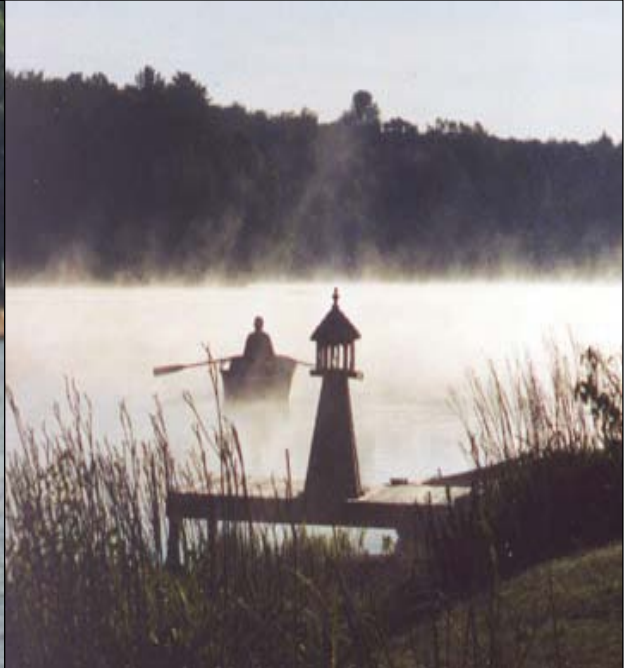


**PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH  
LUZERNE COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
Approved March 14, 2013**



**John R. Varaly, AICP  
Varaly Associates  
50 Finn Street  
Wilkes-Barre PA 18705-3229  
Phone (570) 574-3061 Fax (570) 829-6261  
jackvaraly@hotmail.com**

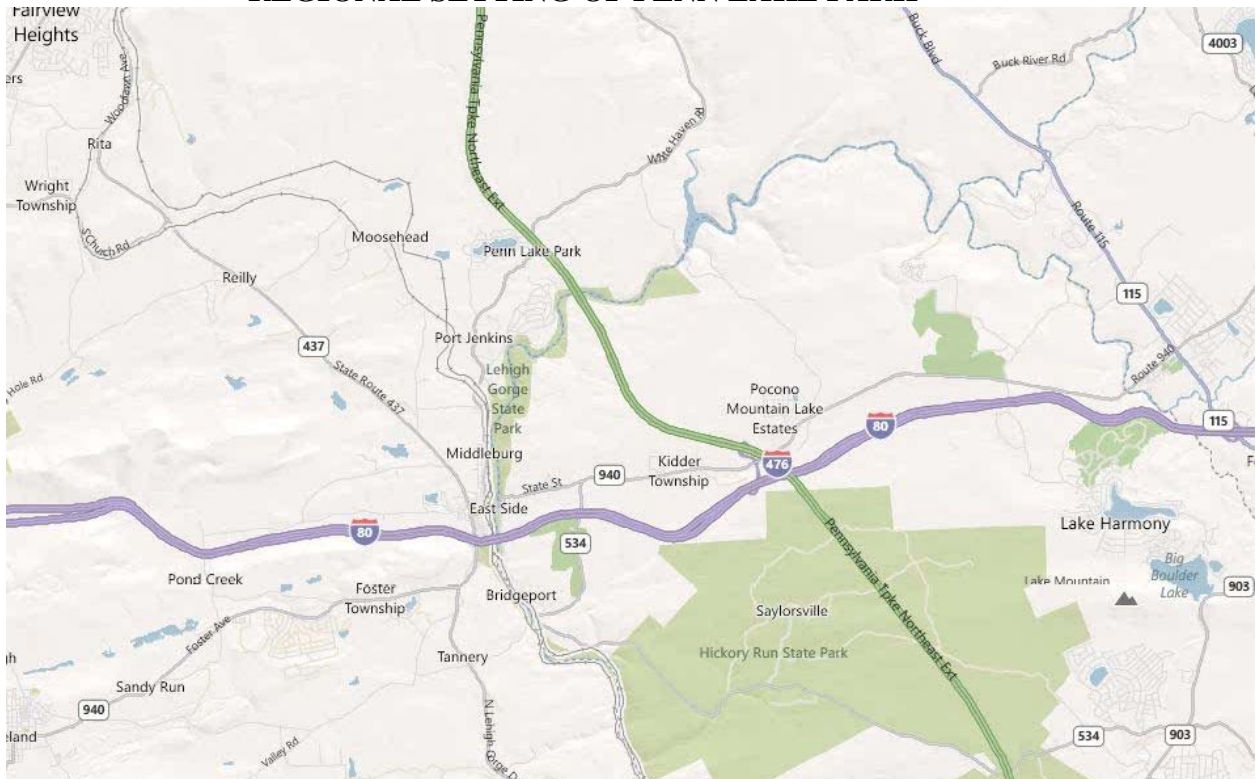
## CHAPTER 1

### REGIONAL SETTING AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH

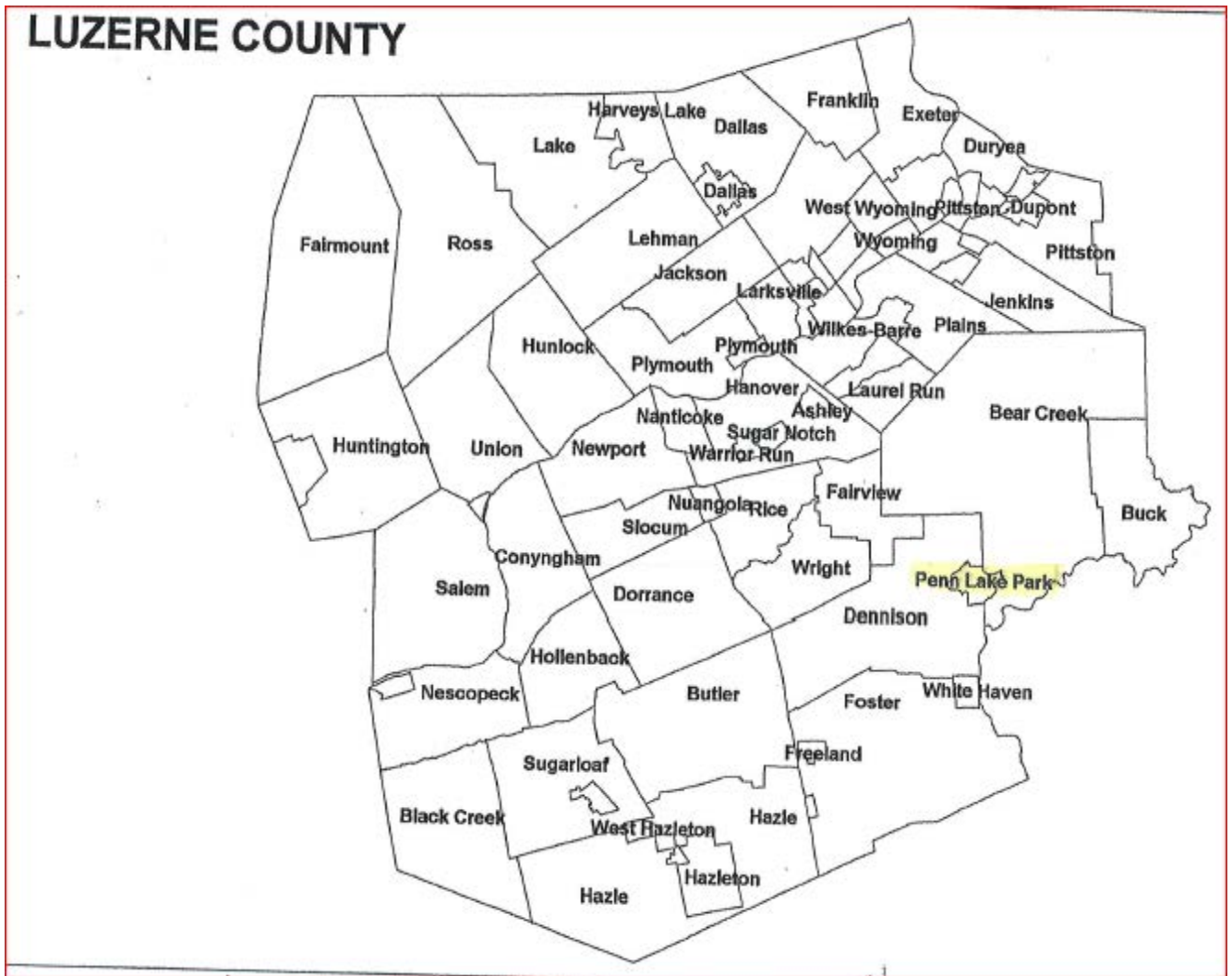
Penn Lake Park Borough is a relatively new Borough that was incorporated in 1974. The Borough which encompasses approximately 2 square mile of land was created from land formerly located in Dennison Township and Bear Creek Township. Penn Lake Park is located in the eastern most section of Luzerne County with a southerly orientation. It is bordered by Dennison Township to the north, south and west and by Bear Creek Township to the east.

Penn Lake Park Borough is a small and picturesque residential haven that is clandestinely located between White Haven Borough and Bear Creek Township in the Pocono Mountains. The Borough is located in close proximity to the Lehigh River to the east and the headwaters of the Lehigh River at the Francis Walter Dam. The Borough of Penn Lake Park is named after William Penn. The area which was to become Penn Lake was part of the virgin forest around the White Haven/Bear Creek area.

#### REGIONAL SETTING OF PENN LAKE PARK



Geographically within Luzerne County, Penn Lake Park Borough is located in the southeasterly section of Luzerne County along the fringe of the Pocono Mountains with Pocono resort communities immediately to the east. The Lehigh River separates Luzerne County from Carbon County with SR 940 and Interstate 80 having bridge crossing into Carbon County at White Haven Borough. Access to Penn Lake Park and its proximity to the regional highway systems have helped to fuel the second home market within the Borough. A significant number of seasonal residents are from the Philadelphia/New Jersey metropolitan area. Access to the Borough on Interstate 476 provides a relatively easy commute to and from Penn Lake Park.





## **A VIEW ACROSS THE LAKE**



## **THE GAZEBO AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE LAKE FROM CATER DRIVE**



The Penn Lake property was part of the Albert Lewis Estate. Albert Lewis' roots were in the lumber business. Lewis' father and uncle were lumbermen who came to Pennsylvania from Maine. The Lehigh River Ice Industry played an important role in the area which would eventually become Penn Lake Park Borough. The Ice Industry developed in the response to the urbanization and consumer demand in the later half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The railroad logistics and network within the region allowed shipments of cut ice to be transported to regional urban markets which included New York and New Jersey. Penn Lake was created as a result of the ice industry business interests of Albert Lewis who formed the Mountain Springs and Bear Creek Ice Companies in 1880. Records indicate

that the Bear Creek Ice Company cleared the land and constructed a dam along Wright Creek to create the area of land on which Penn Lake is now located.

**Albert Lewis Circa 1918**



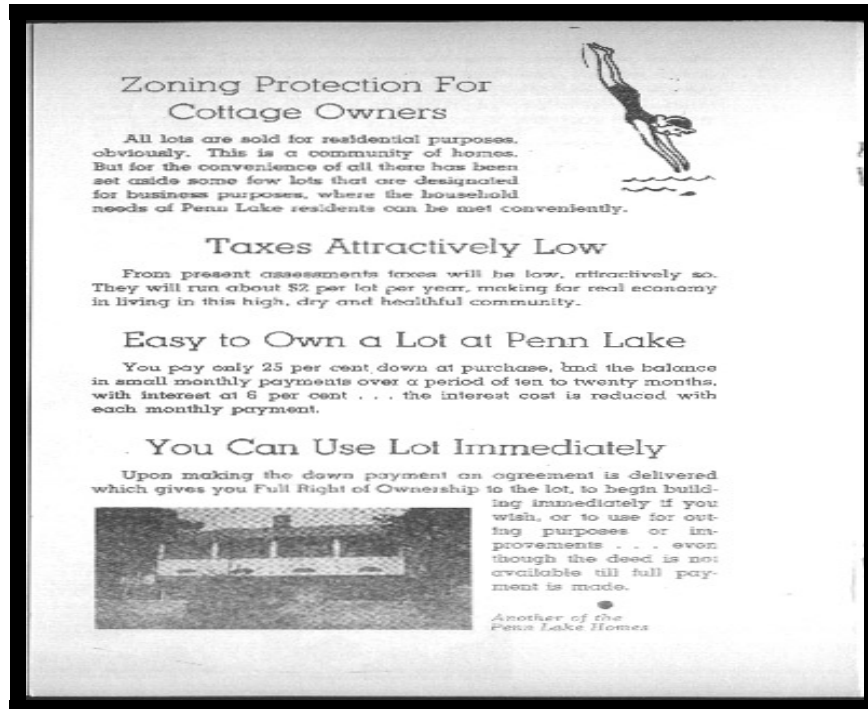
The “Ice House” which was built at Penn Lake adjacent to the rail line was located on the top of the dam. The ice was loaded onto the cars from the Ice House and shipped to regional markets. The Ice Industry flourished from the period of 1880 over the next 30 years. Records further indicate that severe weather conditions, including a hurricane in 1915 hit the area and destroyed the ice plants. Coupled with these natural disasters was the development of ammonia based cooling and refrigeration which allowed ice to be manufactured within the cities and closer to the customers. The dismantling of the ice plants at Penn Lake in 1917 effectively ended the Ice Industry at Penn Lake and its environs. Upon the death of Albert Lewis in 1923, the land around Penn Lake was conveyed from his estate to his daughter, Lily Lewis Kilner. It remained in her ownership until 1938 when the property around Penn Lake was sold to Harry F Goeringer and his wife, Mary C. Goeringer.

**Harry and Mary Goeringer Circa 1950**



The property, bought for real estate development, marked the beginning of the development of residential properties at Penn Lake. The land was surveyed and laid out in lots by the Sturdevant-Dilley Engineering Company, Civil Engineers of Wilkes-Barre. Houses started appearing around the Lake in late 1938. Some of our early residents included the Carters, the Evans, the Shinkles and the Smaltz family. Many of the original homes were cottages, some which remain evident today. The original marketing brochure for Penn Lake titled "Happiness for Sale" offered lots for the development of cottages making Penn Lake into a seasonal community.

#### PAGE FROM ORIGINAL MARKETING BROCHURE CIRCA 1938

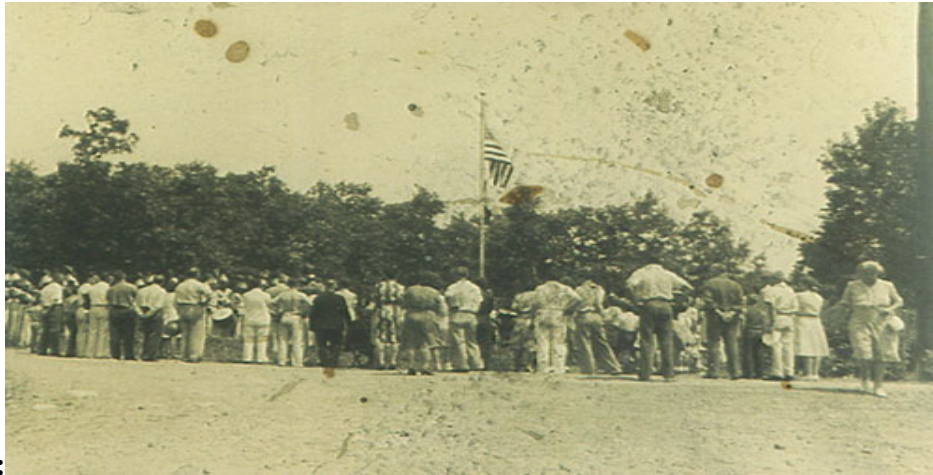


While Penn Lake Park began as a summer vacation community, it has increasingly become the place to live year round.

In 1941, the Penn Lake Association was formed and incorporated as a non-profit organization for the purpose of creating a governing body for the Penn Lake community. Although Penn Lake Park was not incorporated into a Borough until 1974, Penn Lake Association was and remains an instrumental element which functions in quasi-public fashion in the provision of civic, social, and educational programs and services for the Borough. The Community Building which was constructed in 1941 was and remains the focal point for all activities sponsored by the Association and serves the Borough for meetings regarding municipal affairs.

In 1976, Penn Lake Park was incorporated and became a Borough with its own Mayor and Borough Council. The Borough was formed out of land formerly located in Dennison Township and Bear Creek Township. Penn Lake since its inception in 1938 has historically had a small year round population base of less than 300 persons up to the 2010 Census.

### **COMMUNITY HOUSE DEDICATION**



**8/8/1943:**

The Borough values its character as a rural lake community with an idyllic setting. Changes are evident however; the most noticeable of which is an increasing population much of which is related to the conversion of cottages and seasonal housing into year round dwellings. In some cases such homes are properties which have been held by the same family for two or more generations. The aging population of baby boomers owning property in the Borough is often opting to take advantage of the environmental attributes of the Borough for their retirement years. The other factor that will play a role of population of the Borough is amount of open space available for potential development. Land use policies developed within the context of this Comprehensive Plan are intended to play a vital role in shaping the landscape of the Borough within the context of preserving the character of the Borough which is a fundamental theme and goal of this Comprehensive Plan.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH COMMUNITY SURVEY**

The Penn Lake Park Community Survey is viewed as the initial component in preparing this Comprehensive Plan for the Borough. The Community Survey was undertaken by the Penn Lake Planning Commission in 2009. The Borough Planning Commission took full responsibility for drafting, distributing, collecting and tabulating the results of the Community Survey. The results of the Community Survey were published in a report dated May 23, 2009, which is attached as an Appendix to this Chapter along with the Survey. The purpose of the Community Survey was designed to elicit citizen input on a variety of topics that could be considered within the context of the Comprehensive Plan. The Borough Planning Commission believed that citizen input was a vital necessity to ensure diverse views and opinions could be considered in drafting the Comprehensive Plan. The outreach aspect of the Community Survey served the purpose of allowing citizen participation for residents and property owners who do not normally attend Borough meetings. While the following provides a summary of some of the major findings and results and results of the Community Survey, a complete review of the total responses is suggested for a better understanding of citizens' views in Penn Lake Park.

The Survey was distributed to all households and property owners within the Borough as a mail-out/mail-back process with postage included for returns. The concept was to allow all households the opportunity to participate in the Survey. It should be noted that there are 141 households (2010 Census) within the Borough representing 308 permanent year-round residents. The Borough has a substantial population of seasonal residents, many who while spending a significant amount of time at the Borough, are not included by the Census within the Borough's household or population count. Nonetheless, the seasonal population represents an important element to the Borough with some estimates indicating that the Borough's population may double during peak summer months. A total of 226 Surveys were mailed to households and property owners in the Borough representing a 100% contact rate of both permanent and seasonal residents. It is assumed that 141 surveys were sent to households, representing permanent residents of the Borough, while 85 surveys were mailed to property owners living



outside of the Borough classified as seasonal residents. The Borough Planning Commission established a target goal of a 25% to ensure the final results provided an accurate representation of citizens' input. A total of 88 surveys were returned representing a response rate of 39%; which is a significantly high response rate for such type of surveys. Fifty five (55%) percent of the returned surveys represent responses were from residents in year-round households. Thus nearly half of all Borough year-round households (48%) responded to the Survey and similar return rate (47%) was generated by property owners classified as seasonal residents. Thus it is noted that the survey results were both broad-based and valid for consideration and incorporation into the Comprehensive Plan.

As one will note in reviewing the geographic distribution of responses more than half of them (63%) were from households along Lakeview Drive, which is not surprising as it is the longest and most populous street within the Borough. A total of 67% of all respondents indicated that they have resided and/or owned property within the Borough for more than 10 years, with 46% of all respondents having a history with the Borough that exceeds 20 years. The longevity factor somewhat favors and ensures the accuracy of responses to questions within the Survey.

As one reads through the Survey Report, and overriding theme of conservation of natural resources and the historic characteristics which define Penn Lake Borough to be the most overriding issues of concern. While the responses to the question, "*What attracted you to reside in Penn Lake?*" have variations in their wording, an amazing 70% of all responses centered upon environmental features that make up a fabric of the community. Borough residents further underscored the importance of land use issues in their response to the question that asked residents: "*What do you believe to be the most important change that should occur that would benefit all residents of Penn Lake?*" A total of 25% of the respondents indicated that better and more equitable enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance was required, with the suggestions that replacing the Zoning Officer in 2009 would represent the needed solution.

While growth, change and transition are inevitable, the key challenge to the Borough will be its management of these factors to ensure they do not negatively impact upon the features valued most by Borough residents, with the protection of the natural features of the Borough and its

character of paramount importance. While the Community Survey cannot and is not intended to solve problems of the Borough, it provides Borough Officials with first-hand citizen responses in identifying problems and concerns for the allocation of Borough resources in addressing such issues. The Community Survey will help enable the Borough to be proactive rather than reactive as a first step in planning for its future.

---

**Penn Lake Borough  
Luzerne County, Pennsylvania**

**Penn Lake Borough  
Comprehensive Plan  
Community Survey Results**

---

**May 23, 2009**

Results Compiled by Members of the Penn Lake Planning Commission:

Barbara Sudimak  
Jill Rosenstock  
Carol Winters  
Kathy Donaldson  
Jerry Dailey

## Survey Results as presented by the Penn Lake Planning Commission (PLPC) on May 23, 2009

The PLPC is totally committed to preparing a Comprehensive Plan for our community, which is mandated by law as a Borough in Pennsylvania. Part of that process is data collection in the form of a community survey. This survey is a preliminary step to the development of a Comprehensive Plan.

We are going to use this survey to open up the planning process by accessing community-wide values which you provided and document our citizen interests. Questions were chosen based upon State approved requirements. Generally a Professional Planner conducts this type of survey, but in order to save money for the Borough, the Planning Commission took on this huge undertaking by developing the survey, tallying, analyzing and presenting the results. In order to assure that our survey met State requirements, it was reviewed and approved by a Professional Planner before distribution to the community. This effort by the Planning Commission has saved the Borough between \$10,000 - \$15,000.

### **Why do we need a Comprehensive Plan?**

Borough's are required to have a Comprehensive Plan by the State of Pennsylvania. The objective of a Comprehensive Plan is to conserve natural resources, while properly managing development throughout the Borough. It is designed to be both issue-oriented and citizen-oriented from the outset with continued citizen participation throughout the process. A Comprehensive Plan is an educational document providing discussion of conditions, issues, opportunities, and identifies resources that are worthy of protection and preservation. This process organizes the community for the future by creating a planning "blueprint" for our land use patterns of tomorrow. It is a basis for implementation techniques such as land use ordinances, official maps, and capital improvement programs throughout the community. *We, as a Borough, are less likely to obtain any substantial Government grants without a Comprehensive Plan.*

An example of what a Comprehensive Plan did for a local community in our area is a grant Nanticoke received in May for \$950,000 for a Recreation Center.



---

***A Comprehensive Plan can help Penn Lake Borough by addressing:***

- Dam Maintenance
- Open space preservation
- Recreation opportunities

As well as, anything that can improve our community based upon the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan. It will provide a means of planning for future generations those environmental, historic, scenic, cultural, agricultural and economic resources, which make this area special to those who live here.

No one person, agency or group controls the development process. Government's responsibility is to provide a framework for change. Without a framework or plan, the development process is reactive.

A Comprehensive Plan will work proactively to assure that the future of our community will be shaped by this municipality's own vision, rather than by reaction to forces acting upon us.

The next step in this process is forwarding our survey results to a Professional Planning consultant. With assistance from a Professional Planning consultant, we will submit a grant application, and begin formulation of our Comprehensive Plan. We will then be notified when grant money is available for us to proceed.

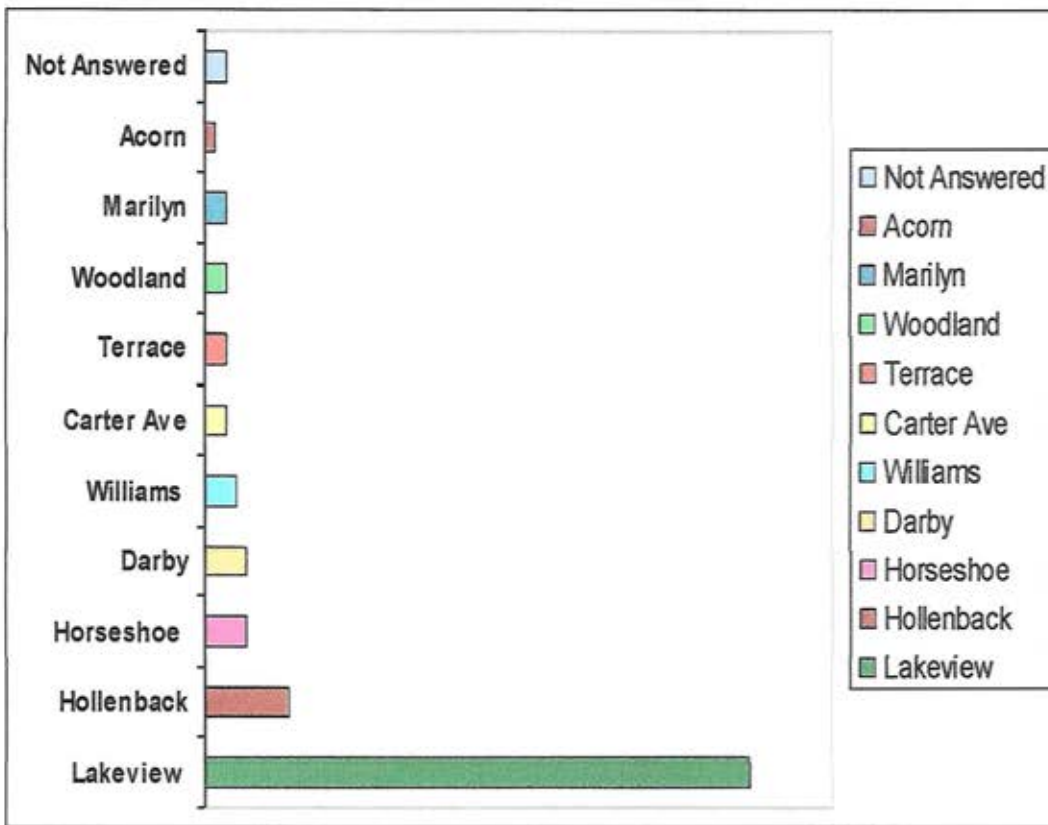
We will keep the community informed of our progress by posting updates on the [www.pennlake.org](http://www.pennlake.org) website.

**Thank you for your support,  
PENN LAKE PLANNING COMMISSION**

---

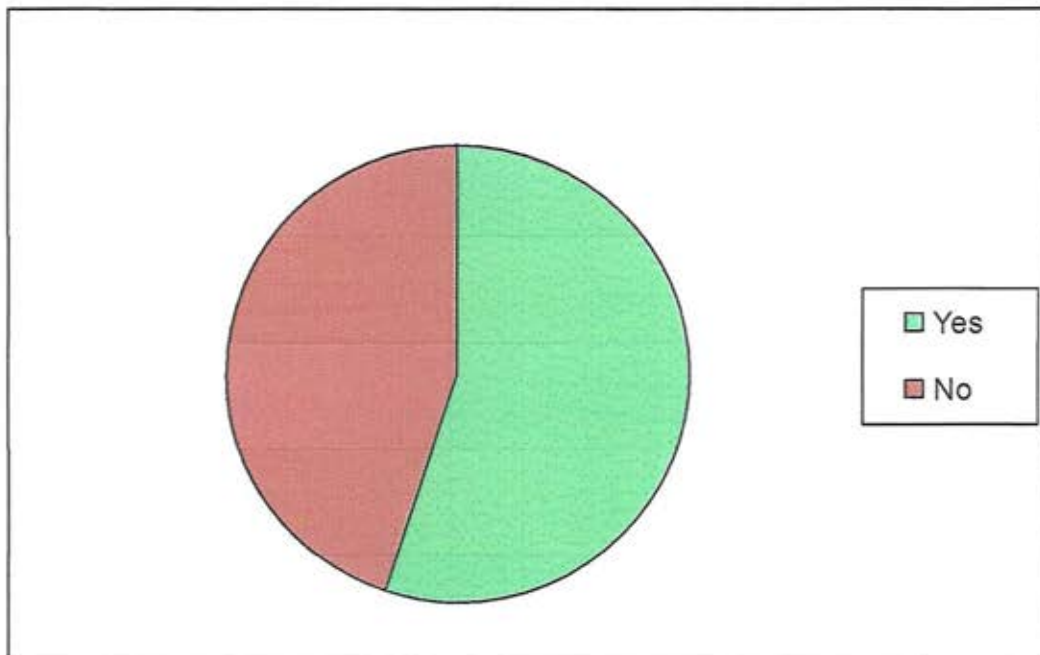
## Question 1

**Name of Road or Street Which Your Home Fronts Upon**



Lakeview	63%
Hollenback	10%
Horseshoe	5%
Darby	5%
Williams	4%
Carter	2%
Terrace	2%
Woodland	2%
Marilyn	2%
Acorn	1%
No Response	2%

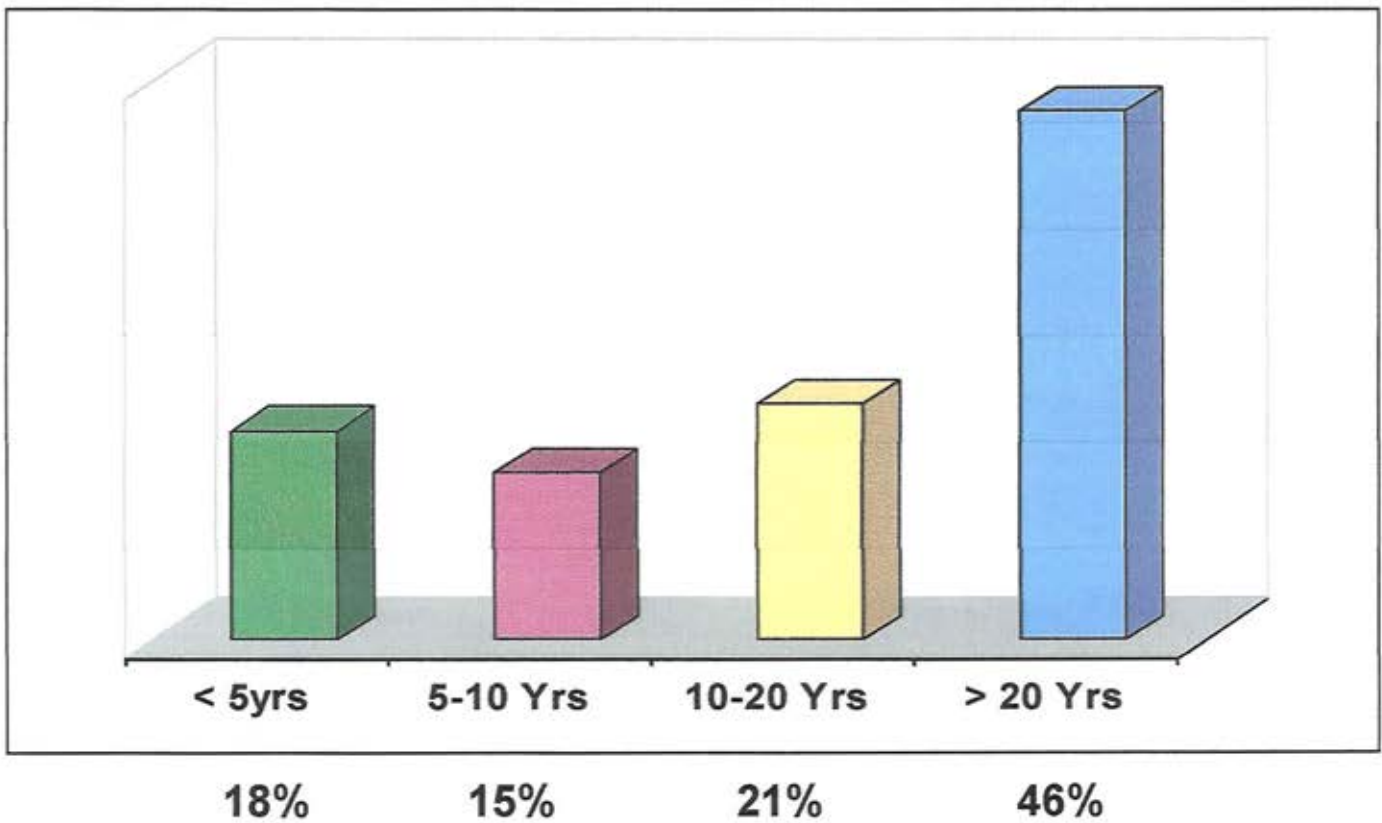
**Question 2**  
**Are You a Year Round Resident?**



