

THE SUSSEX BOROUGH MASTER PLAN



Main Street – Sussex, New Jersey – Early 1960's



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SEPTEMBER 21, 2009

AS REVISED BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE 10/15/09 PUBLIC HEARING

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COVER PHOTO CREDIT: A painting by Jeffery Card entitled “Main Street – Sussex Borough”

MAP CREDITS – Maps contained in this document have either been prepared by Guerin and Vreeland Engineering Inc under the direction of Ken Nelson PP /AICP of the Nelson Consulting Group or have been reproduced from the 1975 Sussex Borough Master Plan

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This document was adopted by the Sussex Planning Board on 10/15/09

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE MASTER PLAN

This master plan effort – hereinafter referred to as the 2009 Plan – was initiated at the beginning of 2008 and continued into 2009. Once adopted, it replaces the 1975 Sussex Borough Master Plan – hereinafter referred to as the 1975 Master Plan - as the primary planning policy document of the Borough. The 2009 Plan relies on a variety of documents and studies previously prepared for the Borough, including the 1975 Plan itself. A substantial amount of material contained in the 1975 Plan is still valid, however, a number of the conclusions and the policies related to that material are outdated, since they are now over thirty years old.

So, the 2009 Plan, although a new document, rests to a certain extent on past decisions and past policies, updated to reflect the realities of the early part of the 21st century. The 2009 Plan establishes a new set of planning related Goals and Objectives for the community and a new Land Use Plan Element. Furthermore, as part of the Existing Conditions section of this document, a detailed analysis of the Borough’s existing land use pattern, as of 2009, is included. The last comprehensive analysis of the Borough’s existing land use pattern was done prior to 1975, so it was considered essential, as part of the 2009 Plan, to include the most recent information about how all properties within the Borough are currently being used. This information is obviously important in determining the need for changes to the Borough’s planning policies and land use regulations.

The 2009 Plan also includes updated information related to the physical characteristics and natural features of the Borough, which are illustrated on various maps contained herein. There is also a brief Recycling Plan Element included and the 2009 Plan also references two other plan elements – The Housing Plan and The Stormwater Management Plan – that are actually separate documents and are not contained in this document in their entirety. However, they should be viewed as an integral part of the 2009 Plan and many of the policies and issues contained in those documents are adopted by reference in this one.

Finally, this document also serves to meet the standards of section 40:55D-89 of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (NJMLUL), as it pertains to the requirement for each municipality in New Jersey to periodically reexamine its municipal master plan and development regulations. The 2009 Plan does not strictly follow the format of a standard master plan reexamination report but it does conduct the evaluation specified in the aforementioned statute.

In summary, the 2009 Plan includes the required elements of a master plan as specified in 40:55D-28 of the NJMLUL. There are other elements that can, at the option of a municipality, also be included in a master plan document. Section 6.0 of the 2009 Plan discusses several master plan elements in an abbreviated format, as well as future planning efforts that the Borough may wish to consider, thereby expanding the 2009 Plan

at some point into a more comprehensive planning document. However, as already noted, the material contained herein is sufficient to establish a current and defensible set of planning policies for the Borough.

1.2 THE MASTER PLAN PROCESS

The preparation of a master plan can be undertaken in a variety of ways. In this instance, the Sussex Borough Planning Board authorized The Nelson Consulting Group, toward the end of 2008 to work with the Board in compiling a new master plan document. Rather than deferring the work to a committee of the Board, it was decided that the Board would serve as a committee of the whole and the entire Board would thereby be involved in supervising the process from beginning to end.

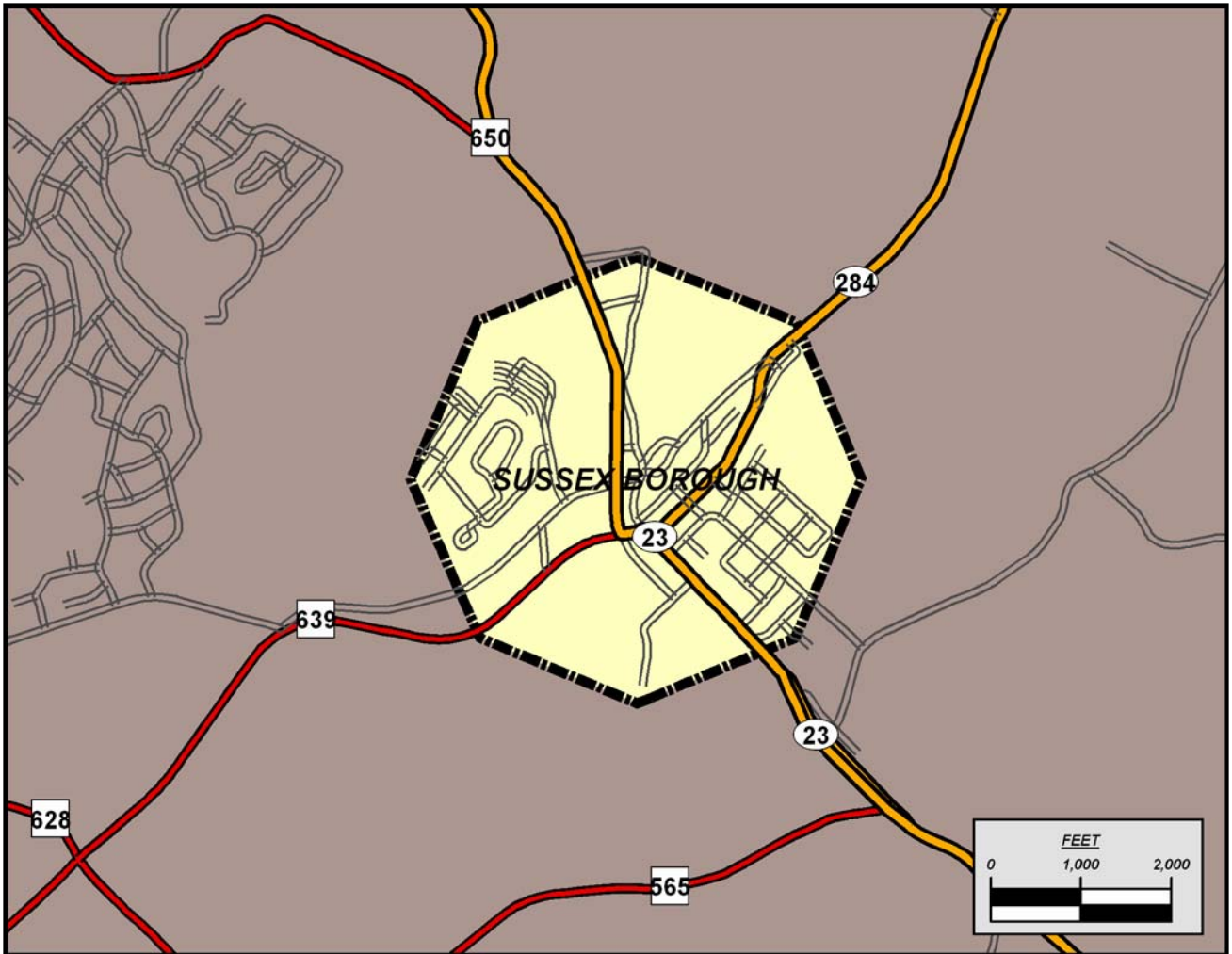
All discussions related to the preparation of the document were held at either the regular monthly meetings of the Board or at regularly scheduled work sessions. In addition, various public notices were issued during the process and communication with the Borough Council was maintained, so that at anytime interested residents or anyone with an interest in the Borough could provide input, if they so chose.

The compiling of material to be included in a municipal master plan is usually an involved process and requires a substantial amount of discussion. This was true in connection with the preparation of this document and started with a detailed review of a proposed set of goals and objectives. Once the broad framework of the 2009 Plan was established via agreement regarding the policies contained in the aforementioned goals and objectives, the Board then considered a variety of factors related to the existing conditions of the Borough. From those discussions and analyses, flowed the components of the new Land Use Plan Element for the Borough, which includes the Borough's Vision of the Future – a concise written statement that paints a picture of what role the Borough should play as the community moves further along into the 21st century and which is presented in Section 4.1.

The planning process in a municipality actually should never stop. Although the Board established a process in connection with the preparation of this document and that process has come to an end in the form of the 2009 Plan, further work will be needed in the years ahead to keep the 2009 Plan current and to adjust the planning policies of the community as needed.

1.3 THE HISTORY OF SUSSEX BOROUGH AND ITS IMPORTANCE

As of 2009, Sussex Borough can be described as a small mixed use community, both in terms of population and size. The Borough, which consists of .62 square miles, is located in the northeast quadrant of Sussex County New Jersey and was one of the first areas to be settled in this part of New Jersey. **Exhibit 1 – Regional Location Map** – depicts the location of the Borough with respect to the portions of Wantage Township surrounding it, as well as its relationship to the rest of Sussex County and the State of New Jersey.



LEGEND

- SUSSEX BOROUGH**
- SUSSEX COUNTY**
- NEW JERSEY**

LEGEND

- 284 NEW JERSEY STATE HIGHWAY**
- 639 SUSSEX COUNTY ROADWAY**
- LOCAL ROADWAY**



REFERENCES:

- 1.0 NJDOT 2008 NJ Roadway Network
- 2.0 NJDEP GIS Resource Data, Series I, Volume III.
- 3.0 Sussex County Geographic Information System.

NOTES:

- 1.0 This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.
- 2.0 This map was developed using Sussex County Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by SCOGIS and is not county-authorized.
- 3.0 Digital data files are periodically updated. Files are dated and users are responsible for obtaining the latest version of the data.

**REGIONAL LOCATION MAP
BOROUGH OF SUSSEX
SUSSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

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Sussex Borough is a community with a defined, densely developed “commercial” center or “core” that extends along Main St and to a lesser extent along Route 23, East Main St and Loomis Ave and which is bordered by a number of residential neighborhoods.

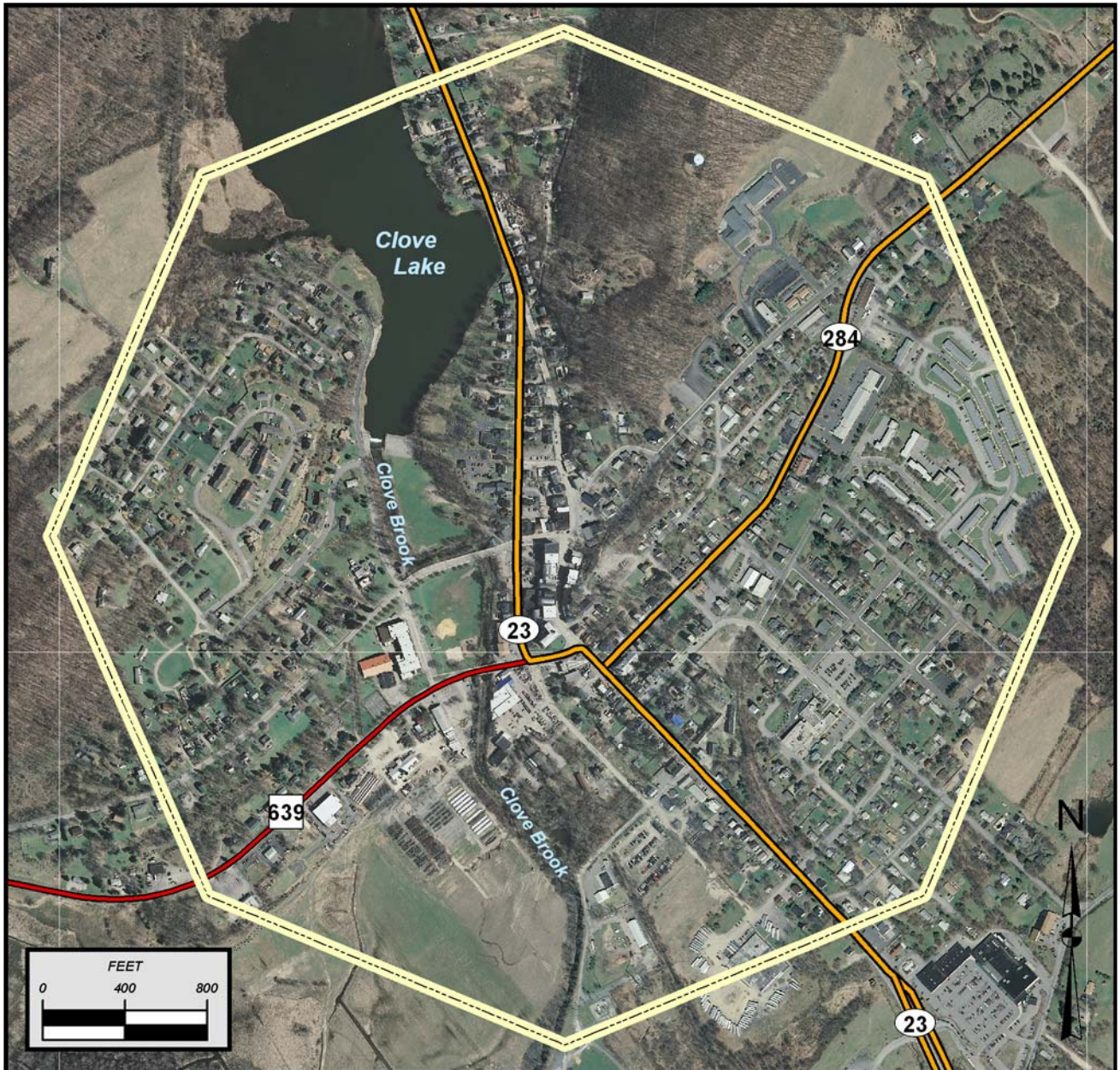
Exhibit 2 – An Aerial Photo of Sussex Borough – clearly depicts this densely developed commercial core and the less densely developed outlying residential areas that comprise most of the remainder of the Borough.

Historically this commercial center has served the residents of the surrounding region but in recent decades the role of this commercial center has been diminished somewhat. However, as we move further into the 21st century, the prospect exists that the Borough may be able to recapture more of its historic commercial and cultural role.

The beginning of what is now Sussex Borough is traced to the first white settler who arrived in the area circa 1732. It is not the purpose of this section of the 2009 Plan to delve into all of the historic detail about the founding of the Borough or its subsequent history. Much is contained in other documents about this subject, such as Snell’s History of Sussex and Warren Counties. Suffice it to say that Sussex Borough was originally known as the Deckertown section of Wantage Township and like the rest of Sussex County was sparsely settled. During the 19th century, however, the Deckertown area gradually developed into a commercial and residential center, substantially different from the rest of Wantage Township, which consisted of farms and very small villages. Deckertown took on the characteristics of a small town and developed a separate identity. This process eventually resulted in the residents of Deckertown deciding that it was to their advantage to legally separate from Wantage and this was accomplished in 1891.



HISTORIC MARKER – MAIN STREET



LEGEND

- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY**
- NEW JERSEY STATE HIGHWAY**
- SUSSEX COUNTY ROADWAY**

REFERENCES:

- 1.0 NJ Office of Information Technology, Office of Geographic Information Systems Digital Orthophotography of New Jersey, March-May, 2007.
- 2.0 Sussex County Geographic Information System.

NOTES:

- 1.0 This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.
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**AERIAL PHOTO
BOROUGH OF SUSSEX
SUSSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

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A decade later in 1902, the residents of Deckertown changed the name of the community to Sussex Borough, as it has been known ever since. But even though the Borough has gone from being known as Deckertown to now Sussex Borough and even though the Borough is no longer part of Wantage Township, it still is connected in many ways to Wantage and Wantage to the Borough. The legal boundary separating the two municipalities still exists but the socio-economic factors connecting the two communities also still very much exist.

