

**UPPER SAUCON TOWNSHIP
LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
RESOLUTION NO. 2024-18**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF UPPER SAUCON
TOWNSHIP, LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA AMENDING THE
COMPREHENSIVE RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN FOR UPPER SAUCON
TOWNSHIP, DATED AUGUST 2020**

WHEREAS, Upper Saucon Township (hereinafter, "Township") is a Second Class Township organized and operating under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, the Township has various parks, trails, and open space lands for residents to enjoy; and

WHEREAS, the Upper Saucon Township Board of Supervisors (hereinafter, "Supervisors") strive to enhance recreation opportunities for residents and to preserve farmland and open space to the extent possible; and

WHEREAS, the Supervisors recognize the benefits of planning for the community's future park, recreation, and open space needs; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution No. 2022-20, the Supervisors adopted the Comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Plan for Upper Saucon Township, dated August 2020 (hereinafter, "Open Space Plan"); and

WHEREAS, by Ordinance No. 173, enacted July 30, 2021, the Supervisors authorized a referendum for registered electors of the Township to vote on the imposition of an additional earned income tax pursuant to Section 7.1 of the Open Space Lands Acquisition and Preservation Act (hereinafter, "Act"), as codified at 32 P.S. § 5007.1, to fund the acquisition of open space interests pursuant to the Act; and

WHEREAS, in the General Election occurring on November 2, 2021, the registered electors of the Township voted to approve the referendum; and

WHEREAS, by Ordinance No. 174, enacted March 14, 2022, the Supervisors adopted an additional earned income tax in the amount of 0.10% to provide funds for the acquisition of open space interests pursuant to the Act (hereinafter, "Open Space Tax"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ordinance No. 174, the Open Space Tax became effective January 1, 2023; and

WHEREAS, Subsection 7.2(a) of the Act, as codified at 32 P.S. § 5007.2(a), requires that the Township adopt an ordinance or resolution establishing procedures for reviewing open space property interests considered for acquisition by the Township, for rating the relative desirability of interests in particular parcels of real estate as open space, and for establishing the price the

Township will pay for open space interests before the Township may acquire open space interests pursuant to the Act; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Subsection 7.2(a) of the Act, the Township adopted Resolution No. 2023-10 on April 10, 2023, establishing the procedures for reviewing open space property interests considered for acquisition by the Township, for rating the relative desirability of interests in particular parcels of real estate as open space, and for establishing the price the Township will pay for open space interests before the Township may acquire open space interests pursuant to the Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 3 of the Act, as codified at 32 P.S. § 5003, requires that before the Township may acquire an open space interest in real property, such real property must have first been designated for open space uses in a resource, recreation, or land use plan recommended by the Township Planning Commission and adopted by the Supervisors; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Section 3 of the Act, paragraph 5 of Resolution No. 2023-10 mandates that open space interests in parcels of real property may only be acquired by the Township using Open Space Tax revenue if such parcels have first been designated for potential open space uses in the Township's Open Space Plan, the Township's Official Comprehensive Plan adopted April 11, 2022 (hereinafter, "Comprehensive Plan"), or the Township's "Official Map—Component 3" prepared by the Pidcock Company and dated October 27, 2009; and

WHEREAS, since the adoption of the Open Space Plan, the Supervisors have identified certain parcels of real property deemed suitable for potential open space use which were not designated as such at the time of adoption of the Open Space Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township engaged the firm of Simone Collins to update and amend the Open Space Plan; and

WHEREAS, Simone Collins prepared an amendment to the Open Space Plan consisting of eleven (11) pages and dated November 6, 2023, (hereinafter, "Amended Open Space Plan"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Code, *as amended*, 53 P.S. § 1001 *et seq.*, (hereinafter, "MPC"), copies of the Amended Open Space Plan were distributed for review and comment to contiguous municipalities, the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission ("LVPC"), the Southern Lehigh School District, and the Upper Saucon Township Planning Commission ("PC"); and

WHEREAS, at a public meeting on May 7, 2024, the PC unanimously recommended approval of the Amended Open Space Plan to the Supervisors; and

