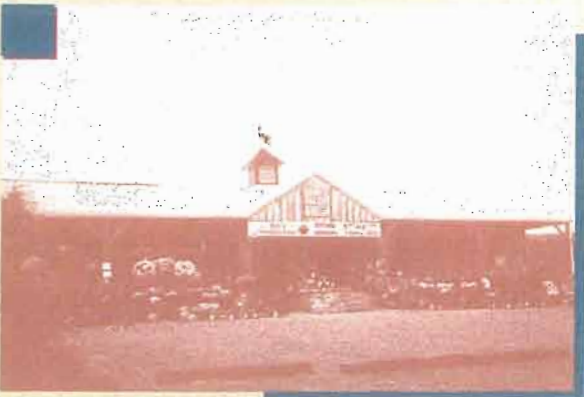


Growth Management Plan

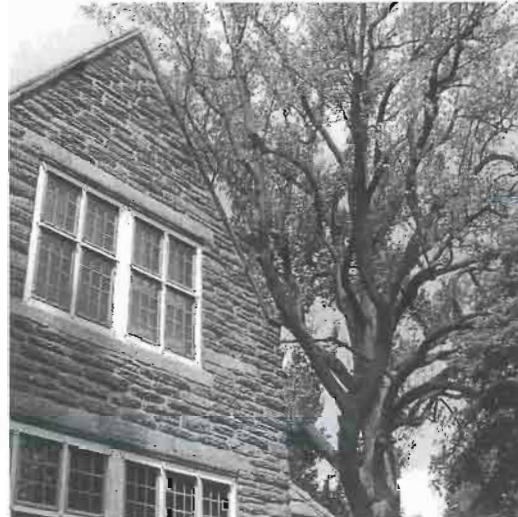
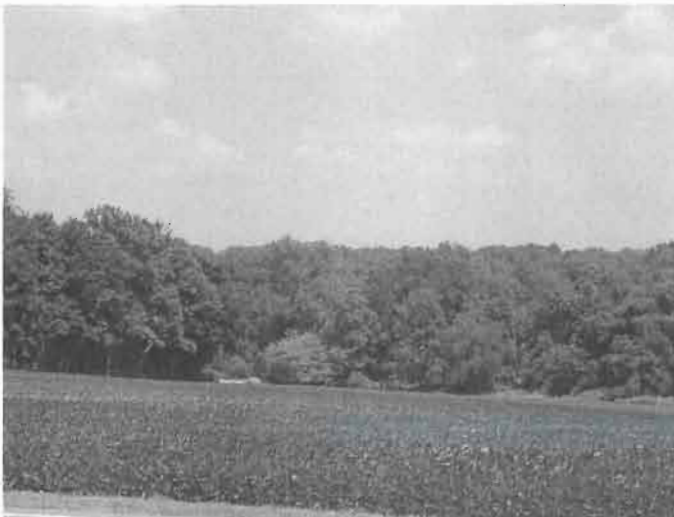
Westtown Township



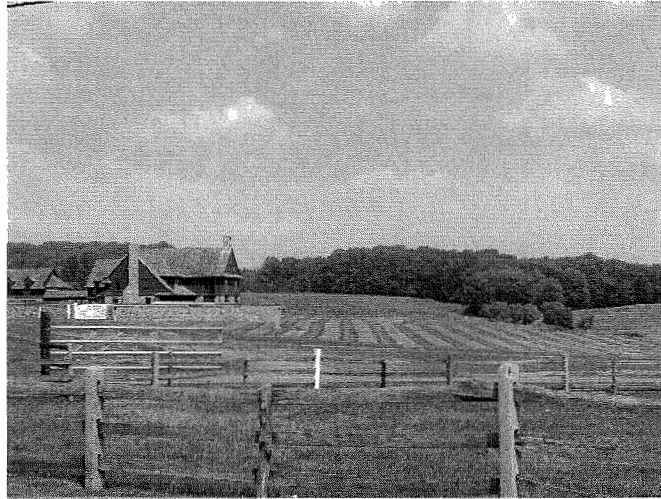
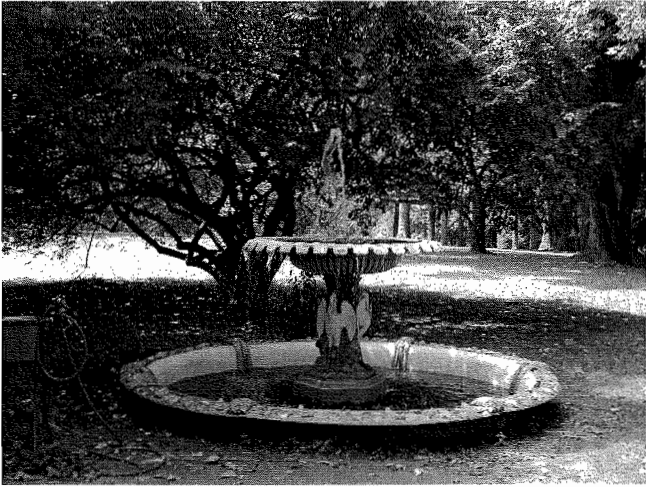
Westtown Township Growth Management Plan

The Comprehensive Plan for the Growth
and Conservation of Westtown Township,
Chester County, Pennsylvania

This Growth Management/Comprehensive Plan was adopted
by the Westtown Township Board of Supervisors on July 2, 2001.



Scenes Around Westtown



**This Growth Management Plan was Prepared
Under the Direction of the Following Westtown Township Officials**

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Special thanks are provided to Mr. Randall Arendt for inspiration for this Plan's policies and his development regulation recommendations, to Walt Pavelchek for editing assistance, and to the Citizens of Westtown Township for their valuable input.

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as administered by the Chester County Planning Commission.*



Community Planning and Zoning Consultants

Urban Research and Development Corporation
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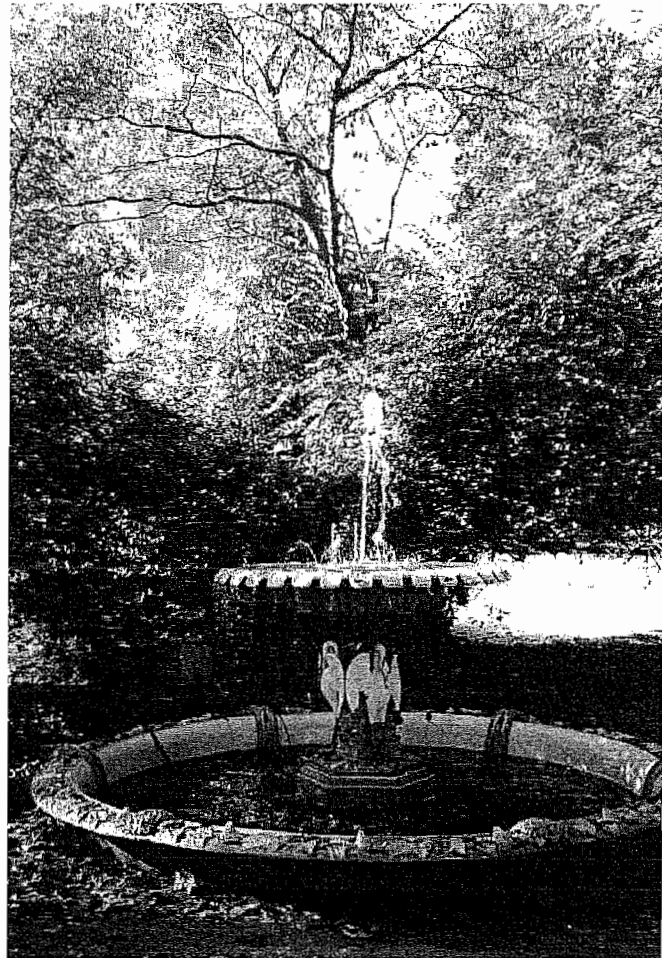
Summary of Westtown's Population and Housing
Glossary of Terms

INTRODUCTION

Westtown Township is a very special community - with many historic buildings, natural creek valleys, tree-canopied roads, beautiful homes, vibrant schools and rolling farmland. While Westtown has experienced great change over the last decades, the change has been accommodated in a manner that maintains this special character and a feeling of being close to nature. Westtown is worthy of continued special efforts to carefully guide changes and preserve the most important features of the community. This is the mission of this Growth Management Plan.

Change cannot be stopped. Legally, growth cannot be stopped. However, changes can be carefully managed so that they enhance the community and further community goals.

Through proper planning and action, we can protect areas of scenic beauty and environmental importance. We can minimize traffic hazards. We can preserve open spaces. We can provide improved public recreation areas. And we can protect the livability of neighborhoods. We can direct change in a way that it makes Westtown an even better place in which to live, work, learn and play.



What is this Growth Management Plan?

This Growth Management Plan will guide the development and preservation of Westtown over the next 10 to 15 years. This Plan will carry out the Vision Statement that is described below. This Plan establishes policies for future land uses, natural feature conservation, open space preservation, parks and recreation, transportation and community facilities. Moreover, it describes methods to carry out the Plan. This Plan is more all encompassing in managing growth than a typical "Comprehensive Plan" because it is integrated with several other major planning efforts.

Introduction

For example, this Plan is coordinated with the Township's new Sewage Facilities Plan. The Sewage Facilities Plan sets policies for where and how central sewage services will be extended. That plan is being completed at the same time as this Growth Management Plan. New regional stormwater plans are also being prepared in coordination with this Growth Management Plan.

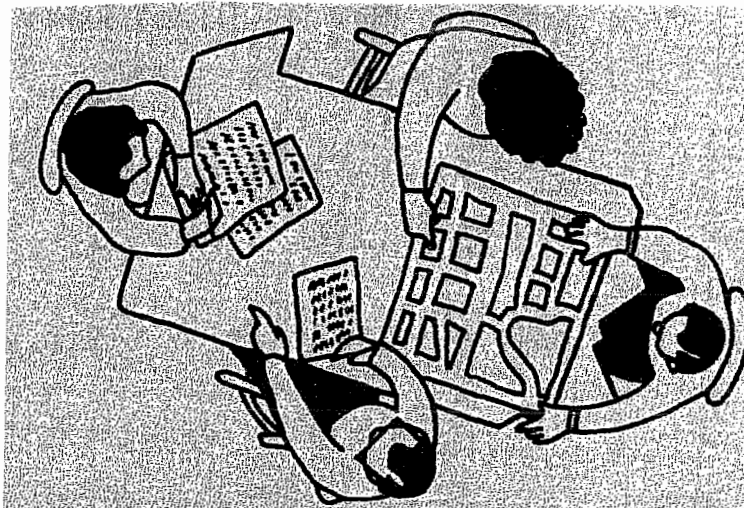
This Growth Management Plan serves as a foundation for revisions for to the Township's development regulations. The proposed revisions to these ordinances are reflected in this Plan. Revisions to these ordinances are being prepared to carry out this Plan.

The Township's two main set of regulations on development are the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). The Zoning Ordinance primarily controls the types of land uses and the densities of development allowed in different areas. The SALDO primarily establishes the procedures for approving new lots and other land developments. The SALDO also establishes requirements for the construction of roads, stormwater management and other improvements.

How This Plan Was Developed

This Growth Management Plan builds upon the Township's 1987 Comprehensive Plan. This Plan was developed through the following major steps:

1. Citizen Survey - A mail-back survey was sent to each household in the Township. The results were summarized in a separate report.
2. Background Studies, Maps and Interviews - Updated maps were prepared of existing conditions. Information was collected on various topics regarding existing conditions and trends. Interviews were conducted with some of the key persons in the Township to gain their insights.
3. Growth Management Committee - A Committee was appointed by the Board of Supervisors to direct the preparation of this Plan. All meetings of the Committee were open to the public. Meetings were also held with the Township's Parks and Open Space Committee.
4. Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives - The Growth Management Committee held an intensive session to develop a Vision Statement and Mission Statement for the Plan. A set of goals and objectives were then prepared to provide overall direction.



Introduction

5. Alternatives for Key Areas - Because most land in Westtown Township is developed, or approved for development, the Plan concentrated on the remaining undeveloped lands. A series of alternatives were intensely discussed for these areas.
6. Recommended Plan - The Growth Management Committee recommended a draft Growth Management Plan to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.
7. Development Regulations - As of 2001, a set of revisions are being considered to the Township's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to carry out the Growth Management Plan.
8. Public Meetings - Public meetings were held by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors on the proposed Plan.

Vision and Mission Statements

The following Vision and Mission Statements were developed by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee.

The Vision of the Future

Westtown Township will continue to be both family and community oriented. Westtown will continue to emphasize a high quality of life, while enjoying and maintaining its natural and man-made environments.

Mission Statement

To accomplish our vision of the future, we will assess, monitor and strive to ensure Westtown's high quality of life, provide quality cost-effective services, develop a spirit and sense of community, manage and control traffic, and manage change in order to build upon and preserve Westtown's important natural, historic and scenic features.

Goals: The Major Direction of this Plan

The following goals provide overall direction to this Plan and will assist in carrying out the Vision and Mission Statements described above. Policies and tasks were then formulated to achieve these goals.

Overall Goal

Direct growth and change in a manner that conserves the most important natural, scenic, agricultural and historic features and character of Westtown Township, while maintaining a high quality of life for residents.

Natural Resource and Agricultural Conservation

- Make sure that development respects the natural features of the land, with particular attention towards creek valleys, wetlands, mature forests and steeply sloped lands.
- Conserve the scenic character and natural beauty of Westtown.
- Encourage the preservation of farmland, where practical.

Land Use and Housing

- Provide for orderly patterns of development, with particular attention on protecting existing neighborhoods from incompatible development.
- Direct new development to occur in a manner that permanently preserves large areas of open space and maintains an attractive character, particularly along main roads.
- Continue to avoid “strip” commercial development along major roads.
- Encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings.

Quality of Life

- Provide a balanced system of active and passive public recreation areas and facilities, in a manner that is coordinated with public schools, a regional trail system and open space preservation.
- Plan in advance for public facility improvements needed to serve future growth.

Introduction

- Provide high-quality, cost-effective community services and facilities, with an emphasis on cooperation across municipal borders.
- Address sewage service needs and encourage the extension of public water service wherever feasible, in a regionally coordinated manner.

Transportation

- Closely coordinate the transportation system with existing and planned development, with an emphasis on careful management of traffic access onto main roads.
- Work with PA. DOT and developers to continually increase the safety and efficiency of the road system.
- Encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel, and support regional efforts to increase use of public transit and carpooling.

Putting the Plan Into Action

- Work to put this Plan into action through a program of updated planning and short-term actions within a long-range perspective.



WHO WE ARE

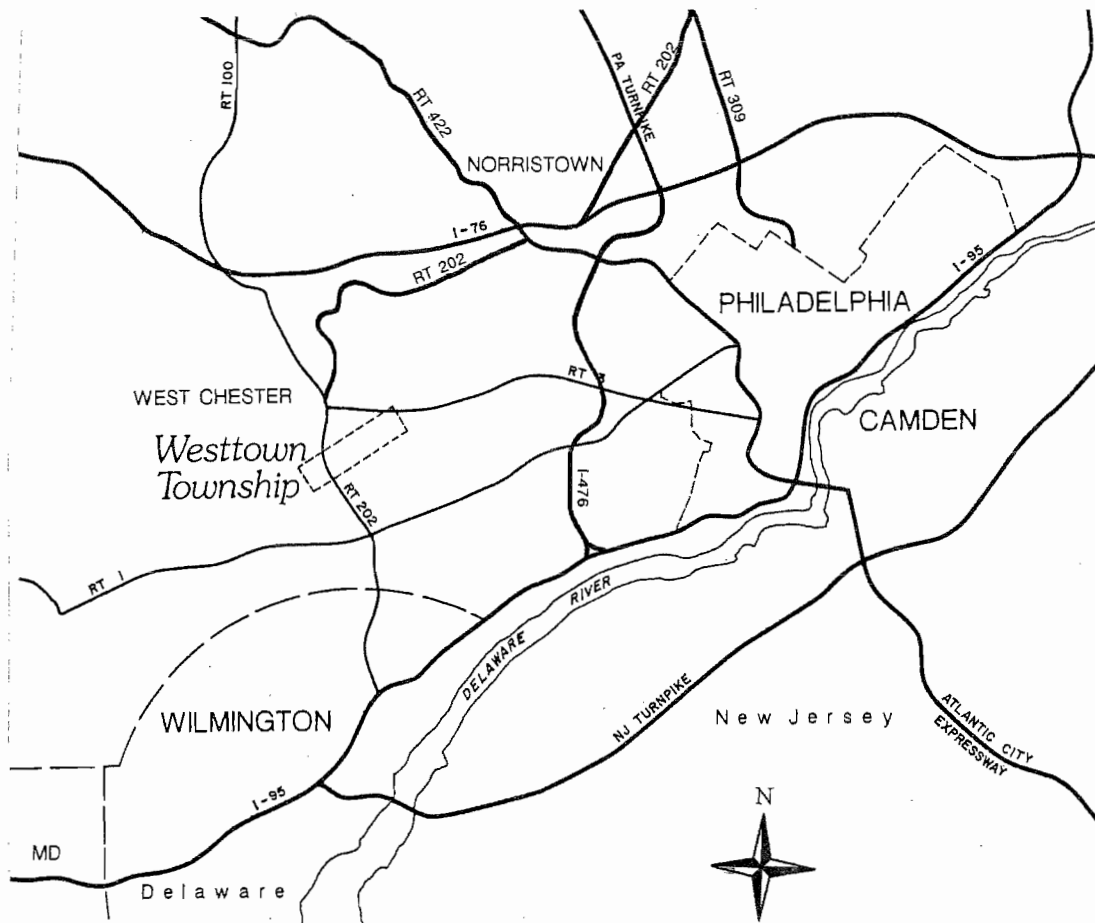
Westtown With the Region

Westtown Township stretches in a long rectangular shape for over five miles in a southwest-northeast direction. Westtown's borders are shown on the map on the following page.

As seen on the following map, Westtown Township is located in eastern Chester County, in an area experiencing intense growth pressures. Westtown's growth pressures derive from its physical attractiveness, access to major roads and reasonable commuting distance to growing employment centers along the Route 202 corridor, the I-476/Blue Route corridor and the Wilmington area.

Regional Location

Westtown Township
Chester County, Pennsylvania

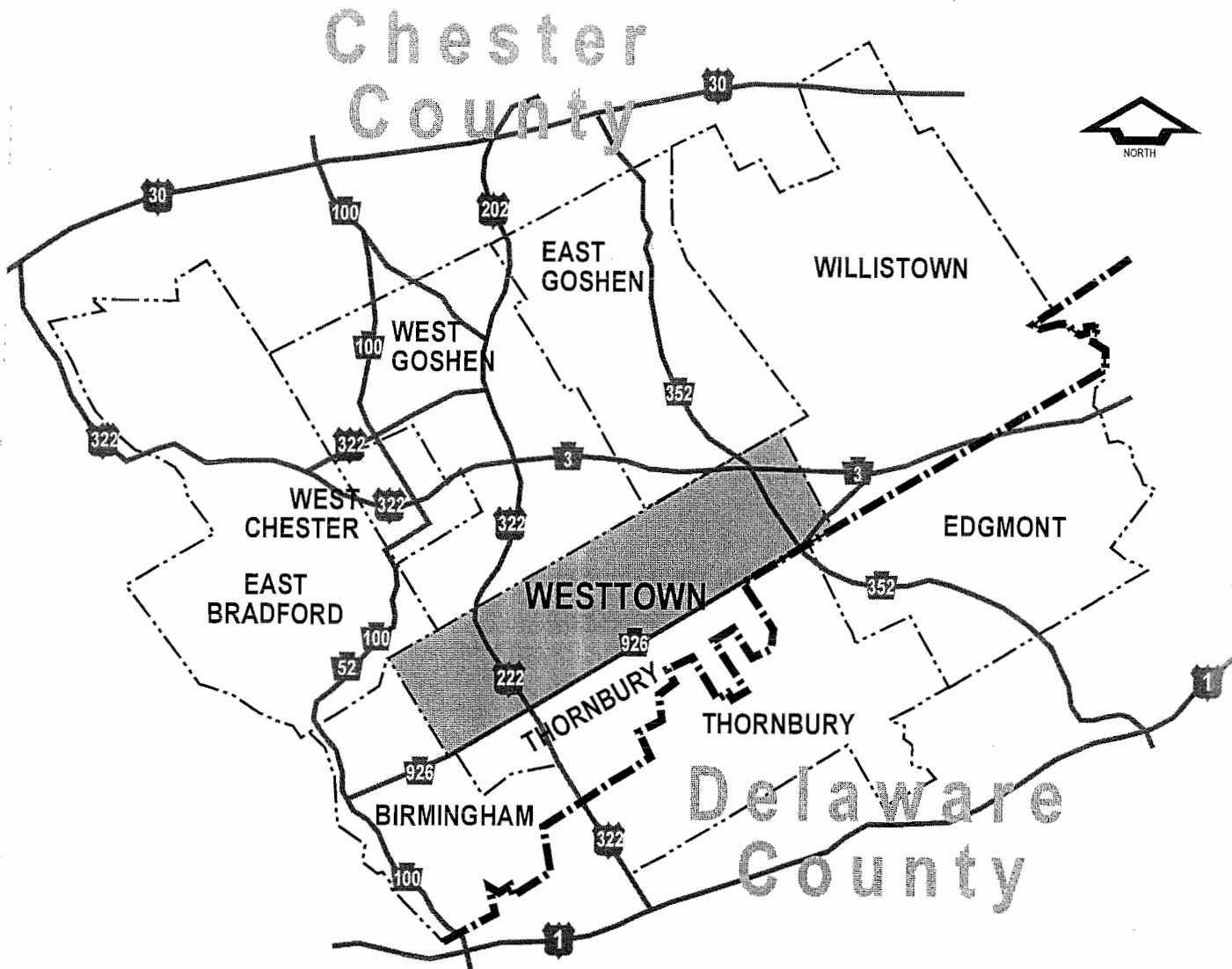


Who We Are

The following map shows the surrounding region at a larger scale. Westtown is located south of the Borough of West Chester. The eastern border of Westtown is approximately 16 miles west of the border of Philadelphia. Four major highways cross Westtown:

- U.S. Route 202, a major highway connecting King of Prussia with Interstate 95 in Wilmington,
- Route 352, which connects Routes 202 and 30 with Route 1 and southern Delaware County,
- Route 3, which connects West Philadelphia with West Chester, and
- Route 926, which connects Route 3 with the Kennett Square area.

Westtown and Adjacent Municipalities



Westtown's Heritage

The following summary of Westtown's history is based upon "A History of Westtown Township" by Arthur James, published in 1973.

Westtown was established in 1685 - the second township in Chester County. Westtown was established three years after the formation of Chester County by William Penn. The borders of Westtown have not changed since its founding. The first settlers were English Quakers, who came to Westtown to establish dairy farms and orchards.

In 1777, the Battle of Brandywine occurred southwest of Westtown between British and Colonial soldiers. Part of the British Army passed through Westtown on its way to the battle.

The Enoch Williams Farm in Westtown was used to hold Union soldiers who had been captured by Confederate soldiers at the Battle of Gettysburg and then "paroled" by the Confederates on the condition that the Union forces make sure that they would not fight again. Many eventually returned to the Army.

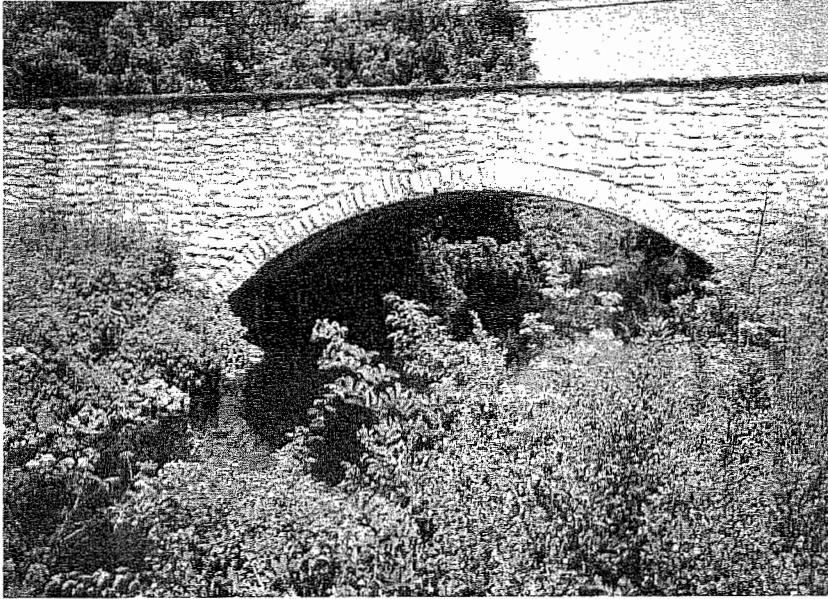
From 1730, two serpentine stone quarries operated in the southwestern corner of Westtown. These quarries provided most of the stone for early buildings in the area. In the 1880s, up to 40 people were employed at "Brinton's Quarry." Much of the stone was hauled to the railroad station along Route 926. The stone was used in churches throughout the northeastern United States. In 1888, a fire destroyed the buildings and water pumps of the quarry, and the quarrying was discontinued. The site has served for decades as a swim club.

In 1794, 600 acres were purchased for the establishment of the Westtown School. These 600 acres continue to be owned and managed by the School. The current main building was opened in 1888.

By the early 1800s, Darlington Corners, at the intersection of present-day Routes 202 and 926, included a hotel, a clock manufacturer, a cotton factory and a store. By 1810, Westtown had reached 790 residents. As agriculture became more mechanized, Westtown's population decreased from 848 in 1880 to 663 in 1910. Little growth occurred in the Township during the early 1900s - the Township only included 992 residents by 1950.

In 1882, Mr. and Mrs. James Smith of Philadelphia purchased 143 acres that is the center of present-day Oakbourne Park. They enlarged the existing granite house and planted formal gardens and exotic trees. The unique stone and brick water tower was built for fire protection. After the Smiths passed away in the 1890s, the home was willed to become a convalescent home for women. The home closed in 1971, and the main property was purchased in 1974 by the Township for a park. In the following years, the Township restored the water tower and acquired large amounts of adjacent land.

In 1896, south of the Smith Mansion, the Pennsylvania Epileptic Hospital was formed. At its peak, it included 150 patients. The property was next used as John Knox College. The property was later transformed into a treatment center for children with emotional difficulties, and then into the Gaudenzia House, which provides drug addiction treatment.



As the railroad was extended west from Philadelphia to Westtown and West Chester, Westtown became more accessible to new residents. Around the turn of the century, street car lines improved access, including trolley service along Route 3 between Philadelphia and West Chester. Increased automobile traffic caused the long-standing picturesque wooden covered bridge on Street Road to be removed in 1937.

As areas closer to Philadelphia became built-out, suburban development pressures moved westward. By 1960, the population was up to 1,947, and by 1970 it was 5,069. Development was spurred by the completion of the Route 202 expressway in the 1960s, the widening of Route 202 between Westtown and Wilmington, and the extension of sewage service into portions of Westtown. By 1990, the Township had grown to 9,937 residents.

The People of Westtown

The U.S. Census estimates that Westtown Township included 10,352 residents in 2000. This number is considerably lower than the Census estimate of 12,183 residents in 1998. Based upon housing construction data, the Township believes that the Census undercounted the Township's population. The 1998 estimated population would be an increase of 23 percent from the 1990 count of 9,937, and an increase of 80 percent from the 1980 count of 6,774. Additional information about Westtown's population and housing are included in the Appendix.

Summary of the Citizen Survey

As part of the Westtown Township Growth Management Plan, the Township mailed a survey to households asking for residents' views on key issues facing the Township. Thirty-seven percent of households responded - much higher than the average response rate of 10 to 20 percent that has been experienced by most municipalities. The full results of the Survey are provided in a separate report.

Who We Are

Major findings of the survey are:

Residents were asked to check off the importance of a range of issues. The most important issues for persons responding to the survey were, in order:

1. Addressing the traffic problems along Route 202
2. Preserving natural areas
3. Preserving open space in new development
4. Preserving the scenic character of the Township
5. Addressing traffic problems along Route 926
6. Carefully controlling the types and locations of business development
7. Extending public sewage service to homes with failing septic systems
8. Improving opportunities for bicycling and pedestrians

Residents were asked to choose which types of recreation facilities were most needed. The largest numbers of responses were in favor of:

1. bicycle/jogging trails
2. wooded natural areas with nature trails
3. children's playgrounds
4. swimming pools
5. outdoor ice skating
6. golf course
7. golf practice area
8. recreation building with gymnasium
9. outdoor amphitheater
10. baseball/softball fields
11. picnic pavilions

- More detailed survey results regarding recreation are included in the Parks and Recreation Plan section of this Plan.

Who We Are

- Almost 70 percent of respondents indicated that community recreation uses should become a top priority for the use of the Oakbourne Mansion and grounds.
- Most respondents rated public services as either “excellent” or “good.” The highest rated public services are trash collection/recycling, police protection and maintenance of Township roads.
- Respondents were divided approximately 60/40 in their willingness to pay \$20 to \$35 more a year to finance park and recreation improvements.
- Survey respondents favored additional recreation programs and activities by a 52/48 margin. Among those persons who cited a need for additional programs and activities, the preferred types of programs were: youth sports, children’s playground programs, special events/holiday activities, and music/arts/drama.

Existing Uses of Land

The map on the following page illustrates the existing uses of each lot in the Township. The majority of the land area in Westtown is developed in single family detached houses. Most of the existing single family homes are developed at lot sizes between one-half and one acre. Although a significant percentage of the housing units in Westtown are apartments and townhouses, they consume a relatively small percentage of land because they are developed at a higher density.

Commercial uses are concentrated along Route 3 and portions of Route 202. There are no significant industrial uses in Westtown. The largest institutional uses are the four public schools, the Gaudenzia House and the Westtown School.