Much of the physical form of the Borough – the street network, community facilities, the Main St shopping district etc. - was shaped during the past 100 to 150 years. And to a certain extent this physical form came into existence prior to the influence of the automobile. This has had both its positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, the Borough contains many quaint arrangements of buildings and other facilities that post World War II construction viewed as obsolete. However, in recent years planners and other design professionals and public officials have been promoting a planning theory known as “New Urbanism”. This theory, this approach to land development draws on the physical forms associated with places like Sussex Borough because it is now understood that such physical forms have a more human scale and appeal than do physical forms that have been primarily influenced by the automobile. The physical form of the Borough, then, has made the transition from a form that fell into disfavor from the 1940’s to the 1980’s but which in recent decades is seen as something to emulate.

There are some negative consequences, however, associated with the Borough’s physical form and age. Chief among them are the problems associated with the fact that portions of the Borough are not automobile friendly, especially with respect to parking. Furthermore, some of the buildings in the Borough have not been maintained as one would hope and are in need of some updating. Finally, the infrastructure of the Borough, particularly the pipes associated with water and sanitary sewer services have been in need of repair and / replacement for many years. It was a sign, in the later part of the 19th century and early 20th century, that Sussex Borough was a “modern” community because of the central water and sewer services that it provided. However, now a hundred years later, the infrastructure associated with those services requires significant attention and the Borough has been pursuing an upgrade program to address those problems.

Although how the history of the Borough shaped the physical form that we see today is important, the nature of the community – its people, its aspirations, its socio-economic framework and its sense of community are equally important. Sussex Borough has always had the image of being primarily a small scale “working class” community. Its residents were not particularly affluent, except for those few businessmen and professionals who provided the needed goods and services required by the surrounding region. Consequently, there are few great mansions from the past or monumental scale public edifices that dominate the landscape. However, the Borough has also escaped the tribulations of larger communities that have watched once healthy sections deteriorate into pockets of poverty and sources of crime.

So, the history of the Borough, from a land use perspective, has had and will continue to have a great influence on the community. This history must be taken into consideration in the shaping of this 2009 Master Plan, whose primary purpose is to shape the future of the Borough in the early part of the 21st century.

1.4 SUSSEX BOROUGH'S PLANNING AND ZONING HISTORY

It appears that the first comprehensive master plan enacted by the Borough is the 1975 Master Plan previously mentioned. It also appears that zoning and subdivision regulations were enacted earlier than that date but it is not clear exactly when that was done. So, it is safe to say that much of what exists in Sussex Borough today actually pre dates zoning and the planning policies established in the 1975 Master Plan.

Such a situation is not unusual, especially in New Jersey, but it still creates difficulties, as a planning board and governing body attempt to shape a land use plan and corresponding land use regulations, which tries to balance the realities of the present with the goals and objectives associated with the future vision of the community. In communities like Sussex Borough, we are not dealing with a “blank slate”. There are development patterns and property rights that must be acknowledged and respected. But if a community is to evolve and reach its full potential, then the realities of the present may need to be adjusted, so that the future goals and objectives can be achieved. That is the challenge of the 2009 Plan – to carefully craft a set of planning policies that are reality based but also future oriented.

In shaping the 2009 Plan, as already noted, much rests on the planning policies and documents from the past. The 1975 Master Plan, which is the basis for the current land use regulations and zoning map, is actually a multi document plan. It consists of five separate “reports” as follows:

- **Report # 1** - Land Use Study
- **Report # 2** - Traffic and Transportation Study
- **Report # 3** - Community Facilities
- **Report # 4** - Physical Characteristics Study, Central Business District Study
Financial Analysis, Population and Regional Evaluation
- **Report # 5** - Summary Master Plan

Report # 5 – The Summary Master Plan is divided into two parts which are identified as follows:

- **Part I:** * Master Plan
- **Part II:** * Housing Work Program
* Capital Improvements Analysis
* Zoning Recommendations
* Implementation Recommendations
* Environmental Assessment Statement

The 1975 Master Plan was prepared by the planning firm of Boorman and Dorram Inc. and it appears that this multi document plan was adopted in late 1975 by the Sussex Planning Board. It should also be noted that this plan predated the NJ Municipal Land Use Law (NJMLUL) which was originally adopted in 1976, replacing several outdated statutes which governed municipal planning up until that time. Consequently, although the 1975 Plan is a good one, it does not follow the master plan format often used today. For example, the 1975 Plan does not include a set of goals and objectives – a mandatory element of any master plan prepared since the enactment of the NJMLUL

Report #5 is considered to be the “meat” of the 1975 Master Plan. The other four reports, for the most part, provide background data that support the planning policies contained in Report # 5. The Land Use Plan section of Report # 5 contains a Land Use Plan map which proposes that the Borough be divided into 10 land use districts, they are:

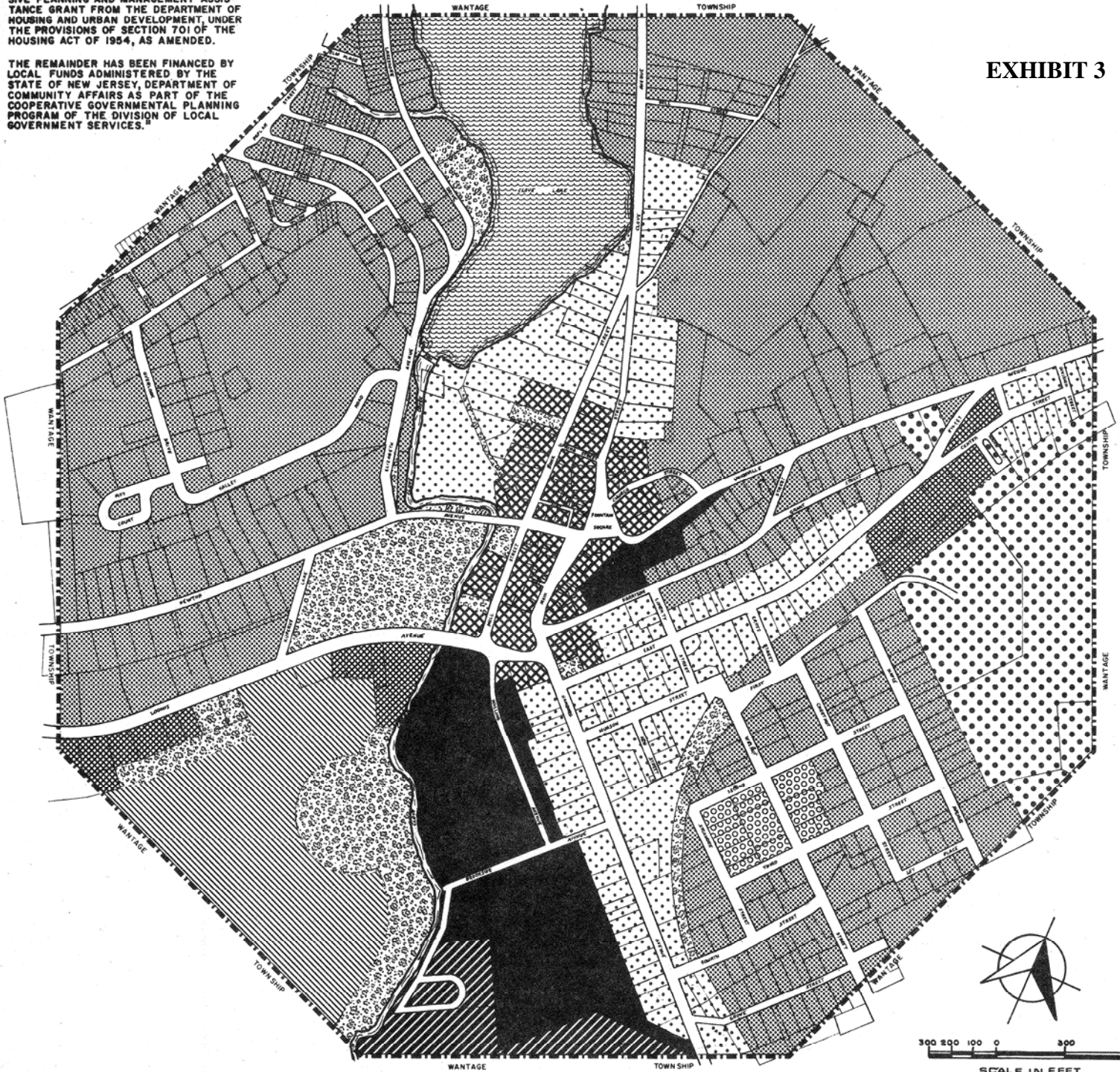
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Central Business District
- Redevelopment Area
- General Commercial
- Institutional
- Agriculture and Light Industry
- Industrial and Utility
- Public and Semi Public

A copy of the Land Use Plan map is presented as **Exhibit 3**. The 1975 Plan also includes a description of each district and as noted previously, the current Borough Zoning Map is largely derived from the 1975 Land Use Plan map. Obviously the 1975 Land Use Plan map was based on the knowledge that existed at that time about the existing development pattern in the Borough, the known environmental constraints and the larger planning and development trends known to exist in New Jersey and Sussex County at that time. Much has changed since then but some things still remain the same and one of the purposes of the 2009 Plan is to determine how and why some of the Borough’s planning policies should be changed in order to reflect current conditions and /or policy changes enacted at the state or federal level. Also, please note that the 1975 Land Use Plan map will be discussed further in Section 2.6 of this document, which involves an analysis of the Borough’s existing zoning. After the adoption of the 1975 Master Plan, the Borough periodically revisited certain planning and zoning issues during the next 30 plus years. A Master Plan Reexamination Report was prepared in 1983 and a comprehensive Central Business District Study was prepared in 1991. The Central Business District Study outlined a strategy to revitalize the Borough’s business areas. More will be discussed about the provisions of this study later in this document. In 1983 another Master Plan Reexamination Report was prepared and a Stormwater Management Plan was prepared in 2005. The Stormwater Management Plan documented strategies to address stormwater related water quality, groundwater recharge and water quantity impacts of new “major development”. The plan addressed these impacts by incorporating stormwater design and performance standards. Creation of the plan was required by N.J.A.C. 7:14A-25 Municipal Stormwater Regulations.











"THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCED IN PART THROUGH A COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 701 OF THE HOUSING ACT OF 1954, AS AMENDED.

THE REMAINDER HAS BEEN FINANCED BY LOCAL FUNDS ADMINISTERED BY THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS AS PART OF THE COOPERATIVE GOVERNMENTAL PLANNING PROGRAM OF THE DIVISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES.

EXHIBIT 3



LAND USE PLAN

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
|  | LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL |  | GENERAL COMMERCIAL |
|  | MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL |  | INSTITUTIONAL |
|  | HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL |  | AGRICULTURE & LIGHT INDUSTRY |
|  | CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT |  | INDUSTRIAL & UTILITY |
|  | REDEVELOPMENT AREA |  | PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC |

SUSSEX BOROUGH

MASTER PLAN

SUSSEX BOROUGH, NEW JERSEY

JUNE 1975

BOORMAN & DORRAN, INC. · CONSULTANTS

SOURCE: BASE MAP PREPARED BY HAROLD E. PELLOW & ASSOC., INC. - MARCH 1972.

Significantly, in the mid 1990's the Borough also restructured its Planning and Zoning Boards into a combined board. This has allowed the single entity now controlling the planning policies of the Borough – the combined board - to better appreciate the potential harm or benefits associated with proposals that do not meet the permitted use requirements established by the land use regulations of the Borough and which therefore require use variances. It has been the general policy of this board to grant use variances sparingly and thereby protect the intent and purpose of the Borough Master Plan and Zone Plan. However, certain issues that have come before the Planning / Zoning Board in recent years have brought attention to the possibility that some of the planning policies of the Borough may be in need of change and these issues will be discussed at more length later in this document.

1.5 THE CURRENT MASTER PLAN EFFORT AS IT RELATES TO THE POTENTIAL MERGER OF SUSSEX BOROUGH AND WANTAGE TOWNSHIP

This document takes no position regarding the study currently underway to determine the desirability of merging Sussex Borough and Wantage Township into a new municipality. It also takes no position on any referendum to decide this issue should the merger question be put in front of the voters of the two municipalities. The only purpose in mentioning this matter is to make future readers of this document aware that the merger issue was known at the time the 2009 Plan was being prepared. Furthermore, it is also important for future readers to understand that the planning policies contained in this document should be continued, to the greatest extent possible, whether or not Sussex Borough remains as a separate municipality.

As already noted, Sussex Borough, when it was known as the Deckertown section of Wantage Township for over 150 years, had a separate and distinct identity as it does now and has had for the last 100 years or more. This identity is largely derived from being a “center” that is clearly separate and distinct, in terms of its physical form, from most of surrounding Wantage Township.

It is very possible, that some day, portions of what is now Wantage Township could supplement what is now Sussex Borough to form a larger, more diverse and vibrant center than what exists today. That will be for future planners and elected officials to decide. However, the guiding principles for those planners and elected officials should be the policies contained in this document, which are aimed at maintaining the role of the Borough as a center but to also maintain the “small town” characteristics of the community that provide it with the charm and ambience that makes Sussex Borough unique.

2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 NATURAL FEATURES AND RESOURCES

OVERVIEW

The natural characteristics of a community vary depending on its size, location and existing development pattern. In shaping a master plan that will guide a municipality into the future, it is first important to know what exists both in terms of the built and the natural environment. In some municipalities, like Sussex Borough, the natural features and conditions have been substantially altered. However, although the Borough is nearly fully developed, there are still a surprising number of natural features and resources remaining in the Borough as of 2009. In **Appendix A**, a series of maps depict various natural characteristics and environmentally sensitive areas within the Borough.

SURFACE WATER, WETLANDS AND FLOOD PRONE AREAS

The first map in Appendix A, identified as Exhibit 4, depicts the location of surface water bodies, wetlands and those portions of the Borough that may be flood prone. Clove Brook runs in a north / south direction through the Borough. The damming of the Brook forms Clove Lake. The Lake is located at the north end of the Borough and consists of approximately 25 acres. This body of water has historically been one of the prominent features in the Borough and is very visible from Route 23 and other parts of the community. In 1998 Clove Lake was accidentally drained when the dam sluice gate malfunctioned. The lake remained empty for many years but ultimately the Borough persevered, obtaining grant money and the necessary non municipal approvals to allow the lake to be refilled. Today, the lake is again a scenic and recreational resource that is of great value to the community. The lake, brook and associated watershed have been the subject of recent studies. In 2008 the Wallkill River Watershed Management Group prepared a watershed restoration plan addressing total phosphorous. The plan was subsequently approved by the NJDEP. Wetlands and flood prone areas for the most part are located in close proximity to the brook and lake. However, there are also several isolated wetland areas along the north and eastern borders of the municipality. The largest of these areas, comprising approximately 22 acres, is located at the southern end of the Borough, near Clove Brook and is part of what is known as the Kuperus farm.



CLOVE LAKE IN WINTER

With respect to water related resources associated with the Borough, a review of a map depicting wetlands and flood prone areas, which was included in the 1975 Master Plan, indicates a similar distribution of wetlands and flood prone areas, as the aforementioned map included in Appendix A. However, it appears that these wetland / flood prone areas, in the ensuing 34 years since the 1975 Master Plan, have been reduced in size, either because of new development or a change in the mapping criteria or both. Suffice it to say that the map included in Appendix A will now be the controlling document, for planning purposes, relative to the location of the wetlands and flood prone areas in the community.

TOPOGRAPHY

Also included in Appendix A is a topographic map of the community, identified as Exhibit 5. This map shows that the lowest point in the Borough is approximately 400' above sea level and can be found near the Borough's southern boundary. The highest point is approximately 720' above sea level and can be found near the Borough's northern boundary. The topography throughout the remainder of the Borough is varied, with a number of virtually flat areas but with other areas being constrained by more rugged terrain. In effect the Borough is a series of plateaus and valleys, interrupted by a number of steeply sloped areas. The topographic conditions have obviously had a significant impact on the development pattern of the community, influencing the placement of structures and the alignment of roads.

