of government services, and quality of life in the community.

It would appear Independence Township would be able to meet all these requirements. Independence Township can entice small business development by easing the difficulties involved in starting up a new business. Independence Township's industrial committee should identify all areas of decision-making affecting the start-up of a small business which the municipality must decide or can influence and set out a course of action for expediting those decisions.

Highway and Neighborhood Commercial

The Plan concentrates both highway and neighborhood commercial uses along Route 46, particularly at its intersections with major local roads.

The Plan recommends the inclusion in the B zone along Route 517 4.19 acres consisting of Block 8, Lot 22.01, 22.02, 22.03 and 22.04. This area currently zoned residential is more suited to business use due to the busy traffic conditions on Route 517 and those anticipated with the future creation of the Hackettstown bypass.

The Plan places the following properties on Cemetery Road in the Business Zone: Block 22, Lots 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55 and Lots 47, 48 and lot 49 to a depth of 300 feet from the Cemetery Road right-way. This area already contains some active business uses. These properties lie within the influence of Route 46 and as such are more appropriate for business rather than residential use.

The Plan places the vacant land in the PURD zone next to Stone Mill in the Business zone.

The Plan recommends eliminating the Business strip encompassing portions of Block 17, lots 28, 55 on the eastern side of Route 46 in front of the OR zone.

Business uses would be permitted in the OR district as a conditional use in planned developments. The zoning ordinance should be amended to allow business activities as a minor percentage of total development in the OR zone.

Independence Township should discourage highway strip commercial blight and encourage a high quality visual appearance, safe and efficient circulation conditions and sound business investments.

Future development pressures must be guided by strong zoning and site plan controls to avoid the kind of strip commercial blight prevalent along many of New Jersey's highways. Planning is needed to provide clear design guidelines for high quality development to occur. Toward these ends, Independence Township should consider the preparation of a detailed lot-by-lot development design plan for the retail commercial area on Route 46. This plan should specify building and parking arrangements, access controls, pedestrian and equestrian paths, design standards for lighting, signage, landscaping

tract recreation facilities fund if it is found that recreation facilities would be inappropriate in a particular development.

Areas for Further Study

The Board will consider the rezoning of Block 29, Lot 27 the so-called Island Farm which is currently zoned AR. The owner of the property indicates it has more development potential than the other sites placed in the highly restrictive 10-acre zone. He will present the Planning Board with information demonstrating how much of the property is free of wetlands, mucklands, flood plains and poor development soils.

The Board will consider revising the R-3 zoning designation to R-2 on Block 1, Lots 67, 68, 82 if more accurate topographic and lot line maps indicate slopes are mainly under 15 percent.

The Planning Board was presented with a policy conflict over the appropriate planning for approximately 1000 acres in the center of Independence Township between Alphano Road and Water Street. The properties in question are Block 21, 2, 2Q, 11, 11Q, 16, 16Q, 20, 20Q, 21, 21Q, 35, 35Q, and 50; Block 28, Lot 14. Federal and state environmental data show most of this land as severely environmentally constrained due to either wetlands or steep slopes. The owners argue this land is not as undevelopable as this data indicates. Site inspection by a subcommittee of the Planning Board showed much of this land is currently farmed or in mild slopes. After considerable discussion, the Board decided to temporarily designate this area as R-3. Because of development controls offered by the Critical Areas Ordinance, the Board has indicated that it may reinstate R-2 zoning if further study shows the area to be without wetland constraints to the extent indicated on the Master Plan maps. The Soil Conservation Service and the Department of Environmental Protection will be asked to study this area to determine if it has the extent of wetlands as indicated on the map in the Master Plan and how these wetlands are regulated by the new State law.