



IX. PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE ELEMENT



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Parks, open space and recreation facilities in a township are key factors to enhancing a community's quality of life. Randolph provides unique opportunities for both active and passive types of recreation. Public parks and open space in the Township include lands owned by the Township, Morris County, the State of New Jersey and the Randolph Township School District. This inventory of publicly-owned park land and open space has increased significantly since 1992 largely because of the recent purchases of land by the Township through the use of its Open Space Trust funds and matching grants provided primarily from the Morris County Open Space Trust Fund and the New Jersey Green Acres Program.

Also since 1992, the Township commissioned the preparation of the "Recreation Plan Needs Assessment." This needs assessment compared Township-owned park land in 1997 against accepted State, County and local recreation standards to determine if there was a shortage/surplus of land required to meet the needs of the Township residents for active recreation. This report also assessed the recreation facilities located in Township parks and then provided a list of new facilities needed to meet changing population trends. The findings of the Needs Assessment have been updated as part of the preparation of this Master Plan using new population projections. These findings are summarized below. Also discussed are additional lands that should be protected as open space from future development because of their unique environmental conditions.

2.0 EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The existing public parks and recreation facilities within Randolph Township provide a baseline for evaluating local recreation needs. Table IX-1 and Figure IX-1 *Existing Public Parks, Schools and Open Space* identifies Township owned parks developed with facilities primarily for active recreation use as well as lands set aside as open space. The Township has added 706.73 acres of land to its park system since 1992. There currently are 1037.23 acres of park land and open space owned by Randolph Township.

Table IX-1	
Randolph Township Parks and Open Space	
Developed Parks	Acres
Brundage Park Complex	232.3
Freedom Park*	172.0
Heistein Park	44.2
Randolph Park	40.9
Stonybrook Park*	31.2
Kiwanis Park	1.8
Senior Center	1.5
Rosenfarb Park*	.63
Subtotal: Developed Parks	525.23 Acres
Open Space	(Acres)
The Glen at Shongum	9.1
Hidden Valley Park*	51.4
Golden's Corner*	7.2
Millbrook Valley Park*	69.74
Combs Hollow*	167.42
Clyde Potts Area*	84.2
Lots next to Town Hall*	9.3
Cohen Farm Park*	110.94
Old Brookside Park*	2.7
Subtotal: Open Space	512 Acres
Total: Township-Owned Land	1037.23 Acres
* Parks that have been added since 1992.	

Table IX-2 includes those lands owned by Morris County, State of New Jersey and Randolph Township School District. The State's open space in Randolph is limited to 15.3 acres owned by New Jersey Department of Fish, Game, and Wildlife. These areas are not controlled by the Township and are not developable for Township recreation projects. County Park lands in Randolph total 692.7 acres with the addition of the Armory Property since 1992. County parks provide open space and recreation for the County and have the potential to draw from a large geographical area. Public school properties total 36.5 acres. The availability of recreational facilities at public schools is limited to the general public because of the intensive use of the school facilities by extra curricular activities.

Table IX-2	
State, County and School Park Land & Open Space	
Name	Area (Acres)
Hedden Park (developed)	109.2
James Andrews Park	524.7
Armory Property	22.3
State DEP Fish and Game Open Space	15.3
Public Schools	36.5
Total Other Lands	708 Acres

Township residents also have access to private recreation areas to meet their recreation needs. Some of the facilities include the Clubhouse Golf Center & Grille and Mt. Freedom driving ranges, the West Morris YMCA, Aspen Ice, Harbor Hills Day Camp, Heritage Stables, Shongum Lake, Indoor Sports Pavilion, Kerry Baker Sports Complex and West Oaks Club. Such facilities, however, are not dedicated to local public recreation use and may, over time, be redeveloped for other uses.

In summary, in 2005 public park land and open space include:

• Township-owned Park & Open Space	1037.23 Acres
• County, State and Public Schools	<u>708.00 Acres</u>
Total	1745.23 Acres

3.0 PARK LAND NEEDS FOR ACTIVE RECREATION FACILITIES

The purpose of Township-owned park land is to provide close-to-home, easily accessible facilities that the residents demand as part of the community and their lifestyles. The types of recreation facilities typically found in local parks include playgrounds, athletic fields, court sports, and picnic areas. As stated above, the total acreage of Township-owned land dedicated to parks is 1037.23 acres. It is estimated that 51 percent of this land is encumbered by wetlands and steep slopes and therefore, leaving approximately 508 acres of upland for active public recreation facilities.

Using the population projection at buildout¹ of available developable land in the Township, which is predicted to occur at 2025 against the standard methods for calculating open space/park needs(as per the “Recreation Plan Needs Assessment”), the Township has exceeded the recommended highest minimum standards for acquiring land to meet the local recreation needs by approximately 206 acres. This can be translated to mean that the Township owns enough land needed to expand its offerings of recreation facilities within its existing park system as determined by the “Recreation Needs Assessment.” This available acreage would should be inventoried and analyzed to determine its suitability for future recreation development.

¹ Population at buildout is projected to be 28,814 as per the calculations provided in the Housing Element.