**55% - Yes**  
**45% - No**

### **Question 3**

**How Long Have You Lived at or Owned Your Current Residence?**

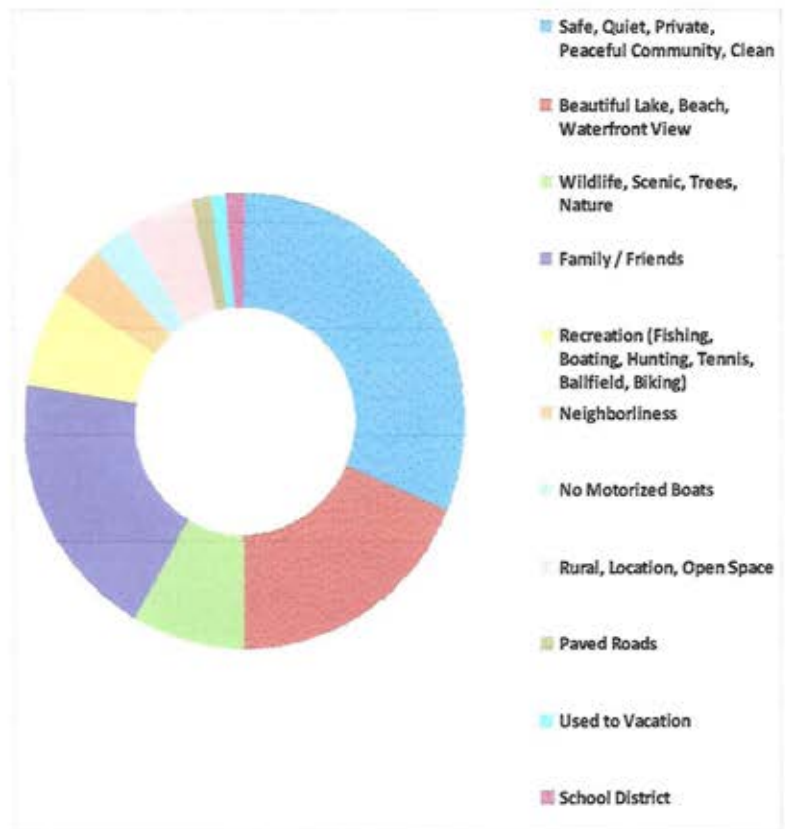




## Question 4

### What Attracted You to Reside in Penn Lake?

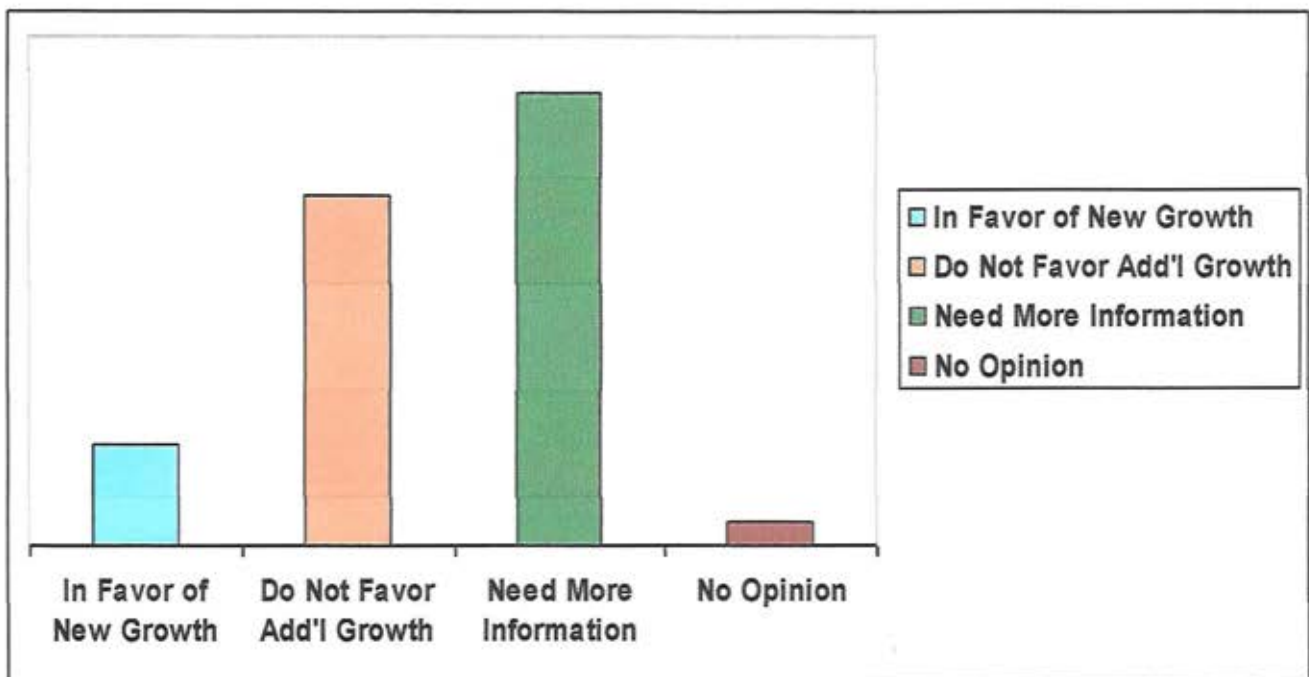
Safe, Quiet, Private, Peaceful	31%
Family / Friends	19%
Beautiful Lake, Beach, Lakeview	19%
Wildlife, Scenic Trees, Nature	8%
Recreation (Fishing, Boating, Hunting, Tennis, Ball field, Biking)	7%
Rural Location, Open Space	5%
Neighborliness	4%
No Motorized Boats	3%
Paved Roads	1%
Used to Vacation Here	1%
School District	1%



*\* Multiple comments received on individual surveys for each category – total 156 comments*

## **Question 5**

**Which Statement Best Describes Your Position  
on the Possibility of New Growth & Development?**



**11% - In Favor Of New Growth**

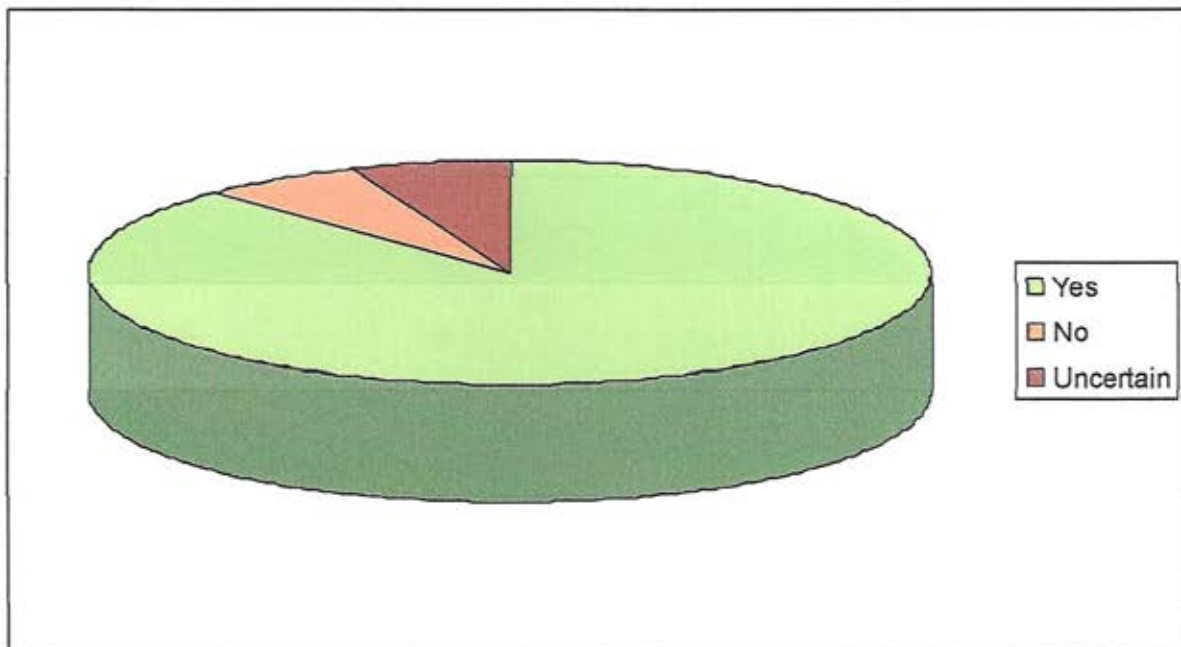
**38% - Do Not Favor Of New Growth**

**49% - Need Additional Information**

**2% - No Opinion**

## **Question 6**

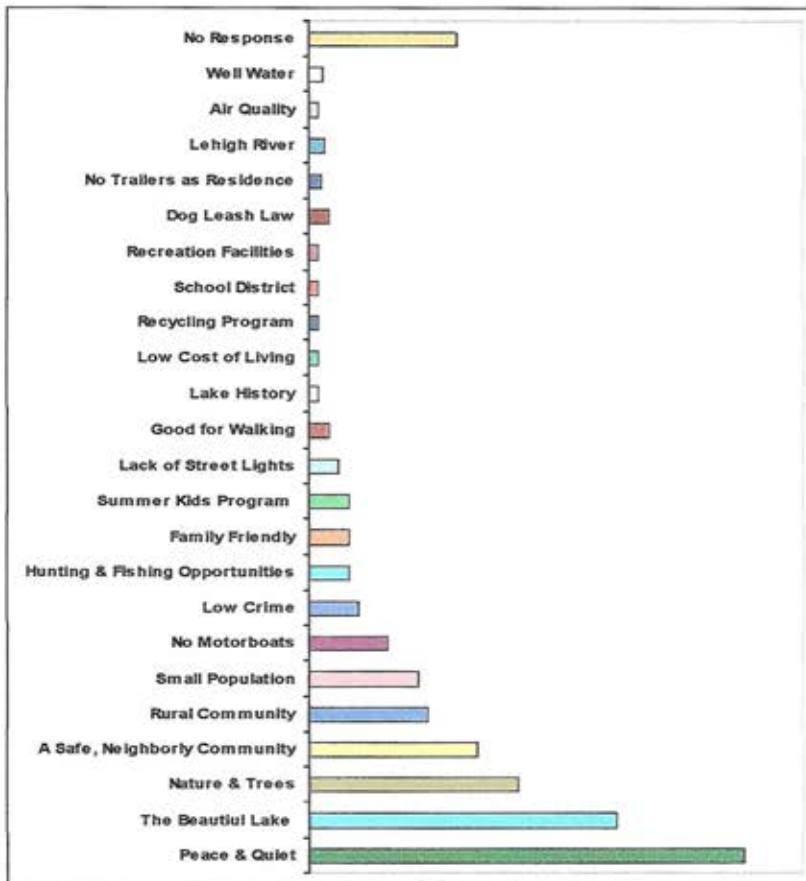
**Would You Support Local Ordinances Designed  
to Conserve Open Space & Existing Environmental Features?**



Yes	88%
No	6%
Uncertain	6%

## Question 7

**In Your Opinion, What Do You Believe to be the Most Positive Aspects or Features of Residing in Penn Lake?**



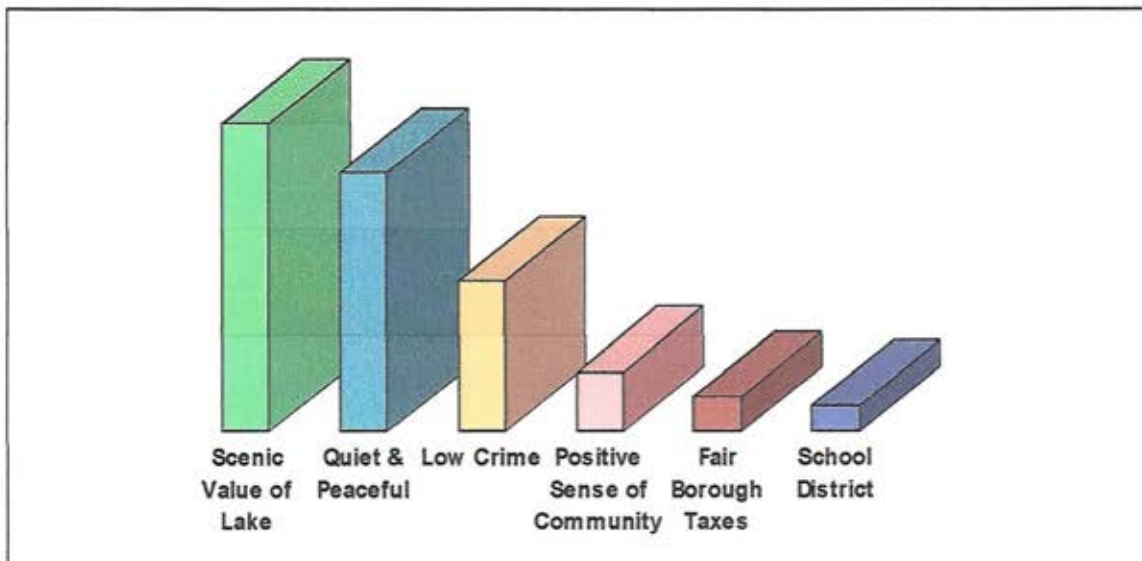
*\* Multiple comments received on individual surveys for each category – total 191 comments*

Peace & Quiet	23%
Beautiful Lake	16%
Nature & Trees	11%
Safe, Neighborly Community	9%
Rural Community	6%
Small Population	6%
No Motorboats	4%
Low Crime	3%
Hunting & Fishing	2%
Family Friendly	2%
Summer Kids Program	2%
Lack of Street Lights	2%
Good for Walking	1%
Lake History	1%
Low Cost of Living	1%
Recycling	1%
School District	1%
Recreation Facilities	1%
Dog Leash Law	1%
No Trailers as Residence	1%
Leigh River	1%
Air Quality	1%
Well Water	1%
No Response	8%



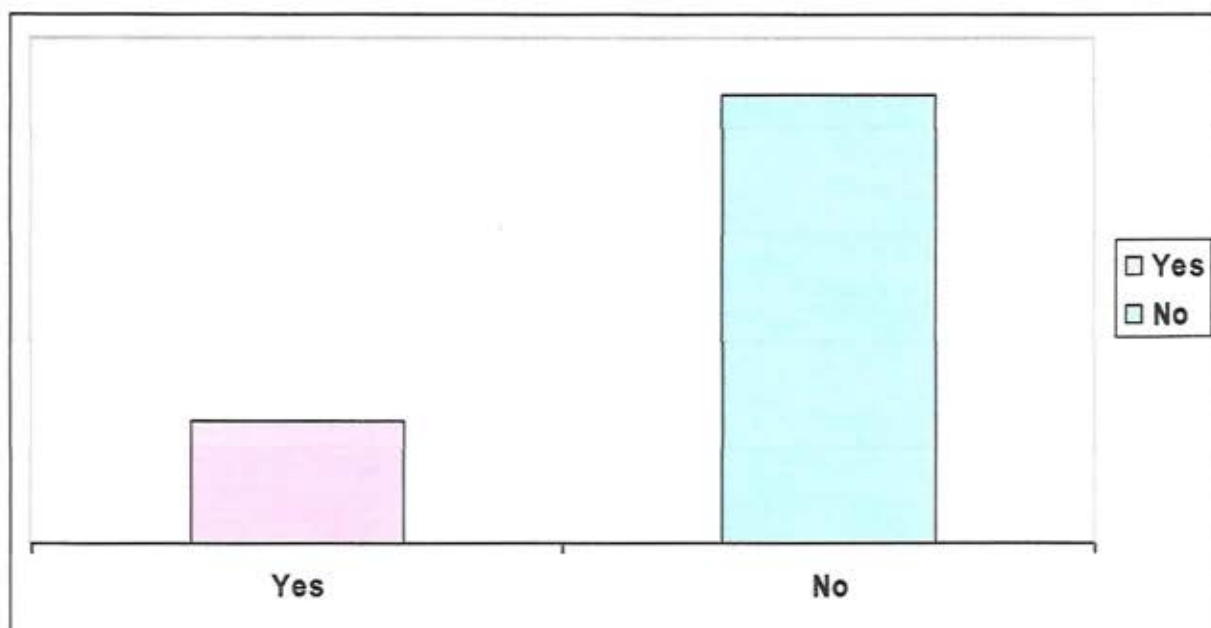
## **Question 8**

**Rate the Following Aspects of Residing in Penn Lake**



Scenic Value of Lake	37%
Quiet & Peaceful	31%
Low Crime	18%
Positive Sense of Community	7%
Fair Borough Taxes	4%
School District	3%

**Question 9**  
**Do You Have Any School Age Children?**

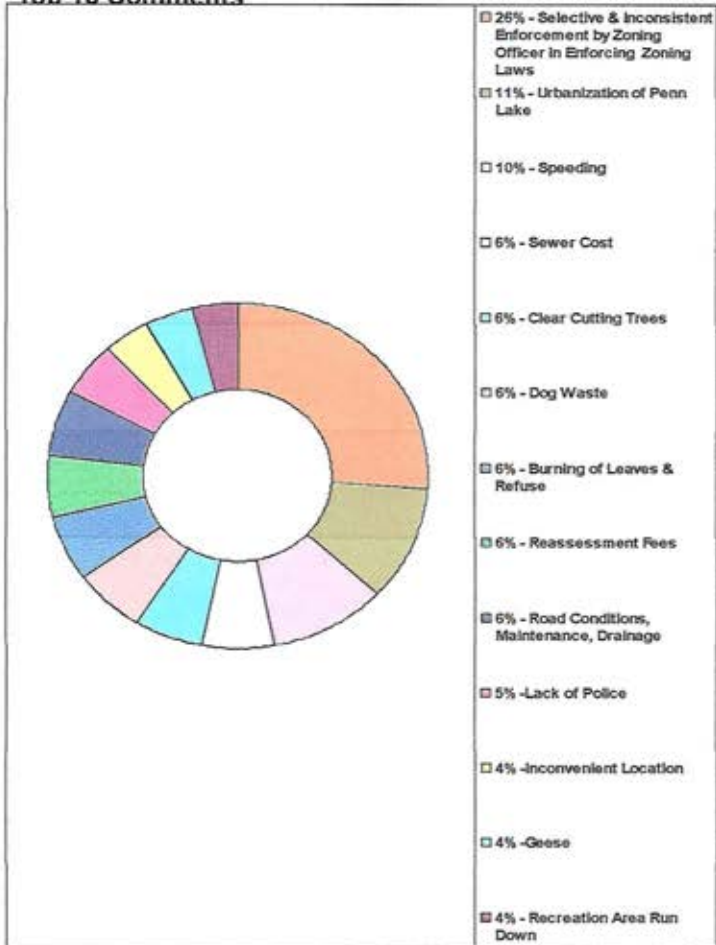


Yes	21%
No	76%
No Response	3%

## Question 10

### What Do You Believe To Be the Most Negative Aspects or Features of Residing in Penn Lake?

**Top 13 Comments**



**Additional Comments**

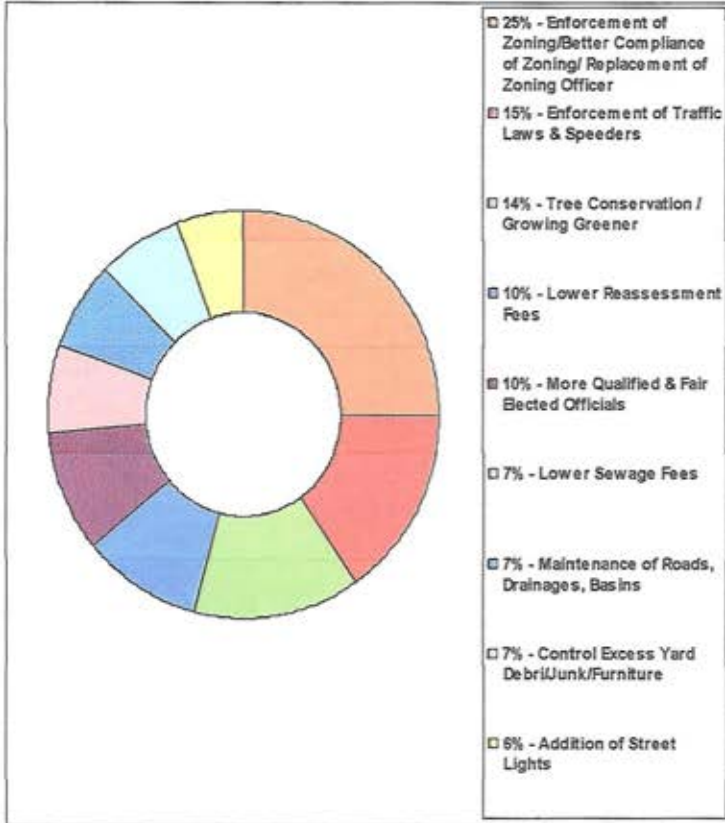
Excessive Junk & Unlicensed Vehicles on Residential Property	Aggressive Realtors
Uncontrolled Development of Wetlands	Too Much Regulation
Garbage Fees	Boat Storage Issues
Stray Cats	Not Sure of Borough's Future
Lack of Association Support	Lack of Privacy
Excess Sea Weed & Lily Pads	Loud Parties
Barking Dogs	Not Enough Children
Lake Upkeep	Trash Bag Limit Too Small
Turnpike Noise	Lack of neighborly Feeling
Poor Communication between Local Govt & Residents	No Store
Divide between Summer Residents & Full-Timers	Association Having Too Much Power
Run Down Homes	Too Many Modular Homes
Restrictive Shed Ordinance	

\* Multiple comments received on individual surveys for each category – total 100 comments

## Question 11

**What Do You Believe To Be the Most Change That Should Occur That Would Benefit All Residents of Penn Lake?**

### Top 9 Comments



### Additional Comments

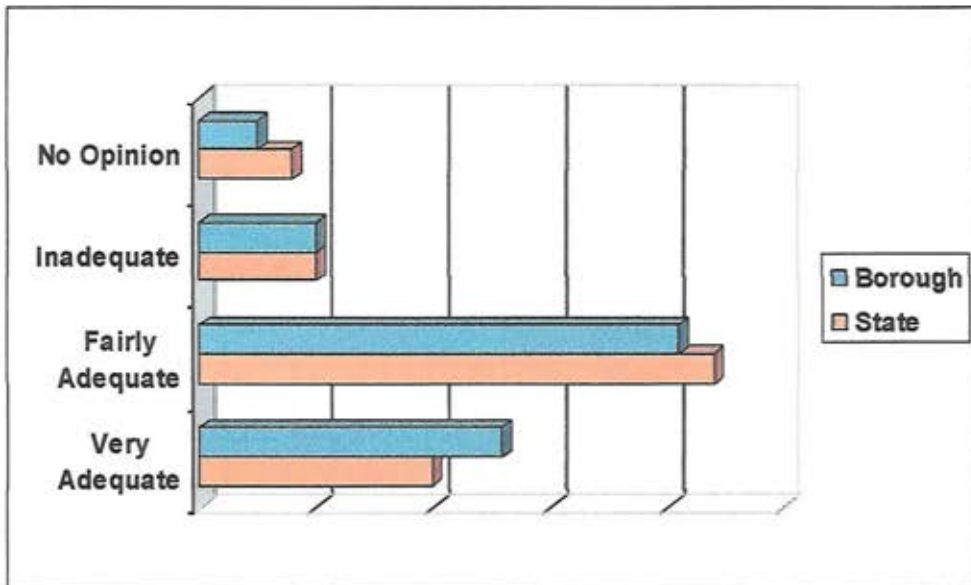
Excessive Snow Removal Cost	Upgrading Beach & Recreation Areas
More Children	Pagoda Area Upkeep
Lack of Support for Association	Run Down Bulletin Board
More Year-Round Social Events	More Bulk Pickups
Widen Roads	Dog Waste Control
Lack of Community Pride	Entrance to Turnpike from Penn Lake
Regulation of Fireworks	Add Community Compost Area
Lily Pad / Seaweed Removal	Less Power to Association
Burning Ban	Eliminate Chronic Complaining
Golf Course & Restaurant	Internet Service

*\* Multiple comments received on individual surveys for each category – total 72 comments*



## Question 12

**Please Rate the Following Various Services  
for Maintenance of Roads & Highways**



### STATE

Very Adequate	24%
Fairly Adequate	54%
Inadequate	12%
No Option	10%

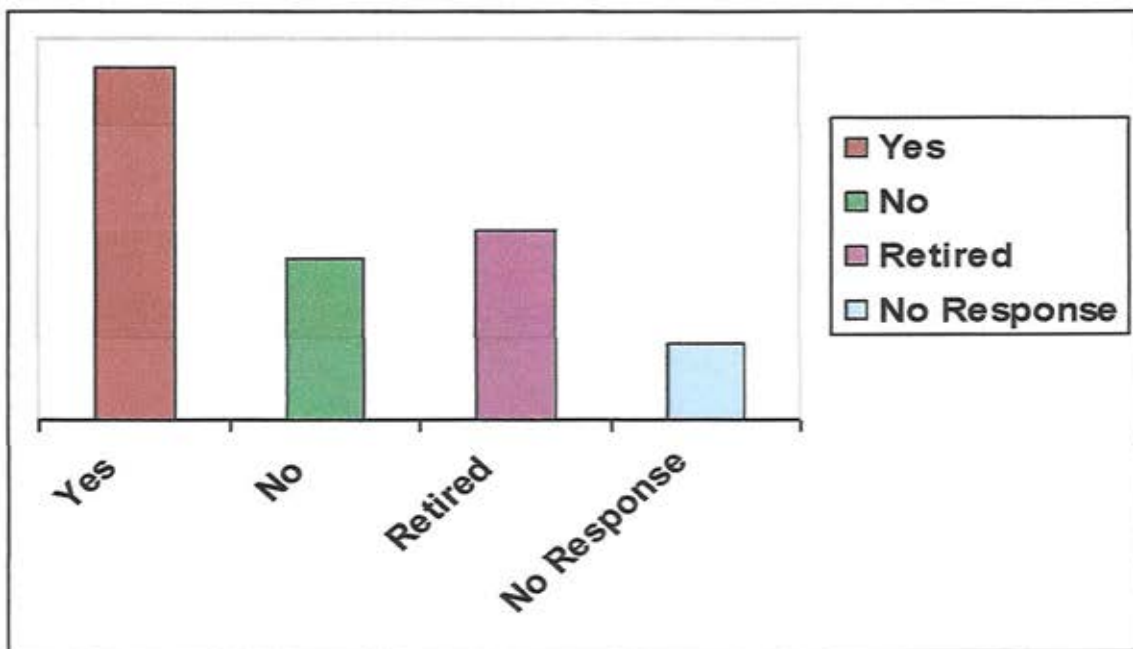
### BOROUGH

Very Adequate	32%
Fairly Adequate	50%
Inadequate	12%
No Option	6%

### Additional Comments

- Poor Drainage
- Road is bad coming into Penn Lake from stone quarry
- People plowed in by snowplow truck
- Pothole on Terrace Dr.
- Street signs need replacing

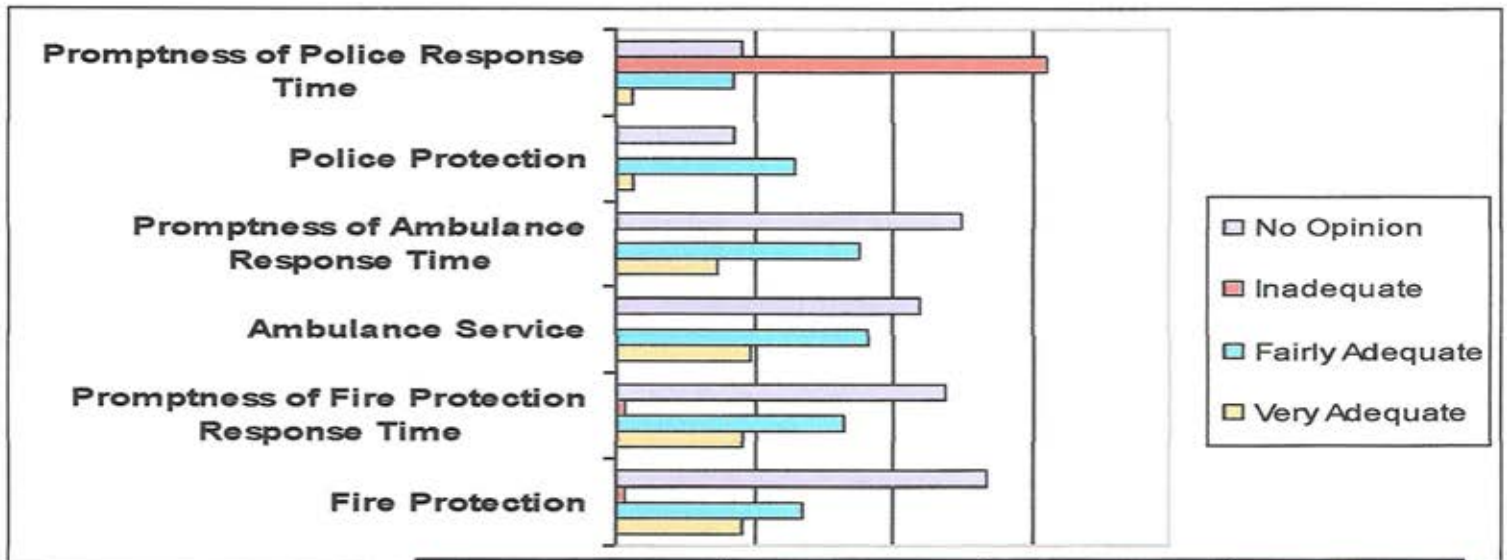
**Question 13**  
**Do You Commute to Work?**



Yes	45%
No	21%
Retired	24%
No Response	10%

## Question 14

### Please Rate the Following Emergency Services



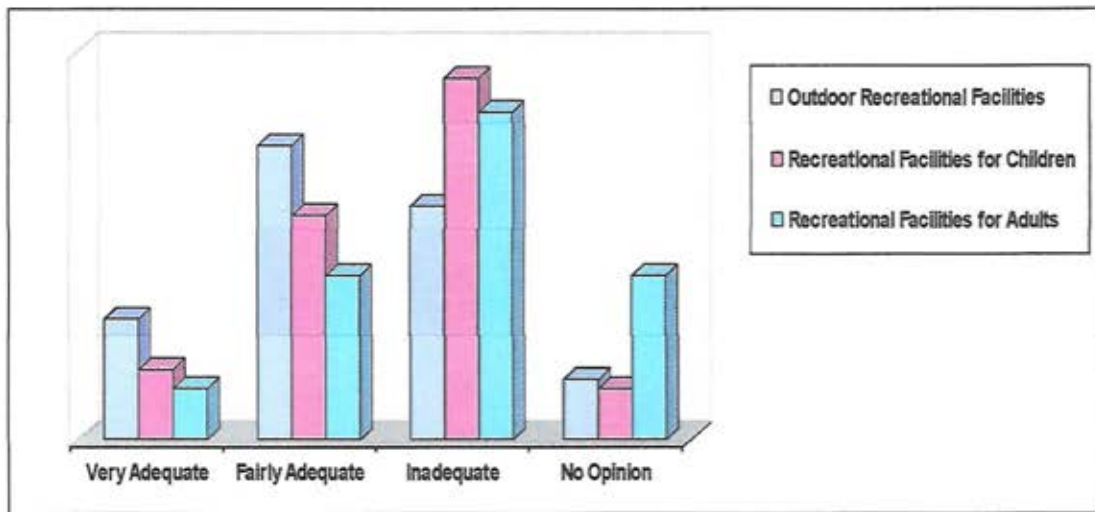
	Very Adequate	Fairly Adequate	Inadequate	No Opinion
Fire Protection	24%	15%	1%	23%
Promptness of Fire Protection Response Time	24%	19%	1%	21%
Ambulance Service	26%	21%	0%	19%
Promptness of Ambulance Response Time	19%	20%	0%	22%
Police Protection	3%	15%	46%	7%
Promptness of Police Response Time	3%	10%	52%	8%