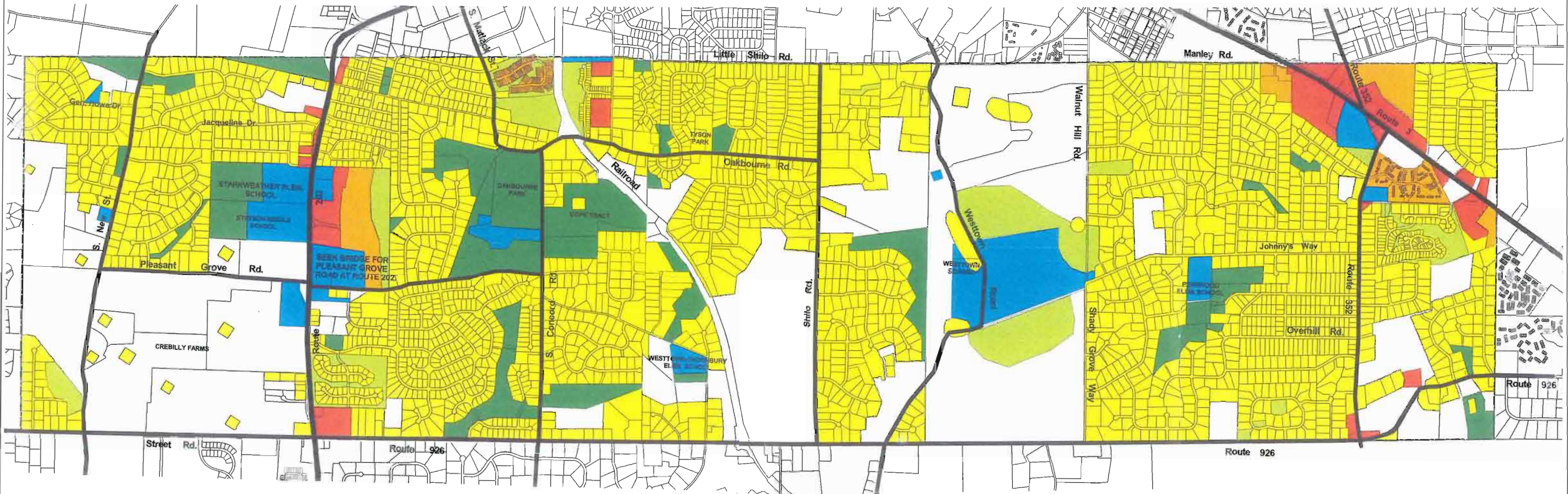
The largest tracts of undeveloped land in the Township are the Crebilly Farm west of Route 202 and north of Route 926, the lands north and south of the Westtown School which are owned by the School, the Stokes Farm east of Shiloh Road, and the Stratton Farm in the southeastern corner of the Township. Most of these lands are in agricultural use, except some lands north of the Westtown School property are wooded. Another large tract of undeveloped land, west of Shiloh Road, was approved in 2000 for an age-restricted residential development.

A substantial percentage of the land area of Westtown has been preserved as public or semi-public open space. Most of this land is owned by the Township or homeowner associations.

1999 EXISTING LAND USE

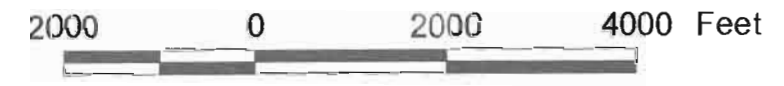
WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP

Chester County, Pennsylvania



Land Use

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
|  | Single Family Detached Residential |  | Private Recreation/Open space |
|  | Attached Residential & Apartments |  | Public Recreation/Open Space |
|  | Business |  | Undeveloped & Agricultural |
|  | Public & Institutional | | |



Community Planning and Recreation Consultants
 URBAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
 Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Base information provided by Chester County Land Records Office, 1998.

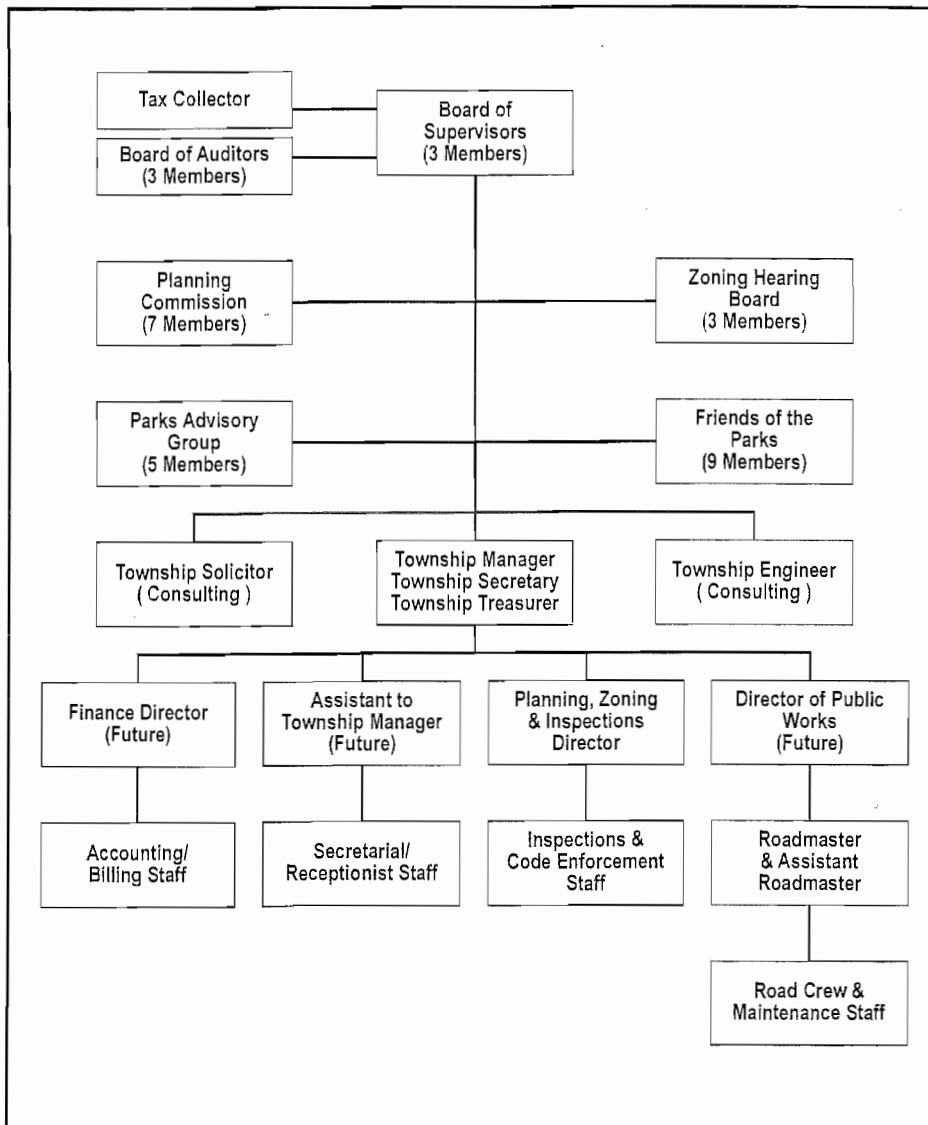
Westtown's Government

The main roles of a township government are to regulate development, maintain roads, provide police protection and offer public parks.

Westtown is governed by an elected three-member part-time Board of Supervisors. Most community planning and land development matters are addressed by a seven-member volunteer Township Planning Commission. The Parks Advisory Group is responsible to oversee park and recreation improvements. An appointed Township Manager directs the day-to-day administration of the Township Government.

As Westtown continues to grow, there will be a need for additional Township staff. The following table was prepared by the Township Manager in 2000 to identify the structure of the Township government and to recommend where additional staff may be needed in the future.

Westtown Township Organizational Chart



Who We Are

Other Information Sources

The following table highlights where additional information can be found about various subjects. Most of these sources are available at the Township Offices.

Topic	Information Source
Township Revenues and Expenditures	Township Budget
Sewage Needs and Future Plans	Township Sewage Facilities Plan ("Act 537")
Development Regulations	Township Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance
State Law Concerning Development Planning, Procedures and Regulations	Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code
Park and Recreation Plans	Township Park and Recreation Plan
Chester County Recommendations Concerning Development and Preservation	County Landscapes Plan
Alternative Methods for Community Planning and Development Regulation	Chester County Planning Commission's Community Planning Handbook
Alternative Methods of Addressing Transportation Concerns	Chester County Planning Commission's Transportation Planning Handbook
Alternative Methods of Promoting Historic Preservation	Chester County Planning Commission's Historic Preservation Handbook



WHERE WE ARE HEADED: THE POLICIES OF THE PLAN

The following sections of this Plan address the major development, conservation and transportation policies of the Township. This section is divided into the following parts:

- Executive Summary of Policies
- The County Landscapes Plan
- The Plan for Natural Resources and Agricultural Conservation
- The Plan to Manage Land Uses and Growth
- The Plan to Enhance the Township's Quality of Life
- The Plan for Transportation

Executive Summary of Policies

Natural Resources and Agricultural Conservation - The goal is to make sure that development respects the natural features of the land, with particular attention towards creek valleys, wetlands, mature forests and steeply sloped lands. Particular attention is needed to continue to preserve creek valleys in a natural state. This will help to maintain "greenways" of natural vegetation along creeks and major drainageways to protect water quality and provide good aquatic habitats.

More natural approaches to stormwater management are critically important, particularly to encourage groundwater recharge, as opposed to structural engineering improvements and steep unsightly detention basins.

Another major goal is to conserve the scenic character and natural beauty of Westtown. This includes preserving a natural and scenic setting along existing through-roads in the Township. Great attention is needed to minimizing the removal of mature trees, which provide much of the scenic character of the Township. Street trees will be required, and landscape buffers will be required to be designed with a naturalistic appearance with a mix of species.

Where practical, the preservation of farmland will be encouraged. The major remaining farmlands are the Crebilly Farm west of Route 202, the Stokes property east of Shiloh Road, the Westtown School farmlands north and south of the school campus, and the Stratton Farm east of Route 352. On larger tracts, it may be practical to preserve a working farm as part of flexible open space-oriented development regulations.

A conservation easement can permanently preserve land in open space. The land typically remains privately owned, and can be sold to another owner, as long as the land is preserved. A landowner can

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

sell their right to develop their land, while continuing to own and maintain it. A conservation easement does not by itself allow any public access to the land. Consideration should be given to working with property-owners to have the Township or a conservancy voluntarily buy the right to develop part or all of the owner's land. Chester County has issued a new bond issue to offer funding for a variety of open space and recreation projects.

Land Uses and Growth - This section of the Plan includes policies for development and redevelopment of different areas of the Township, which provide the foundation for the Township's development regulations. The Plan works to provide for orderly patterns of development, with particular attention on protecting existing neighborhoods from incompatible development.

The following is a summary of the major land use policies:

Agricultural/Cluster - Office - This category is proposed to include the Crebilly Farm property along the west side of Route 202. The preference would be that the land remain as a scenic working farm. However, if that is not practical, then alternatives need to be provided.

- In most cases, approximately 70 percent of the total land area would be permanently preserved in open space. One option could include a golf course, which would help preserve the scenic character of the site in an attractive manner. Part of a golf course might also serve as a buffer between offices and homes.
- As an alternative to or in combination with clustered residential development, a percentage of the tract could be suitable for very light business uses, research facilities and complementary uses, in a campus-type environment. At least 70 percent of the tract would be preserved as open space, and large setbacks would be required from existing homes. Suitable uses would include: all types of offices, research and development facilities that do not create health or safety hazards, and a few very light manufacturing uses that do not generate significant truck traffic (such as microelectronics manufacture).
- As part of an open space development, a mix of housing types would be possible (such as singles, twins and townhouses), provided that the majority of the land is preserved in open space.
- Every effort will be made to avoid the development of this area and the Agricultural Cluster areas in large lot single family detached houses that would destroy the character of the land.

Agricultural Cluster - This category is intended to apply to the Marshall Jones property west of Shiloh Road, open land west of S. New St., the entire Westtown School property and the Stratton Farm in the eastern part of the Township.

- In these areas, the emphasis will be upon allowing schools and residential development in a manner that preserves substantial amounts of open space and protects scenic features. At least 50 to 70 percent of the total land area should be permanently preserved in open space.
- Officials of the Westtown School have described plans to Township officials to emphasize that

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

the northern and southern portions of their property be carefully managed and preserved for at least the next 100 years.

Low Density Residential - The main area of undeveloped land proposed to be within this land use category is east of Shiloh Road. The emphasis will be upon clustering of homes on the most suitable portions of the site, with at least 25 percent of the land area permanently preserved as open space.

Medium Density Residential - The main areas of undeveloped lands within this category are west of Route 202 north of Pleasant Grove Road. These areas are primarily intended to provide for housing at two to four homes per acre. Provisions should be added to emphasize the preservation of substantial contiguous areas of open space as part of any new development, in return for greater flexibility in layout and housing types.

Open Space in New Development - A major goal is to direct new development to occur in a manner that permanently preserves large areas of open space and maintains an attractive character along main roads. Attractive incentives are needed so that any development of the large open tracts of land in the Township would be developed in a cluster form with substantial areas of preserved open space (such as 50 to 70 percent), as opposed to standard "cookie-cutter" type lots.

The intent is to design development in a manner that conserves the important natural, scenic and historic features of a site. This results in homes being placed on portions of the tract that are most environmentally suitable for development - as opposed to being evenly spread across the land. Through this type of open space-oriented development, the following are possible:

- Large contiguous areas can remain in woods and natural creek valleys.
- Scenic features can be preserved. Conservation subdivisions can place homes on less visible portions of a tract, while maintaining scenic views.
- Recreational opportunities can be increased.
- Developers can achieve lower costs for grading, lengths of roads, lengths of utilities and other improvements.
- Municipalities can save on maintenance costs. Shorter lengths of roads, utilities and other improvements mean there is less to maintain.
- Developers can often achieve higher sales prices. Developers can often receive a premium price for lots that are adjacent to or overlook preserved open space.
- Reliable central water and sewage services can be efficiently extended because of the proximity of homes to each other.

Strong incentives and disincentives are needed to encourage open space preservation in new development. A community needs to trade-off a modestly increased number of dwelling units in return for substantial open space preservation. The process for approval of a Conservation Subdivision will not be any more burdensome or time-consuming than the process for a Conventional Subdivision.

Proper standards are needed to make sure that the preserved open space is well-located and improved so that it serves important public functions. In many cases, mature woods, steep slopes and creek valleys will simply be preserved in their natural state. In other cases, the open spaces may be intended

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

for active recreation. In still other cases, trees should be planted in the open spaces and trails should be installed.

The priority of this Plan is to have very substantial amounts of permanently preserved open spaces that create a true feeling of open space and are highly visible. The goal is to have open space that truly serves a public purpose, as opposed to areas that are simply “leftover” after a developer’s preferred pattern of roads and lots are laid out. Narrow strips of open space will be avoided, unless they would preserve a scenic tree line or provide an important trail link. Open Space will be interconnected with common open space areas on abutting parcels where possible, including provisions for public trails to link trail systems within the Township.

Parks and Recreation - The goal is to provide for a balanced system of active and passive public recreation areas and facilities, in a manner that is coordinated with public schools, a regional trail system and open space preservation.

In a Township-wide survey, residents reported that they felt the following facilities were most needed: 1) bicycle/jogging trails, 2) wooded natural areas with nature trails, 3) children’s playgrounds, and 4) a swimming pool. This Plan establishes two major priorities for the next few years in regards to parks and recreation:

- Improving Oakbourne Park as the central community-wide park for the Township, with an emphasis on special events and recreation programs.
- Completing the trail system across the Township, with an initial emphasis on loops through Oakbourne Park, through the Cope Tract on the east side of Concord Road, through the Pleasant Grove development, to the Westtown-Thornbury Elementary School and along the west branch of the Chester Creek. Then, the trail system would emphasize connections through a new development to Shiloh Road and then to Westtown School. This trail system would help to bring together the eastern and western parts of Westtown Township.

New playground equipment is needed at Oakbourne Park, Tyson Park north of Oakbourne Road, Larchbourne Park east of Route 202, and possibly within the Pleasant Grove development.

The area south of the Smith Mansion in Oakbourne Park should be improved as an amphitheater for modest-sized concerts, children’s activities and other special events. As attendance at these events increase, it may be desirable to consider developing a larger amphitheater using the Cope Tract on the east side of Concord Road. The slope of the Cope Tract is naturally suited as an amphitheater.

The Oakbourne Mansion and adjacent grounds will be emphasized as a center for additional special events, classes and activities. The building should be made available during the maximum number of days of the year possible for non-profit recreation programs and organizational meetings of recreational organizations. Recreation groups should be encouraged to complete minor improvements to the park in return for free use of the facilities. Additional restrooms and overflow parking areas are needed to support special events.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Sewage and Water Services - In 2001, the Township adopted a new Sewage Facilities Plan, which proposes extensions of public sewage service to many areas of the Township that are not served. There also are on-going projects to extend central water service to all areas of the Township where it is cost-effective. Central water service is important to provide reliable drinking water supplies and to provide water for firefighting.

Other Community Facilities and Services - The Township moved into a new Township Administrative Building in 2001. This will free the previous Township Building for use by the police. The Township needs to continue to provide high-quality, cost-effective community services and facilities, with an emphasis on cooperation across municipal borders.

Transportation - The entire region has experienced dramatic increases in traffic. The most pronounced increases have been along Routes 202 and 926, but traffic has also increased on many other through-roads. The transportation system needs to be carefully coordinated with existing and planned development, with an emphasis on careful management of traffic access onto main roads.

The Township will continue to aggressively seek to obtain PennDOT funding of needed improvements. When a municipality funds the advance engineering of a project, it is much more likely to receive State funding in a timely manner.

A major study is underway to determine how to widen Route 202 to six lanes through Westtown. This work will involve major changes to the S. High Street and Route 926 intersections with Route 202. A new grade-separated interchange at Matlack Street and Route 202 may also be needed. The intent is also to close off some of the streets and driveways that now enter Route 202 in Westtown. Great care is needed to integrate this widening with the character of Westtown. Any widening of Route 202 should be accompanied by heavily landscaped earth berms wherever space allows.

In any case, if lands west of Route 202 are developed, a new road should be required to be built from the Stetson School jughandle to Route 926, running along the west side of Route 202.

A new bridge should be built across Route 202 at Pleasant Grove Road. This bridge will help to prevent the isolation of the east and west parts of the Township from each other once Route 202 is widened with a solid median.

Improved shoulders are needed along Route 926 for safety reasons. The Shiloh Road /Route 926 intersection is being realigned closer to the Westtown-Thornton Road intersection. Shady Grove Way and Cheney Road should also be aligned with each other along Route 926. In each case, traffic signals would be proposed.

Work is needed with Thornbury Township and adjacent property owners to improve the congested Routes 926/352 intersection. The curves along Route 926 east of Route 352 should be reduced.

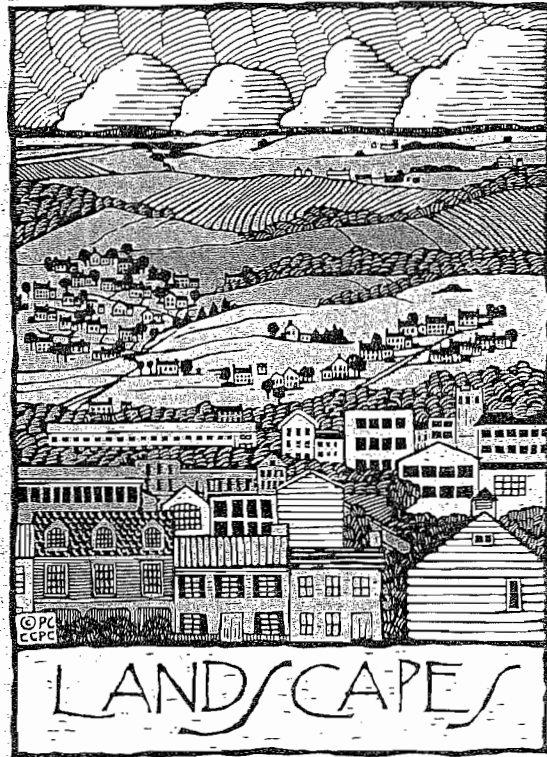
The Plan also encourages pedestrian and bicycle travel, and supports regional efforts to increase use of public transit and carpooling.

The County's Landscapes Plan

The Westtown Township Growth Management Plan is intended to help carry out Chester County's "Landscapes" Comprehensive Plan. Adopted in 1996, the County Plan's emphasis is upon properly managing development to avoid sprawl. The goal is to direct development to appropriate locations at a moderate density, in order to reduce the total amount of land that is consumed by development. By properly directing development, important natural areas, forests and farmlands can be preserved, the character of much of the County can be preserved, and costs for public services and infrastructure can be minimized.

There are several overall goals:

- Preserve and enhance the diversified mix of urban, suburban, rural and natural land uses through municipal cooperation and by concentrating development.
- Sustain and enhance natural, scenic and historic resources for the benefit of current and future generations while accommodating planned growth.
- Achieve and maintain a healthy business climate to ensure continued sound economic growth, and to preserve the quality of life that has made Chester County an attractive place to live and work.
- Provide an inter-modal transportation system which optimizes mobility, strengthens the economy, protects the environment, and supports the Vision for Chester County.
- Provide accessible community facilities and services which meet residents' needs through the cooperation of the public and private sectors.
- Provide utility facilities and services to meet all needs in the county, protect the environment and public health, and support development consistent with the future landscapes pattern.
- Provide diverse, affordable housing to meet the needs of all households, located in a manner consistent with land use goals.
- Provide for the human service needs and public health needs of all county residents.
- Achieve a high level of intergovernmental coordination and public-private cooperation as a model of government efficiency.



Managing Change in Chester County 1996 - 2020

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

The Plan encourages the majority of the County's new "Suburban" development to occur along the following major corridors: Routes 202, 30, 100 (south of Route 401) and 3, in addition to areas around Pottstown and Phoenixville. Redevelopment (where appropriate) and infill development is emphasized within older "Urban" centers, such as West Chester. Major creek valleys and other important natural corridors are proposed to be preserved as "Natural Areas." The character of historic "Villages" is intended to be preserved. Most other areas of the County are designed as "Rural" areas. In these areas, limited development would be allowed, which would be directed to sites that are not prime agricultural soils or environmentally sensitive areas.

All of Westtown is designated by the Landscapes Plan as "Suburban" landscape areas, except the creek valleys are shown as "Natural" areas. Within Suburban areas, the County Plan recommends:

- encouraging infill development to make best use of infrastructure, while protecting important natural features,
- improving the road network to be able to accommodate additional development,
- allowing design flexibility in ordinances to allow a mixture of business and residential uses and variations in density to reflect site conditions,
- promoting bicycle and pedestrian access, particularly between neighborhoods, businesses, and public facilities, preferably using open space corridors,
- locating intense new development near rail stations and public bus lines, and designing new development to encourage use of public transit,
- directing most business development to urban centers or well-planned developments at selected locations with good access to highways and public transit.

Throughout the County, the Landscapes Plan encourages:

- providing a safe long-term supply of water, including through conservation efforts, and by protecting the quantity and quality of groundwater,
- preserving stream habitats, and enhancing vegetative buffers around waterways,
- encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings,
- carefully control access onto major roads to avoid congestion and safety problems,
- encourage transportation demand management strategies to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles, including park and ride lots, public transit and carpooling,
- establish a Countywide greenway system of protected natural resources,
- encourage clustering in housing developments to retain the character of the land,
- promote regional police, fire and emergency services.

The Chester County Government is providing assistance in funding these initiatives, including the Vision Partnership Program for municipal plans and development ordinance updates, an open space grant program, and a historic preservation grant program. The County Planning Commission has also developed model recommendations, provided extensive technical assistance for municipalities, and offers educational workshops to the public.

Consistency With County Landscapes Plan

This Plan is highly consistent with the County Landscapes Plan. The first step in the Township's planning program was the preparation by the County Planning Commission of a "Consistency Review" that analyzes how consistent Westtown Township's current Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances were compared to the County Landscapes Plan. That review did not find any significant inconsistencies. The changes from the current Township policies to this Growth Management Plan would further increase the consistency of the Township with the Landscapes Plan.

The densities of development allowed in Westtown are generally consistent with the "Suburban" Landscape pattern that is recommended for most of Westtown. Further extensions of public water and sewage services are proposed in Westtown to make the most efficient use of land. This Township Plan works towards further extending natural greenway preservation along major creeks. As recommended in the Landscapes Plan, this Township Plan recommends the preservation of substantial areas of open space in new development, as well as flexibility in site layouts.

Furthermore, this Township Plan includes a series of policies and proposed improvements to help meet the County Plan's goals of carefully managing traffic patterns and traffic access to avoid congestion and safety problems.

In addition, this Township Plan endorses continued regional cooperation in providing police, fire and other municipal services, as recommended by the County.



The Plan for Natural Resources and Agricultural Conservation

There is great variation in the ability of land to support different intensities of development. Some areas are well-suited for development. Other lands, such as moderately sloped areas, are only suitable for low-intensity development, and require special care in site design. Other lands, such as flood-prone areas, wetlands and very steep slopes, are not suitable for development. This section is intended to encourage the preservation of important natural features in a manner consistent with the County Landscapes Plan. As recommended in the Landscapes Plan, this Township Plan emphasizes preservation of the creek valleys, with buffers of natural vegetation.

The following major goals provide direction for this section:

- Make sure that development respects the natural features of the land, with particular attention towards creek valleys, wetlands, mature forests and steeply sloped lands.
- Conserve the scenic character and natural beauty of Westtown.
- Encourage the preservation of farmland, where practical.

GOAL: Make sure that development respects the natural features of the land, with particular attention towards creek valleys, wetlands, mature forests and steeply sloped lands.

Most of the land that remains undeveloped in Westtown includes important natural features. These features particularly include creek valleys and steep slopes. Therefore, great care is needed to make sure that development properly respects these natural features.

The Township's current environmental protection regulations are generally appropriate, and no dramatic changes are currently recommended. Careful attention is needed to the way that average density is calculated on lands with significant areas of steep slopes, flood-prone areas and wetlands.



The maps on the following pages show the locations of flood-prone areas, steep slopes, woodlands and other soil conditions. The Land Use and Housing Plan discusses ways to encourage the preservation of open spaces and to protect environmental features.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Work to continue to preserve creek valleys in a natural state.

The Township's existing floodplain regulations generally prohibit the construction of buildings within the "100 year floodplain." The 100 year floodplain is the area expected to be flooded during the worst storm in an average 100 year period. In other words, there is a one percent chance that land within the outer portions of the 100 year floodplain will be flooded each year. The "floodway" is the part of the floodplain that would contain the major portion of floodwaters. Great care is also needed regarding the placement of paving and parking areas near creeks. This will help to maintain "greenways" of natural vegetation along creeks and major drainageways to protect water quality and provide good aquatic habitats.

The Zoning Ordinance should require a substantial minimum setback for buildings, paving and storage from any creek. This will help to maintain natural vegetation along waterways.

An emphasis is needed on promoting the continuance and planting of vegetative buffers along waterways. At best, these buffers should include mature canopy trees and thick understory vegetation. While grass is preferable to paving, it does not offer the same benefits in promoting fish habitats and screening out pollutants.

Great care is needed whenever construction is proposed in areas with a shallow depth to the seasonal water table. These areas are shown on the Soils Map. These areas may be too wet for on-lot septic systems. Construction in these areas may result in flooded basements and poor foundation stability.

The planned extensions of public sewage service to areas with failing septic systems will be an important step to help preserve the water quality of creeks and the groundwater.

The Ridley Creek Conservation Plan was prepared in 1997 as part of Pennsylvania's Rivers Conservation Program. This program funds management plans for key waterways. Once the Plan is completed, it is then possible to apply for grants to carry out projects identified in the Plan. The Ridley Creek Watershed includes the eastern ten percent of Westtown Township. The Ridley Creek is particularly important because it is one of the sources of water for the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company, which serves Westtown. A similar plan is currently being completed for the Chester Creek watershed, which includes most of the center of Westtown. The major recommendations of the Ridley Creek Conservation Plan have been incorporated into this section.

Emphasize more naturalistic methods of managing stormwater




It is critically important to continue to carefully manage stormwater runoff to avoid increased flooding and to avoid sedimentation of creeks. The Township Engineer carefully reviews proposed developments to make sure that they do not increase downstream runoff as a result of development. The County Conservation District carefully reviews development plans to make sure that erosion will be controlled, which avoids the sedimentation of creeks. The County Conservation District also has an important role in working with farmers to find ways to reduce pollution from agricultural runoff.

IMPORTANT SOIL CONDITIONS

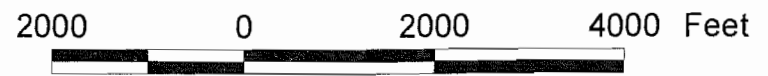
WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP

Chester County, Pennsylvania



-  High Water Table Soils
-  Soils With Shallow Depth to Bedrock
-  Prime Agricultural Soils

Source: This mapping is based upon generalized information from the Chester County Soils Survey, as prepared by the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service.



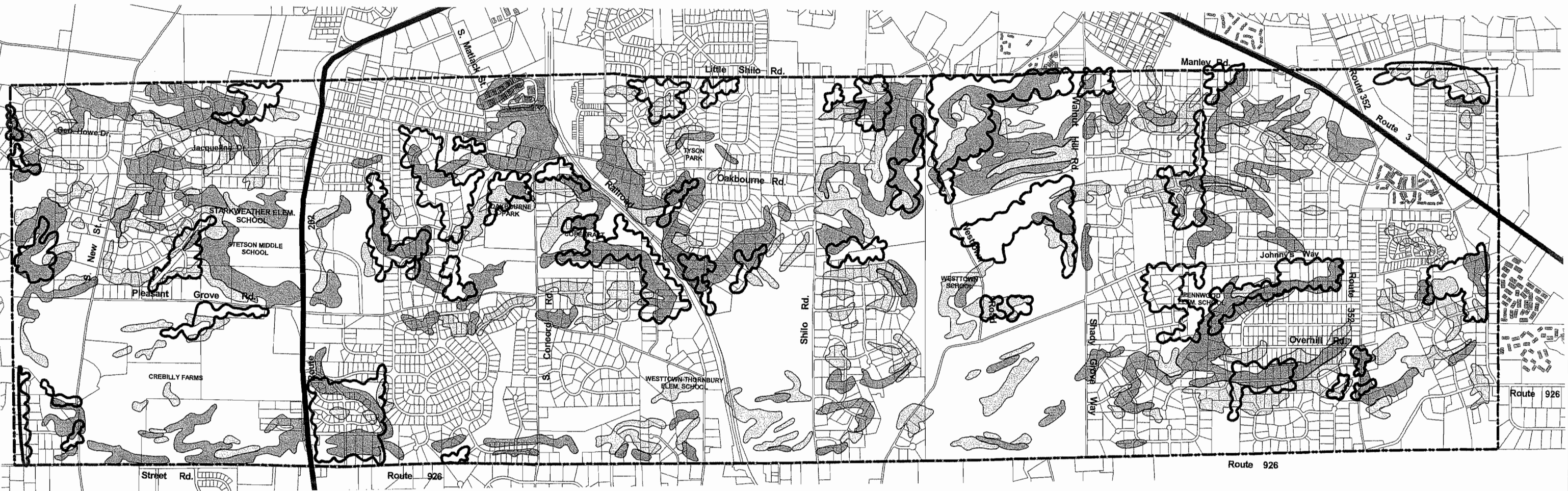
Community Planning and Recreation Consultants
 URBAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
 Bethlehem, Pennsylvania




Base information provided by Chester County Land Records Office, 1998.