As noted previously, the low point in the Borough can be found at its southern end. Then, as one travels north along the Clove Brook valley, the terrain rises slightly until one reaches the vicinity of Clove Lake, where the topographic elevation is between 415' and 420' above sea level. For the most part, east and west of this valley, the terrain rises over relatively short distances by 30' or 40'. Beyond this initial change in elevation, in some cases, the topography rises even more dramatically. An example can be found in the northern part of the Borough where, within less than a thousand feet of Clove Lake, the terrain rises to over 700' above sea level, an increase of over 300'.

The topographic map included in Appendix A does not actually identify steep slope areas. However, the 1975 Master Plan does include such a map and a comparison of that map with the topographic map contained herein indicates that virtually all of the steep slope areas (those areas with a gradient of more than 15%) are located to the north of Routes 284 and 639. The area to the south of Route 284 and east of Route 23, contains a few steep slope areas and many areas that have a moderate slope 5 to 15%. The area to the west of Route 23 and south of Route 639 consists almost entirely of acreage that has slopes between 0 and 5%.

SOILS

A soils map of the Borough is also included in Appendix A and identified as Exhibit 6. In terms of the soil conditions in the Borough a relatively brief analysis will suffice. The reason for this is because, in areas like Sussex Borough, where central water and sanitary sewer systems are available, soil conditions are less critical with respect to the issue of

sewage disposal and hence the development potential of a community. That is not to say that soil conditions are irrelevant, they still play a role in connection with site design strategies and decisions. However, for the purposes of this Plan a simple listing and general description of the soils is sufficient. The soils are:

- Fredon-Halsey
- Hazen-Hoosic
- Hoosic-Otisville
- Nassau-Manlius
- Nassau-Rock Outcrop
- Udorthentis-Urban Land
- Urban Land-Nassau-Manlius

Some of these soil types are associated with extremely steep slopes, such as Nassau-Rock Outcrop and others are associated with wetland areas and high ground water conditions, such as Fredon-Halsey. Still other areas of the Borough, primarily the densely developed portions in the vicinity of Route 23, Main Street and Route 284, are identified as being in an “urban land” category which is an indication that the original soil type has been substantially altered as a result of the extent and type of development that now exists in these areas.

The 1975 Master Plan was also consulted with respect to the soils analysis that was undertaken then. The soils map in that document differs somewhat from the map included herein as part of Appendix A. The differences are probably attributable to the map herein being based on more accurate recent soils studies done by federal and state agencies. Suffice it to say, that the soils information contained herein will be helpful but not controlling in determining land use issues and supersedes the information contained in the 1975 Master Plan. In no case, however, should the soils information herein be considered definitive and or serve as a substitute for detailed on site soils investigations.

TREE RESOURCES

Another natural resource common to most municipalities involves the extent of the “tree cover” that exists. In many municipalities extensive forested areas are the “tree cover” resource. In Sussex Borough, although there is a small forested area at the north end of the community, consisting of approximately 16 acres, the primary “tree cover” resource of the Borough includes the hundreds, if not thousands of shade trees and evergreen trees that can be found on private residential properties and to a lesser extent along the Borough’s streets. The scope and condition of this resource is largely unknown and not documented. Consequently, a map is not included herein, which would quantify this resource, since such an analysis was beyond the scope of this master plan effort. However, based on the visual observations available, as one travels throughout the Borough, one generates a sense that, for the most part, this tree cover resource is in generally good condition and creates an ambience in some portions of the Borough that enhances the aesthetic qualities of those neighborhoods. However, some parts of the Borough are less well endowed with trees and as a result the aesthetic qualities of those neighborhoods are somewhat diminished. In fact, it is surprising how few “street trees” there are in the Borough. It is unknown to what extent street trees did exist at one time

and have been gradually removed over the years or if there were never significantly more street trees than exist now. Suffice it to say, opportunities exist to enhance the aesthetics of the Borough by installing street trees in various locations throughout the community. More will be discussed about this issue later in this document.

OTHER RESOURCES AND NATURAL FEATURES

In concluding this section, it needs to be mentioned that information about other natural features and resources related material, such as the existing subsurface geological characteristics ; the flora and fauna ; scenic resources etc. have not been included herein. The reasons for not doing so primarily involve the small size of the Borough and the nearly fully developed nature of the community. If at a later date it is considered important to supplement this section with additional material, then the opportunity to do so will be available during the statutorily mandated “master plan reexamination report” process that is required to be undertaken every six years.

2.2 INFRASTRUCTURE

OVERVIEW

There are several infrastructure related components that are the subject of this section. They include the following:

- The road network
- The sanitary sewer system
- The stormwater management network
- The potable water supply system
- The non municipal utility network

These networks or systems form the backbone or skeleton of the community that connect the various land uses and allow the component parts of the Borough to function properly. Although no one system or network is more important than the other in terms of the overall land use planning process, there is no question that deficiencies associated with some of the networks can be more devastating than those associated with some of the others. The condition of a street, for example, may create an inconvenience but a malfunctioning sanitary sewer system or one with no additional capacity can have a chilling effect on the health and safety of a community or the potential for future growth and development. This section looks at the various infrastructure components and Appendix B contains maps associated with some of components discussed herein.

ROAD NETWORK

The street map included in Appendix B, identified as Exhibit 7, depicts the road network that services the Borough. Except for a small grid like pattern that can be found in the vicinity of Walnut and Chestnut Streets, the remainder of the Borough road network can best be described as a free form configuration that is partly influenced by topographic conditions, other environmental constraints, such as Clove Brook and the alignments of

the original regional roadways - Routes 23, 284 and 639 in particular - that connect Sussex Borough with the rest of Sussex County. The former railroad rights of way that traversed the community also influenced the street alignments as well.

It also needs to be mentioned in this section that, although Borough residents are almost totally dependent on the automobile for vehicular transportation, there is also limited bus service, operated by Sussex County that serves the Borough. However, the primary function of that service is intra municipal, not a service that allows residents to travel to various locations within the Borough or beyond Sussex County.

The street network is in generally good condition and all of the roads consist of only two lanes, one in each direction, except for several one way streets, such as Munson Street and Church Street. The total mileage for all of the roads combined, most of which are under the jurisdiction of the Borough, has been calculated to be 6.26 miles. The rights of way for the roads, based on information in the 1975 Master Plan, vary between 15' and 66' but most have right of way widths of at least 25'. Pavement widths also vary considerably, with some being as narrow as 15' and some being well over 30'. Most, however, have widths of at least 20'. The total amount of acreage consumed by the roads is estimated to be about 45 acres.

Route 23 is under the jurisdiction of the NJ Dept of Transportation, as is Route 284. Route 639 is under the jurisdiction of Sussex County. Route 23 changes its name four times as it traverses the Borough, with the lower portion south of Route 284 known as Hamburg Ave, the mid portion south of Newton Ave known as Mill Street, the next segment known as Bank Street and the upper portion known as Clove Ave. For simplicity sake, this document will only use the Route 23 designation and not utilize any of the secondary names, unless for clarity purposes the use of one of the secondary names is useful. Finally, it should be noted that Route 284 is also known as East Main St. and Route 639 is known as Loomis Ave.

Generally, there are no locations in the Borough that are subject to an unusually high accident rate. However, there are a number of intersections that are problematic, in terms of safety, since they do not meet the accepted 90 degree (right angle) standard. Those problem intersections include but are not limited to the following:

- Spruce and Elizabeth
- Center and Route 284
- Route 23 and Main
- Larch and Elizabeth
- Harrison and Grant
- Harrison and Unionville
- Unionville and Route 284
- Liberty, Walnut and Munson
- Highland and Main

There can, at times, also be a speeding problem associated with Route 23. Furthermore, the intersection of Route 23, Route 284 and Route 639, which has an “S” shape configuration, can be the source of congestion during the weekday rush hour and occasionally on the weekends. This intersection is the only one in the Borough that is signalized, with the remainder of the other intersections relying on stop signs for traffic control.

Route 23 has been the subject of a multi year study, dating back to the 1990’s, which has been aimed at determining how to relieve the congestion in the center of the Borough resulting from the aforementioned “S” shape intersection. Currently, NJDOT has approved a plan, which would relocate the southbound Route 23 traffic along Walling Ave and beyond Brookside Ave, south into Wantage Township. Northbound traffic will use the current Route 23 alignment between the Borough’s southern boundary and Route 284. Construction on this project is expected to start in 2012.

In summary, then the road network in the Borough is adequate and is generally well maintained. However, the implications of the Route 23 realignment, as well as other issues related to the Borough road network will be discussed in more detail in the Land Use Plan section of this document and also in Section 6.0

PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Associated with the road network, which services motor vehicles, is the companion pedestrian network, which is intended to service individuals who choose to walk, rather than ride. The pedestrian network in the Borough can best be described as incomplete. Those sidewalk areas that do exist, however, are generally in good condition. It is unknown if there was ever a sidewalk construction program in the distant past or why segments of sidewalks exist in certain parts of the community, in conjunction with vast stretches of areas that have no sidewalks. Some parts of the community are well serviced by sidewalks, such as Main Street and Newton Ave but many parts of the community are inadequately served. The policy of the Borough, in recent years, however, has been to include sidewalks where possible in conjunction with any road reconstruction projects.



NEW SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION

It needs to be emphasized that the inadequacy of the sidewalk network is of particular concern because Sussex Borough should be a very “walkable” community, due to its limited geographic area, its existing land use pattern and its relatively gentle terrain. From a practical standpoint the lack of sidewalks in many areas of the community does not completely prohibit pedestrian activity, since many pedestrians will compensate for an interrupted pedestrian network by using the street. Furthermore, it is not realistic to assume that all parts of the Borough can or should have sidewalks. Topographic conditions, right of way limitations and other factors would preclude the installation of sidewalks in many areas and in some areas sidewalks on one side of the street are sufficient. Nevertheless, the inadequate sidewalk network probably has had some negative impact on the amount of pedestrian activity in the Borough. More will be discussed about this issue later in this document.

SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

The two most critical components of a community’s infrastructure, in terms of future growth, relate to potable water and sewage disposal and obviously these two components are very much connected. The **sanitary sewer system** of a community, which should be separate and apart from the network of pipes that carries away stormwater runoff, is the system that carries sewage to a treatment system where it is “sanitized” and where disposal occurs, usually into a receiving stream.

Sussex Borough has had a sanitary sewer network dating back many decades and at one time had its own sewage treatment plant located at the end of Brookside Ave. However, in 1994, the old sewage treatment plant was decommissioned and replaced by a pump station, which enabled the Borough to send its sewage effluent to the regional treatment facility operated by the Sussex County Municipal Utility Authority (SCUMA), via a 10” force main. The SCUMA facility is located in Hardyston Township and also services Franklin, Hamburg, and parts of Hardyston and Vernon.

Sussex Borough has the right to send 439,000 gallons per day (gpd) to the SCUMA plant. Currently, however, the average daily flow is approximately 200,000 gpd. It would seem then that the Borough has a substantial sewage disposal capacity that could support a significant amount of future growth. Unfortunately, the reality is somewhat different. The problem is that the Borough’s sanitary sewer system is plagued by what is known as “infiltration and inflow” (I & I). This means that the system is not a closed one. During rain events groundwater and water from other sources flow into the sewer pipes, resulting in those pipes carrying hundreds of thousands of gallons of additional effluent beyond the Borough’s SCUMA allocation. Consequently, the Borough’s sewage disposal capacity at this time is limited.

Over the past several years the Borough has been in the process of studying this I & I problem and conducts an active program to solve it. However, it is not an easily solvable or inexpensive problem. The Borough has obtained approximately a million dollars in grants to address this problem but more funds will be needed. Nevertheless, over time it can be solved or at least greatly diminished and the Borough should be able to count on at least a 200,000 gpd future capacity to accommodate more growth. The caveat, however,

with respect to this issue is the role that the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) plays with respect to sewage disposal. Specifically, the SCUMA facility is under NJDEP's jurisdiction and the SCUMA facility disposes of effluent into the Wallkill River, which flows through the Federal Wallkill Wildlife Refuge. There is some question as to whether or not future NJDEP regulations will negatively affect the existing or future operating capacity of this facility. Another area where NJDEP has significant control with respect to sewage disposal involves what areas can be serviced by a sanitary sewer system. NJDEP exercises its control in this instance via the use of designated Sewer Service Areas (SSA). These areas are mapped and the map for Sussex Borough is included as Exhibit 8 in Appendix B.

As noted earlier, the ability to dispose of sewage, has become a significant factor in how and where growth will occur in the State of New Jersey. The implications of the Borough's sewage disposal capabilities - current and future – will be discussed in more detail as part of the Land Use Plan element of this document.

POTABLE WATER

The other significant factor directly related to how much growth a community can absorb and sustain is the availability of potable water. Furthermore, as just noted in the previous section, the availability of an abundant supply of water is irrelevant, if at the same time a community can't adequately dispose of that water once it is used and contaminated.

Sussex Borough has an abundant supply of water. Toward the end of the 19th century, the Borough acquired Lake Rutherford, located in Wantage Township, in order to meet the Borough's potable water needs. The water in Lake Rutherford flows into the Colesville Reservoir, also located in Wantage, and from there is piped to a water treatment facility located on Route 23 in the Township. The water treatment facility has a tank associated with it that can hold approximately 300,000 gallons.

After being treated the water is piped to a 500,000 gallon tank located in the northern end of the Borough and accessible from Unionville Ave. All of this flow occurs by gravity since the locations of Lake Rutherford and the other system components are at much higher elevations than the Borough. Currently, the system delivers a daily average of 250,000 gpd but has the capability of providing a safe yield of 600,000 gpd or more, if certain system upgrades and improvements are installed.

It appears then that the Borough has sufficient capacity, subject to existing and future NJDEP regulations, to accommodate a substantial amount of growth, with the possibility of also selling excess capacity to users outside of the Borough. Currently, the Borough already provides water to approximately 150 customers in Wantage Township. In terms of how much growth the water supply capability of the Borough could sustain, the general rule of thumb for residential development is 300 gpd for each residential unit, although depending on the number of bedrooms per unit, the average could be substantially less than 300 gpd. So, assuming that the Borough could eventually develop a water and sewage disposal capability of at least another 200,000 gpd, the number of additional housing units that would be possible could approach 700 or the additional

capacity could be used to support some mix of additional residential and commercial development. The water and sewer standards applicable to commercial development varies depending on the specific nature of the use and any detailed estimates with respect to commercial water and sewage disposal usage is beyond the scope of this document. Suffice it to say, the implications of the water supply and sewage disposal capabilities of the Borough will be factored into the decisions incorporated into the Land Use Plan element of this document. The importance of water, in particular, cannot be overemphasized enough and the Borough must be certain that the water supply available to it is sufficient to sustain, over a long period of time, the growth that it encourages by its land use policies.

STORMWATER SYSTEM

Storm water runoff is an integral part of the hydrologic cycle. The Borough owns and operates a separate storm sewer system that consists of a network of storm drains, pipes, channels and natural drainage courses. As in many older developed municipalities, the existing system collects and conveys mostly untreated stormwater to outfalls. The storm drains are frequently located along roadways and in parking lots. The outfalls frequently discharge to surface water bodies and, in a few areas, may lead to a stormwater management basin. A substantial portion of the Borough drains toward Clove Lake and Clove Brook and essentially all of the Borough's surface runoff eventually finds its way into the Wallkill River, which uniquely flows north toward the Hudson River, rather than south, east or west, as most other waterways in New Jersey do.

