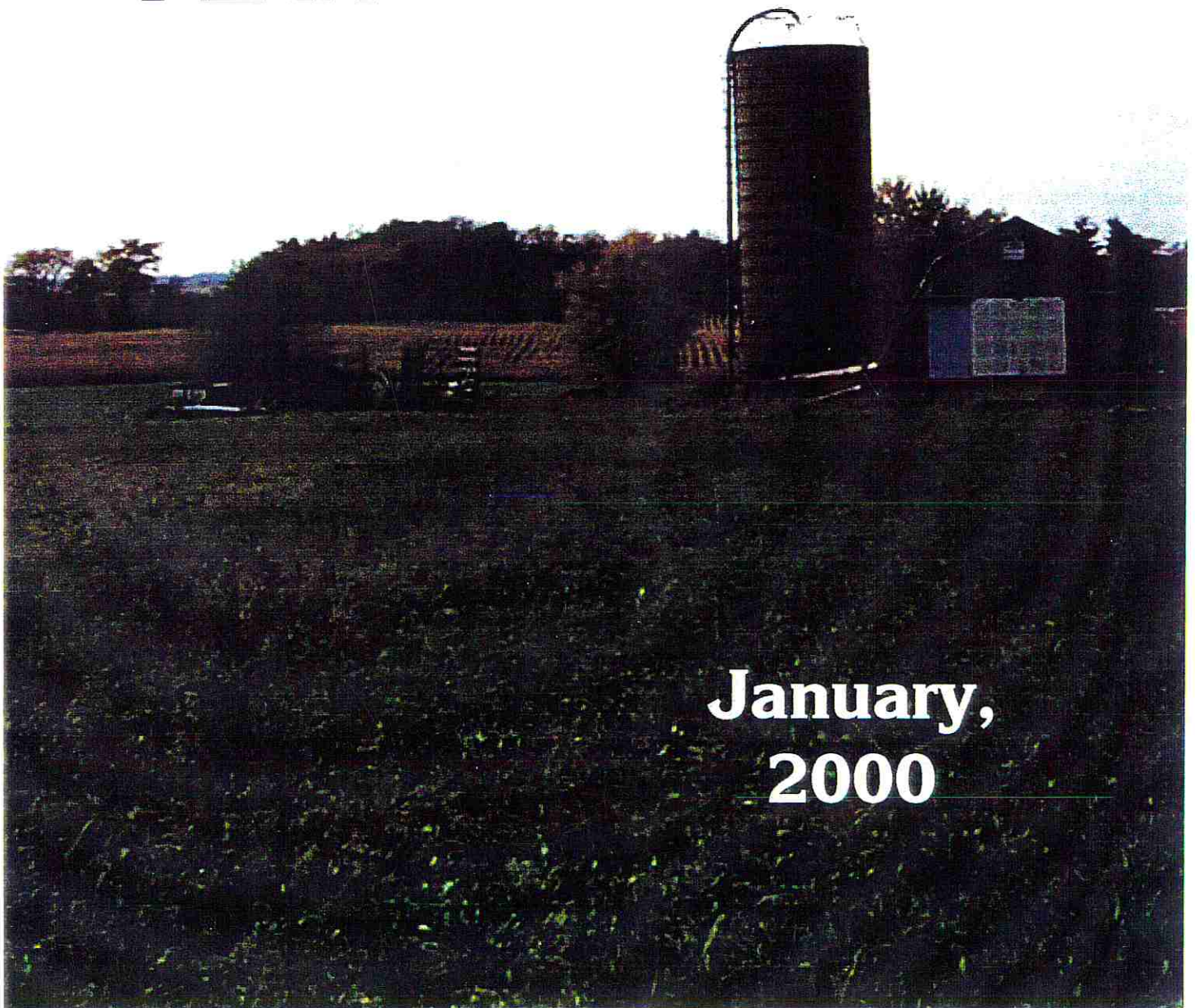


NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP

OPEN SPACE PLAN



**January,
2000**

New Britain Township

Supervisors

Dr. Robert L. Benner, *Chairman*
Robert V. Cotton, *Vice-Chairman*
Dr. Robert J. Piccone
John A. Bodden, Sr.
Helen B. Haun

Land Preservation Advisory Committee

James Jenkins, *Chairman*
David Baun
Greg Dwornikowski
Michael Goodwin
Helen Haun
William Jones
Laverne Keats
David Lundquist
Anne Panfil
Deborah Rendon

Ex-officio Members:
Robert Larason, P.E.
William Mitchell
Paul Williams, Township Manager

Staff Liaison:
Catherine Basillii

Cover Photo: Nowakowski Farm, Sellersville Road, New Britain Township

January 2000

Table of Contents

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND	1
OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION GOAL.....	7
INVENTORY OF POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE LAND	15
IDENTIFICATION OF PROTECTED LAND	21
POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE LINKAGES.....	25
OPEN SPACE NEEDS AND ANALYSIS	29
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	43
IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS	47
APPENDIX A. SCENES OF NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP	57
APPENDIX B. OPEN SPACE RANKING CRITERIA	58
APPENDIX C. PRIORITY CANDIDATES FOR LAND PRESERVATION	61
APPENDIX D. ACCOMPANYING MAPS.....	62

Appendix D: Table of Figures

FIGURE 1. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL MAP.....	63
FIGURE 2. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP REGIONAL LOCATION.....	64
FIGURE 3. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING AREAS	65
FIGURE 4. EXISTING LAND USE AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCE MAP	66
FIGURE 5. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP NATURAL RESOURCES COMPOSITE.....	67
FIGURE 5A. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP SOILS.....	68
FIGURE 5B. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP STEEP SLOPES AND RIDGELINES.....	69
FIGURE 5C. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP WETLANDS, WATERWAYS, AND FLOODPLAINS.....	70
FIGURE 5D. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP FORESTED AREAS.....	71
FIGURE 5E. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP ACT 515 AND 319 PROPERTIES.....	72
FIGURE 5F. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP SCENIC VISTAS	73
FIGURE 6. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP PROTECTED OPEN SPACE LANDS	74
FIGURE 7. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP POTENTIAL TRAILS AND LINKAGES.....	75
FIGURE 8. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP EXISTING AND PROJECTED RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES	76
FIGURE 9. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP LAND PRESERVATION PARCEL IDENTIFICATION	77

New Britain Township Open Space Plan

*Version 1.1, 07-Jan-2000
repaginated for reproduction*

CHAPTER

1

Community Background

History of New Britain Township

New Britain Township was founded in 1723 and celebrated its 275th birthday in 1998. The Township once comprised more than 15,000 acres and included land which is now occupied by Chalfont and New Britain Boroughs as well as Doylestown Township. The Township currently encompasses 14.7 square miles (9900 acres).

According to historical research conducted by Township volunteers, it is estimated that the Lenni Lenape Indians arrived in New Britain Township as early as 1397. The current U.S. Route 202 corridor was a main route for travelers as early as 1730. In 1778, George Washington's troops are said to have marched through the Township on their way to Monmouth, New Jersey from their camp at Valley Forge.

One of the primary features of New Britain Township, Lake Galena, is named after events of the 1800's. In 1838, local residents living near Neshaminy Creek began digging for lead, which occurs in this area as the mineral *galena*. As a result of their successful search, the "lead rush" of 1861 began. These lead mines in the heart of New Britain Township were eventually filled with concrete in the 1970's before being flooded to form Lake Galena, in the current Peace Valley Park.

Figure 1: New Britain Township Historical Map illustrates the rural nature of the Township in 1891. The major primary and secondary roads can be seen on this early map, many of which are heavily traversed in the Township today.. The routes now covered by County Line Road, U.S. Route 202, Route 313, Ferry Road, State Road and many others are apparent on this historic map.

Regional Context

New Britain Township is located in central Bucks County, Pennsylvania, northeast of the City of Philadelphia. Because of the Township's close proximity to this major city, New Britain Township has, and will continue to, experience substantial amounts of growth well into the 21st Century.

The Township consists of approximately 14.7 square miles. Its regional location within Bucks County is shown in **Figure 2: New Britain Township Regional Location**. New Britain Township is bounded by the following Bucks County municipalities: Hilltown Township to the north, Plumstead Township to the east, and portions of New Britain and Chalfont Boroughs and Doylestown and Warrington Townships to the south. To the west, New Britain Township also borders Montgomery and Hatfield Townships in Montgomery County.

New Britain Township was once characterized by its predominantly rural nature consisting of sprawling farms and pastureland. While several farms and agricultural lands remain within the Township today, new residential, commercial and industrial developments are beginning to dominate this once rural landscape. The Township is fortunate to host both gently rolling lands as well as steeply sloped hillsides that provide for interesting and attractive landscapes. In addition, Peace Valley Park and Lake Galena, a 1,500 acre County park, recreation and natural area are also located in the Township.

The major boundaries of the Township are shown in **Figure 3: Planning Areas of New Britain Township**. These boundaries are County Line Road to the south, U.S. Route 313 to the north, Upper State Road to the east, and Hilltown Pike and Township Line Road to the west.

Residents of the Township generally focus their activities (shopping, work, access to major thoroughfares, etc.) toward the Montgomeryville-Lansdale area, which includes the heavily commercialized Route 309 corridor. The Township also relates to the Doylestown area, which includes the rapidly developing Route 611 corridor. The Township's primary links to these regions are provided via the U.S. Route 202 and State Route 152 corridors. The recently approved U.S. Route 202 Bypass is expected to have dramatic effects on reducing traffic congestion in the region, and particularly within New Britain Township.

The Township can be divided into three distinct planning areas. As shown on **Figure 3: New Britain Township Planning Areas**:

- Planning Area 1 is bounded by the Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) commuter rail line, County Line Road, Township Line Road, and Limekiln Pike.
- Planning Area 2 is bounded by the SEPTA rail line, County Line Road, Upper State Road, and the boundaries of Chalfont and New Britain Boroughs.

- Planning Area 3 is the area surrounding Lake Galena and Peace Valley Park that is bounded by Route 313, Upper Stump Road, Ferry Road, and Limekiln Pike.

Planning Area 1 consists of single family residential and light industrial uses and includes the village residential district. Planning Area 2 contains high density residential and commercial districts. Planning Area 3 comprises the rural and low density area of the Township.

Some of the major attractions within New Britain Township are regional park and recreation, including Peace Valley Park, Lake Galena, and the Shrine of Czestochowa, and shopping and corporate facilities, such as New Britain Village Square, High Point Business Campus, and New Britain Business Park.

Land Use

The existing land use in the Township, as explained below and shown on **Figure 4: Existing Land Use and Open Space Resource Map**, is diverse.

The predominant land use in New Britain is residential, occupied by single family detached and attached housing units in the southeastern and southwestern areas of the Township. Developments have spread outward from Chalfont and New Britain Boroughs with the advance of public water and sewer. Residential land use accounts for 29.3% (3,061 acres) of the Township's land.

The second highest use is agricultural, covering 26.4% (2754 acres) of the Township's land area. This use is found largely in the northwest area of the Township. Most of these areas do not have prime soils for intense crop farming.

The next most significant use is recreation, parks, and dedicated open space that encompass 16.5% (1726 acres) of the land. This land is related to two fully developed parks, one undeveloped park in the early stages of planning, and deed-restricted open space in certain developments.

The balance of the land area of 13.9% (1,455 acres) is occupied by institutional (375 acres), industrial (152 acres), commercial (138 acres), and transportation and utilities (790 acres) uses.

With only 1,437 acres of vacant, undeveloped land (13.7%) remaining in the Township, the issue of open space is of significant importance. Development in the future could consume the existing vacant land as well as the present farmland, leading to the elimination of any raw land for new development.

Demographics and Housing

Bucks County has been noted as one of the ten fastest growing counties in population in the state of Pennsylvania. The areas within the County that are experiencing the greatest population increases are located directly north of the City of Philadelphia. This growth extends northeastward and ends just above New Britain Township in the Hilltown Township area. The current population data, which is based upon estimates by the Bucks County Planning Commission, suggests a population of 12,340 in the Township today. It can be argued, however, that a more accurate population estimate can be determined from combination of tax data, school district population data and township surveys: these sources indicate that a more realistic population estimate for the Township would be 10,800 (vs the 12,340 estimate of the Planning Commission). This supports the trend since 1950 of a population increment of approximately 2,000 each decade. However, if the Municipal Demographic Profile for Bucks County proves to be accurate, the Township will sustain a 100% increase in population between now and 2020.

Age characteristics and projections for the Township suggest that the Township's relatively young population is subject to significant increase over the next twenty years. This pattern is comparable to the nation as a whole. Currently, the majority of the Township's population is between 30 and 44 years of age. This age-group often includes families with school-age children, and this data is in agreement with the local school district projections that the fastest growing group is under 16 years of age.

Base upon the 1990 census data, the majority of the Township's residents were home owners. The total households at that time consisted of 3,152 of which 2,582 (nearly 82%) consisted of families of two or more related members. The average household consisted of 2.58 members. Renter-occupied dwelling units made up only slightly more than 10% of the total housing stock.

In addition to the above profile of New Britain Township residents, other characteristics are worthwhile noting because of their significance to future lifestyle requirements. The median family income is slightly above \$57,000, while the average home selling price is approximately \$150,000. The Township is highly educated (90% completed high school, 37.1% hold a bachelor's degree; 12% hold a graduate or professional degree). Most residents are employed in services, manufacturing, financial/real estate, or retail trades, with fewer than 2% employed in agriculture. Nearly 75% of the residents were born in Pennsylvania, and 97% are considered Caucasian.

Compared with residents of Bucks County as a whole, New Britain Township residents are better educated, have a higher median family income, and reside in slightly more expensive housing.

Based upon these data, it is quite easy to establish a general profile for New Britain Township at the start of 2000 of middle class, educated residents who have seen, first-hand, the growth of the area. Voter mandates on the priority of land preservation support the effort to manage growth and preserve open space. With the Township's population projected to double over the next twenty years, open space planning must focus on meeting the needs of future residents, and it must include provisions for a healthy environment and sufficient space for both active and passive recreation.

This page is intentionally left blank.

CHAPTER

2

Open Space Preservation Goal

New Britain Township is committed to preserving a high quality of life for all its residents. Our intent is to maintain open space areas that will help afford this style of life into the next century. Our goals and objectives provide the basic framework by which we intend to achieve open space preservation.

TOWNSHIP PLANS AND POLICIES TO PRESERVE RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE

The Township has a significant array of tools aimed at preserving land, protecting natural resources, and providing adequate recreational land. The current and proposed update to the community's comprehensive plan, as well as municipal ordinances, assist in establishing the goals and objectives for open space preservation. The following narrative describes the various aspects of each document that have been considered in the preparation of this open space plan.

Comprehensive Plan – adopted in 1987.

The plan contains descriptions of many natural features. It encouraged the Township to enact ordinances to require more rigorous identification and protection of natural features during the development process. The draft (1999) update contains new sections on Open Space planning that incorporate the goals and objectives of this document.

The goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to encourage a balance of residential, commercial, office and light industrial land uses. The plan contains several objectives to meet this goal. Each objective contains strategies to achieve the stated objective.

The objectives of the Comprehensive Plan which relate to the development of the Open Space Plan for New Britain Township are as follows:

Natural Features Plan Objective:

- To provide for development that respects the natural features of each site.
- To preserve areas along creeks and around Lake Galena in public and private open space.
- To encourage the preservation of agricultural land, especially in areas that would be difficult to serve with a public sanitary sewage system or public water supply.

Community Facilities Plan Objective:

- To provide for the expansion of community facilities to meet the needs of future growth.

Zoning Ordinance - updated in 1995.

There exist five residential zoning districts (SR-1, SR-2, RR, MHP and VR), two agricultural (RA-1 and RA-2), four commercial (C-1, C-2, C-3 and OP), two industrial districts (I and IO), one institutional (IN), one Conservation and Recreation (CR), and one Floodplain Overlay District in the Township. The purpose and intent of these districts are as follows:

Residential zoning districts

- *SR-1 Suburban Residential District* - To provide for the orderly expansion of medium density residential development. Where public services are available, and where physical carrying capacity of the land is suited to this type of development, clustering is encouraged.
- *SR-2 Suburban Residential District* - To provide for orderly expansion of low density residential development. This development should emphasize the preservation of natural features through clustering where practical.
- *RR Residential District* - To provide for a variety of housing types at medium densities where public water and sewer service is available.
- *MHP Mobile Home Park District* - To provide for mobile home development that incorporates public facilities such as recreation areas aimed at serving resident of the park.
- *VR Village Residential District* - To provide for development similar to existing character, lot sizes, and dwelling types of a specific older village area of the Township.

Agricultural zoning districts

- *RA-1 and RA-2 Rural Agricultural District* - To permit only low density residential development in order to preserve natural resources and maintain current semi-rural character of the community.

Commercial, industrial, and institutional zoning districts

- *C-1, C-2 and C-3 Commercial Districts* - To provide for a variety of commercial uses and associated levels of traffic in areas of the community suited for business development.
- *OP Office Park District* - To provide locations for small offices and related business uses along an arterial street with careful access control.
- *I and IO Industrial/Industrial Office Districts* - To provide for a wide range of industrial and industrial office uses, particularly in industrial park settings that are attractive and well planned.
- *IN Institutional District* - To provide areas for a variety of educational, medical, and health uses.

Conservation, recreation, and floodplain overlay zoning districts

- *Conservation and Recreation District* - To protect environmentally sensitive areas and areas of scenic beauty such as Lake Galena. Low intensity development which will encourage the preservation of open space is permitted.
- *Floodplain Overlay District* - To regulate development within the floodplain area and to comply with the regulations of the Federal Emergency Management Administration.

In addition, to implement the intent of each district, the zoning ordinance has standards that require that natural resources be identified on all development plans and specific percentages of each resource be protected. Protected natural resources include floodplains and alluvial soils, open waterways, steep slopes, forests, wetlands, lakes and ponds and their shorelines.

- **Floodplain Zoning** – The Township has enacted zoning regulations on construction in the floodplain.
- **Natural Resource Protection Zoning** – The revision (1995) to the Zoning Ordinance provided more specific language and control over natural features and open space requirements, including the addition of a Tree Protection Zone providing further buffer against forest damage during the development process.

- Cluster Zoning – The Zoning Ordinance contains a cluster option for certain residential districts that requires the provision of open space as part of the development process.
- Land Preservation Development Zoning – An amendment to the Zoning Ordinance in 1995 permits even more latitude for the Township and developers in achieving economic density and significant open space preservation (60-75%).

Subdivision/Land Development Ordinance – adopted in 1976.

Extensive sections of the Ordinance specify the requirements of identification and protection of natural features. These regulations help mitigate potential on- and off-site problems associated with development and complement the natural resource protection standards listed in the Zoning Ordinance. These Regulations are now being revised and updated.

Park and Recreation Supplement – adopted in 1995.

The Park and Recreation Plan added a significant focus to the Township's planning by analyzing current and future requirements. One of its critical recommendations was the acquisition of properties in the southwestern section of the Township for future park expansion. In 1998, the Township and Bucks County entered into a long-term lease for over 60 acres to be developed into active recreation facilities. The long-range plan for this facility is currently being developed.

The 1998 addition of a fee-in-lieu of dedication of park facilities has strengthened the recreational planning ability of the Township.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

There are many benefits to the residents resulting from the preservation of open space including but certainly not limited to:

- the protection and conservation of water resources and watersheds by protecting the natural cover, preventing floods and soil erosion, protecting water quality and replenishing surface and ground water supplies;
- the protection and conservation of forests and land being used to produce timber crops;
- the protection and conservation of farmlands;
- the protection of existing or planned park, recreation or conservation sites;
- the protection and conservation of natural or scenic resources, including but not limited to soils, beaches, streams, flood plains, steep slopes or marshes;
- the protection of scenic areas for public visual enjoyment from public rights of way;
- the preservation of sites of historic, geologic or botanic interest;
- the promotion of sound, cohesive, and efficient land development by preserving open space between communities.

Implied in the above statement of benefits are two considerations that are critical to any discussion of open space planning: the inter-generational legacy that open space bequeaths, and the personal "sense-of-space" afforded current citizens. Both are, admittedly, subjective in nature, but are recognized as being essential to the health and welfare of human kind.

Goal

To maintain and enhance the quality of life in New Britain Township by preserving open space. Open space preservation will assist in the protection of the natural environment, the integrity of historical resources, and scenic values in order to provide for a high quality environment with a distinct sense of place.

Objectives

1. Protect and enhance the quality of the natural resources found within the Township, as well as those having an ecological relationship to surrounding municipalities. Ensure that resident activity or future development does not degrade or destroy the natural resources found.

Policies:

- Maintain the natural resource protection standards in the municipal zoning ordinance.
- Establish more protective riparian and wetland buffers through municipal ordinance.
- Establish a hydrogeologic impact ordinance that requires developers to demonstrate through water impact studies that adequate water supplies exist to support the projected population without adversely affecting the existing water supplies.
- Purchase easements to protect important features on properties or acquire parcels to establish open space opportunities for residents.
- Identify those areas that are important to protect through public ownership because of their environmental or ecological importance or because of their contribution to the overall scenic or environmental quality of the Township.

2. Protect the integrity of significant cultural and historic resources.

Policies:

- Recognize the historic significance of the houses, barns, and outbuildings of the farms of the Township.
- Investigate methods to restore and preserve historically and culturally significant areas and buildings that are intended to be enhanced by open space initiatives.
- Encourage private funding and preservation efforts.

3. Establish a system of linked open space to serve as multi-purpose community greenways.

Policies:

- Protect by ordinance or negotiation watercourse and associated floodplains so that natural functions and habitat can continue.
- Provide a linear greenway on each major stream corridor.
- Provide for present and future active and passive recreational opportunities of the Township.
- Create natural, cultural, and recreational linkages that will promote the connecting of municipal, county, and state preserved lands.

4. Maintain a continuing commitment to open space planning and preservation both within the Township and within the Central Bucks area.

Policies:

- Integrate open space, park and recreation, and natural and cultural resource planning with overall community planning.
- Promote public education of landowners regarding their role and opportunities in the protection of open space and significant historical and natural resources.
- Coordinate with neighboring municipalities in planning for effective acquisition of open space, protection of the environmental resources, interconnection of open space, and operation of recreational facilities.

5. Encourage and support the continuation of farming in the Township.

Policies:

- Encourage farmland owners within agricultural security areas to apply to the County's agricultural land preservation program for purchase of development rights or conservation easements.
- Support change in policy or legislation to limit the rate of property tax increase on agricultural lands.
- Support the purchase of conservation easements on farms of significant ranking in the Township Open Space Evaluation analysis.
- Promote the on-site sale of produce and other farm related activities.

6. Preserve additional open space land necessary for both passive and active recreational purposes for the next twenty years.

Policies:

- Prepare a plan update that addresses the current and future recreational needs of the Township residents.
- Establish appropriate pedestrian and bicycle routes.
- Ensure that all new residential developments are served by appropriate recreational facilities.
- Encourage industrial and office development to provide appropriate walking paths and outdoor recreational facilities for employees' use.
- Acquire sufficient open space with public access to enhance future recreational opportunities.

This page is intentionally left blank.

CHAPTER

3

Inventory of Potentially Vulnerable Land

The natural resources in New Britain Township help make it the place that it is. From gently rolling streams to steep hillsides, the Township is fortunate to host a wide variety of natural resources that greatly enhance the quality of life and the sense of place. Two of our prized natural resources, Lake Galena and Peace Valley Park, are not natural at all but flood protection projects engineered in the last 30 years. They have become significant assets in the Township's inventory of resources and have contributed broadly to natural habitat.

Geological Features

The geological formations represented in the Township all derive from the Triassic system, and are either igneous or sedimentary. The igneous rock is of the Diabase formation and the sedimentary rocks are Brunswick, Lockatong, and Stockton formations. The Lockatong formation is the most prevalent throughout the Township.

The Diabase formation is a dark gray to black igneous rock and is relatively resistant to weathering. The Brunswick formation manifests itself in low, gently rolling terrain with broad ragged fragments and is easily eroded. The Lockatong formation forms ridges and is comprised of black or dark gray, thick bedded rock. The Neshaminy Creek has cut deep narrow valleys through ridges of this resistant formation. The Stockton formation underlies the low rolling countryside of the Township. Most of the streams that flow throughout this formation have eroded broad, shallow valleys of red sandstone.

Soils

The soil associations present within New Britain Township can generally be characterized as those that have a medium-textured surface layer with a firm and compact subsoil. These soils range from being nearly level to moderately steep. The permeability of these soils ranges from poorly drained in low-lying areas to moderately well drained in a few upland areas. **(Figure 5A: Soils).**

Topography, Drainage Areas, and Wetlands

New Britain is situated in the Piedmont Province of gentle hills and slopes. The highest elevation (640 feet above mean sea level) is located near the northwest boundary of the municipality at Nace's Corner. The lowest elevation (220 feet A.M.S.L.) is recorded on the Neshaminy as it crosses Upper State Road along the northeast boundary. The area is characterized by low, northeast-southwest trending ridges. The topography of the area is shown on **Figure 5B: Steep Slopes and Ridgelines**.

The Neshaminy Creek watershed encompasses the entire Township, with its primary tributaries: the North Branch Neshaminy, the West Branch Neshaminy, the Neshaminy Mainstream, and Pine Run Creek. Smaller tributaries of note but unnamed except by local custom are Railroad Creek and Hardiakan Creek.

Floodplains are associated with each of these streams and vary in width of a few hundred feet to over 1000 feet on the Neshaminy Mainstream. In addition, two dams have been constructed in the Township for flood control. These are known as PA 617 (North Branch Neshaminy Creek) that forms Lake Galena, and PA 615 (unnamed tributary of West Branch Neshaminy Creek) locally referred to as Railroad Creek. Nearby, in Doylestown Township, PA 616 forms Pine Run Reservoir, and thence flows into New Britain Township.

Typically wetlands occur as marshes, swamps, and bogs. Often, they are saturated lands or areas that display a seasonal high water table. Most of the wetlands in New Britain Township are along or coincide with the Neshaminy and its tributaries. The National Wetlands Inventory Map indicates the presence of wetland areas (larger than two acres) in conjunction with these stream corridors as well as numerous sites along both ridges bordering Peace Valley Park.

These wetlands are important resources for they act as filters and recharge zones. They also act as natural retention basins, allowing water to pool and release after a storm at a much slower rate, thus reducing the frequency and severity of flooding. These drainage areas, waterways, floodplains, and wetlands are represented in **Figure 5C: Wetlands, Waterways, and Floodplains**.

Woodlands

The forests throughout New Britain Township consist of several major woodland associations. The types of forest areas found along the floodplains of the North and West Branch and the Mainstream of the Neshaminy are silver maple floodplain forests and sycamore-box elder floodplain forests. As the land begins to slope upwards beyond the creek valleys, red oak-mixed hardwood and red maple forests become the most common. These two forest types can also be found along the slopes that exist along the North Branch as it flows into Peace Valley

Park and adjacent areas. Upland hemlock-mesic hardwood forests are present along the steep, north-facing slopes located between the Neshaminy and Upper State Road. It is important to note that the forested lands that remain in the Township provide a nearly continuous tree-lined corridor along the West and North Branches, as well as along the Mainstream of the Neshaminy and the lower section of Pine Run. In addition, a tree-lined corridor has been noted for preservation along portions of Park, Callowhill, and Creek Road that provides excellent views of Lake Galena and Peace Valley Park. While no endangered or threatened animal species have been noted, the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory notes two endangered plant species are present: the low serviceberry (*Amelanchier humilis*) and the flat-stemmed pondweed (*Potamogeton zosteriformis*). Lake Galena in particular is singled out for its habitat of redbelly turtles (*Pseudemys rubriventris*). Because of the numbers and diversity of waterfowl present through the year, the Nature Center area at the east end of the lake has been designated by the National Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area, one of two in Bucks County. The Township's woodlands are reflected in **Figure 5D: Forested Areas**. (Reference: *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County*).

Agricultural Areas

While there are no agricultural security districts in the Township, one farm currently is party to the County agricultural preservation program. Other farmland owners have shown an interest and are being encouraged by the Township to actively participate. There are few owner-operated farms remaining. Most actively farmed lands are rented to one of three farmers in the area, and are economically marginal. Most farmers in the Township are nearing or past retirement age, which places the Township's agricultural lands in a position of threat from development. Due to the relatively poor agricultural soils in the area, these farms are severely limited in the crops that will grow on them. All of the farms are located in the southwest and northwest areas of the Township. (**Figure 5E: Act 515 and 319 Properties**).

Historic and Cultural Resources

Although the Township was chartered in 1723, most historic buildings date from the mid 1800's. The Bucks County Registry of Historic Places lists two sites of prominence: the James Morgan Homestead and the Elias J. Mowry House. The former is also listed on the Nation Registry and the Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places. Many farmhouses carry cornerstones dated between 1790 and 1840. No other documented record exists of historic sites. A detailed evaluation of potential historic sites would have to be conducted to determine the historic value of these structures.

The Township has numerous institutions, both religious and secular, that have played a part in the cultural life of the community. These resources have served as traditional gathering places for community events. Many of these properties have contributed large plots of open space to the community as well. Most notable are the Shrine of Czechtoshowa, Peace Valley Park, Butler Elementary School, the Township Administration Building, Byers' Choice, Plumstead Christian School, High Point Racquet Club, and St. Jude's Church School.

Scenic Resources

With several ridgelines running southwest to northeast, New Britain Township enjoys numerous scenic vistas due to its varied topography. Notable are the views from roadways, many tree-lined and adjacent to scenic farms. Entry to the Township from the east on County Line Road allows a vista upward toward the ridge in Highpoint Business Campus. Along New Galena Road at Walter Road is a sweeping view of pasturelands and stream corridors. The scenery along Upper Stump and King Roads over Peace Valley Park and the lowlands of the Township are some of the most spectacular. Views along King Road in particular include Doylestown and, under best air quality conditions, the Philadelphia skyline. (Figure 5F: Scenic Vistas).

Natural Areas Inventory Sites

A study was carried out to inventory natural features of Bucks County. Starting with established documentation, sites throughout the county were surveyed for unusual plants, animals, natural communities, and geological and hydrological features. Three sites were identified in New Britain Township.

- *Neshaminy Creek – Route 202 to Bristol Road*
Both the forested slopes and floodplain and wetlands were identified. The notable features include the rich hemlock - mesic hardwood forest, sugar maple - basswood forest, sycamore - river birch - box-elder floodplain forest and the spatter – water lily – pondweed aquatic bed.
- *Peace Valley Park*
The lake contains a population of redbelly turtles. Because of the numbers and diversity of waterfowl present throughout the year, the Nature Center area at the east end of the lake has been designated by the National Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area. Successional forest and old fields surround the lake. The notable features include the Audubon Society Important Bird Area, red oak – mixed hardwood forest, bottomland oak – mixed hardwood forest, sugar maple – basswood forest, and two state endangered species: grass-leaved rush (*Juncus biflorus*) and the redbelly turtle (*Pseudemys rubriventris*).

- *Forest Park woods and pond*

The former amusement park, long abandoned, lies across the three municipalities of Chalfont Borough, New Britain Borough and New Britain Township. Most of the site is covered with mature and successional forest. Remnants of the amusement park are found in the woods. A man-made pond contains the rare plant capitate spike-rush (*Eleocharis olivacea*). Other notable features include the Pine Run stream corridor and bottomland oak – mixed hardwood forest.

This page is intentionally left blank.

CHAPTER

4

Identification of Protected Land

New Britain Township owns over 160 acres, occupying a variety of uses. Two municipal parks encompass over 60 acres. Permanently preserved open space is maintained in stormwater basins associated with existing development, wetlands, and dedicated lands obtained through the land development process. In addition, Bucks County controls over 1,000 acres around Lake Galena as a major recreational resource for the region. Zoning and the Land Development Ordinances of the Township further place restrictions on wetlands, flood plains, steep slopes and woodlands.

It might be concluded that New Britain Township already has sufficient protected land to meet current and future needs. When the rate of conversion of productive farmland and vacant land is considered, along with the location and general accessibility of current open lands, it is quickly seen that much of the open space "stock" currently is of limited value to the majority of citizens. Much of it is isolated in private yards, along inaccessible stream corridors, or in the middle of the few remaining productive farm sites. An Open Space Plan begins the process of identifying the critical needs and potential properties that can meet current and future demands. This section describes the land preserved temporarily or permanently, and provides listing of the amount of land in each category. (**Figure 6: Protected Open Space Lands**).

Temporarily Protected Open Space Lands

Private Recreation Land

The Highpoint Racquet Club owns large parcel of approximately 47 acres used by club members. St. Jude's Church School and Plumstead Christian School occupy 28 acres and 23 acres respectively. All of these properties consist of significant buildings and impervious parking surfaces.

Public Schools

Butler Elementary, Unami Middle School, and Pine Run Elementary contribute 48 acres of open space in active recreation areas.

Preferentially Assessed Land through Acts 319 and 515

Bucks County has entered into voluntary covenants with owners of farm, forest, water supply and open space land to retain the land as open space. The county agrees to assess the property at actual land use value (fair market value). Otherwise the land would be assessed at its value for its highest and best use. The preferential assessment serves as an incentive to preserve the land. If the covenant is breached by the landowner, a penalty in the form of back taxes and interest is assessed.

The Opens Space Act or Act 515 of 1966, is intended to preserve farm, forest, water supply and opens space land. Participation in the program is limited to that land covenanted before 1993 when the county commissioners eliminated the program. Any land involved in the program will be covenanted until 2003 and can then be transferred to a similar program under Act 319, unless the covenant has been breached or termination from the program has been requested. Presently there are 63 parcels covenanted, covering 967.47 acres.

The Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act of 1974, also known as Act 319 or the "Clean and Green Act", is open to taxpayers under the following categories: agricultural use, agricultural reserve, and forest reserve. Once enrolled, the property remains in the program as long as the land meets the eligibility requirements. There are 66 parcels covenanted in New Britain Township under Act 319 with a total of 1787.38 acres. **(Figure 5E: Act 515 and 319 Properties).**

Agricultural Security District

New Britain Township does not currently have an Agricultural Security District. One farm of 52 acres (TPM 26-12-50-4) participates in the Plumstead Township Security District.

Permanently Protected Open Space Land

Permanently protected land falls into two categories: that owned by the public and that which is privately owned. Publicly owned land is owned by local government. Privately owned open space includes land owned by homeowners associations and churches. **(Figure 6: Protected Open Space Lands).**

Municipal Parks and Open Space

New Britain Township has two municipal parks ---North Branch and West Branch Parks -- located along each respective branch of the Neshaminy Creek. North Branch Park consists of 43.1 acres developed into bike paths,

tot lot, picnic areas, a pavilion, and eleven sports fields and one basketball court. West Branch Park consists of 16.0 acres developed into 6 sports fields and a tot lot. A portion of each park includes the adjacent stream corridor, riparian buffer zone, and wetlands as natural boundaries.

Community parks owned by the Township are located in Fairwoods, Brittany Farms, and the Highlands developments and add 53.7 acres of open space.

Bucks County owns significant lands within the Township that are for recreation and flood control purposes. Peace Valley Park consists of several parcels totaling over 1100 acres. The Park and its surrounding forests, including the Nature Center, have been identified in the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County* for the unique features found there. Over 60 acres along Walter Road is part of the flood control program, and currently leased to New Britain Township to be used for an active recreation park in the future.

Private Open Space

Religious institutions, including three cemeteries (Dunkard , Beulah, and St. Paul First Hermit) occupy over 75 acres of open space.

Homeowners Association Open Space

The Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance requires that 30% of the land in planned residential developments be set aside for recreational open space. This is in addition to any resource-restricted land such as wetlands, floodplains, forests or steep slopes.

The Zoning Ordinance further requires 50% open space in the cluster subdivision design. The Land Preservation Development use requires between 50-75% open space depending on the residential zoning district.

Currently, six homeowner or condominium associations own and manage open space in excess of 115 acres. Two additional developments are in process of completion, and will add an additional 42 acres to the inventory.

Open Space in Adjacent Communities

Chalfont and New Britain Boroughs both maintain open space within their boundaries that crosses into New Britain Township. This total acreage is less than 10 acres. Pine Run and Unami Schools also have lands that cross municipal boundaries totaling less than 20 acres in New Britain Township.

Major Utility Easements

Easements are owned by PECO, AT&T, SEPTA, Bucks County Water & Sewer Authority, Chalfont-New Britain Joint Sewer Authority, Texas Eastern Transmission Corporation and the North Penn and North Wales Water

Authorities. These lands together amount to approximately 110 acres. The single largest holding is the PECO properties totaling 82 acres situated in the northwest portion of the Township and used for a high voltage transmission line. Approximately 62 acres of this property is for sale and the Township has expressed interest in obtaining the property, excluding a 300 foot utility easement.

CHAPTER

5

Potential Open Space Linkages

Open space links are corridors or linear parks that serve conservation and recreation purposes along streams and other areas. Their conservation components will contain the stream and their riparian buffer areas. Their recreation components will contain a trail, at a minimum, and widened areas, where appropriate, with seating, play, and or exercise facilities. Where a stream is the focus of a greenway, access will be provided in ways that minimize potential environmental impacts. Land beneath utility transmission lines, above sewer and water lines, and along rail lines are also potential open space links.

Certainly, the extent of development throughout the Township limits the development of these links or greenways to parcels lying along stream corridors, which, because of wetlands and flood plains, will not be targeted for commercial, residential or industrial development. It is fortunate that such land can be acquired at a fraction of the cost of other lands more amenable to profitable development.

Greenways also provide travel corridors for wildlife. The successful survival of many species depends on the ability to move from one area to another and interact with a wider diversity of the genetic pool. This is true of many helpful insects as it is of mammals in the ecosystem.

Open space links can be important connections between neighborhoods and with other community activity centers. They also serve as safe and accessible routes for children and adults without confronting the hazards of traffic.

Three areas in New Britain presently serve as open space links. These areas are made up of protected wetlands and floodplains along the stream corridors of the Neshaminy Creek. In addition, two additional links are resource protected by local zoning, but public access is limited because they lie mostly on private property without public access. In each case, these links are between residential development and schools.

The following briefly describes the areas conducive to the development of greenways. (**Figure 7: Potential Trails and Linkages**).

Neshaminy Creek - West Branch.

The lands adjacent to the West Branch of the Neshaminy are in the vicinity of Railroad Avenue. This linkage would connect West Branch Park with another park in Chalfont Borough. While that stream corridor does appear to be ideal for the construction of a link, in terms of its length and scenery, the stream abuts in one stretch 15 or more residential lots, any one of which could bring the project to a halt if acquisition is denied. The West Branch has not been rejected but will be considered at a later time, and may be more easily developed once the Township has worked through the problems of establishing a greenway in another location. The lands located along the West Branch of the Neshaminy are being studied for wetlands development, which may ease the task of establishing a greenway along that corridor. The Township interest in a greenway at that location should be communicated to the Departments of Transportation and Environmental Protection to preserve the option for greenway development.

Pine Run Creek - North Branch

The Pine Run extends from the Covered Bridge Park at Keeley Avenue in New Britain Borough through lands owned by the Township to North Branch Park and is notable. A rough trail has already been established along this stretch of the creek and exists as a continuation of a well used and scenic trail that extends from the covered bridge at Keeley, all the way to the reservoir behind the Pine Run retirement community. Portions of only a few parcels of land would need to be acquired to develop the greenway along this portion of the Pine Run Creek. There also exists a cross link, requiring stream crossing, that children use to access Pine Run Elementary School. A portion of the Pine Run known as Forest Park is noted in the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County* for its unique features.

Hardiakan Creek

This creek flows from Hilltown Township across Upper Stump Road along an easterly course and then southward into the North Neshaminy at the top of Lake Galena. Through much of its course, it follows exposed bedrock and is flanked by mature hardwood forests. There exist sections of waterfalls and other natural features. This corridor has been identified by both Hilltown Township and Bucks County Park & Recreation Department as a greenway connection to Peace Valley Park.

Neshaminy – Mainstream

Most of this corridor consists of low-lying floodplains which become inundated several times each year. Through most of its course, the stream marks the boundary between the Township and either Chalfont or New Britain Boroughs. The north facing slopes in the Township are often very steep (>25%) and inaccessible. The Township owns three parcels beginning near the confluence of the North and West Branches of the Neshaminy at Blue Jay Road and Blue Jay Circle on the boundary with Chalfont Borough and at Ruth Lane at Upper State Road. The portion of the Neshaminy between Route 202 and Bristol Road has been identified in the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County* for its unique features.

Recent development on property adjacent to the Ruth Lane passive open space resulted in over 50% open space with an easement on the stream corridor preserving 18 acres.

Finally, there should be priorities for providing additional open space links and pedestrian access between significant activity areas in the Township and to adjoining municipalities. Public access can be secured by fee simple acquisition or by purchasing rights to access via an easement. The need to acquire land or easements to provide public access along particular corridors can be evaluated and ranked based on the following criteria: (1) accessibility to/from neighborhoods and activity centers; (2) suitability for pedestrian access or open space protection.

This page is intentionally left blank.

CHAPTER

6

Open Space Needs and Analysis

Overview

In February 1996, an advisory task force for land preservation was formed by Resolution 96-04 of the Board of Supervisors of New Britain Township and consisted of representatives of the general public and members of the Township Planning Commission, Park and Recreation Board, and Supervisors. The common theme that united sometimes disparate views was the recognition that preserving open space provides a number of advantages to the Township and its residents: preserving the rural character of the Township; stabilizing the tax base; protecting the environment; and providing recreational opportunities for the Township's growing population.

At this time, much of the land that is owned by the Township is in small, isolated parcels that provided neither recreation nor a sense of continuous openness to residents. Developing a comprehensive open space preservation plan which would serve to address all the issues listed above and which may, in the future, lead to linking these parcel together into corridors of green was seen as a primary goal with benefits for the Township residents.

The overall goal of the Land Preservation Advisory Task Force was to take a wide view of the increased pressure to develop in relation to the many attributes that development may threaten:

- (1) the scenic vistas that surround residents in all parts of the Township, e.g. steep slopes above Lake Galena and the Neshaminy Creek;
- (2) the "sense of place" that many unique areas, such as Pine Run Creek or the West Branch Neshaminy corridor, provide residents in their day-to-day life;
- (3) the exceptional character of woodlands and fields that surround many developments;
- (4) the quality and quantity of remaining Township farmland; and
- (5) the opportunities for passive recreation that can enhance residents' understanding of and appreciation for environmental preservation as a means to protect both wildlife habitat and biological diversity (an example being trails through wooded areas and along stream corridors).

Because there are so many desirable properties in the Township, the Task Force decided that a system was needed to identify and prioritize key properties for

preservation. A rating system was developed over the ensuing months. This systematic method of identifying and prioritizing undeveloped and improved township land in terms of their ability to meet Township open space needs provided necessary objectivity to the overall process.

Public input was sought on all issues of open space preservation in New Britain Township. Two public meetings, printed announcements and newspaper articles concerning land preservation issues were an important part of this process.

In August 1996, the Task Force issued the "New Britain Township Draft Open Space Plan". The draft plan outlines the overall goals for the development of open space throughout the Township and the overall areas of value for preservation. This plan was submitted to the Township Planning Commission and the Park and Recreation Board for consideration and comment.

A key recommendation of this report was a public voter referendum, placed before the Township's residents in November 1996, requesting approval to borrow up to \$2.5 million for the acquisition of open space. This referendum met with overwhelming approval (81%) by the voters. Another recommendation of the report was for the formation of a permanent Land Preservation Advisory Committee.

The Land Preservation Advisory Committee ("LPAC") was created by resolution (Resolution 97-16) of the Board of Supervisors of New Britain Township in April, 1997. Its objective is to assist the Board of Supervisors in the effective implementation of the Open Space Initiative through the identification, investigation and acquisition of land, or land rights, designated for open space preservation.

Open Space Needs

The obvious question that land planners must confront when considering the open space needs of a community is "How much is enough?" Clearly, natural resources should be preserved to protect the ecosystem, promote biological diversity, and protect agricultural soils. Similarly, historical resources should be protected because they provide a connection between our past and our present cultures. The amount of natural resource protected depends on both the character of the land and the growth demands of the community, including its recreational needs. To establish the preservation program for historic resources requires an inventory and assessment of their location and value to the community. To understand the needs for recreational land and growth, a mix of population projections, growth policy, and recreational standards must be reviewed and analyzed.

Natural and Historic Resources

Resource protected areas abound throughout the Township. In many cases they have been adequately preserved because of the development around them. Their relative isolation from each other and their condition raise questions about their

contribution to the ecological inventory. Therefore, the natural resources on undeveloped lands, while not necessarily more significant, are more vulnerable to damage and should be the focus of conservation and preservation efforts.

The historic resources consist largely of the rustic farm buildings throughout the Township. While their condition and age are mostly unknown, they do add significant scenic quality to the viewscape. They are vulnerable because of the threat of demolition, neglect, and the threat of adjacent development which takes away from their settings.

Development Policy

A consideration of the projected growth of the Township and the policy toward growth is critical. Over the past ten years, New Britain Township has been the slowest growing municipality in the area. New growth can be guided to provide open space and enhance existing resources. The continued management of sewer and water has a demonstrable affect on both the quality and quantity of growth in the area.

Over the next twenty years, New Britain Township is projected to grow by 100%. At that time, the Township will have 25,000 residents and over 8,500 dwelling units. This growth is accommodated in the residential zoning districts as described in the Comprehensive Plan. New growth will take place in the vacant and agricultural land, much of which contains natural resources. Areas of vacant and agricultural land are found in the southwest and northwest sections of the Township. Only the southwest portion has sewer and public water readily available.

Recreation Land

In 1995, the Recreation Facility Supplement to the Comprehensive Plan was completed. Using the design guidelines of the National Recreation and Park Association, an evaluation of Township recreation facilities and needs was conducted. **Figure 8: Existing and Projected Recreational Properties** shows the result of this evaluation. The **Tables 1-3** provide an analysis of the existing parks and future needs.

The park designations used in the evaluation were:

- **Local Parks** – Small recreational areas such as play-lots or mini-parks normally provided in built-up areas where space is at a premium. The service area is under ¼ mile and usually under 1 acre in size. These may also be contained in larger neighborhood parks. Existing local parks are found in Fairwoods Community, Brittany Farms, the Highlands, and a tot-lot in West Branch Park.

- **Neighborhood Parks** – These moderately sized parks should adjoin public elementary schools whenever possible and serve as a center for education, recreation, and cultural activities for the people of a neighborhood. Active and passive recreational opportunities for adults and children should be provided. The ideal size is 15 or more acres serving an area of ½ mile. These neighborhood parks are located at Butler Elementary School, Chalfont Community School, Pine Run Elementary School, and West Branch Park.
- **Community Parks** – The larger, community parks should, whenever possible, adjoin junior and senior high schools and serve a group of neighborhoods with a service area of 1 to 2 miles. Active recreation facilities such as courts and playfields are combined with natural areas for passive recreation. An example of this type of park is North Branch Park.
- **Regional Parks** – These are areas of scenic natural quality for outdoor recreation such as picnicking, fishing, or trails use. Regional Parks are usually over 200 acres serving more than one municipality. Peace Valley Park is in this category.
- **Specialty Facilities** – These are recreational facilities, usually smaller in size and associated with private organizations for the use of their membership. Examples in the community are Plumstead Christian School, St. Jude's Church School, and High Point Racquet Club.

The evaluation shows that the Township is well supplied with recreational facilities, and that the development ordinances provide for adequate space or fees-in-lieu of parklands to adjust for community growth. The southwest growth area near Line Lexington was noted as the one area that required planning for future recreational needs. Since the 1995 Recreational Facilities Supplement, the Township has acquired over 60 acres in this area from Bucks County for the development of a community park.

Table 1 Municipal Parks

Park	Acreage	Park Type
Fairwood Comm	42.7	Local
Brittany Farms	6.5	Local
Highlands	4.5	Local
West Branch	16.0	Neighborhood
Butler School	27.1 *	Neighborhood
Unami Middle School	9.7 *	Neighborhood
Pine Run Elementary	4.5 *	Neighborhood
North Branch	43.1	Community
Bucks County parcel	60.0**	Community
Peace Valley Park	1,100	Regional

* Property owned by private and public school authorities and not included in parkland calculations.
 ** This parcel is unimproved at the present time.

Table 2 Analysis of Existing Municipal Parks

Park type (acreage per 1,000 population)	Need (acres)	Acres	Acreage * (deficit) or surplus
Local parks (0.25 – 0.5 acres/1000)	4.08	53.7	49.6
Neighborhood (1.25 – 2.5 acres/1000)	17.98	16.0	(1.98)
Community (5 – 8 acres/1000)	70.85	103.1	32.25
Regional (5 – 10 acres/1000 in Central Bucks region)	450	1,100	650

* Parkland acreage determined for 2000 estimated population of 10,900 people.

Table 3**Analysis of Future Needs**

2010 Projected Park Needs (Pop. Est. 17,550)				
Park type	Standard acres / 1000 population	Existing Acreage	Acreage needed	(Deficit) or surplus
Local parks	0.375	53.7	6.58	+ 47.12
Neighborhood	1.5	16.0	26.3	(10.3)
Community	6.75	103.1	118.5	(15.4)
Regional	8.0	1,100	720	+ 380

2020 Projected Park Needs (Pop. Est. 24,700)				
Park type	Standard acres / 1000 population	Existing Acreage	Acreage needed	(Deficit) or surplus
Local parks	0.375	53.7	9.26	+44.4
Neighborhood	1.5	16.0	37.05	(21.05)
Community	6.75	103.1	116.73	(63.63)
Regional	8.0	1,100	960	+ 140

Open Space Analysis

The Land Preservation Advisory Committee conducted an inventory of undeveloped and improved Township land and has utilized a revised form of the previously designed numerical ranking system to identify and prioritize these parcels in terms of their ability to meet Township open space needs. The ranking system was adapted from similar systems developed by, and used in numerous townships throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The ranking system serves as a tool to quantitatively differentiate and prioritize larger parcels of land in the Township that might contribute to the Township's open space needs.

It is critical to understand that a numerical rating system is the first step of a multi-phase evaluation. This tool is intended to be used in conjunction with qualitative evaluation methods such as physical inspection by walking a property; determination of specific environmental and scenic features; and matching current open space needs (trails, etc.) with property characteristics.

A description of the ranking system adapted for use by the New Britain Township Land Preservation Advisory Committee is set forth in Appendix B. The ranking system assigns numbers to properties based on three general criteria that correspond with the township goals: 1) Environmental aspects of the property, e.g., the presence or absence of wetlands, steep slopes, streams, mature woods, or other unique habitat for unusual species; 2) Rural preservation, e.g., the historic, scenic, recreation (trails), or agricultural value of the property; 3) Development pressure, e.g., the size and location of the parcel, its availability, and its approval status with the township planning commission.

In conducting the inventory, a total of 70 parcels of 15 acres and greater in the Rural Agriculture, Single Family Residential, and Industrial/Office zones were identified. In the course of the review process, it was determined that while smaller parcels would not be ruled out, attention would be placed on those properties that consisted of at least 20 acres of land. This definition deviated slightly from the designation of properties "in excess of 15 acres", which was originally set forth. The Committee determined that the criteria of the selection process could more efficiently be met when applied to parcels of this larger size because of the prohibitive number of smaller properties.

Accordingly, parcels of land between 15 and 20 acres were mapped, but not considered, for this first phase of the Open Space Initiative. Rather, the ranking of those parcels falling within the 15 and 20 acre size definition would be deferred until a later time in the open space acquisition process. Accordingly, for this first phase of the Open Space Initiative, a list of 24 properties was judged to meet the standards established by the Committee. These 24 properties were ranked in priority. **(Figure 9: Land Preservation Parcel Identification).**

Information describing parcel features was obtained from the following sources: the Township Comprehensive Plan, Bucks County Soil Conservation Survey, Township Park and Recreation Supplement, Bucks County Park and Recreation Board, Bucks County Board of Realtors. Parcels were first ranked by the value of their environmental and rural preservation features, and secondly by the degree of developmental pressure they face. All rankings are subject to change, and will be updated, as new information regarding their environmental sensitivity, rural characteristics, and vulnerability to development pressure become available.

All owners of property meeting the standards were contacted and invited to a public meeting in which the overall plan was discussed, and each owner was given the opportunity to meet with Land Preservation Advisory Committee members and Township officials informally. At individual meetings, the owners were informed of the details of the program as it might affect their properties, and were provided more details of the ranking of their property. The following section contains the prioritized ranking of the top thirteen properties.

Parcel Scoring

Of the final 24 properties, thirteen expressed an interest in continued discussion regarding open space preservation. In cases where two or more properties received the same score, a forced ranking method was used to differentiate between them. In some cases additional on-site observations were used. In order of importance the critical properties are outlined below.

In this inventory, the Township has identified its significant development unprotected properties and potentially vulnerable resources. Township, County, State, and School District properties are not included as they all enjoy some form of public control. The following is a brief analysis of the potentially vulnerable resources and a priority ranking for preservation or protection. The prioritization was based on this plan's goals and objectives, the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, the selection rating criteria which includes: the location of the sites, the proximity to other protected and unprotected sites, the level of importance, the contribution to community and cultural heritage, and the threat of imminent development.

Name: Nowakowski Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-1-123

Land Area: 30.9 acres

Location: Sellersville Road

Zoning District: SR-2 Two acre minimum

Comment: Long term active farm with immediate development potential.

Protection Priority Ranking: High

Name: Pfeiffer/Maurer Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-1-125-2

Land Area: 34.1 acres

Location: Walter Road

Zoning District: SR-2 Two acre minimum

Comment: High property with views to the SW. High potential for development. Borders development in Chalfont Borough. Also borders Nowakowski tract.

Protection Priority Ranking: High

Name: Pitera/Szablewski Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-5-28

Land Area: 20.4

Location: Walter Road

Zoning District: SR-2 Two acre minimum

Comment: Undeveloped parcel with some steep slopes and views to the southwest.

Protection Priority Ranking: Low

Name: Hovsepian Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-4-16

Land Area: 37.4 acres

Location: Upper Stump Road

Zoning District: RA-2 Five acre minimum

Comment: Gently sloping property with stream crossing midway, mature hardwood forest, farmed upper slopes. Old stone farmhouse (1700's) and farm buildings exist. Potential greenway linkage along Hardiakan corridor.

Protection Priority Ranking: High

Name: PECO Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-4-35

Land Area: 80.3 acres

Location: Keller Road

Zoning District: RA-2 Five acre minimum

Comment: This is an undeveloped tract with utility easement for high power lines and towers; right of way required for maintenance access. Several contiguous properties with this the largest with access from Keller Road. Gently sloping and generally along ridge line from west to east. Presently under agreement of sale. Small portion of property situated along Hardiakan stream corridor.

Protection Priority Ranking: Medium

Name: Shelly Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-4-24

Land Area: 82 acres

Location: Route 313

Zoning District: RA-2 Five acre minimum

Comment: Largest actively farmed parcel in the township with high development pressure from Plumstead. Gently sloping land toward the SE with the Hardiakan stream corridor traversing from west to east.

Protection Priority Ranking: High

Name: Keller Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-4-30-1

Land Area: 21.8 acres

Location: King Road

Zoning District: RA-1 Five acre minimum

Comment: Wooded sloping terrain containing the Hardiakan creek with numerous waterfalls flowing to the south.

Protection Priority Ranking: Low

Name: Fossler/Schuman Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-4-30

Land Area: 36.1

Location: King Road

Zoning District: RA-1 Five acre minimum

Comment: Wooded sloping parcel adjacent to stream corridor.

Protection Priority Ranking: Low

Name: Gaynor Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-4-62

Land Area: 39.8 acres

Location: Barner Road

Zoning District: RA-1 Five acre minimum

Comment: Owner lives on property with farm buildings and mobile home. Scenic vistas of Doylestown, Lake Galena and SE. Perhaps one of the highest vistas in the township. High potential for development.

Protection Priority Ranking: Medium

Name: Weinman Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-4-63

Land Area: 32.6 acres

Location: Chapman Road

Zoning District: RA-1 Five acre minimum

Comment: High open farmland adjacent to Gaynor Tract with high potential for development.

Protection Priority Ranking: Medium

Name: Hockman Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-4-4

Land Area: 29.8 acres

Location: Old Limekiln Road/King Road

Zoning District: RA-1 Five acre minimum

Comment: Sloping scenic vista toward SE and Lake Galena. Single family residence on site.

Protection Priority Ranking: Low

Name: Jasin/Inman Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-1-71

Land Area: 48.4 acres

Location: Sellersville Road

Zoning District: SR-2 Two acre minimum

Comment: Undeveloped land level with some wetland and poor soils. Subject to development.

Protection Priority Ranking: Low

Name: Cuce Tract

Tax Parcel: 26-3-25

Land Area: 20.5 acres

Location: Newville Road/New Galena Road/Route 152

Zoning District: SR-2 Two acre minimum

Comment: Property purchased for potential business expansion in landscaping. Old farmhouse and abandoned out buildings. Property frontage extensive on three roads.

Protection Priority Ranking: Low

This page is intentionally left blank.

CHAPTER

7

Recommendations

This chapter makes recommendations for open space preservation in New Britain Township based upon the objectives established in this plan and the needs analysis discussed in the preceding chapter. The plan discusses priorities, and makes numerous recommendations for action on open space preservation based upon the funds available from various sources. These alternative sources will be discussed in the following chapter: *Implementation of Recommendations*.

Recommended Priorities

When setting priorities, the following factors were considered:

- presence of protected natural resources and other natural features of the open space, including but not limited to the presence of wetlands, the location of the open space within a watershed area or floodplain, and the presence of species of flora and fauna of special concern;
- suitability for use for agricultural purposes;
- suitability for use for recreational purposes;
- suitability for other uses consistent with the character of the land as open space;
- aesthetic value to the community;
- negative features such as the known presence of environmental hazards or contaminants, nuisances or other dangers;
- the danger of likelihood of imminent development;
- presence of historical structures; or other features of importance to the preservation of the heritage of New Britain Township;
- linkage of adjoining areas of protected open space or open space that may be protected in the future; and
- importance to the free movement of wildlife to the area.

These resource areas are classified into one of three categories to determine necessity for conservation, preservation or acquisition:

- Highest priority -- those areas of critical importance to the Township due to their unique ability to meet three or more of the above criteria.
- Medium priority -- those areas that are desirable to conserve because they contribute two or more of the above benefits.
- Low priority -- those areas that may meet only one of the criteria above and are deemed of minimal interest to the Township's long range plan.

Areas of highest priority are primarily larger agricultural lands near expanding population centers that can serve as large scenic buffers while providing potential greenways and trails for movement of people and wildlife.

The medium priority areas include any area with significant natural resource such as woodlands, stream corridors or historic resources. These areas are worthy of preservation but are secondary in importance and priority. In some instances they present potential for long range park development and are given special consideration for preservation.

The low priority areas have had considerable development in the past or are subject to little damaging development in the future. The characteristics of the land make it poorly suited for public use, and its restricted open space will continue to provide a stable level of ecological habitat in the area.

Recommendations for Action

This plan has stressed the need to protect the natural resources, agricultural lands, cultural resources, and greenways of the community. This section provides specific recommendations in this regard.

Recommendation: Conserve the key farms in the southwest growth area of the Township for future farming and as an important buffer to future expansion of development.

Two parcels form a natural separation from the high-density housing and the rural, undeveloped areas beyond. Both the farmed and fallow areas add contrast and habitat to the area as a whole. The Township should consider purchasing conservation and access easements on these properties, which would allow a future linkage to the yet undeveloped park on New Galena and Walter Road.

Recommendation: Protect the natural resources along the tributary stream of the Hardiakan Creek that flows into the North Branch of the Neshaminy above Lake Galena.

This stream corridor has the potential of connecting Nockamixon State Park with Peace Valley Park, and is part of both Hilltown Township and Bucks County's Open Space Plans. One property has particular appeal as a long range community park. Other properties in the greenbelt currently are available at reasonable prices with the added advantage that several owners are friendly toward the open space program. The Township should consider purchasing and acquiring these critical parcels for future development of a park and greenway to Peace Valley Park in cooperation with Hilltown Township. (Reference: *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County*).

Recommendation: Protect the natural resources along the West Branch of the Neshaminy from County Line Road to the boundary of Chalfont Borough.

The opportunity exists to preserve most of this corridor due to the characteristic of the land and its current inaccessibility. The link would connect West Branch Park with a smaller park in Chalfont Borough. The Township should consider requesting status in the wetlands mitigation proceedings of the Department of Transportation Section 700 Project to enable the Township to obtain access to the property at some future date with the intent of constructing a trail system outside and separate from the restricted wetlands construction.

Recommendation: Protect the natural resources along the Pine Run corridor from North Branch Park to the Covered Bridge in New Britain Borough.

Much of this land is already preserved with informal trails existing. Only two private properties separate the connection of this link. The Township should investigate the cost of trail construction and hold discussions with property owners in the area. The Township should consider purchasing access easement in the area from willing owners. (Reference: *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County*).

Recommendation: Provide neighborhood and community parklands for future development in the southwest and northwest portions of the Township unserved by such facilities. This should also include provision for linkages from the most highly developed areas of the Township and neighboring municipalities.

The analysis of park needs shows that the current facilities are more than adequate for the present population. However, if growth meets expectations, more neighborhood and community facilities will be needed in both the southwest and northwest areas. The Township should consider the purchase of properties and access easements in those areas.

CHAPTER

8

Implementation of Recommendations

New Britain Township has methodically investigated and studied the issue of open space with careful consideration of the community's needs and its financial ability to pay for these benefits. Only after three years and two volunteer committees completed their individual analysis, focused upon the quality and quantity of land available, did New Britain move to set its plan in place. Over recent years, large quantities of useable land has been preserved. Using natural resource protection ordinance and negotiated agreements with developers, considerably more land has been preserved and enhanced for public use. This process can now be furthered by applying the techniques suggested in this plan. These techniques are grouped into two categories: (1) zoning and subdivision ordinance provisions and (2) land acquisition. These techniques are applied to parcels that were evaluated in the previous chapter or indicated as representing contiguous properties along priority linkages. The final section discusses recommended strategies for the Township to undertake to achieve the open space objectives outlined earlier in the plan.

Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Provisions

The objectives of the open space management plan can and will continue to be met through the use of techniques available in the zoning and subdivision ordinances. These techniques include:

- Residential performance zoning
- Cluster development
- Land Preservation Development use
- Open space ownership standards
- Natural resource protection standards
- Forestry standards and tree protection zones
- Overlay districts
- Mandatory dedication of parkland/fee in lieu
- Design guidelines

Land Acquisition

Four major ways are used to acquire land rights: purchase, leaseback/resale, donation, and easements. Land may be purchased in fee simple, all the rights, or less than fee simple.

Purchase

Acquiring land by outright purchase is the most commonly used technique. It is the most expensive technique, but offers the advantage of allowing the municipality to use the property in any manner it sees fit.

Leaseback/resale

This technique involves purchasing the property in fee simple, placing use restrictions on it, and leasing or reselling it to an interested party. The municipality can acquire property for future use before its price becomes prohibitive. Offering it for lease or sale allows the recapture of some or all of the purchase price.

Donation

By donation of land rights, the donor become eligible for income tax deductions. There are many techniques for using donations in conjunction with estate planning to reduce or eliminate the cost of estate taxes that can become a financial burden upon heirs.

Easements

Easements are specific property rights that are sold or donated by a property owner for the benefit of another party. Easement types include access, conservation, and façade easements. Several of the land preservation methods considered above include the purchase of all or part of a land-owner's development rights. Land ownership consists of a "bundle of rights," such as the right to keep others off the land, the right to sell it, the right to bequeath it, the right to farm it, and the right to develop it subject to zoning and other laws and ordinances. The purchase of development rights consists of purchasing the right to develop and retiring that right. The owner retains all other rights and responsibilities inherent in ownership. The rights purchased are specified and can range from removing the right to build anything at all to smaller limitations on the type or location of development allowed on the property.

The purchase of development rights is also referred to as the purchase of a conservation easement, a scenic easement, a facade easement, etc., depending on the purpose of the easement and details of the rights

purchased. Such easements are "negative" easements; that is, they prevent the owner from doing something with his/her land.

Ownership of only some of the rights, such as the development rights, is known as ownership of a less-than-fee interest. The purchase of development rights (or a conservation easement) is usually in perpetuity, but can also be a term of years (e.g. 25 years). It is recorded on the deed and is binding on future owners of the land.

The value of the development rights is the difference between the fair market value of the land without restrictions (except normal zoning and other regulations) and its value with the restrictions (which sometimes is known as the current use value). The unrestricted value varies depending on development pressure, but the restricted use value (such as for farming) is relatively constant within a region. Therefore, the cost of development rights as a percent of the unrestricted value may vary considerably.

When a landowner sells his development rights, he is exchanging a physical asset for a financial one, and usually can continue to use his land just as he has been doing in the past. As a result, the owner has more financial flexibility, the value of an estate is no longer "tied up in the land," and when the estate has to be settled there is less pressure to sell the land to pay death taxes.

For some landowners, the sale of development rights enables a financial strategy that permits increasing current cash flow from investment of the sale proceeds while continuing to live on and use the property indefinitely. Further, it establishes a reduced estate value for tax purposes. In many cases, the landowner will achieve a greater return on investment through the current sale of development rights than the future sale of land and rights.

The Purchase of Development Rights should be distinguished from Transfer of Development Rights. Under Purchase of Development Rights, the rights are effectively taken out of existence. Under Transfer of Development Rights, the rights to develop are moved to another parcel where they are used.

Each technique has merits, of and by itself. Its appropriateness is determined by each situation, but often results in increased value when used in combination. Often the use of one technique will positively enhance the use of other techniques on adjacent parcels.

Acquisition Funding Sources

In addition to the Bucks County Open Space Bond Issue as a source of financing, other potential open space funding sources include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Several grant programs are administered by the Pa. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, as follows:
 - Keystone Community Grant Program. This program provides funding for up to 50% of the eligible costs for acquisition of property.
 - Keystone Recreational Trail Program. Pennsylvania's appropriation of funds from the federal National Recreational Trails Fund (Symms) Program is available to provide and maintain recreational trails. Grants are limited to a maximum \$2,500.
 - Keystone Land Trust Grant Program. This program is a source of funding for non-profit conservation or preservation organizations, conservancies, and land trusts. Grants amounting up to 50% of eligible project costs are available. This may present an opportunity for New Britain Township to work in cooperation with such a group to acquire a critical link meeting the program's criteria.
 - Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (DOT). As a result of the International Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1998, funding assistance is available for trails on an 80/20 cost share basis, with 20% being the local share.
- (2) Donations and grants from foundations, corporations, and individual benefactors.
- (3) Township Borrowing Capability.

Other Funding Techniques

Certain tax benefits may be used to compensate the property owner for acquisition. These include bargain sales and tax deductions and credits. Investigations should be made of the legality and possibility of utilization of real estate tax credits that can be used by the property owner in future years against those later years' tax liability. By this method, the Township would not have to use present out-of-pocket funds for the acquisition. Lands lying in floodplains may be acquired for a reduced price.

Application of the Techniques

The open space techniques can be applied to the parcels identified in the previous chapter to provide an immediate plan of action for the Township. The parcels are listed according to the scores they received in the criteria grading system evaluation. They are listed in declining priority.

The **Nowakowski** parcel (TMP 26-1-123) is open farmland with some wooded lowlands adjacent to an intermittent stream and associated wetlands. The parcel is not available for sale currently, and, due to availability of public sewer and water, would be prohibitively expensive. The natural resources on the site will be preserved in accordance with ordinance requirements. The Township should consider a conservation easement to protect the farmland, its vistas and buffer to adjacent farms along with an access easement to provide public access along the stream and linking Chalfont Borough to the proposed public park in the Line Lexington area at New Galena and Walter Road.

The **Pfeiffer** parcel (TMP 26-1-125-2) is located adjacent to the **Nowakowski** parcel and is 90% actively farmed. The land is gently rolling with less than 1 acre in wetlands or steep slopes. By combining this parcel with the **Nowakowski** parcel, the Township will put into place a significant block of open land, readily viewed from adjoining roads and providing linkage to access public recreation for people in high density residential areas. This property adds value to the conservation value of the **Nowakowski** property by keeping this portion of the Township rural. The two parcels together are an effective management tool for slowing the pace of development in this area.

The **Hovsepien** parcel (TMP 26-4-16) stands out as being one of the most significant stream corridors (Hardiakan) in the Township. Approximately 40% of the property is in active farming. A woods of over 10 acres includes many species of native hardwoods. The buildings are historic but in relatively poor condition. The stream corridor and adjacent lands suggest an ideal location for a community park in the northeastern section of the Township in addition to the greenway connecting Hilltown Township and Peace Valley Park. The Township should consider purchase acquisition of the land with a life estate for the current owners or subdivision of a 5 acre homestead.

The **Shelly** parcel (TMP 26-4-24) is actively farmed but has considerable woods and stream access on the Hardiakan Creek. The owner wants to continue farming the useable lands for the foreseeable future, but would like to hold land along the Route 313 frontage for possible commercial development. Most of the natural resources can be protected by ordinance, but access would be prohibitively expensive. This property is sited in a location that makes engineering public sewer and water difficult and expensive. The Township should consider acquiring a portion of the property in fee simple purchase with necessary access easement to preserve the linkage along the stream corridor and ensure permanent preservation of a buffer farmland belt for ecological and aesthetic values.

The **PECO Energy** parcel (TMP 26-4-35) is relatively flat land with some portions adjoining the Hardiakan Creek with associated woodlands and native scrub. The property does adjoin the **Hovsepian** parcel and would increase the conservation value of that property and continue the stream linkage. High power utility towers divide the property and make it less desirable than other properties nearby. Nevertheless, interest has been expressed by potential owners to use the acreage for a horse farm. The Township should acquire the parcel with the intent of placing an easement upon the portions meeting the open space criteria, and then leasing or reselling the remaining portions for low density residential development. Alternatively, the Township may wish to purchase an access easement along the stream corridor and a conservation easement along the **Hovsepian** parcel as protection from encroachment.

The **Hopkins** parcel (TMP 26-X-X) is located adjacent to Butler Elementary School. The scenic vistas at the top of the property along with the farm buildings and pond on the lower reaches have attracted much notice. The value of the property is beyond the Township's ability to finance, but it may be possible to arrive at a negotiated agreement of development that preserves those rural features and still allows the yield the owner seeks. The Township should continue discussions with the owner and with the Central Bucks School District to seek a financial solution for preservation of portions of this property.

There are several parcels along the West Branch, Pine Run and the mainstream of the Neshaminy that should be considered for the development of the stream greenway. The ordinances will effectively preserve the natural resources and allow access during any development process. For those properties in private ownership, the Township should continue the process of public education and discussion concerning ways to establish preserved greenways and potential trail systems. This is regarded as a long-term goal and will require considerable public support. (Reference: *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County*).

Implementation Strategies

The following implementation strategies are intended to show the scope of activities the community should engage in to implement the Objectives developed in this open space plan. They are not exhaustive, and other strategies will develop over time. The responsibility of each strategy should rest with one or more committees or boards of the Township, as indicated below. These strategies should be implemented within a given timeframe. The timeframes for implementation are: *ongoing, short-term, middle-term, and long-term*. Ongoing describes efforts that are currently taking place and that should continue into the future. Short-term efforts should commence soon after plan adoption. Middle-term efforts should start 2-5 years after plan adoption. The planning process and results of both short-term and middle-term efforts must be in place before any long-term efforts can be implemented 5-10 years after plan adoption.

- Objective 1. Protect and enhance the quality of the natural resources found within the Township as well as those having an ecological relationship to surrounding municipalities. Ensure that resident activity or future development does not degrade or destroy the natural resources found.**
- Short-term Amend the zoning ordinance to include wetland buffer standards and protection zone.
-- Board of Supervisors
- Short-term Amend the Subdivision ordinance to include a natural resource inventory requirement on each major subdivision.
-- Board of Supervisors
- Short-term Amend the zoning ordinance to prohibit using existing preserved land to satisfy the open space dedication requirements for any future development.
-- Board of Supervisors
- Middle-term Purchase easements on parcels that are ranked significant for open space preservation with special attention to areas noted in the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County*.
-- Board of Supervisors
- Middle-term Purchase public access easements in areas where planned recreation will create or has already created the need for pedestrian paths.
-- Board of Supervisors
- Middle-term Develop a public education program about the significant habitats and species in the Township including those sites noted in the *Natural Areas Inventory of Bucks County*.
-- Planning Commission
- Ongoing Encourage retention of tax rollback or deferral programs and participation in agricultural preservation programs.
-- Board of Supervisors

Objective 2. Protect the integrity of significant cultural and historic resources.

Short-term Amend the Zoning ordinance to allow alternative business uses in historic buildings such as bed and breakfast use in historic farmhouses in all residential zoning districts.

-- Board of Supervisors

Middle-term Conduct an historic structure resource inventory to establish site locations and specific details of each site.

-- Planning Commission

Long-term Purchase or accept dedication of façade easements on buildings of significant cultural or historic value.

-- Board of Supervisors

Objective 3. Establish a system of linked open space to serve as multi-purpose community greenways.

Middle-term Update the Park and Recreation Plan to include long-range park development plans and specific application for the fee-in-lieu funds.

-- Park and Recreation Board

Ongoing Require mandatory dedication/fee-in-lieu for new developments.

-- Board of Supervisors

Middle-term Acquire land or easements for public access along open space linkages where appropriate.

-- Board of Supervisors

Middle-term Coordinate open space link efforts with adjacent communities to connect open space links that cross municipal boundaries.

-- Land Preservation Advisory Committee

Objective 4. Maintain a continuing commitment to open space planning and preservation both within the Township and within the Central Bucks area.

Short-term Participate in greenway planning with County and neighboring municipal agencies. Form a joint committee with Chalfont Borough to plan greenway development.

-- Land Preservation Advisory Committee

Middle-term Update the Open Space Plan in 2004.

-- Land Preservation Advisory Committee

Ongoing Continue public education concerning the preservation program and the importance of greenways throughout the community.

-- Land Preservation Advisory Committee

Objective 5. Encourage and support the continuation of farming in the Township.

Short-term Encourage the Central Bucks School District to find methods to reduce property taxes on average size farms.

-- Board of Supervisors

Middle-term Work with legislators to develop a broader array of farm preservation methods.

-- Board of Supervisors

Middle-term Work with tax and estate planning professionals to develop packages of information and guidance specific to farmers.

-- Land Preservation Advisory Committee

Long-term Purchase easements or reverse mortgages on productive farms that will provide a stream of cash flow for continued operations.

-- Board of Supervisors

Objective 6. Preserve additional open space land necessary for passive and active recreational purpose for the next twenty years.

Middle-term Acquire by donation or fee simple purchase properties in the northwestern area of the Township.

-- Board of Supervisors

Middle-term Amend the zoning ordinance to allow the transfer of development rights in rural areas that will sustain the most growth over this period.

-- Board of Supervisors

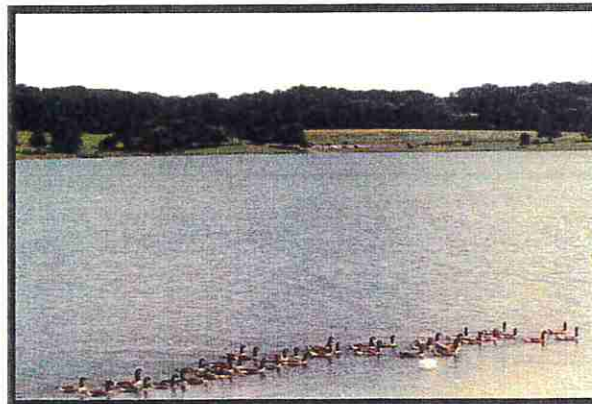
Appendix A. Scenes of New Britain Township



Neshaminy Creek serves as a natural corridor through the Township.



Available land provides for future park development, with a variety of active recreation opportunities.



Peace Valley Park, featuring Lake Galena, is a key component of New Britain Township's Open Space program.

Photos by Jim and Marcia Weikert

Appendix B. Open Space Ranking Criteria

Criteria for open space property prioritization: Evaluation consists of measuring a property's environmental sensitivity, contribution to the rural character of the Township, and vulnerability to development pressure. Higher scoring sites are higher priority for preservation consideration. This inventory is intended as the first step of a multi-phase evaluation of possible properties for preservation.

1. Environmental Factors

Priority will be given to property containing wetlands, steep slopes, streams, woodlands, or unique animal/plant habitats. The values for each Environmental feature are as follows:

a) Wetlands		
(1) Present on property	=	1 point
(2) Not present on property	=	0 points
b) Steep slopes		
(1) Greater than 15%	=	1 point
(2) Less than 15% or not present	=	0 points
c) Streams		
(1) Exceptional stream frontage	=	3 points
(2) Some stream frontage	=	2 points
(3) Protects stream corridor	=	1 point
d) Woodlands		
(1) Mature hardwoods covering major portions of property	=	4 points
(2) Mature woods on minor portion of property	=	3 points
(3) Less mature woods/conifers	=	2 points
(4) Immature woods/scrub/treeline	=	1 point
(5) Not present on property	=	0 points
e) Unique Habitat		
(1) Present on property	=	1 point
(2) Not present on property	=	0 points
f) Soil Types		
(1) Prime agricultural soils	=	1 point
(2) Not present on property	=	0 points
g) Recharge Areas		
(1) Present on property	=	1 point
(2) Not present on property	=	0 points

2. Rural Preservation Characteristics

Priority will be given to property which protects existing open space, farm land, scenic views, or historic sites; or may provide passive recreation opportunities. The values for each Rural Preservation feature are as follows:

- a) Streams
 - (1) Exceptional stream frontage amenable to public access = 4 points
 - (2) Some stream frontage visible to public = 3 points
 - (3) Some stream frontage protects or buffers stream corridor = 2 points

- b) Woodlands
 - (1) Mature hardwoods covering major portions of property and visible = 4 points
 - (2) Mature woods on minor portion of property and not visible = 3 points
 - (3) Less mature woods/conifers = 2 points

- c) Proximity to Protected Open Space
 - (1) Adjacent to preserved Open Space = 4 points
 - (2) Adjacent to potential Open Space = 3 points
 - (3) Complements either of above = 1 point

- d) Potential greenbelt combination
 - (1) Adjacent to other available or preserved contiguous parcels suitable to greenway development = 4 points
 - (2) Not contiguous but complementary = 2 points

- e) Agricultural Use
 - (1) Significant farming activity = 4 points
 - (2) Suitable but not actively farmed = 3 point
 - (3) Buffers active farmland = 1 point

- f) Proximity to Historic Sites/Homes
 - (1) Contains Historic Site/Home = 3 points

- g) Proximity to Scenic Views
 - (1) Contains accessible Scenic Views = 3 points
 - (2) Contains Scenic Views = 2 points

- h) Recreation Opportunities
 - (1) Contains or links Proposed/Active Trail = 4 points
 - (2) Possible access to Proposed/Active Trail = 2 points

3. Development Pressure Factors

Priority will be given to property vulnerable to development. Factors assessed in evaluating development pressure are as follows:

- a) Ownership
 - (1) Builder/Developer = 3 points
 - (2) Bank/Lending Institution = 2 points
 - (3) Absentee or Corporate = 1 point

- b) Parcel Size
 - (1) Parcel > 40 acres = 4 points
 - (2) 30 acres < Parcel < 40 acres = 3 points
 - (3) 15 acres < Parcel < 30 acres = 2 points
 - (4) 15 acres < Parcel < 30 acres = 1 point

- c) Availability for Development
 - (1) For Sale = 4 points
 - (2) Future Availability Likely = 2 points

- d) Approval Status
 - (1) Current Approval obtained = 3 points
 - (2) Plans Submitted = 2 points

- e) Suitability for Development
 - (1) Easily Developed = 4 points
 - (2) Minor Impediments to Development = 2 points

- f) Zoning Classification
 - (1) Single Family = 3 points
 - (2) Multiple Family = 1 point

- g) Proximity to sewer and water
 - (1) 1,000 feet from existing lines = 4 points
 - (2) ¼ mile from existing lines = 3 points
 - (3) ½ mile from existing lines = 2 points
 - (4) 1 mile from existing lines = 1 point

- h) Likelihood of sewer and water availability
 - (1) Highly likely = 3 points
 - (2) Not likely in foreseeable future = 0 points

Appendix C. Priority Candidates for Land Preservation

(from New Britain Township properties > 20 acres)

Based upon the ranking criteria in Appendix A, the Land Preservation Advisory Committee reviewed over 70 parcels in the Township which exceeded 20 acres. Of these parcels, twenty-four were identified as priority candidates for land preservation, based upon the criteria established.

Smaller parcels are not included, although they may be of high priority to support Open Space objectives (such as stream corridor protection, greenway preservation, etc.).

Properties are listed in order by tax parcel number.

Tax Parcel Number	Owner (October, 1999)	Acreage
1-71	Jasin	48.43
1-99	Stewart	32.46
1-99-1	Stewart	23.58
1-103	Clair	23.5
1-111	Detweiler	62.19
1-123	Nowakowski	30.95
1-128-02	Pfeiffer	34.09
3-25	Palovcak	20.8
3-59	Crabtree	53.38
3-62	Gargas	41.5
3-101	Teich	26.93
4-02	Gross	24.14
4-04	Hockman	29.82
4-07	Kohler	49.76
4-10	Gilmore	37.8
4-14	Gutekunst	34.06
4-16	Hovsepian	37.47
4-24	Shelly	82.0
4-30	Fossler	36.1
4-30-1	Keller	21.76
4-35	PECO	80.28
4-62	Gaynor	39.77
4-63	Weinman	32.6
5-28	Pitera	20.4
5-54	Hopkins	45.7

Appendix D. Accompanying Maps

List of Figures

FIGURE 1. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL MAP.....	63
FIGURE 2. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP REGIONAL LOCATION.....	64
FIGURE 3. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING AREAS.....	65
FIGURE 4: EXISTING LAND USE AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCE MAP.....	66
FIGURE 5. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP NATURAL RESOURCES COMPOSITE.....	67
FIGURE 5A. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP SOILS.....	68
FIGURE 5B. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP STEEP SLOPES AND RIDGELINES.....	69
FIGURE 5C. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP WETLANDS, WATERWAYS, AND FLOODPLAINS.....	70
FIGURE 5D. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP FORESTED AREAS.....	71
FIGURE 5E. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP ACT 515 AND 319 PROPERTIES.....	72
FIGURE 5F. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP SCENIC VISTAS.....	73
FIGURE 6. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP PROTECTED OPEN SPACE LANDS.....	74
FIGURE 7. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP POTENTIAL TRAILS AND LINKAGES.....	75
FIGURE 8. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP EXISTING AND PROJECTED RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES.....	76
FIGURE 9. NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP LAND PRESERVATION PARCEL IDENTIFICATION.....	77

Figure 1. New Britain Township Historical Map

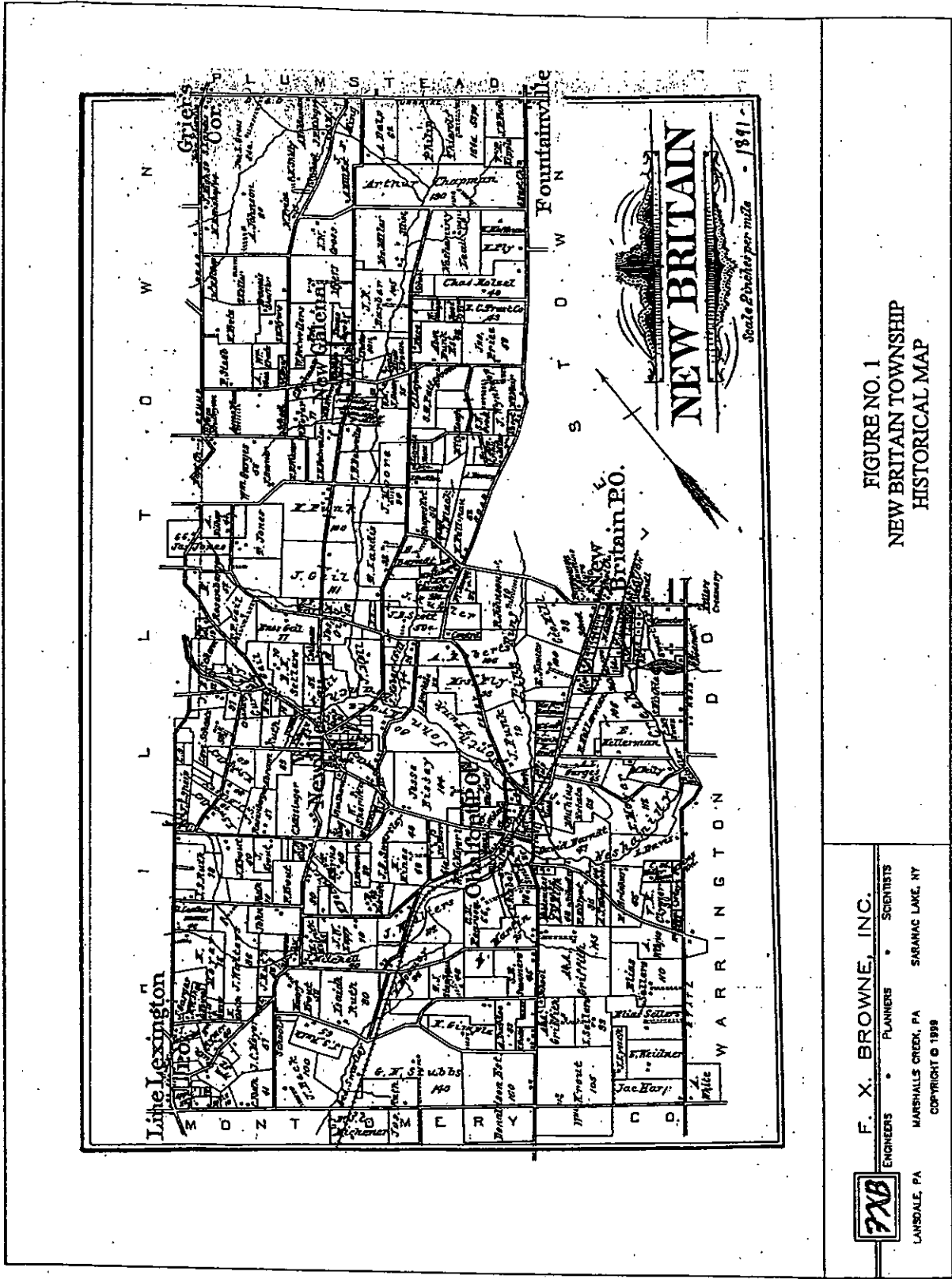


FIGURE NO. 1
NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP
HISTORICAL MAP