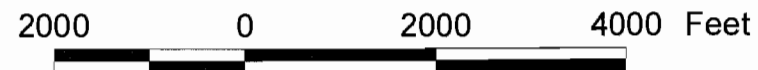
STEEP SLOPES AND WOODLANDS

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP

Chester County, Pennsylvania



-  10%-15% SLOPES
-  15%+ SLOPES
-  WOODLANDS



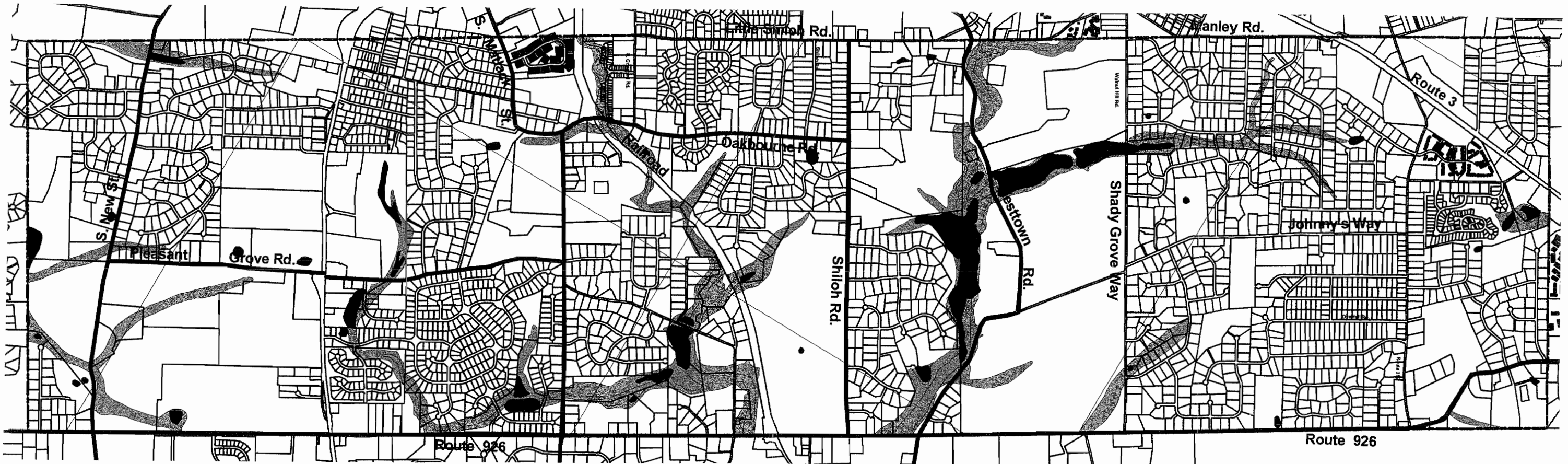
Community Planning and Recreation Consultants
URBAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Base information provided by Chester County Land
Records Office, 1998.

Floodplains & Wetlands

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP

Chester County, Pennsylvania



Legend

 100 Year Floodplains	 Known Wetlands
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NOTES:

100 Year Floodplains are expected to have a 1% chance of flooding per year.
 Floodplains are based upon official mapping of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
 Wetlands are based upon a nationwide inventory by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.
 Digital data compiled by Tatman & Lee, Inc.



Community Planning and Recreation Consultants
 URBAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
 Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Base information provided by Chester County Land Records Office, 1998.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

The County, Westtown and other affected municipalities should jointly complete and carry out Stormwater Management Plans for each watershed. A Stormwater Plan is currently underway for the Chester Creek watershed, which includes most of Westtown. These stormwater plans would take into account the timing of runoff in different parts of a watershed. As a result, developments in lower parts of a watershed might be allowed to release all of their runoff, so that capacity is available in creeks for runoff from higher elevations. In other areas of the watershed, particularly in higher elevations, the Plan may determine that greater amounts of runoff should be detained than is normally required.

Historically, in regards to stormwater, most attention has been directed to controlling the *amounts* of runoff during the worst storms. Little attention has been focused on controlling the water *quality* from runoff. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is now requiring that municipalities in southeastern Pennsylvania carefully manage the water quality of runoff. This involves using new methods in the engineering of development to minimize the amount of pollutants that enter runoff. For example, stormwater runoff can mix with oils as the water flows over parking lots. Measures can be used to separate these pollutants from runoff before they enter a creek. A major reference book has been published on the topic entitled "Best Management Practices for Developing Areas in Pennsylvania."

In place of road salt, the PennDOT and the Township should also use alternative de-icing materials that would have less negative impacts upon water quality.

Over the years, little attention has also been focused on less severe storms, which can still cause damage to downstream properties. Consideration will be given to regulating the increase in runoff from two or five year storms.

More natural approaches to stormwater management will be promoted, including the following:

- New wetlands should be considered to control runoff and filter out pollutants.
- Careful consideration will be given to encouraging infiltration into the ground. However, care is needed because some infiltration methods may need careful regular maintenance or they will not function over time. Also, the success of infiltration depends upon soil conditions.
- Natural drainage channels should remain in place.
- Regrading should be minimized, especially if it will concentrate stormwater flows.
- Thick vegetation should be preserved and/or planted to slow and absorb runoff.
- Wherever practical, vegetative swales should be used along streets instead of curbing. These swales can reduce the speeds of runoff and allow some groundwater recharge.
- The total amount of paving will be minimized, including avoiding excessively wide streets and excessive parking requirements, and controlling the total percentage of a lot covered by buildings and paving.
- Flexibility should be offered in lot layouts to make it easier for site designers to incorporate these methods into projects, without reducing the amount of development that is allowed.

Continue to carefully limit development of steeply sloped lands

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

As seen on the Steep Slopes and Woodlands Map (page 26), a significant amount of land in Westtown includes steep slopes. Fortunately, large areas of steep slopes are already owned by the Township or are protected by existing floodplain regulations.

A 15 percent slope is a vertical increase of the ground level of 15 feet over a 100 feet length. It is important to limit development on steep slopes to minimize erosion and stormwater problems, to avoid steep roads and driveways that are hazardous in snow and ice, to avoid increased costs to build and maintain roads and utilities, and to preserve important natural and scenic resources.

The intensity of development needs to continue to be carefully limited on moderately sloped lands of 15 to 25 percent. Construction of buildings will be prohibited on very steeply sloped lands of over 25 percent. The policies in the Plan for Managing Land Uses and Growth are intended to provide reasonable flexibility in development layouts so that there is no need to intrude into steep slopes.

GOAL: Conserve the scenic character and natural beauty of Westtown.

The Land Use and Housing Plan section discusses ways to emphasize open space preservation in new development. In addition to preserving important natural features, the goal is to preserve a natural and scenic setting along existing through-roads in the Township.



Preserve the creek valleys.

The creek valleys through Westtown are important recreation, water quality, scenic, wildlife and environmental resources that must be preserved. In addition to the methods described above, the Township should also continue to seek to gain public ownership of additional lands along creeks. Other methods to preserve creek valleys include conservation easements (described later in this section) and maintaining natural vegetative buffers along creeks (described earlier in this section).

Minimize removal of mature trees.

The woods and tree lines of Westtown provide much of the scenic character of the Township. Westtown has an appropriate set of regulations to make sure that any removal of mature healthy trees is minimized. Equally important, Westtown's regulations require that measures be used to avoid

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

accidental damage to trees during construction.

Require the planting of street trees as part of new development.

Westtown already requires that substantial landscaping be planted as part of new development. However, the requirements do not specify that deciduous canopy trees need to be placed close to streets if they do not already exist. This type of canopy is important to maintain a rural character along streets. Some studies have shown that mature street trees can add 10 to 15 percent to the market value of a house. If a site is not entirely wooded, it may be appropriate to require a developer to plant a new tree for every mature tree that is removed.

Require landscaping buffers that have a naturalistic appearance.

The Township's ordinances require landscaped buffers between different types of development. Care is needed to make sure that these buffers have a naturalistic appearance with a mix of native species. Monotonous straight rows of one species must be avoided.

GOAL: Encourage the preservation of farmland, where practical.

Unfortunately, most farmland in Westtown Township has been developed, or is committed towards development. Four major areas of agricultural uses exist: the Crebilly Farm west of Route 202, the Stokes property east of Shiloh Road, the Westtown School farmlands north and south of the school campus, and the Stratton Farm east of Route 352. In addition, two



Township-owned tracts are leased for farming: the Cope Tract on the east side of S. Concord Road and a tract in the far southeast corner of the Township.

Fortunately, the owners of the remaining farmland in Westtown have a strong interest in wanting to keep their land open. However, there are serious financial pressures to sell to development, including real estate taxes. The number of homes close to the farms and the sizes of the tracts also create some practical limitations on the types of farming operations that make sense on these parcels. It is extremely

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

difficult for a farmer to make a living simply on crop farming and/or a few animals.

On the largest tracts, it may be practical to preserve a working farm as part of flexible open space-oriented development regulations. This is described in the Land Use and Housing Plan section. If a tract of open space would not be large enough for crop farming, it might still be preserved as a tree farm, a horse farm, or a pick-your-own orchard.

Allow farmers a range of supplemental sources of income.

Also to help preserve farmland, a variety of complementary activities will be permitted to provide supplemental income to farmers. This should include allowing on-site retail sales of agricultural products and related items, which allow a farmer to capture a much higher percentage of the retail value of their products.

Also, a range of low-intensity commercial uses should be considered on larger farm tracts, such as a bed and breakfast inns, nature day camps, horse-riding academies, boarding of horses, Halloween activities and other special events and group picnic facilities. Some of these activities may also be appropriate on agricultural tracts that are not large. These activities are important to help property owners continue to afford to maintain undeveloped lands. This is part of a nation-wide trend named “Farm-Based Tourism.” Reasonable standards, such as setbacks and limits on hours of operation, can be used to avoid nuisances to neighboring homes.

Work closely with major landowners in a cooperative partnership to prepare mutually beneficial plans for short-range and long-range uses of their land.

Westtown needs to work cooperatively with large landowners to determine the most appropriate future for their lands. Landowners should be encouraged to work closely with organizations such as the Brandywine Conservancy and the Natural Lands Trust to find ways to preserve the important features of their land in a manner that meets the landowner’s goals. These organizations can also provide valuable assistance in taking advantage of any potential advantages of land preservation, such as donation of scenic or conservation easements. A valuable resource is the County Planning Commission’s publication entitled “Taking Control of Your Land: A Land Stewardship Guidebook for Landowners.”

Seek to permanently preserve open land through the purchase of easements.

A conservation easement can permanently preserve land in open space. The land typically remains privately owned, and can be sold to another owner, as long as the land is preserved. A landowner can sell their right to develop their land, while continuing to own and maintain it. A conservation easement does not by itself allow any public access to the land.

An agricultural easement is a type of conservation easement that only allows the construction of agricultural buildings. As part of a Statewide program, Chester County purchases agricultural easements to permanently preserve agricultural land for agriculture. A limited amount of funding is available each year. Owners of farms can voluntarily apply, and then the characteristics of the farms are ranked against

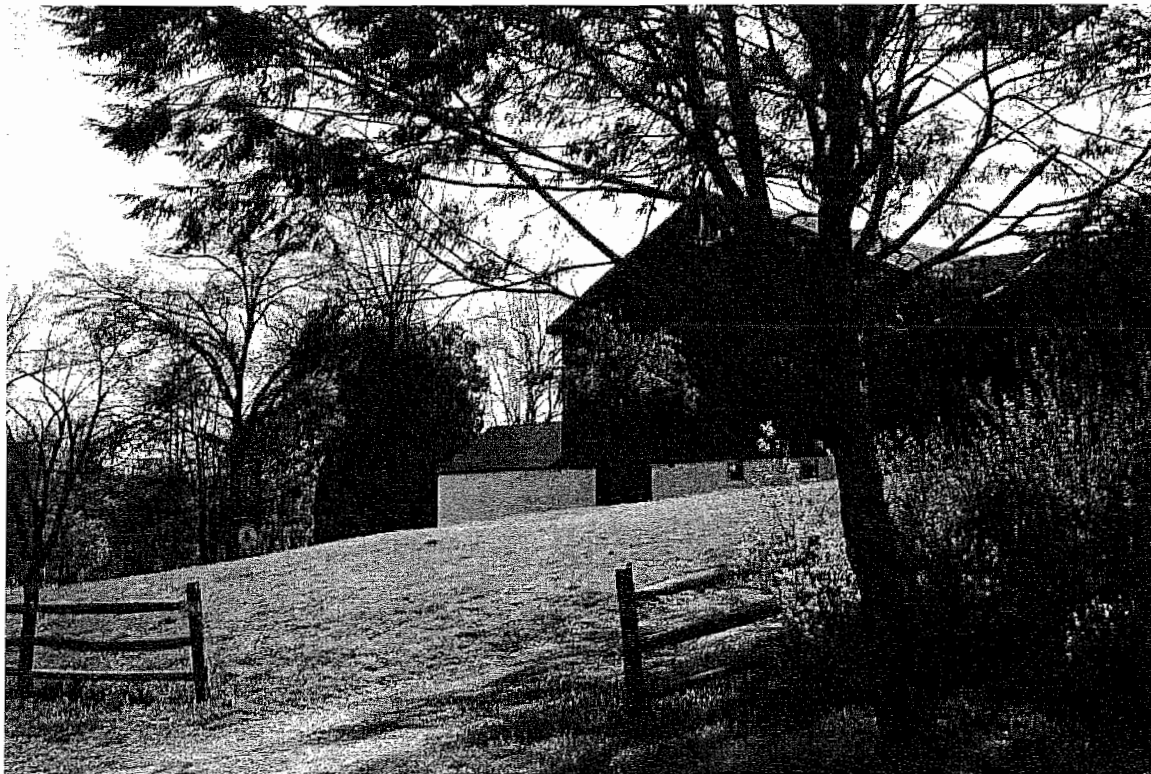
Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

each other to determine which farms should receive the highest priority for funding. Sufficient funding is typically not available to buy development rights in the Westtown area. Instead, most funding is used to preserve farmland in more rural areas. A downside of this State program is that the land must be permanently limited to agriculture, and cannot in the future be shifted to recreation uses.

Consideration should be given to working with property-owners to have them voluntarily sell the right to develop part or all of their land to the Township or a conservancy. Chester County has issued a new bond issue to offer funding for a variety of open space and recreation projects. Many townships in Southeastern Pennsylvania have used referenda to ask voters to approve a bond issue to preserve land. Other townships have used referenda under a State open space law to ask voters to approve a small increase in the earned income tax to fund open space purchases. The key to obtaining voter approval would be to make sure people understand the choice. For example, “we can preserve X acres of the Y property if you agree to a Z percent increase in your total real estate tax bill” (which would pay off a bond issue).

However, land prices are so high in Westtown that, to be affordable, a person selling an easement would likely need to offer a price that is below market-value. This type of offer is common when a property-owner has an emotional commitment to the land and wishes to continue to live on the property. In many cases, a property-owner can treat the difference between the market value of the easement and value that they are paid for the easement as a charitable deduction on their Federal income tax.

Another advantage of preserving land is that it may reduce the real estate tax bill of the property-owner to an affordable level. If a conservation easement is established on a property, the landowner should be able to receive a greatly reduced real estate assessment.



The Plan to Manage Land Uses and Growth

This section of the Plan includes policies for development and redevelopment of different areas of the Township. These policies provide the foundation for proposed revisions to the Township’s development regulations. This Plan was prepared in a manner that works to help carry out the County’s Landscapes Plan by encouraging new business development in appropriate areas with suitable traffic access. This Plan provides for densities of development that make the best use of developable land, thereby discouraging sprawl. New development will be provided with reasonable flexibility in site design to reflect varying site conditions, in a manner consistent with the County’s Landscapes Plan.

The following major goals provide direction for this section:

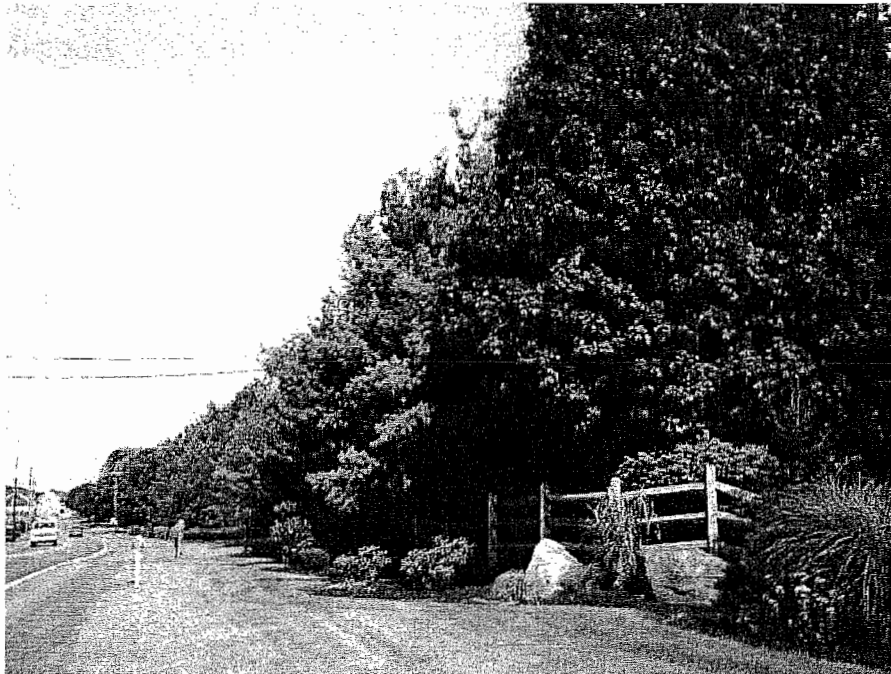
- Provide for orderly patterns of development, with particular attention on protecting existing neighborhoods from incompatible development.
- Direct new development to occur in a manner that permanently preserves large areas of open space and maintains an attractive character, particularly along main roads.
- Continue to avoid “strip” commercial development along major roads.
- Encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings.

This section serves as the “Land Use Plan” and the “Housing Plan” as required under State law.

GOAL: Provide for orderly patterns of development, with particular attention on protecting existing neighborhoods from incompatible development.

This Plan emphasizes the remaining open lands in Westtown, because the vast majority of the land area of the Township is either developed or committed for development.

On most smaller tracts of land, the emphasis will be placed upon providing for single family detached residential “infill” development that would be compatible with adjacent single family homes.



Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Also, the Township's zoning requirements need to be re-examined to determine how they will permit or not permit subdivision of relatively small existing lots. Part of this issue involves whether "flag lots" should be permitted. Flag lots have little frontage along a street, and instead are connected to a street by a relatively narrow stretch of land, including a long driveway. Flag lots should only be allowed under very exceptional circumstances where reasonable use of a property otherwise would not be possible. Standards are needed to ensure compatibility with nearby homes. Ironclad agreements are needed to address maintenance issues if any shared driveways will be used. The driveway to a flag lot should be paved and include sufficient width. A flag lot should not require any setback variances.

This section also focuses upon impacts of the proposed widening of Route 202 to six lanes.

Carry Out the Land Use Policies of this Plan

Every municipality in Pennsylvania has an obligation under the State Planning Code and court decisions to allow opportunities to develop the municipality's "fair share" of the region's needs for all types of housing. Westtown Township already includes several large developments of townhouses and apartments, which are appropriately located with access onto major roads. Opportunities for new development of attached housing will mainly be provided using: a) undeveloped lots along Route 3 and b) provisions for clustered developments on large tracts of land with substantial open space preservation.

The following describes the proposed land use categories, as shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map. In most cases, these categories are intended to become zoning districts.

Agricultural/Cluster - Office - This category is proposed to include the Crebilly Farm property along the west side of Route 202. The preference would be that the land remain as a scenic working farm. However, if that is not practical, then alternatives need to be provided. A blending of complementary uses is desired.

- The intent is to preserve approximately 70 percent of the total land area in permanently preserved open space. One option could include a golf course, which would help preserve the scenic character of the site in an attractive manner. The most important scenic assets are around the pond and the creeks along Street Road, which is also near lands intended to be preserved as part of the Brandywine Battlefield in Thornbury Township (Chester County). Any areas that were actually part of the Brandywine Battlefield should be preserved as passive open space. Part of a golf course might also serve as a buffer between offices and homes.
- A certain amount of land should be available for public active and passive recreation, considering that other public recreation facilities would not be available nearby. Also, a significant number of new homes would generate new demand for recreational facilities. New Street represents a barrier to pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Therefore, public recreation land might be best located on flatter areas east of New Street.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

- As an alternative to or in combination with clustered residential development, a percentage of the tract could be suitable for very light business uses, research facilities and complementary uses, in a campus-type environment. At least 70 percent of the tract would be preserved as open space, and large setbacks will be required from existing homes. Suitable uses would include: all types of offices, research and development facilities that do not create health or safety hazards, and a few very light manufacturing uses that do not generate significant truck traffic (such as microelectronics manufacture).
 - Most industrial uses (such as warehousing and flex space buildings) and commercial uses would not be suitable for this site because of the total amount of tractor-trailer truck and other traffic that would be generated and the proximity to existing and proposed homes.
 - Retail sales will be carefully limited to a small facility within an office building that would serve daily needs of the building's employees, which will help reduce the need for automobile trips for everyday needs.
- As part of an open space development, a mix of housing types will be possible (such as singles, twins and townhouses), provided that the majority of the land is preserved in open space.
- The Township should work in advance to make it practical for a developer to bring public water and sewage service to this area of the Township. Otherwise, a developer may be forced to consider "cookie-cutter" single family detached lots that would destroy the character of the land and avoid the preservation of open space.
- Every effort will be made to avoid the development of this area and the Agricultural Cluster areas in large lot single family detached houses that would destroy the character of the land.

Agricultural Cluster - This category is intended to apply to the Marshall Jones property west of Shiloh Road, open land west of S. New St., the entire Westtown School property and the Stratton Farm in the eastern part of the Township.

- In these areas, the emphasis will be placed upon allowing schools and residential development in a manner that preserves substantial amounts of open space and protects scenic features. At least 50 to 70 percent of the total land area would be permanently preserved in open space.
- Officials of the Westtown School have described plans to Township officials to emphasize that the northern and southern portions of their property be carefully managed and preserved for at least the next 100 years.
- If these lands would be developed, housing for older persons would be especially suited to these areas. This is because it involves less traffic, less water use, less school use and no public school expenses compared to other types of housing.
- To help make farming more economical, a set of recommendations are included under the Agricultural Preservation goal (see page 30).

Low Density Residential - The main area of undeveloped land proposed to be within this land use category is east of Shiloh Road. The emphasis will be upon clustering of homes on the most suitable portions of the site. At least 25 percent of the land area would be permanently preserved as open space.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Medium Density Residential - The main areas of undeveloped lands within this category are: a) west of Route 202 north of Jacqueline Drive, and b) west of Route 202 north of Pleasant Grove Road. These areas are primarily intended to provide for housing at two to four homes per acre. Provisions should be added to emphasize the preservation of substantial contiguous areas of open space as part of any new development, in return for greater flexibility in layout and housing types. Additional setbacks and substantial landscaped buffers will be required wherever there is a major change in net density from adjoining existing homes.

Medium High Density Residential - These areas are intended to provide for a range of different housing types at a density of approximately six to ten homes per acre. In certain situations, offices may also be appropriate along major roads.

Commercial - These areas along portions of Routes 202 and 3 should offer a range of commercial goods and services, in addition to residential uses at up to ten homes per acre.

Mixed Use - These areas north of Oakbourne Road should provide for a range of different residential and business uses, with a careful set of standards to maintain compatibility between them.

Planned Business/Residential - These areas along Route 202 should provide for a mix of residential uses (including assisted living centers) and light business uses (such as offices and day care centers). Great attention needs to be focused upon providing adequate traffic access onto major roads, with full coordination of access with neighboring lots.

Private/Semi-Public Open Space - These areas on the Comprehensive Plan Map highlight approximate locations where open space is encouraged to be preserved in private or semi-public ownership (such as a homeowner association). These areas should be viewed as conceptual areas, and not exact locations. Many of these areas include important natural features that are worthy of preservation. Some of these locations are intended to be preserved through zoning incentives if the land is proposed for development.

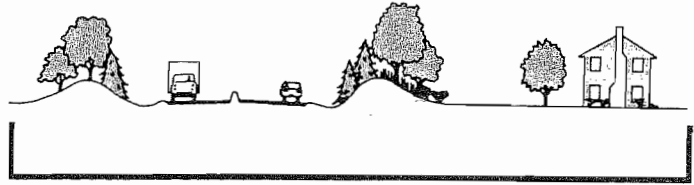
Areas Along Route 202

Route 202 is proposed to be widened to six lanes. The widening will probably be directed to sides of the highway that have fewer historic buildings. The tentative plans of PennDOT are to close many intersections along Route 202, including closing the median at Pleasant Grove Road. As shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map, the Township's goal is to eventually have collector roads running parallel to Route 202 where feasible.

As of mid-2001, along the east side of Route 202 south of Oakbourne Road, the current zoning ordinance allows offices along lots of existing homes that front onto the east side of Route 202 south of Oakbourne Road. The current zoning requires the consolidation of existing lots and careful design of traffic access before any offices can be approved. The long-term goal is to have an interlinked set of driveways and roads that allow a connection to the jughandles and signal at Stetson School. This would allow most existing driveways and streets onto Route 202 to be closed. Great care is needed to make sure that any development of this area protects homes on interior lots to the east.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

However, this zoning may no longer be practical considering the plans to widen Route 202 to six lanes. Additional right-of-way will need to be acquired for the widening that will probably result in the demolition of the homes fronting Route 202 in this area. Therefore, the most desirable use of these lots may be as a buffer area between the widened Route 202 and the homes to the east. The intent is to have thickly landscaped earth berms on these lots that would serve as very attractive sound barriers.



If sound barriers are needed, the minimum height would be reduced if they are placed at the top of a berm. This would help to minimize the visual prominence of sound barriers, and allow a more natural appearance. In some cases, noise barriers can be designed to eventually be covered by vines or other vegetation.

Emphasize Compatibility with Adjacent Municipalities

For three decades, Westtown Township has actively worked through the West Chester Regional Planning Commission (WCRPC) to promote cooperation and coordination across municipal borders. This Commission includes representatives of Westtown, West Chester, East Bradford, East Goshen, Pocopson, West Goshen and Thornbury (Chester County), with staff assistance from the Chester County Planning Commission.

This Comprehensive Plan is compatible with the community planning and zoning regulations of adjacent municipalities. Most of the land immediately adjacent to Westtown Township's borders is already developed or approved for development. In almost all cases, the zoning of adjacent municipalities allows residential development that is similar to residential development allowed in nearby portions of Westtown.

In 1993, the West Chester Regional Planning Commission completed the West Chester Regional Zoning Study. The Study analyzed existing zoning regulations of the municipalities. It found little reason for concern along Westtown's borders. For the most part, the zoning in adjacent municipalities has not changed substantially since 1993. However, Thornbury Township, Delaware County has added commercial zoning along the southwest side of the Routes 926/352 intersection. This may cause conflicts with nearby residential development in Westtown, and further complicate traffic problems at the Routes 926/352 intersection and along Route 926.

Over the long-term, there may be some concerns about compatibility with development of West Chester University's South Campus and adjacent residential development in Westtown - particularly if additional student housing would be developed. Such development may also greatly increase traffic on South New Street.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

GOAL: Direct new development to occur in a manner that permanently preserves large areas of open space and maintains an attractive character along main roads.

Throughout the nation, there is increased emphasis in permanently preserving important open spaces as part of new development. This concept has been promoted by Mr. Randall Arendt in several books and by the Natural Lands Trust.

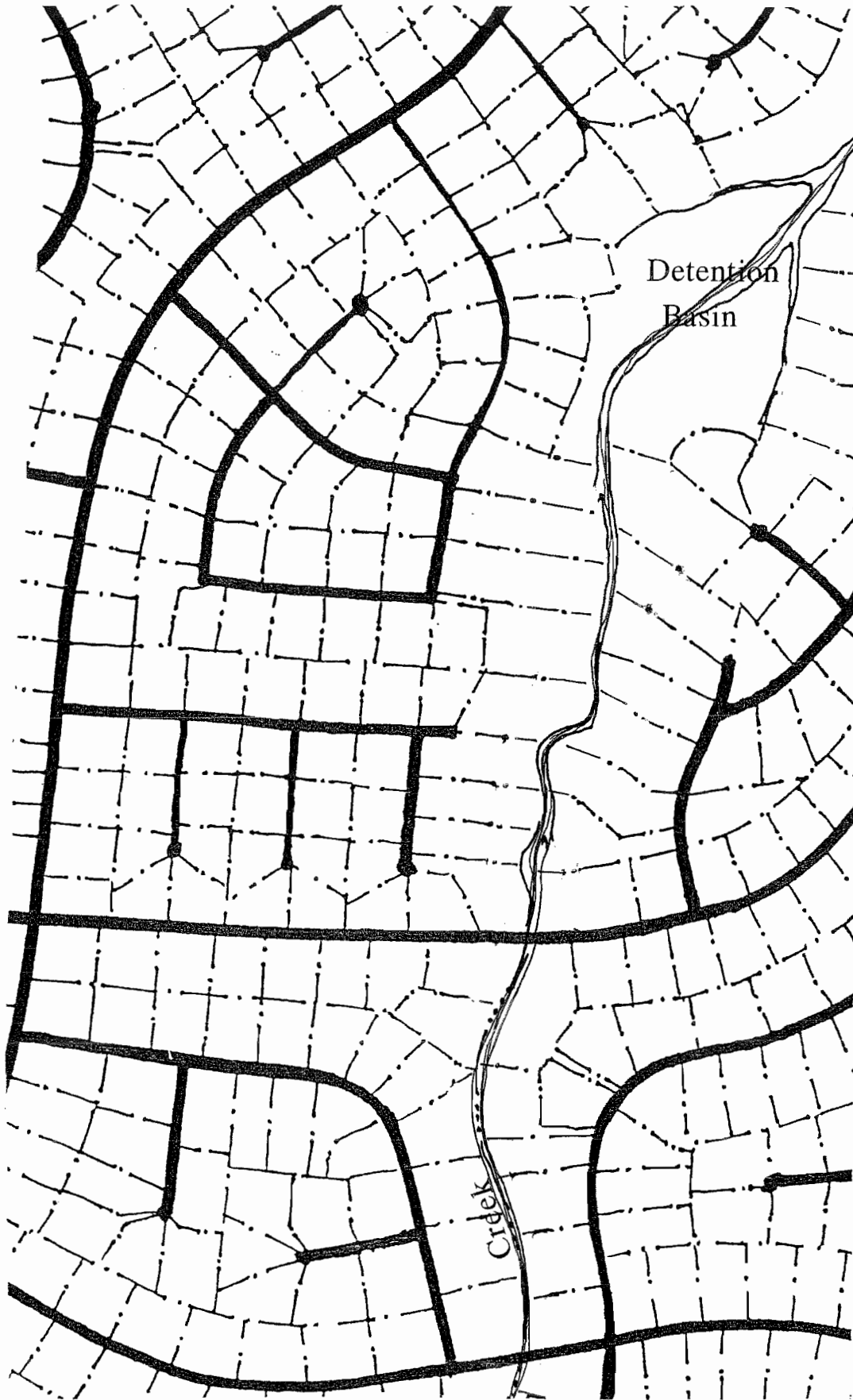
Attractive incentives are needed so that any development of the large open tracts of land in the Township would be developed in a cluster form with substantial areas of preserved open space (such as 50 to 70 percent), as opposed to standard "cookie-cutter" type lots.