In 2004, the NJDEP issued the Borough a Tier B Municipal Stormwater General Permit. The permit authorizes certain new and existing discharges from the small municipal separate storm sewer system. Pursuant to the permit, the Borough has adopted a stormwater management plan and ordinance, developed a local public education program, and implemented a storm drain inlet labeling program. In addition, the Borough often upgrades its existing stormwater collection and conveyance system when streets are reconstructed. Additional information regarding stormwater management is discussed in Section 6.7.

THE NON MUNICIPAL UTILITY NETWORK

There are a number of other infrastructure components that are needed if a community is to enjoy the quality of life expected in the 21st century. Electric, telephone, cable TV and internet services are all considered necessities in today's society. All of these services are provided by privately owned entities, unlike the sanitary sewer, potable water and stormwater systems which are all publicly owned and operated infrastructure components. However, the privately owned service providers are regulated by one or more government agencies, so there is some degree of government control associated with these parts of the community infrastructure as well.

Sussex Borough is provided with electric service by Jersey Central Power and Light ; land line telephone service by Embarq ; cable TV service by Service Electric Cable TV satellite TV service by at least one private company and internet service by a number of

internet service providers. In addition, cell phone service, which in some households has completely replaced land line telephone service, is also available from a number of private companies.

The last “infrastructure” element is not a series of pipes or wires, as some of the other components are, but it is nevertheless essential to the community’s health and welfare. That element, the collection and disposal of garbage or solid waste in the Borough, is handled entirely by private contractors, with the disposal of the material occurring at the SCUMA sanitary landfill in Lafayette Township. It is the responsibility of each property owner to make certain that solid waste generated on their property is properly disposed. Although the Borough does not have direct involvement with this activity, the Borough, via its regulations, does control the required recycling activity applicable to all property owners.

The key issue with respect to all of these parts of the Sussex Borough infrastructure relates to the ability of each component to accommodate additional growth. There appear to be no current limits on the availability of electricity, in particular, although there is a growing trend to make electricity generation more sustainable by utilizing alternative energy sources. The assumption here, however, is that sufficient electricity will continue to be available and will continue to be something that is provided by one or more private entities, rather than via any government provider. However, as will be discussed later, this may be an area that Sussex Borough may want to investigate in terms of the Borough being more pro active from an energy conservation and community sustainability perspective.

Finally, with respect to the other privately owned segments of the Borough’s infrastructure, although they may not be as essential as electricity, they do impact the quality of life of the Borough’s residents. Consequently, the assumption is also made here that these entities will continue to provide sufficient service to meet future demand. Furthermore, the Borough in its planning efforts can rely on that assumption and it can also be assumed that no direct action is needed by the Borough at this time.

2.3 DEMOGRAPHICS – GENERAL INFORMATION

Sussex Borough, as a historic “crossroads” environment, was one of the first locations in Sussex County to become a significantly populated area in the 18th century. As long ago as 1930 the Borough had a resident population within its boundaries of 1,415 people (see Exhibit 9) - just about 700 fewer than the Borough’s population in 2000. In fact, it is estimated that the population of the Borough in the 1890’s was at least a thousand or more residents.

The dense population concentration in the Borough (as many as 1,500 people per square mile), was uncharacteristic of much of rural Sussex County in the late 19th century. As already noted, this was probably one of the reasons why the residents at that time - of what was then known as the Deckertown section of Wantage Township - took the legal steps to establish themselves as a separate municipality with its own identity

So, Sussex Borough, by Sussex County standards, has been a population center and regional center for many generations. The resident population remained relatively stable from the 1930's up to 1960, with small increases each decade. However, between 1960 and the 1980 census, the Borough grew from 1,651 residents to 2,418 – a 46% increase - or just about 23 % per decade. This uncharacteristic increase was largely attributable to several apartment complexes constructed in the Borough during that time.

However, over the next 20 years the population in the Borough decreased somewhat and as of 2000, the population was 2,145, its lowest level since 1970, which translates into a decrease of about 11% It is further assumed that the 2000 census figure of 2,145 has increased somewhat, beyond the 1990 level of 2,201 residents, as of the date of this document. However, it is also doubtful that the current population has again reached the 1980 peak of 2,415.

A review of Exhibit 9, which provides the historic population trends in the Borough from 1930 to 2000, identifies how the Borough's population grew slowly but steadily, then encountered the significant spike in the growth rate previously mentioned and how over the last two decades the population has declined somewhat – probably due to the smaller family sizes that has been a growing trend in recent years.

So, the Borough's role, to a large extent, is still that of a crossroads "center" with a regional impact but not to the extent that it once was. Related to this point is the observation that although the population in the Borough since 1930 has not quite doubled, the growth rate of Sussex County as a whole has been much more substantial. Consequently, in 1930 the Borough population was 5% of the total Sussex County population. Today it is less than 1.5%. Another comparison that is significant is that in 1930, Wantage had a population of 2,075 compared to 1,415 for Sussex. Today the Wantage Township population is five times that of Sussex Borough

EXHIBIT 9
POPULATION GROWTH

Year	Population
1930	1,415
1940	1,478
1950	1,529
1960	1,651
1970	2,040
1980	2,418
1990	2,201
2000	2,145

Source: US Census

The **Borough Housing Plan and Fair Share Plan** draft, which as of the date of this document has not yet been adopted by the Board, contains a substantial amount of additional information about the Borough's demographics related to age group categories, income information and employment data. That information is incorporated herein by reference. However, it should be noted that this data is nearly nine years old and the next census is about a year away. So, although there probably won't be any dramatic changes with respect to the data collected in 2010, there will undoubtedly be some differences and as soon as that data is available, it should be reviewed to determine if the newer data necessitates any changes in the planning policies of the Borough.

In addition to the aforementioned information contained in the Housing Plan, the 2000 census data contains some other revealing things about the Borough's population, especially in comparison to the same data for Sussex County and the State of New Jersey. Those interesting facts and comparisons, as well as comparisons with the 1970 census data, contained in the 1975 Master Plan, can be summarized as follows:

Sussex Borough is very similar to Sussex County and the State of New Jersey with respect to median age, with all three entities having a median age figure in the mid thirties. However, the median age for the Borough at the time of the 1970 census was 29.9

Although the Borough mirrors some of the Sussex County and New Jersey data, the Borough is quite different from the Sussex County and New Jersey averages with respect to the percentage of owner occupied dwellings and the number of housing units occupied by renters. The overall ratio for Sussex County, for example, is Owner Occupied: 82.7% Renter Occupied: 17.3% ; for New Jersey it is 65.6% vs. 34.4% and for Sussex Borough it is 37.9% vs. 62.1%. Obviously in Sussex Borough renters predominate. Furthermore, the 1970 data for Sussex Borough indicates that the ratio of owner occupied to renter occupied units was much different then, with 49% owner occupied and 51% of the units occupied by renters.

Another interesting difference is the number of people per household. For New Jersey it is 2.68 ; for Sussex County it is 2.80 and for Sussex Borough it is 2.36. In 1970 that figure for the Borough was 2.89.

Also, with respect to high school graduates, as a percentage of the population, Sussex County is highest with 89.9%, New Jersey is next with 82.1% and for Sussex Borough only 75% are high school graduates. Another stark contrast between Sussex County and the Borough involves residents 65 and over. For Sussex County it is 9.1% and for the Borough it is 12.7%, which is actually less than the statewide figure of 13.2%..

In terms of race, Sussex Borough is more similar to the rest of Sussex County than it is to the state as a whole, with the percentage of whites accounting for approximately 96% of the population both, in the Borough and countywide..... and with only 72.6% being categorized as white statewide.

Finally, comparing the Borough to the state, as a whole, as well as to Sussex County, with respect to income, the figures are especially revealing. Data available from 1999, indicates that the Borough's median household income was \$ 36,172, whereas for Sussex County it was \$ 65,266 and statewide it was \$ 55,146. Furthermore, the census data also indicates that 27.7% of the Borough residents in 2000 relied on Social Security income and 18.5% also had the Social Security income supplemented by some form of retirement income.

Beyond the aforementioned comparisons, there are other 2000 census facts that further reveal the socio- economic characteristics of the Borough population at that time, which need to be considered in formulating the planning policies of the community. Some of those facts follow:

- *Only 48% of the Borough residents in 2000 had lived in the same house five years earlier.*
- *97.7% were born in the United States*
- *6.9% of families were below the poverty line*
- *11% of Borough residents were below the poverty line*
- *90% of those in the work force commuted to work via some type of vehicle, however, 4.9 walked*
- *The average commuting time was 30 minutes*
- *Only four nationalities were represented in double digits English (13.6%), German (16.0%), Irish (20.4%) and Italian (17.5%).*
- *40.3% of the housing units are located in single family detached structures. (Note: this means a substantial number of single family homes are apparently rented).*
- *65.1% of the residential units were built before 1959.*
- *16.8% of the 900 residents who answered the question, regarding the availability of a vehicle, indicated there was none available to them*

As noted earlier, the census data is somewhat outdated but based on past experience, there probably won't be significant changes based on the findings of the 2010 census. Obviously, the median household income will probably be higher but ethnic composition,

the owner to renter ratio, poverty data and other similar information will probably be very similar. Although communities can and do change over time, those changes are usually not that dramatic during a ten year interval.

Finally, population projections are often notoriously inaccurate and to prove that point the projections presented in the 1975 Master Plan are wildly off base. The source of the projections were The Sussex County Dept. of Planning, Conservation and Economic Development, The NJ Dept of Labor and Industry and a build out analysis done by the consultant who prepared the 1975 Master Plan. In fairness to the individuals involved in making the projections, this was before the State of New Jersey, via its various environmental regulations, began to curtail growth throughout Sussex County. The composite projections for the Borough at that time suggested a total population in the year 2000 of between 4,245 and 11,703. Obviously that growth never occurred for a variety of reasons. Today the projections are much more modest, with the authoritative source being the NJ Council On Affordable Housing (COAH) which estimates that by 2018 the Borough will have 57 additional housing units resulting in a possible population gain of 150 or more residents. So, although it is beyond the scope of this document to offer any reliable population projections, it would not be unreasonable to speculate that by 2020, the Borough population could be in the neighborhood of 2,700 residents or more.

2.4 AN INVENTORY OF EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

As a “center” Sussex Borough has always been home to a variety of community facilities that serve not only the Borough but the surrounding region as well. Broadly defined, a community facility includes such public and quasi public land uses as schools, libraries, hospitals, churches, community centers, government buildings, public safety facilities recreation areas, post offices and similar facilities. In a sense, community facilities, rather than being a separate category, can almost be considered an infrastructure sub category. Just as the roads, sewer system, electric utility grid etc. connect the various land uses together into a cohesive whole, so too do the community facilities within a municipality, provide the various services that often relate to the health, welfare and safety of the community.

The 1975 Master Plan identified a number of community facilities present at that time, in the Borough, that contributed to the Borough’s sense of “identity”. Most but not all of those facilities continue to exist in the Borough and a brief description of each follows:

PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The Borough residents have six park and recreation areas available for use. They are:

- **Brookside Park**, is actually located in Wantage Township but is owned by the Borough. It is just across the southern border of the Borough. It includes two ballfields, a parking area and a small building. It consists of approximately 15 acres and is occasionally subject to flooding due to its location next to Clove Brook.

- **Deckertown Commons** is located on Main St. It is a small (less than a quarter acre) wedged shaped parcel that includes a gazebo, benches, landscaping and decorative street lights. It is intended for passive recreation.
- **Clove Lake** and adjacent park area. This facility is available for fishing and use by small watercraft only.
- **Lake Rutherford** is the Borough's main source of potable water but it is also available for fishing on a permit basis by Sussex Borough residents only. The lake is located in Wantage.
- **The Sussex Middle School Recreation Facilities** are not owned by the Borough but residents can use the gymnasium, ballfield and play equipment as long as they are not being used for school purposes
- **The Boggs Property** is located on the north side of Newton Ave and just to the south of the Clove Lake dam. It is owned by the Borough and currently accommodates a small ballfield. It consists of approximately 3 acres and is flood prone.

RELIGIOUS FACILITIES

The Borough is home to six houses of worship, several of which are located in close proximity to Main Street. They are The First Presbyterian Church of Sussex, St. Monica Roman Catholic Church, The Sussex United Methodist Church, The Sussex Christian Reformed Church, The First Baptist Church of Sussex and The Sussex Wesleyan Church. According to the 1975 Master Plan, another church, the Second Baptist Church existed at that time but that congregation is no longer active. Most of these houses of worship also have ancillary facilities associated with them. A seventh congregation, The Good News Fellowship Church, meets at the Grange building on East Main Street.

MISC. GOVERNMENT RELATED / EDUCATION RELATED FACILITIES

The Borough can count with in its boundaries several government related facilities that include the Borough Municipal Building, the Borough DPW garage, the Sussex - Wantage Board of Education offices and the Sussex -Wantage Middle School, which serves grades six through eight, The Sussex Christian School and the Sussex Fire Department garage and meeting hall .

The Borough facilities are currently adequate to meet the needs of the community. The Sussex Wantage School District still has capacity, in its three schools, to accommodate additional students, although of the three, the Middle School has the least capacity and virtually no room for expansion. However, enrollment may see a period of decline, as residential construction slows and the number of young families moving into the area slows as well.

The Sussex Fire Dept. facility serves both a public safety function and also functions as a de facto “community center”, where various Fire Dept fund raisers and other social activities are held on a regular basis.

OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Included in this category are Saint Clares Hospital, a major medical facility that serves the surrounding region, and the Grange Hall on Route 284. A third facility, The Tri State Actor’s Theatre, is technically not a “community facility” and is more of a commercial use, however, since it is a non profit operation, located in a building owned by the Borough, it is being categorized as a community facility. More will be discussed later in this document about both the hospital and theatre operations.

Finally, the 1975 Master Plan mentions several existing community facilities that, as of 2009, are no longer in the Borough and which have either moved to other locations or no longer exist. They are the post office, the municipal police department and the Sussex Wantage Library. The library and post office needed larger facilities and could not be accommodated within the Borough, so they moved to Wantage. The police department was disbanded in the early 1990’s and the space allocated to the police functions were incorporated into the renovated Borough Hall for general municipal purposes. The Borough now relies on the NJ State Police for police protection.

2.5 EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW

Sussex Borough is located in the northeast quadrant of Sussex County and is completely surrounded by Wantage Township. According to several sources, the total area of the Borough, as already noted, is approximately 0.62 square miles (400 acres), of which, about 25 acres is water, in the form of Clove Lake. Geometrically, the Borough is a symmetrical octagon, oriented on a perfect north-south axis.

Beginning in late 2008 and continuing into 2009, a survey of the existing land use pattern in the Borough was undertaken by The Nelson Consulting Group. A number of sources were drawn upon and a standard methodology was used to determine, to the greatest extent possible, how each property in the Borough was being used. The key term here is “use”, not how each property was “zoned”, since many properties for various reasons may not be consistent with the uses permitted by the zoning regulations. By doing this existing land use survey and developing from it an **Existing Land Use Map** (See Exhibit 10 in Appendix B), as well as a corresponding database, an existing land use baseline has been established regarding the existing land development pattern in the Borough as of 2008 /2009. This information is important in connection with making land use related decisions, that will shape the future land use pattern of the community.