*\* Multiple comments received on individual surveys for each category:*

*Total Very Adequate = 62 , Total Fairly Adequate = 143 , Total Inadequate = 98 , Total No Opinion = 189*

## Question 15a

### Please Rate the Following Recreation Facilities



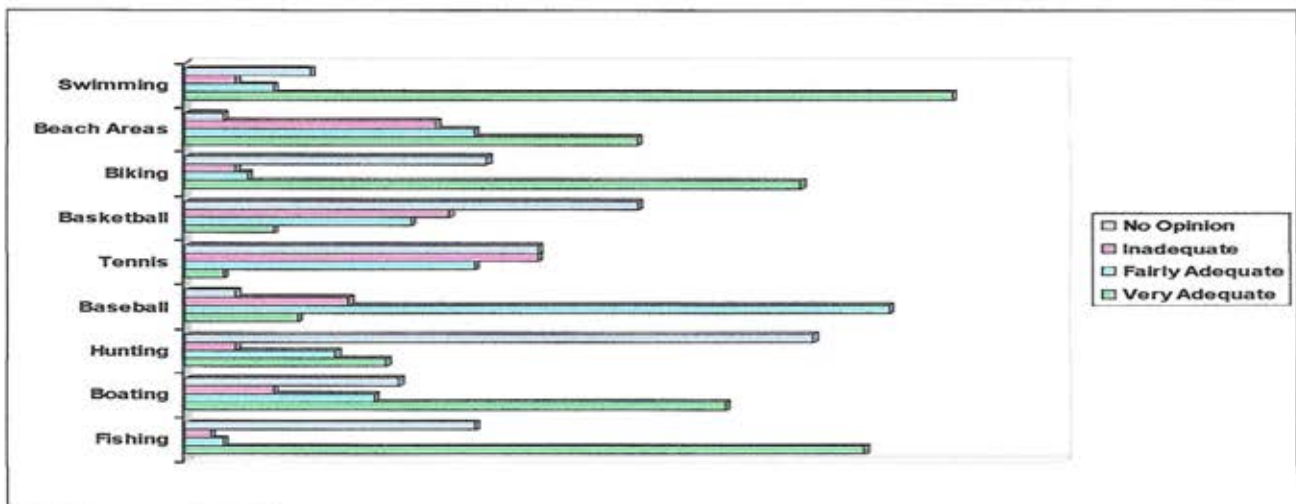
#### Total Outdoor / Children/Adult Responses

Total Very Adequate - 28  
 Total Fairly Adequate - 79  
 Total Inadequate - 107  
 Total No Opinion - 32

	Very Adequate	Fairly Adequate	Inadequate	No Opinion
Outdoor Recreational Facilities	50%	43%	25%	22%
Recreational Facilities for Children	29%	33%	39%	19%
Recreational Facilities for Adults	21%	24%	36%	59%

*\* Multiple comments received on individual surveys for each category:  
 Total Very Adequate = 28 , Total Fairly Adequate = 79 , Total Inadequate = 107 , Total No Opinion = 32*

**Question 15b**  
**Please Rate the Following Recreation Facilities**



	Very Adequate	Fairly Adequate	Inadequate	No Opinion
Fishing	19%	2%	2%	12%
Boating	15%	9%	7%	9%
Hunting	6%	7%	4%	26%
Baseball	3%	35%	13%	2%
Tennis	1%	14%	27%	14%
Basketball	3%	11%	20%	18%
Biking	18%	3%	4%	12%
Beach Areas	13%	14%	19%	2%
Swimming	22%	4%	4%	5%

•Multiple comments received on individual surveys for each category:

•Total Very Adequate = 278 , Total Fairly Adequate = 162 , Total Inadequate = 103 , Total No Opinion = 195



---

*Thank you for taking the time  
to participate in this community survey!*

The Penn Lake Planning Commission

---

**PENN LAKE BOROUGH  
LUZERNE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA  
COMMUNITY SURVEY**

**FOR  
PENN LAKE BOROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

THE PENN LAKE BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION WISHES TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. THE PENN LAKE BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION HAS AN EXPRESSED INTEREST IN PROTECTING AND PRESERVING THE CHARACTER AND ENVIRONMENT OF PENN LAKE BOROUGH. IN ORDER TO DEVELOP A MEANINGFUL PLAN YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED. THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WILL PROVIDE A FUTURE VISION OF THE BOROUGH AND WILL REFLECT THE COLLECTIVE INPUT OF RESIDENTS OF THE BOROUGH.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS COMMUNITY SURVEY IS TO ELICIT CITIZEN COMMENT, OPINION AND VIEWS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES WHICH GENERALLY AFFECT ALL RESIDENTS OF PENN LAKE BOROUGH. THE TABULATED RESULTS OF THE SURVEY WILL BE PRESENTED AT A PUBLIC MEETING AND INCORPORATED INTO PENN LAKE BOROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

IN SEEKING YOUR COOPERATION IN COMPLETING THIS SURVEY, PLEASE BE AWARE THAT YOUR NAME OR ADDRESS IS NOT REQUIRED OR REQUESTED.

1. PLEASE INDICATE THE NAME OF THE ROAD OR STREET WHICH YOUR HOME FRONTS UPON:

NAME OF ROAD OR STREET: \_\_\_\_\_

2. ARE YOU A YEAR ROUND RESIDENT OF THE BOROUGH? YES ☐ NO ☐

3. HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED AT OR OWNED YOUR CURRENT RESIDENCE?

☐ LESS THAN 5 YEARS

☐ 5 TO 10 YEARS

☐ 10 TO 20 YEARS

☐ MORE THAN 20 YEARS

4. WHAT COMMUNITY DID YOU RESIDE IN PRIOR TO RESIDING IN PENN LAKE BOROUGH?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO RESIDE IN PENN LAKE BOROUGH?

---

---

6. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BEST DESCRIBES YOUR POSITION ON THE POSSIBILITY OF NEW GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR PENN LAKE BOROUGH:

- ☐ I AM IN FAVOR OF NEW GROWTH THROUGHOUT THE BOROUGH, AND BELIEVE THERE IS ADEQUATE LAND TO ACCOMMODATE NEW GROWTH.
- ☐ I DO NOT FAVOR ANY TYPE OF ADDITIONAL GROWTH AND BELIEVE THAT ADDITIONAL GROWTH WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OF OUR COMMUNITY.
- ☐ I HAVE NO OPINION ON THIS SUBJECT.
- ☐ OTHER - IF NONE OF THE ABOVE STATEMENTS ADEQUATELY REFLECT YOUR POSITION ON NEW GROWTH, OR IF YOU HAVE ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, PLEASE USE THE SPACE BELOW TO PROVIDE YOUR VIEWS:

---

---

---

7. DO YOU BELIEVE THE AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC SEWERS WILL PROMOTE THE POSSIBILITY OF NEW DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE BOROUGH?

YES ☐ NO ☐ UNCERTAIN ☐

8. WOULD YOU SUPPORT LOCAL ORDINANCES DESIGNED TO CONSERVE OPEN SPACE AND EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES OF THE BOROUGH?

YES ☐ NO ☐ UNCERTAIN ☐

9. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE TO BE THE MOST POSITIVE ASPECT OR FEATURE OF RESIDING IN PENN LAKE BOROUGH?

---

---

---

---

10. PLEASE RANK IN NUMERICAL ORDER OF IMPORTANCE TO YOU, THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS OF RESIDING IN PENN LAKE BOROUGH. RANK THE ITEMS FROM 1 TO 6, WITH THE NUMBER ONE "1" BEING THE HIGHEST RANKING AND MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU. THE DESCENDING NUMBERS (2 THROUGH 6) WILL REPRESENT ASPECTS OF RESIDING IN PENN LAKE BOROUGH OF DESCENDING IMPORTANCE TO YOU. FOR PURPOSES OF COMPUTATION, ONLY ONE NUMBER MAY BE USED AND ASSIGNED TO EACH ITEM.

**RANKING**

- \_\_\_\_\_ QUITE & PEACEFUL ENVIRONMENT OF THE BOROUGH  
 \_\_\_\_\_ POSITIVE SENSE OF COMMUNITY ATMOSPHERE  
 \_\_\_\_\_ THE SCENIC VALUE OF THE LAKE AND SURROUNDING FOREST  
 \_\_\_\_\_ FAIR BOROUGH TAXES (excluding County or School District taxes)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ LOW CRIME RATE  
 \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL DISTRICT (quality of education)

11. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE TO BE THE MOST NEGATIVE ASPECT OR FEATURE OF RESIDING IN PENN LAKE BOROUGH?

---



---



---



---

12. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT CHANGE THAT SHOULD OCCUR THAT WOULD BENEFIT ALL RESIDENTS OF THE BOROUGH?

---



---



---



---

13. IN YOUR OPINION, PLEASE RATE THE FOLLOWING VARIOUS SERVICES AND FACILITIES.

**MAINTENANCE OF ROADS AND HIGHWAYS\***

Ownership	Very Adequate	Fairly Adequate	Inadequate	No Opinion
State*				
Borough				

\*

14. Do you commute to work? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Retired ☐ Not presently employed

If you responded yes to the above question, please respond to the following two questions.

Please list the community to which you commute below:

---

15. Please indicate your approximate travel distance to work:

- ☐ Less than 5 miles  
☐ Between 5 and 10 miles  
☐ Between 10 and 20 miles  
☐ Greater than 20 miles

16. Please rate the following emergency services, even if you or a member of your family never required such services

**RATING OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

Emergency Services	Very Adequate	Fairly Adequate	Inadequate	No Opinion
Fire Protection				
Promptness of Fire Protection Response Time				
Ambulance Service				
Promptness of Ambulance Response Time				

In your opinion, are there any problems or needed improvements in relation to emergency services. Please provide any specific suggestions below.

---

---

---

17. Do you have any school age children? ☐ yes ☐ no

18. **RATING OF RECREATION / LEISURE TIME OPPORTUNITIES AND FACILITIES**

<b>Types of Recreational Facilities</b>	<b>Very Adequate</b>	<b>Fairly Adequate</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Outdoor Recreational Facilities				
Recreational Facilities For Children in the Community				
Recreational Facilities For Adults in the Community				

**IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW, PLEASE ADD ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS YOU  
MAY WISH TO MAKE FOR QUESTIONS NOT INCLUDED WITHIN THIS SURVEY.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**PENN LAKE BOROUGH THANKS YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION IN TAKING THE  
TIME TO COMPLETE YOUR RESPONSES TO THIS SURVEY.**

Please mail or return your completed survey to:

Ms. Jill Rosenstock  
1345 Lakeview Drive  
White Haven PA 18661



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **GENERAL GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

Any Comprehensive Plan and land use management effort must include goals. Without goals, there would be little direction to the future of the community. In the case of planning for a predominately residential community such as Penn Lake Park Borough, goals establish the framework for change and growth management, and the foundation for maintaining key community characteristics. Goals pronounce the community's expectations and provide a vision of how the community is expected to evolve into the future. Objectives are specific actions which are designed to achieve goals and satisfy community needs, intended to sustain and enhance the overall quality of life.

This Plan promotes sustainable development concepts to emphasize the Penn Lake Park Borough's exceptional natural environment, and sense of place and community character while supporting new but limited development strategies. Environmental preservation guides this Plan to not only mitigate the impacts of development, but to maintain the region's rural character and create an economically viable and attractive place.

The goals of all residents of the community will not be the same. Some residents will favor increased economic development, while other residents demand environmental protection. Some residents will demand more community facilities and services, while others prefer limiting expenditures. Some residents may prefer land use diversity, while others would prefer to live in a residential community. The Community Survey was designed to allow all residents of Penn Lake Park Borough to have a voice in policy choices to be made by the Borough through the Comprehensive Plan. The results of the Community Survey combined with the input by the Planning Commission and the Borough Council will be used to establish a consensus between these varied expectations to meet the overall goals of the Borough.

The goals and objectives are intended to serve the Borough as a guide for making strategic decisions on the elements which comprise the Comprehensive Plan. Any significant action taken by a local municipality, be it the adoption of revised zoning regulations or the improvement of a municipal park, should be evaluated in terms of the community's goals and objectives. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan is an on-going process, and the

Borough must periodically evaluate the goals and objectives to ensure that they adequately reflect current community conditions and the expectations of residents and officials.

#### GENERAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

The following general community development objectives are included to provide a broad statement of the community's expectations for the future growth and development of Penn Lake Park Borough.

- A. To strive for coordination between policies, plans, and programs in the community through cooperation and continuing dialogue among governing officials, the planning commission, community interest groups, and the Borough residents.
- B. To achieve the best use of the land within the Borough with the focus on the preservation of open space while allowing for reasonable residential and commercial development. This will ensure that the varying uses of land will complement one another and thus improve the economic, social, and aesthetic character of the community.
- C. To provide for a wide range of residential and limited commercial uses at appropriate scales and locations and establish performance standards through zoning to ensure that such uses do not unduly affect adjoining properties or the public health, safety and general welfare and are consistent with the cultural/historic character of the Borough.
- D. To establish realistic population densities in order to insure health standards, privacy and open space and in order to provide utilities, police protection, and community services and facilities in the most convenient and efficient manner.
- E. Provide wide-range opportunities with a variety of housing types at reasonable densities housing in appropriate areas to meet the needs of all persons regardless of household size, age and/or income.
- F. Provide for orderly development and preservation of open space and natural resources
- G. To maintain and improve the road system for better internal circulation and movement of through traffic, which will facilitate the efficient and safe movement of people and goods.
- H. To provide the necessary community facilities and services to meet the needs of increased development and the potential of a growing population.
- I. To ensure that adequate sewage disposal is provided to maintain the public health and protect water quality, and consider the impact of the extension of central sewage into areas of the Borough lacking central sewage.

- J. To guide the location of future development and establish developmental standards in such a way that negative impacts on the natural environment and natural resources are avoided, minimized and/or mitigated.
- K. To update and revise planning goals and objectives, and the operational tools necessary for implementation, in light of new data and changing conditions, and to meet a changing population, both current and new residents, in concert with maintaining a rural character.
- L. To provide the opportunity for local business on a community based scale to strengthen the area economy by encouraging well-planned commercial, industrial, residential, and recreational growth which will provide for local employment, shopping opportunities, and recreational opportunities which in turn will strengthen the local tax base.

## **GOALS**

### **GOAL 1**

#### **USE OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Achieve greater awareness, understanding and continued participation of Borough residents in carrying out the recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Publicize the Comprehensive Plan to obtain maximum participation and involvement of Borough residents in planning and decision-making, including posting it upon the Borough's Web site and/or through a Borough newsletter.
- B. Continuously use the Comprehensive Plan to help make decisions that affect land use, community facilities and services, and the road system serving the Borough.
- C. Cooperate with all adjoining municipalities on all planning related matters of mutual concern, whether the ramifications of each matter have immediate, short term, long term effects on the Borough.
- D. Encourage the formation of subcommittees and/or local interest groups to work with and advise the Planning Commission and Borough Council on local problems and issues.
- E. Ensure coverage of planning issues and activities in the news media, as means of generating continued public input.
- F. Obtain the assistance of appropriate regional, county and state agencies in maintaining and coordinating the on-going planning process, including general consistency with the County Comprehensive Plan.

## **GOAL 2**

### **LAND USE**

**Maintain Penn Lake Park Borough's existing rural-residential character and quality lifestyle; and conserve forest land, riparian land and open space as important elements, with the preservation of the quality and aesthetics of Penn Lake as the paramount defining element of Penn Lake Park Borough.**

The Borough's physical environment, regional location and past development practices have shaped and maintained its character as a rural-residential community. Development within the Borough has been mostly related to the expansion and conversion of existing dwellings from seasonal into year-round residences. Such development will likely account for most future population increases in the Borough. Commercial and industrial development is virtually nonexistent within the Borough. Commercial and industrial development which provides both shopping and employment opportunities are generally located in the surrounding region in communities primarily located in the greater Wilkes-Barre and Hazleton Areas, Mountaintop and White Haven. Residential development is dispersed throughout the Borough with the greatest concentration of residential density occurring for lakefront properties. There is limited land available for new residential development. The largest landholder of property within the Borough is Nature Conservancy, whose acquisition of approximately 400 acres has greatly reduced the amount of vacant land to accommodate new residential growth. Land-use patterns in the Borough are anticipated and intended to retain the current character of the Borough as a rural lake based community.

Excellent highway access, available to the Borough, has been cornerstone for the growth and development of the Borough. The close proximity of Interstate 476, Interstate 80 and Interstate 81 makes for convenient regional access to the Borough. As a result, many seasonal residents are from out of the area, with a majority coming from the Philadelphia Metropolitan area. The Borough has experienced the continuing transformation of seasonal housing in the Borough to year-round permanent residences. Penn Lake with its surrounding forested areas, open space and quality lifestyle associated with the Borough, are keys to the future of the Borough and its anticipated continued growth. Penn Lake Park Borough is perceived as an attractive community offering a high quality of life, and is within an easy commute to regional employment in

the greater Mountaintop

area and the Wilkes-Barre and Hazleton metropolitan areas. This combination creates great potential for individuals and families to settle in the Borough, which will result in new subdivisions, increased population and demand for facilities and services. Future development must be controlled and managed with an overriding concern to sustain the area's community rural-residential character while meeting the needs and expectations of residents for employment, shopping and services with controlled commercial development

**Objectives:**

- A. Seek land use regulations to lessen the impact of continued growth development and to direct it appropriate locations
- B. Preserve and conserve forest land, open space, significant natural features, and sensitive land areas.
- C. Develop local land use management tools including flexible zoning performance standards to control density and minimize and/or mitigate conflicts between existing and future development, and update the management tools periodically to address changing conditions.
- D. Promote the use of conservation subdivision design for new developments to cluster residential developments away from important natural, historic, scenic and cultural features, and preserve the resulting open space.
- D. Identify and prioritize areas important for preservation, using the Borough's Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan as guide
- F. Encourage the use of Act 319 Clean and Green and other tax incentive programs as a means of forestalling development.
- G. Consider the use of joint zoning with neighboring municipalities as a means of directing higher density residential and commercial/industrial development to areas best suited for such development.
- H. Ensure that adequate community facilities including sewage disposal and water supply are provided for all development.
- I. Carefully consider the expansion of community facilities such as central sewage collection and treatment facilities in terms of stimulating unwanted development in conservation and agricultural areas with important natural, scenic and cultural features.
- J. Carefully control the location and scale of commercial establishments while recognizing the importance of such development to the convenience of local residents and to strengthen the tax base.

- K. Limit heavy commercial uses and industrial uses to certain areas and establish performance standards to control noise, outdoor manufacturing, processing and storage; lighting; and other potential effects.
- L. Provide for a wide range of residential and commercial uses in appropriate areas which when developed in accord with zoning performance standards that are consistent with character of the site.
- M. Ensure consistency of commercial uses with existing community character by encouraging community-scaled businesses with innovative design, as opposed to strip commercial development, with the inclusion of guidelines for commercial building design, landscaping and parking that will ensure high aesthetic quality.
- N. Control common law nuisances and threats to public health and safety due to, among others, noise, lack of property maintenance, poor building practices, junk accumulation, odors and uncontrolled burning.

### **GOAL 3**

#### **OPEN SPACE AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION**

**The preservation of open space is a common thread of this Comprehensive Plan. Open space is land which has not been developed for a constructive or productive use and is intended for environmental and natural resource protection, scenic, or recreational purposes. Open space may include, for example, woodland, wetlands, watercourses, reverting farmland, and floodplain. In the case of a development project, open space may include passive recreation areas such as ballfields, lawns and buffer areas**

**Hydrological resources of the Borough represent a vital natural resource to protected and used in a manner to sustain the character of the Borough. Such resources to be protected include maintaining the water quality of Penn Lake and streams found in Penn Lake Park Borough and its environs.**

**Conserve open land, including those areas containing unique and sensitive natural features such as woodlands, steep slopes, streams, flood plains and wetlands, by setting them aside from development.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Preserve and protect Penn Lake, as the primary natural resource of Borough, from uses, activities and developments that have any potential negatively impact upon the water quality, use and enjoyment of the Lake by residents
- B. Preserve and conserve open space, forest land, significant natural features, and sensitive land areas.
- C. Identify sensitive natural areas such as wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, woodlands, steep slopes, poor soils and flood plains, and adopt regulations to protect such areas by requiring resource sensitive development.



- D. Provide overlay mapping of newly released FEMA Flood Plain Maps to ensure proper identification and enforcement flood plain management regulations.
- E. Promote the conservation of open space within the Boroughs and actively promote the long-term preservation and maintenance of valuable natural resource areas through public negotiated acquisition, private dedication of easements, and other cooperative efforts.
- F. Use of conservation subdivision design to cluster residential development away from important natural, historic, scenic and cultural features, and preserve the resulting open space.
- G. Use transferrable development rights to direct development to locations with adequate infrastructure and enable conservation-minded landowners to preserve their properties.
- H. Coordinate environmental preservation efforts with neighboring jurisdictions and establish and greenway paths along streams that require a regional approach.
- I. Protect the supply and quality of drinking water and protect surface water and quality by ensuring DEP E&S requirements are met to reduce erosion and sedimentation into waterways.
- J. Protect critical wildlife habitat areas.
- K. Natural Areas - Protect sites of rare, threatened, and endangered species.
- L. Consider measures that will preserve the characteristics of important and scenic view sheds by limiting the amount and type of clearing associated with new development.

## **GOAL 4**

### **HOUSING**

#### **Provide for secure and sound housing in a variety of types and densities.**

Families and individuals of all income levels reside in Penn Lake Park Borough need continued access to decent and affordable housing with proper community facilities. Demand for housing by higher income families moving to the Borough from metropolitan areas has occurred. There is a need to promote development practices to ensure the cost of housing within the Borough can accommodate individuals of varied income levels to retain a level of social diversity among existing residents and those seeking to move into the area.

#### **Objectives:**

##### **Meet the housing needs of current Borough residents**

- A. Sound Housing: Encourage preservation of presently sound housing.

- B. Rehabilitation - Promote rehabilitation of houses in decline.
- C. Housing Programs - Encourage participation in all county, state and federal housing rehabilitation and assistance programs to ensure residents receive full benefit from such programs.
- D. Maintenance - Consider adopting standards which require the maintenance of dwellings to prevent dilapidation.

**Accommodate anticipated housing growth in appropriate locations, at appropriate densities, and with suitable amenities.**

- A. Location - Coordinate the location of new housing with pending road improvements
- B. Density - Provide for varying densities suited to the Boroughs' character and landscape.
- C. Multi-Family - Allow multi-family dwellings conservation by design in all zoning districts at the same density as single-family dwellings.
- D. Amenities - Provide and/or require recreation and open space amenities within new residential developments.

**Provide a diversity of housing types and affordability levels.**

- A. Type and Density - Allow residential development of various types in suitable areas at a density sufficiently high to moderate the land cost of the increasing cost of housing, while requiring adequate off street parking, water supply and sewage disposal.
- C. Fair Share - Ensure that the Borough provides for its required fair share of housing, including multi-family housing.
- D. Innovative Design - Advocate conservation design, village style or traditional neighborhood development.
- E. Incentives - Consider density and design incentives to encourage the development of age-restricted and affordable housing, including workforce housing.
- F. Require all residential development to meet adequate design standards and provide proper community facilities via the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, while concurrently avoiding overly restrictive or excessive design requirements which add unnecessarily to the cost of housing.
- G. Carefully evaluate the affect of land use management tools on the cost of housing.

## **GOAL 5**

### **ECONOMY**

**Ensure that any future nonresidential development is located where infrastructure and transportation is adequate and is designed to be compatible with existing land use and community character.**

Given the historical residential development pattern of the Borough, with virtually no commercial development, residents have historically relied heavily on surrounding areas exhibiting more heavily developed commercial areas to provide employment and shopping and personal services. Examples of such nearby or readily accessible locations include White Haven Borough, the Greater Wilkes-Barre Area, the Greater Hazelton Area and that of Mountaintop. Penn Lake Park Borough as a rural lake based bedroom community to may choose to take no direct role in economic development, and recognize that residents will continue to rely on the surrounding regions for employment and shopping and service needs.

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Direct new commercial development to areas of existing commercial development and where roads and other community facilities are adequate, all of which are likely to be located outside of the Borough.
- B. Develop guidelines for commercial development to encourage design sensitive to the environment and community character.
- C. Adopt, monitor and update nonresidential development standards to protect the public health, welfare and safety, to preserve community character, and to minimize conflicts with the regional tourism-recreation trade by limiting such characteristics as noise; outdoor manufacturing, processing and storage; lighting; and other potential effects.
- D. Promote local economic viability by allowing home occupations and home businesses consistent with residential districts and small businesses consistent with the overall community character.
- E. Recognize the importance of the regional economy and monitor and participate in county and regional business development activities that can benefit the regional economy.

## **GOAL 6**

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

**Ensure that community facilities and services which will be adequate to meet expected needs are provided.**

**Residents rely on community and public facilities and services to meet their transportation, educational, water supply, sewage disposal, police protection, emergency response, recreation and other daily living need. Municipalities, do not,**

**and cannot, provide all the facilities and services demanded by its residents, many such services being provided by other levels of government or volunteer organizations. Because of its small level of population with very limited prospects or desire for any significant increases such is the case for Penn Lake Park Borough. Nevertheless, without diligent and ongoing attention to the operation and maintenance of existing facilities and services, and planning for new facilities and services, a municipality can fall short in adequately serving its residents.**

### **Objectives:**

#### **Public Facilities and Services**

- A. Municipal Building- The Community Building, owned by the Penn lake Association, has been always been used for Borough meetings and should be continued in the future as a central and focal location in the Borough.
- B. Overcome the lack of an “official” Borough building by continuing efforts to develop Borough Office space within the Community Building.
- C. Maintenance and upgrade of the Community Building to extend its life and multifunctional use for the Borough and its residents.
- D. In cooperation with the Association, the Borough should plan and seek funding to upgrade the building’s heating, insulation, and electrical system, including a generator for emergencies to ensure its continued long term viability.
- E. Continue dam maintained efforts in cooperation with DEP.
- F. Efficiency - Manage all municipal facilities and services efficiently and effectively.
- F. Cooperation - Encourage and participate in any area intergovernmental cooperation efforts for community facilities planning and economies of scale for joint purchasing, recreation and other facilities and services.

#### **Emergency Services**

- A. Protect the Borough residents with cost effective emergency services.
- B. Police Protection – Promote and enhance the continuation of Borough Police protection with the continued contractual arrangement with White Haven Borough.
- C. Encourage and continue to support volunteer fire, ambulance and other public service organizations.

#### **Water Supply and Sewage Disposal**

- A. Maintain cooperation and coordination with Aqua Pennsylvania as the public utility proving public sewage water service to the Borough

- B. Ensure that an adequate and safe water supply system, proper sewage disposal system, well designed and constructed roads and other facilities are provided by developers as part of any new residential development.

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

Encourage and participate in any area intergovernmental cooperation efforts for community facilities planning and economies of scale for joint purchasing, recreation and other facilities and services.

### **Public Libraries**

Libraries play an important role in the community by making information available to all residents. Libraries supplement school libraries for students, provide life-long learning opportunities for adults, and offer special services such as interlibrary loan, books by mail and children's reading programs, and in more recent years, Internet access. The Greater Mountaintop Area has the resource of Marian Sutherland Kirby Library, a member of the Luzerne County Library System, located in Fairview Borough that is available to the Penn Lake Park Borough residents.

## **GOAL 7**

### **TRANSPORTATION:**

Safe and well maintained roads are vital to all communities, serving not only as the means of travel within the community, but as the direct link to the region and beyond. The White Haven Highway with its connections to SR 115, SR 247, Interstates 80, 81, and 476 provide easy access to and from the Boroughs, and will certainly foster continued regional development. Local officials must plan carefully to ensure adequate funding for the improvement and maintenance of locally-owned roads.

### **Objectives:**

- A. Establish and maintain an adequate circulation system to safely and efficiently move people and goods.
- B. Inventory and classify according to function all public roads and bridges, and assess maintenance and safety concerns and the improvements needed.
- C. Planning - Actively participate in all County and PennDOT highway planning programs.
- D. Improvements Program - Develop a local road and intersection maintenance and capital improvements program.
- E. Develop a coordinated Borough program to maintain an adequate capacity of the road network.
- F. Development Location - Limit higher density and higher traffic impact development to areas with adequate road capacity via zoning.

- G. New Development - Maintain up-to-date standards for construction of new subdivision roads.
- I. Road Linkages - Promote the consideration of through road connections as part of the development review process, by discouraging cul-de-sac and limited points.
- J. Official Map - Using an official map, establish and reserve public street alignments and adequate rights-of-way for planned street improvements.
- K. Pedestrians and Bicyclists -Consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in all transportation planning.
- L.. Maintain an up-to-date road occupancy ordinance setting standards for driveway access to Borough roads and for stormwater and utility improvements within the road right-of-way and require the issuance of a highway occupancy permit by the Borough for any access or drainage work along Borough roads.



## CHAPTER 4

### POPULATION ELEMENT

The Penn Lake Park Borough's population has remained remarkably stable since its inception as a Borough in 1974. The Borough's current population, based on the 2010 Census is 308, representing its highest level of population. As exhibited by Table P-1, the Borough has exhibited a steady percentage increase to its modest population base during the past thirty years.

**TABLE P-1**  
**PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Net / % Changes</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>39 / 14.5%</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>27 / 11.1%</b>
<b>1990</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>25 / 11.5%</b>
<b>1980</b>	<b>217</b>	

From a regional perspective, Penn Lake Park Borough, which is centrally located among three other adjoining municipalities, has the least amount of population. The Borough along with Dennison Township, which shares a common border with approximately three quarters of the Borough, and Bear Creek Township experienced increases in their rate of growth during the past decade. White Haven Borough experienced a population decline, representing the only regional municipality to do so, which is somewhat common to most Boroughs throughout the region.

**TABLE P-2**  
**REGIONAL POPULATION CHANGES**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Penn Lake Park	269	308	+14.5%
White Haven	1,182	1,097	-7.2
Dennison Township	908	1,125	+23.9%
Bear Creek Township	2,580	2,774	+7.5

As a community primarily developed as a summer resort community, the Borough's character today represents a mix of both full time residents and an increased population level of seasonal summertime residents. The Borough's proximity to the regional highway system provides relatively good access to property owners who utilize the Borough as their summer residence. There are two factors influencing the level of development and population growth in the Borough. The first factor is the transformation of some of the seasonal residences into year round dwellings. In some instances dwellings which were initially constructed on the design level of cottages have been

expanded into full time year-round dwellings. In some instances older units have been demolished to allow for new construction. Based upon a survey by the Planning Commission there were 246 residential structures within the Borough at the time of the 2009 Community Survey. The aforementioned figure is based upon Borough records of the number of households billed for refuse pickup with all households, both year-round and seasonal are billed for that service. The 2010 Census official 100% housing count indicated that there were 254 housing units within the Borough and of that total 113 or 44.5% were vacant. Of the 113 vacant units 105 or 92.9% were classified as seasonal housing. The 2010 Census indicated the average household size to be 2.18 and the average family size to 2.63. When the aforementioned figures are applied to the 105 seasonal units, the approximate increase in the seasonal (summer) population would be between 229 to 276 persons. Such increases would result in a seasonal population ranging between 537 to 584 persons with the approximate population increase between 74% to 90%. Borough officials believe the 2.63 family size as applied to seasonal residents represents a conservative estimate due to families with children and their guests which spent summers at the Borough. Thus based upon this perception, the residential population within the Borough during the summer can be considerably higher than the estimated levels, which are particularly evident during holidays, e.g., Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July and Labor Day.

