

RURAL COMMUNITY

DESIGN GUIDE

Chester

County



A COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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RURAL COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE

CHESTER COUNTY

A COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

*The
first farmer
was the
first man,
and all
historic
nobility
rests on
possession
and use
of the land.*

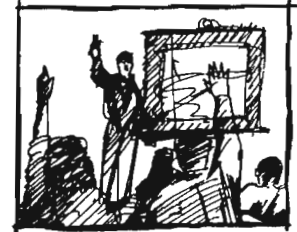
Ralph Waldo
Emerson
"Farming,"
Society and
Solitude

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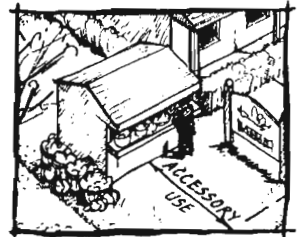
Purpose of design guide,
process of workshops,
design guide series.



PREFERENCES AND DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

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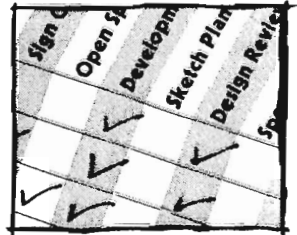
Selected visual preferences are described
with ratings, photographs, and sketches.



IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

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Tables offer tools for Municipal Officials to
implement design recommendations.



GLOSSARY

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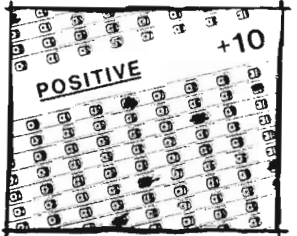
Definitions of key terms.

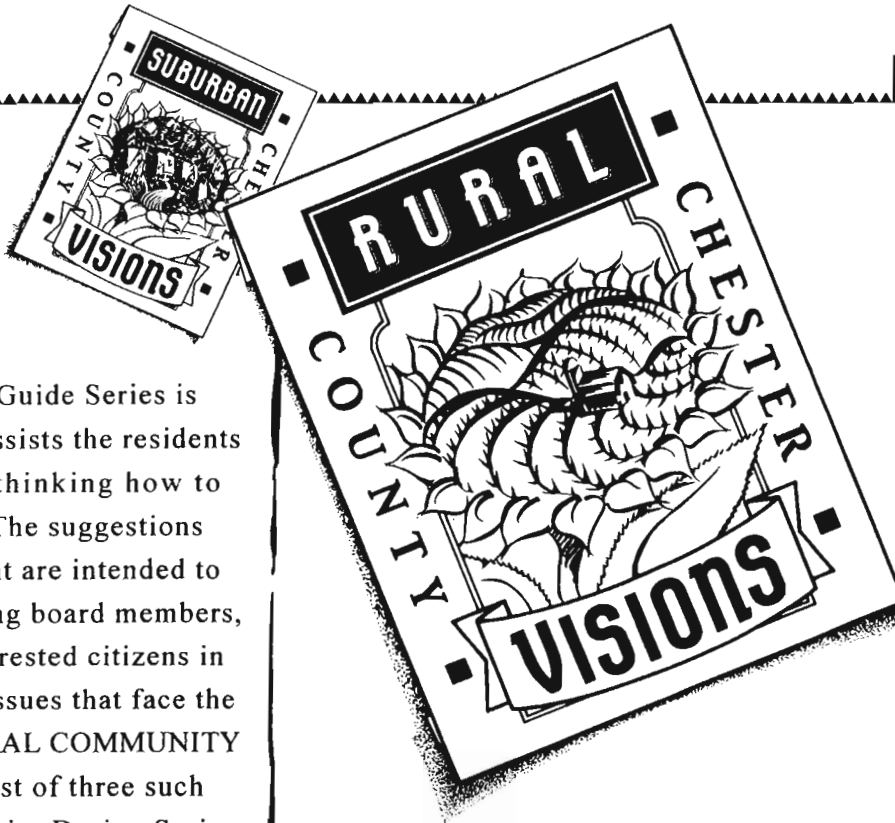


APPENDIX

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List of participants,
survey results,
slide images,
reference.





The Community Design Guide Series is part of a process that assists the residents of Chester County in rethinking how to plan our municipalities. The suggestions contained in this document are intended to assist landowners, planning board members, supervisors and other interested citizens in addressing development issues that face the rural community. The **RURAL COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE** is the first of three such documents in the Community Design Series. The series is a continuation of the planning effort initiated by the County Commissioners in 1992 with the successful Year 2000, Back to the Future. Equally important, the Design Guides serve as a component of the County Comprehensive Plan update to be completed in 1996.

PURPOSE

The Community Design Guides serve several useful purposes. First, they attempt to define the various community characteristics found in Chester County. The first document focuses on our rural character. Defining the term “rural” became a challenge as was discovered during the public participation process.

The Design Guide provides the mechanisms for preserving and enhancing those visual preferences that are positive and improving or correcting those images that are considered negative. The Design Guide serves as a planning instrument that can be used by elected officials, municipal planning officials, citizens’ groups and other organizations committed to maintaining the rural image of Chester County.

The Community Design Guide Series Is:

RURAL COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE



SUBURBAN COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE



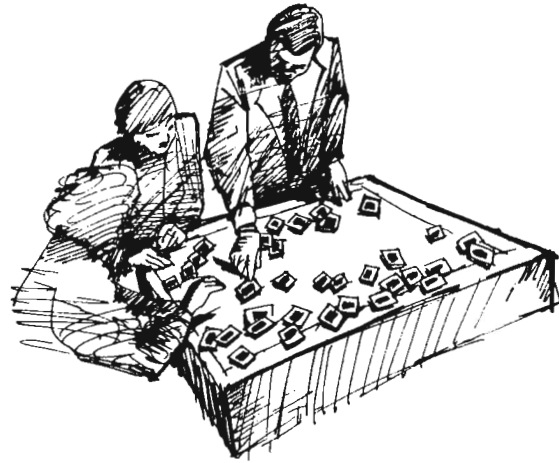
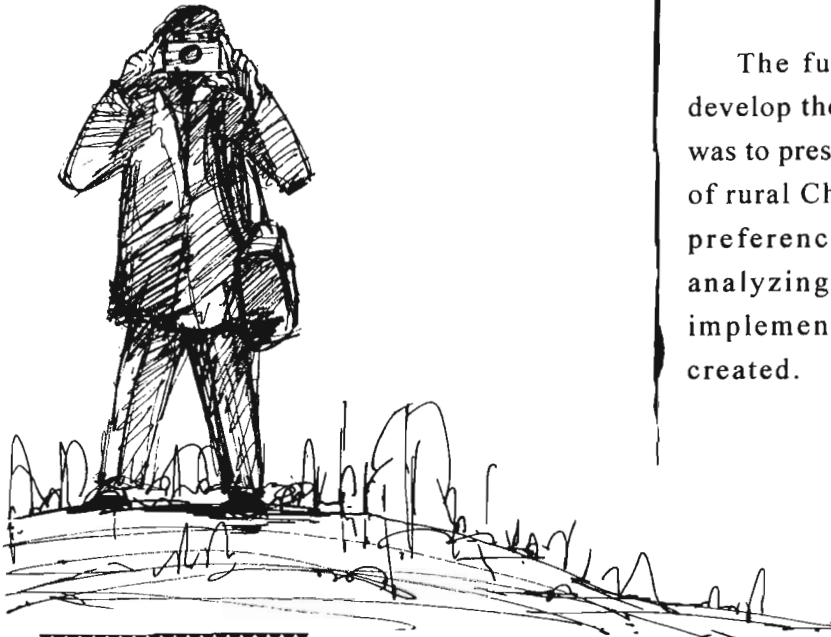
URBAN COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

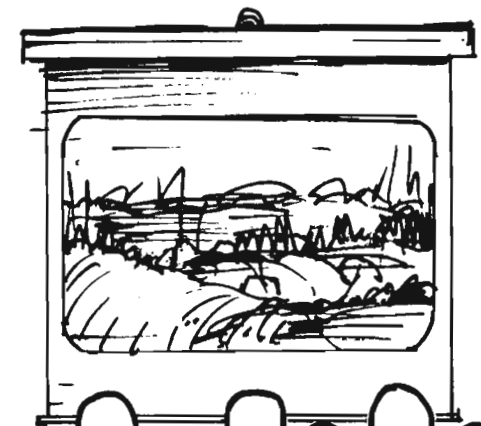
PROCESS

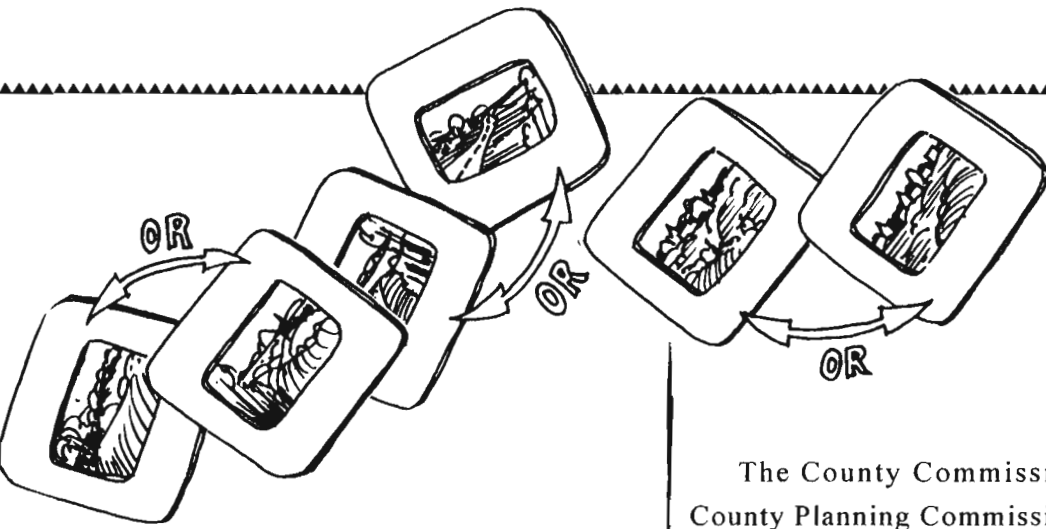
Visions for Rural Chester County was initiated by the County Commissioners with invitations sent to over 180 residents, representing the rural portion of the County, and asking them to participate in two workshops. Those individuals who desired to contribute returned an acceptance card and made suggestions for issues that deserved discussion. This process developed the working group and set in motion the remainder of the program.



The fundamental approach used to develop the Rural Community Design Guide was to present slide images to representatives of rural Chester County and record their preferences for visual images. After analyzing the preferences, design and implementation recommendations were created.

The Chester County Planning Commission staff took photographs of the issues affecting the physical environment. A series of 160 slide images was produced for the first workshop entitled Rural Vision Survey. Over 70 people attended the workshops in February, 1994, held at the Brandywine Hospital School of Nursing facility and the Unionville Senior High School. Participants ranked each slide image numerically based on preference, appropriateness for Chester County and general impressions on the content of the slide image.





The same participants assembled in March 1994 for the second workshop entitled Rural Visions Evaluation to view a selection of the slides. The attendees were asked to identify the specific components of the slide images that compelled them to rate the slide as they did. Average scores were provided for each of the selected slides as a means of stimulating discussion. The Chester County Planning Commission staff recorded the extensive conversation offered by the participants.

The County Commissioners and the County Planning Commission would like to thank the participants for contributing their time and knowledge for the benefit of our community. Without your efforts, this document would not be possible.



The RURAL COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE is the product of the considerable effort extended by the participants to articulate issues and preferences for rural

Chester County



Chester County. This guide is to be used by a variety of decision makers. It is also an information source for *Landscapes*, the new County Comprehensive Plan.

The RURAL COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE will be distributed to all workshop participants, elected and appointed officials in rural municipalities, other agencies involved with rural Chester County and those interested in securing the rural quality of life in the County.

INTRODUCTION



FORMAT

All three Community Design Guides will have a similar format with adjustments made to accommodate each community type. A selected group of the slide images used in the Rural Visions Evaluation is included along with the preference rating. A brief description of the salient issues accompanies the image. Both negative and positive images are discussed with the focus on preserving the characteristics of the positive images and offering corrective measures to improve the negative images.



The RURAL COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE addresses:

- ◆ The issues expressed by the Rural Community representatives.
- ◆ The positive elements of the images.
- ◆ Techniques suggested to improve the negative elements.
- ◆ Recommendations for improving or enhancing rural design.
- ◆ Design examples to convey desired design components.
- ◆ Discussion of potential relationships among a variety of rural designs.
- ◆ Suggestions for implementing the vision for rural Chester County.



The body of the Community Design Guide is supported by a Glossary. The

Glossary contains not only definitions of key words and terms, but examples of rural design tools for enhancing the rural image of the County. Words that appear underlined and in italics notify the reader that a design option is available and can be found in the Glossary.

An appendix is included and provides the names of those who participated in the Rural Visions Workshops, highlights of the Observations of Preferences and Negative Perceptions, the participants' response to a 20-question survey, a copy of the Visual Preference form used to develop the rural visions; and a bibliography/additional references list.

IMPLEMENTING THE PREFERRED DESIGN FEATURES

The RURAL COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE reflects the preferences of the rural community. The purpose of recording the preferences into a Design Guide is to assist municipalities in retaining desired preferences and adding newly articulated design features.

Municipalities may need to take additional steps to ensure that preferred design features are established. The following is a suggested list of steps that may need to be taken:

1. Careful identification of what is worth protecting.

Whether it is a street tree protection ordinance or a scenic viewshed, an essential first step is to carefully identify what the community wants to protect.

2. Careful tailoring to fit local circumstances.

Municipalities need to be careful to tailor ordinances that make sense for their community. Municipal officials need to also work with the public, professionals, and business interests to determine what is appropriate and desired for the community. Economic impacts need to be addressed and incentives considered where applicable.

3. Explicit, detailed review standards.

Ordinances should give sufficient guidance to those using them. For example, the phrase “new construction must be compatible with existing development” may appear in an ordinance. More guidance should be given to define “compatibility” in terms of height, bulk, materials, roof pitch and similar considerations.



INTRODUCTION

4. Municipal officials need adequate resources.

Many municipalities in the rural community do not have a full-time staff to research and create design standards. Outside help, either through technical assistance or design documents, should be obtained by municipal officials when creating design review standards.

5. Visual aids and illustrated guidebooks.

Municipalities should prepare succinct summaries that provide a quick overview of the aesthetic regulatory process, how it works, what the key points are, and other practical pointers that are difficult to glean from reading an ordinance. Written review standards should be illustrated, to make clear what the community desires.

6. Integration with other planning goals and regulations.

Care should be taken to carefully coordinate new regulations among other municipal ordinances. For example, a tree protection ordinance may be ineffective unless pre-development site clearing activities are regulated.

*This document should be used as a source of information to direct municipal officials to the ordinance, plan or process that needs to be updated. The intent of the **RURAL COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE** is to ensure that new development is compatible with the existing character of the community and the overall quality of life is improved.*

RURAL ROAD NETWORK

These roads exemplify what participants define as rural Chester County.



Image Evaluation +7.36



Image Evaluation +7.27

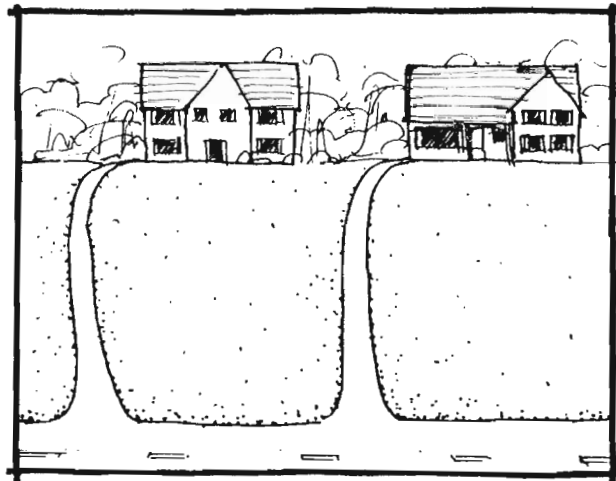
These images were some of the most highly rated slides. They are typical roads in rural Chester County. Two-lane roads permeate the landscape over rolling hills and meadows. The roads are narrow but accommodate the expected traffic. Other roads in the rural landscape should be designated with a higher functional classification and designed accordingly to accommodate higher volumes of vehicular traffic. This helps roads such as these to be preserved by placing traffic on other roads more appropriately designated to accommodate increased traffic volumes.

Survey participants indicated that they liked these roads because they are more aesthetically pleasing to drive on and exemplified what they defined as rural Chester County. The road edges are lined with trees, walls, hedgerows and what seems to be endless fences. Items such as street trees and hedgerows should be preserved on existing roads and encouraged along new roads.

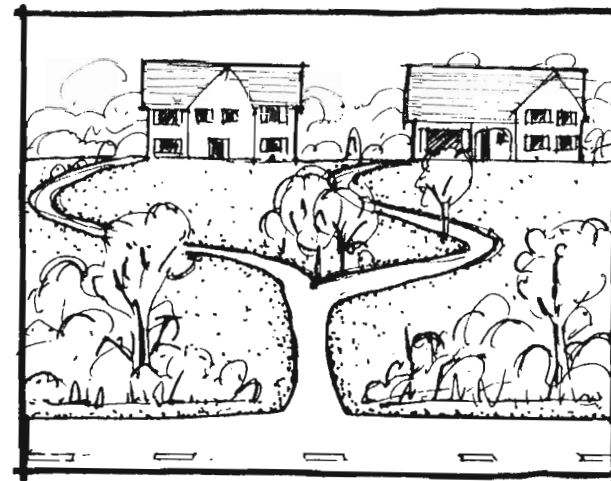
The only negative aspect identified is the utility lines. Future utility lines should be placed underground and within the right-of-way wherever possible. Utility providers and communities should

METHODS OF
PROTECTING THE
CHARACTER OF
RURAL ROADS

work together to create a plan that would place existing utility lines underground. Communities should work with utility companies to effectively prune trees. Often utility providers cut down or remove more of a tree than is necessary.