It was decided to establish twelve land use categories in order to develop an in depth understanding of the various types of land uses that exist in the Borough and ultimately

how those uses related to the existing zoning. Those categories, as depicted on the Existing Land Use Map are:

- Single Family Detached Residential
- Single Family Attached Residential (townhouses)
- Two Family Residential
- Three to Five Family Residential
- Apartments – More Than Five Units
- Commercial
- Mixed Commercial (commercial and residential)
- Industrial
- Public / Quasi Public
- Parks and Recreation
- Agricultural
- Vacant Land (vacant building are not included)

The methodology used in this effort involved reviewing the Existing Land Use Map included in the 1975 Master Plan (see Exhibit 11 in Appendix B), consulting a current aerial photo of the community, reviewing the Borough tax list, reviewing the list of rental properties in the Borough and conducting an extensive “windshield survey” of the entire community. Also, it must be again emphasized that no attempt was made to determine if each use exists legally. That determination is beyond the scope of this document and the jurisdiction of the Planning Board. The sole purpose of this effort was to determine how each property is currently being used.

In terms of the amount of acreage associated with each land use, Exhibit 12 provides that information and compares it with similar data from the 1975 Master Plan

EXHIBIT 12

EXISTING LAND USE ACREAGE FIGURES

<u>Existing Land Use Category</u>	<u>1975 Acreage</u>	<u>2009 Acreage</u>
Single Family	105 Acres	234 Acres
Two Family	Included Above	8
Three to Five Family	Included Below	3
Apartments	27	29
Commercial	30	11
Mixed Commercial	Included Above	12
Industrial	4	2
Public / Quasi Public	31	41
Parks and Recreation	Not Provided	2
Agricultural	58	14
Vacant Land	79	25

Note: The 1975 data indicates that the acreage associated with streets totaled 43 acres. The estimate for 2009 is 48 acres. In addition, Clove Lake consists of approximately 25 acres

From the aforementioned database and existing land use analysis, the following observation can be made - the general land use pattern of the Borough is a mix of compact “urban style” residential and non residential uses in the central business district and in areas that are in close proximity to it. The remainder of the community, with some exceptions, is comprised of lower density “suburban style” residential and non residential uses. In broad general terms, the community can also be seen as consisting of four, irregularly shaped quadrants. They are identified as follows:

- Quadrant # 1 – The northwest portion bordered by Route 23 on the east and Route 639 on the south.
- Quadrant # 2 – The northeast portion bordered by Route 23 on the west and Route 284 on the south.
- Quadrant # 3 – The southeast portion bordered by Route 284 on the north and Route 23 on the west.
- Quadrant # 4 – The southwest portion bordered by Route 23 on the east and Route 639 on the north

These quadrants have been established in this document simply for the purpose of describing the varied land use patterns in the Borough. These quadrants do not function as neighborhoods themselves, although within each of them there may be several distinct neighborhoods. Furthermore, in some cases the land uses on the edge of one quadrant may bear more of a relationship to the uses in the adjoining quadrant, on the other side of the street, than to the uses in the remainder of the quadrant. Also, using this means of dividing the Borough, also divides the “central core” of the community among the four quadrants, when in fact the “central core” functions as one definable entity. Nevertheless, the fact that Routes 23, 284 and 639 divide the Borough as they do, creates a “spatial” impact on the community that can’t be ignored .

So, how can the existing land use patterns in these quadrants be generally described ?
A general description of each follows:

Quadrant #1 *is primarily residential, including many of the Borough’s stately Victorian era homes, but also includes two significant focal points – the Middle School and Clove Lake. It also includes a small portion of the central business district.*

Quadrant # 2 *contains most of the central business district, some residential development, several public and quasi public uses and a large, undeveloped, wooded tract at its northern end.*

Quadrant # 3 *is predominantly residential but with a much higher density of development than Quadrant #1, due to the garden apartment complexes and a number of two and three family structures in this part of the Borough. Except for the hospital there are very few public or quasi public uses in this quadrant but there are some commercial uses on the edges.*

Quadrant # 4 is significantly different than the other three. In terms of acreage, it is dominated by a large agricultural / garden center operation at its southern end. It also has a substantial amount of commercial / industrial development and very few residences.

These general observations now lead to a more detailed review of the Borough's existing land use pattern based on the specific land use categories.

COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL

To a certain extent, Sussex Borough is best known more for its commercial core of retail and service commercial uses than anything else. The commercial core – Main St and its environs - as well as several outlying business areas, contain a varied and complex blend of over 85 commercial land uses distributed among retail, service and office classifications. There are also a scattering of industrial uses still left in the Borough, as well. Exhibit 13 lists most of the businesses in the Borough by street location as of September 2009.

EXHIBIT 13

EXISTING BOROUGH BUSINESSES - 2009

Clove Avenue (Rt. 23)

Diane's Place Hair Salon
Hardin Auto Body

Bank Street (Rt. 23)

Pinkel Funeral Home
High Point Monuments of Sussex County
OBG Originals-Dolls,etc.
Unisex Salon
Henderson's Auto Repair

Mill Street (Rt. 23)

Laundromat
Variety Central

Loomis Avenue (Rt. 639)

High Point Barber Shop
Farmside Pet Supplies
Farmside Florist
Farmside Garden Supplies
Controlled Abrasions
Airport Auto Sales and Service
Allen's Bar and Liquors
Sussex-Wantage Preschool
TJ's Pizza
Tim's Auto and Truck Care Center

Hamburg Avenue (Rt. 23)

Harvey Beckman, MD Gastroenterology

	Totta & Macherone Income Tax Preparation
	DT Tank
	Country Diner Pancake
	Tri County Audio
	Alpine Signs
	Patrick's Wine Barn
	Country Clove
	Catch 23 Deli
Weibel Plaza	
	Econo Pak Factory
Walling Avenue	
	Tom Madsen Home Improvements
	Donald Patlen, Dentist
	Franklin Sussex Hyundai / Neilsen Chevrolet
Town Centre Complex (East Main St. – Rt. 284))	
	East Main Street Laundry Doctor's II Laundromat and Dry Cleaners
	Hilites Hair and Nail
	Wantage Physical Rehabilitation
	Tan Perfect
	Annabel's Pizza
	Family First Day Care
	Cowboy Sean's Convenience Store
East Main Street (Rt. 284)	
	NAPA Auto
	Tucker Rocky Distributing
	Kitchens and Baths by Ranco
	Beckey's Hair Therapy
	Serenity Consignments
	Fish and Tackle
	Dr. Fisher, Physician
Main Street	
	Rainy Day Shop Gifts
	Sussex Inn
	Flying Pig Gallery
	Gift Shop
	Martin Vander Heide Attorney
	Nelda and Emmy Lou's Antiques
	Sussex Help Center
	Ratti's News
	Art Gallery
	Norwescap Head Start
	Bakers Pharmacy
	Just Desserts
	Chase Bank
	Hay Belly Deli
	Taco of the Town

Bobo Kitchen
Lorenzo's Pizza
New York Life
Laurie Lea's Jewelry
Embarq Telephone Office
Wolfe Granite Works
High Point Dance Centre
Pollard's Art
Viper Balance
Tri State Actors Theatre
Fountain Square Inn

Newton Avenue

Dollar Discount
Country Thrift Shop
Shear Intensity
Pandora's Magikal Gifts
The Green Restaurant
Blacksmith Cycle

An emerging arts, antiques, and collectibles sector has been taking place for the past decade or more and is taking root primarily along Main Street. These include several art galleries and gift shops. In addition, several years ago, the building that originally housed the Crescent Theater, later known as the Sussex Theatre, which is almost 100 years old, was restored and has become a regional venue for staged plays. This venue has been renamed the Tri-State Actors Theatre. It has become an activity generator which attracts more than 4,000 patrons, who either reside locally or in the surrounding region, including parts of New York and Pennsylvania. In addition to several full time employees, as many as several dozen part time actors are employed during the year in connection with the various plays that are staged

Another of the growing commercial sectors along Main Street and elsewhere involves establishments serving food and beverages. This restaurant component has always existed but has gotten more diverse and vibrant than was the case in the 1970's and 1980s. During the last decade, in particular, several newer establishments have become fixtures in the business district. No data is available regarding the clientele of these establishments but, although many of the customers are undoubtedly from the Sussex Wantage area, the assumption can be made that many travel to these establishments from other parts of Sussex County and the surrounding region as well.

The central business district – particularly Main St – is characterized by a vertical mix of uses, with storefronts on the ground floor and some residential apartments above. These upstairs residences are exclusively rentals but it should also be noted that some of the upper floor space in this part of the Borough has been vacant for many years. Also, during the last decade or more some of the building facades along Main Street, in

particular, have been renovated, restoring the original appearance of the buildings and adding to the aesthetic appeal of the business district.

Other commercial uses in the Borough, beyond the Main St environs, include an auto dealer, a garden supply store, doctors' offices, two funeral homes and various personal service type uses. By far, the most common non residential uses in the Borough, then, are retail and service commercial enterprises.



A RECENT BUILDING RESTORATION ON MAIN STREET

Over time the mix of commercial uses has changed and adapted to the current demands of the marketplace. An example of an efficient adaptive reuse of a formerly underutilized commercial space is the newly redeveloped “Towne Centre at Sussex Borough”. Formerly the site of an Agway facility, it now includes several commercial uses that add vitality to the Borough.

In summary, the Sussex Borough business district has evolved over time and for the last several years has been responding to the opportunities offered by the marketplace. The entrepreneurs who own the businesses that comprise this “commercial complex”, have been making the decisions necessary to keep their businesses competitive. The future of this sector of the community is promising but not guaranteed and it will take the cooperation of the public and private sectors to build on the success of the last several decades.

RESIDENTIAL

By far, the most common land use category in the Borough is residential. Within this category, single family detached residences are dominant, in terms of the amount of acreage utilized. As noted earlier, these structures are located mainly in Quadrants 1 and

3 and include a variety of colonial and traditional style structures, Cape Cods and Victorian era styles.



NEWTON AVE RESIDENCE



WALNUT STREET RESIDENCE

Most of the housing stock is in relatively good condition, although some older units are in need of rehabilitation. As noted earlier, a substantial portion of the Borough housing stock was built before 1960. On the one hand, this is a positive factor because many of the existing residential structures would be difficult to replicate today due to the craftsmanship and quality of materials required to do so. On the other hand, as these structures age, it requires significant resources – both in terms of money and patience - to maintain them to the standards required. Although it is beyond the scope of this Master Plan to explore the historic resources of the community in any great detail, suffice it to say that these structures of historic and architectural significance should be preserved and protected.

In addition to the single family residential structures, two and three family structures and other multi family buildings are scattered primarily along East Main Street, Hamburg Avenue, and the northern end of Main Street. Harrison Street, Grant Street, and Unionville Avenue also contain several multi family units and two large apartment complexes dominate the northeastern portion of the Borough, north of Maple Avenue.



APARTMENT COMPLEX - UNIONVILLE AVE.

As already noted, the Borough is predominantly a community of renters and these are the structures where most of the renters live. However, it should also be noted that based on a review of the data related to the location of rental units, many single family homes are no longer owner occupied and have been made available to renters. Finally, the same comments offered about the historic and architectural significance of many single family homes also applies to some of the multi family structures in the Borough as well.

Other Land Use Categories

Despite its compact, nearly fully developed nature, Sussex Borough does contain some underutilized land and **vacant land** which could be put to more efficient use. Examples would be the vacant land in the northern area of the community, although the steep slopes there may present potential obstacles in connection with future development. To the south of where Walling Ave ends and west of Route 23, several vacant and / or underutilized parcels present opportunities for growth and new ratables, should the Borough wish to pursue those opportunities. In addition, within several of the Borough's residential areas - such as Harrison Street – there are vacant lots, vacant units and units in need of rehabilitation that may also offer future redevelopment opportunities. Finally, there still a few parcels in the community, although technically “developed”, which are oversized and also present some possibilities for future growth. A prior “build out analysis done in connection with a previous amendment to the Sussex County Wastewater Management Plan indicated that as many as 153 additional housing units might be accommodated within the Borough, along with 96,000 sq ft of non residential floor area. It was noted that this was a conservative estimate and when underutilized and oversized properties are factored into the equation, the resulting numbers could be higher

Next, although the Borough is not a “farming community” there is still a limited amount of **farmland** located in the northern and southwestern portions of the Borough. The farmland in the southwestern part of the community is associated with a large garden center operation. It is also flood prone and constrained by wetlands and its future development potential is limited

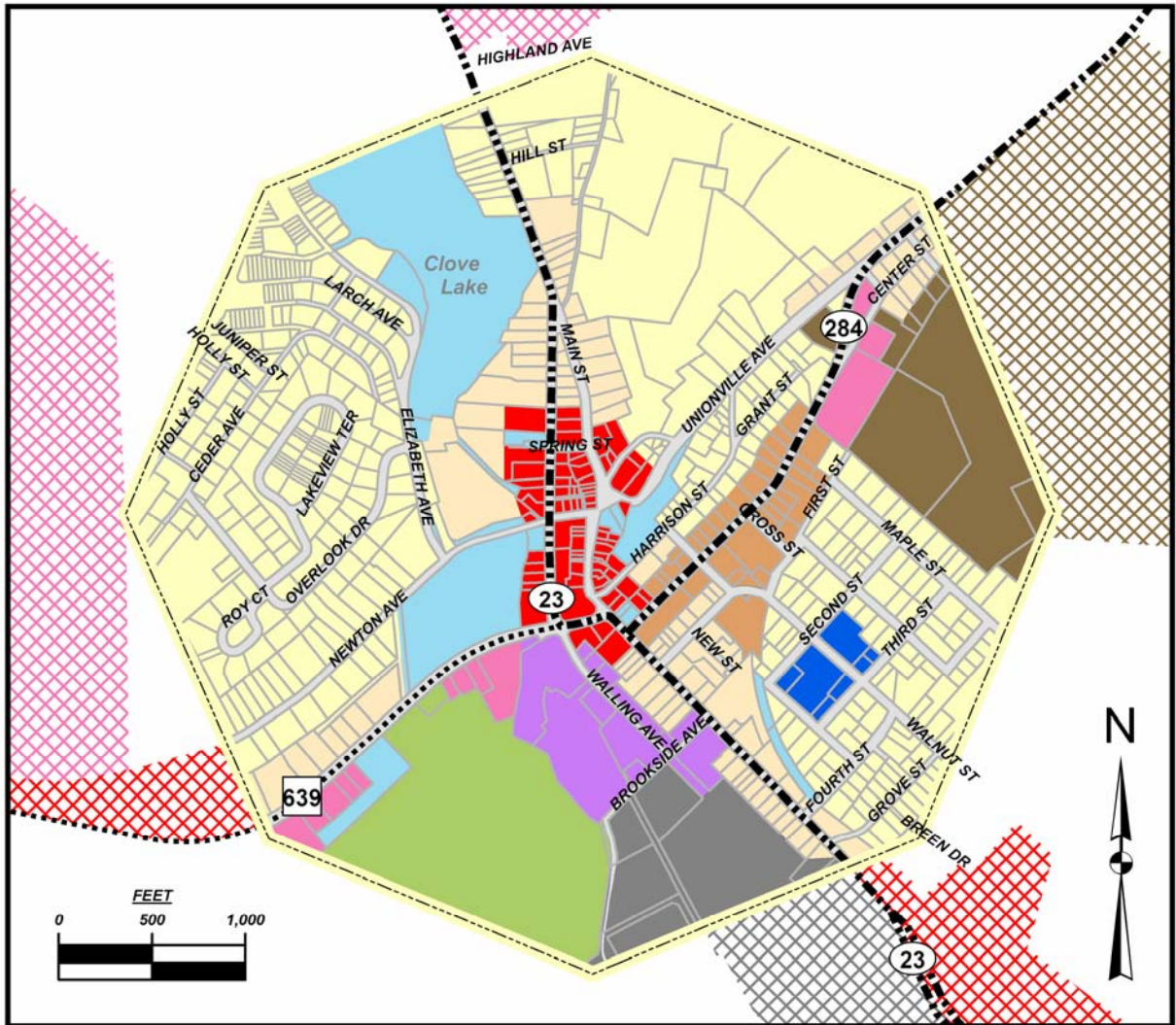
There are also several **public or semi-public** uses scattered throughout the community. These include two schools, 6 churches, a hospital, governmental and educational uses and several park and recreation facilities. These uses were described in some detail in the Community Facilities section of this document. Suffice it to say, that there are positives and negatives associated with these uses. They are, in many instances, “activity generators” drawing visitors into the Borough, who then patronize some of the commercial establishments. Their presence then can add to the vitality of the community. However, these uses are tax exempt and therefore do not add to the municipal revenues. Nevertheless, from time to time, they do require Borough services. So, in terms of the municipal “balance sheet”, they can be a drain on a municipality's resources. This is a problem that most “centers” have and it is always a challenge trying to achieve a reasonable balance between tax exempt and tax paying entities.