The second factor which could have a far greater impact on population within the Borough is the vast amount of open space and undeveloped land throughout the Borough. The majority of population, both year round and seasonal is concentrated in a compact development pattern which surrounds Penn Lake. The only exception is relatively new development and lightly populated area along Hollenback Road. While future development is in any community normally influenced by the decision of individual property owners, Penn Lake Park Borough is somewhat different. The majority of undeveloped land is held in single ownership. From prior conversations and actions by the owner, development of such land can be quite plausible. However the recent purchase of approximately 400 acres of land by the Nature Conservancy will severely limit the amount of land available for future growth. To place the 400 acres into perspective, it presents roughly 30% of land within the Borough. As such these 400 acres will now be held as permanent open space in perpetuity. While the rate and location of development remains open to economic market forces, the advent of public sewage to the Borough will

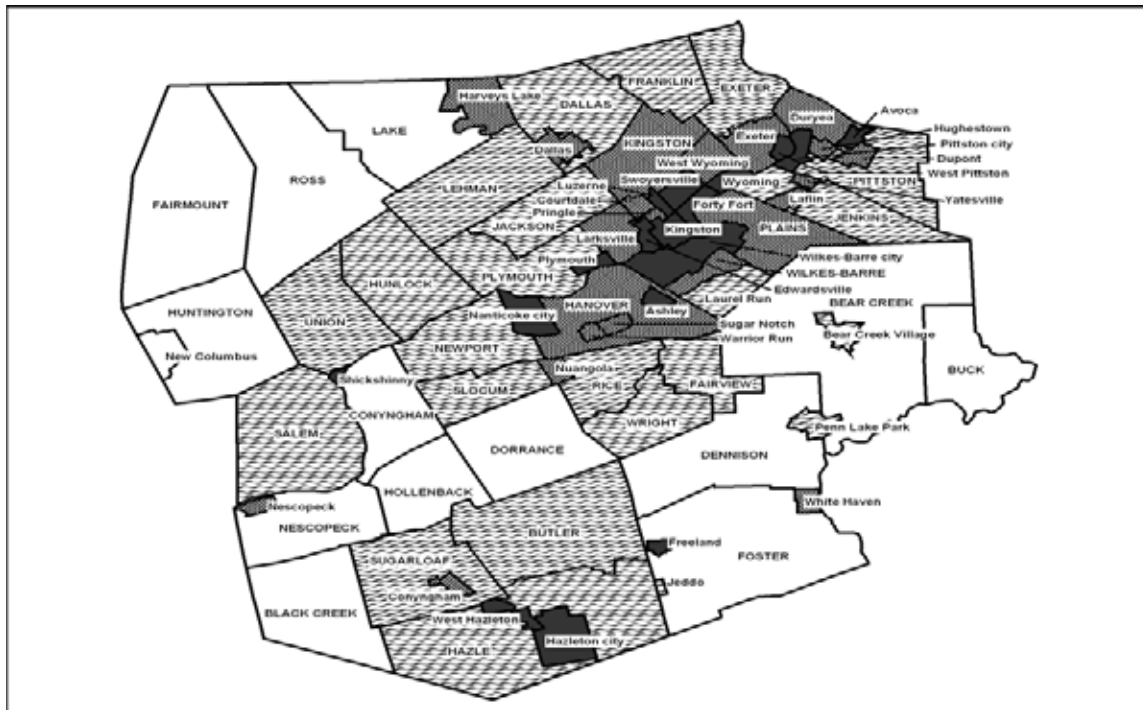
be conducive to future development and subsequent levels of population within the Borough.

The Borough is approximately 2.0 square miles. The population density in 2009 was estimated to be 143.9 persons per square mile. As noted on the below, the Borough's population density is less than that of the State or County, but much higher than that of the two neighboring Townships.

TABLE P-3 POPULATION DENSITY<sup>1</sup>

GEOGRAPHY	POPULATION PER SQUARE MILE
PENNSYLVANIA	281.3
LUZERNE COUNTY	351.2
PENN LAKE PARK	143.9
WHITE HAVEN	950.8
DENNISON TOWNSHIP	27.5
BEAR CREEK TOWNSHIP	41.7

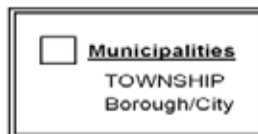
<sup>1</sup>Source: Pennsylvania State Data Center, 2011 Luzerne County Data Book



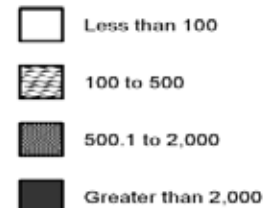
**Source of Data Files:**  
U.S. Department of Commerce,  
Bureau of the Census,  
Population Division, Population  
Estimates Branch, 2009.

**Source of Cartographic Files:**  
U.S. Department of Commerce,  
Bureau of the Census, 2000  
TIGER/Line Files.

**Maps Prepared by:**  
The Pennsylvania State  
Data Center.



**Persons/Sq. Mile**



The developed area of the Borough is concentrated upon smaller lots reflecting a much greater population density than 143.9 persons per square mile. Of the two square miles of land area, the Borough's population is concentrated upon an area not greater than .75 square mile. That results in a population density of 410.6 persons per square mile which is more attuned to a smaller urban setting.

#### **MAJORITY OF POPULATION CONCENTRATED AROUND LAKE**



Penn Lake Park's 2010 population of 308 persons included 141 households, of which 92 or 65% were classified as family households and 49 or 35% as nonfamily households. A total of 34 or 69% of the nonfamily households represent one person households

**TABLE P-4  
HOUSEHOLDS IN PENN LAKE PARK**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>HOUSEHOLD TYPE</b>		
Total households	141	100%
Family households <sup>1</sup>	92	65%
Nonfamily households <sup>2</sup>	49	35%
Persons Living Alone	34	69%

1. A household that has at least one member of the household related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption is a "Family household." Same-sex couple households are included in the family households' category if there is at least one additional person related to the householder by birth or adoption.

Same-sex couple households with no relatives of the householder present are tabulated in nonfamily households.

2. "Nonfamily households" consist of people living alone and households which do not have any members related to the householder.

**TABLE P-5**  
**HOUSEHOLD SIZE IN PENN LAKE PARK**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Total Households	141	100%
Household Size		
1-person household	34	24%
2-person household	73	52%
3-person household	17	12%
4-person household	10	7%
5-person household	5	4%
6-person household	2	1%
7-or-more-person household	0	0

Average household size 2.18

Average family size 2.63

The degree of stability of the Borough's population at the time of the 2010 Census was approximately 80.5%. The aforementioned data item represents that segment of the Borough's population that was residing in the same home from 2005 to 2009. By comparison the County figure for this data item was 88.3%, while the State's was 87.7%. Table P-4 provides a breakdown of the population by age.

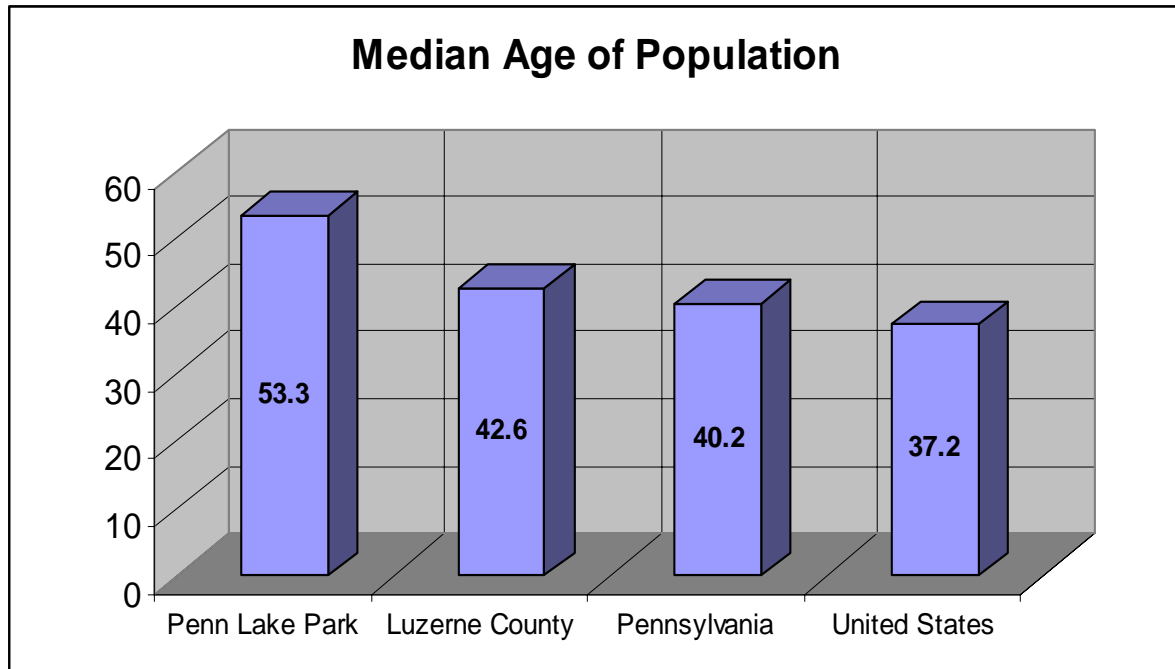
**TABLE P-6**  
**PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH**  
**2010 CENSUS POPULATION BY AGE**

<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Under 5 years	12	3.9 %
5 to 9 years	11	3.6 %
10 to 14 years	9	2.9 %
15 to 19 years	20	6.5 %
20 to 24 years	9	2.9 %
25 to 29 years	9	2.9 %
30 to 34 years	11	3.6 %
35 to 39 years	11	3.6 %
40 to 44 years	14	4.6 %
45 to 49 years	24	7.8 %
50 to 54 years	45	14.6 %
55 to 59 years	29	9.4 %
60 to 64 years	40	13.0 %
65 to 69 years	21	6.8 %
70 to 74 years	20	6.5 %
75 to 79 years	8	2.6 %
80 to 84 years	10	3.2 %
85 years and over	5	1.6 %

Based upon the 2010 Census, the median age for a resident of Penn Lake Park Borough was 53.3 years, which is significantly higher than that of Luzerne County, the State and the Nation. The trend within the Borough of converting what was previously seasonal housing into year round housing by retirees, is evident in the age of Borough residents.

**TABLE P-7  
2010 MEDIAN AGE OF POPULATION**

PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH	53.3 YEARS
LUZERNE COUNTY	42.6 YEARS
PENNSYLVANIA	40.2 YEARS
U.S.	37.2 YEARS



**TABLE P-8  
2010 SPECIAL POPULATION GROUPS**

	<b>AGE 65 AND OLDER</b>	<b>AGE 18 AND YOUNGER</b>
PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH	20.7%	16.9%
LUZERNE COUNTY	17.9%	20.2%
PENNSYLVANIA	15.4%	22.0%

The aging factor is becoming more apparent throughout all levels of geography with the combined elements of the aging of the Baby Boomers and greater longevity of population as a whole. While the median age has been historically increasing at all levels of government, Penn Lake Park Borough exhibits a higher percentage of elderly and a striking lesser percentage of children and as compared to County and State and figures. The Borough's added population of retired individuals will allow this trend to become fixed within the future demographic composition of the Borough. Current Census data

indicates that 33.3% of all households in the Borough include a member of the household who is 65 or older. Based upon the age cohort table, the Borough will likely be approaching an elderly population of approaching 30% by the 2020 Census.

The majority of the Borough's population is comprised of married-couple family households. Based upon the population within occupied units, there is an average of 2.13 persons per owner occupied unit and 3.14 persons per renter occupied unit. Of the 141 total households, 92 or 65% are classified as family households.

**TABLE P-9  
FAMILIES BY TYPE WITH AND WITHOUT CHILDREN**

Penn Lake Park Borough	Total Families	With Children	No Children
	92	15.6%	84.4%

**TABLE P-10  
2010 NON-FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS**

<b>Persons Living Alone</b>				
Area	Non-Family Households	Total	Age 65 and Older	Other
Penn Lake Park Borough	49	34 (69%)	20 (40.0%)	36 (50.0%)

Nearly 70 % of all nonfamily households within Borough are one person households. Within that component, 60 % of persons living alone were age 65 and older.

The 2010 Census indicated that Penn Lake Park Borough's population had no minorities, and no persons of "Hispanic Origin." The latter term is representative of ancestry regardless of race. The 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates listing of the first ancestry reported found German (16%), Italian (15%) and Irish (12%) ancestry representing the three highest percentages.

**TABLE 11**

<b>Total population</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
American	27	+/-6.1
Czech	16	+/-5.0
Dutch	20	+/-5.4
English	30	+/-6.7
French (except Basque)	19	+/-5.7
French Canadian	13	+/-5.3
German	84	+/-11.8
Irish	51	+/-9.8
Italian	60	+/-9.8
Lithuanian	19	+/-5.7

**TABLE 11 (continued)**

<b>Total population</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
Polish	50	+/-7.8
Scottish	11	+/-5.6
Slovak	12	+/-3.6
Welsh	6	+/-2.8

**Selected Social Characteristics in the United States**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American  
Community Survey

**SUMMARY**

Based upon existing trends and data, it appears that the future population of Penn Lake Park Borough will remain limited, affording the Borough its ability to retain its existing small town/rural character. There are a number of influencing factors which are likely to contribute to continued low level of population. The amount of land available for future development has been severely restricted through the acquisition of 400 acres by the Nature Conservancy. The land in the extreme northern portion of the Borough which was not part of the acquisition by the Nature Conservancy has very limited access which in turn diminishes its potential to accommodate additional growth. The area of land surrounding Penn Lake, particularly that land which fronts upon the Lake, has been built out to its maximum capacity. While population increases within this section of the Borough will occur, it will be generated by the conversion and/or expansion of existing structures to create year-round residential units. The areas which remain questionable regarding the potential level of future development, include areas surrounding the “Hidden Lake” area and along the White Haven Highway, SR 1041. On a preliminary basis from information ascertained during the subdivision of property purchased by the Nature Conservancy, no major development is foreseen in the immediate future for this land. While the land along the White Haven Road could be developed, it represents a far less desirable location than areas within the Borough with its abundance of aesthetic features. If the Borough’s growth rate for the current decade reflects that of the past, a 14% increase in population would bring the Borough’s 2020 population level to about 350 persons who would be permanent year round residents.

Bon Data Incorporated, a private firm providing demographic information and population projections, estimated that the Borough will experience an increase in population between now and the 2020 Census of approximately 6%. Should that occur the Borough’s



population would be in the range of  $\pm 326$ . Most private forecasting models are linear in nature and do not account for external changes either positive or negative. A population forecast provides estimates of the most likely future trends in population size and in demographic indicators such as population distribution by age and sex. A variety of methodologies are available for making forecasts, ranging from the simple extrapolation of past trends to complex multiple-equation models involving dozens of demographic, socioeconomic, and environmental variables. In practice, most projections, including that for Penn Lake Park Borough, rely on the so-called cohort-component method, which computes future demographic trajectories implied by assumptions about future trends in birth, death, and migration rates. For the most part the major component of population increases for the Borough will be the result of in-migration. Those persons moving into the Borough are expected to be persons at or near the age of retirement, increasing the median age, now at 53, which is already substantially higher than that of the County or State.

The Borough's future population will also be influenced by the current national economic downturn as related to the market demand for housing. While the desirability and attractiveness of residing in the Borough will not diminish, the length of the economic downturn and its impact on the housing market can affect future population projections for the Borough. While economic projections vary considerably, 2015 in general has been used by some economist as the forecasted benchmark or turning point for the betterment in the economy. As economic conditions improve, the rate of population growth in the Borough could increase based upon new housing starts.

## CHAPTER 5

### HOUSING ELEMENT

The Housing Element examines the characteristics of Penn Lake Park Borough's existing housing stock and provides strategies to address future housing issues. It is intended to meet the housing needs of current residents and to accommodate anticipated growth in context with community character. In addition, the Housing Element seeks to ensure the provision of housing of various types and in various arrangements. In doing so, families and individuals of all income levels can be given continued access to decent and affordable housing with proper community facilities. The special needs of young families looking for their first home and senior citizens on fixed incomes should be addressed. Zoning and SALDO regulations should represent a policy tool of the Borough to direct housing types and densities to the most appropriate locations. While new housing construction has occurred during the past decade, there has also been an increase in the conversion of some of the seasonal units into year round residences. The Borough mails out garbage bills to all residences throughout the Borough which includes both year round and seasonal residential dwelling. Based upon the Borough's records, the total number of housing units would be 246. The 2010 Census 100% housing count recorded the number of housing units to be 254 units as the official Census count. Although the difference is minimal, for official purposes the Census figure of 254 units will be used throughout this report. At the time of the 2010 Census there of 254 units, 141 were occupied resulting in a 55.5% to 45.5% ratio of occupied unit versus vacant units.

**TABLE H-1  
HOUSING OCCUPANCY**

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	254	254
Occupied Housing Units	141	55.5%
Vacant Housing Units	113	45.5%

The Borough's population increase of 14.5 % is primarily attributed to in-migration. The new housing units that have been added to the Borough's housing stock include new construction in areas that generally do not border upon the Lake such as those along Hollenback Road and the conversion of seasonal units that either front upon the Lake or that are in close proximity to it. There were 15 new residences constructed in the borough from 2000 to 2010. The seasonal residences that have been upgraded are normally associated with the owner's intent for permanent residency within the Borough often associated with retirement plans. While the majority of municipalities throughout Luzerne County have experienced a decline or no-growth

scenario since 2010, Penn Lake Park Borough has ranked 6th in percentage of population growth among all 76 municipalities throughout Luzerne County.

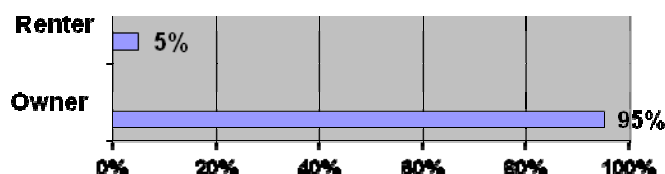
The issues of equality and fairness must be addressed within the housing policies of all municipalities. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires a Plan to meet the housing needs of present residents and of those individuals and families anticipated to reside in the municipality, which may include conservation of presently sound housing, rehabilitation of housing in declining neighborhoods and the accommodation of expected new housing in different dwelling types and at appropriate densities for households of all income levels. The later will prove to be a challenge to Penn Lake Park Borough. The term "fair share" for housing types has been an evolving policy issue throughout the country. The term "fair share" comes from legal decisions that have been made, beginning in the mid-1970s. Courts have held that local government land use regulations must allow for the housing needs of people who may desire to live within municipal borders. In that regard, an ordinance may not exclude legitimate uses of land, such as multi-family housing, either by specifically prohibiting the use or by failing to make provisions for the use. Each municipality, then, must do its fair share in accommodating various housing types that may be in demand in a region.

Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, §604, requires zoning ordinances to "provide for the use of land within the municipality for residential housing of various dwelling types encompassing all basic forms of housing, including single-family and two-family dwellings, and a reasonable range of multifamily dwellings in various arrangements, mobile homes and mobile home parks, provided, however, that no zoning ordinance shall be deemed invalid for the failure to provide for any other specific dwelling type."

Of the 141 occupied units, 134 are owner-occupied and 7 are renter occupied. The dominance of owner-occupied units can be attributed to the Borough as a bedroom community with a lake based setting.

**TABLE H-2**  
**PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH TENURE OF OCCUPIED UNITS**

OWNED	RENTED
134	7



As indicated in Table H-2, 95% of all household reside in owner occupied housing units. The aforementioned rate significantly exceeds the rate of homeownership found at both the County and State levels. As noted from Table H-3, the Borough's owner occupied percentage of units is extremely higher than those of the County and State. A high rate of property ownership is customarily a beneficial component that generally tends to ensure property maintenance and reinvestment into a community's housing stock.

**TABLE H-3  
COMPARATIVE TENURE OF HOUSING UNITS**

	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>RENTER</b>
Penn Lake Park Borough	95.0%	5.0%
Luzerne County	70.4%	29.6%
Pennsylvania	66.9%	33.1%

**TABLE H-4  
COMPARATIVE PERCENTAGE OF VACANT HOUSING UNITS**

Penn Lake Park Borough	44.4%
Luzerne County	11.3%
Pennsylvania	11.8%

While the Borough's percent of vacant housing units is much higher than those of the County or State, the second home market of the Borough provides an unbalanced assessment of the actual vacancy. Of the 113 vacant units, 105 represent units which are classified as seasonal units. There is an important difference to note between the vacant units and the vacancy rate. The former term includes all vacant housing units while the latter is limited to housing units that are available and offered for sale or rent. When you review the data for housing that is available for sale or rent the homeowners vacancy rate in the Borough is actually less than that of the County or State. Of the 113 vacant units only 4 were on the market for rent or sale at the time of the 2010 Census. Given the fact that 95% of the housing within the Borough is single family detached, the statistics indicate a very limited supply of existing housing that is available for sale which would tend to increase the cost of housing within the Borough. Although the rental vacancy rate is higher than that of the County and State, there is a very limited number of renter occupied units within the Borough.

**TABLE H-5  
COMPARATIVE TENURE AND OVERALL VACANCY CHARACTERISTICS**

	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>RENTER</b>	<b>VACANCY RATE</b>
Penn Lake Park Borough	95.0%	5.0%	3.1%
Luzerne County	70.3%	29.7%	9.7%
Pennsylvania	71.3%	28.7%	9.0%

Penn Lake Park Borough has a relatively low vacancy rate that can contribute to inflating the cost of housing within the Borough.

As indicated by Table H-6, there is really no diversity in the Borough housing stock and it is not surprising to find that single family detached units comprised 97.0% of all single family housing units in the Borough as noted in the Table H-6.

**TABLE H-6  
STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF BOROUGH HOUSING**

<b>UNITS IN STRUCTURE</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1 UNIT, DETACHED	97.0%
1 UNIT, ATTACHED	0
2 UNITS	0
3-4 UNITS	3.0%
5-9 UNITS	0
10-19 UNITS	0
20 OR MORE UNITS	0
MOBILE HOME	0
BOAT, RV, VAN, ETC.	0
TOTAL	100%

**TABLE H-7  
COMPARATIVE STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS**

<b>Units in Structure</b>	<b>Penn Lake Park Borough</b>	<b>Luzerne County</b>
1, Detached	97.0%	62.8%
1, Attached	0	13.1%
2-4	3.0%	18.6%
5-9	0	5.5%
10 or more	0	4.0%
Mobile Home	0	3.7%

Table H-7 provides a comparative look at the characteristic housing types in Penn Lake Park Borough to those of the County. Because Penn Lake Park is and will remain a bedroom and resort community, single family detached dwellings, reflective of rural and suburban developments, will remain the dominate the borough is form of housing within Penn Lake Park Borough and its environs.

The cost of housing in Penn Lake Park Borough indicates a median housing value of \$162,500 and a median gross rent gross rent of \$1,167, which includes the costs of utilities. Table H-5 and H-6 provide a more detailed accounting of the estimated value of owner occupied housing units and gross rent within Penn Lake Park Borough.

**TABLE H-8  
SPECIFIED VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS**

VALUE	PERCENTAGE OF HOUSING UNITS
Less than \$50,000	0
\$50,000 to \$99,999	13.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	25.6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	36.4%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	22.5%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	2.3%
\$500,000 or more	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

**MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE \$162,500**

**TABLE H-9  
GROSS RENT OF OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS PAYING RENT**

GROSS RENTAL COST	NUMBER OF UNITS
Less than \$200	0
\$200 to \$299	0
\$300 TO \$499	45.8%
\$500 TO \$749	0
\$750 TO \$999	0
\$1,000 TO \$1,049	54.2%
\$1,050 or more	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**MEDIAN GROSS RENT: \$1,167**

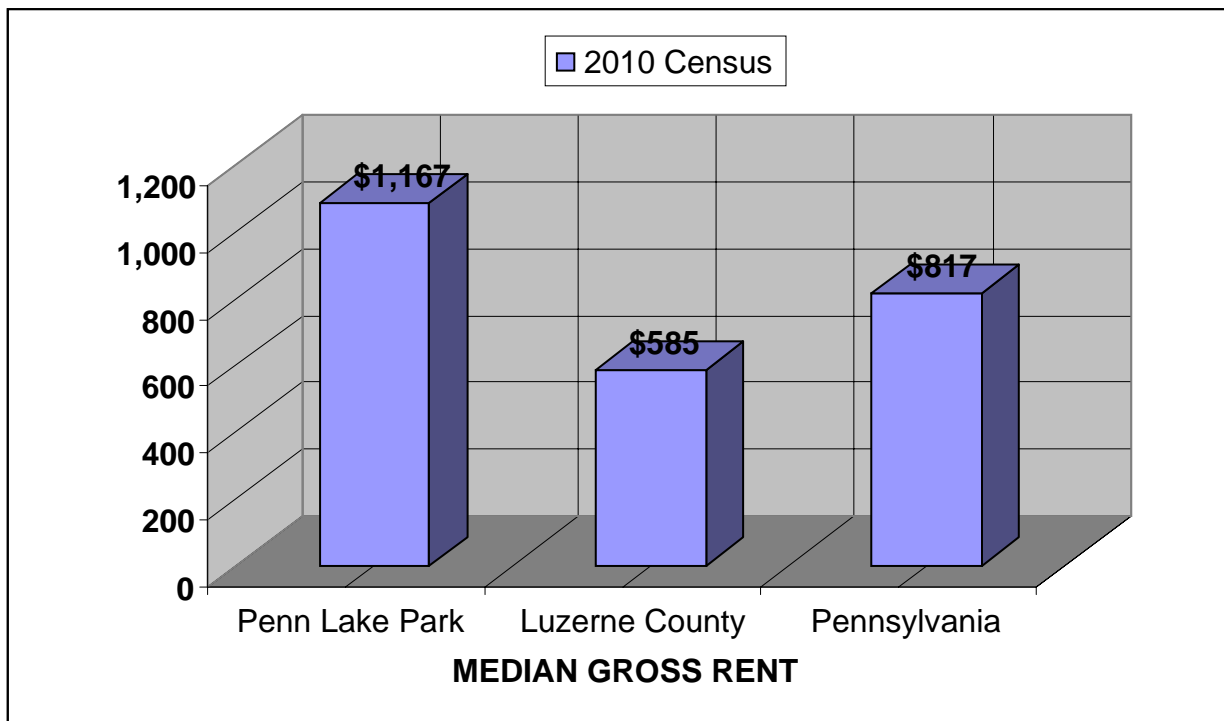
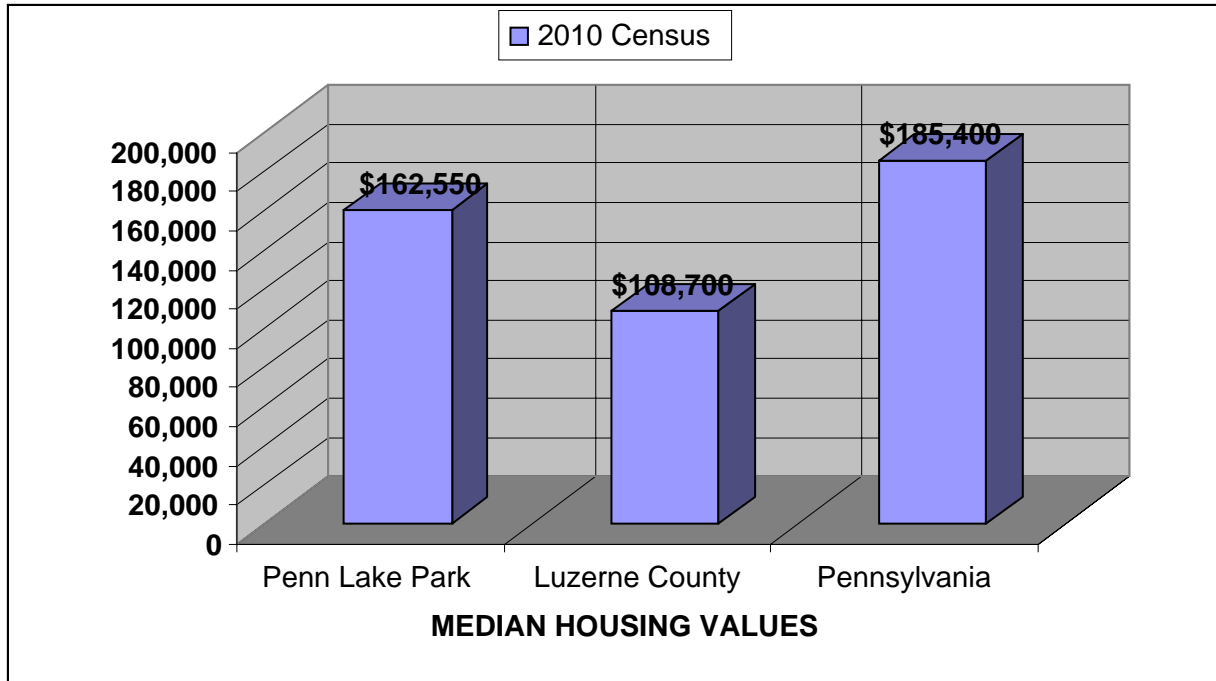
Owner occupied housing in Penn Lake Park Borough is among the more expensive housing found in Luzerne County and certainly within its regional setting. With regard to housing costs within Penn Lake Park Borough, over 60% of owner-occupied units exceed a value of \$150,000. Nationally housing values peaked in early 2005, with a subsequent decline turning financial downturn in the economy. Nonetheless with the presumption that the median value of \$162,500 is reasonably accurate, there has been a 57% increase in housing values over the 2000 value of \$102,976. Other than to note the median gross rent within the Borough and ugh far exceeds that found at the County and State level, there is little that can be ascertained concerning rental costs with the Borough due to the limited number or near nonexistent rental component. A very limited supply of rental units, particularly in a rural community, such as the Borough tends to inflate the cost of such housing in comparison to broader markets. Table H-10 provides the financial status of occupied housing units within the Borough.

**TABLE H-10  
FINANCIAL STATUS**

Owner occupied housing units:	141
Owned with a mortgage or a loan	62.5%
Owned free and clear	37.5%

**TABLE H-11  
COMPARATIVE HOUSING COSTS**

	MEDIAN VALUE	MEDIAN GROSS RENT
Penn Lake Park Borough	\$162,500	\$1,117
Luzerne County	\$108,700	\$585
Pennsylvania	\$185,400	\$817



**TABLE H-12  
COMPARATIVE REGIONAL HOUSING COSTS**

	<b>MEDIAN VALUE</b>	<b>MEDIAN GROSS RENT</b>
Penn Lake Park Borough	\$162,500	\$1,167
Bear Creek Township	\$157,400	\$920
Dennison Township	\$150,800	\$713
White Haven Borough	\$104,700	\$670
Foster Township	\$93,600	\$585

As noted in the above Table, the three highest median value of owner-occupied housing correlates with communities that experienced population increases during the past decade.

Attention on the cost of housing in Penn Lake Park Borough should also be directed toward the percentage of household income expended upon housing costs. The cost of housing in relationship to household income addresses the issue of affordable housing. The standard of 30 percent of household income is the accepted benchmark, i.e. a household should not spend more than 30 percent of its income on housing costs. Federal governmental guidelines, primarily those established by the US. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), define affordable housing as costing no more than thirty percent of a household's gross monthly income—referred to here as the 30 percent rule. The income counted is derived from all wages earned by people fifteen and older in the household. For homeowners, affordability is generally defined as owning a house with a value equal to slightly more than twice the household's annual income. The homeowner costs counted typically include a mortgage payment (principal, interest, taxes, and insurance) and utilities. For renters, the costs usually include contract rent and utilities. The 30 percent rule leaves seventy percent for food clothing, health care, child care, transportation to work and other basic expenses. Because of increasing housing costs, many lower income families are sometime forced to make tradeoffs and go without necessities. Within the realm of zoning, land use regulations can impact the cost and affordability of housing. The Pennsylvania Department of Economic Development publication titled, ***Reducing Land Use Barriers to Affordable Housing, Fourth Edition, August 2001***, lists a number of barriers to affordable housing associated with land use regulations, including among others:

- insufficient amount of land zoned for medium and high density residential development
- excessive lot frontage and setback requirements which dictate greater lot sizes
- excessive street widths and construction standards unrelated to expected traffic volumes
- lack of provisions for cluster design and planned residential development



- limitations on the use of mobile homes and manufactured homes
- plan review and administrative delays.

Affordable housing is a controversial reality of contemporary life, for gains in affordability often results from expanding land available for housing or increasing the density of housing units in a given area. The process of weighing the impacts of locating affordable housing is quite contentious, and is often laden with race and class implications. However, the type and cost of housing available in any municipality is largely market driven and beyond a municipality's direct control. Local municipalities must recognize that housing needs cannot be addressed entirely at the local level. With the exception of ensuring that land use and building regulations are reasonable in terms of affecting costs, small municipalities can do little to manage housing affordability which is so dependent on regional economic real estate market factors. In addition, municipalities can take steps to encourage innovative forms of housing that meet the community's needs and satisfy the market.