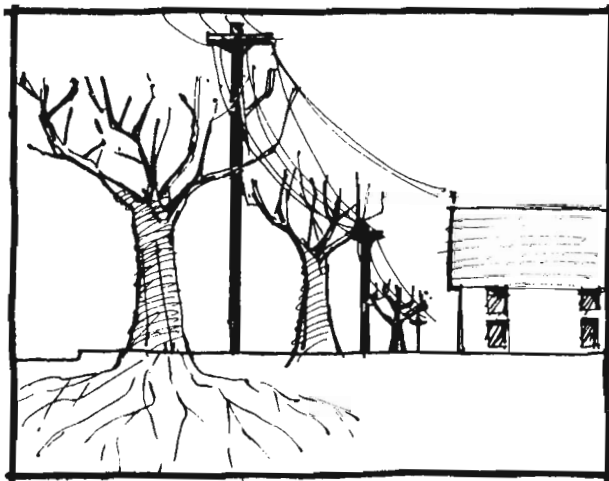


Undesirable

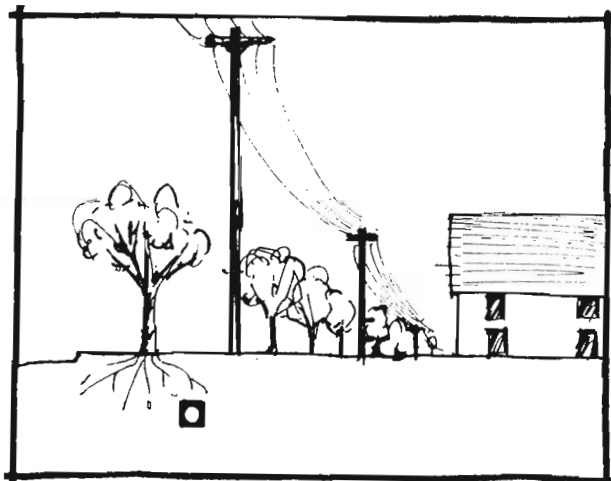


Desirable

Driveways for residential uses can be combined to minimize access points on rural roads.



Undesirable



Desirable

Trees and utility lines can coexist through careful pruning, tunneling instead of trenching, and matching the height of street trees at maturity to their planting locations.

- ◆ Preserve road edges.
- ◆ Develop standards for rural roads.
- ◆ Accommodate vehicular traffic on other roads with higher *functional classification*.
- ◆ Retain and protect *trees, walls and hedgerows*.
- ◆ Enhance rural appearances using strongly identifiable rural images.

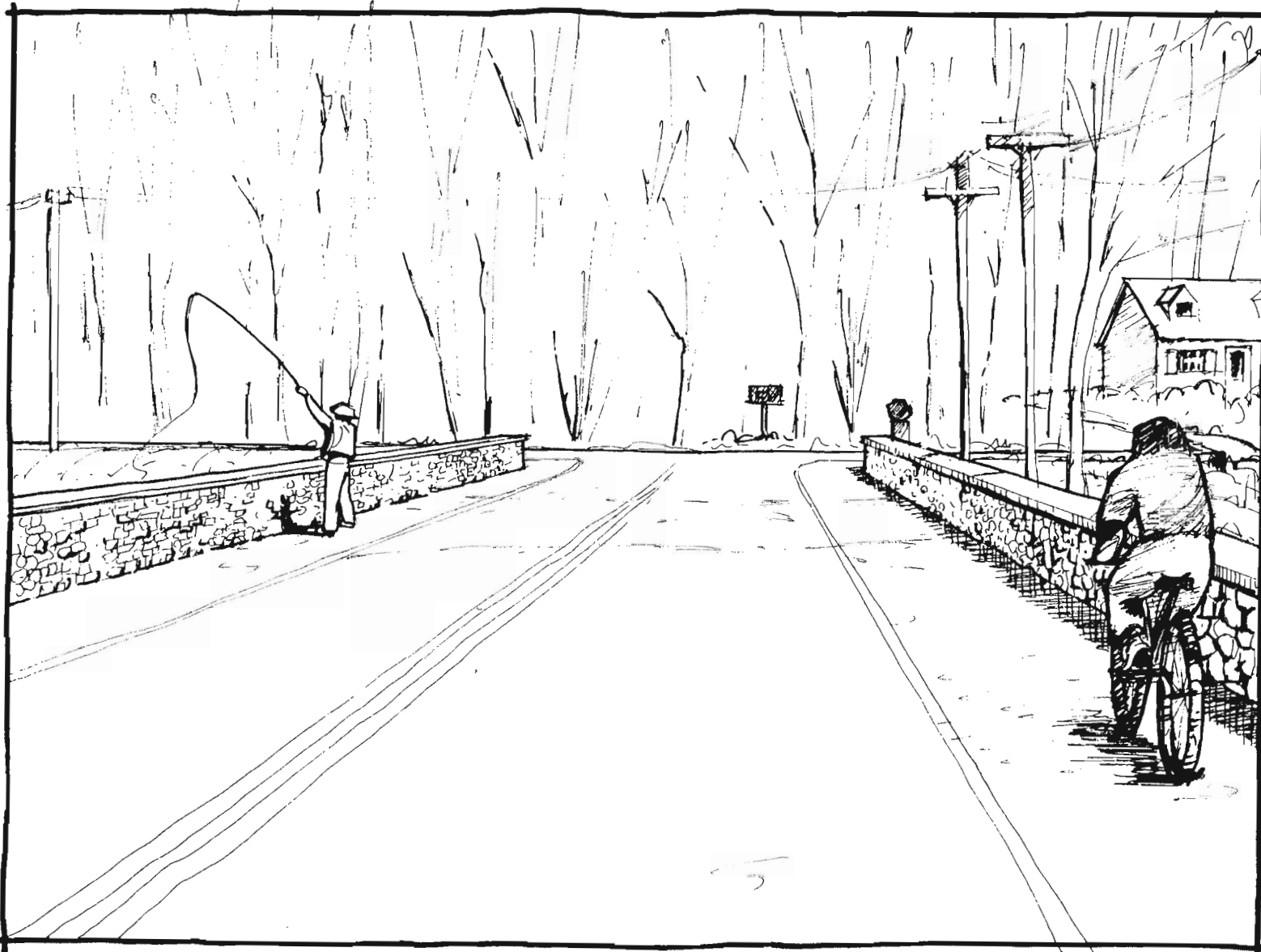
***Residents
have
accepted
bridges
as having
a place
in rural
Chester
County.***



Image Evaluation +2.13

This bridge received a positive rating from the participants. The rating was positive because the visual image was not as bad as some other bridges that the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) has constructed. Residents in the rural area have accepted bridges such as this one as necessary and having a place in rural Chester County. On bridges similar to these, both PennDOT and the community should examine the future functional classification of the roads adjoining the bridge to determine the width of the bridge. Information concerning functional classification and other transportation issues can be found in the Circulation Handbook prepared by the Chester County Planning Commission.

RECOMMENDED
METHODS OF
IMPROVING
RURAL BRIDGES



- ◆ Use more aesthetically pleasing materials.
- ◆ Utilize materials that are rural in character.
- ◆ Add a bicycle or pedestrian lane in the shoulder area and provide the appropriate signs and pavement markings.*
- * Communities should coordinate their efforts with PennDOT on State owned bridges to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are permitted and can be safely provided.

Some alternative bridge designs can accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

ACCESSORY RURAL LAND USES

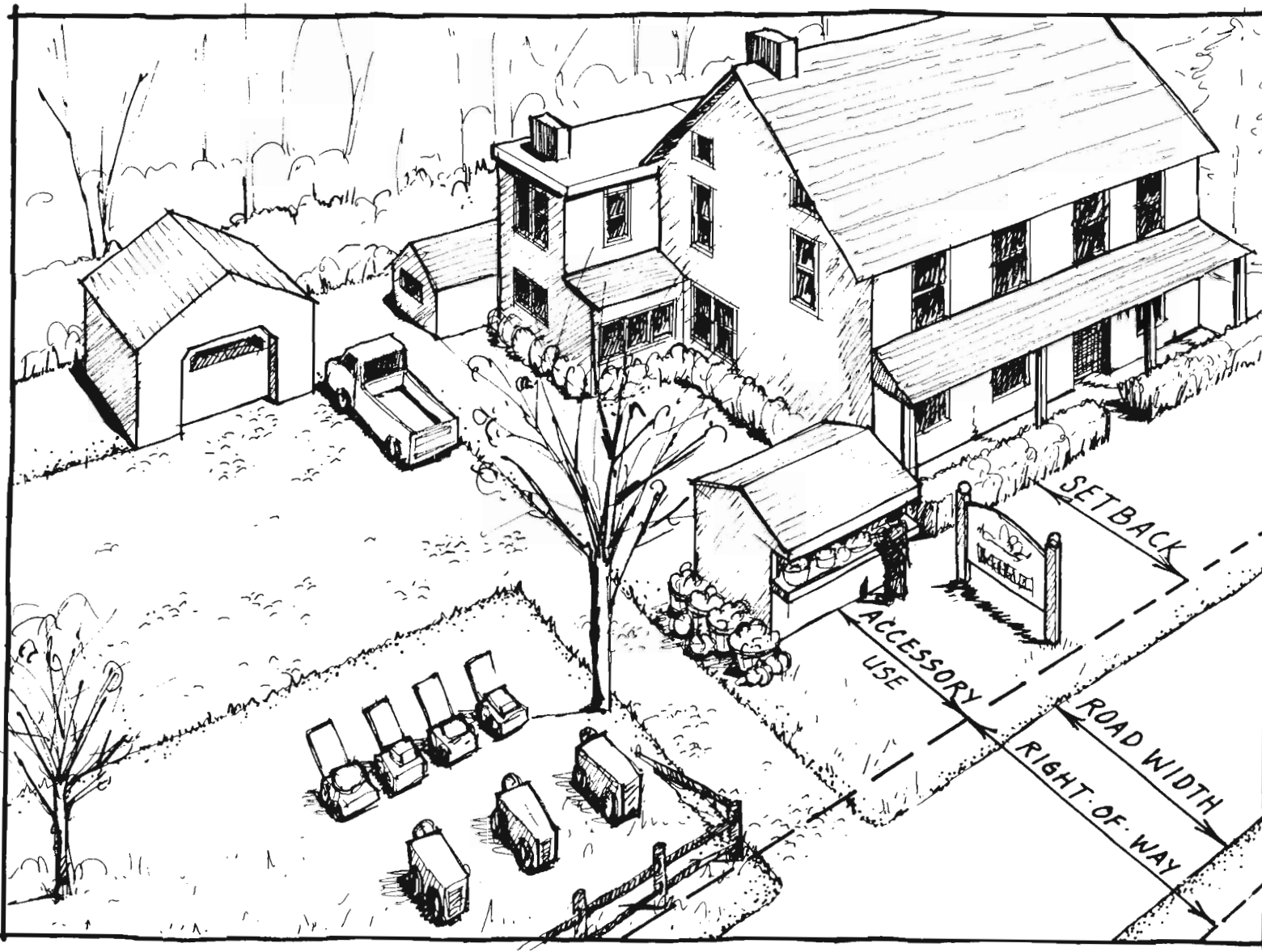
The multi-use farm industry that includes a roadside stand and farm implement dealership are endorsed by rural residents as a positive image.



Image Evaluation +4.44

The image of the farm house with accessory agricultural product sales epitomizes rural Chester County. The repetitive comment describing this image was, “it looks like a farm.” The multi-use farm industry that includes a roadside stand and farm implement dealership are endorsed by rural residents as a positive image. These uses are usually well maintained and allow farmers to supplement their income without having to sell the land. This retains the rural character of the land while preserving open space and farms. This image has the potential to be repeated throughout the rural landscape of Chester County. The use can occur in random rural locations or in a village or hamlet.

METHODS OF
IMPROVING
ACCESSORY USES



- ◆ Select *compatible accessory uses* for zoning districts.
- ◆ Provide adequate *setbacks* for accessory uses.
- ◆ Maintain similar *architectural styles* and building materials.
- ◆ Create *signs* that are rural in character and appropriately sized.
- ◆ Provide adequate parking and driveway facilities to provide safety for vehicles entering the site.
- ◆ Encourage rural accessory uses in plans and ordinances.
- ◆ Do not permit parking within the *right-of-way*.

Accessory uses are a positive image in the rural community.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

***Industrial
uses in
a rural
setting
may seem
inappropriate
but they
need to be
accommodated.***

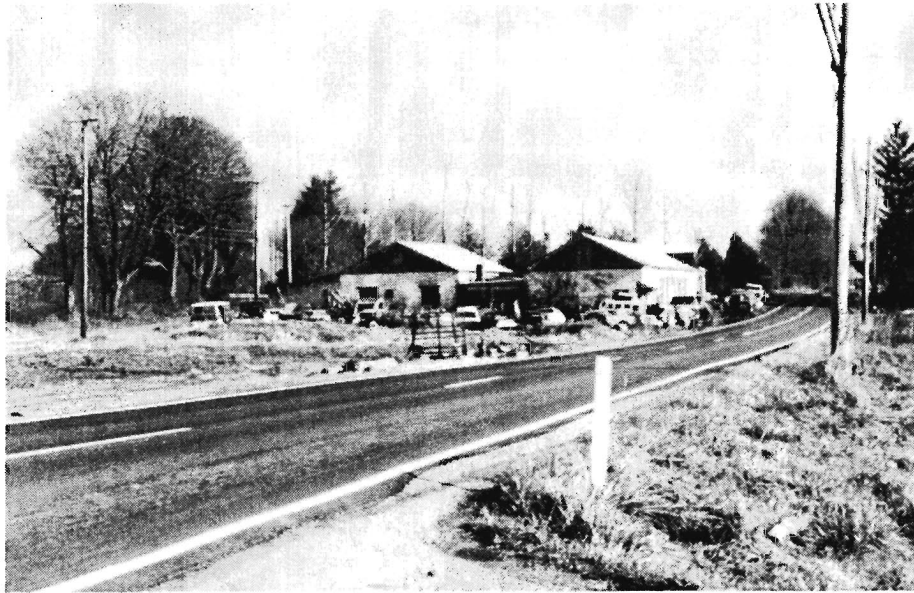
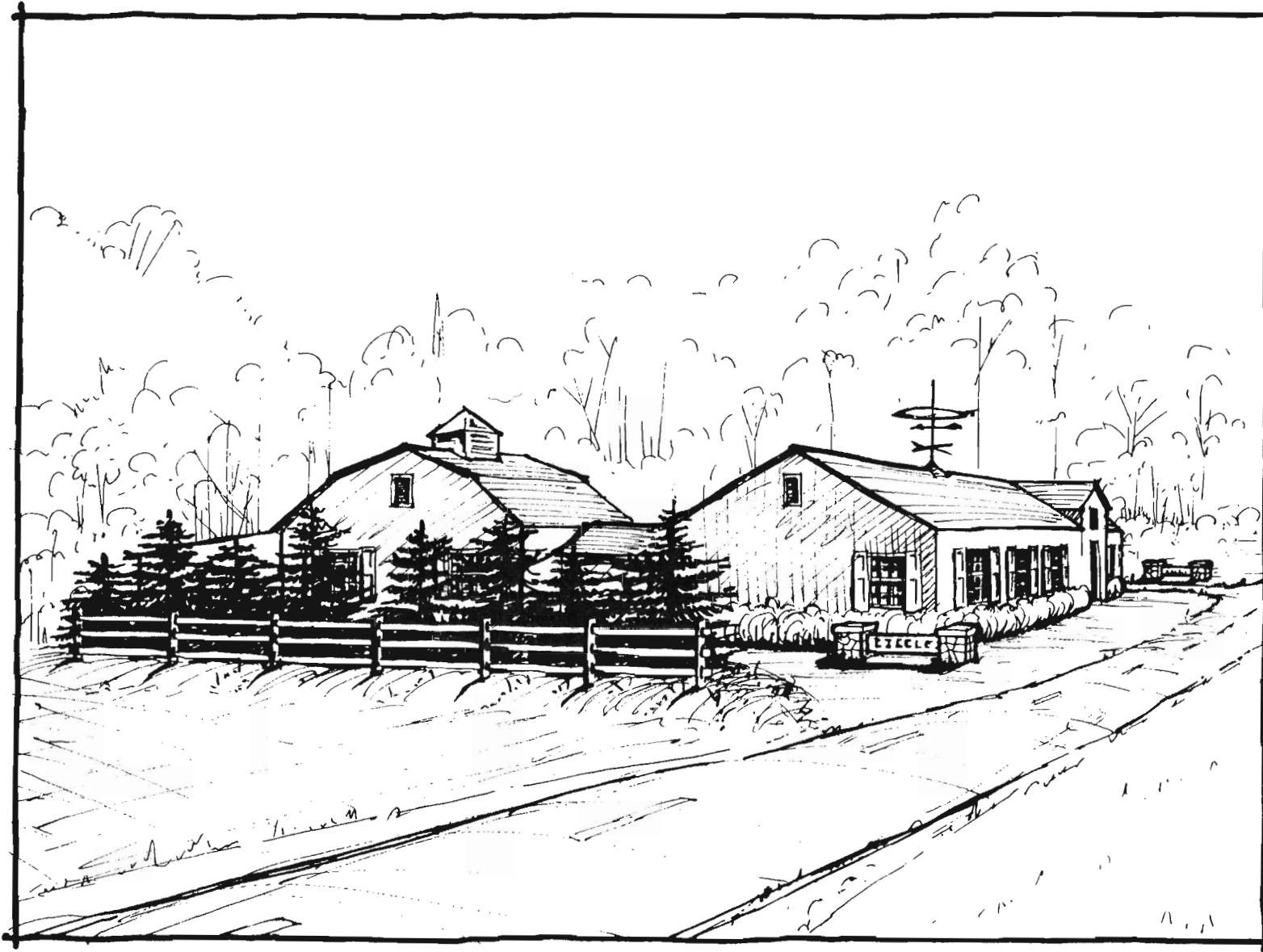


Image Evaluation -4.09

Industrial uses in a rural setting may seem inappropriate but they need to be accommodated. The participants rated this image poorly because of its unkempt appearance and suggested that it be “cleaned up.” Many participants expressed the notion that untidy land uses are not consistent with the rural ethic. Creating a visual barrier between the objects in the yard and the road was unanimously chosen as the way to accomplish this. Another method of enhancing the appearance of this site is to enforce ordinances that require objects to be kept out of the *right-of-way*. If the buildings looked more like a farm structure or had a rural theme then the uses would be more aesthetically acceptable. Utility lines in this image are unpleasant and suggestions were made to place them underground.

The presence of uses in the condition depicted also promotes *sprawl* or “leap frog” land development patterns. The uses do not make particularly good neighbors, so other development moves further down the road. This creates more demand for land in the rural landscape.

RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR
INDUSTRIAL USES
IN RURAL
LANDSCAPE



- ◆ Select locations for industrial uses based on criteria such as roads, land use relationships, and infrastructure.
- ◆ Require a raised earthen *berm*, *fencing*, *vegetation* or a combination of elements to *screen* the use from the road or other uses.
- ◆ Keep objects out of the legal *right-of-way*.
- ◆ Create deeper *setbacks* for industrial uses.
- ◆ Create criteria to encourage buildings to follow a rural architectural theme.
- ◆ Use *rural architectural features* to reduce the intrusion of industrial uses in the rural setting.
- ◆ Encourage building colors that complement the rural landscape.
- ◆ Place outside storage in the rear of industrial uses or *screen* them more aggressively.

A raised earthen berm with fences and vegetation can screen the industrial use.

Image Evaluation -6.39

**Municipalities
should
carefully
review their
zoning
ordinances
to manage
commercial
development.**



This rates as one of the most disliked images because it shows the results of design standards in zoning ordinances that permit strip commercial land uses, many of which are unrelated. Municipalities should carefully review their zoning ordinances along major roads so as not to create this image.

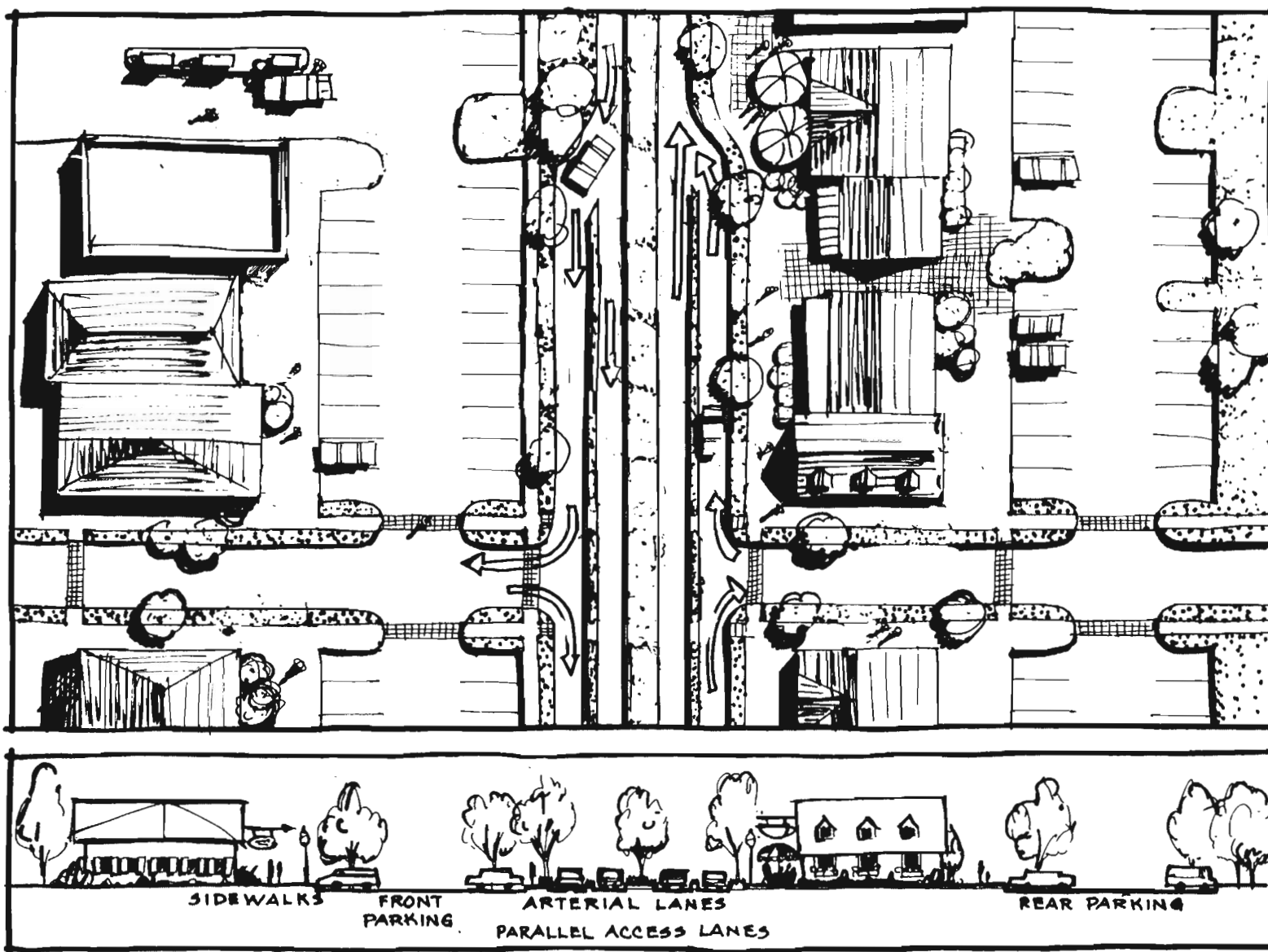
Innovative approaches, such as providing parking in the rear and reducing *setback* distances should be considered to create a *human scale*. *Incentives* should be provided to land owners that apply these innovative approaches. A human scale is created in the area in front of commercial uses when parking is placed in the rear of buildings and pedestrian orientation is emphasized. A human scale develops when individuals exist in an atmosphere in which they are comfortable and intimate with their physical surroundings. Villages are typically arranged in this manner.

TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVES

The volume of traffic causes a decline in the capacity of this road and too many access points create safety hazards. Unifying access points, or possibly, providing a *parallel access road* to accommodate traffic traveling to and from the commercial uses can increase the efficiency and capacity of the road and enhance safety. A parallel access road focuses turning movements to specific intersections. A continuous left-turn lane is more dangerous because it allows turning movements anywhere. Through-traffic benefits from dedicated *left-turn lanes* because turning vehicles are safely removed from the flow of traffic.

Parking for commercial uses can be provided in the rear of the building or in the area between the *right-of-way* line and the building setback line. The sketch shows an alternative to requiring parking to be placed at the back of buildings. Properly designed, parking can be accommodated in front of the stores with a *landscaped buffer* between the parking and access road. Sidewalks for pedestrians should be provided between adjacent commercial uses and to parking areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR
IMPROVING
CIRCULATION



- ◆ Determine the types of commercial land uses desired along the road network.
- ◆ Conduct an *access management study* for existing and new commercial areas.
- ◆ Unify access points and expand distance between them.
- ◆ Create a *parallel access road*.
- ◆ Provide parking with landscaped *buffers* in the rear or in front of buildings.
- ◆ Provide facilities for pedestrian circulation.

Parking areas can be placed in front of or at the rear of buildings. Access to the parking lots is via the parallel access road.



Image Evaluation -6.39

LAND USE INITIATIVES

Development shown in this image generally conforms to the existing zoning ordinance of a municipality. An access management plan or specific development strategy for the corridor is the suggested technique for managing commercial land uses. More forethought should be given to what occurs when land along a road is zoned for commercial development throughout its entire length and then develops to its fullest extent. Participants thought that this was a suburban image that is inappropriate for rural Chester County. Rapidly emerging development often produces negative images such as this one.

Zoning ordinances should be closely examined to determine if this type of development could occur. If it could happen, then zoning ordinances need to be revised and action plans need to be developed to manage such situations. Ordinances and action plans should consider innovative measures that create a theme for the area and provide appropriate standards for rural landscapes as alternatives to uniform standards.

One alternative to the long strips of commercial development is to create larger blocks. The town center concept uses less frontage and unifies the number of access points. An overall design for the roadscape should be created to coordinate access points and the internal road network of multiple undeveloped parcels.

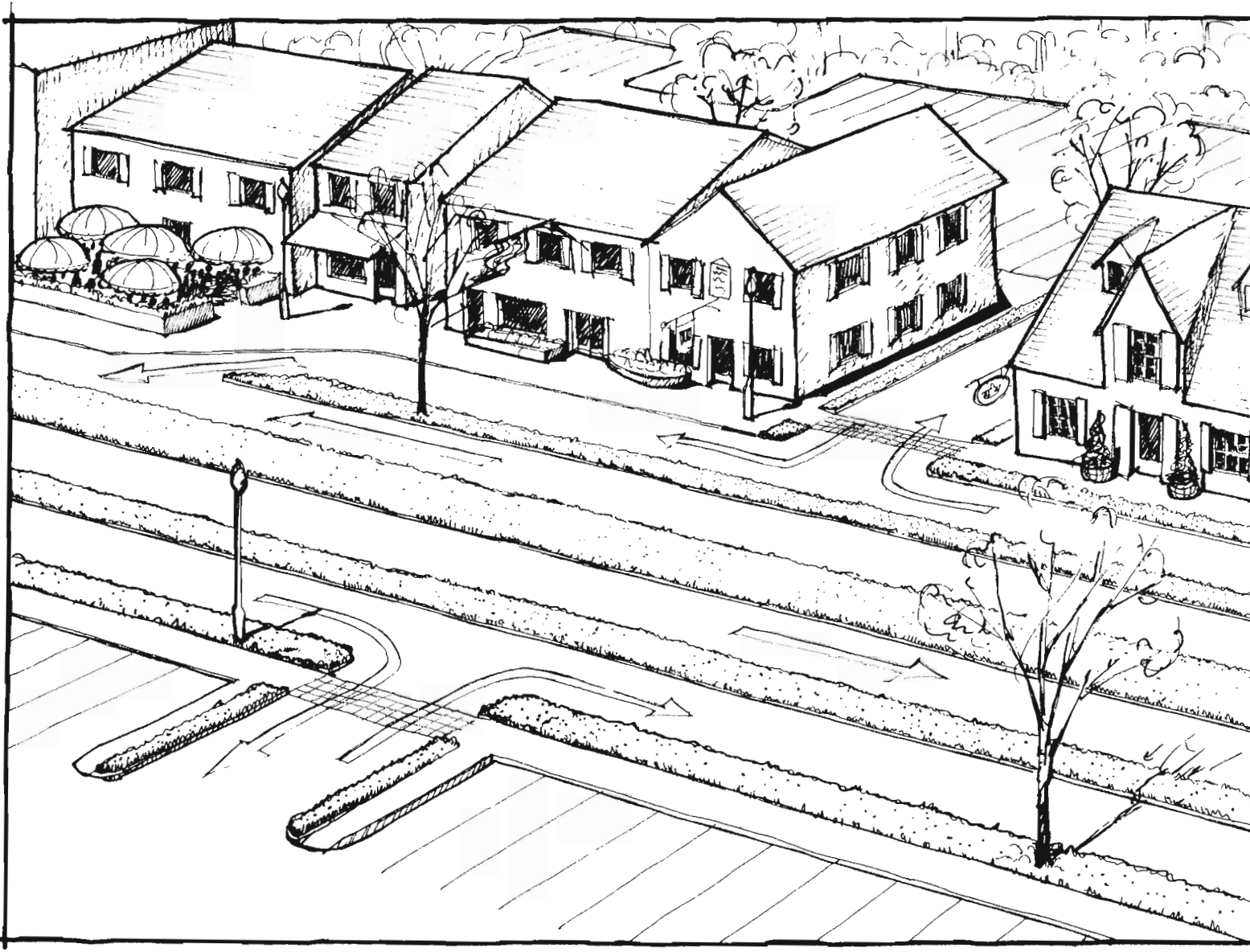
There is no compatibility among *architectural styles* or signage, no vegetation or pedestrian access. Utility lines cover the landscape. This type of development mandates the use of automobiles to reach any destination.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR IMPROVING

RURAL

IMAGES



- ◆ Create blocks of commercial areas instead of strips.
- ◆ Establish the maximum land area desired for commercial uses.
- ◆ Create an architectural or design theme unique to the community.
- ◆ Provide *incentives* such as density bonuses for those who incorporate complementary *architectural styles*.
- ◆ Design buildings which reflect a rural village character including compatible *roof lines* and facades.
- ◆ Add *street trees* and other forms of vegetation or landscaping to reduce the amount of *impervious surfaces* and *screen* negative images.
- ◆ Place utility lines underground.
- ◆ Amend ordinances that suggest a rural character by incorporating similar *sign colors, styles and materials*.

Clustered commercial development requires fewer access points which increases safety for vehicles and pedestrians.

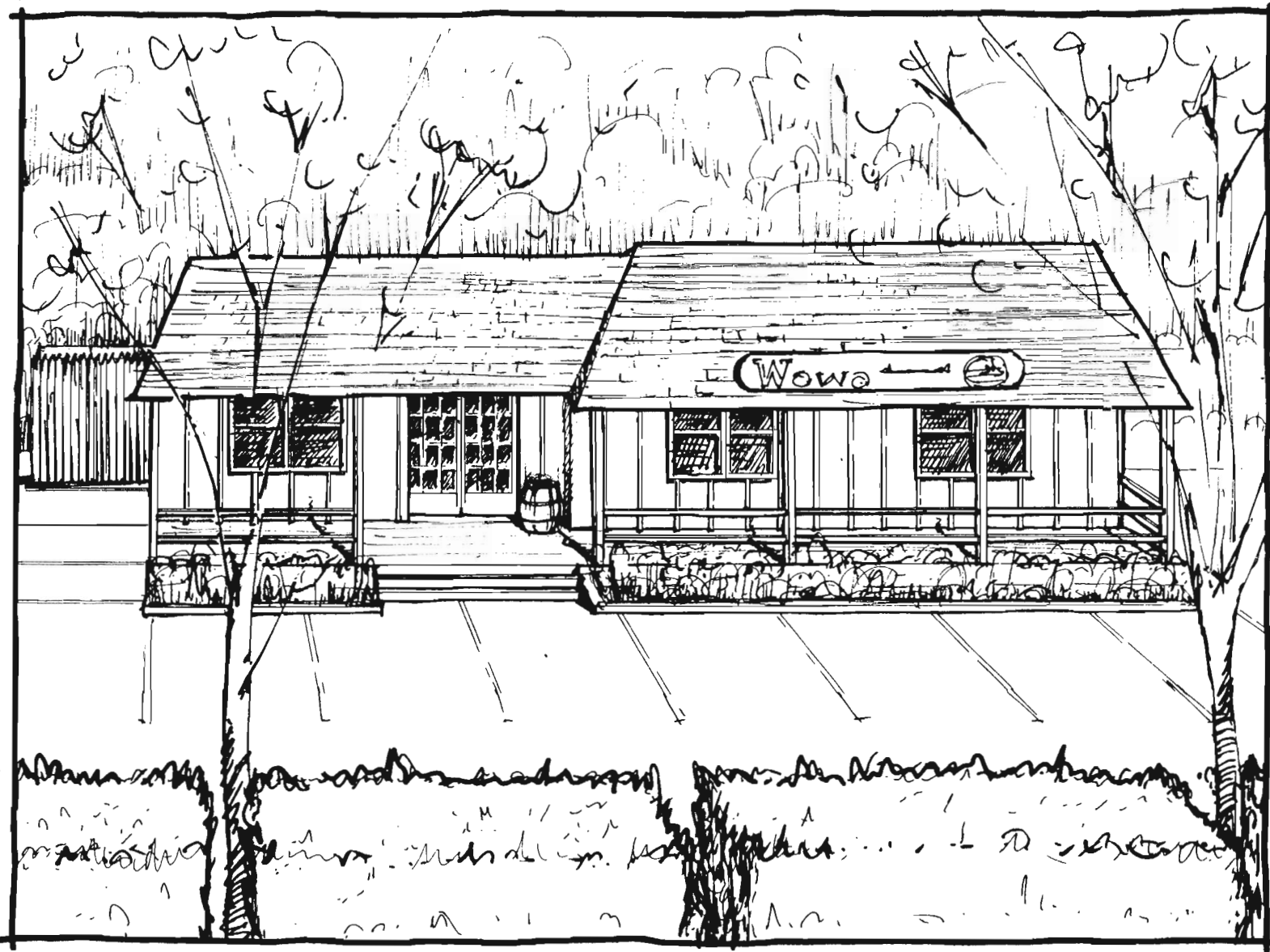
*This slightly
negative
rating
appears to
suggest that
the public
has accepted
convenience
stores as
the modern
version of the
general store.*



Image Evaluation -1.64

This image received a slightly negative rating. What this rating appears to suggest is that the rural public has accepted convenience stores as the modern version of the general store. Negative comments ranged from too many signs on the building to not enough landscaping. Even the ice machine was identified as a sign. The only *sign* that went through the land development approval process was the permanent store sign. Participants agreed that the ice machine should be contained within the structure. An alternative design would screen the machine at the side of the building. Properly designed, a convenience store is an appropriate use in a rural village.

METHODS OF
IMPROVING THE
IMAGE OF
COMMERCIAL
USES



- ◆ Limit and enforce the use and number of *temporary signs*.
- ◆ Require complementary accessory uses to be placed within the structure.
- ◆ Add landscaping between the road, parking area and dumpsters to screen them from the street.
- ◆ Encourage an *architectural style* that reinforces the rural theme.

An example of a convenience store with architecture that has a rural theme, additional landscaping and a clean appearance.

COMMERCIAL LAND USES

*Historic
and older
buildings
can be
utilized
without
destroying
their
character.
Many uses are
acceptable
if they
maintain the
rural theme.*



Image Evaluation +1.59

This image received a slightly positive rating. Participants thought of many ways in which it could be improved. The disparity in *architectural styles* makes the site less attractive. The building in the foreground should look similar to the building in the background. The signs are too large. The parking could be placed in the rear, or if it remains in the front of the building, the parking should be screened from the road. The access point location and *setbacks* appear adequate for this site.

The positive rating was generated from ideas similar to the previous image. A multi-use site with a restaurant and farm enables a family to retain the agricultural use of the land. Many uses are acceptable if they maintain the rural theme. These larger, rural commercial activities should be located near intersections of rural roads or on the fringe of villages.

METHODS FOR
REVITALIZING
RURAL
STRUCTURES



Image Evaluation +4.18

Many historic and older buildings in rural Chester County can be utilized without destroying their character. This example shows a historic barn that has been *preserved* and revitalized as a commercial use.

There are several key elements that make this image distinctly rural. The mature trees are preserved. Water can seep into the ground because there are no curbs or paved surfaces. The *sign* has a rural character. It is painted with appropriate and coordinated colors, utilizes natural *materials*, is *indirectly illuminated*, and is proportional to the building.

- ◆ Identify older or historical structures that are available for productive reuses.
- ◆ Encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings through *incentives* (tax credits, flexible zoning and subdivision regulations).
- ◆ Preserve existing trees and vegetation.
- ◆ Reduce *impervious surfaces* by using stone driveways and parking areas.
- ◆ Omit curbing to allow stormwater runoff to flow into drainage swales and recharge the groundwater.
- ◆ Create a sign ordinance that reinforces the desired elements of the signs.