WHEREAS, the LVPC offered comments and recommendations concerning the Amended Open Space Plan in a review letter dated May 29, 2024; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Subsection 302(b) of the MPC, as codified at 53 P.S. § 10302(b), the Supervisors held a public hearing on June 10, 2024, for the purpose of accepting public comment and input concerning the adoption of the Amended Open Space Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Supervisors desire to adopt the Amended Open Space Plan as a companion, component, and supplement to the Open Space Plan and the Township's Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, a true and correct copy of the Amended Open Space Plan, including all maps, charts, and textual matter, is attached hereto as **Exhibit A** and made a material part hereof.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Upper Saucon Township, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, as follows:

1. The foregoing "Whereas" clauses are incorporated herein by reference and made a material part hereof.
2. Pursuant to Subsections 302(a) and (c) of the MPC, as codified at 53 P.S. §§ 302(a),(c), the Amended Open Space Plan, including all maps, charts, textual matters, and other matters forming a part of the Amended Open Space Plan, a true and correct copy of which is attached hereto as **Exhibit A** and made a material part hereof, is hereby adopted as a companion and supplement to the Township's Comprehensive Plan.
3. On matters relating to parks, recreation, and open space planning, the Supervisors shall be guided by the Amended Open Space Plan, however, they shall not be obligated to strictly implement the recommendations contained in the Amended Open Space Plan.
4. Except as modified by the Amended Open Space Plan, all other provisions of the Open Space Plan shall remain in full force and effect.
5. This Resolution shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until modified or rescinded by the Upper Saucon Township Board of Supervisors.
6. All Resolutions or parts of Resolutions in conflict with the provisions of this Resolution are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.
7. A true and correct copy of this Resolution shall be formally and officially appended to the Amended Open Space Plan.

[SIGNATURE PAGE FOLLOWS]


(Signature Page to Resolution No. 2024-18)

DULY ADOPTED, this 10th day of June, 2024, by the Board of Supervisors of Upper Saucon Township, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, in lawful session duly assembled.



CHAIRMAN

VICE CHAIRMAN



SUPERVISOR



SUPERVISOR



SUPERVISOR



SECRETARY

EXHIBIT A – AMENDED OPEN SPACE PLAN

UPPER SAUCON TOWNSHIP

Comprehensive Recreation & Open Space Plan



August 2020

Amended 11/05/2023

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Board of Supervisors

Brian Ferrell - Chairperson

Philip Spaeth- Vice Chairperson

Dennis Benner

John Inglis

Stephan Wagner



Township Contacts

Patrick M. Leonard - Special Projects Coordinator

Patricia Lang, AICP - Director of Community Development

Project Committee

Phil Spaeth - Township Supervisor, Vice Chair

John Inglis - Township Supervisor

Kimberly Stehlik - Park and Recreation Commission

Todd Bergey - Southern Lehigh School District

Thomas Gettings - Environmental Advisory Council,
Chairperson

Robert Kassel - Resident

Lloyd Ohl - Resident

Bridget Graver - Resident (Soccer League)

Chris Wayock - Resident (Lacrosse League)



Pat Stasio, Certified Park and Recreation Professional

SC# 23080.00

Upper Saucon Township Comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Plan

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reviewed on the Natural Resource Map (pg.37), Proposed Connections Map (pg.71), Park Service Area Map (pg.52), and the Open Space Map (pg.48). Sites that are adjacent to existing permanent preserved space are scored higher and show the importance of connecting to existing open space lands. Developed areas are scored higher as this will assist in providing open space in more densely populated areas. An additional score is placed on the parcel if the development is adjacent to a multi-family residential areas. Adjacency to trails is given a higher score to address connections in the Township. Historic sites may be an important factor for preservation. Public park service areas recognize that a parcel that may be important in underserved communities. Greenway limits pertain to the greenways identified in Chapter 2 and their incorporation of natural, cultural, and/or scenic features. Sewer and water services recognizes Act 537 existing and proposed facilities. Having parcels located within these zones will reduce the need for additional services to be applied on a parcel if it were to be developed.

Parcels to be Added to the Official Map for Acquisition Consideration

This section examines only the parcels not currently on the Official Map and are noted on the Proposed Open Space Map (pg.72). The parcels are described by the coinciding number placed on the map. As stated before, multiple parcels are shown with one number for clarity.

4 **Parcels 4** – These parcels should be added to increase the size of the area around Moyer Lake. Moyer Lake is a diamond in the rough. It already offers unique programming for catch and release fishing for children who normally may not have access to these types of activities. If the Township were to acquire all of the properties within this area, this would provide a large core habitat area that is within the Saucon Creek/Limeport Wetlands and would connect to Township Open Space, creating a large, ecologically important greenway. The properties lend themselves for passive recreation, access to the

lake, and educational opportunities in an area that is outside of the public park 3-mile service area.