The Borough also needs to monitor the current national economic downturn as related to its impact on the market demand for housing in Penn Lake Park Borough. While the desirability and attractiveness of residing in Penn Lake Park Borough will not diminish, the length the economic downturn and its impact on the housing market can be one component affecting future population projections for the Borough. Economic forecast indicate that a surplus of housing built during the past decade will be a constraint for the housing industry. Nationally housing prices peaked in early 2005 and started to decline in 2006 and 2007. It is not clear to what extent the collapse of the housing bubble has had on the housing values in Penn Lake Park Borough. Housing bubbles in their late stages are typically characterized by rapid increases in the valuations of real property until unsustainable levels are reached relative to incomes and other economic indicators of affordability. This may be followed by decreases in home values that result in many owners finding themselves in a position of negative equity: a mortgage debt higher than the value of the property. The underlying causes of the housing bubble are complex. Factors include historically low interest rates, lax lending standards, and a speculative fever.

The long term stability of housing values within the Borough is bolstered by Penn Lake. It is well recognized that the location of property associated with bodies of water increase the value of property. Whether it be oceans, lakes or rivers, water brings up the aesthetic value, and dollar value of any area. Due to the inherent beauty of things like waterfront sunsets, aquatic

and avian life, and simply hearing the flow of water, property values on lakefronts are simply worth more to people than inland property.

Even with a stable housing market the trend of continued in-migration of higher income households to Penn Lake Park Borough could have the potential of increasing housing values beyond the means of the incomes of long time local residents. Approximately 43.6% of all owner households that have a mortgage expend more than 30 percent of their income on housing, as compared to 11.8% without a mortgage. Approximately 59.1% of the very limited number of renter-occupied units expend more than 30 percent of their income on housing. On a comparative basis of the affordability of housing costs in Penn Lake Park Borough is greater issue of concern at the Borough level than that of the County or the State level. In each case both owner housing and rental housing is less affordable in Penn Lake Park Borough. The cost of housing and the value of land in Penn Lake Park Borough have continued to increase which in turn created a housing market during the past decade where new units became less affordable to even middle income families. The subsequent and on-going reduction in housing values when combined with the weak economy will not foster goals of housing affordability in the Borough.

**TABLE H-13**  
**PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH**  
**MONTHLY OWNER COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME**  
**WITH A MORTGAGE**

Less than 20%	34.1%
20% to 24.9%	7.10%
25% to 29.9%	15.3%
30% to 34.9%	1.2%
35% or more	42.4%
TOTAL	100%

Of all owner occupied housing units with the Borough approximately 62% have mortgages. Forty-two percent of mortgaged properties spend in excess of 30% of their household income on monthly housing costs while only 12% of mortgage free properties do so.

**TABLE H-14**  
**PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH**  
**GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

Less than 15%	40.9%
15% to 19.9%	0
20% to 24.9%	0
25% to 29.9%	0
30% to 34.9%	0
35% or more	59.1%
TOTAL	100%

The age and condition of a community's housing stock is a key component of the community's overall housing profile. Penn Lake Park Borough's housing stock is relatively new in comparison to that of Luzerne County as a whole. As indicated on in Table H-15, 21% of the Borough's housing stock was constructed since 1990. However overall the most of the Borough's housing stock is much older with nearly 42% of all units being at least 50 years old. The age of the housing reflects the historic development of cottages which began in the late 1930's.

**TABLE H-15  
PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH - AGE OF HOUSING STOCK**

<b>Year Structure Built</b>	<b>Percentage of Units</b>
2005 or later	6.3%
2000 to 2004	2.2%
1990 to 1999	12.5%
1980 to 1989	4.6%
1970 to 1979	22.3%
1960 to 1969	10.3%
1950 to 1959	29.3%
1940 to 1959	5.4%
1939 or earlier	7.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

The primary house heating fuel for housing units in Penn Lake Park Borough is fuel oil (51.3%) followed by electric (22.1.0%). By comparison, the primary fuel source of occupied housing units at the County level and State level is utility gas which respectively represents 46% and 51% of the home heating fuel source. Utility gas is not available in Penn Lake Park Borough

**TABLE H-13  
PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH - HOUSE HEATING FUEL  
OCCUPIED UNITS**

<b>FUEL</b>	<b>PERCENT OF HOUSING UNITS</b>
FUEL OIL	47.5%
ELECTRIC	25.3%
BOTTLED TANK OR LP	12.7%
COAL	8.9%
WOOD	5.6%

### **FUTURE PLANNING AND HOUSING POLICIES**

Future planning and policy recommendations pertaining to housing are intended to ensure that the Borough accommodate projected housing unit growth while maintaining adequate

open land, provide for a diverse and affordable mix of housing types, and maintain a sound housing stock. These include:

- Promote mixed-use development that would accommodate various dwelling types.
- Provide for a variety of housing types, including single-family attached and multifamily dwellings designed to accommodate individuals and families of various income levels.
- Promote conservation of land in concert with new residential developments
- Review land use controls in terms of standards not directly linked to public health and safety which increase housing costs.
- Provide for age-restricted housing to accommodate seniors and retired individuals.
- Monitor the effect of the collapse of the housing bubble on the long term demand for housing within the Borough, with particular attention to building permits.
- Permit a mix of lot sizes within residential developments to encourage diversity of housing structures and styles.
- Encourage maintenance of the existing housing stock and rehabilitation of deteriorating homes.
- Encourage innovative development to promote energy conservation.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES.**

- Incorporate Conservation by Design regulations ( Growing Greener) into the Zoning Ordinance and SALDO to fully comply with the provisions set forth in the Borough's Community Assessment Report provided by the Natural Lands Trust.
- Incorporate transferrable development rights into the Zoning Ordinance to enable the shift of density from predominately rural parcels to zoning districts allowing higher residential density.
- Provide incentives such as density bonuses as a means of providing more affordable housing in new subdivisions
- Consider providing some incentives (density or design) for developers who provide age restricted and/or affordable housing.
- Allow flexibility to layout of subdivisions to promote predominantly east-west street orientation for optimal building orientation for solar access.
- Make road width and other construction standards in the SALDO reasonable in terms of meeting safety and durability requirements without adding unnecessary costs to housing.
- Consider the adoption of a the International Property Maintenance Code to ensure the public health, safety and welfare standards to ensure the structural integrity of dwellings,

to prevent dilapidation and to preclude negative effects on the Borough.

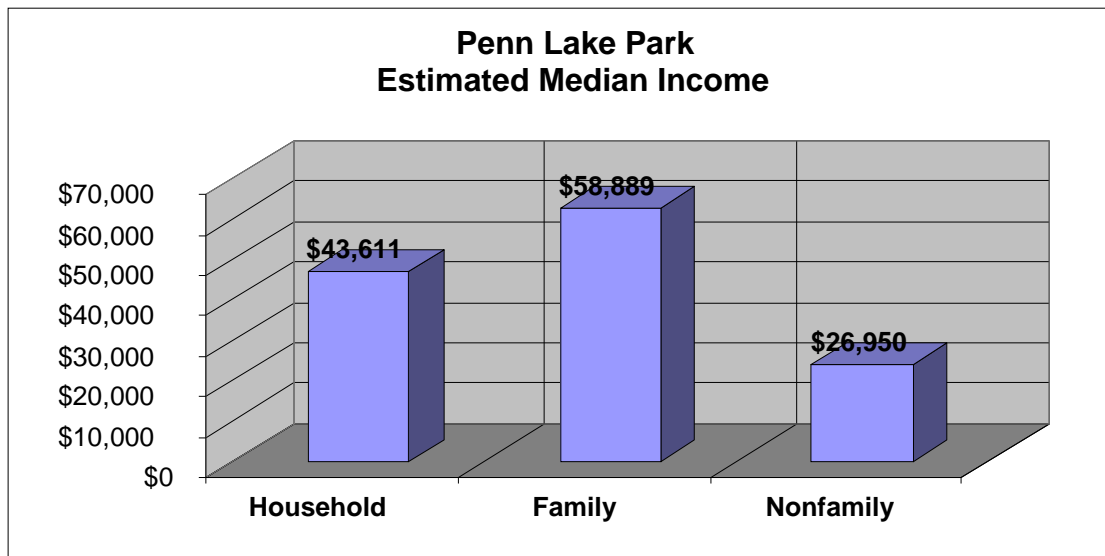
## CHAPTER 6

### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ELEMENT

Penn Lake Park can be generally categorized as a middle income community in Luzerne County. As indicated in Table ES-1 the Median Household Income for the Borough is less than that of two adjoining Townships, Dennison and Bear Creek, but higher than that of White Haven Borough and Foster Township. On a broader scale, the Penn Lake Park's median household income is higher than that of Luzerne County and slightly less than that at the State level. The same results generally hold true for Family and Per Capita Income figures.

**Table ES-1**  
**2006-2010 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY ESTIMATES**  
**COMPARISON OF ESTIMATED MEDIAN INCOME & PER CAPITA INCOME**

MUNICIPALITY	HOUSEHOLD	FAMILY	PER CAPITA
<b>Penn Lake Park Borough</b>	\$43,611	\$58,889	\$26,693
Bear Creek Township	\$57,609	\$65,319	\$25,333
Dennison Township	\$56,964	\$63,594	\$27,493
White Haven Borough	\$44,821	\$48,611	\$22,063
Foster Township	\$37,431	\$50,123	\$20,819
Luzerne County	\$41,898	\$54,972	\$23,176
Pennsylvania	\$50,398	\$63,364	\$27,049



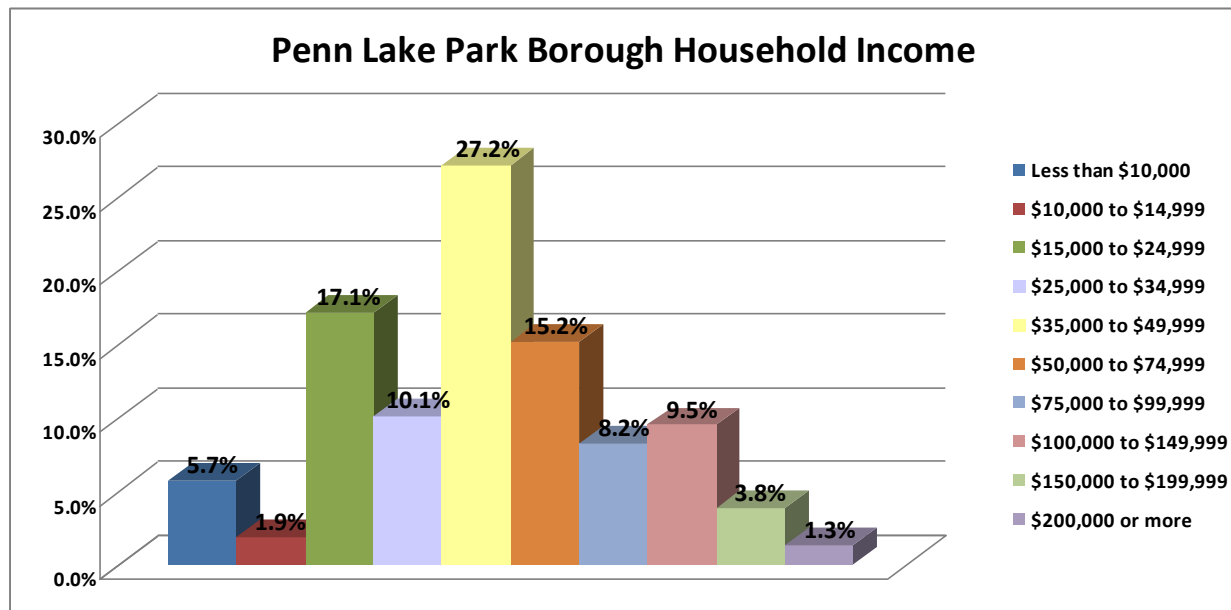
As noted by Census definitions, a “Family” Household contains two or more individuals who are related to one another, while the definition of a “Household” is more encompassing by including all occupied housing units with one or more individuals. Nearly half of all households within the Borough are nonfamily households and nearly a quarter of those households represent single person households which helps provide an explanation for the disparity between the two sets of

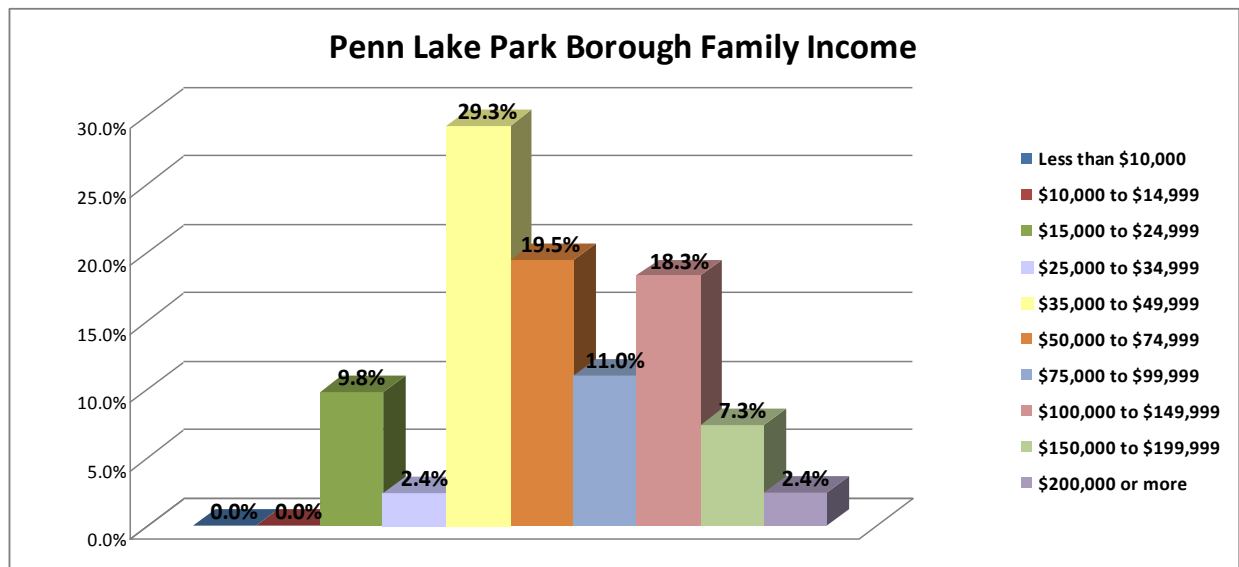
data. Per-capita income is the overall income of a population divided by the number of people included in the population. It does not always give an accurate representation of the quality of life due to the function's inability to account for skewed data. The Borough's per capita income level of \$26,693 is higher than those of those of all surrounding communities, excluding Dennison Township.

**Table ES-2**  
**2006-2010 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY**  
**Range of Estimated Income by Type of Household**

Income Range	Penn Lake Park Borough			
	Households	Families	Married-couple families	Nonfamily households
Income	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Total	158*	82	80	76
Less than \$10,000	5.7%	0.0%	0.0%	11.8%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	17.1%	9.8%	10.0%	25.0%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	10.1%	2.4%	2.5%	18.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	27.2%	29.3%	30.0%	25.0%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	15.2%	19.5%	17.5%	10.5%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	8.2%	11.0%	11.3%	5.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	9.5%	18.3%	18.8%	0.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3.8%	7.3%	7.5%	0.0%
\$200,000 or more	1.3%	2.4%	2.5%	0.0%
Median income (dollars)	\$43,611	\$58,889	\$58,611	\$26,591

- Actual 2010 Census Count equaled 144 Households





In reviewing the Income Data ranges for Penn Lake Park as contained in Table ES-2, some additional clarification regarding terminology of the data is in order. With reference to the Census definition, a “Family Household” contains two or more persons who are either married or related by blood or adoption. A “Non-family Household” normally represents a household with only one person residing therein or, to a lesser degree, two or more persons residing together who are not related in any manner. When using the term “Household” it includes both family households and non-family households. Therefore household incomes are always less than those of family households but greater than those of non-family households.

While any level of poverty represents an issue for community concern regarding its complex interrelationships with other social issues, only 3.8% of all family households within Penn Lake Borough were deemed to have income levels below the poverty level during the preceding 12 months. In comparison to all other jurisdictions listed in Table ES-3, the Borough’s was found to be the lowest.

**Table ES-3**  
**2006-2010 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY**  
**PERCENT OF FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS BELOW POVERTY LEVEL**

MUNICIPALITY	Percent
Penn Lake Park Borough	3.7%
Bear Creek Township	6.0%
Dennison Township	8.5%
White Haven Borough	7.4%
Foster Township	8.8%
Luzerne County	10.0%
Pennsylvania	8.5%



Census data records various forms of income within any given community. The most common forms of income include Earnings (wages or salary received for work performed as an employee), Social Security Income (pensions, survivors benefits and permanent disability), Retirement Income (pensions received from his former employer, income from annuities and insurance) and Public Assistance Income (general and temporary assistance to needy families, excluding non-cash benefits such as food stamps).

**Table ES-4**  
**2006-2010 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY**  
**COMPARISON OF INCOME AND BENEFITS**

Forms of Income	Penn Lake Park	Luzerne County	Pennsylvania
<b>Earnings</b>	69.0%	72.6%	76.6%
<b>Social Security</b>	30.4%	36.7%	31.5%
<b>Retirement Income</b>	25.9%	22.5%	20.1%
<b>Cash Public Assistance</b>	0.0%	2.9%	3.2%

These income sources are not mutually exclusive; that is, some households received income from more than one source. It is interesting to note that households in Penn Lake Park Borough as compared to County and State figures have a lesser percentage of Earnings and a higher percentage of Retirement Income which corresponds with the Borough's aging population as addressed in Chapter 4, Population Element.

### **LABOR FORCE**

Census data utilizes the population of age 16 and older for data related to a municipality's labor force. The 2010 Census indicated a population of 273 Borough residents within that age classification. Of that total, 176 persons or 64.5% % of the aforementioned total were active participants within the labor force. The Borough's recorded unemployment rate was at time 7.2%. The composition of the Borough's labor force when differentiated by gender it finds male to female ratio to be 53% to 47%, with approximately 43% of all family households with children having both husband and wife working. There exists an approximate gender differential in median earnings of \$3,000, with that of males estimated to be \$35,938 compared to \$32,656.

The vast majority of the Borough's population that are not active in labor force consist of persons still in high school or college and those individuals who have retired or have a disability. Based upon primary and secondary school enrollment data there are less than 30 persons who fall into that classification which actually represents 66% of the Borough's school age population. As noted in Chapter 4, Population Element, the Borough has very limited population of school age and younger adults

**Table ES-5**  
**2006-2010 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY.**  
**PENN LAKE PARK BOROUGH**

<b>SCHOOL ENROLLMENT</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school	44	100%
Nursery school, preschool	2	4.5%
Kindergarten	0	0.0%
Elementary school (grades 1-8)	13	29.5%
High school (grades 9-12)	11	25.0%
College or graduate school	18	40.9%

Conversely with the older demographics of the Borough's population, combined with 30.4% of all households receiving Social Security and 25.9% receiving a retirement income, would lead one to conclude that the majority residents no longer active in the labor force are age-related.

The Census Bureau provides data based upon the industry, occupation and class of worker. The information on industry relates to the type of business conducted by the person's employing organization, occupation describes the type of work performed by the employee, and the class of worker is related to means and/or method of employment, i.e., private, public or self-employed. There is an important distinction to be made when analyzing employment and occupation data. Employment by industry reflects the types of goods or services produced by the company or firm which employs an individual. The employment of a person by type of occupational classification is distinct in that any given industry or organization normally employs a variety of differing occupations in its overall operations. The employment characteristics of Borough's labor force is provided in Table ES-6 and Table ES-7

**Table ES-6**  
**2006-2010 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5- YEAR ESTIMATES**  
**EMPLOYED PERSONS<sup>1</sup> BY INDUSTRY<sup>2</sup>**

<b>TYPE OF INDUSTRY</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0	0.0%
Construction	8	4.4%
Manufacturing	17	9.3%
Wholesale trade	9	4.9%
<b>Retail trade</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>21.0%</b>
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	0	0.0%
Information	0	0.0%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	12	6.6%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	17	9.3%

<b>Educational services, and health care and social assistance</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>30.3%</b>
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	15	8.2%
Other services, except public administration	6	3.3%
Public administration	5	2.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>

**1** Employed persons age 16 and older.

**2** Industry data describe the kind of business conducted by a person's employing organization. Industry data were derived from answers to Census questions 42 through 44. Question 42 asks: "For whom did this person work?" Question 43 asks: "What kind of business or industry was this?" Question 44 provides 4 check boxes from which respondents are to select one to indicate whether the business was primarily manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail trade, or other (agriculture, construction, service, government, etc.).

During the period from 2006-2010, for the employed population 16 years and older, the leading industries for employment for Penn Lake Park Borough residents were Educational Services, and Health Care, and Social Services at 30% percent and Retail Trade, at 21 percent. There were approximately 9.3% equally employed in industries related to Manufacturing and the Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services

**Table ES-7**  
**2006-2010 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5- YEAR ESTIMATES**  
**EMPLOYED PERSONS<sup>1</sup> BY OCCUPATION<sup>2</sup>**

<b>OCCUPATION</b>	<b>Persons</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Management, Professional and Related Occupations	68	37.4%
Service Occupations	34	18.7%
Sales and Office Occupations	61	33.5%
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations	11	6.0%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations	8	4.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>100%</b>

**1** Employed persons age 16 and older.

**2** Occupation describes the kind of work a person does on the job. Occupation data were derived from answers to Census questions 45 and 46. Question 45 asks: "What kind of work was this person doing?" Question 46 asks: "What were this person's most important activities or duties?" These questions were asked of all people 15 years old and over who had worked in the past 5 years. For employed people, the data refer to the person's job during the previous week. For those who worked two or more jobs, the data refer to the job where the person worked the greatest number of hours. For unemployed people and people who are not currently employed but report having a job within the last five years, the data refer to their last job.

Some occupation groups are related closely to certain industries. For example healthcare providers and teachers account for the major portion of individuals employed under the industrial classification of "Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance. However, the various industry categories include people in other occupations. For example,

people employed in Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities include truck drivers and bookkeepers; people employed in the Wholesale trade industry can include mechanics, freight handlers, and payroll clerks; and people employed in the health care profession include janitors, security guards, and secretaries.

OCCUPATIONS AND TYPE OF EMPLOYER: Among the most common occupations of Borough residents which accounted for more than 70% were: Management, Professional and Related Occupations, 37.4% and Sales and Office Occupations, 33.5%. As indicated in Table ES-8, most Borough residents are employed in the private sector.

**Table ES-8**  
**2006-2010 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5- YEAR ESTIMATES**  
**SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT**

Private Industry/Business	Government Employed	Self-employed
80.2%	8.2%	11.5%

### TRAVEL TIME TO PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT

<b>Table ES-9</b> <b>2006-2010 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY</b>		
COMMUTING TO WORK	Estimate	Percent
Workers 16 years and over	176	176
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	141	80.1%
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	35	19.9%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	0	0.0%
Walked	0	0.0%
Other means	0	0.0%
Worked at home	0	0.0%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	26.8	(X

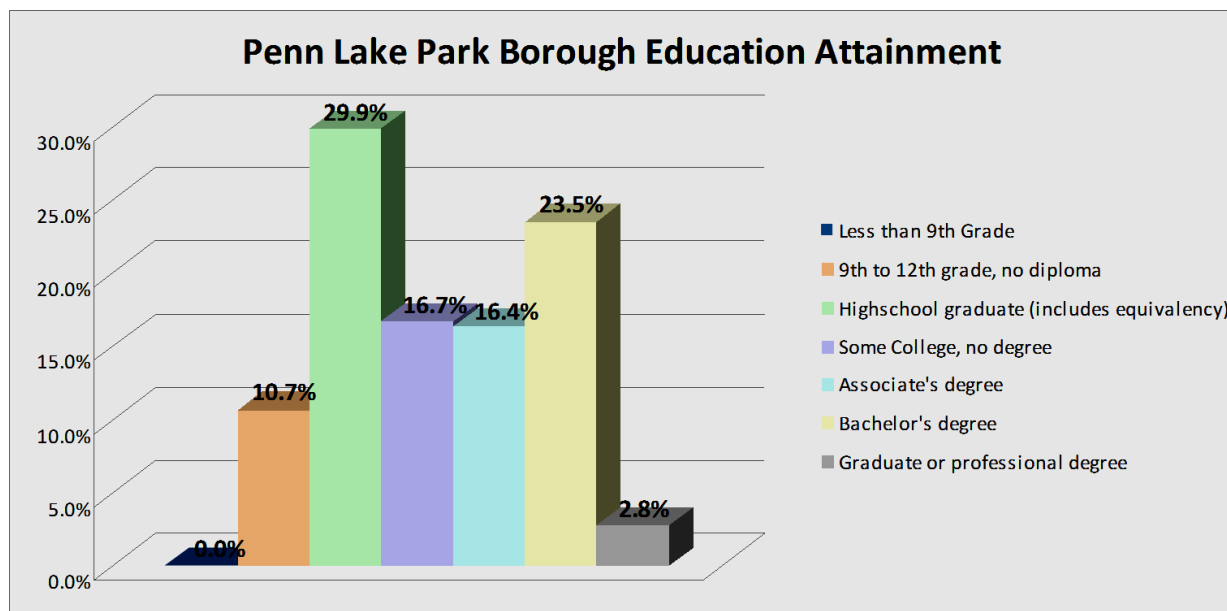
Eighty percent of Penn Lake Park Borough workers drove to work alone and 20 percent carpooled. Among those who commuted to work, it took them on average 26.7 minutes to get to work. The average time for traveling to work indicates a likely combination of close to home employment opportunities and the Borough's proximity major highways including Interstate 80, Interstate 476, SR 947 and SR 315.

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

In 2006-2010, 89 percent of Borough residents 25 years and older had at least graduated from high school and 26.3% percent had a bachelor's degree or higher.

**Table ES-10**  
**2006-2010 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY**

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	Estimate	Percent
Population 25 years and over	281	281
Less than 9th grade	0	0.0%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	30	10.7%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	84	29.9%
Some college, no degree	47	16.7%
Associate's degree	46	16.4%
Bachelor's degree	66	23.5%
Graduate or professional degree	8	2.8%
Percent high school graduate or higher		89.3%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher		26.3%



On a comparative basis, the percent of the Borough's population having a bachelor's degree or higher exceeds that of both the County and State by significant margins.

### PERCENT OF POPULATION WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER

Penn Lake Park Borough	Luzerne County	Pennsylvania
26.3%	13.3%	16.6%

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **LAND USE ELEMENT**

A community's growth and development is affected by a broad range of interrelated factors including such things as regional location, transportation system, natural resources, land suitability for development, available community facilities such as sewage disposal and public water, general economic conditions (regional and national), local land values and real estate taxes. A change in one factor can in all likelihood result in a change in another factor, and could affect the overall character of the community. How a community's character has developed and how it will change into the future is the result of a complex interaction of variable factors. Land use patterns in a community are the result of this complex interaction extended over the community's history. Penn Lake Park Borough's rural character and environmental and scenic quality as a lake-based community, combined with its proximity to the Wilkes-Barre/Hazleton, New York and New Jersey metropolitan areas make it a very desirable place to reside. Penn Lake Park Borough faces a challenge as it moves into the future to strike a balance between growth and preservation. The Borough must provide for essential growth and development while concurrently preserving the natural and scenic character that gives its residents a superior quality of life. Without careful planning and management of growth the Borough's landscape and community character can be forever altered by sprawling and disorganized development.

This land use plan examines development patterns in Penn Lake Park Borough and provides recommendations designed to achieve balanced and coordinated growth and development based upon the community's needs. Given the strong preference as demonstrated within the Community Survey, the preservation of natural features which define and give Penn Lake Park its identity must be of paramount consideration.

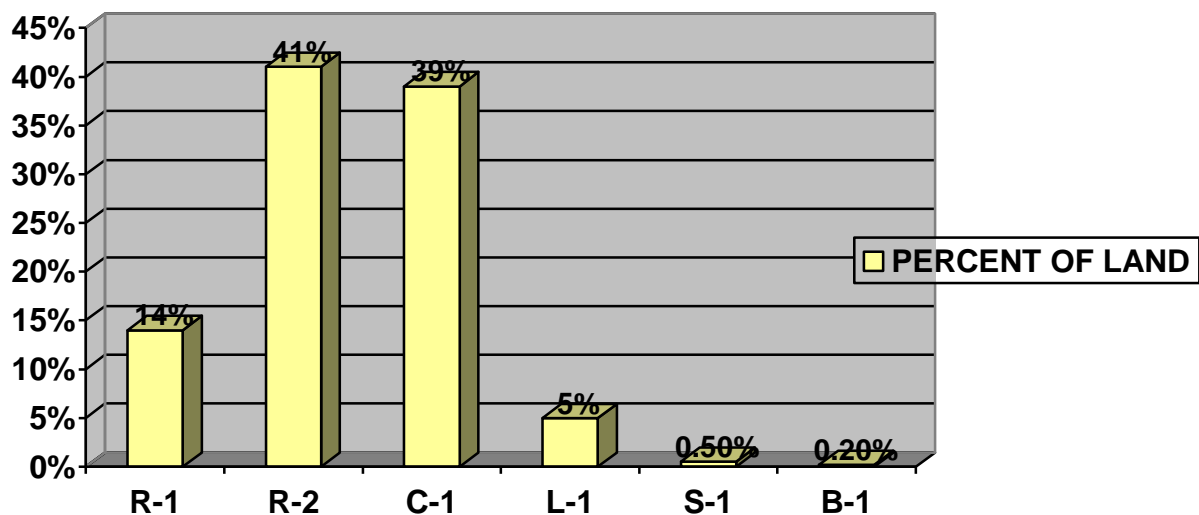
Penn Lake Park Borough can be best characterized as a bedroom/resort community, which has within recent years taken upon a component of a retirement community for baby boomers who have opted to convert seasonal housing into year-round residences. Given spatial limitations for new growth beyond the development footprint that surrounds the Lake, the conversion of seasonal units into year-round units and the expansion of existing dwellings appears to be a trend that will continue within the Borough. With the exception of one established convenience store, the Borough lacks any type of land uses which can be characterized as commercial or industrial.

With the exception of SR 2014 (White Haven Highway) which traverses the outskirts of the Borough, the Borough does not possess the transportation component or geographic location which would attract commercial or industrial development to the Borough. Nor is there a population level within the Borough to support commercial service uses, such as a convenience store. As such there are only 2.62 acres of land that are zoned for commercial use. The aforementioned acreage represents only .2% of all land within the Borough. There is no land within the Borough that is zoned industrial. A narrative is provided herein which addresses each of the six Zoning Districts found within the Borough. The following table provides the amount of land within the Borough by Zoning District.

**TABLE LU-1**

ZONING DISTRICT	CLASSIFICATION	ACRES	PERCENT OF LAND
R-1	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE	153.78	14.2%
R-2	RURAL RESIDENTIAL	446.37	41.2%
C-1	CONSERVATION	420.73	38.8%
L-1	LAKE AREA	55.44	5.1%
S-1	SPECIAL PURPOSE	5.23	0.5%
B-1	CONVENIENCE COMMERCIAL	2.62	0.2%

**DISTRIBUTION OF LAND BY ZONING CLASSIFICATION**



As indicated by the above Table approximately 80% of all land is zoned as either R-2 or C-1, with the vast majority of such land as undeveloped forested open space. The majority of developed land is concentrated within the R-1 District which circles Penn Lake, with nearly all developed land within the Borough representing single family dwelling units.



# Zoning Map of Penn Lake Park Borough



Information Provided By:  
Luzerne County Planning Commission  
7-6-2010

**BOROUGH  
TOTAL AREA  
1,084.16 Acres**

**C-1  
AREA  
244.73 Acres**

**R-2  
AREA  
343.84 Acres**

**R-1  
AREA  
144.55 Acres**

**L-1  
AREA  
55.44 Acres**

**B-1  
AREA  
1.71 Acres**

**B-1  
AREA  
0.81 Acres**

**S-1  
AREA  
0.22 Acres**

**R-1  
AREA  
9.23 Acres**

**S-1  
AREA  
5.01 Acres**

**R-2  
AREA  
83.32 Acres**

**C-1  
AREA  
173.71 Acres**

**R-2  
AREA  
69.21 Acres**

## Zoning Key

R-1 Single Family Residential  
R-2 Rural Residential  
C-1 Conservation  
B-1 Convenience Commercial  
L-1 Lake Area  
S-1 Special Purpose

## GRAPHIC SCALE



1 inch = 350 feet

## Legend

Penn Lake Park Borough Zoning  
All Parcels  
Penn Lake Park Borough  
Streets



## **R-1 ZONING (SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL)**

The R-1 District encompasses approximately 14% of the land area with Penn Lake Park Borough. As illustrated upon the Zoning Map, nearly all developed land within the Borough is zoned R-1 as a band that surrounds Penn Lake with the majority of properties fronting upon Lakeview Drive.