Participants agreed that villages are the preferred location for future rural development. New signage and buildings should be compatible with existing themes.



Image Evaluation +0.06

The immediate reaction to this image was the gasoline station may not be inappropriate for this setting, but the sign does not support the character of the rural village. The sign is placed too high and is too large for the design speed of the road. The colors and materials are not the best choices for a rural landscape. The signs that appear on the other buildings are not objectionable. They are properly scaled and readable. The

traffic route sign creates a sidewalk obstacle for pedestrians because of the two support poles that are located on the sidewalk.

This image has two distinctive themes. The left side reveals a traditional village setting with interesting architecture and compatible signs. Rural Chester County is represented very well. The right side shows many inconsistencies with village land uses and design and evokes a more suburban setting.

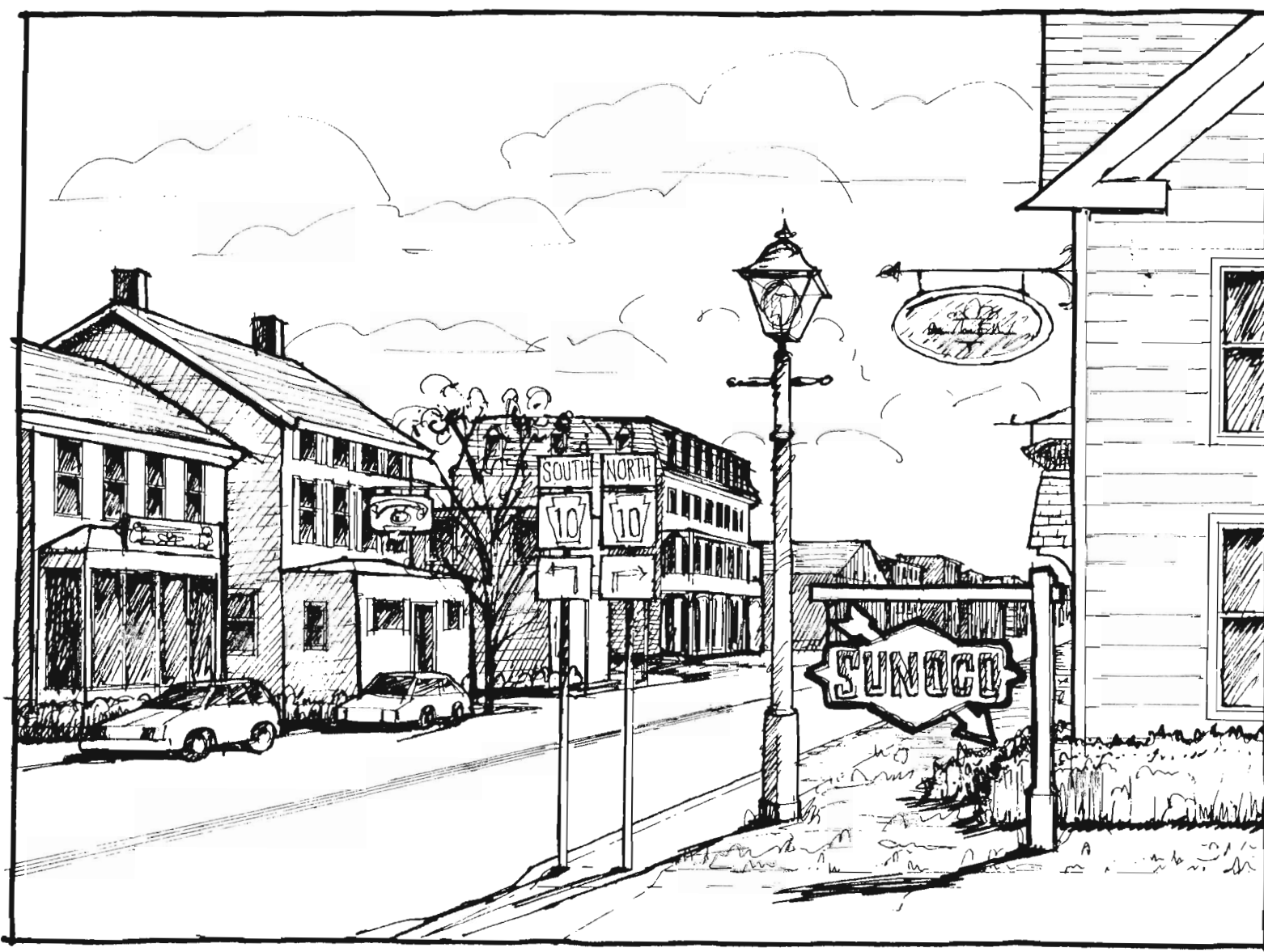
Participants agreed that hamlets and villages are the preferred location for future rural development. New buildings should create an image compatible with the existing structures and design. Other aesthetic nuisances that were a concern are the overhead utility lines and the *street lighting* that seems more appropriate for an expressway. Sidewalk street lamps would present a more positive image.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR IMPROVING

A VILLAGE

LANDSCAPE



- ◆ Draft a sign ordinance that creates and reinforces the rural theme.
 - ◆ Use indirect lighting on signs rather than *back-lighting* them.
 - ◆ Require new buildings to reflect rural architectural themes.
 - ◆ Place utilities underground.
 - ◆ Reduce space utilized by road signs.*
 - ◆ Create lighting facilities that are appropriate for rural villages.
 - ◆ Avoid obstructions in pedestrian system
- *Communities should coordinate their efforts with PennDOT to ensure that signs remain readable without being obstructive.

An example of street details that promote the rural character of a village.

Rural areas need to accommodate multi-family as well as single-family residential development. The dynamic nature of villages allows both types of residences.



Image Evaluation -1.44

belong in a rural landscape. Suburban development does not create the same sense of community as traditional rural landscapes, according to the participants. Suburban subdivisions are often restricted to single-family residences, on a limited range of lot sizes. They incorporate one land use, at a uniform density, spanning a narrow price range. They support one lifestyle, one income group, and often only one particular place in the resident's lifecycle. This design discourages people with varying income levels, age groups and cultural backgrounds to live in the same neighborhood.

The image received a negative rating because the architecture is redundant and it does not have a rural character. The houses have the same *setback* and *roof line*. Streets are excessively wide and the emphasis is placed on the garages and vehicular access. The trees and other landscaping are sparse and only present on private residential lots.

This image was regarded as suburban development that does not



Image Evaluation +3.11

The single-family houses in this image are new and on similar lot sizes as the previous image, but they differ in many ways. Residential development like this is very adaptable to the fabric of existing villages. *Incentives* should be given to help attract development that adds to or creates a village setting. The cost of providing municipal services (water and sewer lines) is reduced which, in turn, reduces the cost to taxpayers. An incentive may be reducing the width of roads on residential streets. This reduces costs for those who build houses and the prospective buyers.

CREATING
RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT
IN A VILLAGE
SETTING



Image Evaluation -3.47

Rural areas need to accommodate multi-family as well as single-family residential development. The participants rated this image negatively because it is not aesthetically pleasing, it lacks an *architectural style* associated with rural environments and the “repetitive mix of olive, brown, and mustard-colored siding” are not the best suited. Land is unnecessarily used because the dwelling units are spread over a large area of land rather than clustered on a portion of the site. The trees are sparse and provide little shade and the vegetation is limited. Parking is accommodated in large, paved parking areas. Perhaps the design is the product of a zoning ordinance not sensitive to rural needs.

This positively rated image has the same number of dwelling units as the previous image but



Image Evaluation +3.23

utilizes less ground. Multi-family residential units should become part of the village landscape and encouraged by innovative zoning regulations. This building type reinforces the village theme and demonstrates that the participants find this image acceptable in a rural location. The dynamic nature of villages allows multi-family residences to be interspersed between single-family, commercial, and other uses.

Traditional *architectural styles* which use varied *roof lines*, balconies, columns and a combination of materials is more appealing. The addition of sidewalks, *street trees* and landscaping adds to the overall positive image and creates a sense of community. Vehicles can access parking areas from *alleys* in the rear of the building. Residents have the opportunity to enjoy larger backyards in a private setting.

- ◆ Design a rear *alley* for vehicular access to eliminate driveways and garage doors facing the street.
- ◆ Place houses close to the street which increases private backyard areas and helps frame the village streetscape.
- ◆ Add sidewalks with wide *planting strips* and *street trees*.
- ◆ Diversify *architectural styles*.
- ◆ Add front porches to houses close to the sidewalk to encourage social interaction which promotes a sense of community.
- ◆ Vary lot sizes, housing types, and cost to encourage a variety of family types.

MOBILE HOMES

Mobile home parks must reflect a sense of community rather than be considered as a temporary place of residence.

Often mobile home parks are arranged to provide the maximum number of lots with little aesthetic or functional considerations. This provides a seemingly crowded condition and compromises the visual image.

Although most participants did not score images of mobile home parks favorably, they did see a need to create an atmosphere where they are more acceptable. Some citizens prefer to live in mobile homes and they provide an alternative housing stock.

Both images received negative ratings but the participants recognized that mobile homes are needed and considered appropriate in the rural areas. Mobile home parks must reflect a sense of community rather than be considered as a temporary place of residence.



Image Evaluation -5.64

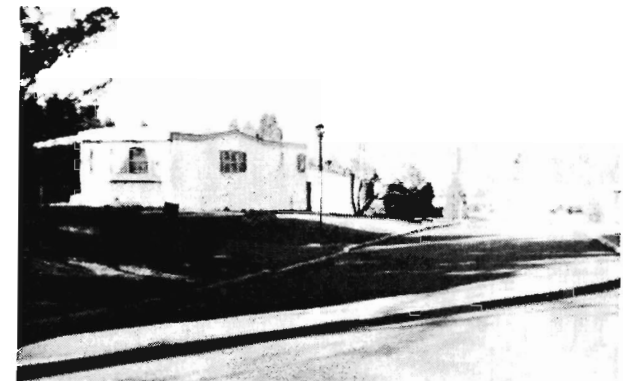
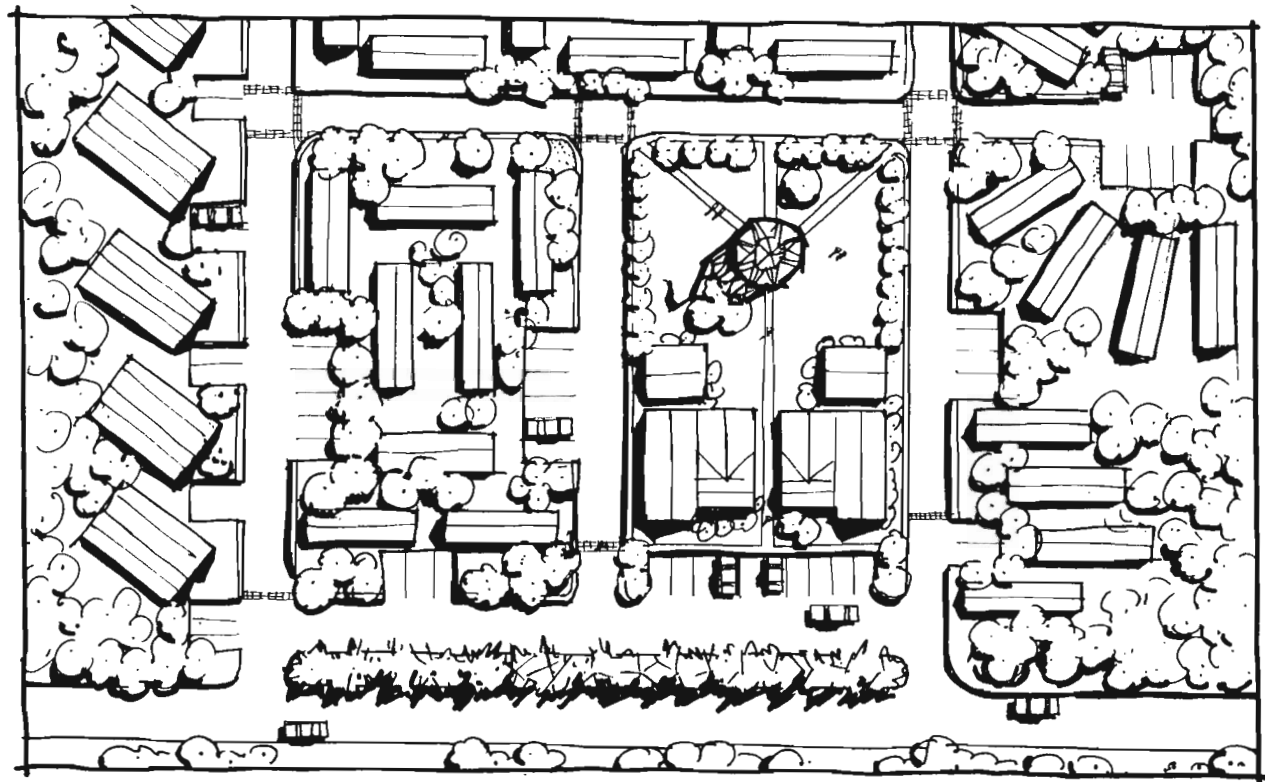
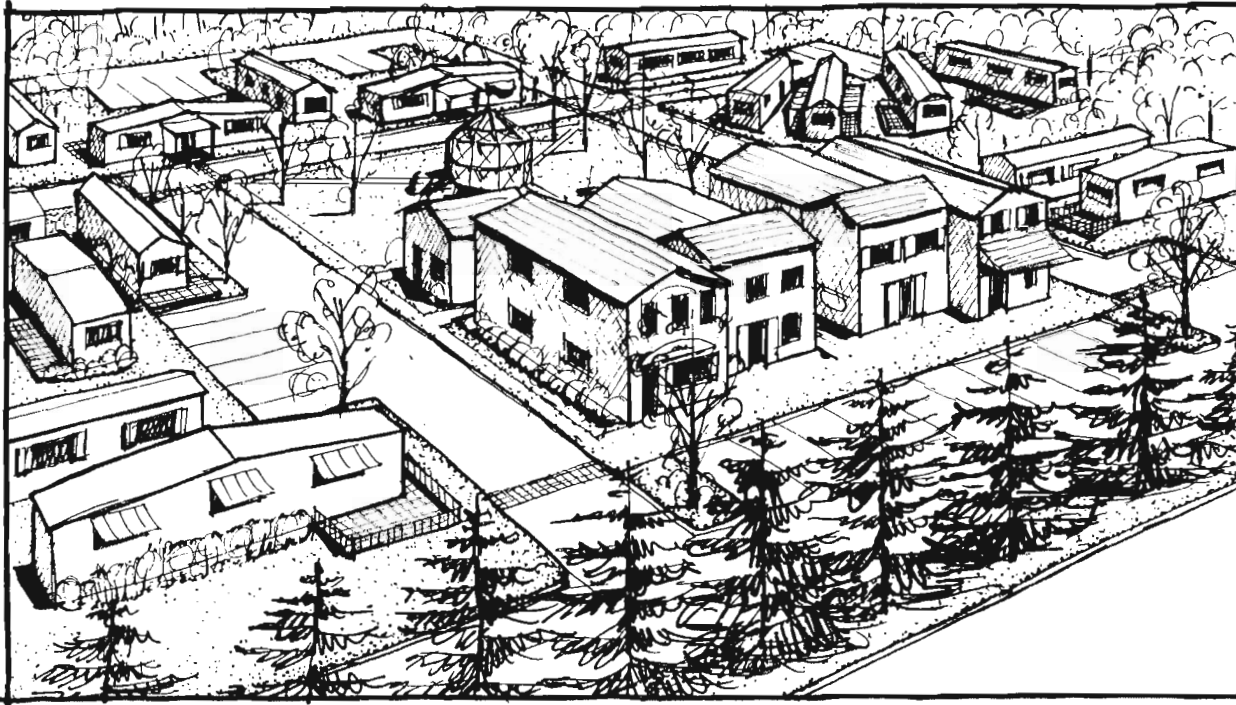


Image Evaluation -2.79



An example of a mobile home park with a variety of lot sizes and layouts, integrated commercial uses, and public areas.

Details of integrated commercial, residential and public spaces in a mobile home park.



Municipal ordinances should contain language which promotes innovative design and the successful use of mobile homes. Mobile homes should be treated similar to single-family homes.

They can be placed on lots of varying sizes and combined with interesting aesthetic improvements. These units have a place in the village landscape as well.

The participants suggested multiple ways of improving mobile home parks. The sketches show several designs that could be used in multiple combinations to enhance the visual image of mobile homes in the rural landscape. They can be oriented differently to create a variety of layouts. Lot sizes can be increased so the units will not be close

together. Porches and sidewalks should become part of mobile home parks to promote a sense of community.

Other suggestions included the use of trees and vegetation which should be a high priority design issue to enhance the aesthetic quality and provide privacy between individual lots. A landscaped *berm* with vegetation can be used to *screen* the park from the road while providing a noise barrier and privacy for the residents. Parking can be provided in *alleys*. Commercial uses near an entrance to a mobile home park could provide a buffer and shopping facilities for mobile home residents and others in the immediate vicinity. Mobile homes should be considered a viable land use in rural villages.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING MOBILE HOME PARKS

- ◆ Encourage mobile home design in the same manner as single-family residences.
- ◆ Provide a mix of residential and commercial uses on mobile home sites.
- ◆ Integrate mobile home parks into the village setting.
- ◆ Create different lot sizes and layouts.
- ◆ Add *screening* and *buffers* between mobile home parks, roads and neighboring uses.
- ◆ Plant trees and vegetation within the mobile home park.
- ◆ Encourage porches to be added to mobile homes.
- ◆ Add a network of sidewalks within and to mobile home parks.
- ◆ Park cars in *alleys* or small clustered parking areas.
- ◆ Design street networks that promote the village theme.
- ◆ Provide *incentives* to landowners that create innovative design features that foster a rural character.

*Large houses
built
on the
ridgeline
compromise
rural character.*



Image Evaluation -1.77

*Ridgeline
development
should be
allowed
under limited
environmental
circumstances.*

This image received a negative rating because large houses built on a *ridgeline* compromise rural character. It is preferable to preserve ridgelines but it was suggested that development on ridgelines is a possibility in limited circumstances to preserve farmland and *prime agricultural soils*. If houses were placed in the foreground and the farmland was on the ridgeline, farming activities could continue and the visual landscape would remain essentially rural.