2.6 EXISTING ZONING ANALYSIS

The primary goal of this master plan document is to develop a new Land Use Plan which replaces the Land Use Plan contained in the 1975 Master Plan. A copy of that map, as noted previously, is included herein as Exhibit 3. The 2009 Land Use Plan will serve as the basis for a new Borough Zoning Map which, with the Borough Council's consent, will replace the current Borough Zoning Map. A copy of that current zoning map is also included herein as Exhibit 14.

The steps necessary to arrive at a new Land Use Plan and ultimately a new Zoning Map, involved first analyzing the existing land use pattern of the community and then measuring those realities against both the 1975 Land Use Plan and the existing Zoning Map and the categories and the configurations of the zoning district / land use districts associated with each. The aforementioned steps have resulted in some observations about the relationship of the land use goals of the 1975 Master Plan, as illustrated by the Land Use Plan map contained in that document, and the existing land development pattern of the Borough, as of 2009. Those observations can be summarized as follows:

- *The basic land use pattern established by the 1975 Master Plan and the current Zoning Map is still valid but a number of adjustments are needed, which will require both map changes and changes to the Borough's land use policies and regulations.*
- *Among the major issues raised by the aforementioned analysis and related discussions are the following:*
 1. How can the **“small town” character** of the community be protected while at the same time absorbing more residential and commercial growth
 2. What approach should be followed in order to protect the **existing single family residential areas**, so that they are not further encroached upon by inappropriate uses.
 3. How can the potential **economic development opportunities** associated with the realignment of Route 23 be fully realized ? Is the use of one or more redevelopment zones advisable in this part of the community and in other areas as well ?
 4. What is the **future of retail and service commercial uses** in the Borough ? What commercial uses are still possible and feasible in the Central Business District and which ones are more appropriate in the adjoining commercial districts ?
 5. How can **the CBD be best enhanced** so that it remains the active core of the Borough, thereby maintaining the role of the Borough as the “center” for the Sussex Wantage area ?



NOTES:

- 1.0 This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.
- 2.0 This map was developed using Sussex County Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by SCOGIS and is not county-authorized.
- 3.0 Digital data files are periodically updated. Files are dated and users are responsible for obtaining the latest version of the data.

REFERENCES:

- 1.0 The Nelson Consulting Group, *Official Zoning Map, Sussex Borough*, September 1993.
- 2.0 Harold E. Pellow and Associates, *Road and Zoning Map for Township of Wantage*, March, 2005.
- 3.0 NJDOT 2008 NJ Roadway Network.

**EXISTING ZONING MAP
BOROUGH OF SUSSEX AND ADJACENT LANDS
SUSSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

LEGEND

	MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY		ZONING - SUSSEX BOROUGH
	PARCEL		R-1: LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
	NEW JERSEY STATE HIGHWAY		R-2: MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
	SUSSEX COUNTY ROADWAY		R-3: HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
	ZONING - WANTAGE TOWNSHIP		C-1: CENTRAL BUSINESS
	RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONS		C-2: REDEVELOPMENT AREA
	MULTIPLE-RESIDENTIAL		C-3: GENERAL COMMERCIAL
	NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL		INST: INSTITUTIONAL
	HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL		A&I: AGRICULTURE AND LIGHT INDUSTRY
	LIMITED INDUSTRIAL		LI&U: LIGHT INDUSTRIAL and UTILITY
			P: PUBLIC and SEMI-PUBLIC
			OR: OFFICE RESIDENTIAL

6. Should the **C-3 Zone be restructured** so that it is more of a mixed use district ?
7. How and where can slightly **higher building heights and increased densities** be permitted ?
8. What should be done about **existing non conforming uses** ? Which ones should be made conforming and which should remain non conforming, with the expectation that they will eventually be replaced with conforming uses ?
9. How can the **environmentally sensitive areas** of the Borough – wetlands, steep slopes, flood plain areas etc. – be best protected ?
10. How can **Clove Lake be best protected** but at the same time take advantage of the economic development and recreational opportunities that this asset offers ?
11. How can Sussex Borough achieve the goal of becoming a **“sustainable” community**. Is more growth consistent with the goal of sustainability ?
12. What steps are necessary in order to enhance the **“walkability”** of the community as a whole and the various neighborhoods specifically ?
13. Will the **role of St. Clare’s Hospital** change in the immediate future ? How will that change, if it occurs, affect the Borough ? What needs to be done to ensure that the negative impacts will be minimal if the hospital’s role changes ?
14. Should the Borough begin anticipating an alternative **future use for the Sussex Middle School** or will it remain an educational facility long into the future ?
15. What can be done to improve the **renter / homeowner ratio** in the Borough, which is dramatically different from the Wantage, Sussex County and New Jersey ratios ?
16. Is there still a need for **industrial zoning** in the Borough ?

There are a variety of lesser issues that were also raised but any detailed discussion of those items is beyond the scope of this effort.

As part of the zoning analysis, two other matters were also reviewed. First, the zoning in Wantage Township, immediately adjacent to the Borough boundary, was analyzed. Some of the Wantage zoning is inconsistent with the Borough’s zoning and

this concern has been forwarded to Wantage via direct communication. Specifically, there are several locations within Wantage where non residential zoning exists immediately adjacent to residentially zoned portions of the Borough. This issue will be discussed further with Wantage officials and hopefully will be resolved in the not too distant future.

Finally, the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the Sussex County Strategic Growth Plan were both reviewed and the Borough is in agreement with both of those documents, which view the Borough as a “center” where additional growth can be directed.

3.0 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The Borough of Sussex, as already discussed, is a small, mixed use community that historically has served as a “center” for the agricultural operations and lower density population areas surrounding it in Wantage Township. As the Borough contemplates the role that it will play during the 21st century, two key issues need to be considered:

- The “physical form” of the Borough
- The “quality of life” that Sussex Borough visitors and residents alike, will experience.

The specific planning goals and objectives delineated herein will significantly influence both how the Borough’s physical form will be shaped and what quality of life the Borough will be able to offer.

As a starting point, Sussex Borough accepts and adopts, by reference, the planning purposes outlined in 40:55 D-2 of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (NJMLUL), as well as the applicable goals and statewide policies of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The NJMLUL purposes provide the broad general framework for successful planning in both the State of New Jersey, in general, and Sussex Borough, specifically. The purposes of the Act (The NJMLUL), as they are listed in that document follow:

40:55D-2. PURPOSE OF THE ACT.

It is the intent and purpose of this act:

- a. To encourage municipal action to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in this State, in a manner which will promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare;
- b. To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and man-made disasters;
- c. To provide adequate light, air and open space;
- d. To ensure that the development of individual municipalities does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, the county and the State as a whole;
- e. To promote the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment;
- f. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies;
- g. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial and industrial uses and open space, both public and private, according to their respective environmental requirements in order to meet the needs of all New Jersey citizens;
- h. To encourage the location and design of transportation routes which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging location of such facilities and routes which result in congestion or blight;
- i. To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangement;

- j. To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources in the State and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land;
- k. To encourage planned unit developments which incorporate the best features of design and relate the type, design and layout of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development to the particular site;
- l. To encourage senior citizen community housing construction;
- m. To encourage coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view of lessening the cost of such development and to the more efficient use of land;
- n. To promote utilization of renewable energy resources; and
- o. To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs.

The aforementioned purposes, however, as already noted are intended to be broad in nature and do not target in any detail the unique issues and circumstances that affect individual communities. Consequently it is necessary to be more definitive with respect to the Borough's planning goals and objectives, if the Borough is to clearly identify its twenty-first century destination and how it intends to get there.

The goals and objectives are divided into six separate "policy" categories. Each goal associated with a policy category has one or more objectives that suggest how the goal in question will be achieved. Some of the objectives apply to more than one goal. This is done for emphasis in order to identify those objectives that are multi purpose in nature and to illustrate the interrelationship among the various goals that have been identified.

Again, these specific goals and objectives are tailored to fit Sussex Borough, but are grounded in the purposes of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, as previously referenced and delineated. These goals and objectives have been formulated and tested via a review by the Planning Board and with input from other municipal officials and the general public. These goals and objectives reflect a general consensus about the future of Sussex Borough but due to the nature of community planning and the limitations associated with formulating a concise set of goals and objectives, it has not been possible for the goals and objectives to be reflective of every opinion that has been expressed.

This doesn't in any way threaten the validity of the goals and objectives as stated herein. It does, however, require that the Borough periodically consider any dissenting opinions and determine if changing circumstances warrant reconsideration. The vehicle to do this is the Master Plan Re-examination Report process that is required to occur every six years by the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law. Until such time then as the goals and objectives contained herein are reexamined and possibly altered, they are to be considered an integral part of the planning policies of Sussex Borough and must be reflected in the various elements of this Master Plan, in any implementing ordinances adopted by the governing body, and in the decisions of the Planning Board relative to development proposals and variance requests before it for consideration. The specific goals and objects follow in Sections 3.2 through 3.7.

3.2 QUALITY OF LIFE

GOAL: *To maintain an environment in Sussex Borough that is conducive to attracting and retaining a diverse population and a vibrant business community. These elements are essential to maintaining the Borough's "small town" identity and its historic role as a "center" for the surrounding region.*

Objective #1:

Preserve the human scale of Sussex Borough, and its "small town flavor", as well as the physical and historic characteristics of the Borough, while at the same time recognizing that it is a regional commercial, medical and cultural center.

Objective #2:

Encourage the private investment and commitment needed to make the Borough more pleasant and efficient as a place to live and work.

Objective #3:

Preserve and protect the existing open space areas, including Clove Lake, which are major elements of the community's identity. Enhance other green spaces and streetscapes in the community that will allow those areas to serve as focal points in their neighborhoods.

Objective #4:

Protect the residential areas of the community from inappropriate intrusions.

Objective #5:

Work toward making the Borough a handicap accessible community, to the greatest extent possible, and be cognizant of the problems associated with the special needs population

3.3 LAND USE

GOAL: *To encourage a balanced and appropriate land use pattern.*

Objective #1:

Preserve the human scale of Sussex Borough and its small town flavor, as well as its landmarks and heritage so vital to its identity, where appropriate and realistic.

Objective #2:

Respond to regional development trends in a manner most responsive to the community's continued well being and its viability as an historic "center".

Objective #3:

Preserve the viability of the Borough's role in the region by maintaining its diversity as a residential, commercial, professional, cultural, medical and service center. In addition, its role as a center should continue to be encouraged only to the extent that the Borough tax base is not jeopardized and eroded by the addition of new tax exempt entities.

Objective #4:

Establish a pattern of land uses, which will promote the highest degree of health, safety, efficiency and well-being for all segments of the community and which will ensure a positive relationship between land used for residential, commercial and other uses.

Objective #5

Encourage appropriate commercial and higher density residential growth in the Borough through the approval of redevelopment projects in the Main Street and Route 23 portions of the community and other locations, where appropriate, based on thorough studies.

3.4 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

GOAL #1: *To respect the portions of the natural environment still remaining in and around Sussex Borough*

Objective #1:

Conserve open space and other valuable natural resources through the proper use of land and facilities, both public and private.

Objective #2:

Maintain and supplement the public park and street tree resources that exist within the Borough and encourage the protection of trees on privately owned land.

Objective #3:

Protect the environmentally and aesthetically sensitive resources of the community.

Objective #4:

Encourage the use of green building technology on future projects and specifically on redevelopment projects.

GOAL #2: *To encourage the protection of air, water and other natural resources of the community and to minimize the impact of other pollutants.*

Objective #1:

Control non-point source water pollution within the Borough in order to protect Clove Lake, its watershed and other water resources. Additionally, actively participate in regional water quality forums and monitor land use issues for areas that impact the Borough and various water resources, especially with respect to Lake Rutherford and the Wallkill River Wildlife Area.

Objective #2:

Ensure that the criteria and controls in the Storm Water Management Plan are enforced.

Objective #3:

Encourage the use of public transit facilities and/or other transportation alternatives, including pedestrian and bicycle activity, in order to minimize the use of the internal combustion engine.

Objective #4:

Maintain an effective recycling program.

Objective #5:

Encourage patterns of land use and other development controls in order to minimize the impact of noise, especially in residential areas.

3.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: *To retain and enhance Sussex Borough's position as the business, cultural, medical and historical center of the region and as one of the logical locations for increased business activity in the eastern part of Sussex County.*

Objective #1:

Install and encourage streetscape and other aesthetic improvements throughout the Borough and especially in the business districts in order to make them attractive to visitors.

Objective #2:

Encourage businesses that are technologically oriented and that will compete effectively in the twenty-first century.

Objective # 3:

Provide the infrastructure needed by the types of business that the Borough is most likely to attract and retain.

Objective # 4:

Encourage the adaptive reuse and development of underutilized and "brownfields" properties.

Objective #5:

Provide sufficient housing for a workforce to staff the economic development endeavors of the Borough

Objective #6:

Provide the necessary parking facilities in the vicinity of the Main St business district and other business districts of the community.

Objective #7

Encourage the realignment of Route 23 and reevaluate the land development opportunities in the vicinity of that roadway

Objective #8

Evaluate how St Clare’s Hospital can enhance its role as an economic engine of the Borough

3.6 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

GOAL: *To protect the key elements of Sussex Borough’s historic architectural fabric so that the unique character of the community is not lost*

Objective #1:

Discourage demolition and redevelopment in those portions of the community where the predominant architectural style is historically significant.

Objective #2:

Make certain that where development and redevelopment occurs, particularly in the business districts, that any new structures will be compatible with the existing predominant architectural style of its neighbors.

Objective #3:

Encourage the protection of historic and architecturally important buildings via facade easements and other preservation methods.

Objective #4:

Encourage the adaptive reuse of historically or architecturally important structures that can no longer be used for their original purpose because of economic factors or functional obsolescence, provided the exterior design of the building is not adversely altered.

3.7 HOUSING

GOAL: *Provide for a reasonable variety of housing opportunities.*

Objective #1:

Adopt a Housing Element to this Master Plan which meets the Borough’s Third Round COAH obligation. Revise that plan periodically as needed and tailor the plan to the needs of the Borough

Objective #2:

Permit higher density residential development in appropriate locations, consistent with the other goals and objectives herein

Objective #4:

Encourage the ownership of residences in order to modify the owner to renter imbalance.

Objective #5:

Undertake aggressive initiatives to meet the Borough's affordable housing obligation, working with both developers and non profit agencies, as appropriate.

Objective #6:

Allow building conversions and infill development only where the character of the neighborhood will not be adversely altered. Determine the need for and appropriateness of two family residential structures in certain portions of the Borough

Objective #7:

Encourage housing for special needs populations, such as senior citizens, in areas where appropriate.

The contents of this section have set the stage for the remainder of this document, particularly the next part of this document entitled THE LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT. That section begins by describing the Borough's "Vision of the Future", which is essentially a summary of the Goals and Objectives contained in this section of the document.

4.0 THE LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT

4.1 THE BOROUGH'S VISION OF THE FUTURE

Sussex Borough's role as a "center", as already noted, began to take shape in the 19th century, came to fruition in the 20th century and will continue into the 21st century. However, that role has evolved over time and the purpose of this section or element of the master plan is to clarify the land use strategy aimed at continuing that role.