F. X. BROWNE, INC.
ENGINEERS • PLANNERS • SCIENTISTS
MARSHALLS CREEK, PA SARANAC LAKE, NY
LANSDALE, PA COPYRIGHT © 1988

Figure 2. New Britain Township Regional Location

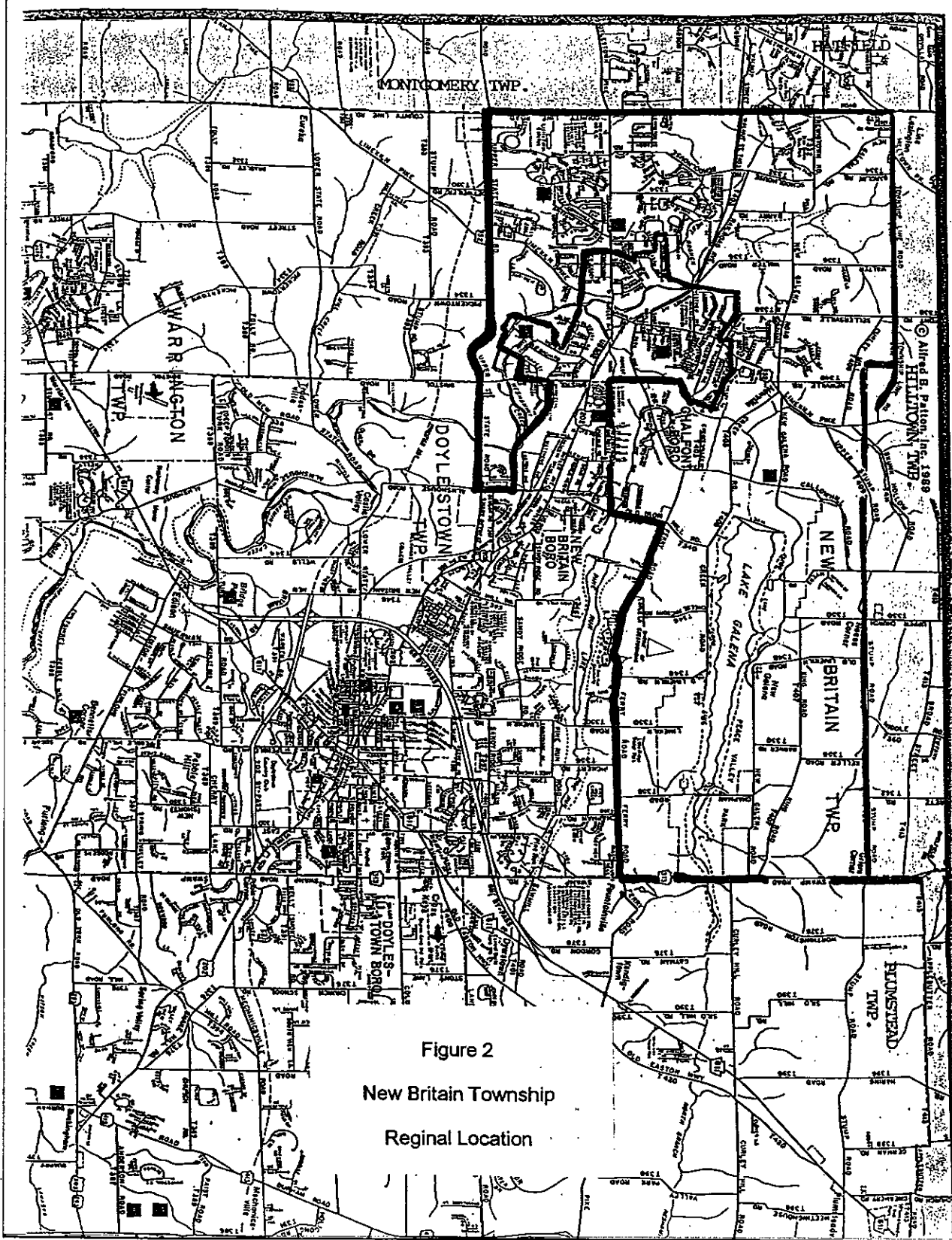


Figure 2
New Britain Township
Regional Location

Figure 3. New Britain Township Planning Areas

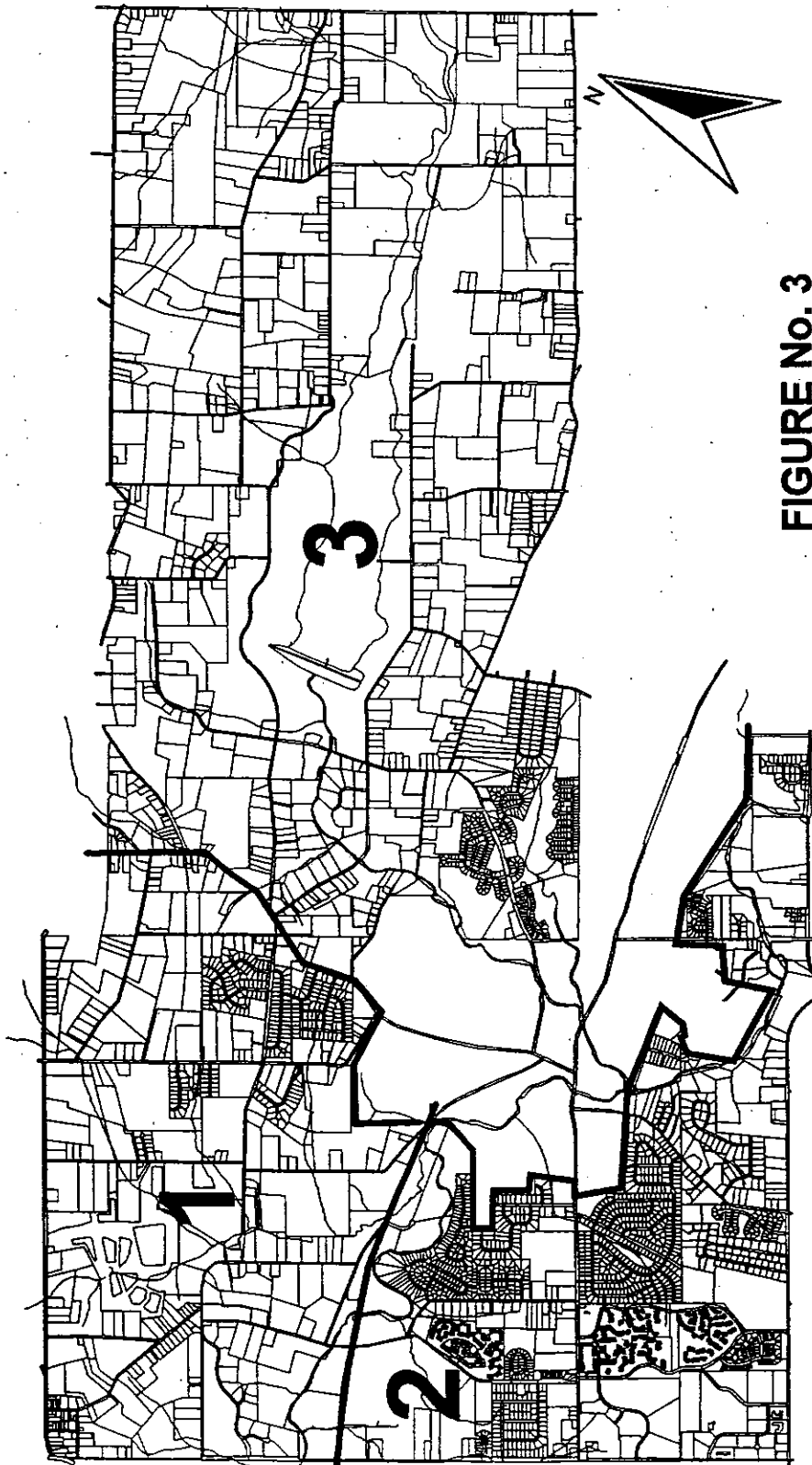
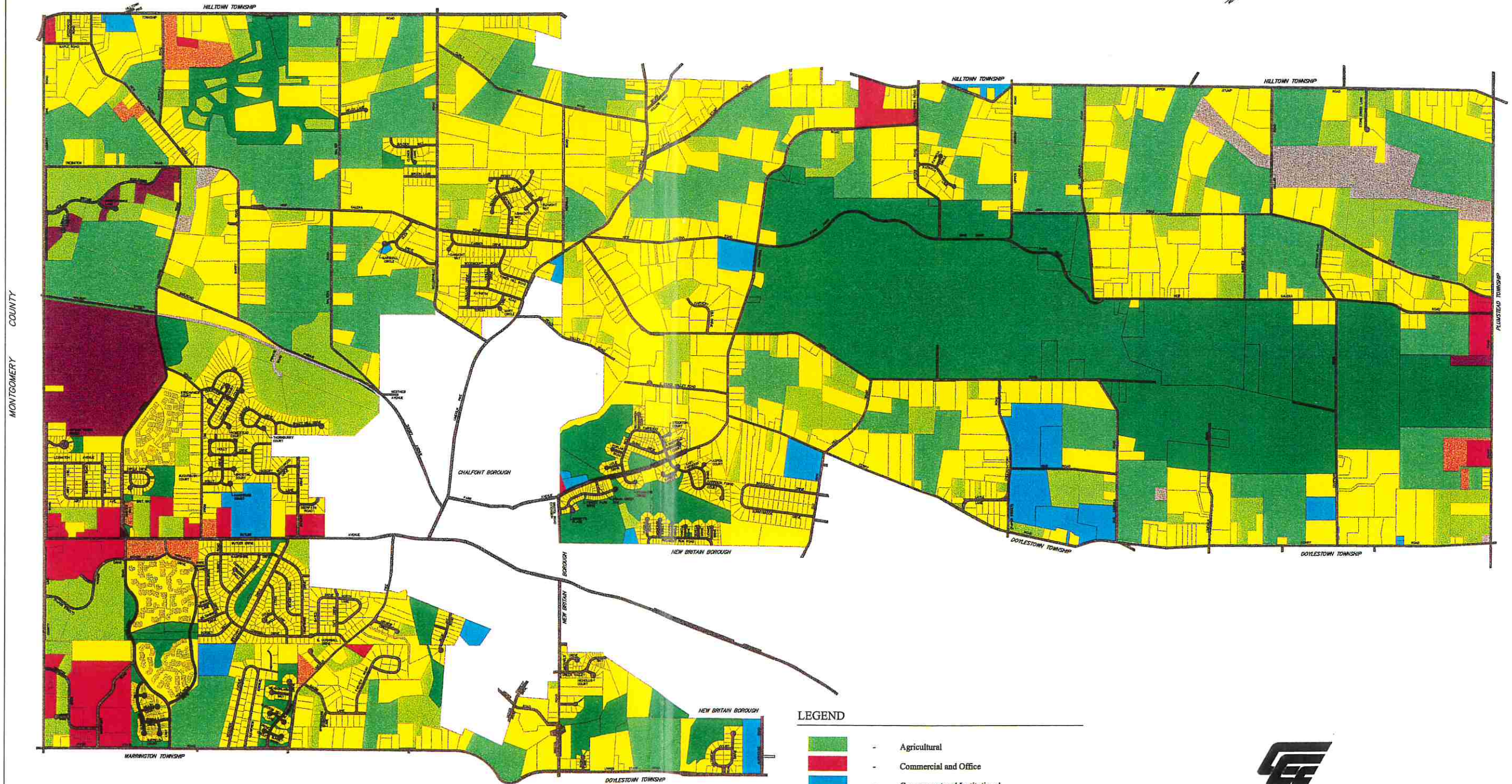


FIGURE No. 3
New Britain Township
Planning Areas










NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP

BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

EXISTING LAND USE AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCE MAP

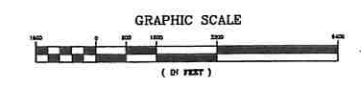


LEGEND

-  - Agricultural
-  - Commercial and Office
-  - Government and Institutional
-  - Apartment, Duplex, and Condominium
-  - Manufacturing and Industrial
-  - Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
-  - Mobile Home Park, Town House, and Single Family Dwelling
-  - Transportation and Utilities
-  - Vacant

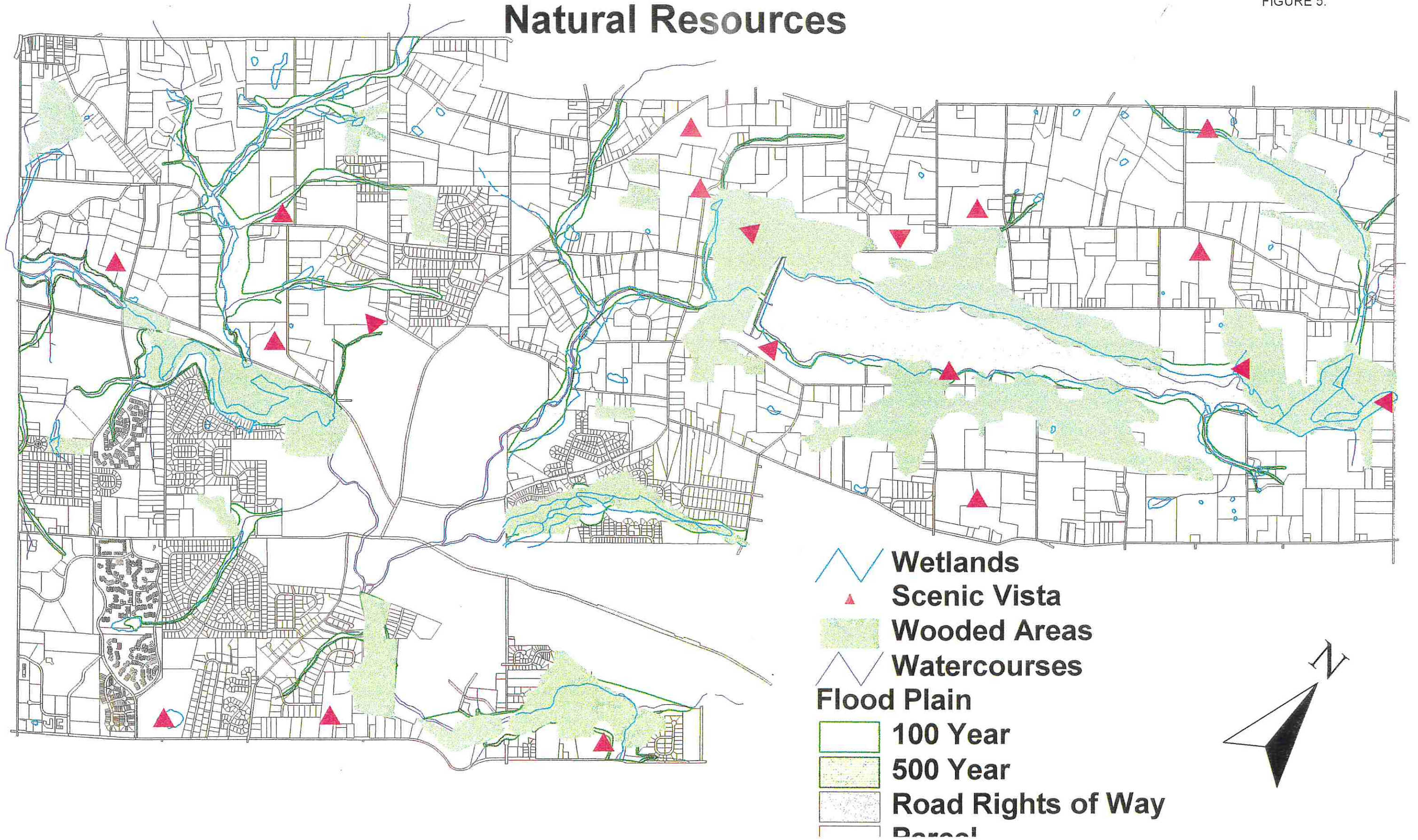


CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION
CONSULTING ENGINEERS
949 EASTON ROAD
WARRINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18976



New Britain Township Natural Resources

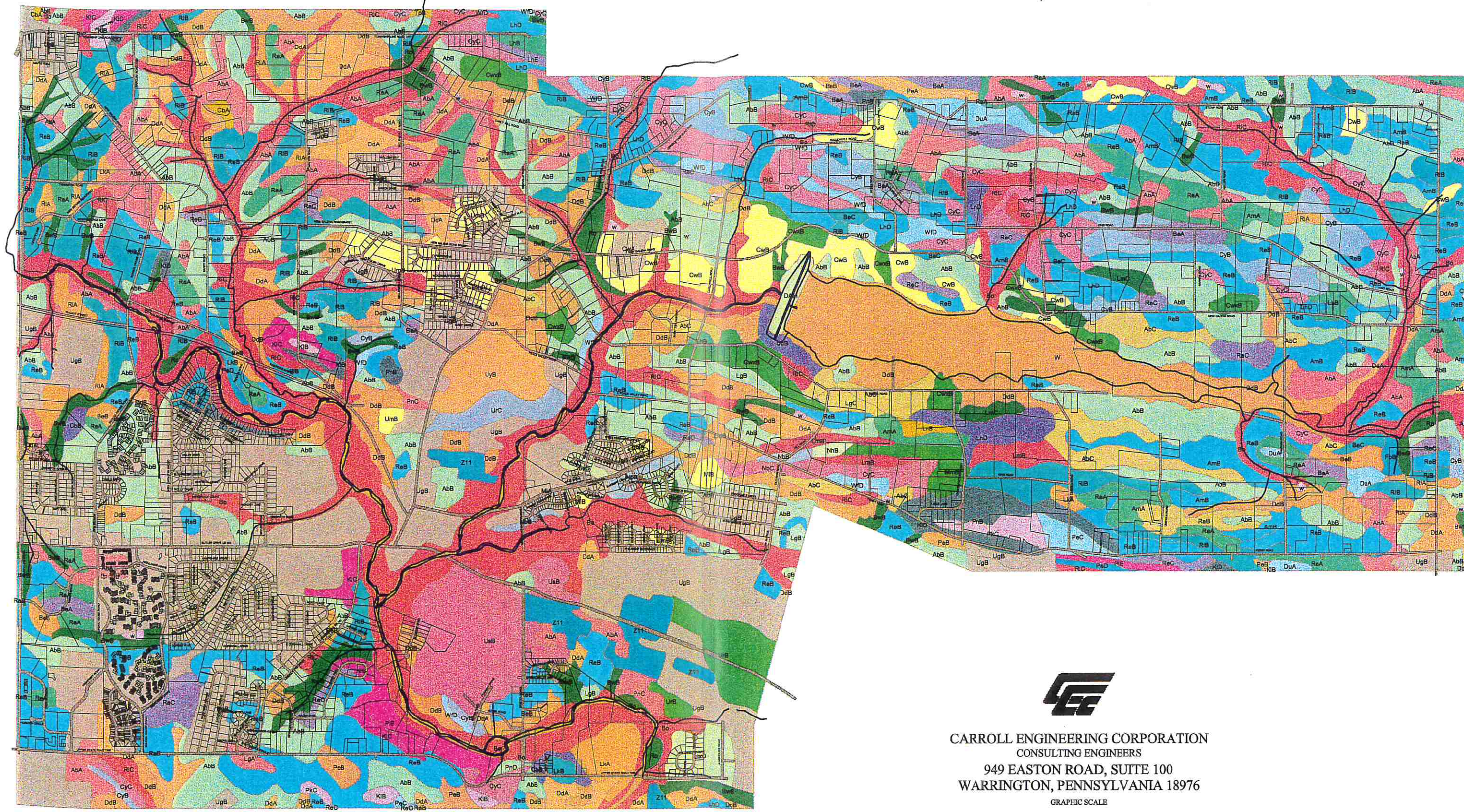
FIGURE 5.