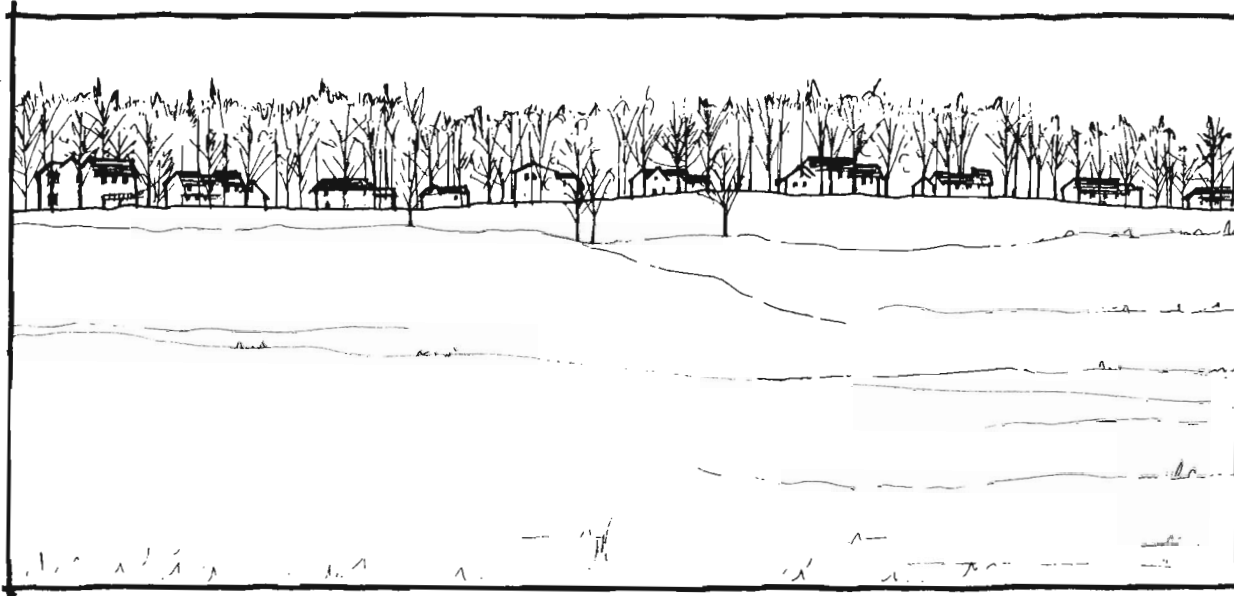
RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR

MAINTAINING

RIDGELINES

Placing additional vegetative screening improves the view of the ridgeline.



Moving the houses to the right below the ridgeline saves some of the ridgeline.



- ◆ Locate, analyze, and protect *prime agricultural soils*.
- ◆ Define ridgelines in zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances.
- ◆ Protect *scenic viewsheds* through ordinance language.
- ◆ Preclude houses from being developed on the *ridgeline*.
- ◆ Screen the houses with a vegetative *buffer*.
- ◆ *Cluster* houses to reduce the impact on the ridgeline and maintain farmland.

RETAINING FARMLAND

Where possible, development should be clustered, and should not disturb scenic viewsheds or prime agricultural soils.

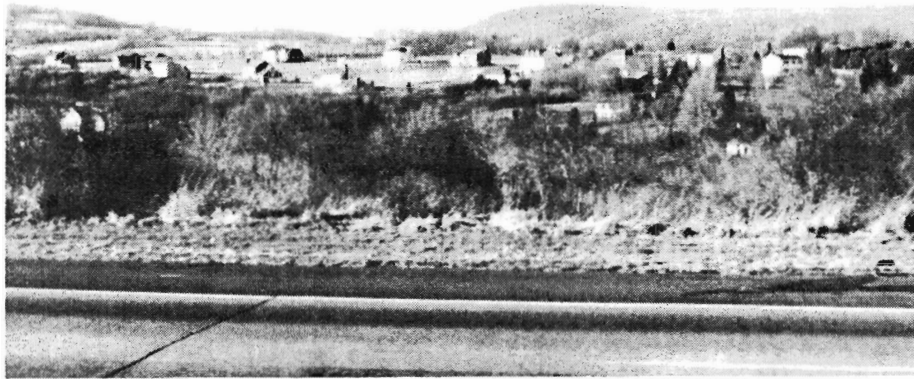
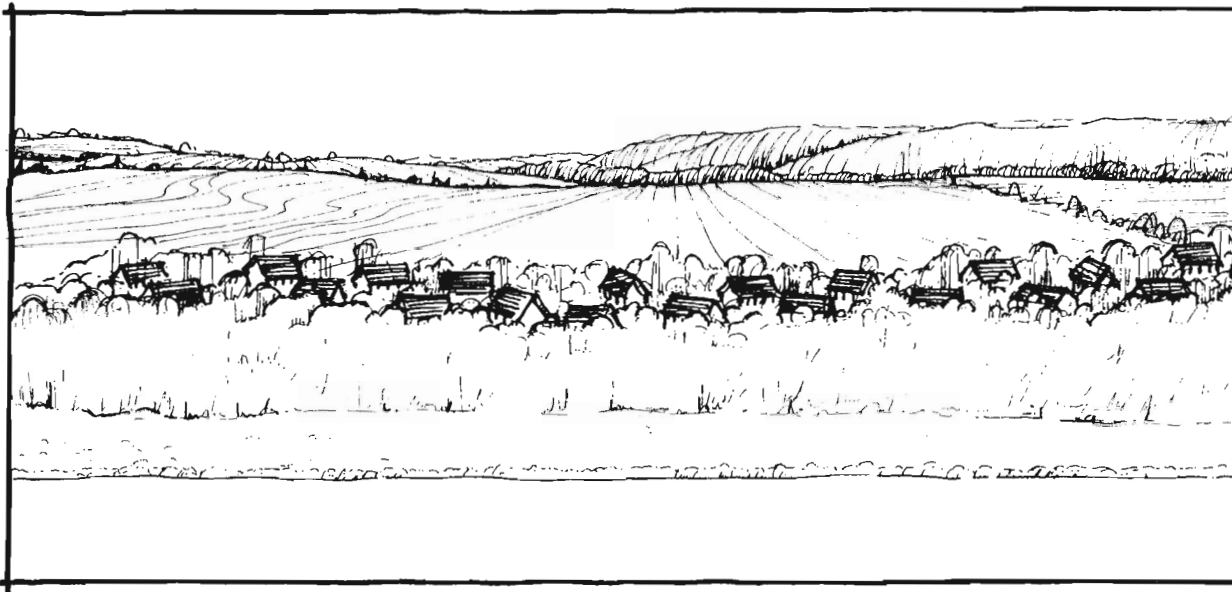


Image Evaluation -1.74

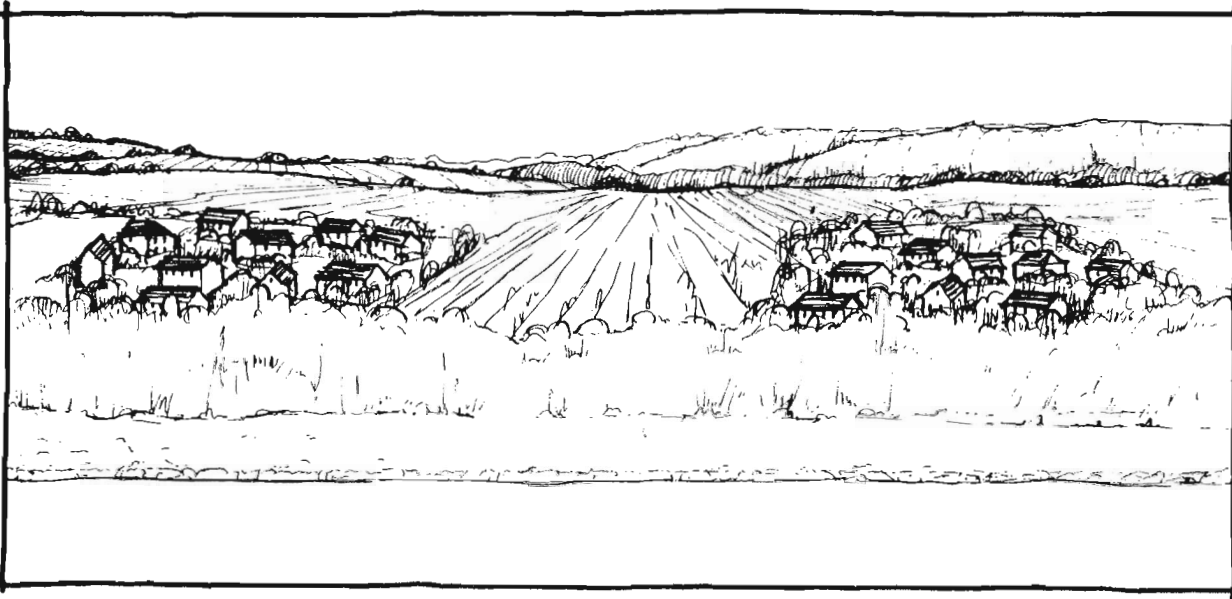
Large lot, ridgeline development that disturbs scenic viewsheds generated a negative rating. Where possible, houses should be built on soils not suitable for agricultural uses and clustered together on smaller lots. Clustering development achieves two purposes; accommodating selected development and encouraging agricultural pursuits to continue. This technique preserves farmland by limiting quantities of land needed to support residential development. Architectural styles should reflect the rural character of the area rather than looking like suburban development. Additional vegetation needs to be included to screen the houses, or the houses should be integrated with the existing vegetation to present a natural setting.

RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR IMPROVING
RIDGELINE
DEVELOPMENT

Moving the houses from the ridgeline closer to existing vegetation saves farmland and the ridgeline.



Clustering the houses and planting trees as screening improves the view of the ridgeline.



- ◆ Protect *scenic viewsheds* with ordinance language.
- ◆ Preclude houses from being developed on the *ridgeline*.
- ◆ Screen the houses with a vegetative *buffer*.
- ◆ Reduce lot sizes of ridgeline development.
- ◆ *Cluster* houses to reduce the impact on the ridgeline and maintain usable farmland.
- ◆ Cluster houses into small groups.
- ◆ Design houses to look like farm houses.

This image received a strong negative rating because it shows the effects of suburban sprawl.



Image Evaluation -5.07

This image received a strong negative rating because it shows the effects of *suburban sprawl*. This type of development uses farmland and creates uniform-sized homes on similar lot sizes. Residents must use vehicles to get everywhere. One of the few positive aspects of this type of development is that the density is sufficient for public sewer and water service.



Image Evaluation +1.91

Participants suggested that development in the rural areas should be focused toward existing villages, boroughs and new villages. Creating planned development rather than developing the countryside saves farmland, woodlands and open space. If properly designed, future development can be accommodated over long periods of time while reinforcing the desired design. Rural municipalities should encourage village development. They should examine their ordinances and revise them, to discourage suburban design standards.

Villages and hamlets provide the public with a neighborhood atmosphere and sense of community. Architecture and lot sizes are varied which accommodate many types of living arrangements. *Public areas* such as green spaces and sidewalks encourage social interaction between diverse groups. A mix of uses such as commercial, institutional and residential creates an atmosphere where people will walk reasonable distances.

Residents who move into existing or new villages which are bordered by agricultural uses should be aware of the hours, noise and odors associated with farming operations.

Development will occur in rural Chester County. The rural participants aware of this indicated that new development should be placed in established rural centers, hamlets or villages. This approach will help preserve the rural character of Chester County. The sketch on page 39 illustrates how future development can be accommodated in existing or future villages.

Participants suggested that development in rural areas should be focused toward existing villages, boroughs and new villages.

*A balance
between
development
and
preservation
can be
achieved by
guiding
development
away from
the most
environmentally
sensitive
areas.*

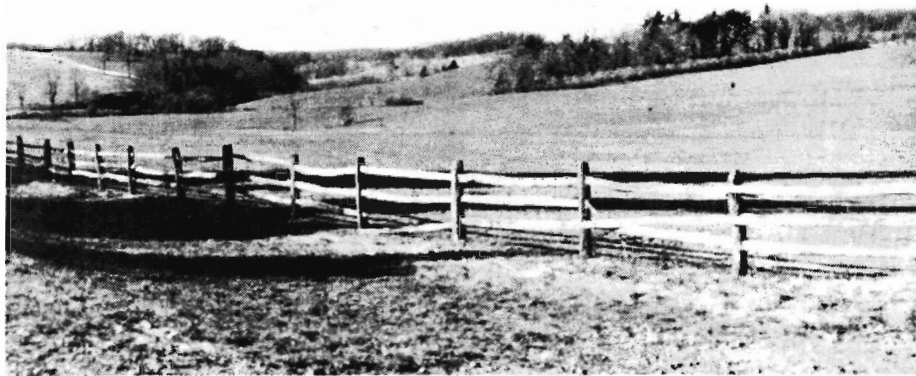


Image Evaluation +8.10

This image is the most highly rated slide in the visual survey. Besides the scenic beauty there are other issues that need consideration: preserving and improving the existing biodiversity, enhancing water quality, and creating an ecological system that allows natural species to flourish. Scenic and natural environments that have attracted so many people to the County are quickly being lost because of increased development. A balance between development and preservation of scenic and natural resources can be achieved by guiding development away from the most environmentally sensitive areas. Large *buffers* and *setbacks* between development and stream corridors or *floodplains* should be provided. This would prevent stormwater runoff from development entering the water system and degrading its quality.

The open space system should create a network of trails now rather than when it is too expensive to acquire the land.



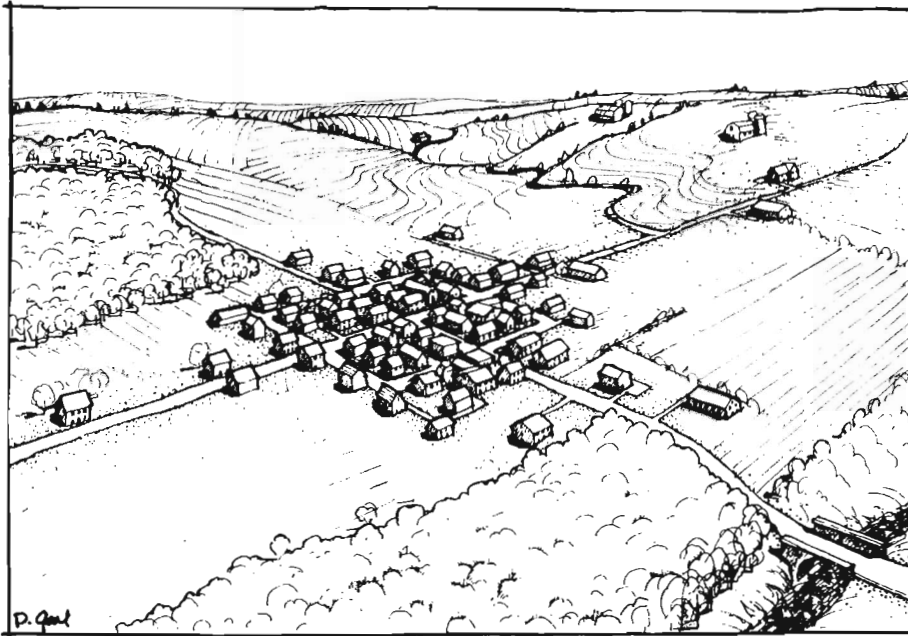
Image Evaluation +7.20

Trails are rated highly and are an appropriate use in rural areas. They are well liked because the public is losing access to this type of setting. The open space system should create a network of trails as part of new development just as streets, water and sewer facilities, rather than after development has occurred and land is too expensive. Steep, sloping land is not suitable for development or agriculture which makes it available for use as part of a natural trail network.

**POSITIVE
DESIGN
FEATURES
FOR TRAILS**

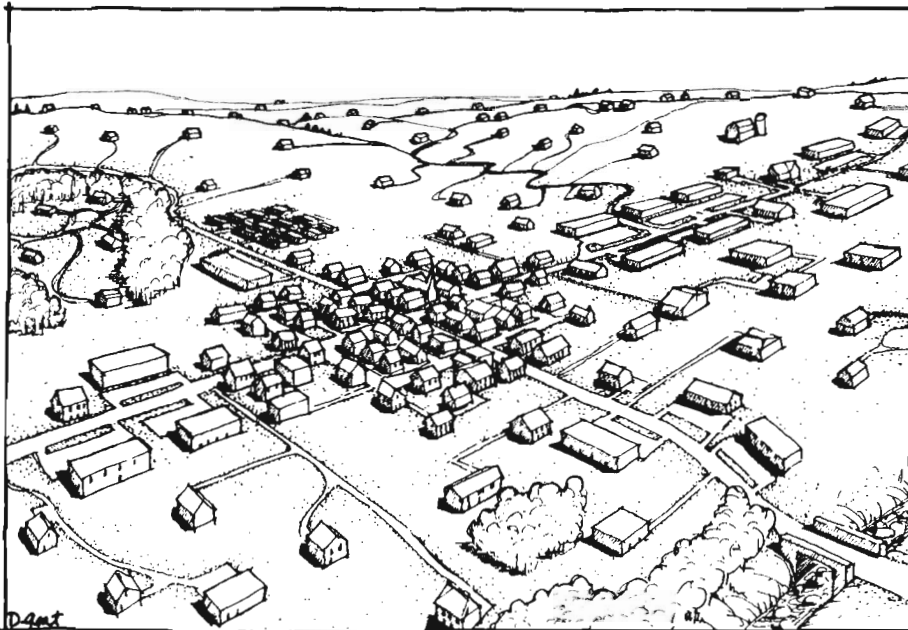
- ◆ Trail has a rustic nature.
- ◆ Natural materials are used for sign and wall.
- ◆ Gravel, stone or woodchip surface is well maintained.
- ◆ Recreation is promoted.
- ◆ Open space is preserved.
- ◆ A public need is served.
- ◆ Does not intrude into farm fields.
- ◆ Links villages together through a trail network.

*Multiple
uses
can fit
into the
fabric of
a rural
village.*

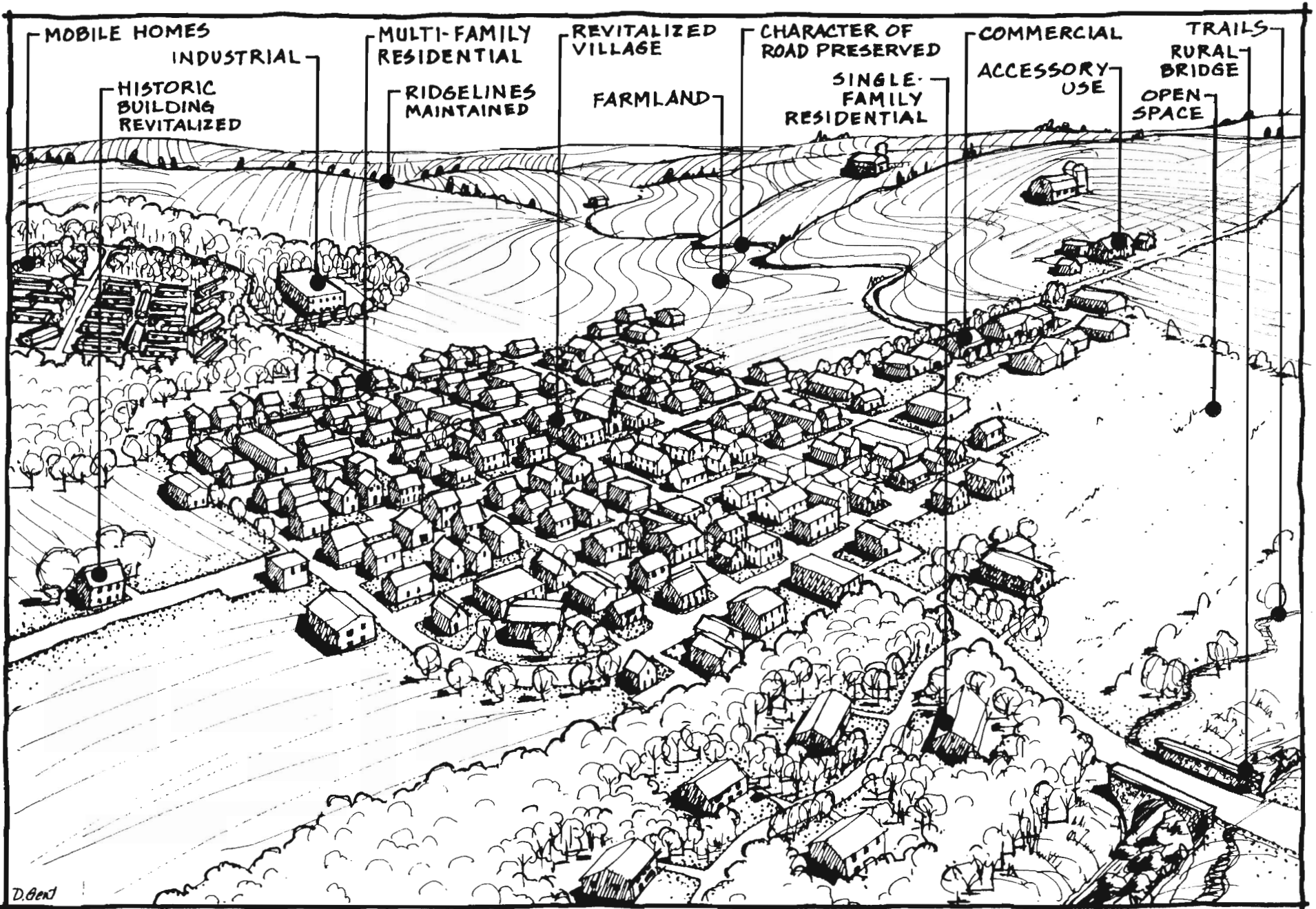


Existing rural village

*The
choice for
village
planning
saves
countryside.*



Conventional development in village



D. Bend

RURAL VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT



There are several opportunities to implement the community design guides suggested in this document. Many of the recommendations require only the review of ordinances and plans that are already in place in most municipalities. The following tables offer the link between the design guides and the tools for bringing about the desired change for the rural landscape in the County.

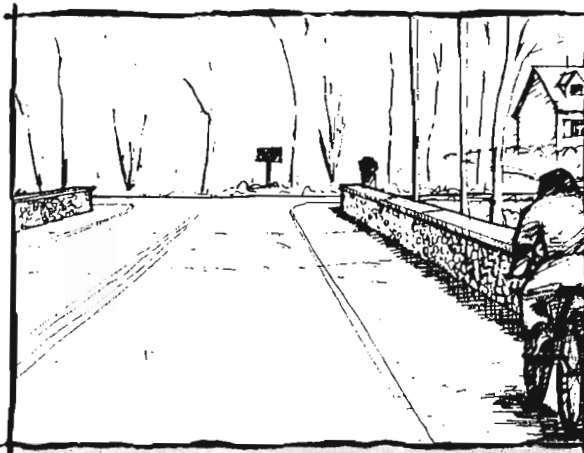
HOW TO USE IMPLEMENTATION CHARTS

Each implementation chart refers to a topic found on the top of each page in the “Preferences and Design Recommendations” section. Page numbers are provided on the implementation charts for easy reference to the topical areas.

Implementation techniques are listed in the left-hand column of the table. Check marks indicate where information can be found and which tools municipal officials can use to implement suggested design options. Many of the documents listed at the top of the chart are from the Chester County Planning Commission.

For example, the topic discussed on page 9 is “Rural Road Network.” One of the recommendations listed is “Retain and protect trees, walls, and hedgerows.” This recommendation also appears on page 41. The check marks in the chart on page 41 show resources that can be used and a combination of implementation techniques.

**Rural
Road
Network**
pages 8-11

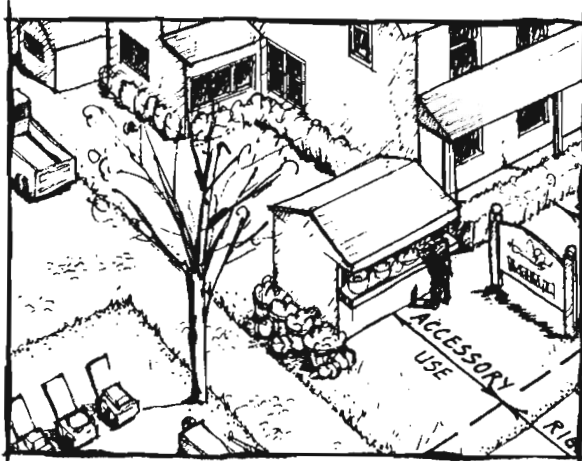


	Municipal Comprehensive Plan	Municipal Zoning Ordinance	Municipal Subdivision Regulations Sign Ordinances	Open Space Plan	Development Standards	Sketch Plan Review	Design Review Process	Special Use Districts	County Comprehensive Plan	Chester County Circulation Handbook	Chester County Village Handbook	Chester County Scenic Roads Handbook	Chester County Open Space Plan	Historic Districts	Access Management Plans	Agricultural Conservation Easements	Agricultural Security District
Preserve road edges	✓	✓			✓	✓						✓		✓			
Develop rural road standards		✓			✓				✓		✓	✓					
Accommodate traffic on roads with higher functional classification	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓								
Retain and protect trees, walls and hedgerows		✓		✓	✓							✓					
Enhance identifiable rural images	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓						✓				✓	✓
Use aesthetically pleasing bridge materials					✓				✓								
Encourage rural character on bridges		✓			✓												
Add bicycle lanes on rural bridges	✓	✓							✓					✓			
Add pedestrian lanes on rural bridges	✓	✓							✓					✓			

IMPLEMENTATION

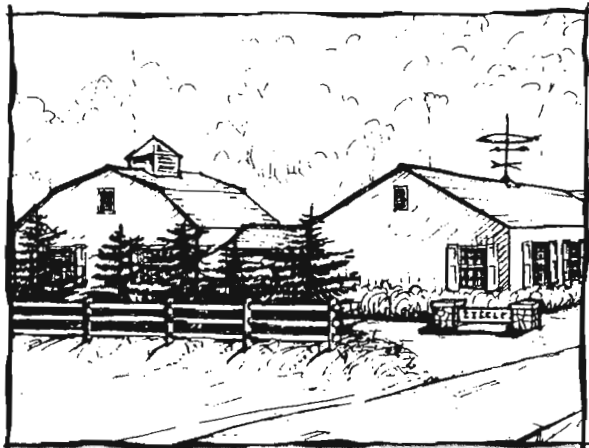
Accessory Rural Land Uses

pages 12, 13



	Municipal Comprehensive Plan	Municipal Zoning Ordinance	Municipal Subdivision Regulations	Sign Ordinances	Open Space Plan	Development Standards	Sketch Plan Review	Design Review Process	Special Use Districts	County Comprehensive Plan	Chester County Circulation Handbook	Chester County Village Handbook	Chester County Scenic Roads Handbook	Chester County Open Space Plan	Historic Districts	Access Management Plan	Agricultural Conservation Easements	Agricultural Security District
Identify compatible accessory land uses	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓										
Provide appropriate setbacks for all uses		✓			✓	✓												
Maintain similar architectural style			✓		✓	✓												
Encourage signs with rural character		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓										
Promote appropriate sizing of signs		✓	✓		✓	✓												
Develop parking standards for accessory uses		✓			✓					✓								
Encourage rural accessory land uses	✓	✓																
Do not permit parking within the right-of-way		✓			✓		✓			✓								

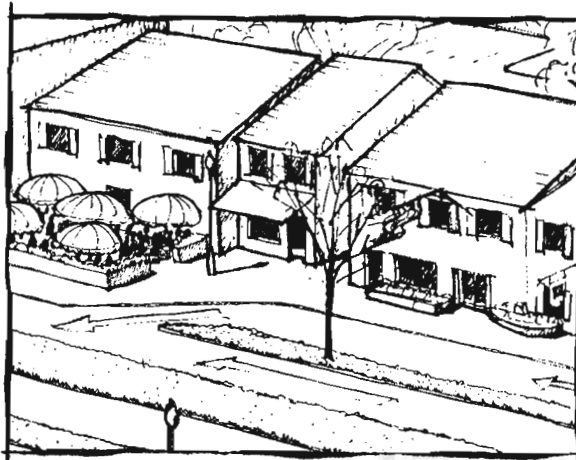
**Industrial
Land
Uses**
pages 14, 15



	Municipal Comprehensive Plan	Municipal Zoning Ordinance	Municipal Subdivision Regulations	Sign Ordinances	Open Space Plan	Development Standards	Sketch Plan Review	Design Review Process	Special Use Districts	County Comprehensive Plan	Chester County Circulation Handbook	Chester County Village Handbook	Chester County Scenic Roads Handbook	Chester County Open Space Plan	Historic Districts	Access Management Plans	Agricultural Conservation Easements	Agricultural Security District
Develop industrial land use criteria	✓	✓				✓	✓											
Encourage complementary industrial uses	✓	✓				✓												
Develop standards for screening industrial uses			✓		✓													
Develop location criteria for screening			✓		✓													
Keep objects out of legal right-of-way		✓							✓		✓	✓						
Create deeper setbacks for industrial uses		✓									✓							
Encourage compatible architectural styles		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓									
Use rural architectural features		✓	✓			✓	✓		✓									
Select colors to complement rural landscape			✓			✓		✓										
Direct outside storage to back of buildings		✓				✓												
Limit quantity and locate placement of outside storage		✓				✓												

IMPLEMENTATION

**Commercial
Land
Uses**
pages 16-23



	Municipal Comprehensive Plan	Municipal Zoning Ordinance	Municipal Subdivision Regulations	Sign Ordinances	Open Space Plan	Development Standards	Sketch Plan Review	Design Review Process	Special Use Districts	County Comprehensive Plan	Chester County Circulation Handbook	Chester County Village Handbook	Chester County Scenic Roads Handbook	Chester County Open Space Plan	Historic Districts	Access Management Plans	Agricultural Conservation Easements	Agricultural Security District
Direct parking to rear of buildings		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓								
Develop landscape buffers for all parking		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓								
Design pedestrian circulation	✓		✓								✓							
Determine land area for commercial uses	✓	✓				✓				✓								
Encourage unified architectural themes	✓					✓				✓							✓	
Offer density bonus for desired design		✓				✓	✓	✓										
Consider roof treatment with design			✓			✓			✓								✓	
Develop street tree standards			✓		✓													
Create landscaping guidelines along roads			✓			✓		✓			✓							
Reduce impervious surfaces			✓								✓							
Screen negative images			✓		✓													
Place utility lines underground			✓															
Amend sign ordinances for rural images		✓	✓	✓														
Consider compatible colors, styles and materials for signs				✓														
Determine desired highway commercial uses	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓									
Develop access management criteria and guidelines	✓	✓				✓		✓			✓							✓
Unify access points	✓	✓									✓							✓
Set minimum distances for driveways		✓									✓							✓

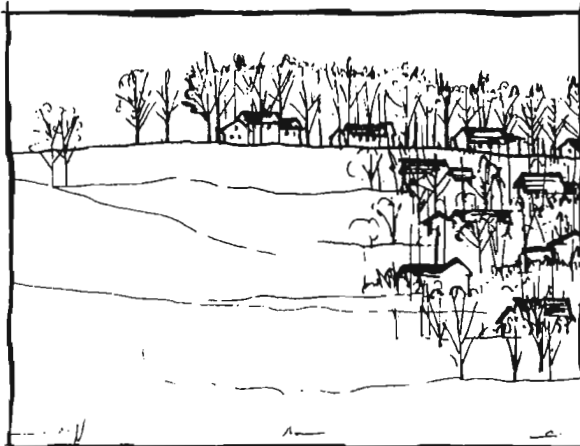
**Commercial
Land
Uses
pages 16-23**



	Municipal Comprehensive Plan	Municipal Zoning Ordinance	Municipal Subdivision Regulations	Sign Ordinances	Open Space Plan	Development Standards	Sketch Plan Review	Design Review Process	Special Use Districts	County Comprehensive Plan	Chester County Circulation Handbook	Chester County Village Handbook	Chester County Scenic Roads Handbook	Chester County Open Space Plan	Historic Districts	Access Management Plans	Agricultural Conservation Easements	Agricultural Security District
Limit number of temporary signs		✓		✓				✓										
Enforce temporary sign regulations		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓										
Reduce outside use of vending machines		✓		✓		✓												
Screen parking and dumpsters from road		✓				✓		✓										
Encourage architectural styles that reinforce rural theme	✓					✓			✓									✓
Create blocks of commercial areas instead of strips	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓										✓
Draft sign ordinances to support rural theme			✓	✓		✓		✓										
Use indirect lighting of signs			✓	✓		✓		✓										
Require new buildings to reflect rural architectural themes	✓		✓						✓				✓					
Create lighting facilities compatible with rural villages			✓	✓		✓		✓										
Identify older or historical structures	✓														✓			
Encourage reuse of historical structures		✓	✓			✓								✓				
Preserve existing mature trees and vegetation	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓										

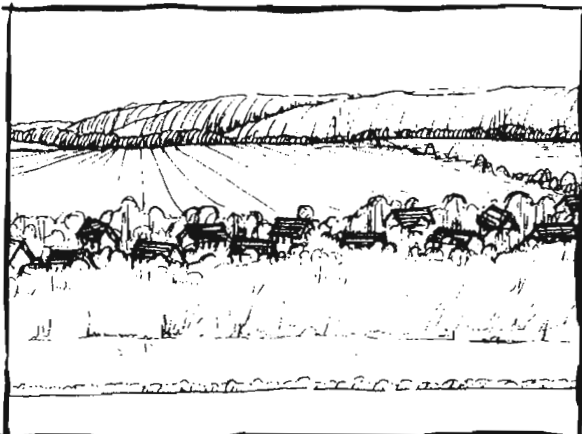
IMPLEMENTATION

**Ridgeline
Preservation**
pages 30, 31



	Municipal Comprehensive Plan	Municipal Zoning Ordinance	Municipal Subdivision Regulations	Sign Ordinances	Open Space Plan	Development Standards	Sketch Plan Review	Design Review Process	Special Use Districts	County Comprehensive Plan	Chester County Circulation Handbook	Chester County Village Handbook	Chester County Scenic Roads Handbook	Chester County Open Space Plan	Historic Districts	Access Management Plans	Agricultural Conservation Easements	Agricultural Security District
Analyze and locate prime agricultural soils	✓	✓			✓									✓		✓	✓	
Define ridgelines	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓						✓				
Protect scenic viewsheds	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓						✓				
Preclude development on ridgelines	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓						✓				
Screen uses near ridgelines	✓		✓			✓		✓						✓				
Cluster development to reduce impact on ridgelines	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓						✓				
Maintain farmland along ridgelines	✓				✓									✓			✓	✓
Encourage rural architectural character for new units	✓		✓		✓		✓			✓								

**Retaining
Farmland
pages 32, 33**



	Municipal Comprehensive Plan	Municipal Zoning Ordinance	Municipal Subdivision Regulations	Sign Ordinances	Open Space Plan	Development Standards	Sketch Plan Review	Design Review Process	Special Use Districts	County Comprehensive Plan	Chester County Circulation Handbook	Chester County Village Handbook	Chester County Scenic Roads Handbook	Chester County Open Space Plan	Historic Districts	Access Management Plans	Agricultural Conservation Easements	Agricultural Security District
Encourage most development to occur in areas with public sewer facilities	✓	✓				✓		✓		✓								
Restrict development in environmentally sensitive areas	✓	✓				✓		✓					✓					
Offer tax incentives for not developing farmland	✓																✓	✓
Identify farmland as a critical land use	✓	✓							✓				✓				✓	✓
Investigate transfer of development rights	✓	✓							✓									
Develop agricultural zoning districts with limited uses	✓	✓				✓			✓									
Consider greenbelts to define agricultural areas	✓	✓			✓					✓			✓					
Develop resource protection regulations	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			✓				✓	✓

IMPLEMENTATION

*Open Space/
Recreation
pages 36, 37*



	Municipal Comprehensive Plan	Municipal Zoning Ordinance	Municipal Subdivision Regulations	Sign Ordinances	Open Space Plan	Development Standards	Sketch Plan Review	Design Review Process	Special Use Districts	County Comprehensive Plan	Chester County Circulation Handbook	Chester County Village Handbook	Chester County Scenic Roads Handbook	Chester County Open Space Plan	Historic Districts	Access Management Plans	Agricultural Conservation Easements	Agricultural Security District
Develop an integrated trail network	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓					
Use natural materials for signs	✓	✓		✓		✓												
Use pervious materials on surfaces	✓		✓			✓												
Create recreational opportunities on trails	✓				✓													✓
Do not intrude into farm fields with trails	✓				✓			✓										✓
Link villages through a trail network	✓				✓			✓			✓							✓
Identify natural and cultural resources to be protected	✓				✓													✓
Incorporate resource protection within ordinances		✓	✓				✓	✓										

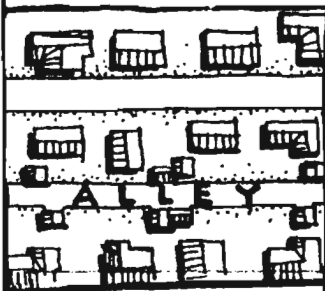
ACCESS MANAGEMENT STUDY

Solutions to preserve and improve the operating and safety capabilities of a road where new capacity is not realistic and where a distinct conflict exists between property access and vehicular mobility.



AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION

To conserve and protect agricultural lands as valued natural and ecological resources for the production of food and other agricultural products, needed open spaces, clean air and other aesthetic purposes.



ALLEYS

A service roadway providing a secondary means of public access to abutting property and not intended for general traffic circulation.



EARLY GEORGIAN
(1720 - 1760)



VICTORIAN
(1830 - 1850)



FEDERAL
(1780 - 1820)

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

The characteristic form and detail of buildings, or group of buildings or structures, including the site and landscape development, that produces a distinctive character of a particular historic period.



COLONIAL
(1700 - 1720)

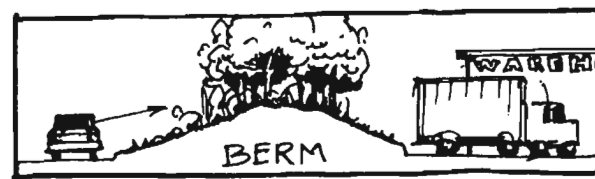
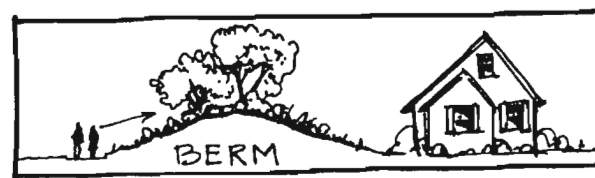
BACKLIGHTING

A method of illuminating a sign by placing an artificial light source behind a permeable glass or plastic panel through which light can travel. This technique is generally not appropriate in villages.



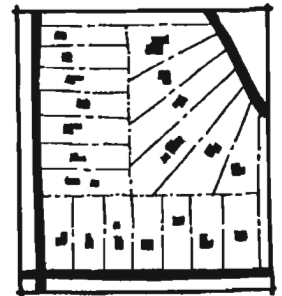
BERM

A mound of earth used to separate incompatible uses, create privacy, or to screen views.

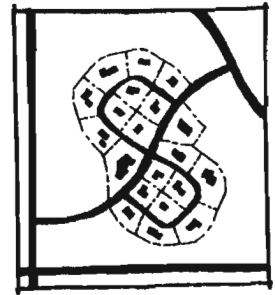


BUFFERS

Open spaces, landscaped areas, fences, walls, berms, or any combination thereof used to physically separate or screen one use or property from another so as to visually shield or block noise, lights, or other nuisances.



CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

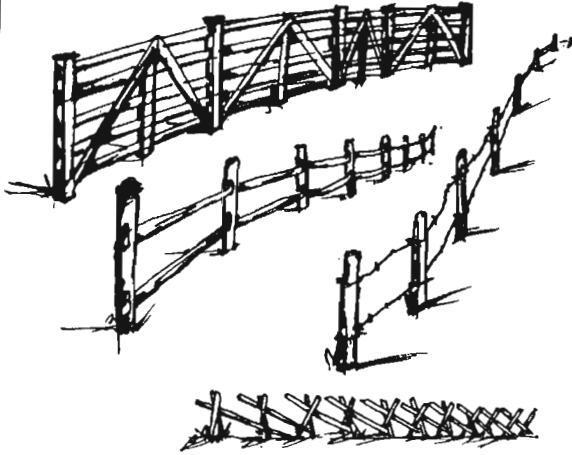
CLUSTER

A development design technique that concentrates building on a part of the site to allow the remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, agriculture, and preservation of environmentally sensitive features.

COMPATIBLE ACCESSORY USE

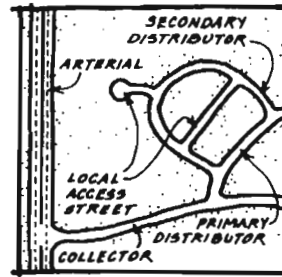
A use of land or of a building or portion thereof customarily incidental and subordinate to the principal use of the land or building and located on the same lot with the principal use.

FENCES



FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

The system by which roads are classified according to their purpose, operational characteristics and travel demand they serve.



TRIMMED HEDGE DEFINES SPACE



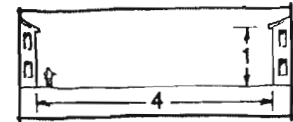
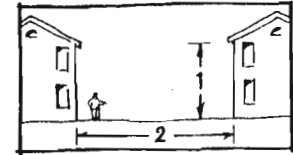
HEDGEROWS

A row of shrubs, planted as a hedge.



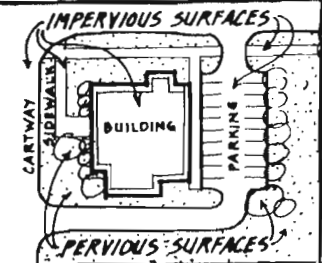
HUMAN SCALE

The proportional relationship of a particular building, structure, or street-scape element to the human form and function.



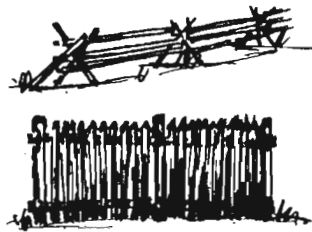
IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

Any material that prevents absorption of stormwater into the ground.



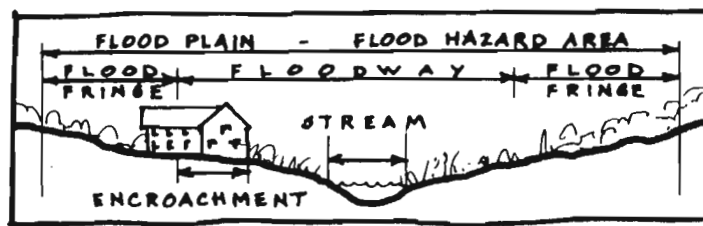
COMPATIBLE ACCESSORY USES

COMPATIBLE	MODERATELY COMPATIBLE	NOT COMPATIBLE
Sale of Farm Products Secondary Farm Business Bed and Breakfast Roadside Stands Handicrafts Craftsmen Shops (blacksmith, woodworking)	Kennels Hunt Clubs Professional Practices Riding Academy Stables Game Preserves Grain Elevators Commercial Greenhouses Farm Machinery Repair Metalworking Sharpening Service Fencing Supply	Non-Farm Outdoor Storage Auto Repair Garages Non-Farm Manufacturing



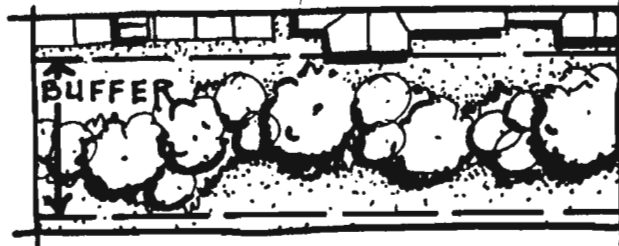
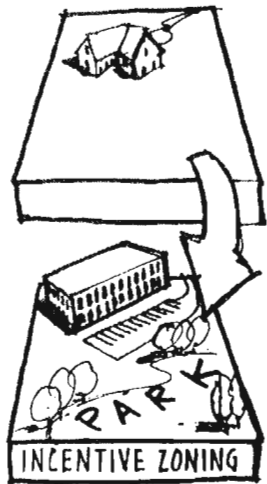
FLOODPLAIN

The channel and the relatively flat area adjoining the channel of a natural stream or river that has been or may be covered by floodwater.



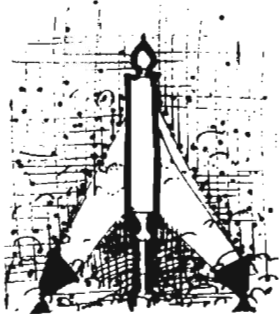
INCENTIVES

The granting by the municipality of additional benefits or variations from ordinances in exchange for the provision of a public benefit or amenity by the landowner.



INDIRECT LIGHTING

Lighting that is reflected or diffused to give a minimum of glare or shadow.

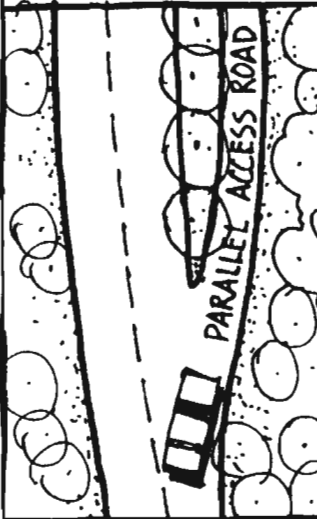


LEFT-TURN LANE

The provision of a separate distinct travel lane for left-turn movements.

PARALLEL ACCESS ROAD

A road which is generally parallel to an arterial road. It may or may not be continuous, and it may be provided on one or both sides of an arterial.



PLANTING STRIP

A strip or area of land within the required buffer which is landscaped with trees and shrubs and maintained accordingly.



PRESERVATION

To keep an object or structure from decaying or being changed by maintaining it.

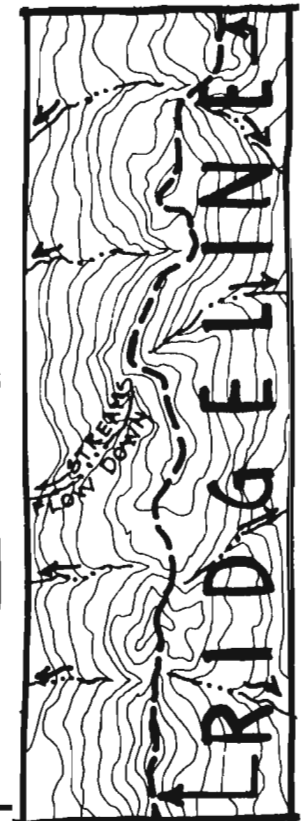


PRIME AGRICULTURAL SOILS

Any soil defined as belonging to Agricultural Capability Classes I and II as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service.

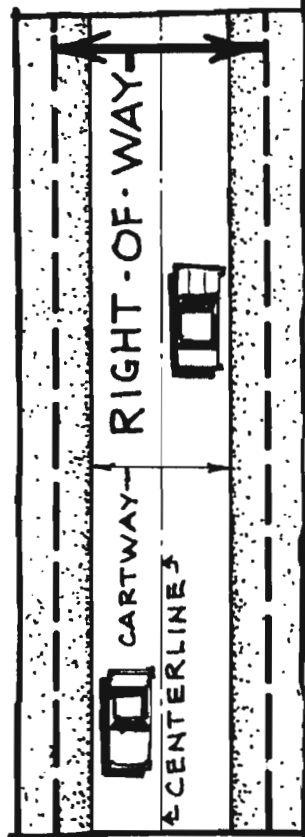
RIDGELINE

The continuous line extending along the highest elevation of a mountain chain or line of hills.

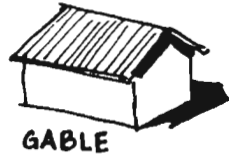


RIGHT-OF-WAY

An area of land, measured from the centerline of the cartway, that can be used by the public for travel or the location of utilities.



ROOF LINE



GABLE



FLAT



HIP



GAMBREL

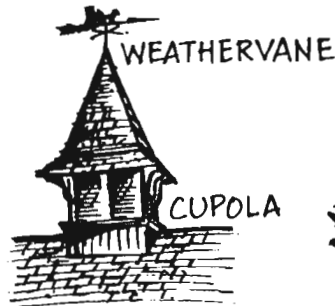


SHED



MANSARD

RURAL ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES



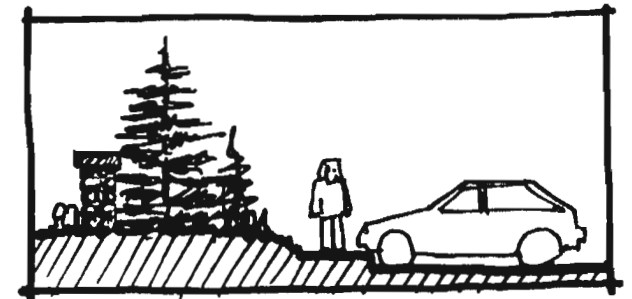
SCENIC VIEWSHEDS

An area visible from a highway, waterway, railway, or major hiking, biking, or equestrian trail that provides vistas over water, across expanses of land, such as farmlands, woodlands, or coastal wetlands, or from mountaintops or ridges.



SCREENING

A method of visually shielding or obscuring one abutting or nearby structure from another by fencing, walls, berms, or densely planted vegetation.



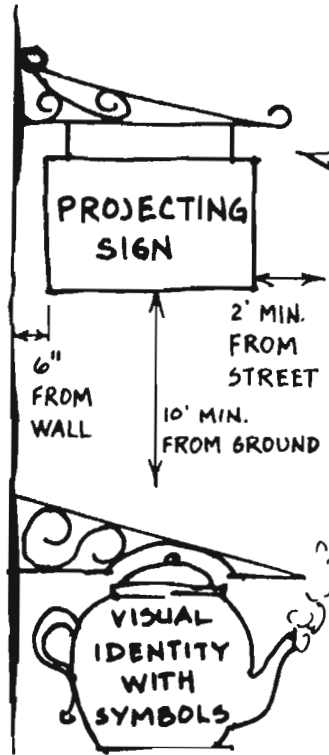
SETBACK

The minimum distance between the building and any lot line. In built-up neighborhoods, many ordinances establish the prevailing setback as the standard to which new houses must conform. Thus, if the houses on both sides of a vacant lot are twenty and thirty feet, respectively, the mean would be twenty-five feet.



SIGNS

Painted or carved wooden signs are usually most appropriate in rural areas. Other materials can be used but only if they are compatible with the design of the building and character of the area. Plastic, backlit, or flashing signs are not appropriate in the rural landscape.

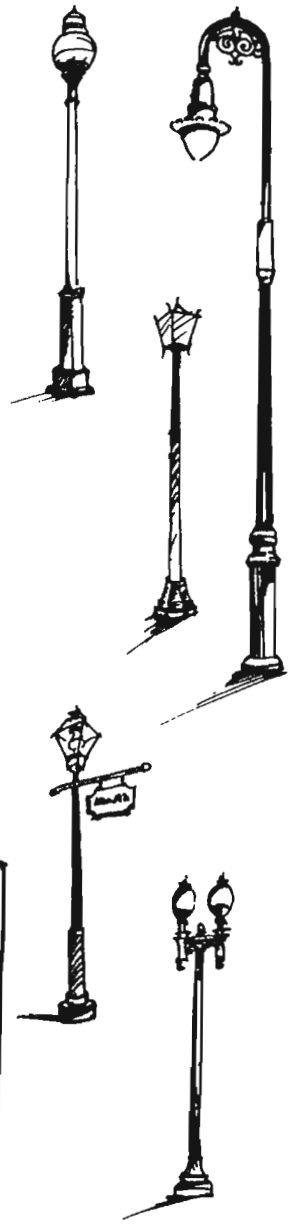


Letter Color	Background Color	Accent Color
Gold leaf, white, red, blue, green, cream, straw yellow	Black	White, red, green, gold leaf, blue, dark yellow
White, red	Navy blue	Black, white, straw yellow, gold leaf
Navy blue, black	Gray	White, red
Gold leaf, white, red	Emerald green	White, gold leaf, black
Gold leaf, light blue	Brown	Red, white
Navy blue, red	Cream	Black
Gold leaf, white, mustard yellow	Red	Black
Navy blue, red	Mustard yellow	Red, black

DESIGN FACTORS FOR LETTER HEIGHT & SIGN SIZE

Number of lanes	Speed	Reaction Time	Distance	Letter Height	Area of Sign	
					Comm./Ind.	Rural/Res.
2	15-25 mph	8 sec.	234'	5"	15 s.f.	10 s.f.
2	30-40 mph	8 sec.	410'	8"	35 s.f.	20 s.f.
2	45-55 mph	8 sec.	586'	12"	75 s.f.	50 s.f.
4	15-25 mph	10 sec.	293'	6"	20 s.f.	15 s.f.
4	30-40 mph	10 sec.	510'	10"	50 s.f.	35 s.f.
4	45-55 mph	10 sec.	733'	15"	120 s.f.	80 s.f.
6	15-25 mph	11 sec.	322'	7"	25 s.f.	20 s.f.
6	30-40 mph	11 sec.	564'	11"	65 s.f.	40 s.f.
6	45-55 mph	11 sec.	806'	16"	130 s.f.	90 s.f.
expr.	50-55+ mph	12 sec.	1,056'	21"	200 s.f.	150 s.f.

STREET LIGHTING



STREET TREES

A tree along the edge of a street within the public right-of-way. The following trees are native species to Chester County.



SCARLET OAK



WHITE ASH



AMERICAN BEECH



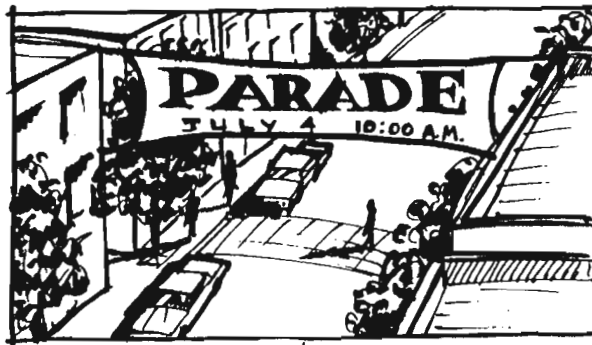
RED MAPLE



SUGAR MAPLE



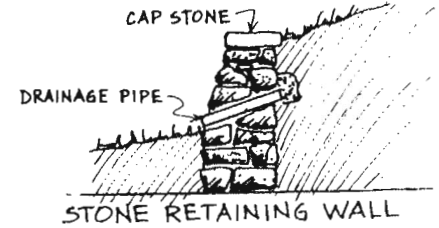
GREEN ASH



TEMPORARY SIGN

A sign or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, fabric, plywood, or other light material and designed or intended to be displayed for a short period of time, typically between 15 to 30 days.

WALLS



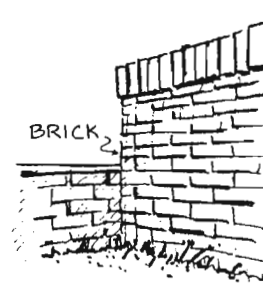
CAP STONE

DRAINAGE PIPE

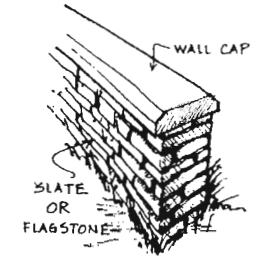
STONE RETAINING WALL



FIELD STONE



BRICK

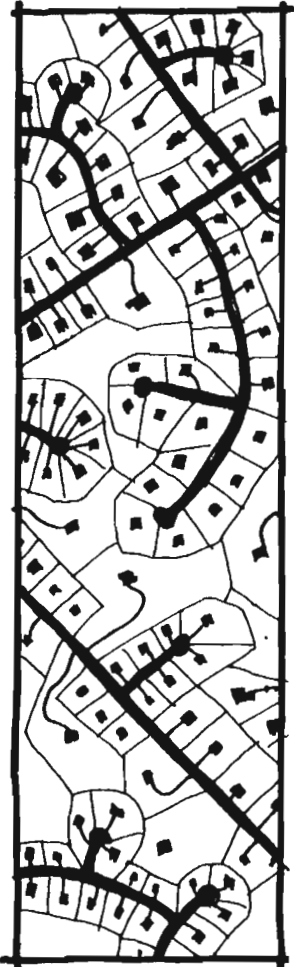


WALL CAP

SLATE OR FLAGSTONE



SERPENTINE PATTERN WINDS AROUND TREES



SPRAWL

Unplanned or disorderly development spread over a broad area.

APPENDIX



William S. Agliano
East Lynn Grange
♦
Rose Marie Aldridge
West Nottingham Township
♦
Spencer Andress
Rural Consultant
♦
John A. Arrell, Chairman
New London Township BOS
♦
Nelson Beam, Treasurer
Lancaster-Chester County Pork Producers Council
♦
Mark Bedwell
East Bradford Township Ag. Easement Farm
♦
Peter Benton
Wallace Township Planning Commission/ Preservation 1st
♦
Dell Black
Lower Oxford Township
♦
Harold Bryson
Upper Oxford Planning Commission
♦
Gary M. Bogert
New London Township Supervisor
♦
John Buchanan
Elk Township
♦
Dennis Bryne
Cattle Farmer
♦
William Cook
New Bolton Center

Nancy Cox
West Nottingham Township
♦
Bill Cracas
Farm Supply
♦
Kate Damsgaard
W. Vincent Township Planning Commission
♦
Virginia Devaney
E. Nantmeal Township/Agway Representative
♦
Leland Devine
♦
W. Joseph Duckworth
Chester County Planning Commission
♦
Edward A. Frankel
Honey Brook
♦
Bobby German
Keystone Farm Credit ACA

Samuel A. Goodley, Jr., E. Nottingham Township/
Attorney for Lancaster County Ag. Preservation
♦
Vernon Guest
East Nantmeal Township
♦
Don Hannum
West Caln Township
♦
Allen Heist, Manager
West Vincent Township
♦
Robert Hewitt
Farmer
♦
E. Kent High
North Coventry Township
♦
David Hodge
Highland Orchard
♦
Bruce Hodge
MISA Corporation
♦
Barclay & Diana Hoopes
Chester/Delaware County Farmers Association
♦
Betsy E. Huber
Upper Oxford Supervisor
♦
Jim Hudson
State Agricultural Official
♦
Gerry Hurff
League of Women Voters
♦
Paula Johnson
Northbrook Orchards

The County Commissioners and the Planning Commission wish to thank all those who participated in the Rural Vision Survey and the Rural Vision Evaluation workshops. Over 180 individuals representing the rural community were invited to attend. The contribution made by these individuals helped in the development of the RURAL COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE.

Roy Jackson
West Marlborough Township

◆

Charles Jacobs, Chairman
Warwick Township

◆

G. Pownall Jones
New Garden Township Assessment Board

◆

Harold R. Kulp
East Coventry Township

◆

Suzanne Lamborn
League of Women Voters

◆

David Lytle
Sheep Farmer

◆

Karen Martynick
Chester County Commissioner

◆

Tom McCaffrey
West Brandywine Supervisor

◆

Laura McCardle
Brandywine Grange/Pomona Grange

◆

Maureen McGovern
League of Women Voters

◆

Nancy Mohr
Open Space and Agriculture

◆

Walter Moore & Greta Rech
London Grove Township/Ag. Easement Farms

◆

Harry McMullen
French and Pickering Creek Trust

Ray Nester
Chairman, East Coventry Planning Commission

◆

Christine Nibour
Upper Oxford Planning Commission

◆

Aileen Parrish
London Britain Township

◆

Howard F. Patterson
Honey Brook Borough

◆

Lynn Perkins
West Vincent Township Supervisor/Northern Federation

◆

Don & Suzanne Phillips
Phillips Mushrooms

◆

Andrew F. Quinn
Chester County Planning Commission

◆

Robert Ray
Wallace Township

Daniel Siegfried
West Nottingham Township/ADC Member

◆

Franne Sippel
League of Women Voters

◆

Don Siver
Chester County Beekeepers Association

◆

Robert Struble
Brandywine Valley Association

◆

Paul E. Stubbe
Chester County Planning Commission

◆

John C. Super
Honey Brook Township

◆

Edith Swoboda
League of Women Voters

◆

Jack Tingle
Newlin Township/Ag. Easement Farm

◆

David Wanner
Honey Brook Grange

◆

W. Richard Whitlock, Chairman
South Coventry Township

◆

George Wickersham
Pocopson Township

◆

Leon Wilkinson
New Garden Township

◆

Dunwoody Zook
East Nantmeal Township

RESPONSE TO RURAL VISIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

As part of the RURAL Visions Survey, participants selected their preferences to 20 questions. The responses to the questions were used in conjunction with the numerical rating of the slide images to stimulate dialogue and reach conclusions in the RURAL Vision Evaluation Workshop. The preference most frequently expressed for each question is printed in ***BOLD ITALICS, AND IN ALL CAPITAL LETTERS.***

1. Which one choice best describes the quality of life in rural Chester County?

- A. Outstanding
- B. EXCELLENT**
- C. Good
- D. Fair
- E. Poor

2. What do you like best about rural Chester County?

- A. Convenient location to work
- B. Recreation/Parks
- C. Sense of community
- D. Appearance
- E. AGRICULTURE/OPEN SPACE**

3. What do you like least about rural Chester County?

- A. Traffic
- B. Lack of sense of community
- C. Appearance
- D. Availability of services
- E. INCREASED DEVELOPMENT**

4. The newer buildings in the County are attractive and well landscaped. Do you:

- A. Strongly agree
- B. AGREE**
- C. Neutral
- D. DISAGREE**
- E. Strongly disagree

5. The rural environment is protected by land use regulations.

Do you:

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Neutral
- D. DISAGREE**
- E. Strongly disagree

6. Which of the following do you feel best describes the County's image (what is the County best known for) today?

- A. THE SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL BEDROOM COMMUNITY**
- B. A rural/farm community
- C. An employment center
- D. A community with good public programs such as parks, recreation, etc.

7. Where in the County should future growth be concentrated?

- A. VILLAGES AND BOROUGHES**
- B. Urban Townships
- C. Suburban Townships
- D. Rural Townships
- E. Other

8. Would you be willing to accept growth in your municipality to preserve open spaces such as wetlands, rural lands and wildlife habitat elsewhere in the County?

- A. Yes
- B. NO**

9. If you must accept some future development in your municipality, what type of development would be most acceptable?

- A. Single family residential
- B. Multi-family residential
- C. Office
- D. Retail/Commercial
- E. A MIX OF RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL USES**

APPENDIX

10. Future nonresidential growth in Chester County should target...?

- A. Professional and office development
- B. Retail commercial development
- C. **SERVICES**
- D. Industrial development

11. What is the one best way Chester County can protect open spaces (land that remains in its natural state) as we grow?

- A. Purchase additional land for open space
- B. **ALLOW FOR THE TRANSFER DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS FROM ONE PIECE OF LAND TO ANOTHER.**
- C. Do nothing, we have enough open space
- D. Require new development to set aside a percentage of the site for open space

12. How can rural Chester County municipalities best accommodate future residential growth?

- A. Encourage primarily single family housing
- B. Encourage primarily multifamily housing
- C. Encourage a mix of single family and multifamily housing
- D. Encourage housing in mixed use developments along with shopping and/or business development
- E. **ENCOURAGE A VARIETY OF LOT SIZES IN A VILLAGE SETTING**

13. Of the following, which is the most important area for us to focus our transportation resources?

- A. Build more roads for general purpose traffic
- B. Build more roads only for buses and carpools
- C. Convert some existing lanes to buses and carpool only
- D. **DEVELOP PROGRAMS AND INCENTIVES TO PROMOTE USE OF CARPOOLS AND PUBLIC TRANSIT**
- E. Promote pedestrian greenways such as bike trails

14. Do you agree that it is desirable that municipalities plan for concentrations of residential and commercial development to enhance the feasibility of public transit?

- A. Strongly agree
- B. **AGREE**
- C. Neutral
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly disagree

15. Which of the following types of road systems do you feel would work best for getting around in Chester County by private automobile?

- A. **A GRID SYSTEM (SUCH AS FOUND IN PHILADELPHIA AND BOROUGHES) WHERE THERE ARE MORE BUT SMALLER THROUGH STREETS WHICH PROVIDE MORE OPTIONS FOR GOING TO A DESTINATION, BUT ALSO MORE INTERSECTIONS AND LOWER SPEED LIMITS**
- B. A system of dead end cul-de-sac and arterials which provide fewer options for going to a destination, but also fewer intersections and high speed limits
- C. I feel they both are about the same
- D. No opinion

16. As Chester County grows, which of the following capital facilities do you think municipalities will most need to focus its resources on?

- A. Parks, recreation and cultural arts programs
- B. Schools
- C. **WATER AND SEWER SYSTEMS**
- D. Emergency and public safety services
- E. Other

17. What is the one best way to improve our water quality?

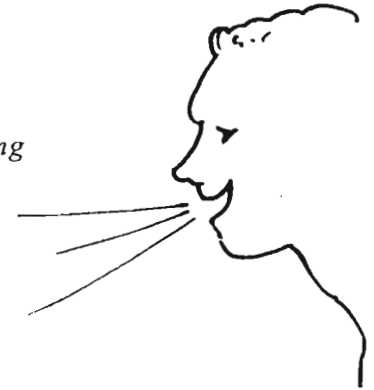
- A. **REQUIRE DEVELOPMENT TO CONNECT TO SEWER SYSTEMS**
- B. Keep livestock away from streams
- C. Require on-site water treatment such as biofiltration
- D. Provide regional water treatment facilities

18. **How should Chester County best ensure that our outdoor recreation facilities respond to needs of growth?**
- A. Focus on acquiring land for future park development
 - B. Focus on developing large community parks
 - C. ***FOCUS ON DEVELOPING SMALLER NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS***
 - D. Focus on developing more trails for bikes and walking
19. **What is your vision for the ideal relationship between your home and daily shopping needs?**
- A. My home to be within walking distance of most of my daily shopping needs
 - B. My home to be within walking distance of public transportation which would take me to my daily shopping needs
 - C. ***MY HOME TO BE LOCATED IN AN AREA SEPARATE FROM MY DAILY SHOPPING NEEDS AND TRAVEL BY PRIVATE AUTOMOBILE***
 - D. To live in a mixed-use area where my daily shopping needs were located in the same vicinity as my home
20. **What do you think is the most important challenge the County will face as it grows?**
- A. Meeting transportation needs
 - B. ***PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT/PRESERVING OPEN SPACE***
 - C. Meeting the need for affordable housing and human services
 - D. Meeting capital facilities requirements
 - E. Other

The following list of comments and observations were expressed by the participants in the second RURAL Visions Workshop. This provided, in part, a basis for developing the recommendations for the RURAL COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDE.

POSITIVE PREFERENCES

- ◆ *It looks like a farm*
- ◆ *Agricultural activities of any kind*
- ◆ *Pride of ownership of structures*
- ◆ *Historical and preservation theme of rural landscape*
- ◆ *Architecture of rural buildings*
- ◆ *Land uses not as important if rural character is reinforced*
- ◆ *Country roads preserved*
- ◆ *Road edges with stone walls, rail fences or hedgerows*
- ◆ *Signage that reflects an agricultural theme*
- ◆ *Some non-agricultural uses acceptable to maintain farm family environment*
- ◆ *Variation in building setbacks from roads*
- ◆ *Landscaping increases visual images for all land uses*
- ◆ *Villages reflect historical Chester County image*
- ◆ *Density is not major issue, location is*
- ◆ *Higher density in village settings is the preferred rural landscape*
- ◆ *Design elements have a direct bearing on visual preferences for rural landscape*
- ◆ *Diversity of community in a village setting*
- ◆ *Mushroom industry needs to be more aesthetically pleasing to preserve it*



NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS



- ◆ *Suburban design standards are not appropriate in rural environment*
- ◆ *Mobile home locations need better design criteria*
- ◆ *Large lot single family dwellings in random locations detract from rural image*
- ◆ *Minimal landscaping does not evoke positive images*
- ◆ *Sprawling land uses have significant negative impact on rural setting*
- ◆ *Non-agricultural activities (suburban traffic, junk yards) create negative images*
- ◆ *Architecture that does not support rural buildings' theme*

- ◆ *Family farm is in jeopardy because of increasing land values*
- ◆ *Untidy land uses are not consistent with rural ethic*
- ◆ *Signage that is suburban looking or over sized*
- ◆ *Utility land uses compromise rural vision*
- ◆ *Land use controls do not always support rural character*
- ◆ *Part-time farmers create compromises with rural land uses*
- ◆ *As agricultural uses disappear, so will rural character*
- ◆ *Conversion of some rural structures is not consistent with rural community image*



ROADS AND BRIDGES



+6.03 Average response
Unpaved road
Slide #1



+7.23 Average response
Road and hedge
Slide #5



+7.27 Average response
Rural road, rolling hills
Slide #2



+7.13 Average response
Entrance road
Slide #6



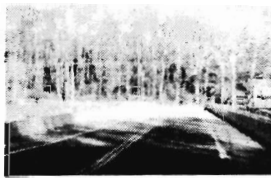
+7.36 Average response
Road and stone wall
Slide #3



+6.27 Average response
Stone wall bridge
Slide #7

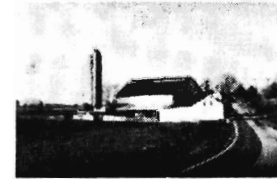


+7.06 Average response
Road with fence
Slide #4



+2.13 Average response
Contemporary decked bridge
Slide #8

RURAL ROAD EVOLUTION



+7.17 Average response
Road and farm
Slide #9



+4.44 Average response
Farm and roadside commercial
Slide #10



+1.59 Average response
Dairy farm and store
Slide #11

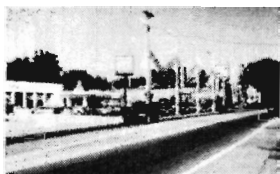


-1.07 Average response
Convenience store
Slide #12

BUILDING TYPES



-4.09 Average response
Auto repair facility
Slide #13



-4.20 Average response
Automobile dealership
Slide #14



-2.11 Average response
Four lane road
Slide #15



-6.39 Average response
Strip commercial road
Slide #16



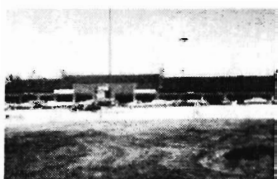
-7.26 Average response
Billboards
Slide #17



-4.17 Average response
Office building
Slide #18



-1.64 Average response
Convenience store
Slide #19



-1.06 Average response
Commercial facility
Slide #20



+ .90 Average response
Shopping center
Slide #21



+1.86 Average response
Village shopping center
Slide #22



+4.99 Average response
Village buildings
Slide #23



+0.06 Average response
Village and signs
Slide #24

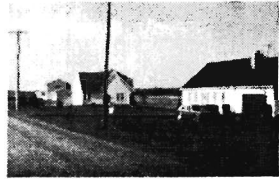


+4.31 Average response
Rural store
Slide #25



+4.18 Average response
Stone barn shop
Slide #26

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES



-1.80 Average response
Three single family homes
Slide #27



+4.51 Average response
Older village buildings
Slide #32



-5.64 Average response
Mobile home park entrance
Slide #36



-5.11 Average response
Numerous single family homes
Slide #28



+3.11 Average response
Newer village buildings
Slide #33



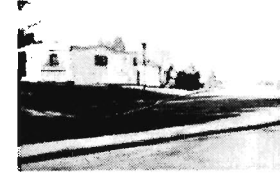
-5.60 Average response
Mobile homes edge
Slide #37



-1.44 Average response
Residential street
Slide #29



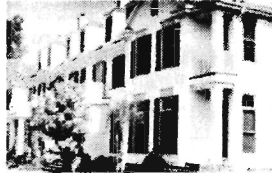
-3.47 Average response
Townhouses
Slide #34



-2.79 Average response
Mobile homes interior
Slide #38



-.36 Average response
Residential street with trees
Slide #30



+3.23 Average response
Townhouses
Slide #35



-3.83 Average response
Mobile home park entrance
Slide #39



+3.44 Average response
Two colonial-style homes
Slide #31

MANAGING DEVELOPMENT



**-1.77 Average response
Ridgeline development
Slide #40**



**-1.74 Average response
Large lot residential units
Slide #41**



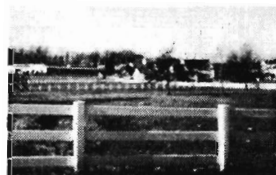
**+1.26 Average response
Multi-unit residential lots
Slide #42**



**-.99 Average response
Emerging residential units
Slide #43**



**-2.96 Average response
Multi-family residential units
Slide #44**



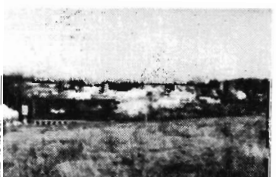
**+4.20 Average response
Residential units with fencing
Slide #45**



**-5.07 Average response
Cul-de-sac aerial photograph
Slide #46**



**+1.91 Average response
Crossroads aerial photograph
Slide #47**



**-2.97 Average response
Village cluster
Slide #48**



**+5.44 Average response
Mixed use agricultural dev.
Slide #49**



**+7.20 Average response
Trail
Slide #50**



**+8.01 Average response
Stream corridor
Slide #51**



**+8.10 Average response
Rolling hills
Slide #52**

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