The intent is to design development in a manner that conserves the important natural, scenic and historic features of a site. Large percentages of a tract are permanently preserved in open space. Mr. Arendt refers to this concept as "Conservation Subdivisions" or "Open Space Design Subdivisions." They also have been known as "Clustering." In comparison, "Conventional Subdivisions" typically involve very little or no open space preservation. Conventional Subdivisions are also known as "Cookie Cutter Subdivisions" because every lot is typically the same size and shape, regardless of the features of the land. These two concepts are illustrated on the sketches on the following pages.

Promote the Advantages of Conservation/ Open Space Developments

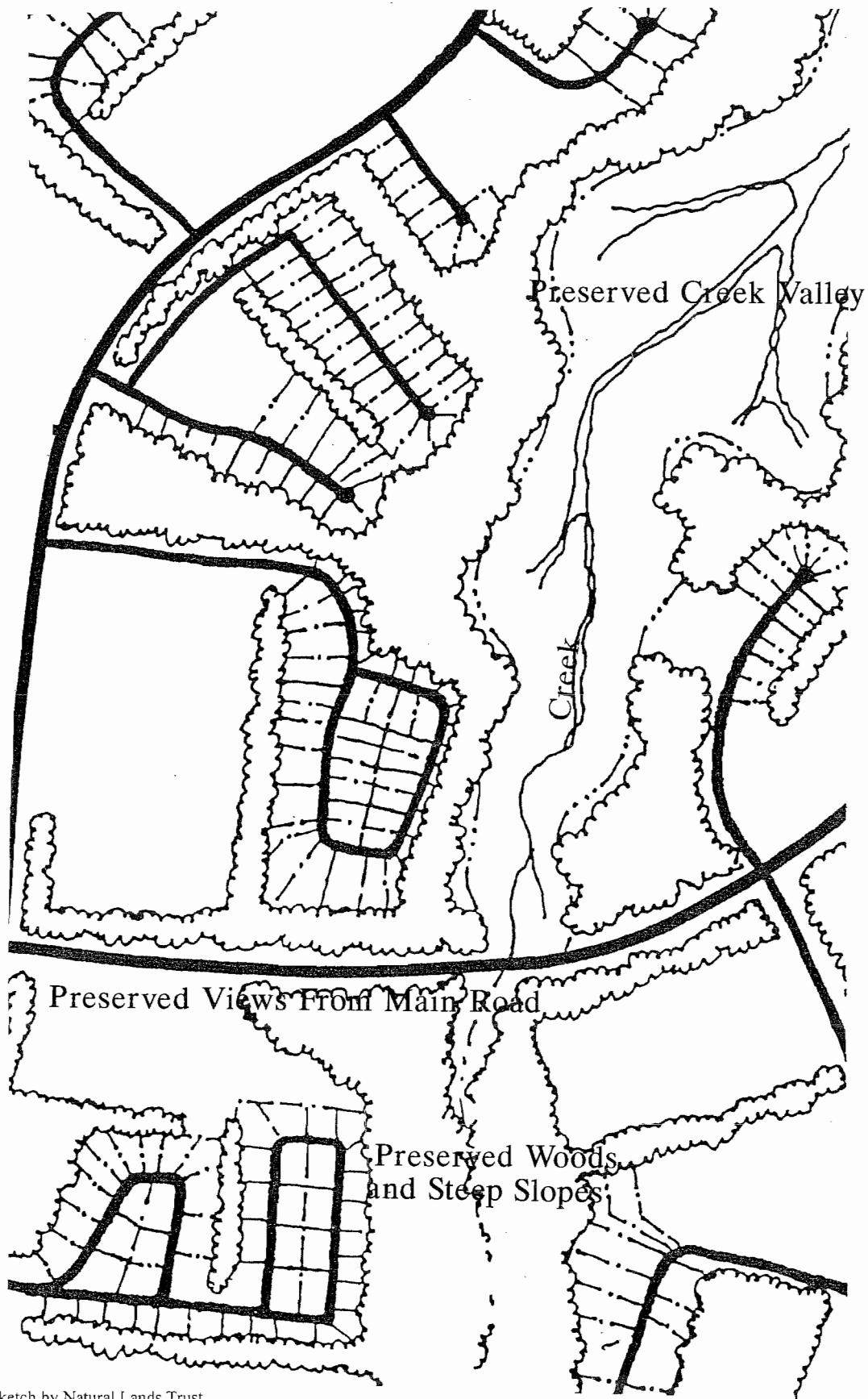
Based upon the writings of Mr. Randall Arendt, the following are some of the major advantages of Conservation/Open Space Subdivisions:

- *Important natural features can be preserved.* Conservation subdivisions should include standards that direct buildings away from steep slopes, wetlands, waterways and other important natural features. As a result, homes are placed on portions of the tract that are most environmentally suitable for development - as opposed to being evenly spread across the land. Large contiguous areas can remain in woods and other natural vegetation - which are important as wildlife corridors. Thick natural vegetation can be preserved along creeks - which is essential to filter out eroded soil and other pollutants from runoff before it enters the creek. This vegetation along creeks is also important to maintain high quality fishing habitats.
 - In comparison, if an entire tract is divided into lots, it is likely to mostly be in mowed grass - which is a "mono-culture" that does not have the same environmental benefits.
 - With open space preservation, stormwater runoff can be managed in a more natural manner that encourages recharge into the groundwater.
- *Scenic features can be preserved.* Conservation subdivisions can place homes on less visible portions of a tract, while maintaining scenic views. For example, many conservation subdivisions setback homes from main through-roads and limit placement of homes on major ridgelines. As a result, the main angle of vision along major roads involves green space.
 - Mature woods can be preserved in locations that hide views of development. The preservation of open space also provides visual relief from seeing continuous development.



Based Upon Sketch by Natural Lands Trust

Conventional Subdivision
With 2 Acre Minimum Lots, but Very Little Preservation of Open Space



Based Upon Sketch by Natural Lands Trust

Conservation Subdivision
With Smaller Lots but Substantial Permanent Preservation of Open Spaces

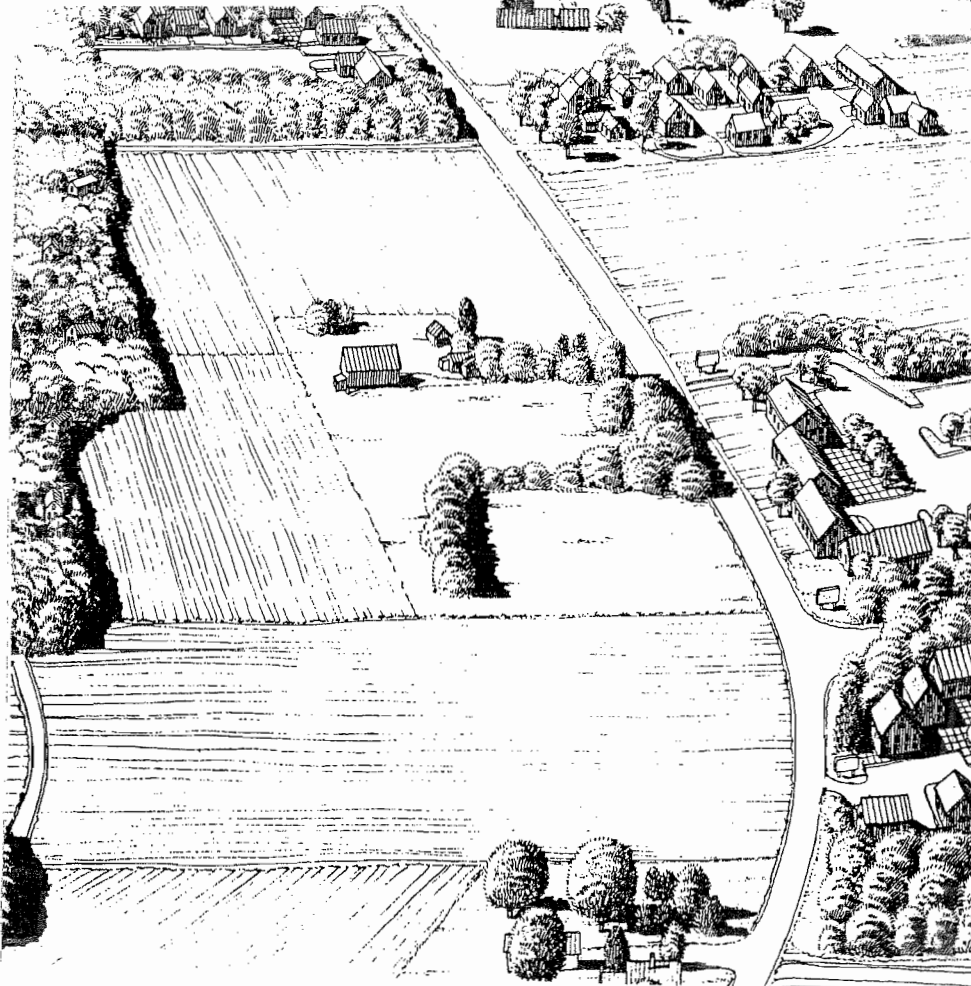
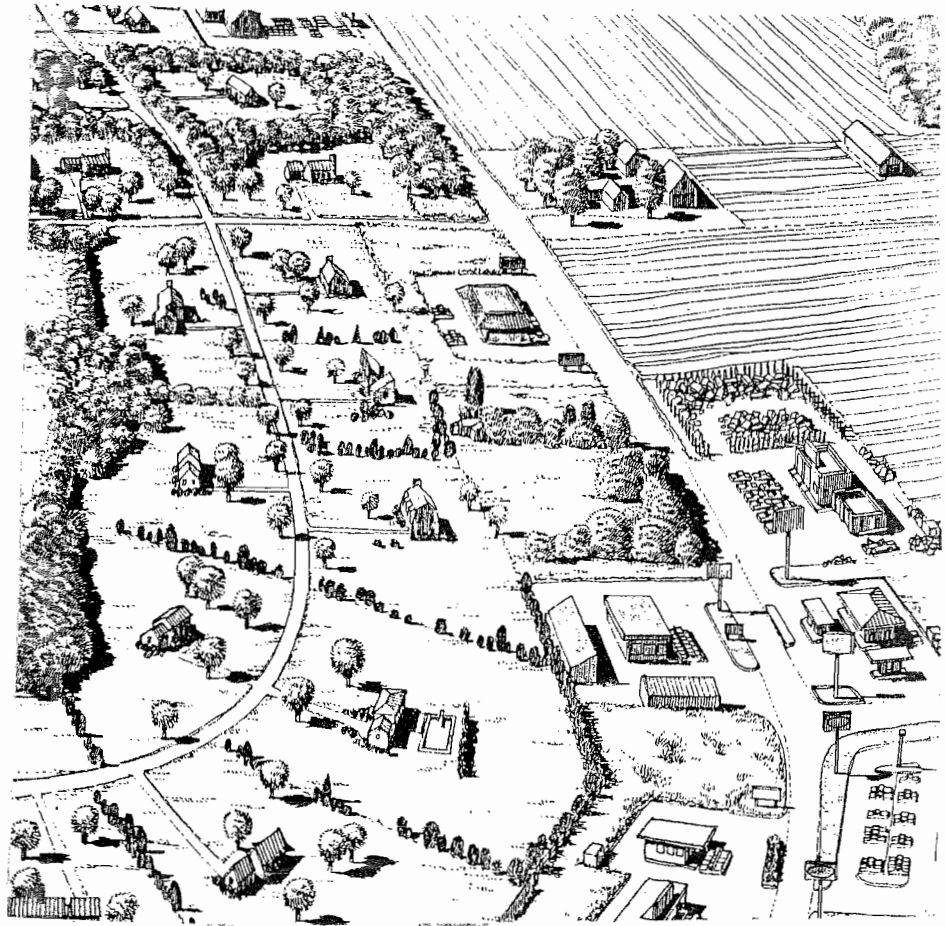
Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

- Stormwater runoff can also be managed in a more attractive manner - as opposed to within deep man-made channels and detention basins.
- *Recreational opportunities can be increased.* Conservation subdivisions typically include attractive areas for walking, jogging, cross-country skiing and nature study. In some cases, active recreation facilities can be included. These open spaces can also increase interaction among neighbors.
- *Developers can achieve lower costs* for grading, lengths of roads, lengths of utilities and other improvements.
 - Developers may also be able to save time and money by avoiding wetland alterations and waterway crossings.
 - Conservation Subdivisions can provide the flexibility in layout to move homes off of steep slopes, which are more expensive to build upon. Avoiding steep slopes can also reduce the need for blasting.
 - By allowing flexibility in placement of buildings, it is easier to find suitable sites for septic systems.
- *Municipalities can save on maintenance costs.* Shorter lengths of roads, utilities and other improvements mean there is less to maintain. It is expensive to maintain and plow snow from steeply sloped roads. Conservation Subdivisions can result in roads being placed at more modest slopes.
- *Developers can often achieve higher sales prices.* More and more developments are stressing in their advertising that homes are adjacent to preserved open spaces. Developers can often receive a premium price for lots that are adjacent to or overlook preserved open space. The presence of trails and other open space amenities can also spur sales.
- Studies have also shown that homes near preserved open space are likely to increase in value faster than other homes.



Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

These sketches compare a typical conventional development with a design that is possible with more creative techniques. The example on the right allows homes to be “hidden in the woods” and in clusters that resemble a rural village, while allowing most of the farmland to be preserved.



Source of Sketches - Dealing With Change in the Connecticut River Valley: A Design Manual for Conservation and Development, 1988.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

- *Reliable central water and sewage services* can be extended. It is usually uneconomical to provide central water and sewage services with lot sizes of 2 acres or larger. However, if homes are clustered on a tract, then it is often possible and/or necessary to provide central water and sewage services. Public water and sewage services typically are more reliable than individual wells and septic systems.
 - Central sewage service avoids the threat of groundwater contamination from failing malfunctioning septic systems. Central water service avoids the risks of well water contamination from various sources.

The following major policies will be emphasized to encourage Conservation/Open Space Subdivisions:

1. *Strong incentives and disincentives* are needed to encourage open space preservation in new development. It typically is not sufficient to allow the same density for a Conservation Subdivision as for a conventional subdivision. This is because developers prefer to build what has been successful in the past, as opposed to trying new concepts. Also, developers may feel that the homes on larger lots may have a higher market value than homes on smaller lots with open space. Therefore, density bonuses are needed for open space preservation. A community needs to trade-off a modestly increased number of dwelling units in return for substantial open space preservation.
2. The process for approval of a Conservation Subdivision will not be any more burdensome or time-consuming than the process for a Conventional Subdivision. Where practical, the process to gain approval for a desirable type of development will be easier than the process for a Conventional Subdivision. Discipline is needed in writing Conservation Subdivision standards to make sure that they are not overly restrictive. If Conservation Subdivision standards are too detailed or too extensive, they may not allow enough flexibility for a good design. If the standards get in the way of a developer's marketing plans or cause excessive costs, a developer may choose to do a Conventional Subdivision.
3. Proper standards are needed to make sure that the preserved open space is well-located and improved so that it serves important public functions. In many cases, mature woods, steep slopes and creek valleys should simply be preserved in their natural state. In other cases, the open spaces may be intended for active recreation. In still other cases, trees should be planted in the open spaces and trails should be installed. The key is to avoid a process in which the "open space" is simply the land that is left over after the most economical set of lots and roads are laid out. Narrow strips of open space will be avoided, unless they would preserve a scenic tree line or provide an important trail link.

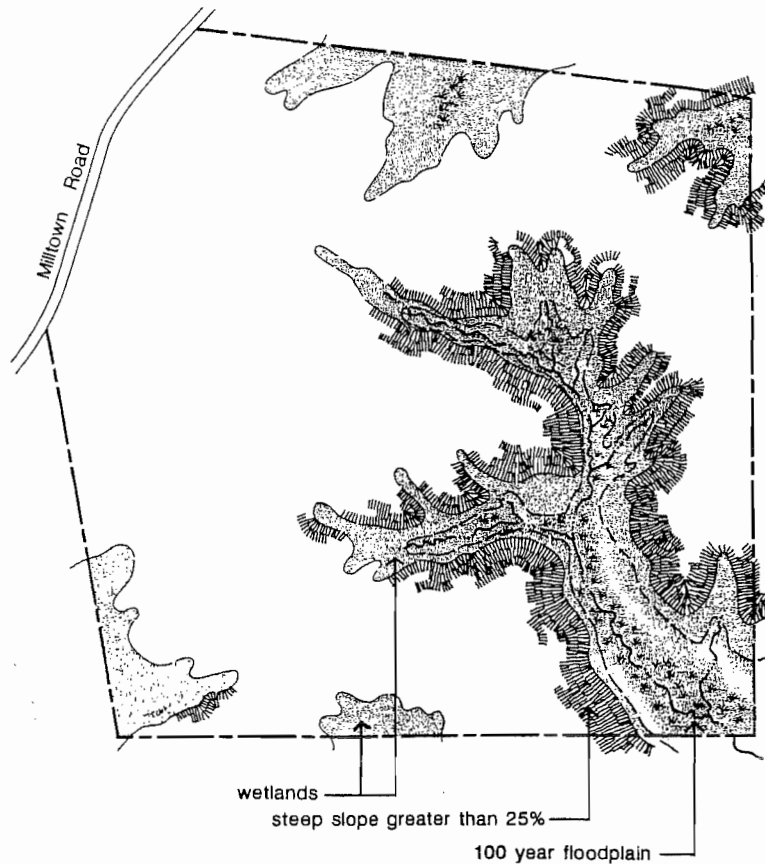
Use a four-step process to result in conservation-oriented design

Mr. Randall Arendt promotes the following four-step process in the design of new development in order to emphasize land conservation principles. The Township's development regulations and procedures will require that this process be followed. These steps must be accomplished at the sketch plan stage - before any detailed engineering is completed.

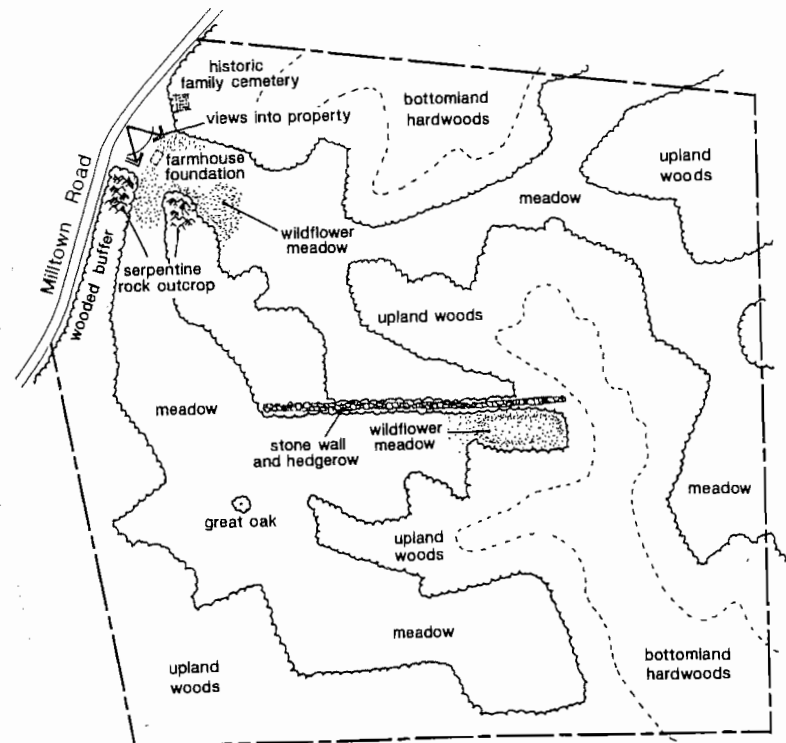
Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

1. Identifying Lands that Should Be Preserved.

First, the areas that are most worthy of preservation will be mapped, including wetlands, flood-prone areas, creek valleys, and very steeply sloped lands. These are known as the Primary Conservation Areas.



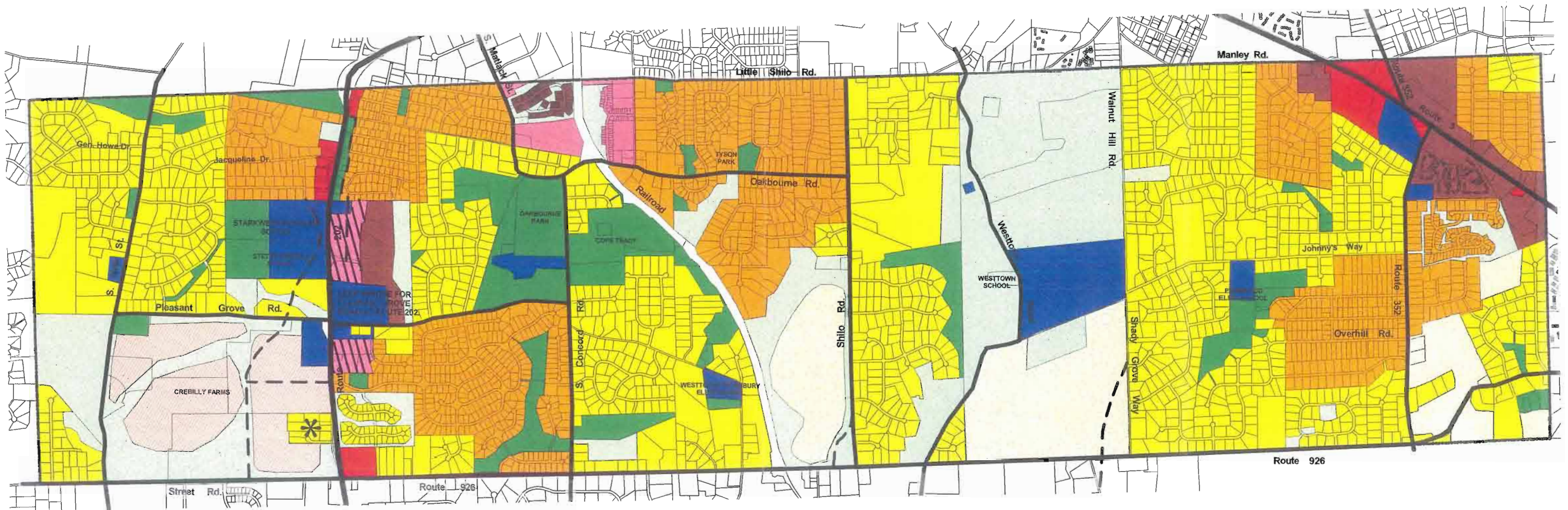
Then, other features that are important for conservation will be mapped, such as woodlands, tree lines, scenic views, historic buildings, and prime farmland. These are known as the Secondary Conservation Areas.



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP

Chester County, Pennsylvania



- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
|  | Public Open Space |  | Medium High Density Residential |
|  | Private / Semi-Public Open Space |  | Commercial |
|  | Major Community Facilities / Institutional |  | Mixed Use |
|  | Agricultural / Cluster Residential Option |  | Planned Business/Residential |
|  | Agricultural / Cluster Residential / Office Option |  | Proposed Road Link |
|  | Low Density Residential |  | Consider Office Uses If Traffic Access Is Provided from The West |
|  | Medium Density Residential | | |

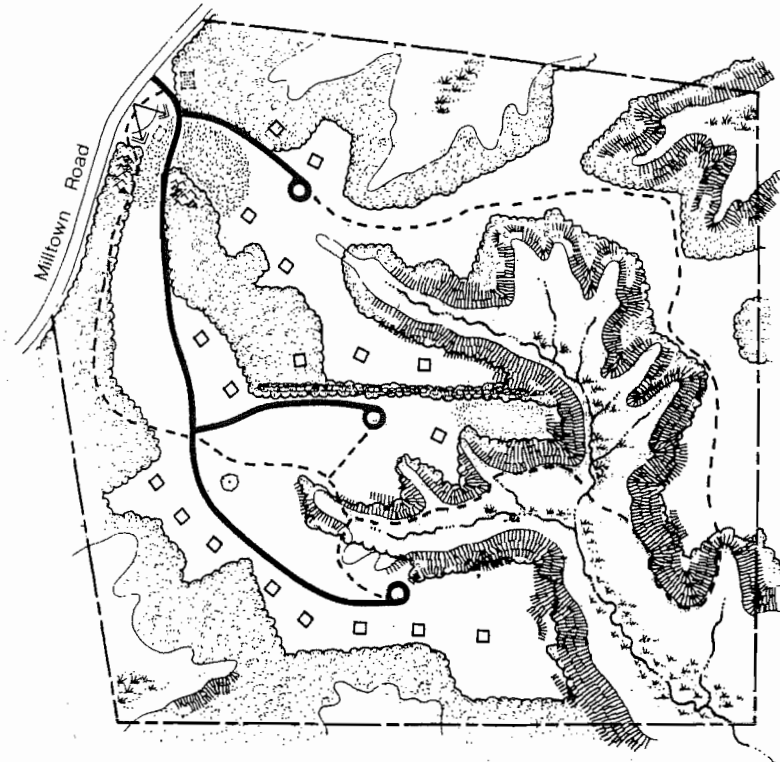


Community Planning and Recreation Consultants
 URBAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
 Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Base information provided by Chester County Land
 Records Office, 1998.

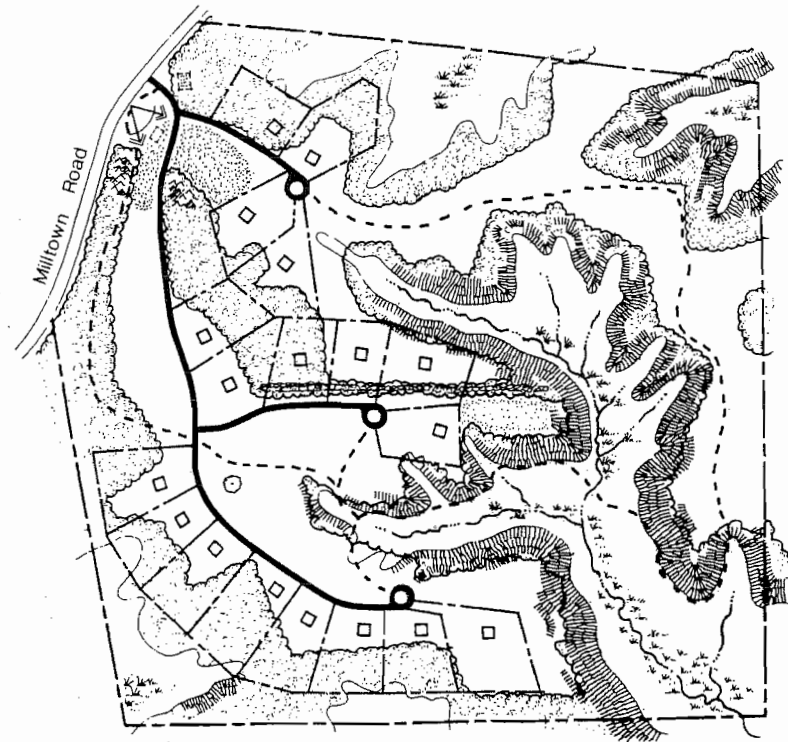
3. Locate Roads and Trails.

After the home sites are selected, then a road system will be designed that serves those homes. A trail system should also provide links between homes and to destinations outside of the tract.



4. Draw in the Lot Lines.

The last sketch plan step is to draw in lot lines. In conventional development, with strict "cookie-cutter" lot requirements, this is often the first step - before any consideration of natural features of the site.

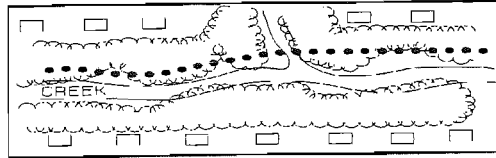


Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

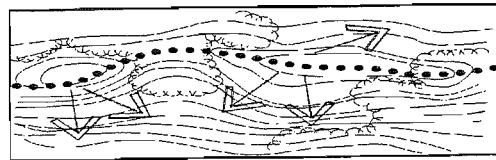
The following principles will be kept in mind when considering the locations of preserved open spaces that will serve as part of a greenway network.

GREENWAY AND TRAILS PLANNING PRINCIPLES

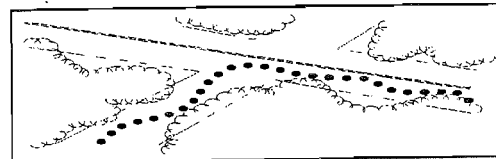
Provide greenways along natural areas such as streams, wetlands, floodplains and edges of water bodies.



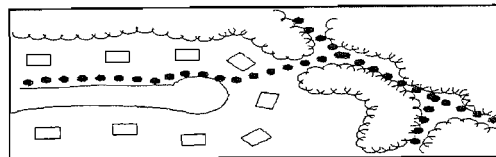
Provide greenways along ridges with attractive scenic views.



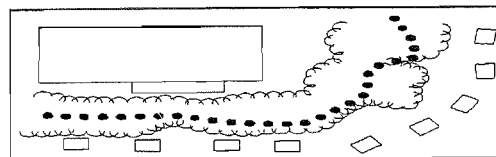
Provide greenways along man-made linear corridors, such as utility easements, utility rights-of-way, abandoned railroad beds, and underground pipelines.



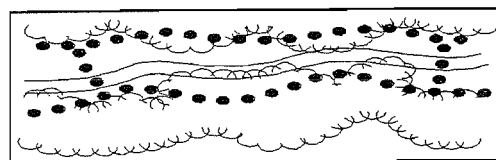
Provide greenways which incorporate existing pathways, bike routes, trails, and sidewalks.



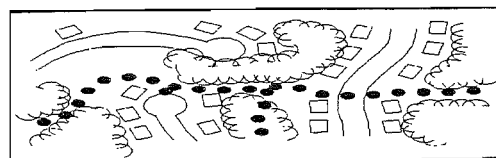
Provide greenways within buffer areas between different types of land uses.



Provide greenways which interconnect and loop, giving interest for walkers, bikers and other users.



Provide greenways which minimize road crossings, especially along highways with high traffic volumes and fast moving traffic. When streets are required for linkages, use streets with limited traffic.



Use Great Care in the Design and Location of Preserved Open Space Areas Within Development

As part of the development of this Plan, there was significant discussion about what areas will be considered to be “open space” in order to meet the requirements of Township ordinances. The term “Preserved Open Space” is more appropriate than “Common Open Space” because the open space may not be commonly owned if it is part of a golf course or a preserved farm or tree nursery.

The priority of this Plan is to have very substantial amounts of permanently preserved open spaces that create a true feeling of open space and are highly visible. The goal is to have open space that truly serves a public purpose, as opposed to areas that are simply “leftover” after a developer’s preferred pattern of roads and lots are laid out.

Valid public purposes for open space include:

- To preserve scenic views along roads, especially as viewed from major through-roads. Typically, most attention is paid to “foreground views” that are most prominent. It is much more difficult to maintain long “background views.”
- To preserve environmental sensitive areas, particularly creek valleys and concentrations of wooded steeply sloped lands.
- To manage stormwater in a more attractive and naturalistic manner that protects water quality, as opposed to engineered channels and traditional fenced-in detention basins.
- To provide usable recreation areas and important links in the Township’s trail system.
- To preserve large contiguous swaths of open space in visible locations that maintain a feeling of open space and that provide a visual relief between developments. At best, some open space would be preserved along exterior roads.
- To preserve land for agriculture, hayfields, orchards and tree farms.