7 **Parcels 7** – There are two parcels within this area to be considered. They both have steep slopes and are wooded. Since the parcels are completely surrounded by development, this area would serve the surrounding areas for ecological services and perhaps passive recreation.

8 **Parcel 8** – This parcel contains important hydrological functions such as hydric soils and headwaters that feed a tributary to Saucon Creek. It sits across from existing Township owned stormwater BMPs. If this land was acquired, it could provide a trail connection from the neighboring developments to the Hopewell Park. It also could be managed to help address water quality as it passes through the adjacent horse farm (parcel 10) and into Hopewell Park.

14 **Parcels 14** – These two parcels lie within the Saucon Creek floodway and are within the 100-year flood zone. They also lie within the Saucon Creek Greenway. Acquiring these properties should be considered with the other 2 parcels (parcels 12) shown along Saucon Creek to provide a trail for residents to access to Saucon Creek, as well as providing protection of riparian ecosystems.

20 **Parcels 20** – There are five parcels to be considered for acquisition by the Township. They are connected to the Lehigh County Scholl's Woods and Big Rocks area. These lands would increase the ecologically important forest core along the South Mountain area and provide passive recreation access to this unique geological area. Some of these parcels contain headwaters that may come from seeps within the gneiss rock formations of South Mountain.

21 **Parcel 21** – This parcel is Thomas Lake and provides no opportunity for development. What it could provide is walking access to passive recreation opportunities for people within the corporate center or visitors to the Promenade.

CHAPTER 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

22 **Parcel 22** – This is the site of the former Center Valley Club Golf Course. This area is underlined with limestone carbonate geology and has many constraints for development. This large parcel lies in the Saucon Creek floodway and 100 and 500-year flood zones. Currently, some existing trail infrastructure could be used to provide immediate use of the space for passive recreation. It would also build on parcels 12 and 14 and Township owned open space to create a larger area of preserved riparian ecosystem through the Saucon Creek Greenway. When connected to Township owned open space and the trail system on the HOA preserved open space; it would provide a trail system from Route 378 to Limeport Pike.

23 **Parcel 23** – This parcel is home of the historically important President Pump House within the Ueberroth Zinc Mine site. The Township has been in conversation with Lehigh University to preserve this land as an educational and passive recreation space. This engine house is the only surviving example of a Cornish-style, house-built pumping engine structure in the United States. Preservation of this site would also protect the cultural heritage for the Township. Additionally, this area has been identified by the Natural Heritage Inventory for being home to a threatened species.

24 **Parcel 24** – There are three parcels within this area and all are privately owned by the same party. These parcels are adjacent to the Saucon Valley Golf Club and preserving this land along Saucon Creek can increase the size of preserved riparian ecosystems. This area is already being farmed and has Prime agricultural soils.

31 **Parcels 31** – There are five parcels in this area and one is already identified on the Official Map. There are headwaters on site and some steep slopes over 15%. These parcels could provide passive recreation opportunities for residents in this area.

32 **Parcel 32** – This large parcel is the former home of Camp Helena and is the only large core of woodlands that exist in this part of the Township. Preserving this site as a wooded area should be a priority for the Township. Additionally, this is the highest scoring property on the parcel preservation matrix with a score of 29. It has both headwaters and aquatic life supporting streams on site. There are both steep slopes of 25% and important agricultural soils. This site offers passive recreation opportunities and environmental educational opportunities.

34 **Parcel 34** – This parcel is directly adjacent to Parcel 32 and would increase the size of that parcel





by an additional six acres. While this parcel only has 25% woodland at this time, it could be reforested to join Parcel 32 and become an even larger uninterrupted woodland.

35 Parcel 35 – This fully-wooded parcel is completely surrounded by residential properties. It also lays directly adjacent to the proposed Liberty Bell Trail and could act as both a local park and a trailhead.

Parcels Acquisition Priorities

After reviewing all the parcels that are existing and proposed for the Official Map, a list of 6 important land areas was made to assist the Township with prioritizing land acquisition. As stated before, municipal acquisition of lands for public open space is a complex process, but this list will help focus efforts of the Township for land acquisition.