In order to better clarify how the Borough views this continuing role as a "center", a vision statement has been prepared for that purpose. It also needs to be emphasized that the "vision statement" is connected, very directly, to the goals and objectives contained in the preceding section. The vision statement follows:

SUSSEX BOROUGH, IN THE YEAR 2030, WILL HAVE ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS THE CORE OF A REGIONAL CENTER, WHICH WILL ALSO INCLUDE PARTS OF WANTAGE TOWNSHIP AND WHICH WILL BE THE FOCAL POINT OF A LARGE PORTION OF THE NORTHEASTERN QUADRANT OF SUSSEX COUNTY.

THE BOROUGH WILL ATTRACT VISITORS FROM THROUGHOUT SUSSEX COUNTY AND OTHER AREAS AS WELL. THE RESIDENT POPULATION WILL HAVE INCREASED TO AS MANY AS 3,500 PEOPLE, WITH MANY OF THE NEW RESIDENTS CLUSTERED IN THE VICINITY OF THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT.

THE ROUTE 23 REALIGNMENT WILL HAVE BEEN THE CATALYST FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION OF THE SOUTHERN END OF THE BOROUGH. THE VIBRANT "MIXED USE" ENVIRONMENT CREATED IN THIS AREA WILL BE CONNECTED TO THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT VIA AN EXTENSIVE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORK. THE BOROUGH AS A RESULT WILL HAVE BECOME A MORE DIVERSE, DYNAMIC AND INTERESTING COMMUNITY

THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AND THE AREAS IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO IT, BY 2030, WILL HAVE BEEN STRENGTHENED BY NEW BUSINESSES, MORE PARKING AND THE INTRODUCTION OF UPSCALE HOUSING. NEW RESIDENTS AND COMMERCIAL USES WILL INCREASE THE LEVEL OF ACTIVITY IN THIS PART OF THE BOROUGH, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE COMPACT, WALKABLE ENVIRONMENT THAT, BY 2030, WILL BE ENHANCED AND EXPANDED. THE NEW COMMERCIAL USES WILL SERVE THE RESIDENTS IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA BUT WILL ALSO INCLUDE NICHE AND REGIONAL, SPECIALITY USES THAT WILL DRAW CUSTOMERS FROM OTHER AREAS AS WELL. THE HISTORICAL CHARACTER AND RESOURCES OF THIS AREA WILL BE ENHANCED AND ANY NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL RESPECT THE HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS AND VICTORIAN ARCHITECTURE OF THE COMMUNITY.

THE SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AREAS WILL HAVE BEEN PROTECTED FROM ANY INAPPROPRIATE INTRUSIONS, MAKING THEM THE PREMIER RESIDENTIAL AREAS WITHIN THE BOROUGH. THE BOROUGH'S REMAINING ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES WILL BE PROTECTED AND PRESERVED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, THEREBY

ACHIEVING THE ECOLOGICAL BALANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE FOR BOROUGH RESIDENTS. THE FULL RECREATIONAL AND AESTHETIC POTENTIAL OF CLOVE LAKE AND CLOVE BROOK WILL HAVE BEEN REALIZED AND WILL BE THE FOCAL POINT FOR SOME NEW COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL USES

HOWEVER, AT TIMES, IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH THE NECESSARY “CRITICAL MASS” DEMANDED BY A “CENTER”, SOME ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES WERE COMPROMISED IN FAVOR OF APPROPRIATE CENTER BASED DEVELOPMENT.

IN SUMMARY, SUSSEX BOROUGH BOROUGH, IN THE YEAR 2030, WILL HAVE BECOME A COMMUNITY THAT ILLUSTRATES WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERM “SMART GROWTH” AND WILL SERVE AS THE MODEL FOR OTHER “CENTERS” IN THE RURAL PARTS OF NEW JERSEY.

4.2 THE LAND USE PLAN DISTRICTS

The 1975 Master Plan and the Land Use Plan Element of that document contained ten separate land use categories or districts. These ten districts were ultimately translated into ten distinct zoning districts and were adopted by the Borough Council. The Land Use Plan districts and the corresponding zoning district for each follows:

<u>LAND USE PLAN DISTRICT</u>	<u>ZONING DISTRICT CATEGORY</u>
• Low Density Residential	R-1
• Medium Density Residential	R-2
• High Density Residential	R-3
• Central Business District	C-1
• Redevelopment Area	C-2
• General Commercial	C-3
• Institutional	INST.
• Agriculture & Industry	A & I
• Industrial & Utility	LI & U
• Public & Semi Public	P

The above referenced Zoning Districts have remained essentially unchanged for nearly 35 years, with one exception. That exception involves a new zoning district – the Office Residential Zone - that was established in the early 1990’s. This district is located along East Main St. (Route 284) and encompasses an area that was previously zoned R-2. It should also be mentioned that during the last 35 years, there have also been some slight adjustments to some of the zoning district boundaries, such as the Institutional Zone, which was expanded slightly to allow for a limited expansion of St Clare’s Hospital. However, for the most part, the current Zoning Map is very consistent with the 1975 Land Use Plan Map and neither has changed much from when they were first adopted.

In formulating a new Land Use Plan Element and corresponding Land Use Plan Map – and ultimately a new zoning map – it is essential to determine how much of the existing Land Use Plan Map is still relevant and which parts may be outdated. Obviously, one of the primary resources used in connection with such a determination is the information derived from an existing land use analysis. In addition, any new information regarding environmental constraints, as well as any information regarding marketplace conditions and other issues that affect land use planning decisions, need to be factored into the equation.

In the case of Sussex Borough, there was a great deal of discussion, earlier in this document, about how the existing land use pattern of the Borough had changed since 1975, as well as where changes had not occurred. There was also discussion about the growth potential of the Borough and its role as a center. Finally, the planning policies of the state were considered, as well as the planning policies of Wantage Township, which surrounds Sussex Borough, were also evaluated.

After much discussion and debate, it was determined that the configurations of the three residential districts were still relevant, for the most part, but that some adjustments were warranted and a new residential zone (The Very Low Density Residential District) should be established. Furthermore, it was decided that the two industrial districts (Agriculture and Light Industry and Industrial & Utility) were obsolete and should be replaced. It was also determined that the three commercial zones needed to be updated, both in terms of their configurations and requirements, and that the Public & Semi Public Zone also needed some updating. Finally, given the proposed realignment of Route 23, it was decided that the zoning adjacent to what will be the new Route 23 Southbound lane, should be changed to reflect the new opportunities that the realignment will offer.

All of these changes are reflected on the new Land Use Plan Map, included herein as Exhibit 15 in Appendix C. The following descriptions clarify the nature and scope of each land use district as depicted on the 2009 Land Use Plan Map:

- **VERY LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

This district removes some properties that are currently located in the Low Density Residential District (R-1 Zone) and the Agriculture and Industry District (A&I Zone), and designates them as Very Low Density Residential because of the severe environmental constraints that exist at these locations. Only large lot residential development (3 acre minimum lot size requirement or greater) and agricultural related uses should be allowed in this district. Alternatively, some of this acreage could be set aside as permanent open space, if the funds are available to do so. Related to that point, the 1975 Master Plan indicated that a substantial area adjacent to Clove Brook, at the southern end of the Borough be set aside as permanent open space and this is one of the areas that has been designated as Very Low Residential.

- **LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

This district remains essentially the same as it was in the 1975 Master Plan. It includes the premier single family detached residential neighborhoods in the Borough. Some non residential, two family and multi family residential intrusions do exist in these areas but it is essential that these neighborhoods be protected from any further inappropriate intrusions. The minimum lot size requirement of 10,000 sq ft should continue to be the standard for this district.

It is anticipated that there will be some future infill development that occurs within these neighborhoods and such infill development, provided that it is limited to single family detached residential structures, should be encouraged. However, it is essential that any new structures be compatible with the traditional building styles that are predominant in these areas. Specifically, the front facades should include the architectural detail and features that are found on traditional residential structures. In particular, the front facades should not include garage doors that face the street. However, if garage doors are included as part of the front façade, they should be of a traditional design, be recessed and not be more than one car width wide.

Finally, consideration should be given to modifying or eliminating the home office / home occupation provision of this district, along with some or all of the conditional uses that are currently allowed. By doing so, the single family detached residential nature of this district will be strengthened.

- **MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

This district allows single family detached and two family residential structures and is essentially a transition district between the single family detached residential neighborhoods and the more intensively developed portions of the Borough. Many of the structures in this district are of a traditional design and any infill development should follow the same guidelines as suggested for the Low Density Residential District.

The permitted accessory and conditional uses should be less restrictive than suggested for the Low Density Residential neighborhoods, in order to better reflect the transitional nature of this district. Consideration should also be given to revising the minimum lot size requirements and the other dimensional requirements and also allowing three family structures, where appropriate, under specified conditions. This is especially true for the Medium Density Residential area that borders the southern portion of Route 23 (Hamburg Ave)

It should also be noted that an area in the vicinity of Harrison St. and Grant St., that had been designated as Low Density Residential on the 1975 Land Use Plan Map, is now included on the Land Use Plan Map herein as Medium Density Residential, which better reflects the existing land use pattern in this area.

- **HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL**

This district, despite its name, is only high density in relative terms. It is the highest density residential district in the Borough but, at 12 units per acre, it is not “high density” when compared to residential districts in other communities that allow densities that are double, triple or higher than what this district permits.

This district encompasses two large garden apartment developments and two smaller multi family complexes, all in the vicinity of Route 284. This district is fully developed, at or near the current allowed density.

It is conceivable that at some future date, some or all of the structures in this district might be the subject of redevelopment proposals. However, there are no prospects of any redevelopment proposals involving this district at the current time and no changes are recommended for this district.

- **THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT**

The Central Business District (The CBD) is a densely developed, mixed use district that contains a variety of commercial uses, as well as a scattering of multi family residential structures. It is physically located in the center of the Borough and it is also the “center” of the community..... and to a certain extent of the surrounding region as well.

In 1991 a study was done of The CBD and the adjoining commercial areas bordering Route 23, Route 284 and Route 639, which was adopted by the Borough Planning Board. A substantial portion of the contents of that study, despite the study’s age, are still relevant, although some of the material is admittedly somewhat outdated. However, many of the recommendations of the study have been implemented and the general approach, which serves as the foundation of the study, is still valid. That approach, devised by an organization known as the National Main Street Center, uses a four point program, which can be summarized as follows:

- * **ORGANIZATION**
- * **DESIGN**
- * **PROMOTION**
- * **ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING**

Very simply, a successful business district enhancement / revitalization program must start with an effective **organizational structure** that is capable of coordinating the necessary business district activities and programs. That organizational structure currently exists in the form of a cooperative arrangement between the business community and the Borough government.

The **design** aspect of the approach, simply involves enhancing the public and private components of the business district landscape. During the last 15 to 20 years, the Borough CBD has been enhanced by various public streetscape projects and also by a number of building façade improvement efforts.

The **promotional** activities related to the CBD have been sporadic and could be more comprehensive in nature but the foundation has been established for promoting the CBD and the adjoining business districts as a single entity

Finally, **economic restructuring** can take a variety of forms. Probably the best example of this type of activity, in the Borough, is the establishment of the Tri State Actors Theatre, which has added a new dimension to what the CBD can offer. The key to a successful business district, then, is encouraging a mix of uses, and adding to those uses, in order to create a “synergy” which is only possible in an intensively developed, mixed use environment. Very simply, a business district can almost be viewed as a “living” organism that is constantly changing and that change must include appropriate economic restructuring activities, otherwise the business district will ultimately stagnate and fail.

So, although this Master Plan document does not readopt the 1991 CBD Study, it is still valuable as a guide and should be utilized by both the public and private sectors accordingly until such time that a new study can be undertaken. In the meantime, this Master Plan reaffirms that the CBD is center of the Borough. Its historic character must be protected and the parking needs of existing and prospective businesses must be addressed. Included herein as Exhibit 16 in Appendix C is the Concept Plan for the CBD Core contained in the 1991 Study. This Plan illustrates a potential parking strategy, as well as other enhancement / revitalization features, some of which have been implemented and some of which are now outdated. Accompanying the Concept Plan in Appendix C are two lists that briefly describe the components of the Concept Plan. Additional comments about this Concept Plan and the CBD Study are contained in Section 6.8.

Another essential component will involve revisions to the zoning regulations for this district that will allow for more flexibility and better clarification with respect to parking requirements, building heights, allowed densities and the location of residential uses, while at the same time maintaining the historic integrity of this area and the ground level commercial activity that is so important to the future of the CBD and the community. Finally, the configuration of the CBD has been modified to better reflect existing conditions and to allow for appropriate future growth.

- **OFFICE – RESIDENTIAL**

This district was originally established in the early 1990’s and remains essentially unchanged on the Land Use Plan Map, in terms of its configuration. The original intent of this district was to encourage the redevelopment of this area, from a

medium density residential environment, to a more mixed use district which would include medical offices and support facilities related to the hospital complex located a short distance away. That transition has not occurred and it is not certain why it has not. Nevertheless, this Master Plan reaffirms and reestablishes this district, with the caveat that at the time of the next master plan reexamination report, the future of this district be evaluated in detail. At that time, the decision can be made as to whether or not the nature and scope of this district should remain as is or be changed in response to evolving marketplace conditions.

- **GENERAL COMMERCIAL**

This district, in the 1975 Master Plan and in the subsequent Borough zoning regulations, was envisioned as a retail commercial zone that would accommodate selected commercial activities that could not or should not be accommodated in the CBD. Given current marketplace conditions, however, and the future role of these outlying commercial areas, this Master Plan now envisions this district as a mixed use zone, which allows residential development under certain conditions and restructures the nature of the permitted uses list, to encourage retail and service commercial uses of a higher quality. The dimensional standards also need to be revised, including the possibility of increasing the allowed building height from two stories to three or even four stories, under certain conditions. The allowed residential density would be similar to what is permitted in the R-3 zone. Finally, it should be noted that the land area encompassed by this district has been increased by utilizing a portion of the area previously zoned A & I.

- **REDEVELOPMENT AREAS – A & B**

These two areas are located in the vicinity of the proposed relocation of Route 23 Southbound. The future development / redevelopment of these areas can either be controlled via one set of regulations or, alternatively, two sets of controls can be established – one for the area north of Brookside Ave and another set for the area south of it.

Depending on how this area is defined, the total acreage involved is between 25 and 30 acres. A substantial portion of this acreage is vacant or underutilized and the relocation of Route 23 will make it accessible in a way that it has not been in the past, thereby enhancing its development potential. Several existing structures in this area are nearing the end of their useful life and are candidates for redevelopment.

This area is envisioned as a mixed use area consisting of commercial and residential development. It will be designed as an extension of the CBD but will be complementary to the CBD, not in competition with it. The building styles are envisioned as being traditional in appearance but some design flexibility should

be allowed because this area is something of a “blank slate” and does not include a substantial number of historic structures as the CBD does.

In terms of residential development, the allowed density should be between 15 and 25 units per acre and buildings of up to 4 stories should be permitted. In fact, an argument can be made that given the valuable nature of this area in terms of future growth, no new structures of less than 3 or 4 stories should be permitted. This area might also be considered as a receiving area in connection with a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program, which is a standard planning tool that preserves acreage in one area as permanent open space and transfers the development rights of that acreage to where new development should be directed.

The methods to be used to control and guide development in this area require more investigation but essentially two distinct approaches are available – standard zoning or the designated redevelopment area process. The designated redevelopment area process has its pros and cons, as does standard zoning. However, given the unique nature of this area, its full value can probably be best realized by designating it as an “area in need of redevelopment” If this route is followed, however, it will be essential to involve the public and any affected property owners right at the beginning of the process, so that there are no misunderstandings or preconceptions and so that the resulting redevelopment plan is truly representative of what the community wants this area to be in the future.