The current dimensional and setback requirements for properties located within the R-1 District are as follows.

- A. Minimum Lot Area:
  - 1. Sixty Thousand (60,000) square feet when serviced by central sewers.
  - 2. Two (2) acres when serviced by on-lot sewage disposal and governed by the applicable standards of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.
- B. Minimum Lot Width: Two Hundred (200) feet, as measured from a depth of the required front yard setback.
- C. Minimum Lot Depth: One Hundred (100) feet, as measured from the front lot line to the rear lot line.
- D. Front Yard: Forty (40) feet in depth as measured from the front lot line.
- E. Rear Yard: Forty (40) feet in depth as measured from the rear lot line.
- F. Side Yard: Each side yard shall be not less than fifteen (15') feet on each side.

- G. Maximum Lot Coverage: Not more than forty (40%) percent of the lot area shall be covered with buildings or structures.*
- H. Building Height: The maximum height of any building shall not exceed two and one-half (2.5) stories or thirty-five (35) feet, whichever is the lesser.*

It is noteworthy to first consider the minimum lot size for this District which is 60,000 square feet or essentially 1 ½ acres. As noted within Chapter 1, the original layout of lots within the Borough dates back to the late 1930's. The development concept for property at that time was premised on "cottages" built on relatively small lots, most of which had limited frontage or width of not greater than fifty (50) feet. It's fair to assume that nearly all properties within the R-1 District do not meet the dimensional requirements of the R-1 District, placing such lots in a dimensional nonconforming status.

The high density is a fixed given feature of land surrounding the Lake. There is no other vacant land in the Borough with an R-1 zoning classification suitable for new development for which the current dimensional standards would apply for a low density residential development. In concert with property owners finding the Borough increasingly attractive for year-round residence, there has been a marked increase in number of cases before the Zoning Hearing Board regarding dimensional variances for new construction or the expansion of dwellings within the R-1 District. While each case is judged upon its individual merit in accordance with the applicable criteria that must be met by applicants, the Board finds it very difficult to grant approval. Under such circumstances with the exception of the few vacant parcels, the existing pattern of development within the R-1 District of the Borough will remain frozen.

While there is an apparent mismatch between the actual physical pattern of development in the R-1 District and applicable dimensional standards for that District, it does have the effect of limiting the scale of new growth which is a stated policy objective of the Borough. Given the recent advent of public sewers in the Borough, a minimum lot size of 60,000 square feet may be excessive as a means to limiting growth. Consideration should be given to reducing the minimum lot size for areas serviced by public sewers without promoting increased density. A minimum lot size of 20,000 to 25,000 square feet would be more realistic and provide the opportunity for infill development and/or the combining of lots to obtain a minimum lot size.

If the Borough opts to retain the current minimum lot size of 60,000 square feet, then Growing Greener land-use regulations, as developed by the Natural Lands Trust, for conserving open space would certainly be appropriate consideration.

In conjunction with reexamining the minimum lot size, the Borough should also consider dividing the R-1 into two separate categories which would distinguish Lake-Front property from that of the balance of the current District. The benefit of doing so would allow the Borough to craft zoning regulations that would be applicable to the unique features of being a Lake-Front property and the protection of environmental features and values requiring special attention and protection, some of which is already in place. Current zoning regulations limit development for areas bordering Lake including a prohibition of contour changes. The specific language within the Section 802.10 of Borough's Zoning Ordinance which provides such protection reads as follows:

*"The following regulations apply to all properties, regardless of Zoning District classification which have a common border with the easement that surrounds Penn Lake. The land areas of such properties shall not be altered or extended by any means, including but not limited to, the use of fill material and/or excavation, nor shall the grade or contours of such properties be altered by any mean."*

With Penn Lake as the dominant environmental asset of the Borough, the retention and enforcement of the above land-use regulations are of critical importance to the Borough. Also with the attraction of development to Lake front lots, there has been a new concern that the scale of new homes and the additions to existing structures may create a "crowding effect." That concern generally relates to the scale of development becoming too large and somewhat out of character with the existing visual and aesthetic scale of existing development. Should the Borough wish to abate this concern, it could be done through a reduction in the maximum lot coverage applicable to lake-front lots. All lake-front lots are zoned R-1 which has a maximum lot coverage of 40%. Just as Section 802.10 represents a land use regulation only applicable to lake-front properties, a reduction in the maximum lot coverage to lake-front properties could be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance with perhaps a maximum lot coverage not to exceed 25%.

The R-1 Zoning District only allows single-family residential uses, as the only residential use permitted by right. Given the Borough's expressed interest in limiting increased density within

this District, it is highly unlikely that any other type of residential use, particularly multifamily dwellings, including townhouses and the conversion existing dwellings, would be permitted in this District in the future. With the MPC policy requirement that municipalities must plan for and provide for various housing types, the Borough will need to focus on other areas of the Borough to provide such housing.

## **R-2 DISTRICT (RURAL RESIDENTIAL)**

The R-2 District encompasses approximately 41% of the land area within Penn Lake Park Borough, representing the highest percentage of land coverage among the six Zoning Districts within the Borough. As illustrated upon the Zoning Map, there are three locations within the Borough that are classified as R-2. The largest area of land classified as R-2 is located along the extreme westerly Section of the Borough which borders Dennison Township. This area encompasses 343 acres of land. The second largest area of land that is zoned R-2 runs parallel to S. R. 2041, the White Haven Highway, and covers approximately 69 acres of land. The third and smallest of the three areas zoned R-2 is located along the south westerly boundary of the Borough with the subject land fronting upon Hollenback Road. The land along Hollenback Road is the only area within the Borough zoned R-2 that contains development; single-family dwellings.

The current dimensional and setback requirements for properties located within the R-2 District are as follows.

- A. *Minimum Lot Area: Each principal building, structure and/or use which shall be connected to central sewers shall be located upon a lot having a minimum lot area of not less than:*
  - 1. *One acre when serviced by central sewers.*
  - 2. *Two (2) acres when serviced by an on-lot sewage disposal system and governed by the applicable standards of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.*
- B. *Minimum Lot Width: One Hundred (100') feet*
- C. *Front Yard: The minimum front yard shall be not less than fifty (50') feet in depth as measured from the front lot line.*

- D. Rear Yard: *The rear yard shall be not less than fifty (50') feet in depth as measured from the rear lot line.*
- E. Side Yard: *Each side yard shall be not less than twenty (20) feet on each side.*
- F. Lot Coverage: *Not more than thirty-five (35) percent of the lot area shall be covered with buildings or structures.*
- G. Building Height: *The maximum height of any building shall not exceed two and one-half (2.5) stories or thirty-five (35') feet, whichever is the lesser.*

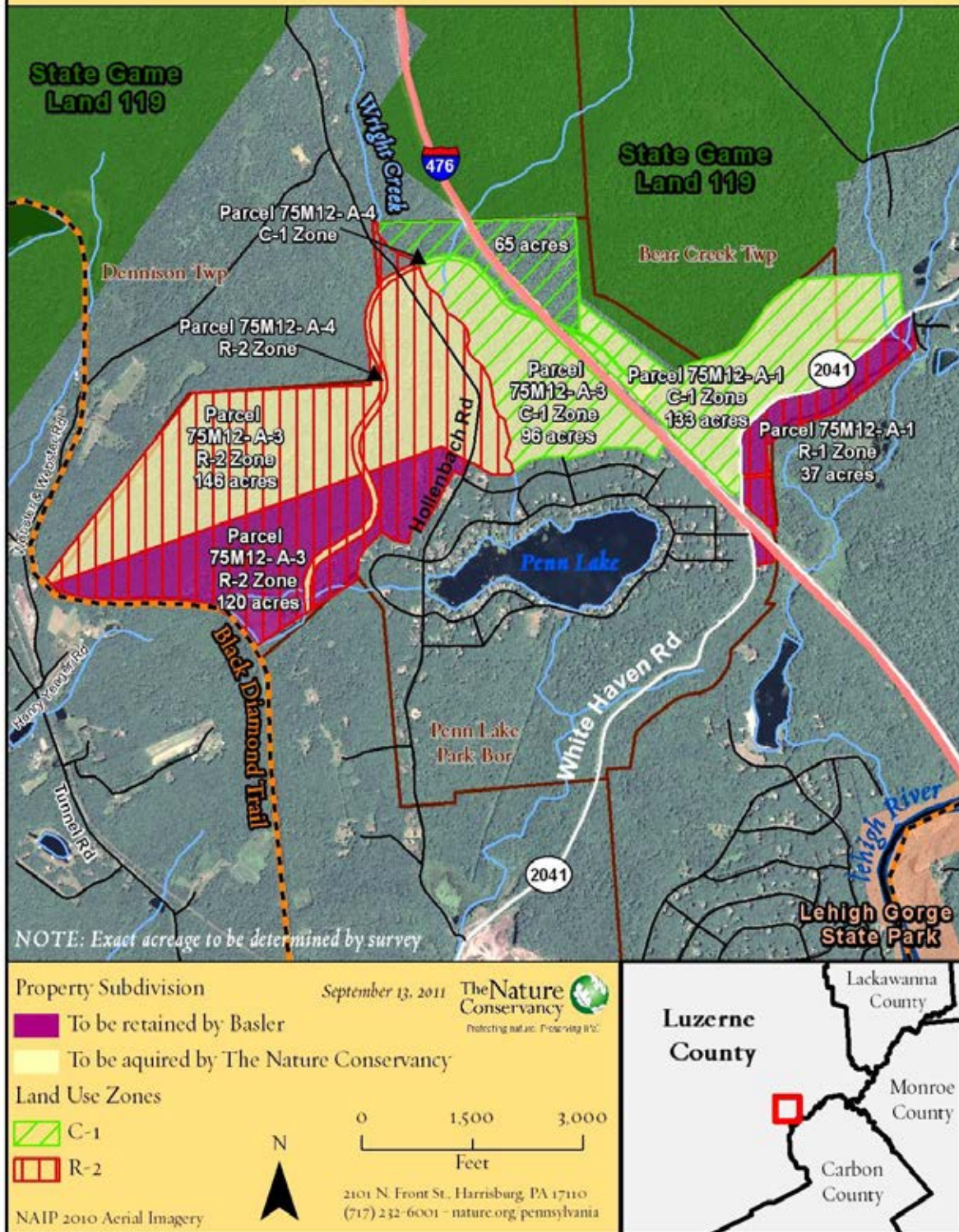
Unlike the R-1 District, the R-2 District provides diversity in the types of housing available within this district. In addition to single-family detached dwellings, two unit dwellings are permitted by right and townhouses as a conditional use.

Because the vast majority of land under the R-2 classification is undeveloped, the future use of this land will represent both an opportunity and challenge to the Borough. The largest of the three areas classified as R-2 (343 acres) is of particular interest for planning purposes. Currently the principal private owner of land within the Borough is in the process of selling approximately 400 acres to the Nature Conservancy, with 146 acres currently zoned a R-2. As illustrated upon the attached map, this parcel runs from the westerly boundary with Dennison Township to an easterly boundary with Wright Creek. As illustrated, the land which will be held as permanent open space forms an umbrella type of coverage over the northern half of the Borough and will have a tremendous positive impact on limiting future growth in this section of the Borough, while preserving forested land and areas of wildlife habitat. The subdivision of the property for the purpose of sale to the Nature Conservancy was approved in May, 2012, by the Borough. The Nature Conservancy land is dissected by Hollenback Road which serves as the only viable means of access to this property. Given the preservation of this land as permanent open space by Nature Conservancy, consideration should be given to rezoning the current R-2 classification to a C-1 (Conservation) classification. The amount of land currently zoned R-2 included within the total land purchase by the Nature Conservancy is approximately 146 acres. The preservation of such acreage as permanent open space will greatly benefit the Borough's goal of preserving the natural environmental features and assets beyond the current pattern of development that surrounds Penn Lake. The balance of land immediately north and west of the 146 acre parcel to be acquired by the Nature Conservancy would be best suited to also be rezoned C-1, as a logical extension of land bordering land to be acquired by the Nature Conservancy.



# Exhibit A-1:

TNC-Arbutus/Basler Acquisition  
Penn Lake Park Borough, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania





There is approximately 33 acres of land which had been previously subdivided into residential building lots, some of which have been developed. This strip of land on the westerly side Hollenback Road is intended to remain classified as R-2.



The retention of the 69.21 acres of land zoned R-2 located on the easterly side of the White Haven Highway would also be an appropriate continued land use designation.



## **C-1 DISTRICT (CONSERVATION)**

Approximately 39% of all land within the Borough is zoned C-1. This figure is somewhat surprising given the vast expanse of open space throughout the Borough. As illustrated upon the Borough's Zoning Map on Page 7- the majority of such land is located in the northeasterly section of the Borough, generally east of Wright Creek and includes State Game Lands and a section of I-476, the northeast extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. This subject section of the Borough which is zoned C-1 encompasses approximately 245 acres of land. A significant area of land, approximately 174 acres, in the southern section of the Borough is also zoned C-1. The importance of the location of the C-1 District is somewhat of a band which wraps around the developed areas within the Borough which are intended to be sheltered from further high density. The current dimensional and setback requirements for properties located within the C-1 District are as follows:

### **506.4        *DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS***

*A principal building, structure and/or use shall be governed by the following regulations, unless more restrictive standards are applicable, including but not limited to State regulations and supplementary regulations contained in Article 8 of this Ordinance.*

- A. *Minimum Lot Area: Each principal building or use shall be located upon a lot having a minimum lot area of not less than two (2) acres.*
- B. *Minimum Lot Width: Each lot shall have a lot width not less than two hundred (200) feet.*
- C. *Front Yard: The minimum front yard shall be not less than fifty (50) feet in depth as measured from the front lot line.*
- D. *Rear Yard: The rear yard shall be not less than fifty (50) feet in depth as measured from the rear lot line.*
- E. *Side Yard: The side yard shall be not less than fifty (50) feet on each side.*
- F. *Lot Coverage: Not more than twenty (20%) percent of a lot shall be covered by buildings. Total impervious cover shall not exceed thirty (30%) percent.*
- G. *Building Height: The maximum height of any building shall not exceed two and one-half (2.5) stories or thirty-five (35') feet, whichever is the lesser.*

While the permitted uses within the C-1 District are primarily low intensity uses, the same cannot be said for uses classified as Special Exceptions and Conditional Uses. Some of



those uses include outdoor storage, self-service storage facilities and commercial recreation facilities as special exception uses, some of which may not be appropriate with the open space goals of Penn Lake Park Borough. Specific Conditional Uses include wireless commercial communication sites (cell towers) golf courses, and excavation, extraction and/or removal of minerals. These uses should also be re-examined, particularly that related to recovery of minerals, as to whether they are appropriate for inclusion in the C-1 District.

The minimum two-acre lot size should be retained and any further development within the C-1 District is anticipated to be residential. Such development should be centered upon Growing Greener land-use regulations, as developed by the Natural Lands Trust. A more detailed description of the methodology for conserving open space while allowing the development is discussed in detail in Chapter 8. It is recommended that the long term land-use prospects for Penn Lake Park Borough would include a future expansion of the C-1 District.

### **L-1 DISTRICT (LAKE DISTRICT)**

The L-1 District was created for Penn Lake and approximately 55 acres of this District encompasses all of Penn Lake and parts of the easement surrounding the Lake. As a man-made lake which is fed by Wright Creek, the preservation and protection of the Lake is of the utmost importance to all residents of the Borough. Therefore one would assume that the Borough's current zoning regulations would be designed around such principles. The current zoning regulations with this District read as follows:

#### **SECTION 504      L-1 LAKE DISTRICT**

##### **504.1      PERMITTED USES**

*Boating and Water Related Recreational Activities*

***NO PERMANENT STRUCTURES SHALL BE PERMITTED IN THE L-1, LAKE DISTRICT.***

##### **504.2      USES PERMITTED BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION**

*NONE*

##### **504.3      CONDITIONAL USES (SEE ARTICLE 7)**

*Any use permitted by right or by special exception shall be deemed a conditional use*

*if it involves the initial or cumulative construction, placement or installation which equals or exceeds 5,000 square feet of buildings, structures and/or other impervious surface area.*

#### 504.4      DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS

*A principal building, structure and/or use shall be governed by the following regulations, unless more restrictive standards are applicable, including but not limited to State or Federal regulations and supplementary regulations contained in Article 8 of this Ordinance.*

- A.      Minimum Lot Area: *None*
- B.      Minimum Lot Width: *None*
- C.      Front Yard: *None*
- D.      Rear Yard: *None*
- E.      Side Yard: *The side yard shall be not less than ten (10) feet on each side.*
- F.      Lot Coverage: *None*
- G.      Building Height: *The maximum height of any building shall not exceed one story or twelve feet in height, whichever is the lesser.*

While the uses within this district are limited to "*Boating and Water Related Recreational Activities*" there is a degree of vagueness which should be re-examined and perhaps stated with better clarity. Regulations which are vague can be counterproductive for preserving the integrity of the Lake. The Borough has stringent zoning regulations which preclude any grading of lakefront property, which is perhaps the best land-use for protecting point. Those regulations read as follows:

#### 802.10      LAKE FRONT PROPERTY - SPECIAL REGULATIONS

*The following regulations apply to all properties, regardless of Zoning District classification, which have a common border with the easement that surrounds Penn Lake. The land areas of such properties shall not be altered or extended by any means, including but not limited to, the use of fill material and/or excavation, nor shall the grade or contours of such properties be altered by any means. A principal building, structure and/or use shall be governed by the following regulations, unless more restrictive standards are applicable, including but not limited to State or Federal regulations and supplementary regulations contained in Article 8 of this Ordinance.*

The Borough also has separate stand-alone ordinances restricting use of the Lake, including the prohibition of any motorized vessels upon the Lake. Because no permanent structures, including

docks are permitted within the Lake, Section 504.3, Conditional Uses is in contradiction with Section 504.1 which states

***"NO PERMANENT STRUCTURES SHALL BE PERMITTED IN THE L-1, LAKE DISTRICT."*** Therefore Section 504.3 should be deleted. Some of the Borough's special purpose ordinances related to the Lake should at minimum be cross referenced within the zoning regulations. Because the Pennsylvania Department Environmental Protection has regulatory jurisdiction regarding Lake, L-1 LAKE DISTRICT regulations should also reference the need to secure an appropriate DEP Water Encroachment Permit for activities within the Lake.

### **S-1 DISTRICT (SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICT)**

The S-1 District is limited to and represents land used for recreational purposes. It is limited to two locations; the recreational area and facilities adjacent to Lakeview Drive and Terrace Drive and the beach area along to Lakeview Drive. The total amount of land classified as S-1 is limited to 5.23 acres or about .05% of all Borough land. Of that amount approximately 5 acres represents the recreational area along Terrace Drive, and the remainder of about one quarter of an acre is the beach area. The current zoning regulations for the S-1 district read as follows:

#### **SECTION 505**      **SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICT**

##### **505.1**      **PERMITTED USES**

*Parks  
Recreational Facilities (Public and/or Private)  
Private/Association Owned Beaches Areas  
Public Utility Facilities (excluding storage yards)  
Accessory Uses to the Above*

##### **505.2**      **USES PERMITTED BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION**

*None*

##### **505.3**      **CONDITIONAL USES (SEE ARTICLE 7)**

*Any nonresidential use permitted by right or by special exception shall be deemed a conditional use if it involves either of the following:*

- (a) the initial or cumulative land disturbance which equals or exceeds 87,120 square feet of surface area.*

- (b) *the initial or cumulative construction, placement or installation which equals or exceeds 5,000 square feet of buildings, structures and/or other impervious surface area.*

**505.4**      **DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS**

*A principal building, structure and/or use shall be governed by the following regulations, unless more restrictive standards are applicable, including but not limited to State or Federal regulations and supplementary regulations contained in Article 8 of this Ordinance.*

- A. *Minimum Lot Area: Two (2) acres for all permitted uses, excluding open beach areas which shall be exempt from any minimum lot area*
- B. *Minimum Lot Width: One hundred (100) feet, excluding open beach areas which shall be exempt from any minimum lot width.*
- C. *Front Yard: The minimum front yard shall be not less than fifty (50) feet in depth as measured from the front lot line, excluding open beach areas which shall be exempt from any minimum front yard.*
- D. *Rear Yard: The rear yard shall be not less than fifty (50) feet in depth as measured from the rear lot line, excluding open beach areas which shall be exempt from any minimum rear yard.*
- E. *Side Yard: The side yard shall be not less than fifty (50) feet on each side, excluding open beach areas which shall be exempt from any minimum side yard.*
- F. *Lot Coverage: Not more than twenty (20%) percent of a lot shall be covered by buildings. Total impervious cover shall not exceed thirty (30%) percent.*
- G. *Building Height: The maximum height of any building shall not exceed one story or fifteen (15) feet, whichever is the lesser.*

Given the fact that the S-1 regulations specifically limit the use of such property to recreational uses, no changes are foreseen for this District. However any additional future recreational facilities that are developed should also be classified as S-1.

**B-1 DISTRICT (CONVENIENCE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT)**

Currently there are no commercial uses located within Penn Lake Park Borough, convenience commercial or otherwise. There are only two locations within the Borough that are currently zoned B-1. Both sides of Carter Drive at the entrance to the Borough from the White Haven Highway, containing approximately 1.71 acres are classified as B-1. At the intersection of Carter Drive and Lakeview Drive, both corners are zoned B-1 which encompasses 2 lots with a total

area of approximately .91 acres. The northerly side of the intersection is the location of the Penn Lake Park Community Building, while the southerly side includes a structure which was once a mixed-use structure that included a residence and commercial convenience store, has recently received zoning approval to reopen as small scale convenience store. Prior to its approval, there were no commercial uses located within the Borough. The following provides the governing regulations for the B-1 District:

**SECTION 503**      **B-1 CONVENIENCE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

**503.1**      **PERMITTED USES**

**A.    RETAIL-ORIENTED BUSINESS INCLUDING OR SIMILAR TO**

*Convenience Stores*  
*Clothing and Clothing Accessories*  
*Newspapers, Books and Stationery*  
*Sporting Goods*  
*Variety Goods*  
*Artist, Music and Hobby Supplies*  
*Accessory Uses and/or Structures to the above*

**B.    SERVICE-ORIENTED BUSINESS INCLUDING OR SIMILAR TO:**

*Personal Services*  
*Professional Offices*  
*Service Offices*  
*Banks,*  
*Public Uses*  
*Medical Clinics*  
*Day Care Centers*  
*Public Utility Facilities (excluding storage yards)*  
*Accessory Uses and/or Structures to the above*

**C.    RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT RELATED BUSINESS INCLUDING OR SIMILAR TO:**

*Public Recreational Facilities*  
*Nonprofit Social Halls, Clubs and Community Centers*  
*Accessory Uses and/or Structures to the above*

**D.    RESIDENTIAL USES**

*Single-family Dwellings*  
*Two-family Dwellings*  
*Dwelling over Business*  
*Accessory Uses and/or Structures to the above*

### 503.2 USES PERMITTED BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION

*Garden Supplies  
Restaurants  
Recreational Facilities  
Public Uses  
Accessory Uses and/or Structures to the above*

### 503.3 CONDITIONAL USES (SEE ARTICLE 7)

1. *Any nonresidential use permitted by right or by special exception shall be deemed a conditional use if it involves any of the following:*
  - (a) *the initial or cumulative land disturbance which equals or exceeds 87,120 square feet of surface area.*
  - (b) *the initial or cumulative construction, placement or installation which equals or exceeds 5,000 square feet of buildings, structures and/or other impervious surface area.*
2. *Adult Uses (as defined in Article 2).*
3. *Methadone Clinic*

### 503.4 DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS

*Each principal building, structure and/or use shall be governed by the following regulations, unless more restrictive standards are applicable, including but not limited to State or Federal regulations and supplementary regulations contained in Article 8 of this Ordinance.*

- A. *Minimum Lot Area:*
  1. *Each principal building, structure and/or use shall have a minimum lot area of not less than fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet when serviced by central sewers.*
  2. *One (1) acre when serviced by an on-lot sewage disposal system and governed by the applicable standards of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.*
- B. *Minimum Lot Width:* *One Hundred (100) feet as measured from a depth of the required front yard setback.*
- C. *Minimum Lot Depth:* *One Hundred and twenty-five (150) feet, as measured from the front lot line to the rear lot line.*
- D. *Front Yard:* *The minimum front yard shall be not less than forty (40) feet in depth as measured from the front lot line.*

- E. Rear Yard: The rear yard shall be not less than thirty (30) feet in depth as measured from the rear lot line.
- F. Side Yard: The side yard shall be not less than twenty (20) feet on each side.
- G. Maximum Lot Coverage: Not more than fifty (50%) percent of the lot area shall be covered with buildings or structures.
- H. Building Height: The maximum height of any building shall not exceed two and one-half (2.5) stories or thirty-five (35) feet, whichever is the lesser.

As one will note in reviewing the above regulations, many of the uses addressed extend beyond the realm of what one would normally consider “commercial convenience.” Penn Lake Park Borough currently lacks the population and geographic location to support a variety of commercial uses. The land at the intersection of Carter Drive and the White Haven Road, while a logical location for a commercial classification, will likely remain undeveloped due to the limited traffic volumes traveling this route and its close geographic proximity to White Haven, which has a variety of commercial services. Because the B-1 District allows for mixed-use development of residential and commercial uses, retaining this zoning classification at this location would be prudent, along with the other B-1 land at the opposite of Carter Drive. It is unlikely that without a major increase in the Borough's population, commercial businesses, perhaps beyond home occupations or no impact businesses, will remain absent from the Borough. The text of uses which are addressed within the B-1 District should be re-examined and possibly reduced by eliminating businesses and commercial services which are impractical at the Borough level.

#### INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

There are no industrial land uses located anywhere within Penn Lake Park Borough, nor has there ever been. As a result, there is no land within the Borough that is zoned for industrial use. There are two specific references contained within the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code that specifically reference industrial land uses. They read as follows:

#### ***Section 301. Preparation of Comprehensive Plan.***

*(a) The municipal, multimunicipal or county comprehensive plan, consisting of maps, charts and textual matter, shall include, but need not be limited to, the following related basic elements:*

*(1) A statement of objectives of the municipality concerning its future development, including, but not limited to, the location, character and timing of future development, that may also serve as a statement of community development objectives as provided in section 606.*

*(2) A plan for land use, which may include provisions for the amount, intensity, character and timing of land use proposed for residence, **industry**, business, agriculture, major traffic and transit facilities, utilities, community facilities, public grounds, parks and recreation, preservation of prime agricultural lands, flood plains and other areas of special hazards and other similar uses.*

#### **Section 606. Statement of Community Development Objectives.**

***Zoning ordinances** enacted after the effective date of this act **should reflect the policy goals of the municipality as listed in a statement of community development objectives**, recognizing that circumstances can necessitate the adoption and timely pursuit of new goals and the enactment of new zoning ordinances which may neither require nor allow for the completion of a new comprehensive plan and approval of new community development objectives. This statement may be supplied by reference to the community comprehensive plan or such portions of the community comprehensive plan as may exist and be applicable or maybe the statement of **community development objectives** provided in a **statement of legislative findings** of the governing body of the municipality **with respect to** land-use; density of population; **the need for** housing, commerce and **industry**; the location and function of streets and other community facilities and utilities; the need for preserving agricultural land and protecting natural resources; and any other factors that the municipality believes relevant in describing the purposes and intends of the zoning ordinance.*

With regard to industrial land uses, Penn Lake Park Borough is highly unlikely to consider any proposed development that would fall within the realm of an industrial classification. As such, it is near impossible to select any appropriate location within the Borough that could be reasonably be zoned for industrial use, with the expectation that the mere zoning of land as industrial would result in such development. The best option for the Borough to address industrial uses would be within the concept of a multi-municipal comprehensive plan. By joint planning with an adjoining community that either has or intends to promote industrial growth within its boundaries, would relieve the Borough of the need to provide for the classification of any land within the Borough for industrial use. In the short term, the Borough is faced with the dilemma of not being able to select land suitable for industrial use, and under such circumstances risks the possibility of an industrial use being granted site-specific approval for a location in the Borough due to the lack of the zoning district to provide for industry. The Borough may opt to postpone making an immediate selection of land to be zoned for industrial use. The Borough may however consider the 1.71 acres at the intersection of Carter Drive and Lakeview Drive, currently zoned as B-1, as a potential mixed use site to be classified as “Highway Commercial/Light Industrial. While the



development of this site for such uses would be unlikely, it would result in compliance with Section 606 of the MPC by providing for all types of land uses within the Borough.

### LAND USE SUMMARY

In order to meet goals and objectives established by the Borough, modifications and revisions to both the text of Penn Lake Park's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance are warranted, along with revisions to zoning district boundaries upon the Borough's official Zoning Map. Such changes represent a proactive approach to address potential development within the Borough, while leaving current zoning regulations in place in areas of the Borough which are already developed at near capacity of what can be expected in the future.

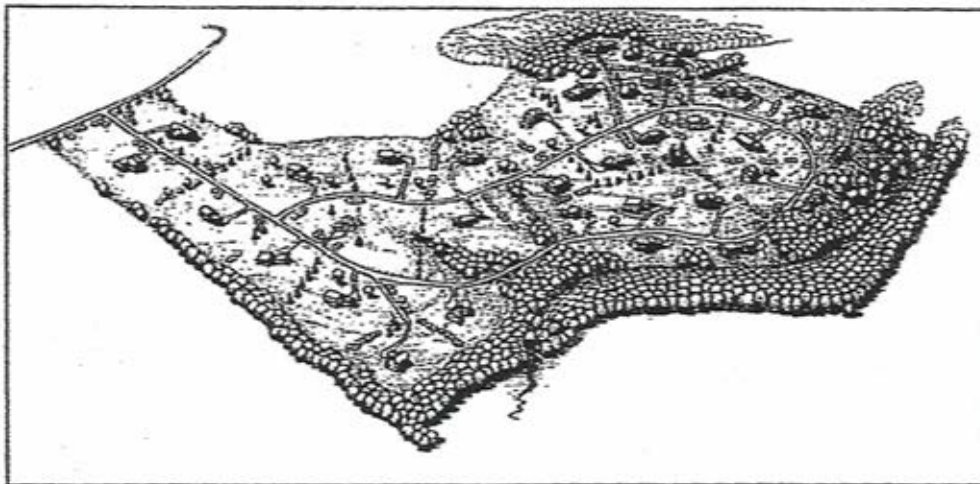
The two primary factors that warrant the above revisions include:

1. The incorporation of Growing Greener land use regulations into the Zoning Ordinance and SALDO.
2. The rezoning of several hundred acres of land from the current classification of R-2 to C, Conservation, which would include all land purchased by the Nature Conservancy.

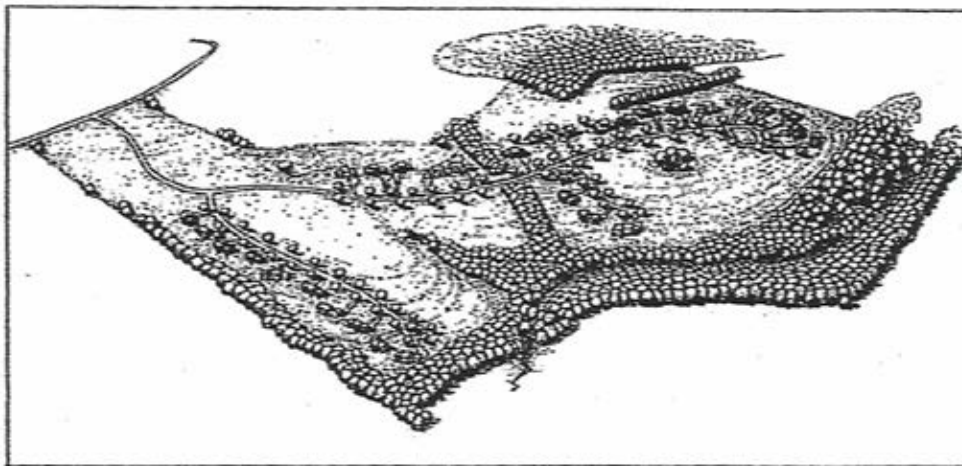
## CHAPTER 8

### GROWING GREENER BY DESIGN

In order to implement a Growing Greener land use program, the Borough will need to revise the Zoning Ordinance and SALDO with the more extensive revisions occurring to the latter. Conservation Subdivision Design is a land use tool that enables municipalities to accommodate growth while simultaneously protecting the open space and natural features and often define the character of the community. Based on the density set in a municipal zoning ordinance, conservation by design permits the same number of units on a parcel as a typical subdivision, but with a requirement to set aside a portion of the tract as protected permanent open space. In order to achieve this, the minimum lot size is reduced. For example, a tract of 100 net acres with a 2 acre density would yield 50 dwelling units. Given a 50% open space requirement, 50 acres would be protected as permanent open space and 50 acres would be developed. Thus to accommodate 50 dwelling units on 50 acres would require lot sizes of 1 acre or less. Open space and natural areas are protected by shifting development to more appropriate areas of the site. In short, the development is designed around the natural features on the tract. In addition to maintaining open space, conservation by design maintains property values by maintaining the maximum development yield, reduces development costs and commitment of resources given shortened road, water line and sewer line lengths, minimizes long-term maintenance costs of such improvements, and limits environmental effects such as soil disturbance and storm water runoff. The same design process can be applied to multi-family and commercial development.



Development based on conventional subdivision standards



Development Based upon Conservation Design Standards

A key concept associated with conservation by design is to focus on residential density instead of minimum lot size. In a standard subdivision the land is simply cut into as many lots as possible while meeting the minimum lot size requirement as required under the zoning ordinance. Under conservation design, which is based on unit density instead of minimum lot size, the size of individual building lots is reduced, while the total number of lots does not exceed the density which is based on the underlying minimum lot size. In addition, constrained land areas (e.g., such as wetlands, floodplain, steep slopes, etc.) are deducted prior to calculating the number of units permitted. The important concept by the Natural Lands Trust is that minimum lot size should not matter provided the number of units does not exceed established density. In conservation design, the maximum lot size is the critical element, as it really defines the minimum open space that must be conserved. Individual building lots can be quite small when community water and sewage disposal are provided as is the case in Penn Lake Park Borough.

While a greater amount of detail is required to thoroughly explain all the nuances involved in “Conservation by Design” principles, as stated at the outset of this Chapter applicable regulations to achieve such a development are contained in both the municipality’s zoning ordinance and its subdivision and land development ordinance. The zoning ordinance establishes the zoning districts in which conservation by design developments are permitted. This generally results in the creation of an overlay district upon municipality’s zoning map. Because conservation by design is not mandatory, the zoning ordinance and zoning map provides information as to location where such development is permitted. The SALDO contains much more detail regarding the

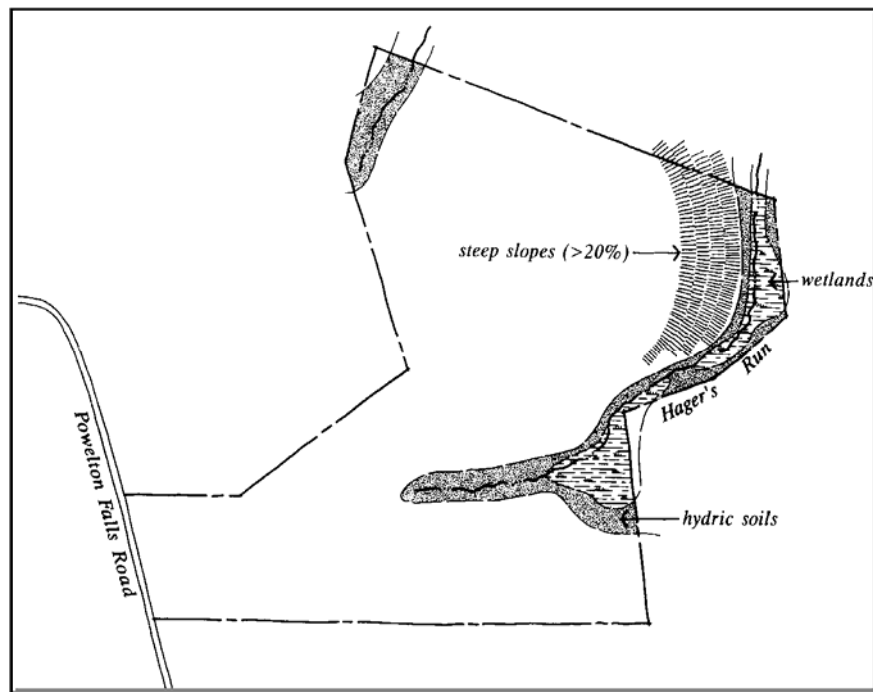
technical aspects for the design of a Conservation Subdivision. Thus the zoning ordinance provides the “where,” SALDO addresses the “how.” Within Penn Lake Park Borough the Conservation District and the R-2 District would be the two districts based upon existing land use considerations that would be best suited for the creation of a Conservation Overlay District.

There are four steps in design process that normally included within the design standards section of a municipality’s SALDO, applicable to the development a “Conservation by Design” subdivision. The outline for the general steps involved in this process is as follows:

FOUR-STEP DESIGN PROCESS  
CONSERVATION DESIGN OVERLAY DISTRICT

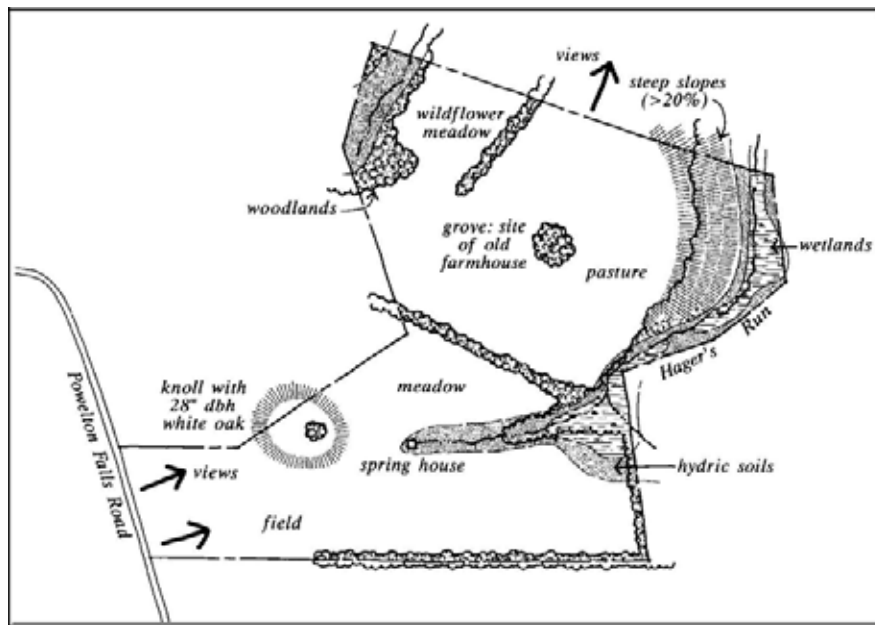
Step 1: Delineation of Conservation Open Space

- a. The minimum percentage and acreage of required conservation open space shall be calculated by the applicant and submitted as part of the Sketch Plan or Preliminary Plan in accordance with the provisions of the SALDO and the governing provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. Conservation open space shall include all Primary Conservation Areas and those parts of the remaining buildable lands with the highest resource significance.



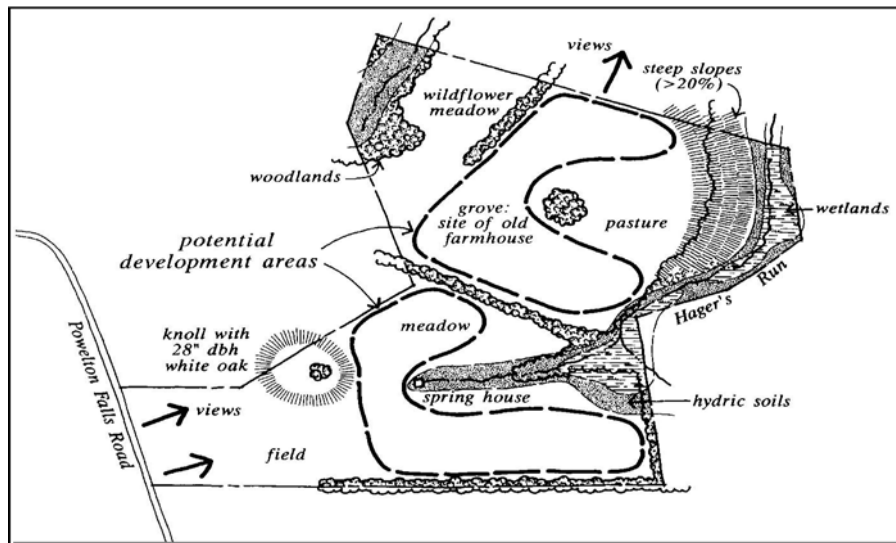
*Step 1, Part 1 – Identifying Primary Conservation Areas*

- b. Proposed conservation open space shall be designated using the Existing Resources and Site Analysis Plan as a base map and complying with the governing provisions Zoning Ordinance and the SALDO, dealing with resource conservation and conservation open space delineation standards. Primary Conservation Areas shall be delineated comprising floodplains, wetlands and slopes over 25 percent.
- c. In delineating Secondary Conservation Areas, the applicant shall prioritize natural and cultural resources on the tract in terms of their highest to least suitabilities for inclusion in the proposed conservation areas, in consultation with the Borough.
- d. On the basis of those priorities and practical considerations given to the tract's configuration, its context in relation to resources areas on adjoining and neighboring properties, and the applicant's subdivision objectives, secondary conservation areas shall be delineated to meet at least the minimum area percentage requirements for conservation open space and in a manner clearly indicating their boundaries as well as the types of resources included within them.



- e. Development areas constitute the remaining areas of land within the tract that are not designated as conservation open space areas.

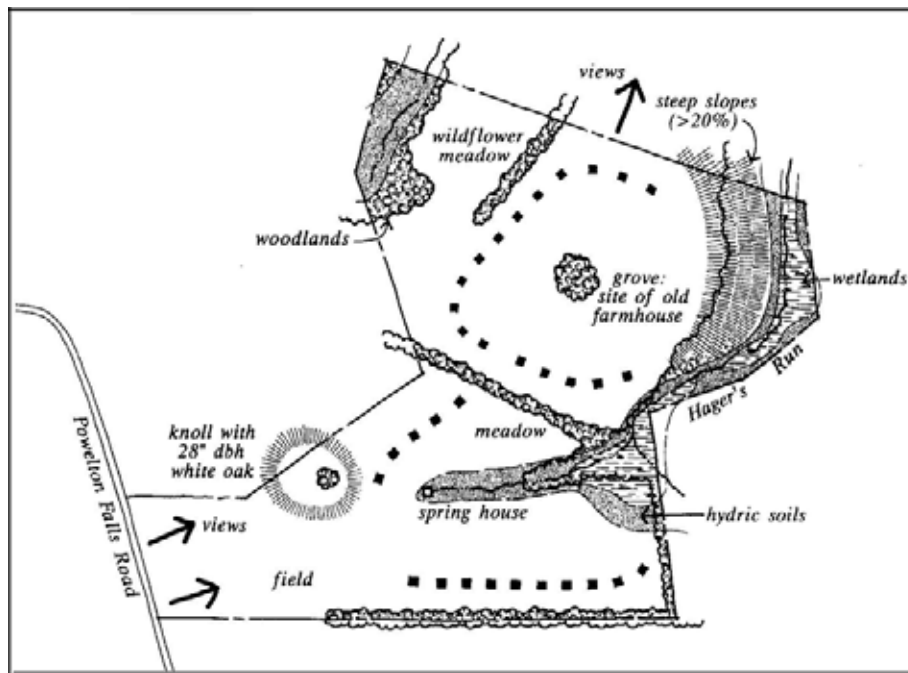
#### Step 1, Part 2 – Identifying Secondary Conservation Areas



Step 1, Part 3 – Identifying Potential Development Areas

## Step 2: Location of House Sites

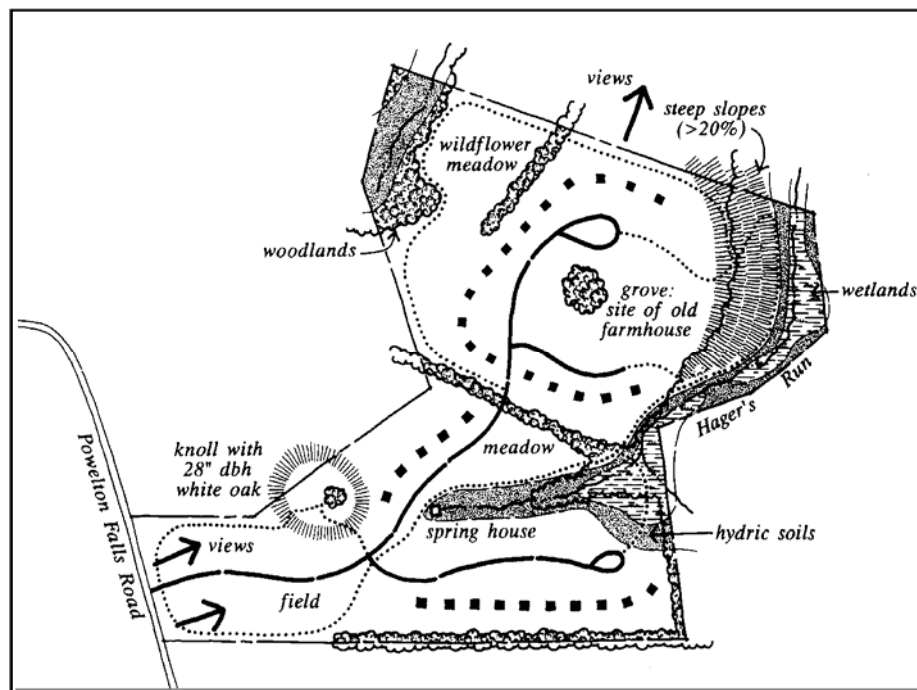
Potential house sites shall be located, using the proposed conservation open space as a base map as well as other relevant data on the Existing Resources and Site Analysis Plan such as topography and soils. House sites should generally be located not closer than 100 feet from Primary Conservation Areas and 50 feet from Secondary Conservation Areas, taking into consideration the potential negative impacts of residential development on such areas as well as the potential positive benefits of such locations to provide attractive views and visual settings for residences.



Step 2 – Location of House Sites

### Step 3: Alignment of Streets and Trails

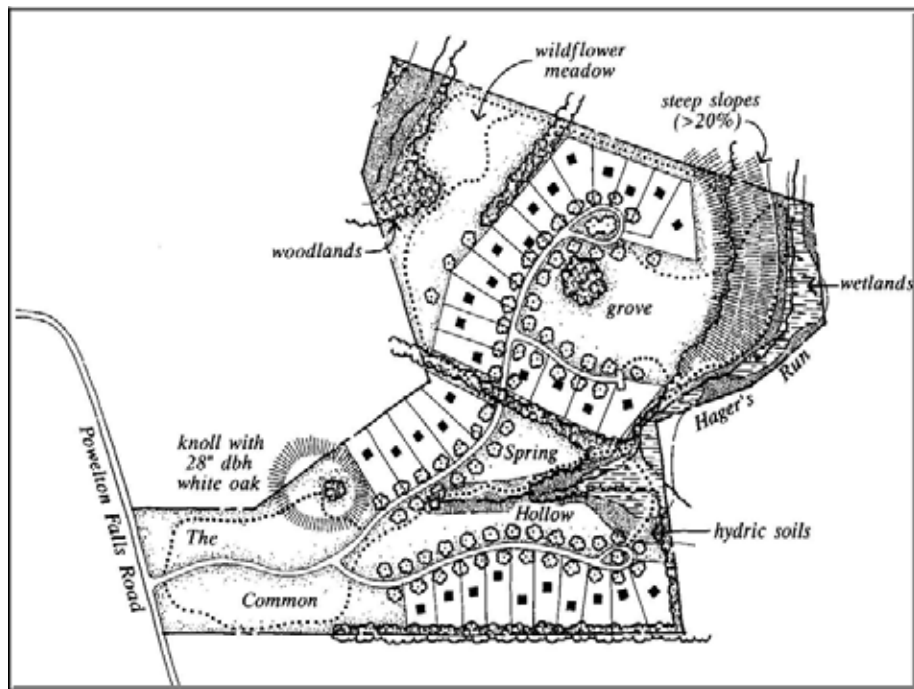
- a. With house site locations identified, applicants shall delineate a street system to provide vehicular access to each house in a manner conforming to the tract's natural topography and providing for a safe pattern of circulation and ingress and egress to and from the tract.
- b. Streets shall avoid or at least minimize adverse impacts on the conservation open space areas. To the greatest extent practicable, wetland crossings and new streets or driveways traversing slopes over 15 percent shall be avoided.
- c. Street connections shall generally be encouraged to minimize the number of new cul-de-sacs to be maintained by the Borough and to facilitate easy access to and from homes in different parts of the tract (and on adjoining parcels).
- d. A tentative network of trails shall also be shown, connecting streets with various natural and cultural features in the conserved greenway lands. Potential trail connections to adjacent parcels shall also be shown, in areas where a Township trail network is envisioned.



Step 3 – Alignment of Streets and Trails

### Step 4: Design of Lot Lines

Lot lines for the subdivision should be drawn as the last step in the design procedure. Lot lines should follow the configuration of house sites and streets in a logical and flexible manner.



Step 4 – Drawing in the Lot/Development Lines



## **CHAPTER 9**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

In 1973, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed Act 148, authorizing any municipality or group of municipalities to establish, by ordinance, an Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) to advise to local Planning Commission, Park and Recreation Board and elected official on matters dealing with the protection, conservation, management, promotion, and the use of natural resources located within the municipality's or group of municipalities' territorial limits. Since the passage of Act 148, over one hundred EACs have been established in Pennsylvania. Given the results of the Community Survey, in which residents addressed a strong preference to establish land use policies which promote and protect the aesthetic and environmental features, with particular emphasis on preserving "green areas" within the Borough, the creation of an EAC within Penn Lake Park Borough appears to be well suited as a measure to achieve such objectives. While an EAC may initially be formulated on an individual basis limited to Penn Lake Park Borough, the potential exists for Penn Lake Park Borough to take a leadership role for promoting inter-municipal cooperation to extend conservation principles beyond its municipal boundaries. Such action would be desirable as a long range goal given the fact that environmental features are not constrained or controlled by municipal boundaries. Therefore, Act 148, as amended provides the framework for municipal governments, throughout the Commonwealth to address or prevent environmental problems and to preserve aesthetic qualities of a community.

There are many issues an EAC can address, from open space preservation to water quality and forest management. Many of these issues relate to land use. Therefore, an EAC represent a natural link with the local planning and zoning processes. An EAC has the ability to promote action on environmental issues by providing information to elected officials, planning commissions, and parks and recreation boards to help them and the public understand the environmental consequences of decisions they make in relationship to land use. Act 148, as amended, empowers an EAC to:

1. Identify environmental problems and recommend plans and programs to the appropriate municipal agencies for the promotion and conservation of natural resources and for the protection and improvement of the quality of the environment within its municipal boundaries.

2. Promote a community environmental program.
3. Keep an index of all open space, publicly and privately owned, including flood prone, areas, swamps, and other unique natural areas, for the purpose of obtaining information on the proper use of such areas.
4. Make recommendations for the possible use of open land areas.
5. Advise the appropriate local government agencies, including but not limited to, the Planning Commission and Park and Recreation Board, or if none, the elected governing body, on the acquisition of property, both real and personal.

As equally important as to what EACs can do, it's important to note functions which they can't do. Those items include:

1. EACs do not regulate; they are advisory only;
2. EACs do not take the place of or compete with planning commissions; they augment and work closely with them;
3. EACs are not activist or extremist environmental groups- they are part of the local government and accomplish the most when they work well with local officials;
4. EACs do not compete with local grass-roots organizations, such as watershed associations. They are contact points and local government liaisons for these groups.
5. EACs do not add bureaucracy to the local government- they have an organized procedure for participating in land use decisions.

Act 148 also gives individual municipalities the ability to join neighboring municipalities to form regional, multi-municipal environmental advisory councils. Multi-municipal councils are desirable because they provide a mechanism for neighboring local governments to join together to focus on natural systems, such as forests, watersheds, flood prone areas and wetlands, as units rather than fragments. The regional perspective offered by a multi-municipal EAC can be highly beneficial to the participating municipalities as they plan, individually or together, for natural resource protection.

The development of an Environmental Resource Inventory is one of the most substantive, important and time consuming projects that an Environmental Advisory Council ((EAC) can undertake. For a municipality to make land use decisions that will ensure protection and wise use of its natural resources, including wetlands, streams, aquifers, flood plains, forests, and open space, it is essential to have a precise description of the location,

character and quality of those resources. An Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI) is an environmental planning program to accomplish such.

In preparing an ERI a municipality, through its EAC, gathers information about its natural resources and then using maps and texts puts forth that information into a format that will make it usable in developing an environmentally sound comprehensive inventory of natural resources. The ERI, in turn, can be used as the basis for the zoning ordinance, which ultimately governs a municipality's land use. When a comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance are already in place, as is the case in Penn Lake Park Borough, an ERI can serve as a valuable reference tool or guide to enhance their effectiveness. It is recommended that an ERI, upon completion, should be officially adopted and made part of the comprehensive plan. In the case of Penn Lake Park Borough, the subsequent development of an ERI can be made an amendment to its Comprehensive Plan. The development of an ERI is a time consuming process upon which ongoing data collection is necessary. It is therefore recommended that Penn Lake Park Borough adopt sections of an ERI as completed. In essence the phasing of its preparation will result in the inclusion of sections of the Borough over a period of time with the ultimate objective of addressing the Borough as a whole.

The importance of having an environmental resource inventory is of the utmost importance in fostering a land use program and policies designed at the preservation of natural resources. The scientific and objective natural resource information contained within an ERI will be essential to planning for the preservation and enhancement of a community's resources. An ERI should be a compilation of maps and accompanying data showing and explaining the natural characteristics and environmental features of a municipality. Maps graphically illustrate the location and extent of resources, and the text describes each resources and its inter-relationship to other resources. An ERI is an effective link to community planning when environmental issues are identified to be of paramount concern to the community. It illustrates the relationship between land use in a municipality and its natural resources through mapping and text.

Although there is no specific mention of an Environmental Resource Inventory in Act 148, the ERI is clearly an important mechanism for each EAC to use for accomplished goals for which they were established. According to Act 148, EACs are charged with advising

“local government agencies on matters dealing with protection, conservation, management, promotion and use of natural resources, including land and water resources.” Thus the preparation of an environmental resources inventory is a major tool for fulfilling this mandate. Specifically, Act 148 enables an EAC to “keep an index of all open areas, publicly or privately owned, including, but not limited to flood- prone areas, swamps and other unique natural areas for the purpose of obtaining information on the proper use of such areas.” An ERI is in effect an index of these natural areas. There are a variety of resources, which should be mapped for an environmental resource inventory. In each instance, the resources shall be site specific to the subject municipality. Environmental resources normally include the following:

Hydrologic resources (streams, ponds, wetlands, flood plains, aquifers, watersheds)  
Vegetation (woodlands, woodland corridors, old fields, meadows, pastures)  
Open Space (public and private, public access points to bodies of water, trails)  
Topography (emphasis upon steep slopes)  
Wildlife Habitat (critical habitat for specific species, including those threatened or endangered)

In addition to the above resources, areas of historic, cultural and scenic value can be included within an environmental resource inventory. The value gained through an Environmental Resource Inventory include the following:

1. A sound basis for land use planning, including preparation of municipal comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances, and identification of areas that may be damaged by or unsuitable for certain types of development.
2. A comprehensive guide in the site plan and subdivision and land development review process.
3. A long-term tool to identify potential land use and natural resource conflicts and ways in which mitigate such conflicts.
4. An educational tool for municipal officials and interested residents to increase understanding of natural systems, their relationship to each other and to development, and the natural limitations and opportunity for use of those systems.

Given the results of the Community Survey which identified the preservation of environmental qualities and rural characteristics found throughout the Borough as a

priority, the development of a Natural Resource Inventory is the required linkage between the residents' vision of the future and a tool for achieving the same.

## **CHAPTER 10**

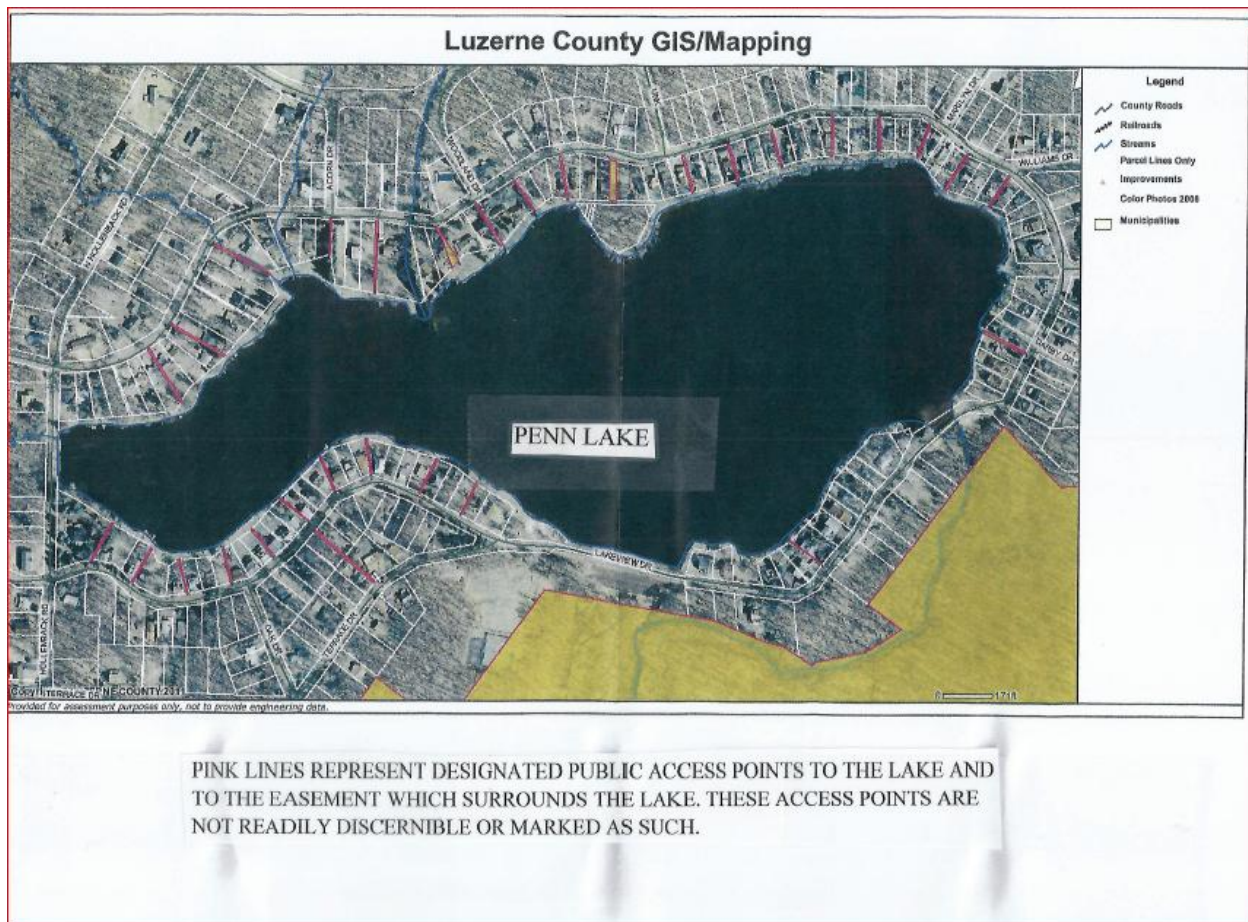
### **LAKE RELATED ISSUES**

Protection of Penn Lake is by far the central theme of environmental protection initiatives on the part of the Borough. The Lake represents the identity of the Borough; its “Raison d’être.” Those same elements of attraction can conversely be viewed as a detrimental element. Overdeveloped of the Borough, particularly those areas that border the Lake can, if not properly managed and regulated, can negatively impact the Lake and most importantly its water quality. The Borough does however have certain restrictions in place which are designed to buffer the Lake for the impacts of development. There are currently four elements which act to protect and buffer the Lake from adverse impacts. First and perhaps the most important element which affords protection is the prohibition on any motorized boating upon the Lake. That prohibition precludes issues of potential fuel and oil contamination of the Lake. The retention of limited boating use of the Lake to non-motorized vehicles should be retained in perpetuity. The second feature which affords protection to the Lake is limited boat access into the Lake. There are 5 public access points into the Lake for launching a boat as shown upon the attached map. With the exception of land fronting upon Hollenback Road, the remaining four points have limited lake frontage. The main sand beach presents conflicts with persons using the beach in the summer and none of the locations have boat ramps. The combined elements fairly limit boating to smaller non-motorized vessels. The lack of amenities and convenience may act to reduce the amount of boating upon the Lake by individuals who do not reside on the Lake. The third element which acts as buffer to the Lake is the easement which encircles the Lake. The easement which allows one to walk along the shoreline has a width of approximately 8 to 10 feet. The easement acts a permanent buffer which ensures development of Lake front properties will not include any land based improvements that extend into or over the water. A final element of Lake protection is provided by Lake Management Committee of the Penn Lake Association. The stated mission of this Committee is to “promote the protection, enhancement, conservation, restoration and understanding of the precious water resources of Penn Lake.” The combination of these four elements:

- Prohibition of Motorized Boats
- Limited Point of Boat Access into the Lake
- Easement Surrounding the Lake
- Activities of the Lake Management Committee

help to protect the quality of the Lake as both an environmental resource as the hallmark of the Borough's identity.

There are land use issues and future development activities that impact the Lake that have not been fully resolved. Perhaps the most important issue is the pathways at intermittent locations that provided pedestrian access from Lakeview Drive to the easement surrounding the Lake. These pathways were created as a feature in the original layout of properties in 1938. The ownership of these pathways has been questioned by the Borough officials but remain unresolved. It is recommended that a title search be undertaken to resolve the issue of ownership.