Priority 1: Parcels 4 & 5 – These 9 parcels would create a larger greenway and preserve important core habitat of 106 acres (including the adjacent Township owned open space) within the Saucon Creek/ Limeport Wetlands. Additionally, this connection of lands would provide the Township with unique passive recreation opportunities such as trails, education, primitive

camping, and access to the lake for fishing and non-motorized boating in a part of the Township that lacks recreational facilities and opportunities.

Priority 2: Parcels 12, 14 & 22 – These 5 parcels total 224.5 acres within the Saucon Creek Greenway. Preserving lands along the Saucon Creek can assist with protecting floodways, riparian ecosystems, and water quality while creating passive recreation opportunities such as a trail that could stretch from Limeport Pike to Route 378.

Priority 3: Parcels 20 – The combination of these 5 properties would preserve an additional 68.2 acres in the South Mountain area. When combined with the adjacent Lehigh County Lands, it would add up to 144 acres of continuous core forest habitat and protection from development pressure. The parcels can provide for a more attractive access and hiking to Big Rocks Park and other passive recreation opportunities.

Priority 4: Parcels 32 & 34 – The home of the former Camp Helena and its neighboring parcel are the only large core of woodlands that exists in this part of the Township and would provide for over 200 acres of preserved open space in this corner of the Township. As stated before, Parcel 32 scored the highest of all parcels evaluated for preservation due to the many natural resources on the site.

CHAPTER 3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Priority 5: Parcel 23 – The site of the President Pump House and mining past is an important historical and cultural parcel that is important to the region. This 61.5 acre site is currently owned by Lehigh University. The Lehigh University has been using the historical parcel as a teaching opportunity with their architectural program to define the space for a historical park. Keeping this property high on the list is important if anything would happen with Lehigh University's interest in keeping the property.

Priority 6: Parcel 35 – This fully-wooded parcel lays directly adjacent to the proposed Liberty Bell Trail and is ideally located to serve as both a local park for Coopersburg and a trailhead for the proposed trail.

Priority 7: Parcels 8 & 10 – These two parcels would provide 35.3 acres of preserved open land that borders development and could provide a trail connection to neighboring Hopewell Park. The parcels would also serve as important stormwater management for the surrounding developed lands.

These 6 parcels do not address active recreation needs. Without complete understanding of demands for active field use in the Township, it would be difficult to appropriately prioritize the purchase of additional land to meet these needs. Currently, the majority of open space owned by the Township is used for active recreation. The need for active recreational space should be evaluated as new fields come on line at Hopewell Park and the possible conversion of Tumblebrook Golf Club into sports fields. The Township needs to work with the athletic groups to gain more understanding for field needs. New active sports game scheduling software will also assist the Township in understanding sports field use and needs. If after evaluating field use and it is determined that more fields are needed for active recreation, the Township should consider the former JCC (parcel 17) since there is already significant infrastructure in place to accommodate immediate active recreational use.

Information on the cost of developing a 100-acre farm vs preservation from *Opportunity Knocks: Open Space is a Community Investment* by Heritage Conservancy

Note: costs based on Central Bucks School District, 2002

Development of the "100-Acre Farm" - Costs to the Community

Calculate the Public School Costs for the Development

100	Farm Area Acres
<u> x 0.66</u>	Dwelling Units per Acre (Average lot = 1.5 acres per home)
66	New Homes
<u> x \$7,526</u>	Public School Costs Per Home
\$496,716	Public School Costs for the 66 New Homes Per Year

Calculate the Public School Revenues from the Development

66	New Homes
<u> x \$3,377</u>	Average School Tax Revenues Per Home (RE and EIT)
\$222,882	Public School Revenues for the 66 Homes Per Year

Calculate the Annual Net Shortfall from the Development

\$222,882 (revenues) - \$496,716 (costs) = -\$273,834 (shortfall) Per Year

Preservation of the "100-Acre Farm" - Savings for the Community

Purchase the Conservation Easements

Calculate the Cost to Purchase the Conservation Easements

100	Acres Purchased
<u> x \$16,982</u>	Average Cost Per Acre - Easements Purchase
\$1,698,200	Purchase Price of the Easements

Calculate the Break Even Period

\$1,698,200/\$273,834 (shortfall) = 6.2 Year Break Even Point

34

2020 Preservation Priorities
 Parcel Address - 1760 TAYLOR DR.

Parcel ID - 643439356218 19.52 AC Parcel Address - 1760 TAYLOR DR.