In most cases, at least half of the required open space should be in one contiguous area. Isolated areas (such as less than one acre) and narrow areas of land (such as less than 100 feet wide) will not be counted as open space. However, more narrow stretches may be suitable as open space if they truly serve as part of a regional trail system. Detention basins will not be considered open space unless they are designed as a major scenic asset (such as a natural appearing pond) or are clearly suitable for recreation. Roads and parking will not count as open space, even if the parking is intended to serve recreation uses. Narrow buffers will not count towards open space, but wider buffers may be appropriate. It may be appropriate to establish a maximum percentage of open space that can be covered by impervious surfaces.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

To count towards the required open space, land will need to:

- be landscaped in trees, shrubs and other attractive vegetation,
- be maintained in agricultural uses, which may include a tree farm,
- be preserved in woods or natural wetlands vegetation,
- not be used for commercial recreation, other than a golf course, and/or
- be developed as recreational facilities, but not including buildings (other than pavilions).

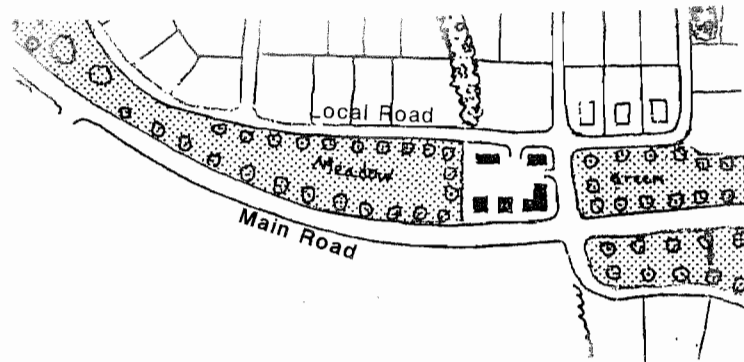
Open Space should be interconnected with common open space areas on abutting parcels where possible, including provisions for public trails to link trail systems within the Township.

In addition to the Open Space, requirements, a second set of development regulations will address recreation needs. These recreation needs in many cases could be met by providing suitable open space. However, if sufficient open space would not be highly suited for recreation, then a developer would be required to pay a fee-in-lieu of recreation land. This recreation fee can then be used to purchase recreation land in a more suitable site, or to improve an existing Township Park.

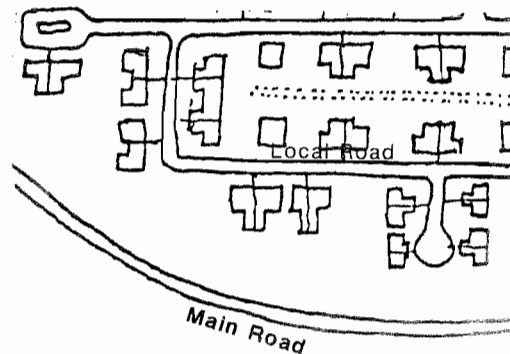
Make sure preserved open spaces are well-integrated with homes.

The following sketches were prepared by Mr. Randall Arendt and the Natural Lands Trust to illustrate ways to integrate open spaces with homes.

At best, homes should face the main road across landscaped open spaces, instead of having the rears of homes facing onto the main road.

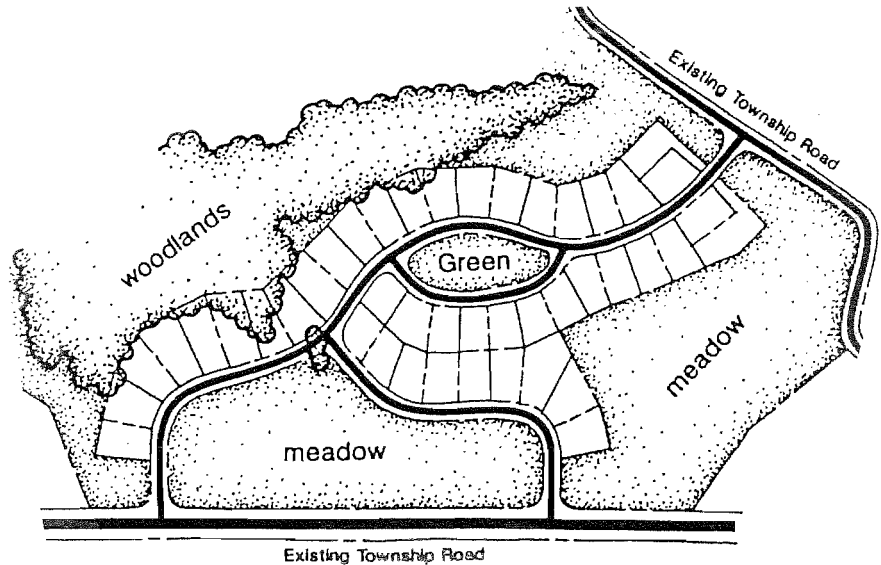


When the rears of homes face onto a major road, there may be less attractive views of sheds and pools, and less privacy for residents.

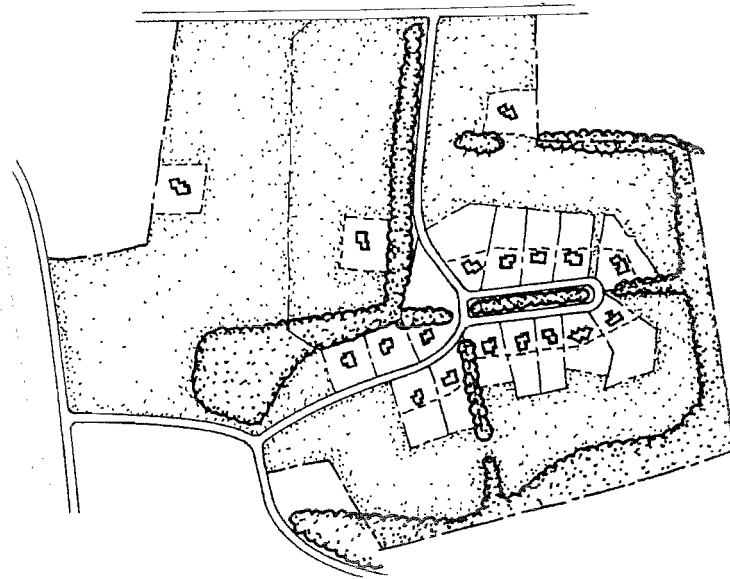


Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Homes should face onto open space, and be separated from a main road by open space. This design provides attractive views of open space from the homes, and an attractive entranceway into the development. This design avoids the rears of homes facing onto a major road. This type of design may require that portions of streets be “single loaded” with homes on only one side of the street.

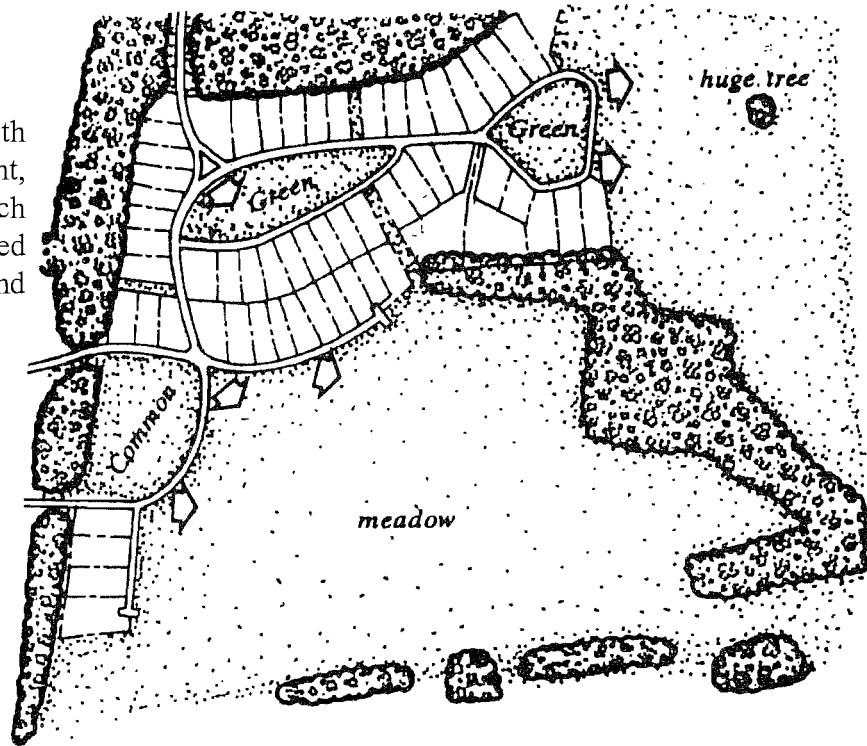


Homes should be designed around important features of the site. For example, in the example to the right, the layout works around the existing woodlands and treelines. The treelines provide the structure for the road system. Large open lots are used to protect the views from the main road.



Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Open space should be aligned with views. In the example to the right, the arrows show major views, which look out onto small parks called “commons,” large meadows and large trees.



Homes should be clustered together in a way that resembles a rural village and helps build a sense of neighborhood.



There should be some variation in the front setbacks of homes to provide some variety and to increase privacy among adjacent back porches.

Source of Sketches - Randall Arendt and the Natural Lands Trust.

Place a strong emphasis on sketch plan reviews of proposed developments.

Although a sketch plan cannot be required, it is very strongly encouraged. Developers should be convinced that a sketch plan submittal can save them the need for expensive re-engineering - because major issues can be addressed before expensive engineering has been completed. A sketch plan review helps to identify Township concerns and major regulatory issues before the developer's engineer has completed most of the engineering.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

To further this concept, the requirements for a preliminary plan submission should not be excessive. For example, detailed stormwater calculations should be deferred to the final plan stage. Otherwise, if the preliminary plan submission requirements are too extensive, a developer may be much less willing to adjust their proposal to incorporate Township concerns during the preliminary plan review - because they have so much invested in the engineering of the preliminary plan.

In addition, the Township needs to take reviews of sketch plans very seriously. Township officials should view the site at the sketch plan stage - allowing a three-dimensional perspective instead of the two-dimensions on paper. Also, the sketch plan should be carefully reviewed by the Township Engineer and Planning Commission. The earlier in the process that the Township provides direction to a developer, the more cooperative a developer is likely to be in incorporating those comments.

Consider basing density on the natural features of the tract and/or lot

It may be appropriate to revise the methods of calculating density in the Zoning Ordinance. This could involve greater use of “Net Usable Tract Area” to determine the number of homes allowed on a tract of land. Certain natural features, such as wetlands and floodplains, would be totally deducted from the area of the land before calculating the allowed density. Areas in other features, such as moderately steep slopes, could be reduced by some percentage (such as 50 percent) before calculating density.

This method could also be used for individual proposed new lots. This is known as “Net Lot Out.” For example, wetlands might be required to be deleted from lot area when calculating whether a lot meets minimum lot area requirements.

Consider offering density bonuses for substantial public improvements.

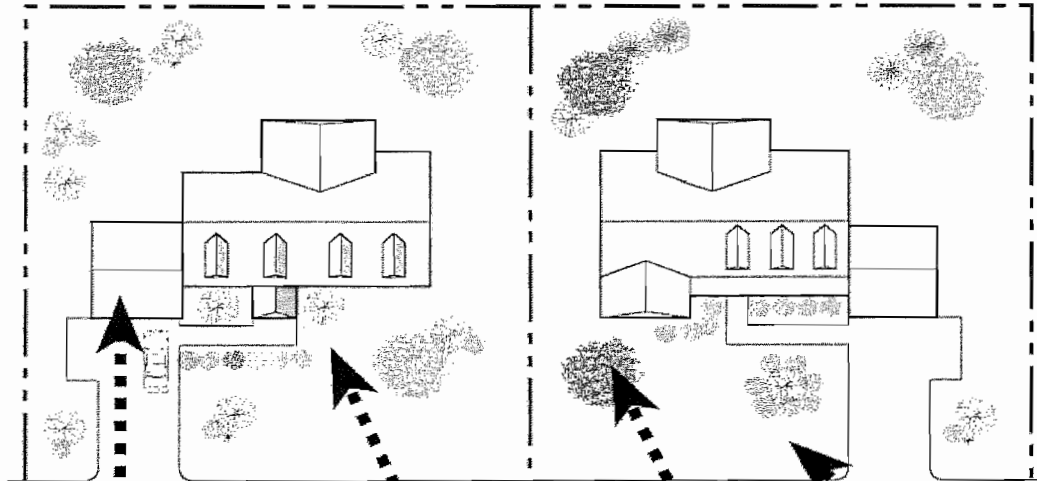
There are cases where a higher density could be appropriate on an area of land if the developer completed major public improvements that would offset the increased density. For example, a developer might complete major improvements to a road one-half mile away to remove a safety hazard. The Township should require a developer to provide an economic report that proves that the density bonus is justified by the value of the proposed improvements. However, no density bonus should be available for any improvements that the Township has the standard authority to require under its ordinances, nor for improvements that PennDOT would typically require.

Extend the best features of older development into newer development

It is desirable to work to extend the best features of older development into newer development. This involves clustering homes in locations where residents can conveniently walk between homes and to parks. It also involves placing homes relatively close to interior roads, preferably with front porches that encourage interaction. Parking, driveways and garages are placed to the side or rear of homes so the majority of the front yard can be landscaped. At best, driveways and garages would be accessed by rear alleys and detached rear garages. Sidewalks and/or bicycle/walking paths would be provided. Street trees should be required. Interior streets should not be so wide that they encourage speeding.

Suburban vs. Neotraditional Design

Suburban Design

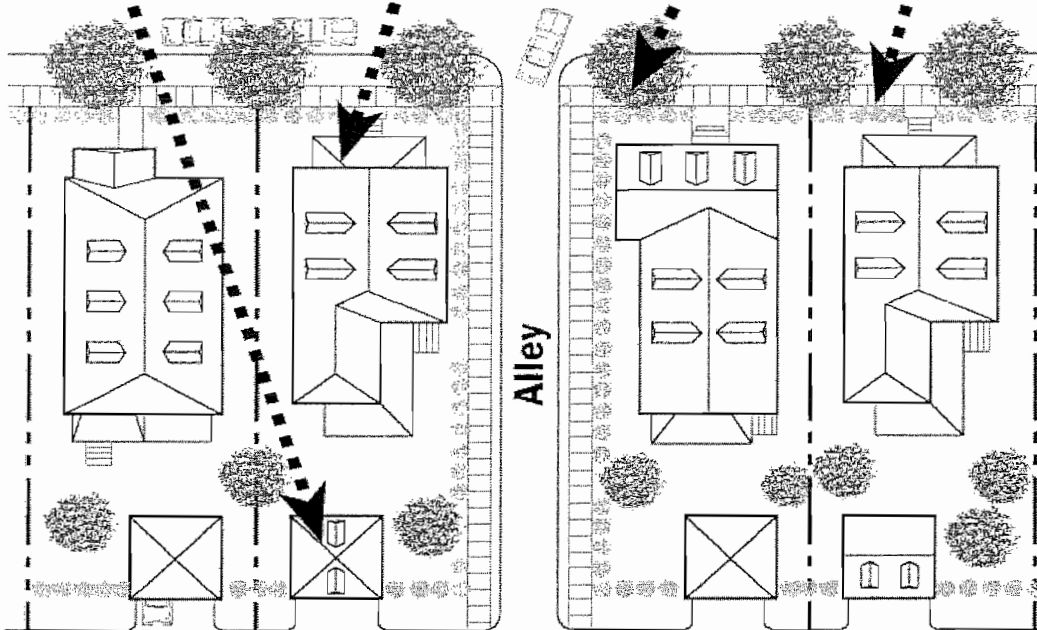


Garages forward
Garages on alleys

Deep front yards
Shallow yards, porches

Trees in yards
Trees along street

No Sidewalks
Sidewalks



Alley

Alley

Neotraditional Design

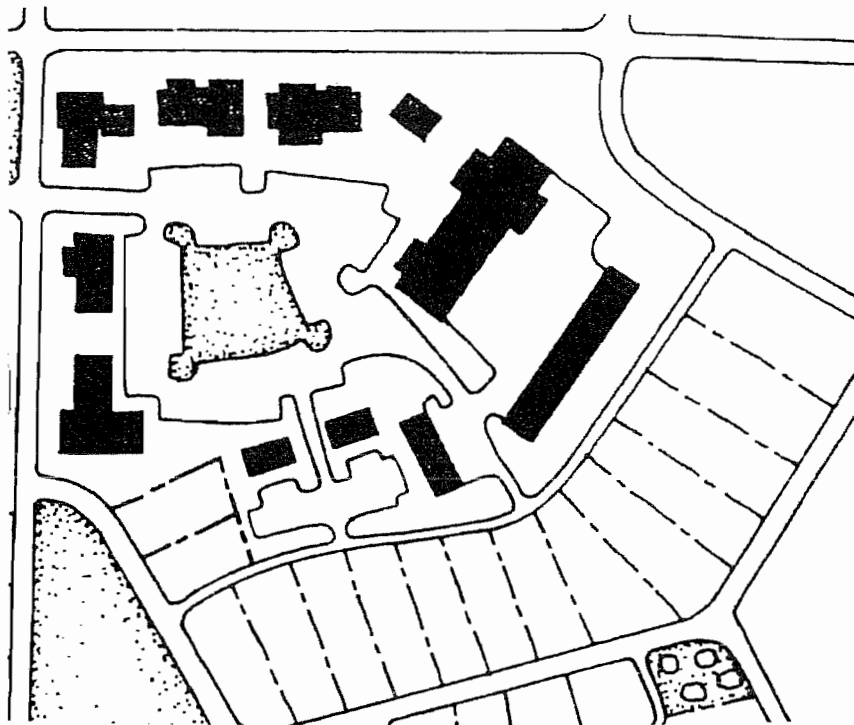
Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Local streets should be interconnected to encourage interaction among neighbors and to provide convenient access to recreation areas and other developments.

This concept is sometimes referred to as “Neotraditional Development” or “Traditional Neighborhoods.” A sketch illustrates this concept on the previous page. The closest example of this concept is within the Eagleview Town Center Development west of Eagleview office park in Uwchlan Township. This development is west of Route 100 south of the Turnpike interchange.

This concept can also apply to new business development. The sketch to the right shows a mix of business and residential uses arranged inward towards a central parking area. Landscaping is placed along the abutting roads, and the parking is not visible from the major roads. Open space is provided as a buffer between the businesses and residences.

Source of sketch - Randall
Arendt, Natural Lands Trust.



Encourage architecture that is consistent with the character of Westtown.

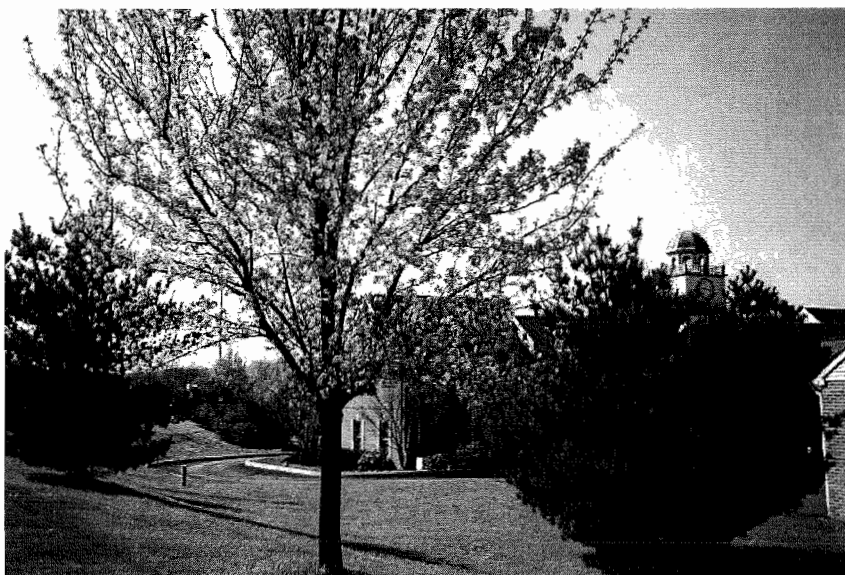
In Pennsylvania, a municipality cannot directly control architecture, except with a State-certified historic district. However, Westtown can promote and discourage architectural styles that are consistent with the character of the community.

As with many matters, to gain cooperation, it is important let a developer know early in the process what is desired. It is much harder to obtain changes after detailed architectural designs are completed. It may also be possible to offer certain bonuses or incentives for certain types of architectural designs or site designs.

It is requested that developers avoid use of garish colors. Materials with a more traditional appearance are requested, particularly on sides of buildings visible from major roads. Landscaping that has a naturalistic appearance is strongly encouraged, as opposed to rigid rows of the same species. Where dense development may occur, landscaping will be used to filter views of it from main roads.

New development can also be designed so that it has the character of a cluster of agricultural buildings or a rural village, as opposed to suburban-style development.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan



Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

GOAL: Continue to avoid “strip” commercial development along major roads.

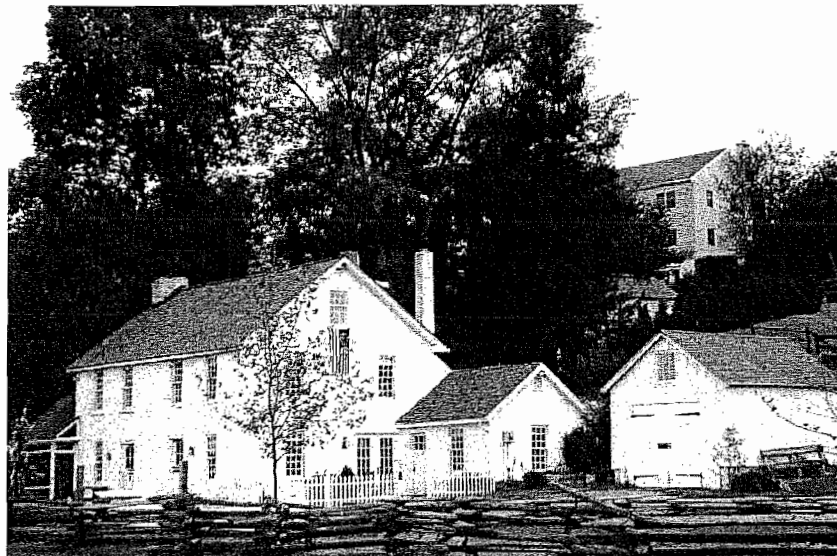
The Land Use Plan was crafted to carry out this Goal. New “strip” retail commercial development will be avoided along additional segments of Routes 202, 352, 926 and other major roads. This policy is important to avoid conflicts with adjacent homes and to avoid increased traffic safety and congestion hazards. This policy is also intended to help strengthen Downtown West Chester as a major center of activity in the region.

Office development along the Route 202 corridor should be limited to locations that can be served by a well-located traffic signal, such as the Stetson Middle School traffic signal and jughandle. However, care is needed, because traffic studies project that even the new jughandle will become overloaded within 10 years.

In the development of this Plan, the Township’s professional consultants were not able to identify any areas that were suitable for new general industrial development. This conclusion primarily results from the limited amount of undeveloped land, the proximity of homes to most open lands, the unsuitability of most roads for tractor-trailer traffic, and the presence of important natural features on many undeveloped lands. Westtown Township continues to participate in regional planning efforts. These regional planning efforts have identified large areas in adjoining municipalities that are clearly well-suited for industrial development. There is no reason to believe that those areas are insufficient to serve the demand in the region.

GOAL: Encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings.

The Township should consider establishing a Historical Commission to promote preservation and sensitive restoration of older buildings. The Township should also consider adding historic preservation provisions to the Zoning Ordinance.

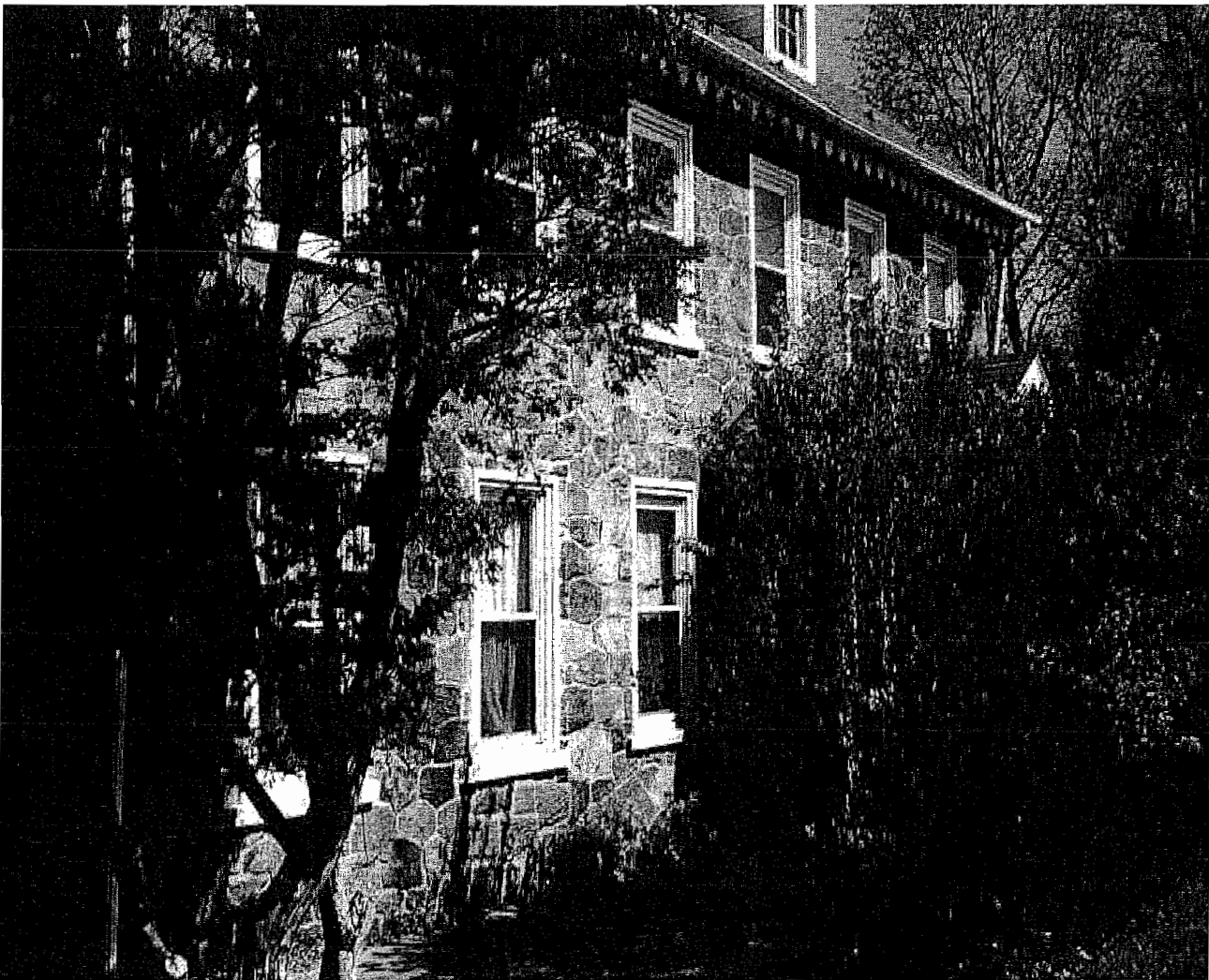


At a minimum, such provisions could require a 90 day delay in the issuance of a permit to demolish a significant older building. A list of significant buildings would need be prepared, which can be based upon research that was completed by the Brandywine Conservancy. This 90 day delay is intended to avoid thoughtless demolition. The 90 day delay is intended to allow time for concerned persons to convince a property-owner that reasonable alternatives exist to demolition. For example, the owner may be put in touch with a knowledgeable architect, or a new buyer for the property may be found.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Consideration should also be given to seeking the designation of a historic district in portions of the Township. For example, a historic district may be appropriate in the southwest corner along Route 926 adjacent to the Brandywine Battlefield Historic District in Thornbury and Brandywine Townships.

By itself, a historic district does not involve any additional regulations upon a private property-owner. However, once a historic district is certified by the State Historical and Museum Commission, a township then has the authority, if they wish, to regulate the demolition of existing buildings and the architecture of new buildings and additions within the District.



The Plan to Enhance Westtown's Quality of Life

This section of the Plan mainly addresses Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Community Facilities and Community Services. In a separate volume, a more detailed Sewage Facilities Plan provides specific policies for sewage extensions and other sewage facilities. Also, additional details about Parks, Recreation and Open Space are provided in a separate volume.

The following major goals provide direction for this section:

- Plan in advance for public facility improvements needed to serve future growth.
- Provide a balanced system of active and passive public recreation areas and facilities, in a manner that is coordinated with public schools, a regional trail system and open space preservation.
- Provide high-quality, cost-effective community services and facilities, with an emphasis on cooperation across municipal borders.
- Address sewage service needs and encourage the extension of public water service wherever feasible, in a regionally coordinated manner.

The Parks and Recreation Plan

The following is a summary of the major park and recreation policies. A more detailed Parks and Recreation Plan has been assembled in a separate report.

GOAL: Provide a balanced system of active and passive public recreation areas and facilities, in a manner that is coordinated with public schools, a regional trail system and open space preservation.

In the "Results of the Citizen Survey" section towards the beginning of this report, a listing is provided of the new recreational facilities that residents felt were most needed, in their responses to the 1998 Citizen Survey. The facilities that rated highest were: 1) Bicycle/jogging trails, 2) Wooded natural areas with nature trails, 3) Children's playgrounds, 4) Swimming pool, 5) Outdoor ice skating area, and 6) Golf course.

Existing Public Recreation Facilities and Programs

In addition to the recreation land at the four public schools, Westtown Township owns 319 acres of public parks and public open space. Another 13 acres are being provided to the Township along Route 926 next to the railroad, but that land mainly includes wetlands. The largest park—Oakbourne Park—is the center of Township recreation activities. The park is 94 acres in size and includes the Oakbourne/Smith Mansion, a baseball field, softball field, 2 soccer/football fields, a small playground, a volleyball court, two tennis courts, a pavilion, picnic areas, and other support facilities.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Municipal recreation programs in Westtown Township are provided through the West Chester Area Recreation Commission. Several major private nonprofit sports organizations use fields in Westtown Township, including: East Side Little League, West Chester Youth Lacrosse, West Chester Girls Softball Association, and the West Chester United Soccer Club.

Recreation Needs

Based upon standards of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Westtown Township should have 16 acres of additional improved parkland to meet the needs of the numbers of residents projected for the year 2010. This 16 acre deficit could be met by improving the flatter portions of the Township-owned 54 acre Cope Tract along the east side of S. Concord Road. Those areas are currently leased out for farming.