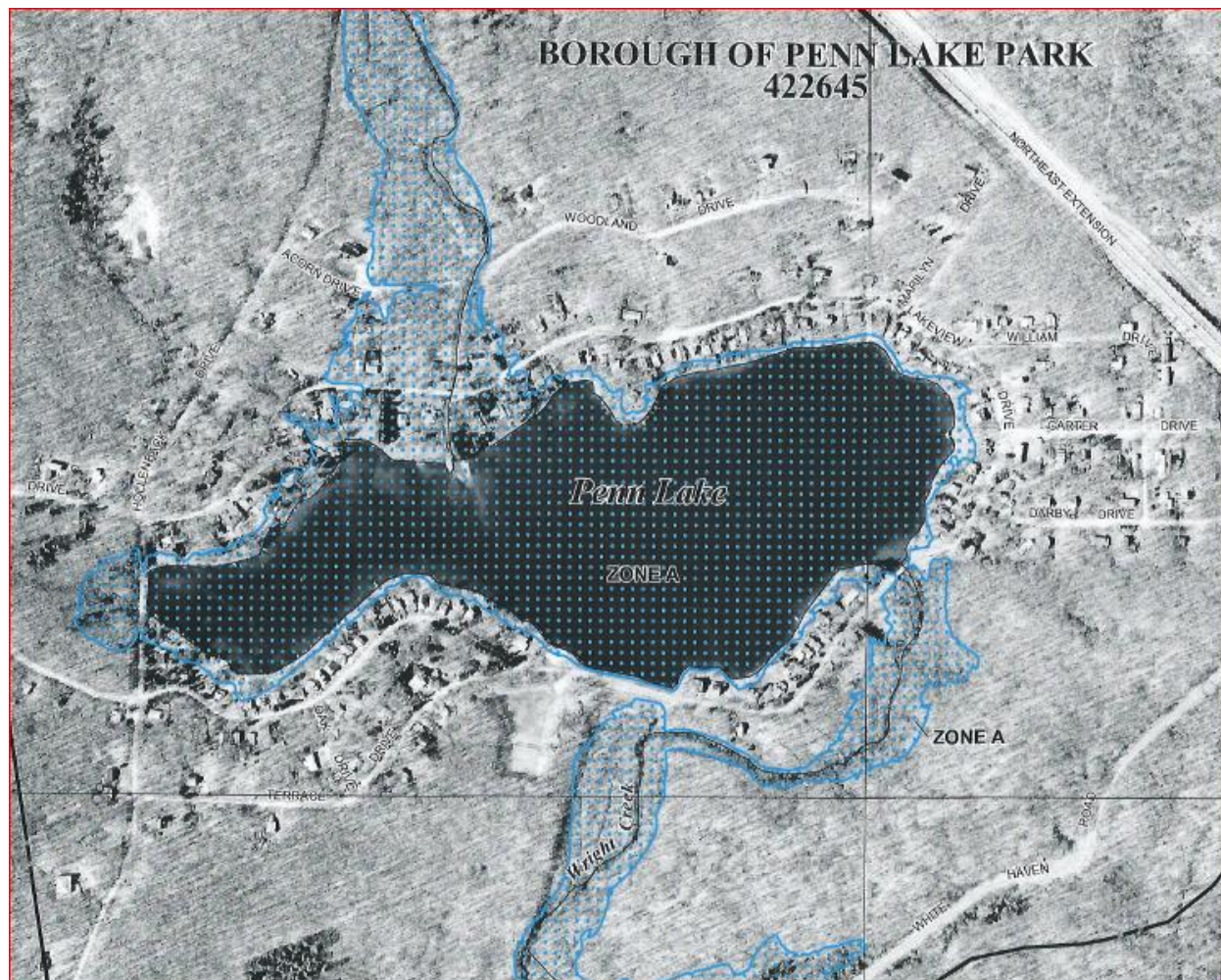


While the Borough owns the easement surrounding the Lake, the pathways or easements may be owned by the Borough, the Penn Lake Association or the family who has held title to Penn Lake as originally laid out in 1938. The issue of upkeep of these pathways is an important consideration as related liability. The party owning these easements, designed for public access, would be responsible for their maintenance and to ensure adjoining properties do not encroach



upon it block or otherwise impede access. It is recommended that these pathways be clearly marked with appropriate signage along Lakeview Drive and be properly maintained for safety purposes.

Although Penn Lake Borough has experienced flooding, with the most recent occurring in the fall of 2011, the majority of the Borough is not included within a designated 100 year floodplain. As noted upon the most recent FEMA floodplain maps, while the 100 year floodplain extends beyond the normal Lake height elevation, its impact appears limited to undeveloped land as opposed to Lakefront structures.



A 100 year floodplain exists on the northern side of Penn Lake along Wright Creek which feeds Penn Lake, affecting residential properties, along Lakeview Drive, Acorn Drive and Woodland Drive. An additional floodplain exists along Wright Creek beginning at the outlet to the Penn Lake.



The Borough's population is relatively small and continued growth at the current rate will result in modest numerical population increases which would not have an adverse impact upon the Lake. However given the amount of vacant land within the Borough, any large development that would cause a spike in the population would place a strain upon the Lake. All persons residing within the Borough by virtue of their ownership are entitled to Lake privileges. If the Borough population were to double or triple overnight, the number of new residents would likely find use of the Lake as an important factor in making the Borough their choice of residence. The generally placid use of the Lake would likely increase far above current levels of activities. The access points to the Lake, both the easements to the Lake and the easement around the Lake could be degraded by over use, thereby requiring more maintenance and costs to the Borough along with conflicts among property owners. While such scenario may not be eminent, it cannot be totally discounted. With the majority of all undeveloped land in single ownership, the sale of this land for development would have an immediate impact upon the Borough with little reaction time.

The low-density and conservation policies contained within the Land Use Element of this Plan are essential for preserving the quality and integrity of the Lake and the character of the Borough. The original footprint of the Borough envisioned it to be a seasonal community with limited full time residences. That has and will continue to shift to more and more full time residences. Mindful of protecting the Lake from overdevelopment, there are a number of options for consideration. The Borough's most direct option at its disposal would be to utilize land use controls within its Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to temper and modify the amount of population it can reasonably absorb knowing increased population levels will impact the Lake. In lieu of that, a supplemental option which could be explored would be the exclusion of Lake privileges to new residences. While the economic feasibility would need to be examined and calculated, it would represent the cost of purchasing a deed restriction clause on the balance of unsold land eliminating Lake privileges to new residences. By eliminating Lake privileges, it could slow the rate of growth by making the Borough a less attractive option for potential buyers. Another option which would be at no cost to the Borough would be to educate and encourage the donation of private conservation easements in perpetuity to the Borough, to the Penn Lake Park Association or to a Land Trust to limit future growth within the Borough.

## **CHAPTER 11**

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Community facilities and services, as provided by local, county and state government, and by quasi- public institutions such as volunteer fire departments, hospitals and libraries, are most often considered in terms of government or institutional response to meet the needs and demands of the community's residents. As the individual municipal and regional population continues to change, the demand for facilities and services will also change. For example, an increasing population may require more classroom space, increased or new police protection, expanded social services, and additional recreation facilities. On the other hand, a stable or declining population, while not requiring additional services, may present a difficulty of paying for existing facilities and services with stagnant or declining tax revenues. This is particularly pertinent to roads which require maintenance regardless of the municipal population. In addition, a change in the composition of the population could require different facilities and services. For example, if the population is aging as a whole, more passive recreation facilities and more social services may be required. Penn Lake Park Borough is somewhat of an anomaly; it's a growing population which is normally associated with younger married couples with children. In fact it is somewhat the opposite with most of the growth element attributed older couples or empty nesters who view the Borough as ideal location to retire. It is not uncommon in some cases that such couples already having family owned homes or property located within the Borough which reduces what would expected to be their most expensive cost; housing or land.

Residents rely on community and public facilities and services to meet their transportation, educational, water supply, sewage disposal, police protection, emergency response, recreation and other daily living need. Municipalities do not, and cannot, provide all the facilities and services demanded by residents, many such services being provided by other levels of government or volunteer organizations. Nevertheless, without diligent and ongoing attention to the operation and maintenance of existing facilities and services, and planning for new facilities and services, a municipality can fall short in adequately serving its residents.

The level of service and community facilities is dictated by the density and demographic character of municipal population and its tax base. While Penn Lake Park Borough is small

but growing community, it currently lacks the tax base necessary to directly provide certain facility and services. The Borough's long-term prospects for sizable growth does not foresee such an increase in growth and population to support the financial cost of providing certain services and facilities. Nor is the Borough under this Comprehensive Plan actively promoting new growth and development.

The greatest potential for raising increased revenue for any community is based upon local real estate tax. The recent property assessment (2007) conducted by Luzerne County resulted in a tax rate adjustment in the Borough to .40 mills as required by state law to keep real estate tax revenues in line with prior years. The annual operating budget for Penn Lake Park Borough generally reflects a total of approximately \$175,000. With real estate taxes, the most consistent form of revenue approximately \$20,000 is generated from that source. Earned income tax also generally runs within the realm of \$20,000. A limited population base reflects a limited source of revenue to provide various municipal services. Such is the case with the Borough. The Borough's fiscal inability to generate greater revenues for the direct provision of municipal services will be a long-term issue over a very extended period of time based upon limiting growth, both by fact and choice of the Borough. The long term prognosis for the Borough, including its policies directed to retain its rural character, would indicate that the Borough will continue to find its sources of revenue a limiting factor in the direct provision of most community services, with emergency services being the most notable type that all residents must rely upon their personal protection and safety.

In lieu of the Borough providing certain direct community services, the Penn Lake Association is an independent private organization comprised of homeowners within the Borough that predates the Borough itself, which provides a variety of services. The Association has historically provided various civic, social and educational programs and components to support those which would otherwise be lacking within the Borough. The Community Building, which is owned by the Association, is the focal point for all meetings and activities which occur within the Borough. The Association provides functions which include maintenance of the beach area, the Community Building, Lake Stocking, Lake restoration, Lake biology, and educational components associated with the Lake. All information regarding the Penn Lake Association and its functions within the Borough can be found on its website ([www.pennlake.org](http://www.pennlake.org)) which is a well organized site to provide Borough residents informed of activities and information, including that

regarding the Borough. The Penn Lake Association which is funded by member dues, functions beyond the traditional role of a homeowners association and provides residents of the Borough with functions and services that might otherwise go unmet.

Community facilities and utilities should be considered resources with limited capacities that are to be provided in appropriate places to support and help implement goals and objectives of a comprehensive plan. The location of certain key facilities, including water, sewer, schools, and roads, are often essential to providing the necessary services to accommodate more intensive development. Conversely, these services can facilitate unintended development in areas, such as important natural resource areas, where growth may not be appropriate. The location of other services, facilities, and utilities should be considered in relation to their ability to support or conflict with the land use planning for the community. The land use planning should facilitate the efficient and economic provision of public, quasi public, and privately provided community services wherever possible.

This section of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on those facilities and services which are provided by the Borough and the quasi-public institutions. Whether considering facilities or services, it is in best interest of the Borough to cooperate with other local municipal jurisdictions, the Crestwood Area School District, the Penn Lake Association and the County to provide and improve facilities and services which can be provided regionally. Inter-municipal cooperation has become more common policy in recent years, with a greater number of municipalities in the Commonwealth working together on a number of issues and programs. Fiscal limitations of municipalities have made inter-municipal cooperation and cost-sharing of services a reality of local governments. The provision of community facilities and services offers numerous opportunities for cooperation which can result in efficiency of program operation and service delivery, and economies of scale in purchasing of supplies and materials.

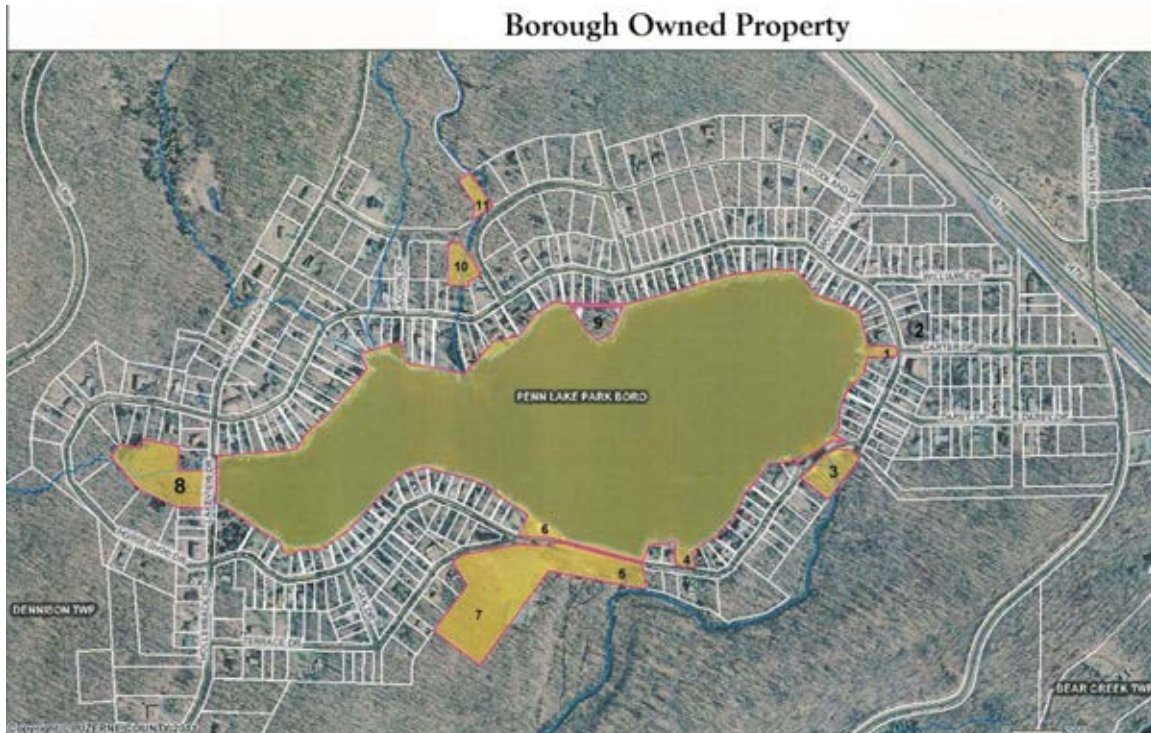
The following provides an assessment existing facilities services in the Borough by the following categories:

Borough Owned Property  
Emergency Services  
Sewer and Water  
Recreation Facilities  
Utilities

## **BOROUGH OWNED PROPERTY**

While the Penn Lake Park Borough holds ownership of property at various locations throughout the Borough, there are no Borough owned buildings or structures. The lack of a municipal building to house Borough records and functions supported by the Borough proves to be a serious shortcoming. The Borough is dependent upon the Community House, owned by the Penn Lake Association, as the focal point for all Borough related activities and meetings. While there has been a long-standing cooperative relationship between the Borough and the Association, the fact remains that the Borough lacks ownership of the Building utilized for all municipal functions. The cooperative relationship between the parties has led to the Borough to begin utilizing the basement space of the Community Building for storage of Borough records; a vital necessity for any municipality and a requirement of state law. Prior to undertaking this venture, Borough records and other official Borough documents were retained by Borough officials at times in their private residences. This has led to problems relating to the historical continuity of record keeping, documents and actions taken by the Borough. In some cases records have been misplaced and/or lost.

The Borough owns property at several locations throughout the Borough as identified upon the Map, titled Borough Owned Property





Location 1 – The Community Building is strategically located at the entrance to the Lake at the intersection of Carter drive and Lakeview Drive.



Location 2 – includes a Fire Lane and a public access point to the Lake. This location is picturesque with a gazebo as the backdrop to the Lake. It presents a scenic and appealing view and first impression of the Borough as one travels down Carter Drive, the main entrance into Penn Lake Park Borough.





Location 3 – This area is the outlet from the Lake into Wright Creek. The area is primarily wetlands and has the potential to be used as a trail along the stream corridor



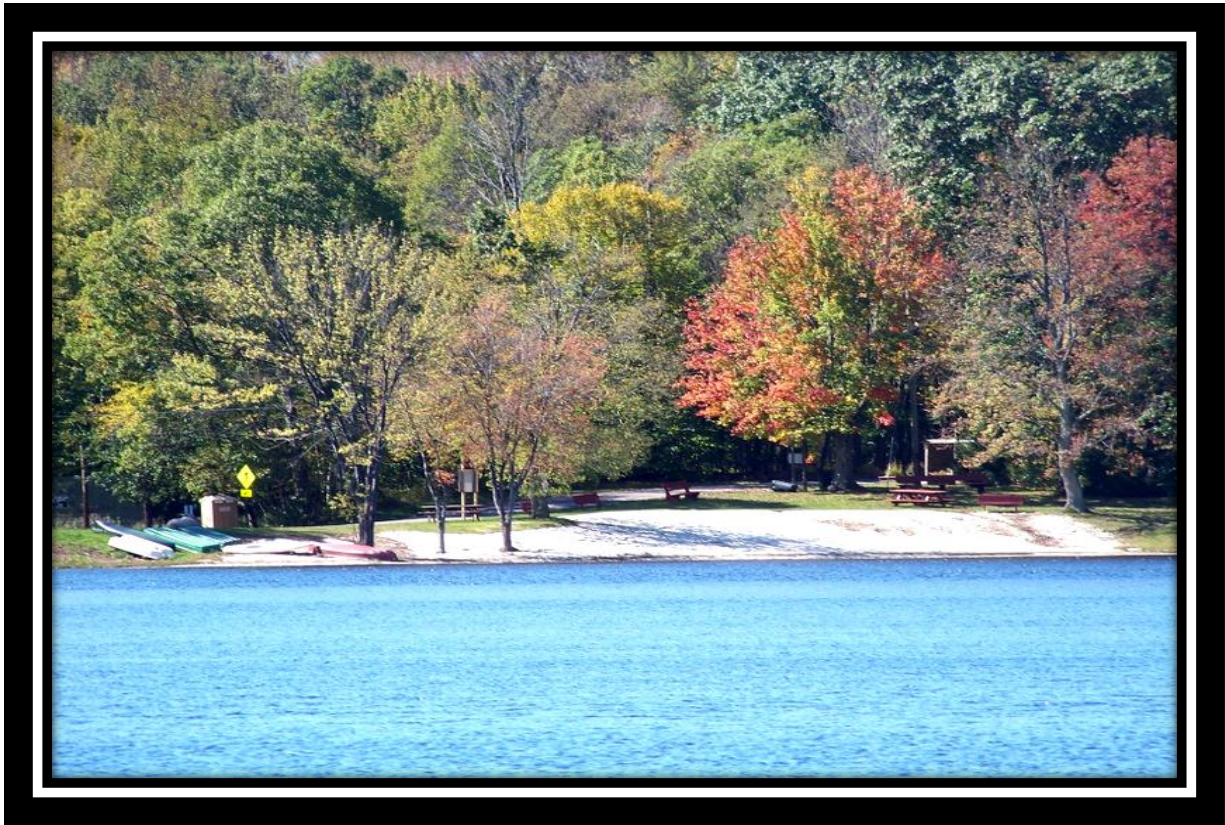
Location 4 – This area is a secondary beach location for residents which is referenced by the Borough has the “grass beach,” which is a relatively small area of land adjacent to the dam.

Location 5 – The Penn Lake Dam, originally constructed for the development of the Lake in 1880.





Location 6 – This area is the primary beach location for residents which is heavily used throughout the summer swimming season. Because of its limited space, the Penn Lake Association has recently instituted the issuance of bandages/permits to ensure the beach is limited to Borough residents.



Location 7 – This area contains recreational facilities of the Borough which include a playground, a tennis court and ballfields.





## PLAYGROUND



## BALL FIELD





# TENNIS COURTS

Location 8 – This area located in what is reference as the “swampy” section of Penn Lake contains wetlands and that portion of the Lake adjacent to Lakeview drive is referenced as the “frog pond.”



Location 10 – This area is primarily wooded wetlands, located along Wright Creek.

Location 11 – This area is primarily wooded wetlands, located along Wright Creek.

The Borough received the land in locations 8, 9, and 10 from the original landowner when the Borough was incorporated to prevent the sale and/or development upon land which was unsuitable for such purposes.

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

The three basic components of emergency for services include police protection, fire protection and ambulance service. All calls for emergency services are dispatched through Luzerne County 911. Until 2011, Penn Lake Park Borough was dependent upon the State Police for police protection throughout the Borough. As indicated by the majority of respondents in a Community Survey conducted by the Penn Lake Park Planning Commission in 2009, the response time was deemed the most unfavorable aspect of relying upon the State Police, particularly for minor infractions. In response to

the need to secure police protection at a reasonable cost, within an acceptable timeframe, Penn Lake Park Borough explored the possibility of contracting with White Haven Borough for the provision of such services. The results of that decision have been extremely favorable to the Borough in terms of response time and the financial cost of contracting for such services. The Borough has secured such services for an annual cost of approximately \$1,500 per year on a month to month basis, which in turn translates into a cost per property owner of approximately five dollars per month. The Borough displayed prudence in seeking a regional approach, becoming more commonplace among municipalities that require such services, which need not be duplicated on an individual basis to meet residents needs for a safe and secure environment. Fire protection is also secured through a White Haven Borough which is served by a volunteer fire department. Penn Lake Park Borough contributes an annual some of \$3,000 for such services. White Haven Borough has a volunteer fire company, along with inter-municipal cooperation agreements to secure proper fire protection. Ambulance service to the Borough includes both advance life support and basic life support service, provided by Bear Creek Township and Plains Township. The ambulance service by Bear Creek Township represents a volunteer organization which seeks households in communities which they serve to subscribe to support their operations. Plains Township Ambulance represents full-time staff operating out of Geisinger Hospital with advance life support capabilities. The Borough has just recently arranged for services to be provided by Bear Creek Township and Plains Township and thus far service calls and provision of ambulance service to the Borough as been deemed to be prompt.

### **SEWER AND WATER**

Sewage disposal is one of the most critical factors affecting the future growth, development and quality of life of a municipality. With the advent of mandated public sewers to the Borough in 2006, all developed areas of the Borough have access to public sewage. The importance of public sewers within the Borough is twofold. First from environmental quality standpoint the collection disposal of sewage somewhat relieves the Borough of the fear of pollution of Penn Lake from on lot systems which previously served developed lots within the Borough. This was particularly true given the small lots with very limited yard areas that were developed around Penn Lake. In addition to the year-round population within the Borough, there has been a continuing trend of converting a significant number of seasonal units into year-round residences. Public sewage is conveyed and treated to Aqua Pennsylvania, operating a secondary treatment

plant in White Haven Borough. Records of Aqua Pennsylvania indicate there are 243 accounts for sewage customers in the Borough. The second factor of importance related to public sewage is the potential for conditional growth and development. Public sewage is generally viewed as a development tool which fosters growth with the potential of higher densities. Given Borough policies that do not promote such growth which could impact the character of the community, the Borough should seek a limitation on the potential extension of sewage beyond its current limits. Discussions should also be pursued with Aqua Pennsylvania to determine the sewage capacity of available EDUs that it is capable use servicing for future development within its area of coverage. If developments were proposed and included the expansion of the services, the Borough can somewhat mitigate the issue of perceived density through a re-examination of land-use regulations to include conservation by design regulations.

Public water is available to Borough residents through the services Aqua Pennsylvania. Records of Aqua Pennsylvania indicate there are 75 accounts for water customers in the Borough. The majority of homes within the Borough having public water are generally located along Lakeview Drive. The provision of public water service serves as a means to support the rate of groundwater recharge which is important residents both within the Borough and beyond its border who are dependent on wells as their source of potable water.

## **UTILITIES**

The utility companies currently serving Penn Lake Park Borough include:

PPL; provider of electrical service  
Aqua Pennsylvania; provider of public water  
Aqua Pennsylvania; provider public sewage  
Metrocast; provider of cable TV with Internet service

## **CHAPTER 12**

### **TRANSPORTATION**

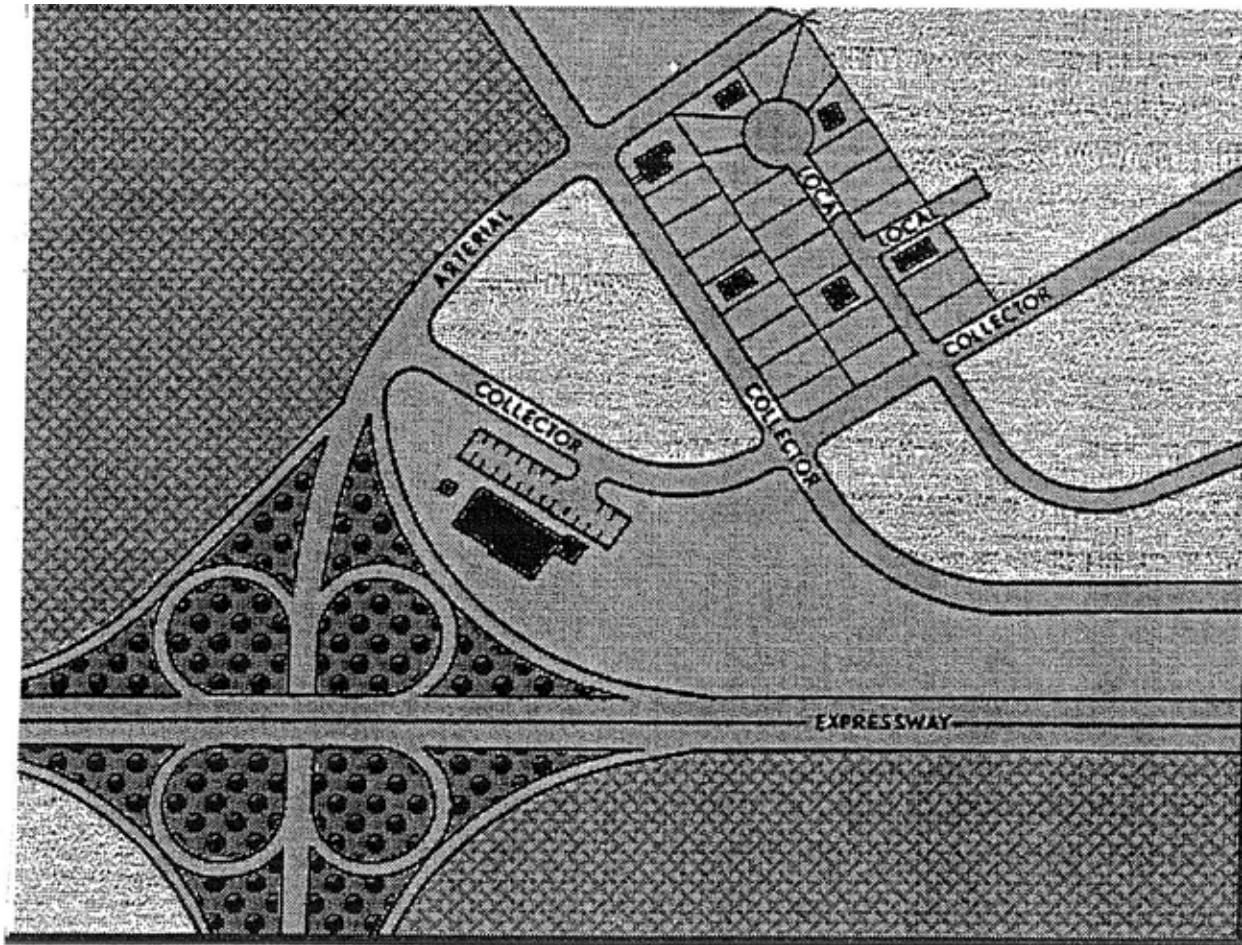
Safe and well-maintained roads are vital to all communities, serving not only as the means of travel within the community, but as a direct link to the region and beyond. Two major state routes cross Penn Lake Park Borough with the White Haven Highway (State Route 2041) serving as the primary route between Bear Creek Township and White Haven Borough which provides access to and from Penn Lake Park Borough. However the White Haven Highway runs along the southeasterly edge of the borough and is not enter into the developed area of the Borough. The Northeast Extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, Interstate 476, crosses through the North easterly section of the borough; however there is no immediate interchange providing access to the Borough. The nearest interchange is located approximately 10 miles from the borough in Kidder Township.

Although Penn Lake Park Borough has excellent access to the regional highway system, the Borough is somewhat secluded and making it a destination as opposed to a location traversed by any State Highway. This is particularly true with regard to the White Haven Highway, which represents the only travel route to and from the Borough. White Haven Highway serves as the connecting route to Penn Lake Park Borough which then provides access and connects the Borough to State Routes 940 and 437, along with Interstate 80 in White Haven Borough and Interstate 476 in Kidder Township. Traveling north from the borough on the white haven Highway connects the borough to State Route 115 in Bear Creek Township as a connecting route to the Greater Wilkes-Barre Area in Wyoming Valley as a major employment and commercial center serving Penn Lake Park Borough. In most cases all of the other connecting travel routes, represent a travel time of approximately not more 20 minutes from the Borough. The relative ease of access to the borough has and will continue to have a decisive effect on future development. Favorable access to Penn Lake Park Borough makes the Borough more amenable to residential development from persons outside of the region. The Borough has a seasonal increase in population over the summer months and has experienced older couples settling in the Borough for their retirement years.

Local officials in all communities must plan carefully to ensure adequate funding for the improvements and maintenance of locally owned roads. In the case of Penn Lake Park Borough

there are approximately 4.68 miles of local roads which the Borough is responsible to maintain. PennDOT is responsible for the maintenance of approximately 1.48 miles of roads crossing through the Borough.

The functional classification of roads in relationship to physical design and surface treatment is important to its proper classification. The designation of roads by its functional classification is normally divided into four categories: Expressways, Arterial Highways, Collector Roads and local roads. Each classification is distinct in relationship to the intended volume of traffic



## Highway Functional Classification

### Characteristics of Roads by Classification

#### Expressways

- provide interregional and interstate connections
- designed for unrestricted, high-speed (55 to 65 mph) mobility of traffic
- provides highest level of mobility
- intersects with selected arterial or collector routes by means of interchanges

- carries highest volumes of automobile and truck traffic with longer trip lengths

Interstate 476, the Northeast Extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, represents an expressway crossing through Penn Lake Park Borough.

### **Arterial Highways**

- provides connections between commercial and population centers in the region
- provides connections between municipalities and adjoining communities, counties and States
- carries large volumes of traffic at a relatively high speed (45–55 mph)
- serves a mix of local and through traffic
- provides moderate to high levels of mobility
- access limited only by PennDOT Highway occupancy permits and local zoning and subdivision ordinances

The White Haven Highway, State Route 2041, running between Bear Creek Township and White Haven Borough, and serving as the only means of access to Penn Lake Park Borough, is classified as an Arterial Highway.

### **Collector Roads**

- collects traffic from local streets for connection of the residents on to arterial roads where travel to commercial and activity centers
- serves moderate levels of traffic normally at a reduced speed of not greater than 35–45 mph
- serves more locally oriented traffic and few through trips
- truck traffic is primarily limited to only “local delivery”
- provides access from smaller and more numerous properties
- access limited only by local municipal and PennDOT Highway occupancy permits and local zoning and subdivision ordinances

Carter Drive, Hollenback Road and Lakeview Drive are Borough thoroughfares that generally meet the classification of the Collector Road.

### **Local Roads**

- provides direct connection and access to residential properties
- serves the lowest level of traffic volumes at slower speeds (normally not in excess of 25 mph)
- provides high level of access from smaller residential parcels where areas with low levels of development
- carries local trip traffic only with no through trips

- carries minimal truck traffic; limited to local deliveries

All other public roads in Penn Lake Park Borough not classified as a Collector Road are considered Local Roads.

All roads within Penn Lake Park Borough are quite narrow with right-of-way widths usually not greater than 40 feet and cartways widths which vary but seldom exceed 20 feet. In some cases the cartways narrow to the extent to only allow one vehicle to pass in the traveling lane. These design features, which have been part of the Borough since it was originally developed, to take lower travel speeds throughout the borough as compared to local streets in other municipalities. There are no sidewalks or defined walkways along roads within the Borough; thus forcing pedestrian traffic within the roadway. Based on these features and the close proximity of homes to roads within the Borough, a maximum speed of 15 mph would be reasonable and best suited for most streets within the Borough.

Funding for maintenance of Borough roads is taken from the General Fund and the Liquid Fuels Fund. The Borough receives approximately \$14,000-\$15,000 per year from the State Liquid Fuel Fund; the primary funding source for road maintenance within the Borough. The State Liquid Fuel Funds are distributed to municipalities based upon a formula which takes into account population in Borough and Borough road miles. Barring any changes in the means by which State funds are distributed, the Borough's limited population and fixed road mileage would result in the above allocation to remain constant future years. The borough did receive approximately \$56,000 from FEMA for road damage that occurred in September of 2011; with the primary flood damage located along sections of Hollenback Road and Lakeview Drive. In 2010, the Borough received approximately \$47,000 in Community Development Funds for the road improvements, used for the paving of Darby Drive. Because the use of Community Development Funds for road improvements is limited to areas where the majority of the population is classified by HUD as low-moderate income, the Borough anticipates that Darby Drive will represent the last street in the Borough that will qualify for such funding.

Penn Lake Park Borough, based upon its limited size and limited financial resources is highly unlikely to undertake any new road construction were major road improvements in the foreseeable future. Any new road construction or improvements needed to serve any new residential developments that may occur in the Borough will be constructed by the developer in accordance with the applicable Borough standards and requirements set forth in the Borough's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.



If determined beneficial to the overall public good, new roads can be, but are not required to be accepted for public dedication by the Borough. If the roads met PennDOT standards, the State Liquid Fuels Fund Allocation to the Borough would increase. However such increase would not likely be sufficient to justify long-term maintenance of new roads within the Borough. Penn Lake Park Borough should consider implementing a policy not to accept new or extended roads in any new development unless the roads clearly served a greater general public purpose other than providing access to homes and the residential subdivision. In general the long term cost maintenance of public roads falls far short of funds received from the State Liquid Fuel Program. The Borough must carefully weigh all aspects of long-term maintenance cost against the local tax revenues generated by development and increased liquid fuel funding before accepting any private roads for dedication. In some cases municipalities which have adopted a policy of not accepting new roads for public dedication has found it to be a factor that limits growth and new development.