Resource	Conservation Value				Points
	4	3	2	1	
Parcel Size	25 AC +	10-25 AC	5-10 AC	> 5 AC	2
Water Resources					
Headwaters		Adjacent Parcel			No Resource
Stream On Site (Water Quality)	On Site supporting	impaired			No Resource
100 Yr. Flood Plain	75% +	50-75%	25-50%		> 25%
Land Resources					
Steep Slopes over 15% slope		50-100%	0-50%		No Resource
Steep Slopes over 25% slope	50-100%	0-50%			No Resource
Prime Agricultural Soils	50-100%	0-50%			No Resource
State Wide Importance Agricultural Soils		50-100%	0-50%		No Resource
Carbonate Geology	75%+	50-75%	25-50%		>25%
Woodlands Coverage	75% +	50-75%	25-50%		> 25%
Community Resources					
Adjacent to Permanent Preserved Land	Openspace	Permanent AG			No Resource
Adjacent to Single Family Residential Dev	Three Sides	Two Sides	One Side		No Resource
Add one point per side for Multifamily Dev.*	+1	+1	+1		No Resource
Adjacent to Trails (existing or planned)	Existing	planned			No Resource
Historic Sites			Yes		No Resource
Public Park 3-mile Service Area			Outside		No Resource
Within Greenway Limits (Creek or Highlands)			yes		No Resource
Within Public Water / Sewer Service Exist	proposed	Yes			No Resource
* Multifamily development is defined as: two family twin or duplex dwellings, single family attached dwellings, or multifamily apartments.					10

NOTES:
 • ADJACENT TO PARCEL 32, SINGLE LARGEST WOODED LAND MASS IN TWP.
 • CONTAINS STREAM

35

2020 Preservation Priorities
 Parcel ID - **642551419767** **6.41 AC** Parcel Address - **357 N. LIBERTY ST**

Resource	Conservation Value				Points
	4	3	2	1	
Parcel Size		25 AC +	10-25 AC	5-10 AC	0 > 5 AC
Water Resources					
Headwaters		On Site	Adjacent Parcel		No Resource
Stream On Site (Water Quality)		supporting	impaired		No Resource
100 Yr. Flood Plain		75% +	50-75%	25-50%	> 25%
Land Resources					
Steep Slopes over 15% slope			50-100%	0-50%	No Resource
Steep Slopes over 25% slope		50-100%	0-50%		No Resource
Prime Agricultural Soils		50-100%	0-50%		2
State Wide Importance Agricultural Soils			50-100%	0-50%	2
Carbonate Geology		75%+	50-75%	25-50%	1
Woodlands Coverage		75% +	50-75%	25-50%	3
Community Resources					
Adjacent to Permanent Preserved Land		Openspace	Permanent AG		No Resource
Adjacent to Single Family Residential Dev.		Three Sides	Two Sides	One Side	No Resource
<i>Add one point per side for Multifamily Dev.*</i>		+1	+1	+1	No Resource
Adjacent to Trails (existing or planned)		Existing	planned		No Resource
Historic Sites				Yes	No Resource
Public Park 3-mile Service Area				Outside	No Resource
Within Greenway Limits (Creek or Highlands)				yes	No Resource
Within Public Water / Sewer Service Exist		proposed	Yes		No Resource
* Multifamily development is defined as: two family twin or duplex dwellings, single family attached dwellings, or multifamily apartments.					20

NOTES:

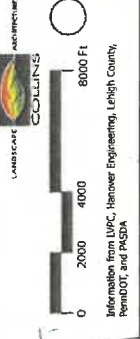
- . ADJACENT TO DOWNTOWN COOPERSBURG
- . ADJACENT TO PROPOSED LIBERTY BELL TRAIL
- . FULLY WOODED

This number coincides with the assigned evaluation number. All evaluations can be found in the appendix of this report.