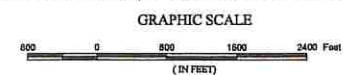
NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP

BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

SOILS MAP



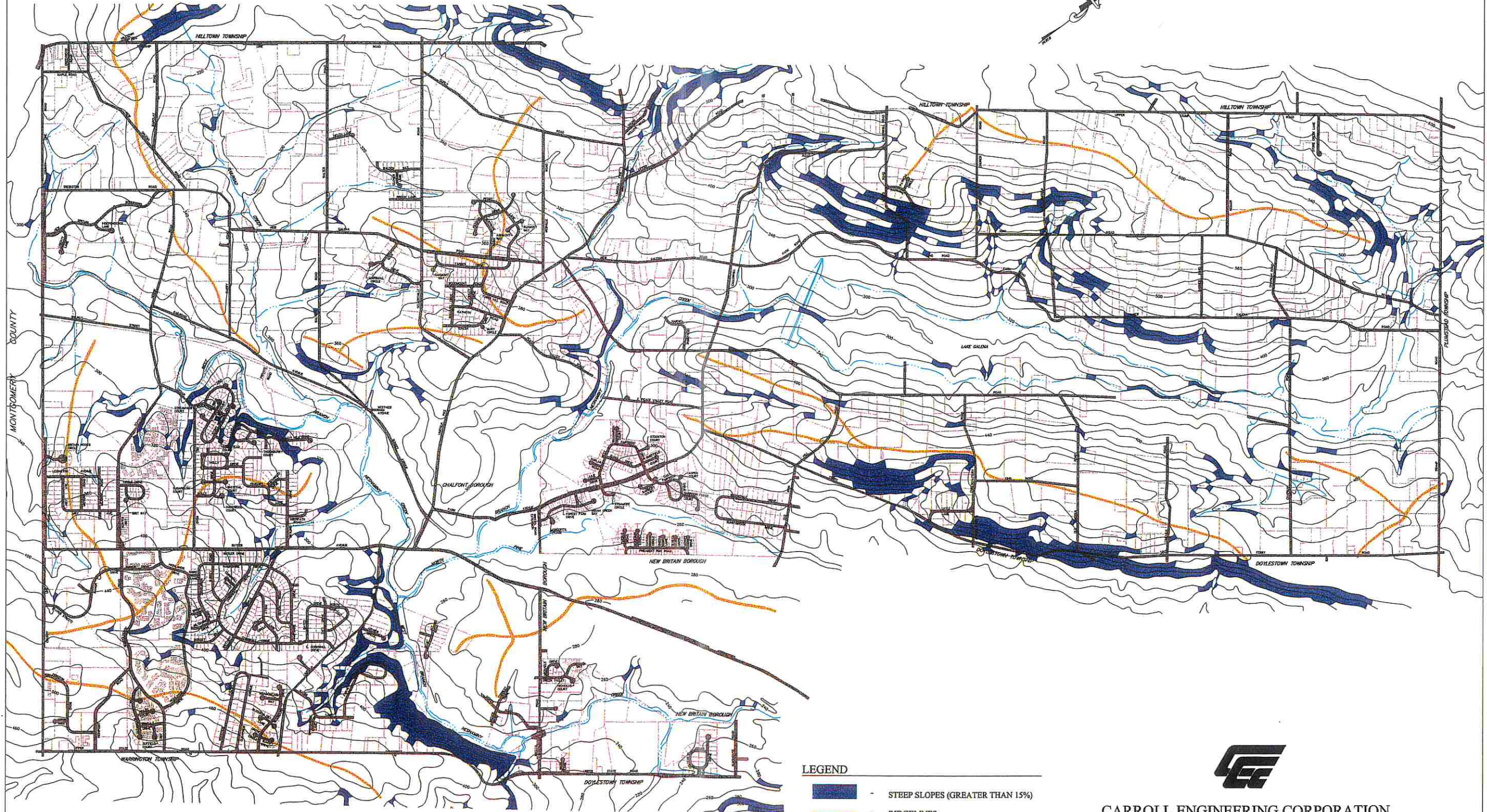
CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION
CONSULTING ENGINEERS
949 EASTON ROAD, SUITE 100
WARRINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18976





NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP

BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

NATURAL RESOURCES MAP

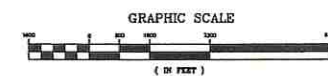


LEGEND

-  - STEEP SLOPES (GREATER THAN 15%)
-  - RIDGELINES

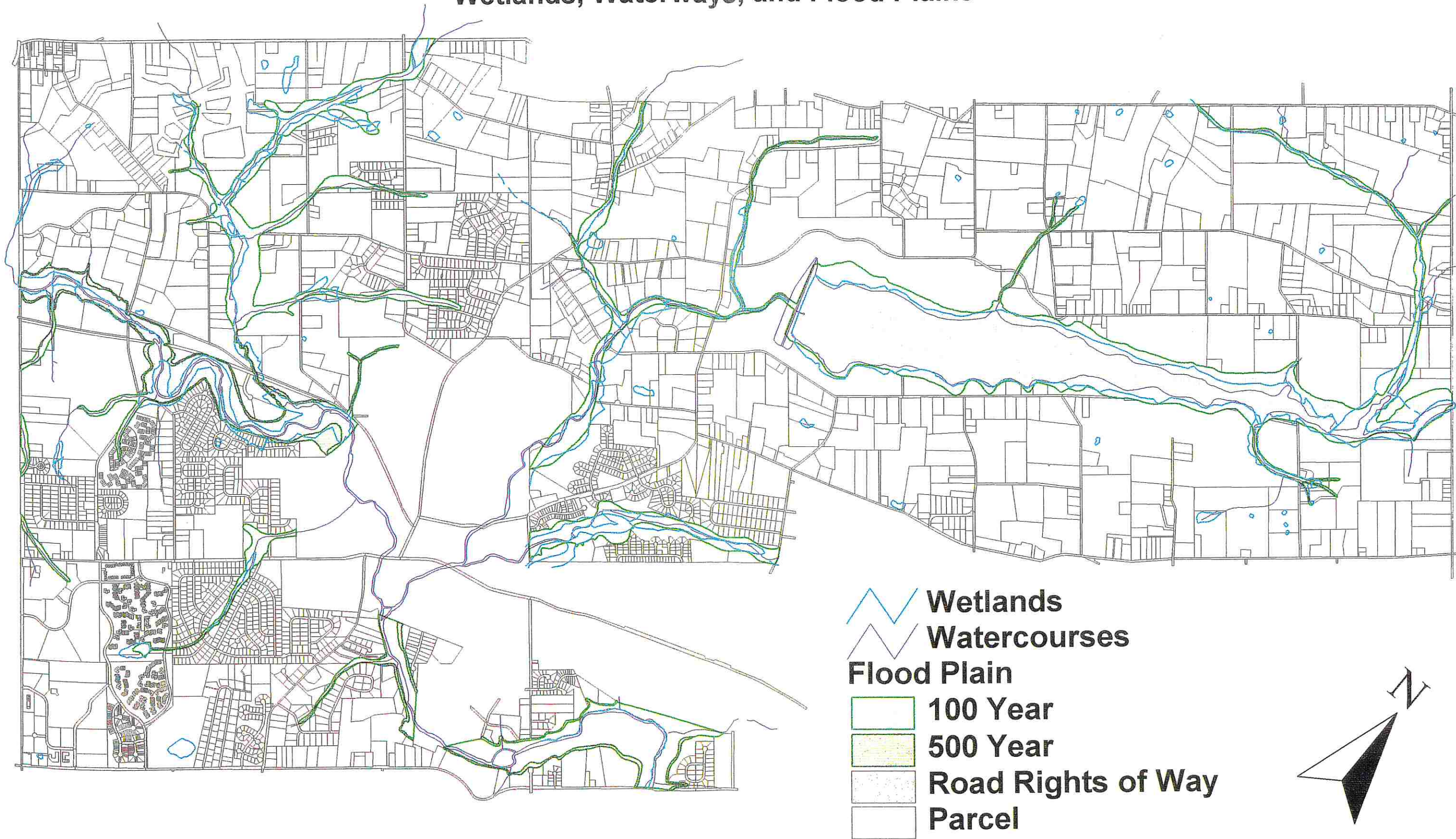


CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION
CONSULTING ENGINEERS
949 EASTON ROAD
WARRINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18976



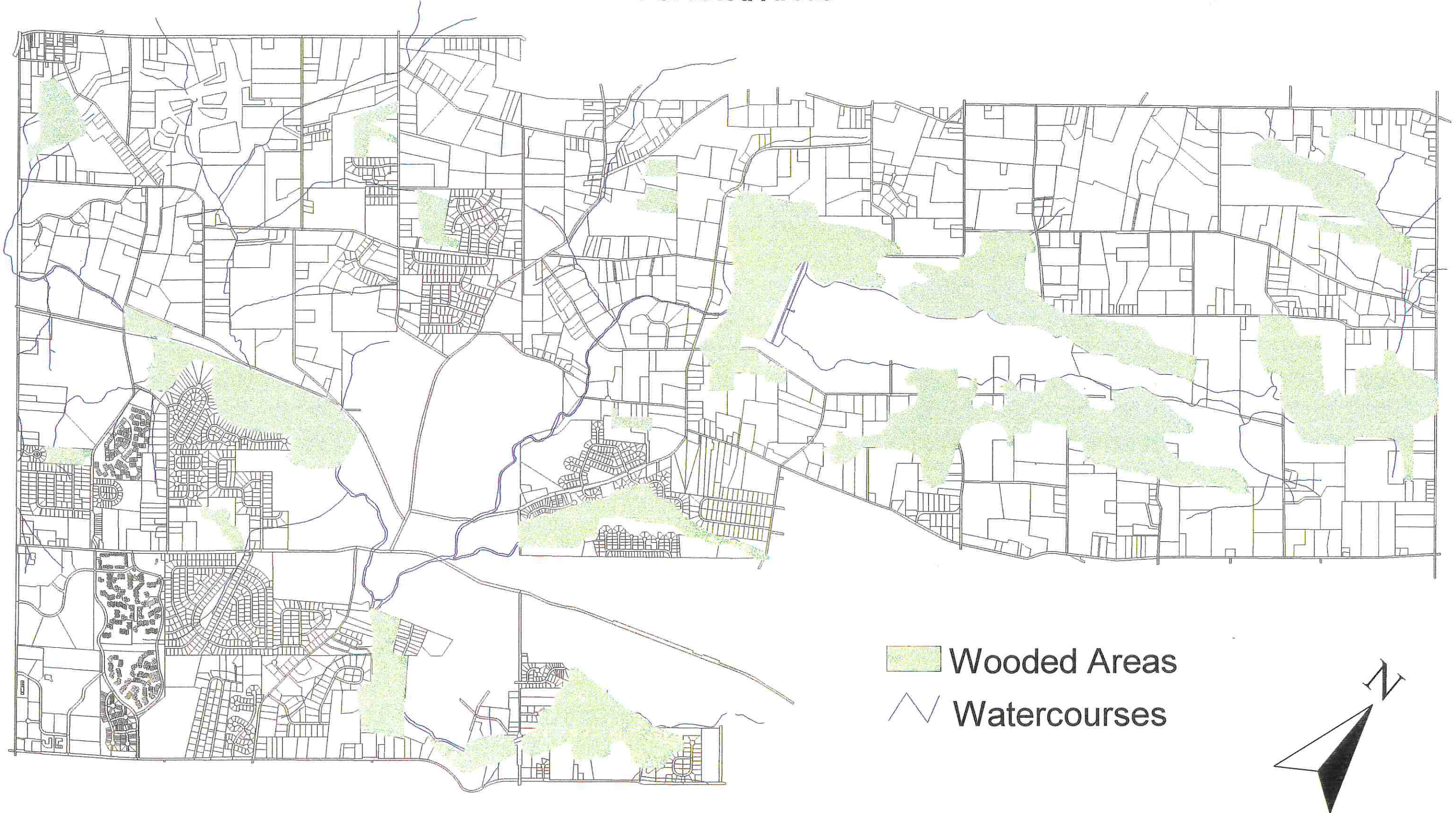
New Britain Township Wetlands, Waterways, and Flood Plains

FIGURE 5C.



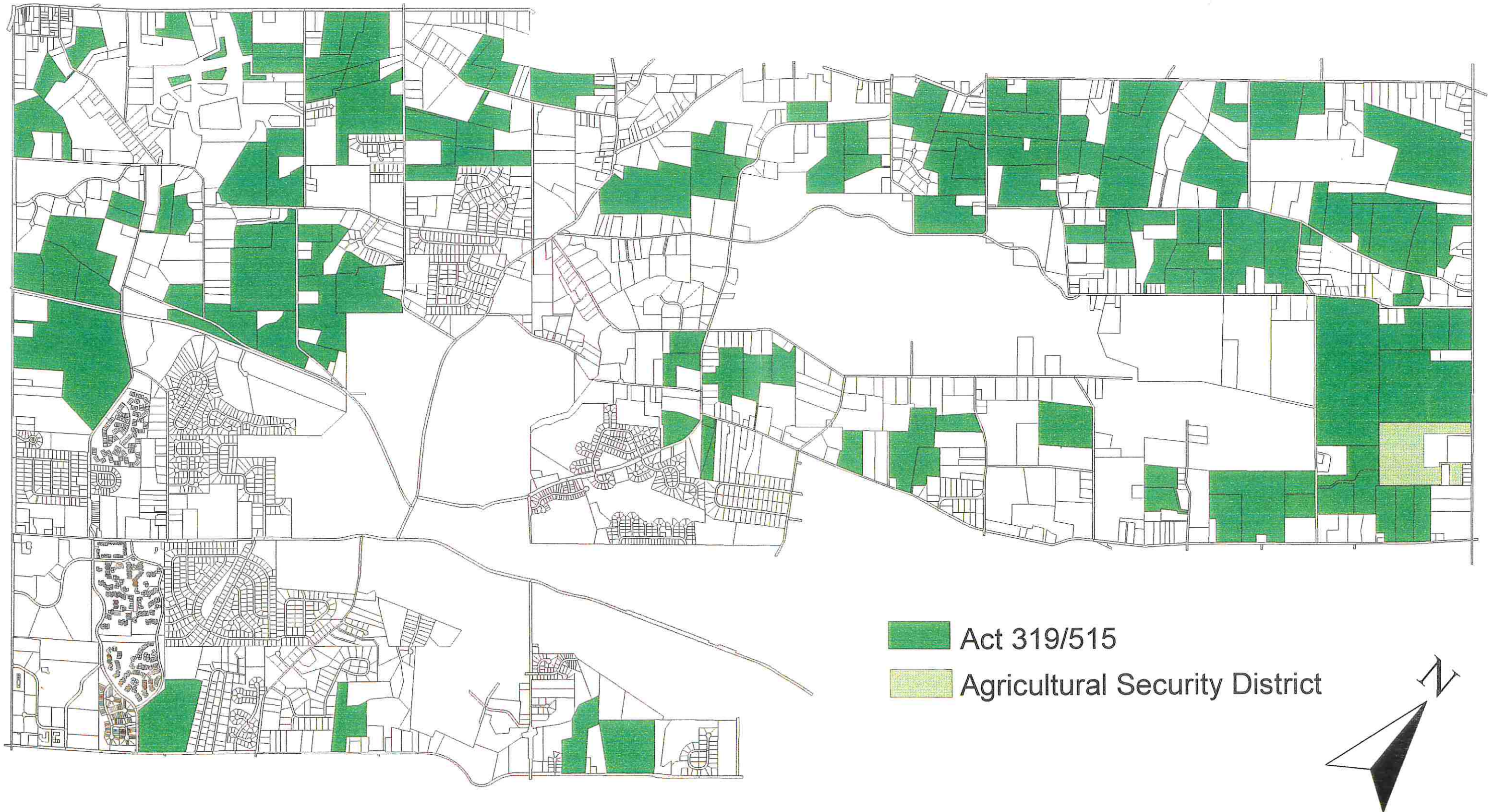
New Britain Township Forested Areas

FIGURE 5D.



New Britain Township Act 515 and 319 Properties

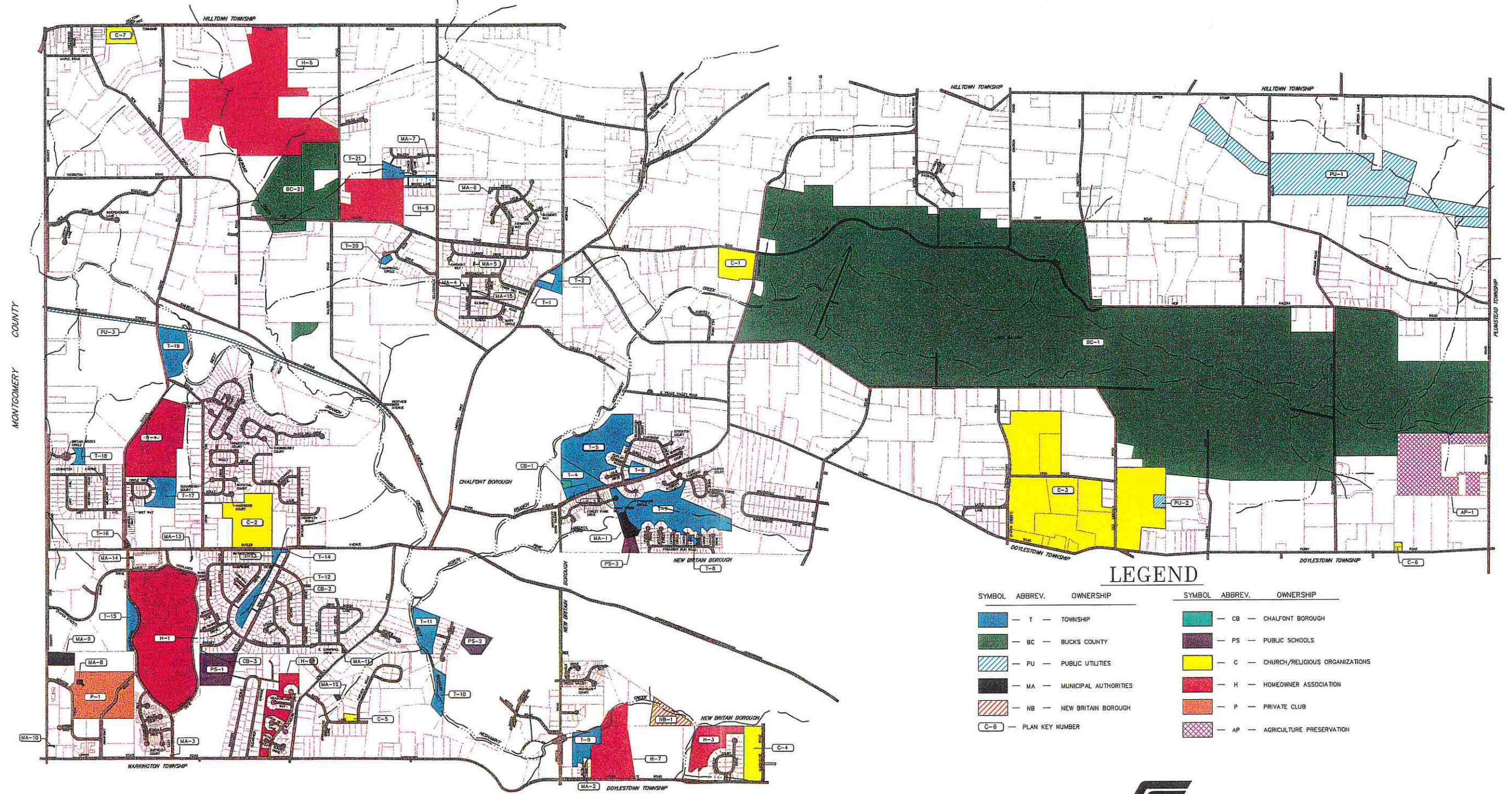
FIGURE 5E.



NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP

BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

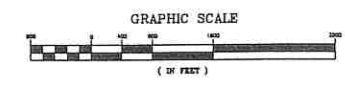
PROTECTED OPEN SPACE LANDS



LEGEND

SYMBOL	ABBREV.	OWNERSHIP	SYMBOL	ABBREV.	OWNERSHIP
[Blue Box]	T	TOWNSHIP	[Green Box]	CB	CHALFONT BOROUGH
[Dark Green Box]	BC	BUCKS COUNTY	[Purple Box]	PS	PUBLIC SCHOOLS
[Blue Hatched Box]	PU	PUBLIC UTILITIES	[Yellow Box]	C	CHURCH/RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS
[Black Box]	MA	MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES	[Red Box]	H	HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATION
[Pink Hatched Box]	NB	NEW BRITAIN BOROUGH	[Orange Box]	P	PRIVATE CLUB
[C-6 in Box]		PLAN KEY NUMBER	[Pink Dotted Box]	AP	AGRICULTURE PRESERVATION

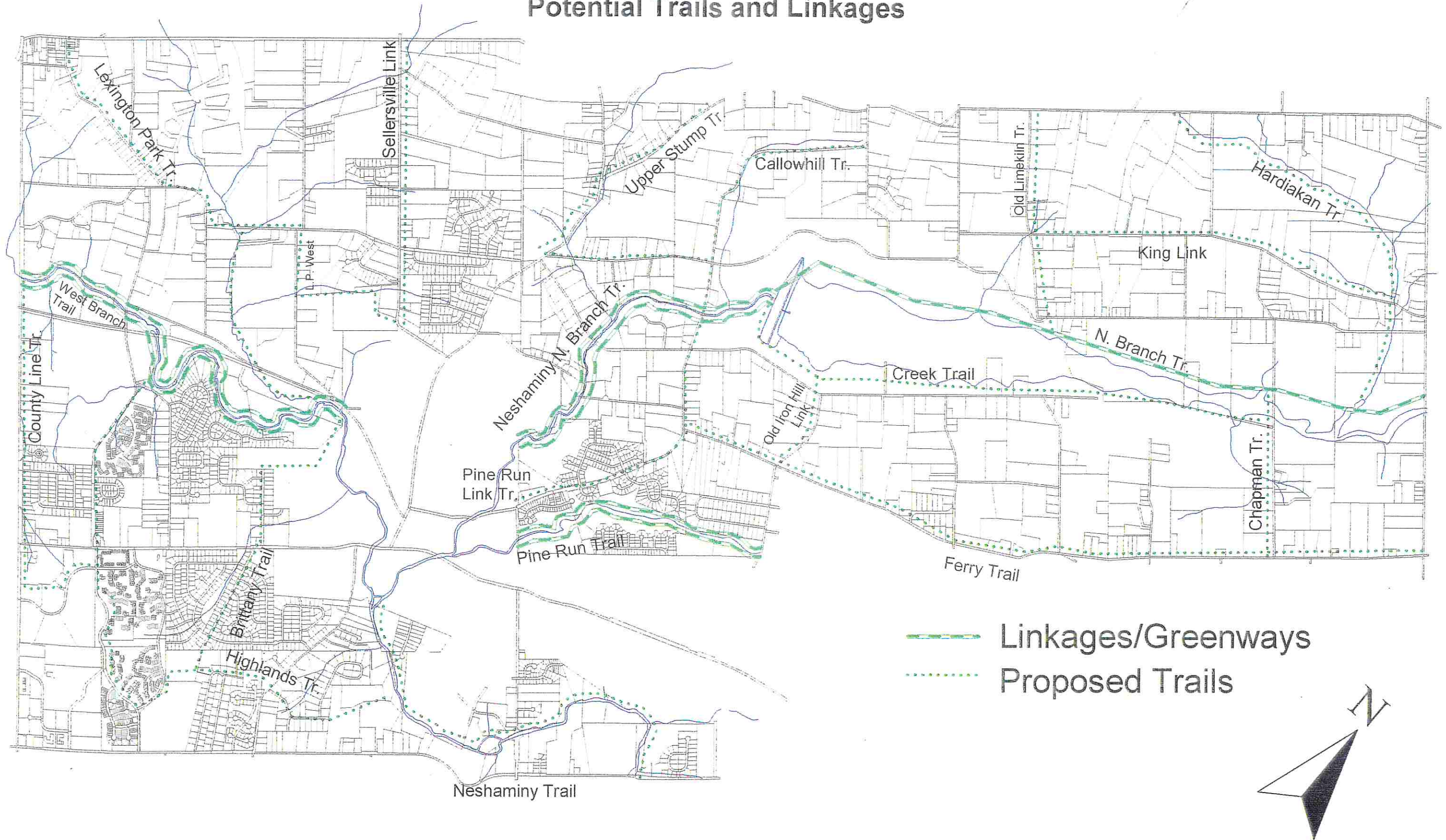

CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION
 CONSULTING ENGINEERS
 949 EASTON ROAD, SUITE 100
 WARRINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18976



THIS PLAN IS THE PROPERTY OF CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION. IT IS TO BE USED ONLY FOR THE PROJECT AND AREA SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED HEREON. IT IS NOT TO BE REPRODUCED, COPIED, OR TRANSMITTED IN ANY FORM OR BY ANY MEANS, ELECTRONIC OR MECHANICAL, INCLUDING PHOTOCOPYING, RECORDING, OR BY ANY INFORMATION STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM, WITHOUT THE WRITTEN PERMISSION OF CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION.

New Britain Township Potential Trails and Linkages

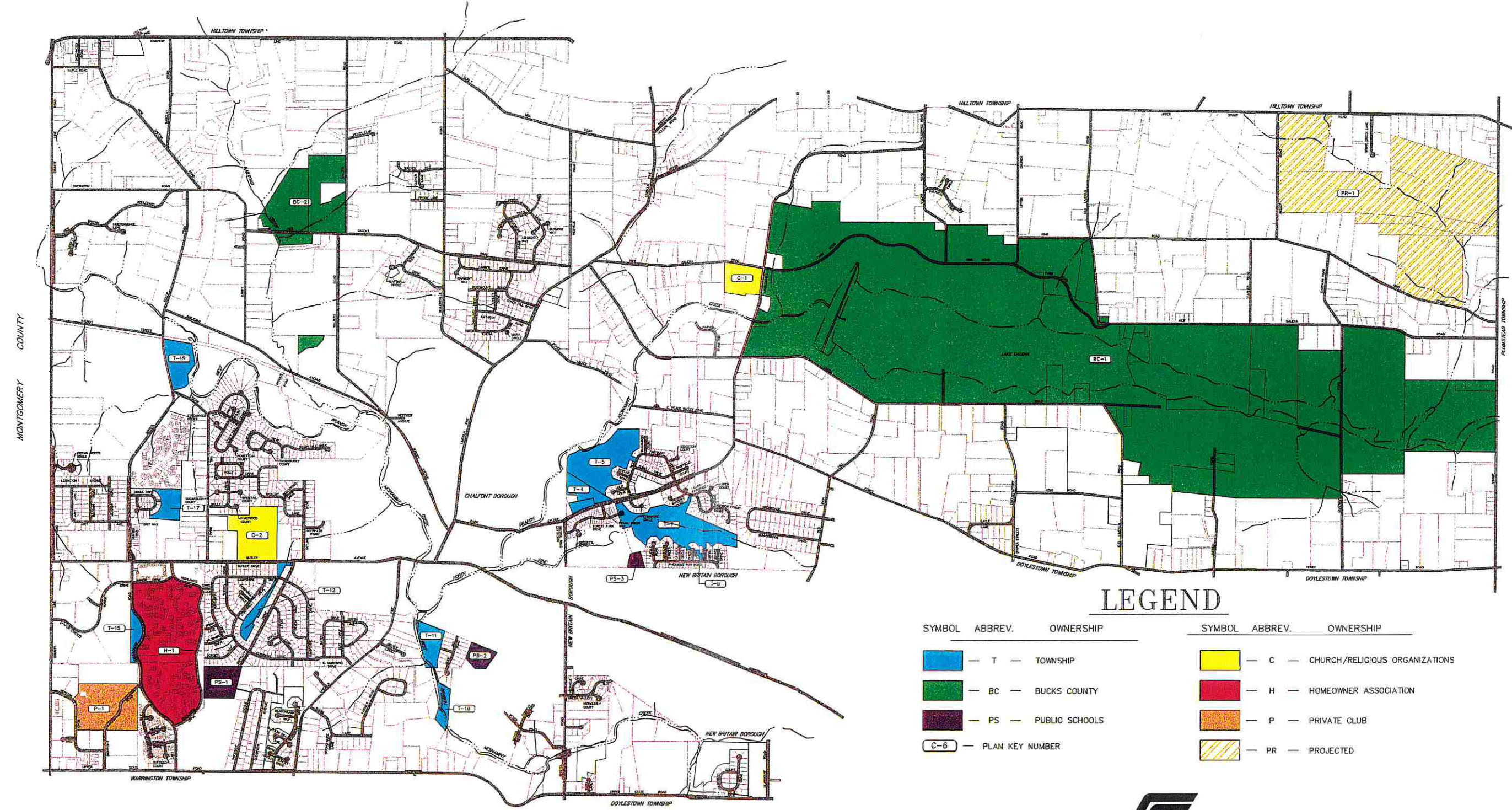
FIGURE 7.



NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP

BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

RECREATIONAL PROPERTIES - EXISTING AND PROJECTED

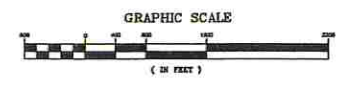


LEGEND

SYMBOL	ABBREV.	OWNERSHIP	SYMBOL	ABBREV.	OWNERSHIP
	T	TOWNSHIP		C	CHURCH/RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS
	BC	BUCKS COUNTY		H	HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATION
	PS	PUBLIC SCHOOLS		P	PRIVATE CLUB
C-6		PLAN KEY NUMBER		PR	PROJECTED



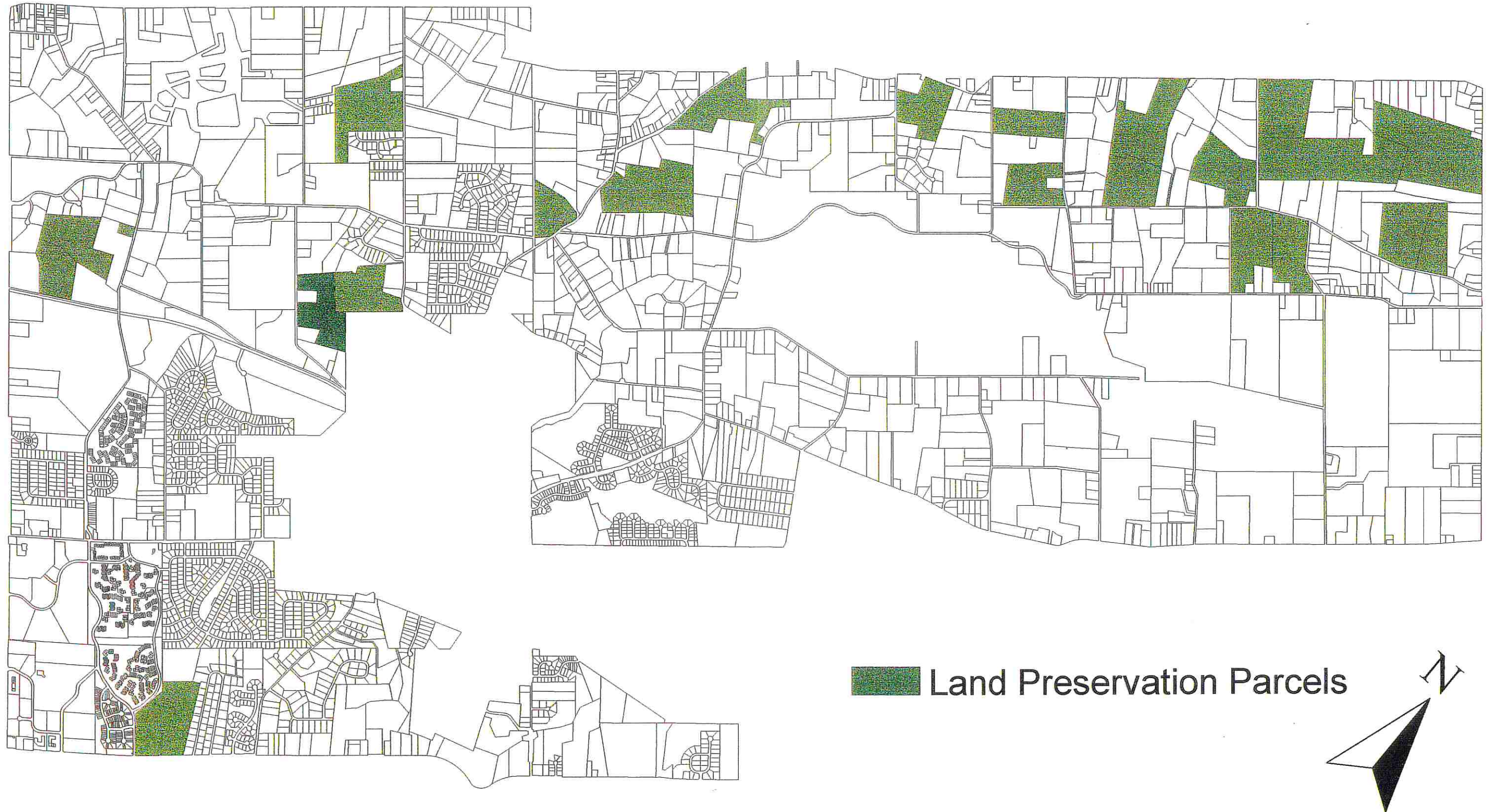
CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION
 CONSULTING ENGINEERS
 949 EASTON ROAD, SUITE 100
 WARRINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18976



THIS MAP WAS PREPARED FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF NEW BRITAIN, PENNSYLVANIA, BY CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION, WARRINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA. THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER HAS REVIEWED THIS MAP AND HAS APPROVED IT FOR THE TOWNSHIP. THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER'S REVIEW IS LIMITED TO THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO HIM BY CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION. CARROLL ENGINEERING CORPORATION IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO HIM BY THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER.

New Britain Township Land Preservation Parcel Identification

FIGURE 9.



RESOLUTION NO. 2000-10

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP, BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING THE OPEN SPACE PLAN

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the Township of New Britain, Bucks County, recognizes that the Township contains open space, farmland, and natural areas that contribute to the quality of life and economic health of our community which are worthy of preservation; and

WHEREAS, the Bucks County Commissioners have established the Bucks County Open Space Program through a referendum overwhelmingly passed by Bucks County Voters on May 20, 1997, the purpose of which is "To develop a practical plan to protect in perpetuity those natural resource areas and farmlands deemed essential to preserve the unique character of Bucks County"; and

WHEREAS, the Bucks County Open Space Program provides an allocation of funding for protection and development of open space resources by municipalities provided that the municipality first prepares an approved Municipal Open Space Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township of New Britain wishes to participate in protection of Bucks County's open space, farmland and natural resources through participation in the Bucks County Open Space Program.

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of Supervisors of the Township of New Britain, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, hereby resolves that the New Britain Township Open Space Plan, dated January 24, 2000, prepared in compliance with the Municipal Open Space Guidelines dated October 28, 1997 and distributed by the Bucks County Commissioners, has been discussed at a public meeting and is hereby adopted in its entirety in the form attached hereto, as the official Open Space Plan of the Township of New Britain; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Manager shall attach a copy of the Resolution to the Open Space Plan, and furthermore, that the Township of New Britain intends to take actions as appropriate to implement the goals of the Open Space Plan in support of which a copy of this Resolution and the attached Open Space Plan shall be forwarded to the Bucks County Commissioners.

This Resolution has been duly prepared and adopted by the Board of Supervisors of New Britain Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania in a public meeting held the 24 day of January, 2000.

NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



Dr. Robert L. Benner, Chairman



Robert V. Cotton, Vice Chairman



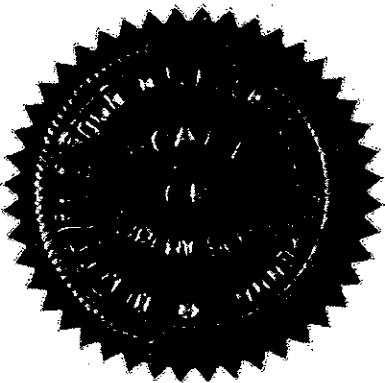
John A. Bodden, Sr., Member



Helen B. Haun, Member



Dr. Robert J. Piccone, Member



Attest.



Paul A. Williams, Secretary
Township Manager