- **REDEVELOPMENT AREA – C**

This portion of the Borough, at the northern end of Route 23, also has some potential as a designated redevelopment area but only for residential purposes. Commercial uses should not be permitted. Some of this area does include environmentally constrained acreage and that acreage would probably be designated as permanent open space in connection with any redevelopment plan. The primary asset of this area is its view of Clove Lake and any redevelopment plan would obviously make full use of that asset. This area is envisioned as accommodating multi family structures of two, three and four stories and the allowed density should be similar to what is allowed in the R-3 Zone. The design of any new structures should be respectful of the Victorian era structures that exist in the surrounding neighborhood.

- **INSTITUTIONAL**

This district encompasses the St Clare’s Hospital complex, including the parking area associated with that facility. The configuration of this district remains unchanged. However, some revisions and clarifications are needed in connection with some of the standards associated with this district, especially with respect to permitted uses, building height and parking requirements.

Clearly, St. Clare's is an important component of the Borough landscape, providing easy access to medical services and care. However, it is located in the middle of one of the Borough's single family residential neighborhoods. Consequently, any future expansion or redevelopment of this site must be done carefully, so as not to negatively affect the neighborhood.

- **PUBLIC – SEMI PUBLIC**

This district was originally established to include a number of public uses existing in the Borough at the time of the 1975 Master Plan. This Master Plan continues that original role but builds on it and expands it. Specifically, a number of publicly owned properties have been added to this district and so have a number of semi-public uses (churches, private schools etc). In addition, this district includes several residential properties, because they are located in close proximity to one or more of the aforementioned public or semi public uses. Excluding them from this district would have created a "spot zoning" situation and unnecessarily fragmented the configuration of the Public – Semi Public Zone. Given the change in the configuration and scope of this district, it will be necessary to revise certain standards that pertain to permitted uses and the dimensional requirements associated with each. To the greatest extent possible those standards should reflect existing conditions. Specifically, residential uses in this district should continue to remain as permitted uses, rather than be made non conforming.

4.3 SUMMARY AND RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

In summary, this Land Use Plan Element has used as its foundation the 1975 Borough Master Plan. However, changing conditions related to the land use pattern of the Borough, environmental regulations and the demands of the marketplace, plus the establishment of a detailed set of goals and objectives to guide the planning decisions of the Borough, have resulted in significant modifications to the planning policies established by the 1975 Master Plan. This document then stands on its own but recognizes the pioneering work that was done in compiling its predecessor and the influence that the 1975 Master Plan has had on what Sussex Borough is today.

It is also a document that is consistent with the NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan as well as the Sussex County Strategic Growth Plan. Furthermore, nothing in this plan element is inconsistent with the planning policies of the Borough's neighbor, Wantage Township, although it may be necessary for the two municipalities to make some minor adjustments in their regulatory standards in order to be fully consistent along portions of their common boundary.

5.0 THE RECYLCING PLAN ELEMENT

Sussex Borough has an active recycling program that is governed by a municipal ordinance that is consistent with the current New Jersey policies regarding recycling. That ordinance was adopted in 2009 and is identified as Ordinance # 2009 - 01. It replaces an earlier set of regulations, which comprehensively governed garbage removal and recycling within the Borough. In effect, Ordinance # 2009 -01 amends Chapter 15 of the Revised General Ordinances of the Borough and clearly defines the areas of responsibility and authority.

The recycling regulations are divided into a number of sections as follows:

- A definitions section
- Regulations regarding refuse receptacles
- Standards regarding preparation and collection of refuse
- Residential and non residential garbage collection requirements
- Requirements pertaining to the disposal of refuse
- Source separation standards and exemptions
- Procedures related to the collection of recyclables
- Residential and non residential compliance requirements
- The prohibition of solid waste that is mixed with recyclables
- Enforcement provisions
- Violation fines
- Private recycling plan requirements.

With respect to a more detailed explanation of some of the above referenced bullet points, The definitions section, among other things, establishes various classes of recyclables. Furthermore, with respect to enforcement, a number of municipal officials are given the authority to enforce the provisions of the ordinance. Also, violators can be fined from \$ 50 to \$ 1,000 per day, per occurrence. Finally, certain development applications seeking approval from the municipality are required to include as part of the application a detailed recycling plan.

In summary, this Recycling Plan Element serves as the basis for the Borough's recycling requirements and regulations which, as already noted, are consistent with the recycling policies of the State of New Jersey.

6.0 OTHER MASTER PLAN POLICIES AND FUTURE PLANNING EFFORTS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This Master Plan does not include all of the master plan elements listed in 40:55D-28 of the NJ Municipal Land Use Law. According to that statute, the required elements of a master plan are: 1) “A statement of objectives, principles, assumptions.....upon which the constituent proposals.....of the municipality are based.” 2) “A land use plan element.....showing the existing and proposed location, extent and intensity of development of land to be used in the future for varying types of residential, commercial, industrial.....and other public and private uses.....” Municipalities are also required to include in their master plans, a housing plan and fair share plan element as per the New Jersey Fair Housing Act. All other master plan elements listed in 40:55D-28 are optional and this master only includes the required elements. However, in constructing the Land Use Plan Element contained in this document and the Vision Statement, as well as the Goals and Objectives upon which the Land Use Plan is based, it became clear that it would be advisable to also include herein some clarifying language about other issues and policies related to the future of Sussex Borough. So, even though the following material cannot be classified as separate master plan “elements”, the information provided helps to clarify the various planning policies of the municipality, as those policies relate to and supplement the material contained in the Land Use Plan Element.

6.2 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

The Borough has several recreation facilities and some dedicated open space areas within the Borough limits, as previously described in Section 2.0, and several outside of the Borough limits in Wantage Township. Some of these recreation facilities need to be upgraded to meet the needs of the Borough population and the Borough should consider setting aside some additional dedicated open space, as described in Section 4.0. In addition, there is the opportunity to develop biking and pedestrian trails in portions of the Borough that can add to the recreational opportunities that currently exist. Further study is needed to provide the specifics regarding all of these recommendations which would be included in an Open Space and Recreation Plan Element, which would be adopted as part of this Master Plan

6.3 TRAFFIC CIRCULATION, PARKING AND THE PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

As previously noted in Section 2.0, the future relocation of Route 23 is currently in the design phase and a construction date of 2012 has been established by NJDOT. The current alignment of Route 23 from the Borough’s southern boundary to its intersection with Route 284 will become northbound only. The southbound route will follow the current alignment of Walling Ave and the extension of that alignment south into Wantage. This Master Plan supports and is in agreement with that project and various components contained in the Land Use Plan Element are dependent on the completion of that project.

In addition to the Route 23 project, this Master Plan supports other projects being considered or under construction which are intended to increase the parking availability in and around the Borough's business districts. In particular, a number of the parking lot proposals contained in the Borough's CBD Study, prepared in 1991, are still valid and with some updating should continue to be pursued. The Borough should reconsider some of its parking standards and should also investigate how shared parking, parking enforcement tactics and other parking measures – such as the establishment of a parking improvement district - can maximize the effectiveness of those parking spaces that are available for public use. Finally, the Borough's sidewalk network needs to be expanded and kept in good repair, so that the “walkability” potential of the Borough can be fully realized. All of these recommendations require further study, which would be included in a Traffic and Circulation Plan Element, which would be adopted as part of this Master Plan.

6.4 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Borough contains a number of historic structures that are worth preserving and protecting and which contribute to the unique character of the Borough. This Master Plan supports the continued efforts to protect the Borough's historic resources, where possible and where appropriate. New construction should be consistent with the existing architectural styles in the Borough but it also needs to be recognized that new construction cannot and should not attempt to replicate building styles that were commonplace 75 or 100 years ago. It is recommended that the Borough undertake a detailed investigation of its historic resources and also consider establishing a Historic Preservation Commission, as authorized by state statute. Furthermore a historic preservation strategy should be developed for the Borough that would be incorporated into a Historic Preservation Plan Element which would be adopted as part of this Master Plan.

6.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The continuing efforts to upgrade the Borough's business areas, in particular the CBD and the area in the vicinity of Walling Ave, are vital to the well being of the community as a whole. However, those efforts must be based in reality and must take into consideration the changing conditions of the “marketplace”. Those changing conditions have resulted in the Land Use Plan Element of this Master Plan eliminating the two industrial zones that have existed in the Borough for many years. The Land Use Plan also envisions the development of new mixed use developments that can strengthen the Borough's role as a “center”. It is anticipated that the number of jobs in the Borough will increase as a result of this new development, with many of the jobs being of a service oriented nature but with others being more “high tech” and higher paying. This will require some creative thinking on the part of the Borough and developers alike and will necessitate the adaptive reuse of some existing structures. The 1991 CBD Study contained a number of ideas to pursue in that regard and many of them are still valid as they pertain to the CBD in particular.

Some examples of ideas and activities, related to the previous statement, to be pursued include such possibilities as: 1) The encouragement of Bed and Breakfast operations in certain parts of the Borough, 2) Recruiting new retail and office uses, for areas adjacent to the CBD, that won't have a negative effect on the viability of the CBD, 3) The initiation of discussions with officials of St Clare's Hospital about how that "economic engine" can play an even more important role in terms of the economic vitality of the community. and 4) Finally, if the Sussex Wantage Board of Education begins to consider the possibility of constructing a new school to replace the Sussex Middle School, the Borough should be included in that decision making process, so that planning for the adaptive reuse of the Sussex Middle School property can begin as soon as possible.

6.6 HOUSING

The Borough, concurrently with this Master Plan effort, has been preparing a Housing Plan and Fair Share Plan that will comply with the requirements of the NJ Council On Affordable Housing (COAH). Due to a number of factors, including COAH's changing rules and regulations and litigation related to those rules and regulations, it was decided to delay the completion of the Housing Plan temporarily. However, the analysis contained in the initial draft of the Housing Plan indicates that the Borough's obligation is not substantial (there is no prior round obligation to be addressed) and the Borough has already met part of its growth share obligation because of two existing group homes in the community. The Borough fully intends to complete the Housing Plan and Fair Share Plan and petition COAH for substantive certification in the near future. Once the Housing Plan is completed it will be adopted as part of this Master Plan. As a final note, in terms of the Borough's overall housing strategy, home ownership should be encouraged to the greatest extent possible. Currently the ratio of renters to home owners is heavily skewed in the direction of renters. A goal of a 50/50 split is not unreasonable to pursue in this regard.

6.7 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

In 2005 the Borough prepared and adopted a Municipal Stormwater Management Plan. The plan establishes the stormwater policies and regulations related to the control of stormwater in the Borough and includes the following goals:

- *Reduce flood damage*
- *Minimize the increase in stormwater runoff*
- *Reduce soil erosion*
- *Assure the adequacy of drainage structures*
- *Maintain groundwater recharge*
- *Prevent an increase in nonpoint pollution*
- *Maintain the integrity of stream channels*
- *Minimize pollutants in stormwater runoff*
- *Properly design and operate stormwater basins*

Based on the aforementioned goals, the Plan established standards that new development must meet with respect to groundwater recharge, water quality and the impacts associated with increases in the quantity of stormwater runoff. To the maximum extent practicable, these standards are to be met by incorporating nonstructural stormwater management strategies. The plan established operating and maintenance procedures related to existing and future stormwater facilities. In addition, the Plan included mitigation measures for projects that cannot meet the established stormwater management requirements.

The NJDEP established a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for total phosphorus in the Clove Acres Lake/Lakeshed and the Papakating Creek Watershed located within both Sussex Borough and Wantage Township. The intent of the TMDL is to identify all the contributors to surface water quality impacts and to set goals for load reductions for total phosphorous as necessary to meet the Surface Water Quality Standards. In response to the TMDL, the Wallkill River Watershed Management Group developed a Restoration and Protection Plan in 2008. The Plan identified several stormwater runoff related adverse impacts associated with development that predominately took place prior to the adoption of the NJDEP Stormwater Management Rules and Municipal Stormwater Management Plan. The following stormwater related nonpoint sources of total phosphorous were identified:

- *Streambank erosion*
- *Agricultural land erosion and drainage*
- *Undeveloped land erosion and drainage*
- *Improper/Overuse of both agricultural and residential fertilizer application*
- *Stormwater runoff from developed and undeveloped lands and roads*
- *Typical urban area sources*

In an effort to address these sources the restoration plan identified implementation projects and also recommends establishing advisory ‘Panels’. Initial implementation projects located within the Borough include: streambank stabilization and riparian restoration along Clove Brook; installation of stormwater treatment devices into existing catch basins; lakeside riparian restoration and stabilization along Clove Acres Lake and Debris removal along Clove Brook. The Borough should take an active role in forming these panels and should be adequately represented.

Considering the findings of the restoration plan and the urban/developed nature of the Borough, the Borough should consider implementing appropriate Tier A Municipal Stormwater General Permit requirements. Relevant Tier A municipal ordinances include: tree preservation/removal, fertilizer application formulation, geese control, pet waste, litter, improper disposal of waste and illicit connections. The Borough should continue its ongoing efforts to reduce sanitary sewer I&I, eliminate wastewater overflows, eliminate illicit connections, maintenance of municipally operated stormwater facilities, and street sweeping. In addition, the Borough should consider enhanced stormwater design standards for redevelopment projects.

In summary, this document, the 2009 Sussex Borough Master Plan, readopts the 2005 Stormwater Management Plan for the Borough, as updated and amended by the prior statements contained in this subsection.

6.8 MISCELLANEOUS FUTURE PLANNING EFFORTS

Among some additional future planning related tasks to consider, which would strengthen the Borough's planning policies and help the Borough achieve its vision of the future, are the following:

- **A Tree Study** – A comprehensive analysis of the Borough's tree resources should be undertaken, in conjunction with the Borough's shade Tree Commission, aimed at the ultimate goal of establishing a detailed tree protection and maintenance program for the community.
- **Sustainable Energy Efforts** – The Borough has begun the effort to investigate the feasibility of establishing solar and other renewable energy facilities in order to minimize the Borough's carbon footprint and head in the direction of a more sustainable future. Those efforts should be continued and expanded.
- **Sewer Capacity Documentation** – As already noted, the Borough has been involved in upgrading its sewer infrastructure. As the Borough continues this effort, it will be important to more definitively determine the additional sewer capacity that these efforts have produced, since the growth limits of the Borough will depend largely upon what sewage disposal capacity is available.
- **A Build Out Analysis** – A build out analysis was prepared several years ago but should be updated so that the numbers are more current and reflect the proposed zoning changes included herein.
- **A New Land Use Regulations Document** – This Master Plan essentially requires that a new set of land use regulations be devised for a significant part of the community. The current regulations are outdated and in some cases are contradictory and confusing. They obviously do not include the standards for any of the new zoning districts recommended herein or the suggested revisions to the existing districts
- **CBD Study** – As already noted, in 1991 the Planning board had adopted a comprehensive plan for the business areas of the community, with the primary focus being on the Central Business District area. That Study / Plan is nearly 20 years old and much of the material and recommendations in it are outdated. Consequently, it would not be advisable to simply readopt it, as part of this master plan, without appropriate changes. Unfortunately, an updating of that Plan was beyond the scope of this project. So, instead, this document has noted that a significant amount of the material in the 1991 Study / Plan should still be used as

a guide where it is still relevant. However, at the earliest possible date, the Borough should prepare a new study that will build on the contents of the 1991 effort and update it as needed.

This concludes the 2009 Sussex Borough Master Plan, which constitutes the established planning policies of the community, as amended and supplemented, by other studies and plans that may be prepared in the future in order to further clarify the Borough's land use related goals and objectives.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX C