

## Land Preservation Recommendations

*“...the goal of Morris Township’s Open Space Trust is to acquire open lands and waters to be retained in a predominantly natural or undeveloped state. These areas will supply resource-based recreation to the residents of Morris Township, create greenways and protect ecologically sensitive areas.”*

*--Executive Summary, 1997 Morris Township Open Space and Recreation Plan*

Included in this Open Space and Recreation Plan is the *Greenway Map* illustrating the land preservation recommendations listed in this section. The map details possible targets for preservation in town and provides a vision for Morris Township’s open space preservation program. Properties included in this *Land Preservation Recommendations* section will not necessarily be purchased for preservation. Inclusion on the *Land Preservation Recommendations* list indicates that the specific property has potential for preservation and recreational uses and is part of the proposed greenways and trails identified in the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Included in this section is a summary of the open space significance of these properties as well as the strategy that could be used to preserve the parcels. Additional funding opportunities can be found in the *Preservation Tools and Funding Sources* section of the Plan.

### ***Morris Township Greenways***

The greenways of Morris Township follow the stream corridors and natural areas of the Township. Focusing on connecting parks and protecting natural resources, the Township is protecting its water recharge areas and drinking water supplies for the region. In addition, the *Greenway Map* includes the Township’s Conservation Overlay Zone in the Washington Valley, as regulated by zoning ordinance 95-27.2. As stated in the ordinance, the purpose of the zone is to “assure that the natural, scenic and open space character of the lands within it will be retained.” The zone boundary is to coincide with the lands held by Morris County for protection of the Washington Valley. (*Adrian Humber, Township Planner*).

Linking parks, neighborhoods, and destination areas in the Township will bring people outside to enjoy the open spaces of the Township. Linking recreational resources and trails are identified as possibilities on the Greenways Map.

### ***Morristown Greenways***

In an effort to regionalize preservation efforts, the Town of Morristown’s greenways are depicted on the Township of Morris Greenways Map. The Great Brook Greenway and the Great Morristown Greenway will connect Township resources with the Town, linking communities and natural areas.

### ***Existing and Proposed Trails***

Patriots' Path, Loantaka Brook Reservation and the Traction Line Trail travel through Morris Township. The Open Space Committee envisions a network of walking, hiking, and bicycling trails throughout the Township.

### ***Scenic Vistas***

Scenic vistas identify Morris Township. From Washington Valley to the Traction Line Trail, residents are afforded spectacular views of the rolling hills, lush woodland, and winding streams.

### ***Recreational Facilities***

Residents involved with the Township recreation programs expressed concern at the fall 2003 Public Hearing about the field usage and field conditions. Facilities are being used year-round and are at risk of becoming damaged from over-use. The lacrosse program has seen an increase in the number of players and number of teams and there are not enough fields for the players. In addition, members of the recreational programs recommended that there be separate fields for the different sports to allow fields to rest between seasons. The Recreation Committee observed that there are not enough recreational opportunities and facilities in the southwestern portion of the Township. Working with Morris County, the Township may be able to answer some of their recreational needs through the development of the Greystone Complex into a county recreational fields and facility. In addition, a comprehensive multi-year plan for recreational field use and space may identify opportunities for diversifying field usage and recommending additional areas for new facilities.