With some adjustments for local demand, nationwide recreation facility standards indicate that the following additional public recreation facilities will be needed in Westtown Township by the year 2010:

- 2 baseball fields
- 3 softball/Little League fields
- 2 soccer/football/lacrosse fields
- 1 basketball court
- 1 playground (and upgrading of existing playgrounds)
- 2 volleyball courts
- 2/3 of a swimming pool
- 3 tennis courts

Many of the recreation groups report an ability to raise funding to help develop fields. However, the main limitation in providing additional fields is the lack of suitable land, particularly considering the high cost of relatively flat well-drained land in the region.

Park and Recreation Priorities

This Plan recommends two major priorities for the next few years in regards to parks and recreation:

- Improving Oakbourne Park as the central community-wide park for the Township, with an emphasis on special events and recreation programs.
- Complete the trail system across the Township, with an initial emphasis on loops through Oakbourne Park, through the Cope Tract on the east side of Concord Road, through the Pleasant Grove development, to the Westtown-Thornbury Elementary School and along the west branch of the Chester Creek. Then, the trail system would emphasize connections through a new development to Shiloh Road and then to Westtown School. This trail system would help to bring together the eastern and central parts of Westtown Township.

The following areas should serve as the following functions:

- a) the Starkweather/Stetson Schools should serve as a neighborhood park for areas west of Route 202,
- b) Oakbourne Park should serve as a community-wide park for the entire Township and a neighborhood park for areas east of Route 202, and

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

- c) Penn Wood School and adjacent Township-owned recreation land as serving as a neighborhood park for areas between Westtown School and Route 352. The primary use of the Township land around the school should be as an environmental education area for the school students.

At the Township's Pennwood Park, the Township's existing undersized playing field should be upgraded to make it more suitable for youth games. However, the slopes and an underground pipeline limit use of much of this land. A volleyball court should also be considered.

Tyson Park should include a volleyball court and play equipment. A new pavilion has been installed. The Park is intended to primarily serve "free play" and other informal recreation for nearby residents as opposed to organized sports and programmed activities.

Likewise, Larchbourne Park (east of Route 202, south of W. Goshen) should emphasize informal recreation by nearby residents. New play equipment and picnic tables are recommended.

The Edgewood Chase Open Space has been discussed as an appropriate place for a sledding area.

Recreation facilities need to be designed so they are reasonably secure against crime and vandalism and to make them relatively easy to maintain. Recreational facilities will also be designed to carefully blend with the natural landscape, historic features and adjacent residences.

Athletic Fields

In most cases, the Township has been able to meet requests for athletic fields, particularly for youth games. The growing population, the desire to have teams with fewer members and the desire for additional practice space mean that additional athletic fields would always prove useful. Although Westtown Township only provides four athletic fields, there are a significant number of fields on public school property and a large number of new fields have been built in the past couple years in adjacent townships.

Most athletic associations prefer to concentrate fields at a limited number of locations, as opposed to have individual fields at many scattered sites. Concentrating fields is also easier on parents and coaches. It also minimizes the costs of maintenance and providing supporting facilities, such as restrooms. Furthermore, it allows the economical establishment of one refreshment stand, which is a major source of funding for athletic groups.

While certain types of recreation (such as playgrounds and free play areas) should be available within walking and bicycling distance of neighborhoods, it is reasonable to expect adult ballplayers and parents of young persons to drive up to 15 minutes away for competitive athletic games. The long shape of the Township means that many locations in adjoining townships are closer to Westtown residents than locations within Westtown.

Land that is suitable for athletic fields is also well-suited to building construction - and therefore is likely to be expensive. At present, the only undeveloped land that Westtown Township owns that is physically suited for new athletic fields is a portion of the Cope Tract on the east side of South Concord Road.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Regrading moderately or steeply sloped land for athletic fields is very costly. Some athletic groups may be in a position to contribute towards the development of new fields if the municipality provides the land.

If new athletic fields are to be developed, the following options should be considered:

- Eventually developing athletic fields on the flatter portions of the Cope Tract, with substantial landscaped buffers and setbacks from adjoining homes. The existing woods would be preserved.
- Seeking ownership of one of the flatter portions of the Crebilly Farm, such as a portion west or east of S. New St. If the Farm would be proposed for development in the future, it may be possible to obtain an area of land as part of open space requirements. Such recreation land would help to meet the “close to home” recreation needs of residents west of Route 202 - particularly if Route 202 is widened in the future to 6 lanes and the Pleasant Grove Road intersection along Route 202 is closed. Such recreation land would also help to meet the needs of additional new residents on adjoining lands.
- Seeking joint development and joint use of athletic fields on part of the southern side of the Westtown School property. School officials have indicated that they wish to maintain ownership of all of their landholdings. However, it may be possible to arrange a partnership under which the Township and athletic groups would help to fund development of fields in return for use of the fields during Summer months and certain times of the week. The School would retain ownership of the land and gain use of the fields during their school days, for daytime sports camps and certain other times of the week. This arrangement would still allow the majority of the agricultural lands to remain in operation.
- Seeking to purchase parts of one of the few other remaining tracts in the Township, such as part of the Stratton Family tract. That family has informed the Township that they wish to continue to live on the land and continue to farm it.
- Participating with an adjacent township in the joint development of athletic fields in that township. There may be a situation where an adjoining township may be able to acquire land more economically where central water and sewage services are not available. Or, an adjoining township may be able to obtain a large area of land through cluster zoning provisions.

Playgrounds

Children’s playgrounds should be available within a convenient walking or bicycling distance of most neighborhoods - preferably without needing to cross a major road. The playgrounds at the three existing elementary schools are well-located to serve adjacent neighborhoods. A playground area should also include an open grass area that is suitable for informal “pick-up” games by young people. There is less need for playgrounds in areas where homes have larger lots.

The play equipment at Oakbourne Park is insufficient and additional modern equipment meeting current safety standards should be installed. Plans are underway to install new playground equipment at Tyson Park north of Oakbourne Road. That would allow Tyson Park to serve children in areas east of the

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

railroad.

Ideally, children's playgrounds would be available in the following additional areas of the Township:

- North of Route 3, east of Route 352. (Note - East Goshen has the 1.6 acre Milltown Park north of Route 3, which includes a playground and which may effectively serve this area.)
- South of Route 3, east of Route 352. Potentially, this could involve a partnership with a nearby church.
- On a portion of the Township open space within the Pleasant Grove development, south of Pleasant Grove Road.

Swimming Pool

Many communities have avoided constructing swimming pools because of the high cost of construction, operation and periodic reconstruction. An existing public pool exists in West Chester, which was threatened with closure because of insufficient revenue. It may be most appropriate for Westtown residents in search of a public pool to utilize that existing pool. Swimming is also offered at Westtown Lake and the YMCA has an indoor pool. East Goshen Township has periodically considered constructing a public pool along Paoli Pike. There are hundreds of existing private pools in the Township. Many people who do not have their own pool have friends or relatives who live nearby who have a pool. There are several private swim clubs within a convenient drive. However, some of the swim clubs have long waiting lists. If the Township would consider developing a new major public park, then it may be advisable at that time to reserve a suitable site for a possible future pool.

National standards estimate that a public pool is needed for every 20,000 persons. Therefore, Westtown Township would not be expected to support its own pool. Westtown's long linear shape means that it is natural to work with neighboring municipalities to meet recreation demands. As a result, it may be appropriate for Westtown to participate with neighboring municipalities in developing a regional pool or improving the existing West Chester Pool.

Hockey Court

At Oakbourne Park, a combined informal basketball court/hockey area exists. The Township is considering developing a separate dedicated area for in-line skating hockey.

Golf Course

There is a strong demand for golf in the area, and dramatic growth throughout Eastern Pennsylvania in the number of golf courses. Westtown Township is not in a position to develop and own its own golf course. However, it could be possible through zoning to strongly encourage the private development of a golf course on portions of the Crebilly Farm if it would be developed. A golf course can flow between clusters of homes and can provide a buffer between offices and homes. A golf course can also make use of areas that are not physically suited for development.

Golf Practice Area

An informal golf practice area could conceivably be developed on the Township-owned Cope Tract, if it would be removed from agricultural use. This land is moderately sloped, making it suitable to help contain golf balls, but unsuitable for most other recreation facilities. The site could be planted in grass, which would control erosion. The major issue with a golf practice area is to avoid other activities on the land that would put people in the path of golf balls. This facility should not have lights for use during hours of darkness.

Amphitheater

The area south of the Smith Mansion in Oakbourne Park should be improved as an amphitheater for modest-sized concerts, children's activities and other special events. As attendance at these events increases, it may be desirable to consider developing a larger amphitheater using the Cope Tract on the east side of Concord Road. The slope of the Cope Tract is naturally suited as an amphitheater. However, new parking would be needed on the east side of S. Concord Road. At the beginning and end of a large event, the police could stop traffic for pedestrian crossings from Oakbourne Park. An amphitheater on the Cope Tract would be very compatible with an informal golf practice area.

Indoor Recreation Facilities

It is critically important to make the best use of indoor and outdoor facilities of the public schools for public recreation when they are not needed for school uses. The schools should be considered as joint "Education/Recreation Centers" for the community.

Special Events

The commercial use of the Oakbourne Mansion and the surrounding grounds during long periods in the mid-1990s seriously interfered with the ability to provide recreation programs and activities. As a result, some local organizations did not consider asking about Oakbourne because the facilities are not available on a regular basis. The growth of programming and special events by the West Chester Area Recreation Commission and the commission's ability to raise funds to support new programs was been hampered by the limited availability of the mansion and grounds. This issue is now being addressed by providing preference to community recreation activities.

The Oakbourne Mansion and adjacent grounds should be emphasized as a center for additional special events, classes and activities. The building should be made available during the maximum number of days of the year possible for non-profit recreation programs and organizational meetings of recreational organizations. Recreation groups should be encouraged to complete minor improvements to the park in return for free use of the facilities. The existing concerts should be expanded into a regular series. Additional restrooms and overflow parking areas are needed to support special events.

Develop an extensive set of trails that connects into a regional system.

The Trails Plan Map on the following page recommends a full system of trails across the Township. These recommendations also consider proposed trails in adjoining municipalities. In some cases, connections are proposed involving widened shoulders along existing roads, where no other alternative existed. For example, the shoulder of Johnny's Way is proposed to be widened in spots to provide pedestrian and bicycle access into Penn Wood Elementary and the adjacent Penn Wood Park.

The goal of this Trails Plan is to allow persons to walk or mountain bike from their home to parks, schools and stores. The Trail System is also intended to provide for loops that will be pleasant for recreational walking and cross-country skiing.

As described in the Plan for Land Uses Section (page 19), a new bridge is being sought across Route 202 at Pleasant Grove at the time Route 202 would be widened to six lanes. This bridge would be important to allow pedestrian and bicycle connections across the Township, particularly for residents of the western part of the Township to reach Oakbourne Park.

In addition to allowing walking and hiking for pleasure, the trail system should be designed to provide alternative routes to walking or bicycling along Street Road, Route 352 and other hazardous routes. For this purpose, trails should emphasize connecting missing links between local streets that are suitable for bicycling and walking.

Most of the land owned by Westtown Township is mainly suited for nature trails. Most trail segments would most appropriately developed as nature trails with dirt, mulch or grass surfaces. The goal is to accommodate walking in a manner that minimizes the disturbance to the environment. The widths of trails should be minimized to avoid loss of trees. Trails need to be laid out to minimize erosion. As use increases in certain segments, it may be necessary to consider crushed stone surfaces. Crushed stone trails are particularly well-suited for jogging.

None of the trail system is intended for motorized vehicles. Use of trails by horses can be appropriate if there is a system among horse riders to periodically clear the trail of horse manure.

A few selected segments should be asphalt and gradually sloped to provide access to persons in wheelchairs. For example, a paved trail at Oakbourne Park could link handicapped parking spaces to a pavilion and then to an area providing access to view games at the athletic fields. There is discussion at the Federal level of establishing requirements for trail systems under the Americans With Disabilities Act. These requirements would exempt trails through natural wooded areas, but may require a portion of a trail system to be handicapped accessible.

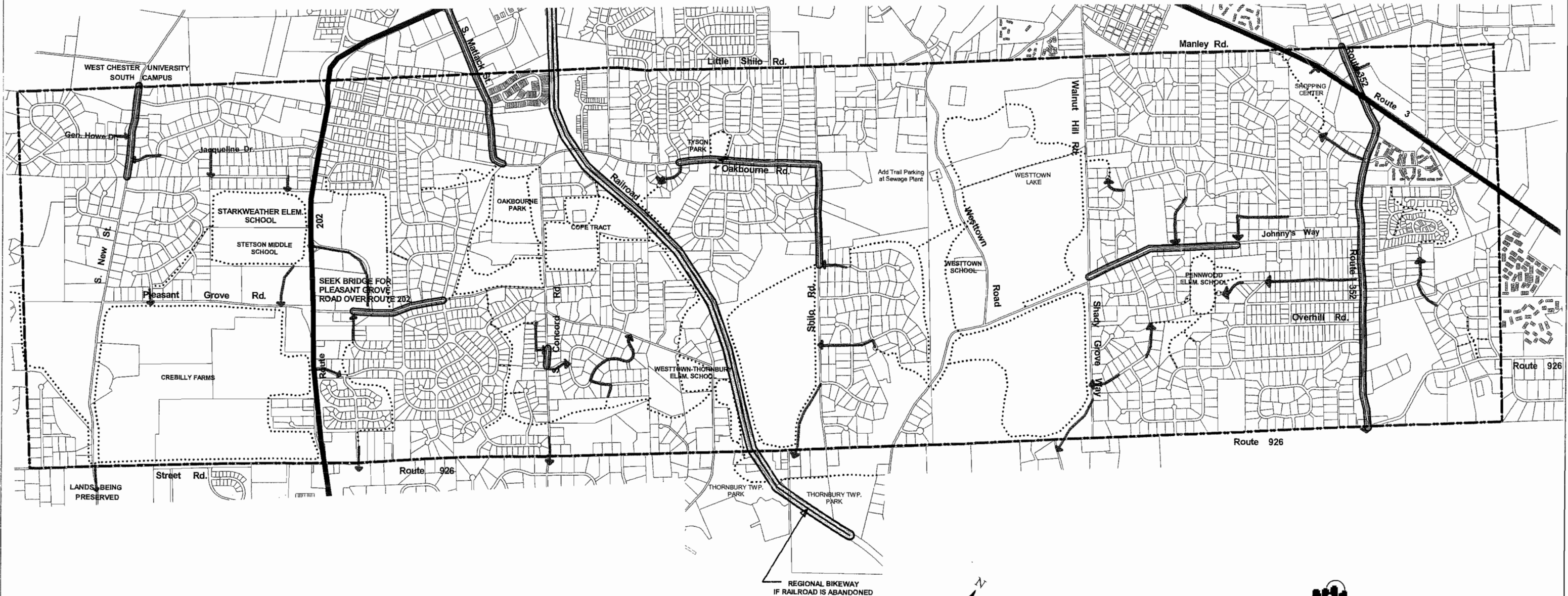
Hard-surface trails are in demand for in-line skating (which is fast-growing sport) and for bicycles other than mountain-bikes. Hard-surface trails in select locations can also provide access for maintenance and emergency vehicles.





TRAILS PLAN

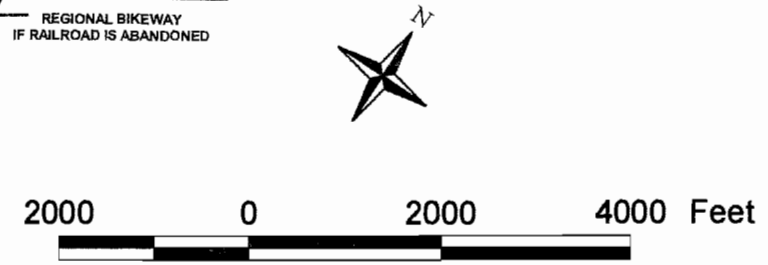
WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP

Chester County, Pennsylvania

This Plan was adopted in 2001 by the Board of Supervisors as part of the Westtown Township Growth Management/Comprehensive Plan.



-  Regional bikeway
-  Proposed trails
-  Major roadlinks into trails
-  Widen and improve shoulders of road where there are no alternative connections




URDC
 Community Planning and Recreation Consultants
 URBAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
 Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Base information provided by Chester County Land Records Office, 1998.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

It would be desirable to construct pedestrian bridges over creeks. However, if a bridge is required to be constructed above the 100 year floodplain, it would be a major visual disruption and be very costly. At times, it may be more practical for hikers to arrange rocks in a creek to allow crossings.

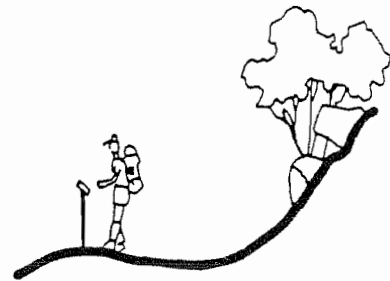
A trail system exists through the northern portions of the Westtown School property, and additional segments are planned by the School. Officials of the School have discussed establishing a permit system that would allow nearby residents to have access to the trails. Such persons could be required to sign a waiver of any liability to the School. A further step would be to consider an agreement between the Township and the School to open up one or more trail links to connect the eastern and central parts of the Township together.

Two state laws already limit the liability of a landowner who allows public access to a trail or unimproved recreation lands if the landowner does not charge any fees. The Township could also consider providing an additional layer of liability protection to landowners who allow public trail links.

The following sketches illustrate some design guidelines for trails.

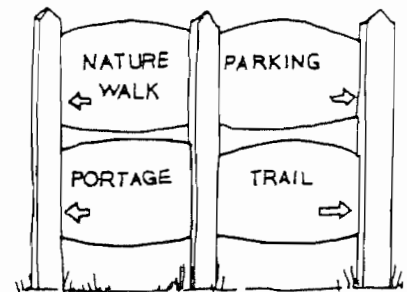
Nature Trails

- Use native or naturalized plant materials.
- Highlight areas of interesting natural features (e.g. geological formations, unique plant communities).
- Use plant materials that provide food and shelter for wildlife.
- Direct traffic away from areas sensitive to human activity.
- Maintain a diversity of habitats for plants and animals.
- Leave dead trees, brush and other natural elements that may be home for wildlife.



Park Furniture and Signs

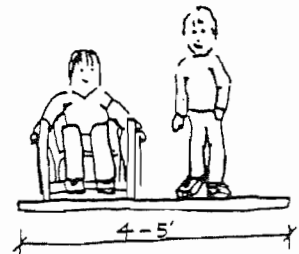
- Use materials/forms which don't detract from the environment.
- Use durable materials.
- Use vandal-proof construction technologies.
- Signs should be placed along roadways prior to trail heads.
- Signs should be made as small as possible but not smaller than 2 inches.
- A sign should be placed within a trail head and contain a key map showing the whole trail system.
- Number of signs should be held to a minimum.
- Use park furniture appropriate to environment (e.g. picnic table in small open space areas, benches at viewing areas, trash receptacles at public areas).



Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Handicapped Accessible Trails

- Work closely with disabled persons in the planning of these trails.
- A type of marking system should be incorporated using signs placed at approximately 300' intervals to inform users as to how far they travelled and their location.
- Avoid long straight sections that become monotonous.
- Generally, grades should not exceed 3 percent. 8-10 percent grades are satisfactory if only for short lengths.
- Trail should be cleared of all obstacles (e.g. shrubs, rocks, roots).
- Frequent wide and flat areas should be provided with benches, as rest stops.



Hiking/Walking & Jogging Trails

- Provide adequate headroom (at least 8').
- Allow adequate access for passing (at least 4'-8').
- Use smooth relatively soft but firm materials.
- Vary sense of enclosure (both long and short stretches).
- Pay more attention to design details in areas of high use by casual walkers.
- Provide resting spots at appropriate intervals and at points of interest.



Bicycle Trails

- Provide adequate headroom (at least 10').
- Allow adequate width for passing (5'-9').
- Use smooth, hard surface material, free of loose gravel.
- Provide bike racks at appropriate locations.
- Design curve radii and gradients for moderate, safe speeds.
- Provide loop trails.



Improve maintenance and oversight of Township-owned open spaces

Westtown Township owns hundreds of acres of land in scattered locations that are mainly intended to serve as passive natural areas. However, some of these areas have become dumping grounds for yard waste. If there was a location where residents could conveniently drop off yard waste, they would be less

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

tempted to dump it on the open spaces. The Township, by itself or in partnership with neighboring municipalities, should establish a yard waste composting center. Funding is available from the State for equipment. This composting center would only accept tree and shrub cuttings - not grass. The plant materials would be turned into mulch that would then be made available for free to residents. Grass composting should be avoided because it requires a much more expensive facility and can generate odors.

The Township should also sponsor annual neighborhood cleanups of the open spaces. For instance, this could be an appropriate Earth Day activity. These cleanups not only would make the open spaces more attractive, they also would provide residents with a greater sense of commitment to the lands.

Consideration should be given to leasing some of its scattered open spaces to adjacent homeowner associations. The intent is that the homeowner associations may be willing to provide a higher level of oversight and maintenance of the land than the Township. It also may help create a "pride of ownership" among nearby residents.

Require the provision of Recreation Fees or Land by Developers

Westtown already utilizes a State law that allows a municipality to require that a new residential development dedicate a reasonable amount of land for recreation. However, Westtown does not currently take advantage of the option in this law for the municipality and the developer to mutually agree to the payment of recreation fees instead of dedicating land. Recreation fees in other townships often exceed \$1,000 per dwelling. The fees can only be used to acquire or improve parkland or build recreation facilities. The land and facilities must be accessible to the residents of the development that paid the fees. Westtown should consider allowing this option, particularly when the public would be better served by buying or improving land in a central location, instead of accepting a small area of land in an inappropriate location.

Work with neighboring municipalities to further expand recreation programs

Recreation programs are extremely important to promote both mental and physical health. At the same time, recreation programs can effectively strengthen the community identity of Westtown.

Excellent athletic programs are provided by private groups in the region, particularly for youths and young adults. The Township should not try to duplicate these efforts, but instead should continue to try to provide facilities to support their work. Westtown Township should continue to work with the West Chester Area Recreation Commission to emphasize non-athletic recreation programs, particularly for young children and senior citizens. As demand increases, the Summer Playground program and outdoor summer concerts at Oakbourne should be expanded. Environmental education should be emphasized, particularly considering the suitability of Oakbourne Park for these activities.

Reciprocal agreements should be sought with neighboring municipalities so that residents would have the privilege of participating in certain programs of adjacent municipalities at the same costs as residents of that municipality. This would be valuable so that each municipality does not need to provide every type of program.

Community Facilities and Services Plan

GOAL: Plan in advance for public facility improvements needed to serve future growth.

Community facilities include central sewage, central water, schools, Township buildings, emergency service stations and many other types of facilities. Advance planning is needed to determine future needs in order to properly plan for large expenses and to make sure that development occurs in a manner concurrent with the infrastructure needed to support it.

In 2001, the Township renovated and converted a former bank on Route 202 into a new Township Administration Building. This will allow the existing Township Building to serve as an expanded Police Headquarters. The Township public works facilities will continue to be located at Route 202 and Pleasant Grove Road. The historic Oakbourne Mansion needs major repair work, particularly to flooring and mechanical systems. The Gatehouse at the entrance to Oakbourne Park also needs major repairs.

GOAL: Continue to provide high-quality, cost-effective community services and facilities, with an emphasis on cooperation across municipal borders.

Westtown has been a leader in inter-municipal cooperation in police protection. Recreation programs, fire protection and emergency medical services also are provided by organizations that cross municipal borders. Additional opportunities should be considered for regional cooperation, such as joint purchasing, shared staff, and shared use of expensive equipment.

Continue to provide high-quality police protection in cooperation with nearby municipalities.

Westtown operates a joint police force with East Goshen Township, which also provides protection to Thornbury Township (Chester County) through a contracting arrangement. As development and traffic continue to increase throughout the region, staffing levels will need to be increased.

Continue to work with the volunteer fire and emergency medical service providers to make sure that they have the equipment and training they need to accomplish their mission.

The western portion of Westtown is served by the West Chester Fire Department, while the eastern portion is served by the Goshen Fire Company. Emergency medical/ambulance services are provided by the Goshen Fire Company and the Good Fellowship Ambulance Company. Emergency responses are coordinated by the Chester County Communications Center.

If the number of volunteers dwindle, particularly during weekday mornings and afternoons, there may be an increased need for paid staff to supplement volunteers. The municipalities should make sure that the fire companies have adequate funding so that volunteers do not find that an excessive amount of their time is consumed in fund-raising.

Continued extensions of the public water system are extremely desirable to provide sufficient water supplies and pressure for firefighting.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Work cooperatively with the School District to address growth.

The West Chester Area School District continues to experience high growth in student enrollments - from under 9,000 in 1989 to over 12,000 in 2000. The District includes a very large land area - West Chester, Westtown, West Whiteland, West Goshen, East Goshen, East Bradford, Thornbury (Delaware) and Thornbury (Chester). The District includes two high schools, three middle schools and ten elementary schools. One middle and three elementary schools are located within Westtown.

In 2000, the School District announced plans to construct a new high school in East Bradford Township. The existing Henderson High School would then become a middle school. The East High School would then expand into the existing adjacent Fugett Middle School.

Each municipality needs to have regular communications with the School District to provide information about residential developments that are proposed, and the expected rate of construction. This information is important for the District to plan for building capacity, staffing levels, busing routes and service areas of schools.

Major non-public schools in the Township include the Westtown School and parochial schools of the St. Simon and Jude and St. Maximilian Kolbe parishes.

Because Westtown already includes four public schools and three non-public schools, and because most of the growth in the West Chester Area School District is occurring in locations that are not near Westtown, this Plan recommends that new large schools be located in areas outside of Westtown.



Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

GOAL: Continue to address sewage service needs and encourage the extension of public water service wherever feasible, in a regionally coordinated manner.

Work to address sewage needs in a regionally coordinated manner.

It is extremely expensive to build, expand, operate and maintain sewage treatment plants. To the maximum extent feasible, the number of treatment plants should be minimized through regional coordination. A major Regional Sewage Plan is currently prepared by the West Chester Regional Planning Commission. The recommendations of that Plan should be seriously considered by Westtown Township.

Sewage systems work best along watershed boundaries, not municipal boundaries. Currently, all of the sewage treatment plants and lines in the region are operated by individual municipalities, their individual authorities or private entities. Eventually, it may be appropriate to establish one or more regional sewage treatment authorities to operate and maintain fully coordinated sewage systems.

Carry out the Township's Sewage Facilities Plan, including extensions to serve concentrations of failing septic systems.

As of 2000, Westtown Township is completing a new Sewage Facilities Plan. In 1997, the Township acquired a deteriorating existing privately-owned sewage plant, which is now known as the Westtown-Chester Creek Plant. This plant mainly serves the northeastern portion of the Township, including areas east of Walnut Hill Road and north of Johnny's Way. This plant is being greatly upgraded and expanded to a capacity of 495,000 gallons per day. For sewage planning purposes, each housing unit is typically assumed to generate 300 to 350 gallons per day, although small households may average only 200 gallons per day.

Portions of the central areas of Westtown are served by the West Goshen Township Sewage Plant, which is located along South Concord Road near the West Goshen/Westtown border. The areas that are served are mainly east of Route 202, except for the Stetson and Starkweather schools. Westtown Township has received increased allocation in this plant, from 320,000 to 540,000 gallons per day. This increased allocation should provide capacity for 630 to 730 homes.

The greatest problems exist in the southeastern corner of the Township where there are older homes on lots of less than one acre that do not have suitable area for a new septic drain field. However, the Sewage Facilities Plan found that there have been problems with failing septic systems throughout almost all unsewered areas of the Township, based upon records of permits for system repairs.

The Sewage Facilities Plan recommends extending lines from the Chester Creek Plant to serve most unsewered subdivisions in the central and eastern parts of the Township. A major new development west of Shiloh Road would also be served. In addition, sewage lines would be extended from the West Goshen Plant to serve most unsewered subdivisions in the western parts of the Township.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

The Westtown School operates its own sewage plant along the Chester Creek. This plant will likely be closed, and the School will be connected into the Township's Chester Creek plant.

Over the long-run, if necessary, there also is the potential to connect into West Chester Borough's Goose Creek Sewage Plant, which is located between West Chester and Westtown, west of Route 202.

Serious consideration needs to be given to planning for appropriate sewage service of any development that may be proposed on the Crebilly Farms property west of Route 202. This Plan seeks that the land remain in open space. However, if it is developed, this Plan recommends that development be clustered on portions of the tract, so that large areas can be permanently preserved. The Sewage Facilities Plan recommends that this area be served by a spray irrigation or drip irrigation sewage system. That type of system requires that large land areas remain open in order to absorb treated effluent. Another alternative would be to extend central sewage service from the West Goshen plant. A third alternative would be to connect with the new sewage system to the south in Birmingham Township. The danger is that if appropriate sewage service is not available, the Crebilly Farms may be completely developed in two-acre lots with on-lot septic systems - without open space preservation.

Continue to promote extensions of central water service, where cost-effective.

In 1997, a major report was completed by Chester County Planning Commission entitled Water Resources, Use and Service in Chester County. This study mainly involves statistical analysis, and will be the basis for the development of a new Water Resources Plan to manage water throughout the County.

While some areas are served by on-lot wells, most of Westtown is served by the Philadelphia Suburban Water Company. In addition, a few homes along Route 202 are served by the West Chester Area Municipal Authority. There is an emergency interconnection between the two systems along Oakbourne Road at the West Goshen border. The Westtown School has its own water system with its own well.

Most of the older developments in Westtown were originally developed with independent water systems with their own wells. These systems were merged into the Great Valley Water Company, which was purchased by Philadelphia Suburban in 1986. The Great Valley service area includes Westtown, East Goshen and adjacent parts of West Goshen, among other areas. Philadelphia Suburban has been interconnecting these formerly independent systems.

As of 1991 mapping by the County, there were a number of central wells scattered throughout Westtown and adjacent areas. These included wells along Route 202 near Skiles Boulevard, on Oakbourne Road east of the railroad, south of the intersection of Shiloh and Route 926 in Thornbury Township, on Westtown Road south of W. Goshen, off Leslie Lane northeast of Penn Wood Elementary School, and along 926 just west of Willistown border. There are water storage tanks west of New Street on General Greene Drive and within Oakbourne Park.

Philadelphia Suburban obtains water from a wide variety of sources. Approximately 12 percent of the water supply is provided by 37 wells. The company also purchases water from Chester Water Authority (which obtains water from Octoraro Reservoir and the Susquehanna River), purchases water from the

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

West Chester Area Municipal Authority (which mainly obtains water from the East Branch of the Brandywine Creek and wells), uses the Pickering Creek and Pickering Reservoir (near Phoenixville), and withdrawals from the Crum Creek, Chester Creek, Ridley Creek and the Schuylkill River, among other sources.

As of 1996, Philadelphia Suburban's system had a peak use of 101.9 million gallons per day. As of early 1998, average use is 93 million gallons per day. In 1996, Philadelphia Suburban estimated that their system had a safe yield of 106 million gallons per day (during drought conditions), not including bulk purchases from other providers. In addition, storage tanks hold 147 million gallons to provide a supplement during peak periods of demand. The nearest treatment plants are located near Media and Phoenixville.

The 1997 County Study forecasts that between 9.8 and 14.9 million gallons per day of additional water will be needed within Chester County by community water systems by the year 2020. The range in needs depends upon growth rates, the success of conservation efforts, and the extent of use of central water systems versus on-lot wells.

The majority of development in Westtown is served by public water service, except for: a) areas around Westtown-Thornbury School, b) the West Wynn development south of Manley Road, c) the Westtown Farms development in the northeast corner of the Township and d) the Westover Farms, Grandview Acres and Avonlea developments west of Route 352.

Central water service is important to provide reliable drinking water supplies and to provide water for firefighting. Central water service should be extended to all development wherever it is not cost-prohibitive. Philadelphia Suburban Water Company is continuing to extend water service where they determine there will be sufficient revenues to pay for the extensions and where the majority of the affected property-owners support the connections. In certain cases, the Township has adopted ordinances requiring every property-owner to connect into the water system where the majority of property-owners are in favor of the water extension.

The Transportation Plan

The entire region has experienced dramatic increases in traffic. The most pronounced increases have been along Routes 202, 3, 352 and 926, but traffic has also increased on many other through-roads. Route 202 is likely to be widened to six lanes within the next decade. This section works to address transportation issues in a manner that is carefully coordinated with land uses and neighborhoods. In a manner consistent with the County's Landscapes Plan, this Plan addresses managing traffic access onto major roads and encouraging methods of transportation other than "one person in one car."

The following major goals provide overall direction for this section:

- Closely coordinate the transportation system with existing and planned development, with an emphasis on careful management of traffic access onto main roads.
- Work with PA, DOT and developers to continually increase the safety and efficiency of the road system.
- Encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel, and support regional efforts to increase use of public transit and carpooling.

GOAL: Closely coordinate the transportation system with existing and planned development, with an emphasis on careful management of traffic access onto main roads.

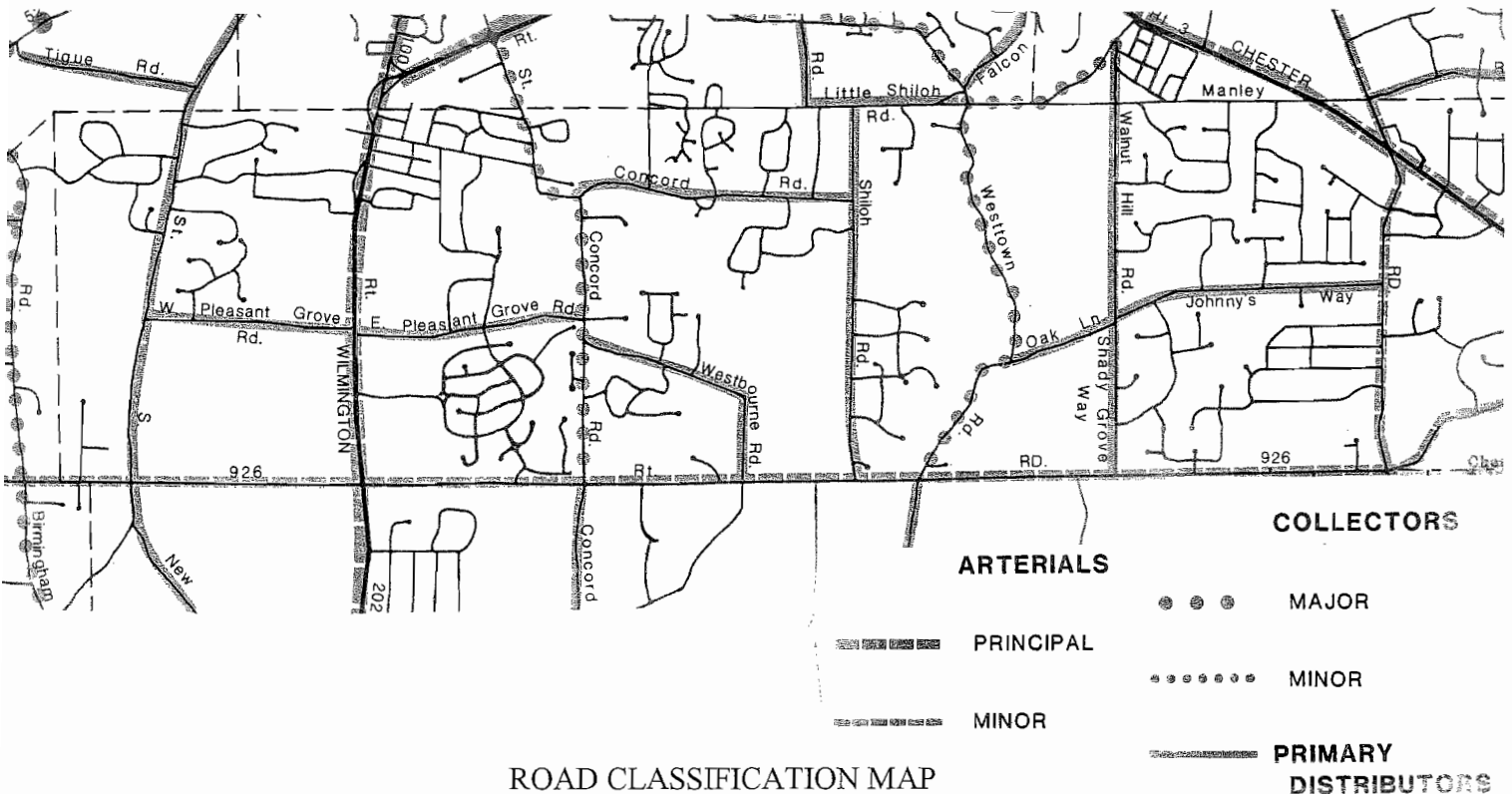
Manage roads according to their intended functions.

Different roads in the Township serve different roles. Some roads carry through-traffic, while others mainly connect residential driveways. It is important to classify roads according to their intended function to decide the most appropriate type of traffic access. These "functional classifications" of roads can also assist in prioritizing roads for future improvements. Moreover, these classifications are used in the road design requirements of the Subdivision Ordinance. As seen on the map on the following page, roads are classified according to the following major types, with certain sub-types as recommended in the 1994 West Chester Region Functional Classification Study:

Expressways - Provide major highway connections between regions. There are no expressways within Westtown. However, Route 202 to the north of Westtown is an expressway.

Principal Arterials - These roads serve trips within a region, at speeds typically between 35 and 55 miles per hour. These roads typically carry very high traffic volumes - between 10,000 and 40,000 vehicles per day. Routes 202 and 3 are both classified as principal arterials.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan



ROAD CLASSIFICATION MAP

Minor Arterials - These roads do not typically carry traffic as long distances as principal arterials. They typically have speed limits between 35 and 45 miles per hour, and carry moderately heavy traffic volumes - between 5,000 and 20,000 vehicles per day. Routes 3, 926 and 352 are classified as minor arterials.

Major Collectors - These roads primarily provide for moderate to short distance travel at typical speeds of 45 miles per hour. They usually carry moderate volumes of traffic - 3,000 to 10,000 vehicles per day. Westtown Road, Matlack Street and S. Concord Road are classified as major collectors.

Minor Collectors - These roads primarily provide for shorter distances of travel than major collectors. They typically involve speeds of 40 miles per hour and traffic volumes of 2,000 to 5,000 vehicles per day. No roads in Westtown have been classified as minor collectors.

Primary Distributors - This is a type of local road that primarily serves local traffic but at typical volumes of 750 to 2,000 vehicles per day. These roads typically have speed limits of 25 to 35 miles per hour. This classification includes Pleasant Grove Road, Shiloh Road, Little Shiloh Road, Walnut Hill Road, South New Street and Johnny's Way.

Other Local Roads - Other roads in Westtown are classified as Secondary Distributors or Local Access Roads. These roads primarily serve to link driveways to through-roads. These roads serve short-distance travel and typically are designed for speeds of 25 miles per hour. These roads typically have traffic volumes of less than 1,000 trips per day.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Work with PennDOT to carefully manage access of development onto major roads.

Uncontrolled traffic access can interfere with the movement of through-traffic, and create traffic hazards. An excellent reference source on these matters is the Chester County Planning Commission's Circulation Handbook.

A special emphasis is needed upon carefully controlling traffic access points onto Routes 202, 3 and 926. Any new residential development should be setback far enough from major roads to minimize noise conflicts, with substantial landscaped buffers. Westtown Township already has strict regulations in place on traffic access onto Routes 202 and 3, and to reserve right-of-way for future widening of major roads. Adjacent municipalities will be encouraged to adopt similar regulations, if they are not already in place.

The West Chester Region Zoning Study recommended a greater emphasis on controlling access along Route 926. Specifically, the Study recommended that at least 250 feet be required between every access point along Route 926. The Study encouraged use of shared driveways.

It may be desirable to consider additional access controls in Westtown Township on major collector roads. For example, a larger lot width can be required if a new lot will have its own driveway onto a major road, than if it will have access onto a local road. This encourages use of new interior roads.

Reserve additional right-of-way along all major roads to allow for possible future improvements.

Sufficient ultimate right-of-way should be reserved along major roads to allow for future widening, utility improvements, stormwater improvements and street trees.

While a municipality does not always have the legal authority to require the actual dedication of additional right-of-way without cost to the Township, it can require that buildings be setback from a "future" right-of-way line to leave room for future improvements. Most developers will agree to dedicate the future right-of-way, especially if ordinances are structured so that it does not reduce the density of a development.

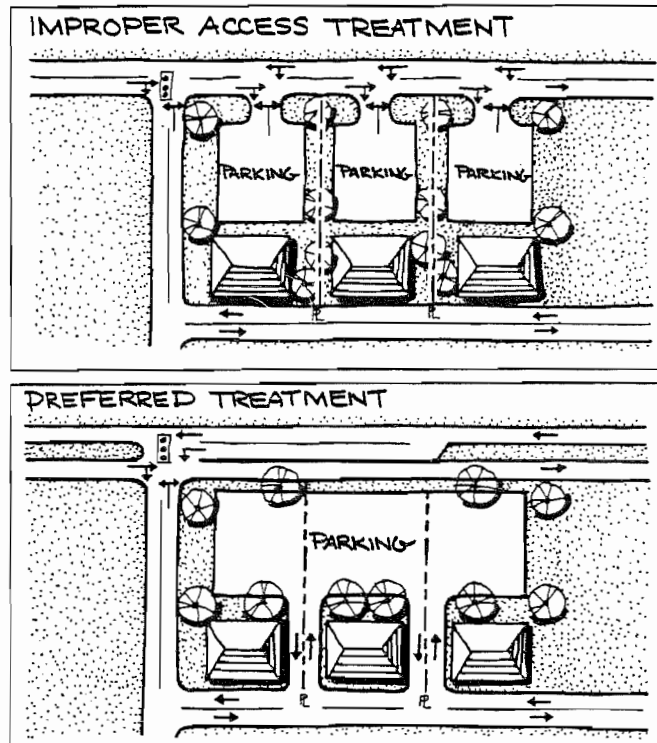
Westtown was a leader in the region in requiring a 120 feet wide ultimate right-of-way along Route 202. An even wider ultimate right-of-way of 150 feet is recommended along Route 202 by the West Chester Region Zoning Study to provide room for six lanes of traffic.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Encourage use of rear or side access to reduce the number of turning movements directly onto major roads.

This method works best when uses are able to gain access to a traffic signal. Connections between adjacent uses should be completed parallel to Route 202 to allow traffic to enter Route 202 at carefully designed locations, where feasible.

In addition to a goal of inter-connected parking lots, the Comprehensive Plan Map proposes parallel road connections running along much of the west side of Route 202 and a portion of the east side of the highway.

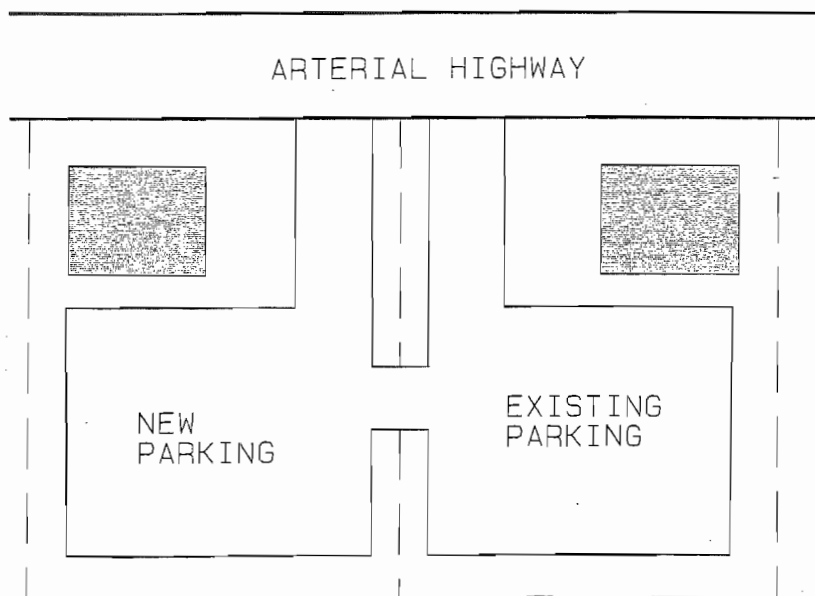


Source: Chester County Planning Commission, 1993.

Seek inter-connections between adjacent non-residential uses to avoid the need to re-enter major roads.

Interconnections between adjacent non-residential uses along a major road allows traffic to visit more than one use to another use without needing to enter and re-enter major roads.

These inter-connections can be required for a new development. If an existing adjacent use will not allow an inter-connection, then the new development should be required to provide the link as a stub. This stub can then be opened in the future when any development approval is sought on the adjacent lot.



Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

GOAL: Work with PA. DOT and developers to continually increase the safety and efficiency of the road system.

Recognize that traffic congestion will become more severe if improvements are not made.

The 1997 West Chester Region Long-Range Transportation Study was a major effort, which considered development in the entire West Chester Region. This Study projected that the number of households in the West Chester Region will increase by 22% and the number of employees working in the Region will increase by 28% by 2010. Traffic congestion is rated on a scale of A to F, with A being free-flowing and F being very severe congestion and/or failure of an intersection to accommodate the traffic. For example, if vehicles seeking to turn left must regularly wait through a few cycles of a traffic signal to turn left, that is considered to be complete failure. The Study forecast that if no road improvements would be made except for the minor short-range improvements that were already funded, 24 major intersections in the Region would have unacceptable levels of congestion involving levels of "E" or "F." The Study recommends a number of additional projects. If these additional projects are completed, the Study forecasts, then traffic congestion in 2010 might be held to 1995 levels.

The Study stated that it is impractical to consider major reductions in the amount of development permitted within the West Chester Region because: a) most of the zoning of undeveloped residential areas is already low-density, b) most of the zoning of undeveloped business areas are within established business centers, and c) the County Comprehensive Plan recommends most of these areas as being suitable locations for the County's development.

The West Chester Region Transportation Study concentrated upon four of the largest available development areas in the Region, including the Crebilly Farm property in Westtown. On the Crebilly Farm, under current zoning, the Study estimated that 350 dwelling units would be possible. Two alternatives were also considered in case rezoning would be considered. The "mid-level alternative" involved 550 dwellings and 500,000 square feet of office space. The "high intensity alternative" involved 1.5 million square feet of office and warehouse space and 750 dwellings. Under the highest intensity alternative, the Route 202/Matlack Street intersection would be a much more severe rate of failure, and the intersections of Route 926 with Birmingham Road and New Street would fall from C to D.

The Study analyzed existing traffic conditions as of 1995. Then, the Study projected traffic conditions in 2010 with currently planned minor improvements. Next, the Study projected traffic conditions in 2010 if all of the improvements recommended in the Study would be completed. The volumes of traffic were provided for the PM peak hour.

The intersection of Routes 926/202 was considered to be at level D in 1995, which was forecast to drop to F by 2010 without major improvements. By 2010, a new grade separated interchange could greatly improve conditions. However a level E would still be expected for the southbound off-ramp. PennDOT is seriously considering constructing a grade-separated interchange at this intersection as part of the Route 202 widening.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

The Matlack St. intersection with Route 202 was below level F in 1995, which was projected to continue to fail without major improvements, and would could rise to level C or better if converted into a grade separated interchange by 2010. This Plan recommends serious consideration of a grade-separated interchange at Route 202 and Matlack Street as part of the proposed Route 202 reconstruction and widening.

The Route 352/Route 3 intersection was below level F in 1995, and was projected to continue to fail by 2010, even with the improvements planned in the Study. The Study particularly noted the congestion for left-turns from northbound Route 352 to westbound Route 3. There are no easy solutions to this situation.

Since this Regional Transportation Study was completed, traffic signals have been installed at the S. New Street and S. Concord Road intersections of Route 926. These signals greatly increase traffic safety for turning movements. However, the signals have also served to increase traffic along S. Concord Road.

As described below, this Plan recommends several additional improvements along Route 926 to address problems identified in the Regional Transportation Study.

Continue to aggressively seek to obtain PennDOT funding of needed improvements by engineering improvements in advance.

The best method to have improvements along State roads made in a timely manner is for Westtown Township to complete the needed traffic engineering designs with Township dollars. This initial investment greatly reduces the amount of time needed to complete projects, and gives the projects a much higher priority in the competition for limited State road improvement dollars. This is a “pro-active” approach to traffic problems, as opposed to passively waiting for “PennDOT to do something.”

Work to integrate a widened Route 202 with the character of Westtown.

A major engineering study is underway to determine how to widen Route 202 to six lanes through Westtown. This work would likely involve major changes to the S. High Street and Route 926 intersections with Route 202. New grade-separated interchanges may be proposed at the Matlack Street and Route 926 intersections with Route 202. The intent is also to close off some of the streets and driveways that now enter Route 202 in Westtown.

As described in the Land Use Plan section, any widening of Route 202 should be accompanied by heavily landscaped earth berms wherever space allows. It appears that many homes that currently front upon Route 202 will need to be demolished to widen the road. Any excess land should be used for these berms.

Seek improved shoulders and wider bridges along Route 926.

Route 926 is likely to experience increased truck traffic once weight restrictions are removed on two bridges that are being replaced. The narrowness of shoulders along the road means the road is unforgiving to the smallest driver error. Shoulders of at least four feet width on each side should be constructed by PennDOT. Utility companies should be required to move all poles out of the existing 50 feet wide right-of-way, to allow the road to be widened and to remove hazards.

The narrow “Singing Bridge” on the Westtown/Thornbury border along Route 926 is programmed for widening by PennDOT. A second bridge along Route 926 over the creek west of the railroad is also narrow, but it is a historic and scenic stone bridge.

Work with PennDOT to address the severely congested intersection of Routes 202/926.

The most effective long-term solution is currently being studied - to develop a grade-separated intersection with a bridge and ramps. This intersection would not be a full cloverleaf, but instead would probably involve some type of configuration that consumes less land. A less expensive but shorter-term solution would be to complete the set of loop roads.

In any case, if the Crebilly Farms property develops near Route 202, a new road should be required to be built from the Episcopal Church to Route 926, running parallel to Route 202. Among other advantages, this road may encourage persons who wish to turn westward from southbound Route 202 to take this alternative route, and thereby remove some of the turning movements from the Route 926/202 intersection.

Work with Thornbury Township and the Westtown School to realign intersections along Route 926.

Many intersections along Route 926 are narrow, have limited sight distances and are not safe for left-hand turns, particularly considering the speeds of traffic. Intersections along Route 926 would work best if they can be signalized and widened. In order to justify a signal, roads from the north should intersect Route 926 at the same locations where roads intersect from the south. This would allow efficient north-south travel across Route 926. A development has been approved that would realign the Shiloh Road /Route 926 intersection so that it is closer to the Westtown-Thornton Road intersection. Discussions have also occurred with Westtown School and Thornbury Township to realign the Shady Grove Way/Route 926 intersection with the Cheney Road/Route 926 intersection. In each case, traffic signals would be proposed.

All of the traffic signals along Route 926 are being engineered so that they will have coordinated timing with each other, to allow traffic to move smoothly at moderate speeds. This signal timing should work to discourage speeding.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Allow speed bumps along Oak Lane, and re-align Shady Grove Way.

The Westtown School is very concerned about pedestrian safety hazards because of the high speeds of traffic along Oak Lane. Oak Lane separates the School's main campus from most of its athletic fields. If Oak Lane would be vacated by the Township between Westtown Road and Walnut Hill Road, the School could then place speed bumps along the road to reduce speeds. In this case, the Township would still retain an access easement guaranteeing the right of the public to use the road. However, for this road vacation to properly function, the realignment of Shady Grove Way at Route 926 should occur, as described above.

Work with PennDOT and adjacent property-owners to reduce sight distance problems.

A number of problems remain throughout the Township where there is limited sight distances to see oncoming traffic. Most of the problems are at intersections involving State-owned roads. Most of the sight distance problems are along the following roads: Route 926, Route 352, Little Shiloh Road and South Concord Road. In some cases, sight distance problems can be reduced by seeking approval from the adjacent property-owner to regrade a bank or ordering the removal of a shrub, fence or wall that is in the right-of-way. Many property-owners will promptly remove a sight obstruction if they are informed of the legal liability they may have in the event of an accident. In other cases, a reconstruction of a road may be needed to provide adequate sight distance.

It may be appropriate to install a four-way stop and a lower speed limit at S. Concord and Pleasant Grove Roads to address the sight distance problem. A new entrance into Oakbourne Park is also proposed along S. Concord at a location with better sight distance.

Work with Thornbury Township and adjacent property owners to improve the Routes 926/352 intersection.

This intersection is very congested. More clearly defined and wider turn lanes should be provided. If the adjacent commercially zoned property in Thornbury Township (Delaware County) is developed, then more major improvements will be needed.

Seek a new bridge across Route 202 at Pleasant Grove Road.

Once Route 202 is widened to six lanes, if a continuous median is completed, the east and west ends of the Township will become even more separated from each other. It would be particularly difficult for residents of the western part of the Township to walk or bicycle to Oakbourne Park or to connect with the Township's trail system. As part of the widening plans, PennDOT should construct a bridge to allow Pleasant Grove Road to cross Route 202. At best, this bridge would carry motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians, and provide an important link for the regional police force from its headquarters on Pleasant Grove Road. However, if this is not feasible, then at a minimum, a bridge should provide for pedestrian and bicycle access.

Where We Are Headed: The Policies of the Plan

Work with PennDOT and adjacent property-owners to improve the eastern end of Route 926.

The curves along Route 926 east of Route 352 should be reduced. This can be accomplished by trading with adjacent land-owners the existing right-of-way of Route 926 for a less curvy right-of-way.

Use an Official Map to reserve land for needed road links and improvements.

This recommendation is discussed in the “Putting this Plan Into Action” section (see page 88).

GOAL: Encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel, and support regional efforts to increase use of public transit and carpooling.

A variety of measures can be used to promote methods of travel other than “one person, one car” and to manage the demand for travel. Many of these efforts are being promoted by Transportation Management Associations that bring together government agencies with major employers.

Opportunities should be improved for pedestrian and bicycle travel. Where sidewalks cannot be justified, property-owners can be required to provide flat open grass areas along major roads that allow pedestrians to avoid walking in the road. The Trails Plan Map shows proposed walking and bicycling routes, which are intended to be linked to routes in adjacent municipalities. Smoother and wider shoulders should be installed along key roads to allow for safer bicycling. These shoulders should be clearly separated from travel lanes by white lines.

The Trails Plan is discussed in the “Parks and Recreation Plan” section. See page 66. Significant amounts of Federal and State grant funds are available to construct trails, particularly regional bicycle trails that can serve a transportation function, in addition to recreation.

Employers should permit additional tele-commuting from their employee’s homes and allow flexible work hours so employees can avoid rush hour congestion.

Carpooling, vanpooling, and employer-provided shuttles should be encouraged. Preferential parking should be provided to carpoolers. A new park and ride lot has been constructed at the Route 202/Paoli Pike interchange, which helps to promote carpooling. Additional park and ride lots should be considered in convenient locations.

Limited public bus service is available in the Township through SEPTA and a private bus company under contract to SEPTA. The Chester County Paratransit System offers flexible door-to-door transportation for persons with special needs who cannot use the fixed-route bus system.

Putting This Plan Into Action



Additional use of public transit should be promoted, including commuter rail and bus service. This Plan recommends that commuter rail service be re-extended to West Chester. However, if that is not feasible, service should at least be extended to Wawa or Chester Heights, versus the current ending of service at Elywn. In addition to reducing east-west traffic from peak hour commuters, this service extension would also serve Cheyney University students. While additional parking has been added in Exton, more parking is needed along the Delaware County rail line. If land becomes available that is suitable for a future parking area along this rail corridor, it should be acquired.

Appropriate locations for public bus stops should be incorporated wherever appropriate.

Putting This Plan Into Action

Putting this Plan Into Action

This section of the Plan includes policies to carry out the Plan. These include actions that should be accomplished by the Township Government, State agencies, residents and many other agencies and organizations.

GOAL: Work to put this Plan into action through a program of updated planning and short-term actions within a long-range perspective.

This Plan should be consistently used as an overall guide for land use, community facility and transportation decisions. In addition, the Plan needs to be reviewed periodically and, if necessary, updated to reflect changing trends.

Planning is an on-going process. This Plan should be implemented through a continuous process of follow-up planning and action. The most immediate action will be the updating of the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.

The Township Government cannot implement this Plan alone. Involvement is needed by residents, homeowner associations, businesses, institutions, property-owners and many other groups.

To be effective, community development efforts need wide participation. A close working relationship is needed with Federal, State and County agencies and adjacent municipalities.

Maximize communications, coordination and cooperative efforts between Westtown Township, adjacent municipalities, the County and other agencies and organizations.

Tools to Implement this Plan

This Plan establishes overall policies for guiding the future development and preservation of Westtown. However, this Plan is not a regulation. The following major tools are available to help implement this Plan:

- Citizen involvement,
- the Zoning Ordinance,
- the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance,
- the Construction Codes,
- an Official Map,
- computerized mapping,

Putting This Plan Into Action

- Capital Improvements Planning, and
- the Township's annual spending and the seeking of additional grant funds.

Citizen Involvement

The volunteer efforts of boards, committees, homeowner associations are essential to further improve Westtown and to carry out this Plan. The objective is to strengthen community pride and emphasize volunteer efforts for residents and property-owners to improve their surroundings.

It is essential to keep citizens informed and provide opportunities for meaningful citizen input, while making use of new technologies for communication.

The Township's internet site should be regularly updated with information that will help spur public interest, enthusiasm and involvement. Opportunities for citizen involvement should also be highlighted through the newspaper and other media.

Zoning Ordinance

The Township's Zoning Ordinance is the primary legal tool to regulate the uses of land and buildings. The Zoning Ordinance includes a Zoning Map that divides the Township into different zoning districts. Each district permits a set of activities and establishes a maximum density of development. The Zoning Ordinance and Map should be updated to carry out the Land Use Policies of this Plan.

In addition to regulating land uses and densities, zoning also controls the following:

- the heights of buildings,
- the percentage of a lot that may be covered by buildings and paving,
- the minimum distances that buildings may be placed from streets and property lines,
- the minimum size of lots,
- the maximum sizes and heights of signs, and
- the protection of important natural features.

Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO)

The Township's SALDO is currently being updated. That ordinance mainly regulates the creation of new lots and the construction of new streets by developers. It also regulates the engineering of a new commercial, industrial and institutional building.

Putting This Plan Into Action

It is preferable to place many types of standards in the subdivision ordinance instead of the zoning ordinance. This is because, under State law, more flexibility is allowed in subdivision ordinance provisions. Under a SALDO ordinance, regulations can be waived by the Board of Supervisors for common sense reasons. This allows trade-offs between different matters that result in improved site designs.

In comparison, a zoning provision is a strict regulation that can only be varied through a variance by the Zoning Hearing Board. A zoning officer must enforce a zoning regulation without any discretion. In most cases, a Zoning Hearing Board stresses legal matters, and is not oriented to address broader site design issues. In most cases, a zoning variance cannot be granted unless the applicant is able to prove that there is a hardship that prevents them from complying. A formal hearing is required with a stenographer, and any variance is vulnerable to lengthy appeals by any person who may be opposed to a project.

Construction Codes

Westtown enforces a modern set of construction codes, using model ordinances prepared by national organizations. These codes are particularly important to minimize fire hazards. Care is needed that these codes are not excessive when applied to the renovation of historic buildings.

Official Map

The State Municipalities Planning Code grants municipalities the authority to adopt an "Official Map." An Official Map can designate proposed locations of new roads, intersection improvements, municipal uses and parks. The Map may cover the entire Township or only certain areas. The proposed locations do not need to be exact surveyed boundaries. This process may be particularly useful, for example, to reserve right-of-way for a future road along the west side of Route 202 south of Stetson Middle School.

Once an Official Map is officially adopted by the Supervisors, then the Township is provided with a limited amount of authority to reserve land for the projects on the map. If the land affected by the proposed project is proposed for development, then the Township would have one year to either purchase the land for its fair market value or decide not to go forward with the project. This one year period is intended to provide time to raise funds to acquire the land, and avoid lost opportunities. If this one year period is not in effect, a person could obtain a building permit almost immediately in many cases and construct a building that could obstruct an important project. An Official Map also serves to provide notice to property-owners about the Township's future plans.

Computerized Mapping

Putting This Plan Into Action

Westtown is working with neighboring municipalities to develop a modern computerized mapping/“Geographic Information” system. This system will build upon Chester County’s system, which includes tax maps.

Capital Improvements Planning

The Township needs to continually plan and budget for major capital expenditures. “Capital” improvements are projects involving a substantial expense for the construction or improvement of major public facilities that have a long life span and that are not annual operating expenses. Examples of capital projects include major road improvements, acquisition of parkland, and major stormwater improvements.

A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) can help the Township identify projects that will be needed, prioritize them, identify possible funding sources and then budget for their completion. A typical CIP looks five years in the future. A CIP should identify major street reconstruction projects that will be needed, which can help coordinate the reconstruction with underground projects by utilities. A CIP can help a community minimize the total number of bond issues that are needed, which will minimize borrowing expenses. It also can allow the Township to carefully time any bond issues to take advantage of the lowest interest rates.

Other Implementation Tools

Many other tools are available to carry out the Comprehensive Plan, including the following:

- priorities decided as part of the Township’s annual budget, and
- aggressively seeking Federal and State grants to reduce the burden upon local taxpayers.

Problems do not stop at municipal borders. Many solutions, such as traffic problems along Route 926, are complicated by the need to work with several other municipal governments. A strong emphasis is needed upon inter-municipal cooperation. Increasingly, State grants require some evidence of inter-municipal cooperation. Over the long-run, consideration should be given to merging Westtown Township with another adjoining township, to increase the efficiency and coordination of local government.

The West Chester Regional Planning Commission also represents another implementation tool. This body brings together representatives of municipalities in the area to discuss issues of common concern. The Commission also works with the County Planning Commission to prepare studies and plans on key issues. Joint municipal organizations can also be valuable to provide certain services across municipal borders or to offer joint purchasing, which can often lower purchasing costs. For example, a Council of Government in the State College area provides many code enforcement services. Joint municipal organizations can also be beneficial to maintain good lines of communication and to trade ideas.

Putting This Plan Into Action

Role of the Planning Commission

Some of the Planning Commission's greatest responsibilities are to oversee the preparation and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and the preparation of Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance revisions. On a monthly basis, the Planning Commission also reviews proposed developments. The Planning Commission also has a role in reviewing proposals of other government agencies.

Role of the Board of Supervisors

The final decision on nearly all matters affecting the growth and preservation of Westtown rests with the Board of Supervisors. Therefore, close communications and cooperation between the Planning Commission, the Township Staff, and the Supervisors will be essential in continuing to improve quality of life in Westtown.

ACTION PROGRAM

The following table summarizes the major recommendations of this Plan. Certain items are noted as being high priorities. The timing of each recommendation is listed, as well which agencies should have the primary responsibility to carry out the recommendation.

Abbreviations:

Sup. = Township Board of Supervisors

Staff = Township Staff

PC = Township Planning Commission

Eng. = Township Engineer

P&R = Parks and Recreation Committee

CPC = Chester County Planning Commission

Cons. District = County Conservation District

Dev. = Private Developers

PennDOT = PA. Department of Transportation

WCRPC = West Chester Region Planning Commission

WCARC = West Chester Area Recreation Commission

Putting This Plan Into Action

NATURAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION PLAN

Policy or Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations below)
Work to preserve creek valleys in a natural state, including establishing a large setback from creeks for parking, buildings and storage, and maintaining natural vegetation along creeks.	✓	Continuous	PC, Cons. District, Dev., Landowners, P&R
Emphasize more naturalistic approaches to stormwater management, with an emphasis on protecting water quality and encouraging groundwater recharge.	✓	Continuous	PC, Cons. District, Twp. Engineer, Dev.
Continue to carefully restrict development on steeply sloped lands, including seeking to avoid any development on slopes over 25 percent.	✓	Continuous	Staff, PC, Cons. District, Twp. Engineer
Minimize the removal of mature trees, and require the planting of street trees as part of new development.	✓	Continuous	Staff, PC, Twp. Engineer
Require landscaping buffers that have a naturalistic appearance, with a mix of native species.		Continuous	Staff, PC, Twp. Eng.
Encourage the preservation of farmland, where practical, through creative forms of development, allowing supplemental sources of income, and cooperative partnerships with landowners to design the best long-term uses of their land.	✓	Continuous	Staff, PC, Sup., Landowners, Conser-vancies
Seek to permanently preserve key tracts of land through the purchase of conservation easements, which may combine County bond funding, a dedicated source of Township funding (such as a bond issue) and a partial charitable deduction by the property-owner.	✓	Short-range	Sup, Staff, Land-owners, CPC, Conser-vancies

Putting This Plan Into Action

PLAN TO MANAGE LAND USES AND GROWTH

Policy or Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Carry out the land use recommendations of this Plan including zoning map and text revisions.	✓	Short-range	Sup, PC, Staff, Eng.
Make every possible effort to strongly promote development to occur with significant well-designed preserved open spaces, as opposed to “cookie-cutter” subdivisions.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff, Eng., Dev.
Emphasize preserved open spaces that serve a valuable public purpose, such as preserving a natural character along major roads, preserving creek corridors, providing recreational opportunities. Avoid narrow and isolated open spaces.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff, Eng., P&R
Consider basing the allowed density upon the natural features of the parcel and lot.	✓	Short-range	Sup, PC, Staff
Consider offering density bonuses for substantial public improvements, such as major off-site road improvements.	✓	Short-range	Sup., PC, Staff
Make sure that open spaces are well-integrated with the homes sites, as opposed to simply being left-over land.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff, Eng, P&R
Use a four-step subdivision process in result in conservation-oriented design, with an emphasis on considering natural features before laying out lots. The major decisions involving lot layout and open space preservation should occur at the sketch plan stage, before detailed engineering is completed.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff, Eng, Dev.
As part of the widening of Route 202, seek that PennDOT replace any homes that are acquired with a substantial heavily landscaped earth berm.	✓	Short-range	Sup, PC, Staff, Eng., PennDOT
Emphasize compatible land uses and road patterns with adjoining municipalities.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff
Work to extend the best features of older development into newer development, including encouraging architecture that is consistent with the character of Westtown.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff, Dev.

Putting This Plan Into Action

Policy or Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Continue to avoid strip commercial development along major roads, and instead direct most commercial uses to existing centers within Westtown and adjacent areas.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, WCRPC
Encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Co. Histor. Society

PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

Policy or Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Provide a balanced system of active and passive recreation areas and facilities, in a manner that is coordinated with public schools, a regional trail system and open space preservation.	✓	Continuous	P&R, WCARC, Sup., PC, Staff, School District
Continue to provide recreational facilities that support the programs of local recreation associations, with an emphasis on youth activities.	✓	Continuous	P&R, WCARC, Sup
Through the West Chester Area Recreation Commission, provide for types of recreational activities that are not being provided by recreation associations, such as special events, summer day camps and environmental education. Cooperate with adjacent municipalities to provide for a wider range of recreation programs.	✓	Continuous	P&R, WCARC, Sup
Improve Oakbourne Park as the central community-wide park, with an emphasis on recreation programs, group picnics, special events, trails, music concerts and a major new playground. Maintain existing woods as natural areas.	✓	Short-range	P&R, WCARC, Sup.

Putting This Plan Into Action

Policy or Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Complete the trail system throughout the Township, with an initial emphasis on a loop through Oakbourne Park, the Cope tract east of Concord Rd., the Pleasant Grove Development, Westtown-Thornbury School and the west branch of the Chester Creek. Most of these trails should be nature trails, with some paved trails where old roads exist in Oakbourne Park.	✓	Short-range	P&R, Sup., Staff, School District
Work with Westtown School to seek community use of trails through portions of the School's property, possibly with the Township providing liability coverage.		Mid-range	P&R, Sup., Westtown School
Upgrade Tyson Park and Larchbourne Park for local recreation and the field at PennWood Park.	✓	Short-range	P&R, Sup.
Investigate alternatives to provide additional athletic fields (such as a joint project with an adjacent township), or to allow for joint use of fields at the Westtown School. - Over the long-range, consider additional athletic fields on the flatter portions of the Cope Tract on the east side of S. Concord Road.	✓	Mid-range	P&R, Sup., Westtown School, landowners, Staff, Athletic Assocs.
Consider jointly developing or improving a public swimming pool with one or more nearby municipalities.		Mid-range	P&R, Sup., Adj. Municipalities, Staff, WCARC
Promote the development of a golf course on the Crebilly Farm, if the land does not continue in agriculture.		Long-range	Sup, PC
Seek the fullest use possible of the outdoor and indoor facilities of public schools for community recreation when they are not needed for school activities.		Continuous	P&R, School District, WCARC, Rec. groups
Improve the maintenance and oversight of Township-owned open spaces, with involvement by adjacent residents.		Continuous	P&R, Sup, Staff, Homeowner Associations

Putting This Plan Into Action

Policy or Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Require that residential developers either provide suitable recreation land on-site or pay fees to be used to acquire and improve recreational land in other locations.	✓	Short-range	Sup, PC

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES PLAN

Policy or Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Address the need for improvement of township buildings, including renovating the Oakbourne Mansion for recreation and possibly constructing a new Township Building.	✓	Short-range	Sup, Staff
Continue to provide for high-quality police protection in cooperation with nearby municipalities.	✓	Continuous	Sup, Staff, Police Dept.
Continue to work with fire companies and emergency medical service providers to make sure they have the equipment and training they need.	✓	Continuous	Sup, Staff, Fire Companies, EMS Providers
Carry out the Sewage Facilities Plan, including extensions to serve concentrations of failing septic systems.	✓	Short-range	Sup, Staff, Twp. Eng.
Continue to promote extensions of central water service, where cost-effective.		Continuous	Sup, Staff, Phila. Sub. Water Co.

Putting This Plan Into Action

THE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Policy or Action	High Priority?	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Work with PennDOT and through development regulations and reviews to carefully manage access of development onto major roads. This should include encouraging rear or side access to reduce turning movements onto major roads, and inter-connections between adjacent parking lots.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff, Twp. Eng., PennDOT
Reserve right-of-way along major roads for future improvements.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff, Twp. Eng., PennDOT
Work with PennDOT and developers to continually increase the safety and efficiency of the road system. Continue to aggressively seek PennDOT funding of needed improvements, with the Township engineering improvements in advance.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff, Twp. Eng, dev., PennDOT, CCPC
Seek improved shoulders along Route 926, improvements to the Route 202/926 intersection, realignments of Shady Grove Road and Shiloh Road along Route 926, sight distance improvements, improvements to the Route 926/352 intersection, a new bridge across Route 202 at Pleasant Grove Road and a reduction in the curve of Route 926 east of Route 352.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff, Twp. Eng, dev. PennDOT, CCPC, adjacent landowners
Promote pedestrian and bicycle travel and use of carpooling and public transit. Seek the re-establishment of commuter rail service to stations that are further west, preferably as far as West Chester.	✓	Continuous	Sup, PC, Staff, PennDOT, Septa

Appendices: Background Information for the Plan

The People of Westtown

This section discusses many statistical characteristics of Westtown's population, including age, race and household size.

Population Estimates

The U.S. Census reported that Westtown Township included 10,352 persons in 2000. This number is considerably lower than the Census estimate of 12,183 residents in mid-1998. That 1998 estimate was consistent with the number of housing units built in Westtown between 1990 and 1998. If the Census number for 2000 is accurate, then there was an increase of only four percent from 1990 to 2000. The 1998 estimate would have been an increase of 23 percent from the 1990 count of 9,937, and an increase of 80 percent from the 1980 count of 6,774.

The Census reported that Chester County included 433,501 residents in 2000. This was a 15 percent increase from the 1990 population of 376,396, making Chester County one of the fastest growing counties in Pennsylvania.

Population Projection

Population projections are useful to estimate water and sewage usage, traffic, school populations and many other community service demands. This population projection assumes that the Crebilly Farms, Stratton Tracts, Stokes Farm and Westtown School properties will not be developed for additional residences before 2010.

Based upon remaining undeveloped residential lots and proposed zoning, it is then assumed that 680 new housing units will have been built between the time of the 1998 estimate and 2010. Because most of these units are projected to be age-restricted or apartments, it is assumed that 600 of these units will average 2.0 persons per household. The remaining 80 dwelling units are projected to include an average of 3.1 persons per household. This would result in a total increase of approximately 1,448 persons. When this is added to the 1998 estimate of 12,183, it would result in a projected population in 2010 of 13,631.

Population and Housing Changes and Trends

The following tables are based upon U.S. Census data. Complete detailed data from the year 2000 Census will not be available until 2002.

Westtown's population increased by 80 percent from 1980 to 1998 - from about 6,800 to about 12,200 persons. During this same period, the County's population increased by 33 percent.

POPULATION

LOCATION	ESTIMATE	POPULATION		CHANGE 1980-1998	
	1998	1990	1980	NUMBER	PERCENT
Westtown Township	12,183	9,937	6,774	5,409	79.9%
Chester County	421,686	376,396	316,660	105,026	33.1%

In 2000, the Census reported that 3 percent of Westtown's population were African-American persons, while 2 person were Asian and 1 percent was Hispanic. These percentages were unchanged from 1990.

In 2000, 27 percent of the Township's population was under age 18. This was a slight decrease from the 29 percent figure in 1990. In 2000, 10 percent of the Township's population was aged 65 years or older - compared to 7 percent in 1990. Westtown's percentage of residents age 65 and older was considerably lower than the State average.

The median age of Township residents in 2000 was 39 years, up from 35 years in 1990, 31 years in 1980 and 27 years in 1970. As a result, half of Township residents in 2000 were older than 39, and half were younger.

The Census reported that Westtown included 3,795 housing units in 2000. However, this number appears low. Between 1990 and 2000, the Census reported that 516 new housing units were constructed in Westtown. This does not correspond to Township statistics that show an additional 629 housing units constructed from 1990 to 1997.

The following table shows that housing units in Westtown increased by a very high 62 percent between 1980 and 1990. This was much greater than the 27 percent increase in the County as a whole. The percentage increase in housing units during the 1980s was greater than the percentage increase in population because the average number of persons per household decreased.

From 1990 to 1998, the number of housing units increased another 19 percent - to 3,906. From 1970 to 1980, the number of housing units in Westtown increased by 48 percent - from 1,371 to 2,028. This was an increase of 657 housing units.

In 2000, an unusually high 83 percent of housing units in Westtown were owner-occupied. However, this number was a decrease from 90 percent in 1990. Seventy-nine percent of housing units in 1990 were single family detached houses. In 1990, the median value of owner-occupied housing, as estimated by residents of each house, was \$211,000. The median rental cost per month of rental housing was \$601 in 1990.

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS, 1980–2000

LOCATION	HOUSING UNITS			CHANGE 1990–2000	
	2000	1990	1980	NUMBER	PERCENT
Westtown Township	3,795*	3,279	2,028	516	15.7%
Chester County	163,773	139,597	110,183	24,176	17.3%

* Appears uncounted.

The average number of persons living in each household decreased in Westtown from 3.4 to 3.1 during the 1980s, and then down to 2.8 in 2000. This was part of a nationwide trend, as the divorce rate increased, families had fewer numbers of children, persons delayed marriages and people lived longer.

In 2000, 71 percent of households in Westtown included a married couple. This number fell from 78 percent in 1990. In 2000, 62 persons were listed as living in group quarters, which includes the Gaudenzia House.

On the average, Westtown residents have higher educational levels than the County and State averages. In 1990, 53 percent of Westtown residents age 25 or older had completed at least four years of college. This percentage was only 35 percent in Chester County and 18 percent for Pennsylvania as whole. Westtown also had higher percentages of residents who graduated from high school.

EDUCATION LEVEL, 1980–1990

LOCATION	PERCENT OF POPULATION AGE 25 AND OVER WITH			
	HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA		4 OR MORE YEARS OF COLLEGE	
	1990	1980	1990	1980
Westtown Township	94.7%	90.6%	53.4%	40.9%
Chester County	84.9%	76.4%	34.7%	26.3%
Pennsylvania	74.7%	64.7%	17.9%	13.6%

Unfortunately, recent data or estimates are not available for incomes at the municipal level. The U.S. Census estimates that the average income per person in Chester County in 1995 was \$34,469. This was 46 percent higher than the average of \$23,588 for Pennsylvania.

In 1989, half of the households in Westtown had incomes above \$65,000, while half had incomes below this amount. This “median” income level was significantly higher than the median for the County, and over twice the median for the State.

In 1989, the average income per resident was \$23,547. Less than one percent of families were considered to have incomes below the poverty level.

Among residents age 16 or older who were employed in 1990, 47 percent worked in managerial jobs, 37 percent in sales and support occupations, 6 percent in service jobs, 6 percent in craft and repair jobs, 4 percent in general labor, and less than one percent in farming.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME—1979, 1989

LOCATION	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME		CHANGE, 1979-1989	
	1989	1979	NUMBER	PERCENT
Westtown Township	\$65,046	\$30,635	\$34,411	112.3%
Chester County	\$45,642	\$22,206	\$23,436	105.5%
Pennsylvania	\$29,069	\$16,880	\$12,189	72.2%

Glossary of Terms

The following list provides concise definitions of terms that are commonly used in community planning. Please understand that the official definitions for regulatory purposes are included in the State Municipalities Planning Code, the Township Zoning Ordinance and the Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

Americans with Disabilities Act. A 1990 federal law designed to bring disabled Americans into the economic mainstream by providing them equal access to jobs, transportation, public facilities and services.

Aquifer. A geologic formation that contains a usable supply of water.

Aquifer Recharge Area. The outcropping portion of the aquifer through which water enters.

Best Management Practices. The methods, measures or practices to prevent or reduce the amount of pollution of waterways from point or non-point sources, including:

1. structural controls,
2. non-structural controls, and
3. operation and maintenance procedures.

Capital Improvements Plan. A list or schedule of public projects that a municipality intends to undertake over a period of time, usually between one and ten years. Projects are prioritized, costs are estimated and methods of financing are outlined. The capital improvements program should be updated annually.

Cluster. A form of development that permits a reduction in lot area and bulk requirements, provided there is no increase in the number of lots permitted under a conventional subdivision or increase in the overall density of development, and the remaining land area is devoted to open space, active recreation, preservation of environmentally sensitive areas or agriculture.

Conditional Use. Under the Zoning Ordinance, conditional uses which are subject to zoning approval by the Board of Supervisors.

Conservation Easement. A legal document that limits the development of land for a period of time or in perpetuity. A conservation easement may provide for enforcement by the Township, a conservation organization and/or neighboring property-owners. A conservation easement may also require certain land management measures, such as limiting the types of forestry.

Curative Amendment Challenge. A process provided for in the State Municipalities Planning Code that enables landowners to challenge the validity of a zoning ordinance on substantive grounds. If a municipality declines to "cure" its zoning ordinance to provide for the landowner's proposed use, a court may order the municipality to allow the use on that specific site, if the landowner prevails on appeal.

Density Bonus. A percentage increase in the maximum base density which may be allowed if a development meets certain additional standards, beyond those standards that are normally required.

Detention Basin. A facility for the temporary storage of storm water runoff in order to control the peak rates of runoff.

Floodplains. A low-lying area near a river or stream that can be expected to flood following heavy rains and snowmelt.

Floodways. The channel of a river or watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the 100-year flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one foot. Floodways are only delineated in communities where detailed hydraulic analyses have been completed.

Geographic Information System (GIS). A computerized system of compiling, presenting and analyzing spatial or geographic-based information.

Greenway. A linear open space established along: a) a natural corridor such as a riverfront, stream valley or ridge line, b) land along a railroad right-of-way converted to recreational use, c) a natural or landscaped course for pedestrian or bicycle passage, d) an open space connector linking parks, natural reserves, cultural features or historic sites with each other and with populated areas; or e) linear parks designated as a parkway or greenbelt.

Groundwater Recharge. A process by which precipitation or surface water flow enters the subsurface of the soil and supplements or adds to the existing ground water.

Growth Management. A system to control the location, timing and character of development and the preservation of certain natural features and other important community features, and to make sure that appropriate community facilities and services are available to serve the growth.

Homeowners Association. A community association that is organized in a development in which individual owners share common responsibilities for costs and upkeep of common open space or facilities. A condominium association is similar in nature, and typically involves almost all of the land in common ownership, and with the dwellings being individually owned.

Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Also known as Act 247 of 1968, as amended, the MPC is the state law which governs zoning, subdivision and land development and other aspects of land use planning in all jurisdictions of the Commonwealth, with the exceptions of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

National Register of Historic Places. The official list, established by the National Historic Preservation Act, of sites, districts, buildings, structures and objects significant in the nation's history or whose artistic or architectural value is unique. In Pennsylvania, nominations for designation are made to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Nonconforming Use. A use of land or a structure which does not comply with the applicable use provisions in a zoning ordinance, but which existed prior to adoption of the current ordinance. Nonconforming uses are permitted to continue, subject to certain conditions imposed in the zoning ordinance.

Open Space. An area of land or water that is undeveloped and set aside, dedicated, or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment or for the use and enjoyment of owners, occupants and their guests of land adjoining or neighboring such open space.

Overlay Zoning District. A special purpose zoning district that is superimposed over existing zoning jurisdictions. It is designated to provide additional standards and regulations for specific areas based on special conditions such as environmental factors, historical features or neighborhood preservation.

Permitted Uses or Uses by Right. Those uses that are allowed in a zoning ordinance without any further zoning approvals, as opposed to conditional uses, special exceptions or variances.

Public Open Space. An open space area conveyed or otherwise dedicated to the Township, a municipal agency, school district, state or county agency or other public body for recreational or conservation uses.

Recreational Open Space. Open space, whether publicly or privately owned, improved or unimproved, set aside, dedicated, designated or reserved for recreational use and enjoyment.

Right-of-Way. A strip of land acquired by reservation, dedication, prescription or condemnation and intended to be occupied by a road, railroad, electric transmission lines, oil or gas pipeline, water line, sanitary storm sewer and other similar uses.

Riparian Buffers. An area or band of vegetation on and near the shore of a body of water. Because vegetation uses water and nutrients, puts down roots and provides cover, it functions to slow down surface water, catch and hold sediments, absorb nutrients and help regulate the temperature of water. Additionally, riparian vegetation can serve as important habitat to plants and wildlife.

Sedimentation. The action or process of forming or depositing sediment, especially in waterways.

Setback. A minimum distance required by zoning to be maintained between two structures or between a structure and property lines.

Spot Zoning. Zoning an area of land in a manner that treats it unfairly compared to similar land, without proper justification.

Stream Corridor Buffer Area. An area of undisturbed vegetation, except in the case of agricultural areas utilizing Best Management Practices, maintained along the bank of any surface water body to protect stream corridors from impacts of development.

Subdivision. The division or re-division of a lot, tract or other parcel of land into two or more lots. The term also includes changes in existing lot lines.

Traffic-calming. Techniques intended to moderate traffic speeds and/or discourage high volumes of traffic, particularly in residential neighborhoods.

Variance. Permission granted by the Zoning Hearing Board after a public hearing which allows an exception to a zoning ordinance requirement. State law limits the ability of a Zoning Hearing Board to grant a variance. In most cases, an applicant is required to prove that there is a unique hardship that requires a variance to allow a reasonable use of the property.

Viewshed. The area that is visible from a specific location, such as a road, considering obstructions to sight caused by terrain and other physical features. Viewshed analysis is useful for planning locations of unsightly facilities.

Watershed. Land area from which water drains toward a creek or other waterway.

Wetland. An area that typically has wet soils during part or all of the year. Federal and State regulations consider the soil types, the species of vegetation and the depth to the water table to determine whether an area is considered to be a wetland.

Zoning Hearing Board. A quasi-judicial board appointed by the Board of Supervisors to conduct hearings and make decisions on challenges and appeals from the Zoning Ordinance under the State Municipalities Planning Code.

Existing Recreation Lands, Facilities and Programs

Existing Recreation Lands and Facilities

Westtown Township has a total of 407 acres of publicly owned parkland and open space. Of this land, 78 percent —319 acres—is owned by Westtown Township.

Six sites totalling 84.1 acres have severe environmental constraints which dictate that the parcels should remain undeveloped:

- Plumly tract — 26.6 acres — wetlands
- Wickerton Drive — 3.5 acres — wetlands
- Pleasant Grove Open Space — 2.4 acres — pond
- Springview Court — 1.7 acres — storm water detention pond
- Sage Road cul-de-sac — 1.6 acres — storm water detention pond
- West Pleasant Grove — 48.8 acres — storm water detention; wetlands

The largest park—Oakbourne Park—is the center of Township recreation activities. The park is 94 acres in size and includes the Oakbourne/Smith Mansion, a baseball field, softball field, 2 soccer/football fields, a small playground, a volleyball court, two tennis courts, a pavilion, picnic areas, and other support facilities.

The remaining public recreational areas are located at the four public schools in the Township: Stetson Middle School and three elementary schools: Starkweather, Pennwood, and Westtown-Thornbury. A total of 87 acres at the four schools is devoted to outdoor recreation space and facilities. School district policy governs the availability of school recreational facilities to organizations. In most cases, access is limited to well-organized groups that are able to provide insurance coverage for the School District.

Major facilities for active recreation on school district and Township property include:

AREA AND OWNERSHIP	SERVICE AREA	SIZE (ac.)	ACTIVE RECREATION FACILITIES										PASSIVE RECREATION							SUPPORT FACILITIES							OTHER FACILITIES / COMMENTS
			Baseball Field	Softball Field	Soccer/Football Field	Outdoor Basketball	Gymnasium	Track/Field	Outdoor Volleyball	Playground	Swimming Pool	Tennis Courts	Passive Open Space	Pavilion	Picnic Tables	Hiking Trail	Benches	Drinking Water	Restrooms	Trash Receptacles	Indoor/Undercover	Outdoor Facility	Security Lighting	On-site Parking	Telephone	Level of Maintenance ¹	
Stetson Middle School	West	38.0	1	2	2	1	1												X			X	X		2	1	
Starkweather Elementary School	West	21.6			2			1			X												X	X	3	1	
TOTAL — WEST CHESTER AREA S. D.		87.6	2	0	6	3	0	1	0	3	0	4	0	11	0	8	0	0	1	0	0	4	4	0			
TOTAL — PUBLIC		407.0	4	1	9	3	0	1	1	6	0	2	21	1	32	4	17	1	1	4	0	5	7	0			
<i>Private</i> Westtown School	Central & East		1	1	3	2	1			4	1	6	X			7		X				X	X		3	1	

Sources: URDC field view of each site, with base information from *Westtown Township Open Space, Recreation & Environmental Resources Plan* (1993)

¹ 3=Excellent, 2=Good, 1=Fair

In summary, the following facilities are available on Township and School-District owned properties within Westtown Township:

- 4 baseball fields
- 1 softball field
- 9 soccer/football fields
- 3 outdoor basketball courts
- 1 track and field facility
- 1 outdoor volleyball court

Major Existing Recreation Programs

West Chester Area Recreation Commission - The Commission is composed of representatives from the Borough of West Chester and the Townships of East Bradford and Westtown. A full-time recreation professional serves as director and is employed through the Borough of West Chester Recreation Department. Westtown Township provides several thousand dollars of annual funding to the commission to provide recreation programs in the Township. Most programs center on children's programs and special events.

TOWNSHIP RECREATION PROGRAM INVENTORY, 1999
Westtown Township

PROGRAM	CLASSIFICATION ¹	CATEGORY ²	PARTICIPANTS	GENDER	AGES	SEASON	FEES	LOCATION
Special Events								
Easter Egg Hunt	S	Soc, SE	800	Both	Children	Spring	None	Starkweather
Old-Fashioned Picnic	S, SD, Spc	A, M, Soc, SE, Sp	30	Both	All	Summer	Public: None Crafters: \$25/booth	Oakbourne
Harcapella Concert	S, Spc	M, Soc, SE	40	Both	All	Summer	None	Oakbourne
Kids Night	S, Spc	M, Soc, SE	150	Both	Children	Summer	None	Oakbourne
Haloween Party	S, SD, Spc	A, Soc, SE	150	Both	10/under	Fall	None	Oakbourne
Ghost Stories/Haunted Hay Ride	S, SD	O, Soc, SE	200 (sold out)	Both	All	Fall	\$5/person	Oakbourne
Holiday Festival	S, SD, Spc	A, M, Soc, SE	600	Both	All	Winter	None	Oakbourne
Evening of Valentine Love Stories	S, Spc	C, L/M, Soc, SE	70 (sold out)	Both	Young Adults Adults	Winter	\$8/person	Oakbourne
Programs								
Summer Park (1 8-wk. session)	all	all	100	Both	Children	Summer	None	Penwood
Kiddie Camp (2 2-wk. sessions)	all	all	15	Both	3-4 years old	Summer	None	Oakbourne
Earthkeepers (1 1-wk. session)	SI, S, SD, Spc	A, C, O	12	Both	3 rd -5 th grades	Summer	None	Oakbourne
Tennis Lessons (4 1-wk. sessions)	SI	Sp	16 (sold out)	Both	Children	Summer	None	Oakbourne
Tennis Lessons (2 1-wk. sessions)	SI	Sp	16 (sold out)	Both	Adults	Summer	None	Oakbourne

¹ Classification: SI Self-improvement
S Social

² Category: A Arts and Crafts
C Clubs, Hobbies, Special Interest Groups
Da Dance
Dr Drama
C Competition
SD Self-directed
L/M Language Arts/Mental Activities
M Music
O Outdoor Recreation, Camping
S Service Activities
Soc Social Recreation
SE Special Events
Sp Sports/Games

Source: West Chester Area Recreation Commission

East Side Little League - ESLL operates baseball, softball and T-ball leagues for children from ages 5 through 18. ESLL serves Westtown, West Goshen, and Thornbury Townships. Enrollment has varied from approximately 650 to approximately 900, with 1997 enrollment at about 800. Approximately half of the participants come from Westtown Township.

ESLL operates two seasons per year: spring (mid-March to mid-July) and fall (weekends only in September and October). The league uses fields throughout the three townships and participates in the West Chester Area Sports Association. ESLL uses both the baseball field and softball field at Oakbourne Park as well as fields at the Westtown Thornbury Elementary School. Under agreement with Westtown Township, ESLL maintains the fields and surrounding area in exchange for use of the fields. ESLL also owns all the structures at the fields, such as fencing and dugouts.

The league reports an immediate need for one senior field (full-size baseball dimensions). Furthermore, teams for the current season average 16 players, but Little League guidelines suggest teams of 12–13 players, indicating a need for additional teams and, therefore, additional fields.

West Chester Youth Lacrosse - The WCYL season extends from the beginning of March until Memorial Day. The league serves approximately 385 children between the ages of 9 and 15. Enrollment is reportedly growing at a rate of about 10 percent per year.

In Westtown, WCYL uses the field at Pennwood until the beginning of April, when the field is taken by the West Chester Girls Softball Association (discussed below). The league has used fields at Oakbourne Park in the past, but scheduling conflicts occur frequently. The primary need reported by WCYL is for one field which is consistently available.

West Chester Girls Softball Association - The WCGSA serves 725 girls between the ages of 5 and 18, 164 (23 percent) of whom live in Westtown. The association uses the field at Pennwood every night throughout April, May, and June. The Pennwood is used by the 9–10 year olds (the largest of the organization's seven age groups) for both practices and games. WCGSA reports occasionally using the field at Tyson Park for practice, but the field is not suitable for games. WCGSA also uses fields in West Goshen, East Bradford, East Goshen, and Thornbury Townships, as well as school fields, when available. In addition, the association is part of the group that developed the new field complex next to the County Services Building in West Goshen.

The primary need reported by WCGSA is for practice fields during the week. The association reports an availability to help financing field improvements.

West Chester United Soccer Club - WCUSC serves about 2,700 youth from age 5 to 18 and about 225 adults from ages 18 to 50. WCUSC uses the lower soccer field at Oakbourne, at the corner of Pleasant Grove Road and South Concord Road. The club has an arrangement with Westtown Township similar to ESLL in that the club maintains the field in exchange for use of the field. The club uses the upper soccer field at Oakbourne whenever possible, but conflicts prevent regular use of the field. The club also uses fields at Stetson Middle School and Starkweather Elementary School, but the fields have been closed for construction.

WCUSC is busy for nine months of the year. Practices are held weekday evenings from March through November. Games are held every Saturday and Sunday during the spring and fall. Camps are operated throughout the summer. The soccer club reports a constant need for additional fields.

Other Athletic Programs - Other major athletic programs include the LAFA Youth Football Association and an adult volleyball league.



EXISTING RECREATION AREAS

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP

Chester County, Pennsylvania



Existing Recreation Areas

-  Private Recreation/Open space
-  Public Recreation/Open Space



Community Planning and Recreation Consultants
URBAN RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Base information provided by Chester County Land
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