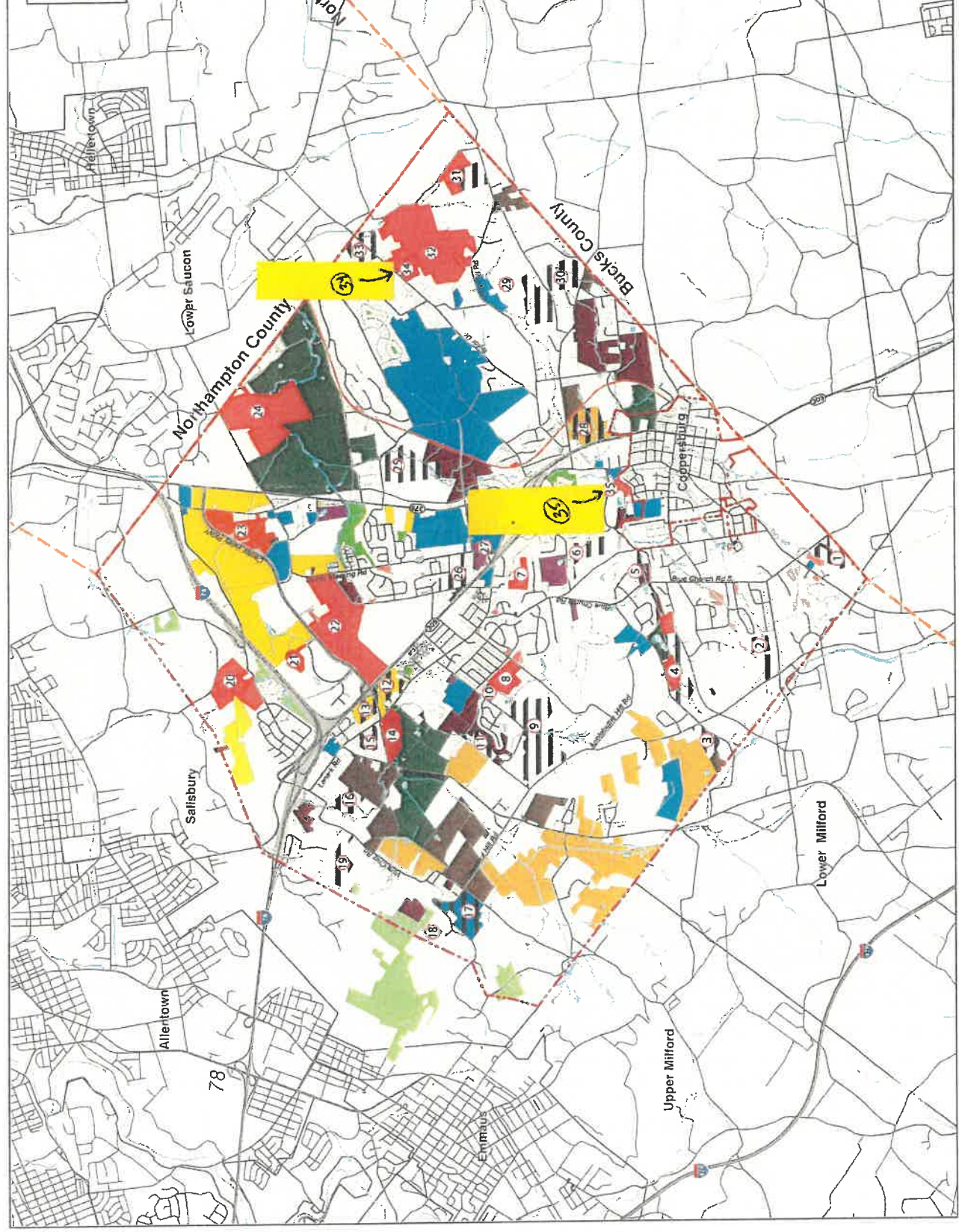
Proposed Open Space

Upper Saucon Township Comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Plan

- LEGEND**
- Township Owned Open Space
 - Township Owned Facility Space
 - Private Recreation
 - Conservation Land (Permanent)
 - County Owned Land (Permanent)
 - Institutional Land
 - HOA Conserved Land (Private)
 - Preserved Agriculture Land
 - Agriculture Security Land
 - Lehigh University Land
 - Township Stormwater Management Land
 - State Land
 - Considered Future Open Space as Identified by Official Map
 - Proposed Future Open Space
 - Saucon Rail Trail
 - Township Border
 - County Border
 - Municipal Border
 - Parcel Lines
 - Roads
 - Streams



Information from LRPC, Harver Engineering, Lehigh County, PennDOT, and PG&A



This number coincides with the assigned evaluation number. All evaluations can be found in the appendix of this report.



Proposed Open Space

Upper Saucon Township
Comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Plan

LEGEND

- Township Owned Open Space
- Township Owned Facility Space
- Private Recreation
- Conservation Land (Permanent)
- County Owned Land (Permanent)
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