4.0 NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES

The Township Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department maintain detailed information on participation in its recreation and community service programs. There was substantial growth in participation in the early 1990s to 2000. Also, there have been substantial increases in participation in girls' lacrosse, boy's lacrosse, Babe Ruth baseball, football, track and cross-country, soccer, ice hockey, boy's basketball and girl's basketball. Participation in all programs over the period increased 63%.

The Township needs to expand its recreation facilities to meet the trends outlined above. The recreation facilities listed below to meet current recreation needs of Township residents and those projected at buildout. This list is based on accepted state and county standards and input from parks staff concerning usage of fields. They include:

- BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL
 2005 no fields needed at this time
 Build-out 5 public ball fields
- MULTI-PURPOSE ATHLETIC FIELDS (SOCCER, FIELD HOCKEY, ETC.)
 2005 1 additional public field
 Build-out 4 public fields
 This number of fields needed could be less if turf fields are built instead of natural grass field. A turf field was recently built in Freedom Park. It allows for extended use by more teams throughout the year because of its wear ability.)
- BASKETBALL COURTS (OUTDOORS)
 2005 No new courts needed at this time
 Build-out 1 court
- VOLLEYBALL
 2005 0 additional courts
 Build-Out 3 additional courts
- GOLF
 2005 1 golf course
 Build-out 1 course
 There have been several attempts by the Township to develop a golf course. A private course is planned for Calais Road and has been reviewed and assisted by the Township.
- SWIMMING
 2005 0 ADDITIONAL
 Build-out 1 additional swimming facility
 Major work was committed to developing a pool in 1995 –96. A pool committee was appointed and a location and design developed. No decision was made at this time. A new interest has developed and a pool committee formed 2005 to re-investigate the

concept of a Randolph Township Community Pool. A study was commissioned by the Township in August, 2005. Results of the study are pending.

- **TOT LOTS/PLAYGROUNDS**

Tot lots and playgrounds are used primarily by pre-school and elementary school age children. There are currently eleven (11) community tot lots and playgrounds, including school playgrounds. Current trends are shifting away from small neighborhood playgrounds to larger, regionalized, interactive structures. Therefore, playgrounds should be located at larger regional parks in the Township and upgraded as needed.

5.0 RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PARKS

The Township Parks Committee and the Director of Parks and Recreation evaluated the existing park system in terms of its physical condition as well as their assessment of current Township recreation activity needs. Improvements to township parks are recommended below in terms of high, medium and low priority.

HIGH PRIORITY NEEDS

<u>New Facilities:</u>	1. Community pool. Location to be decided pending pool feasibility study: <i>current-5 years</i>
	2. Constructed turf field at Freedom Park. Build additional turf fields. <i>Current-5 years.</i>
<u>Brundage Park</u>	Playhouse building addition: <i>current</i> Trail upgrade and repaving: <i>current-5 years</i>
<u>Brundage Sussex</u>	Lighting installation: <i>current-5 years</i>
<u>Brundage Preserve</u>	Parking lot expansion and improvements <i>current-5 years</i>
<u>Heistein Park</u>	Parking lot repair and expansion <i>current-5 years</i> Septic system repair <i>current-5 years</i>
<u>Randolph Park</u>	Playground <i>current-5 years</i>
<u>Brundage Park</u>	Field lighting replacement <i>5-10 years</i> Tennis Courts reconstruction <i>5-10 years</i>
<u>Heistein Park</u>	Fencing <i>5-10 years</i>
<u>Randolph Park</u>	Parking lot repaving <i>5-10 years</i>

<u>Freedom Park</u>	Lighting replacement (replacement through maintenance agreement) 5-10 years
<u>Stony Brook Day Camp</u>	Improvements through a cooperative agreement with lessee 5-15 years
<u>General improvements</u>	Community Recreation Center renovations and expansion 5-10 years <i>See page VIII-5 for further discussion.</i>
<u>Freedom Park</u>	Parking lot paving and expansion 10-15 years

MEDIUM PRIORITY NEEDS

<u>General Improvements</u>	Trail renovations/improvements 5-10 years
<u>Heistein Park</u>	Irrigation system replacement <i>current-5 years</i> Drainage/field renovation <i>current-5 years</i>
<u>Mini parks</u>	Playground upgrades, renovations or removal. Also, no additional mini parks to be built <i>current-10 years</i>
<u>Brundage Park</u>	Playground and skate park upgrade and renovation 5-10 years
<u>Brundage Sussex Park</u>	Field area expansion 5-10 years Parking upgrade and renovation 5-10 years
<u>Brundage Preserve</u>	Open field improvements 5-10 years
<u>Hidden Valley Park</u>	Parking and access improvements 5-10 years
<u>Brundage Park</u>	Playhouse major renovation 10-15 years Maintenance garage upgrade 10-15 years
<u>Freedom Park</u>	Playground renovation 10-15 years

LOW PRIORITY NEEDS

<u>Brundage Park</u>	Demolition of bungalows <i>current</i>
<u>Brundage Sussex Park</u>	Restroom construction/refreshment stand 5-10 years
<u>Heistein Park</u>	Pond renovation 5-10 years
<u>Randolph Park</u>	Baseball field renovations/upgrades/lighting 5-15 years Minor facility upgrades and improvements to lake/beach area 5-15 years

6.0 OPEN SPACE PLAN AND ACQUISITION PROGRAM

In 1992, Randolph Township established a local Open Space Trust Fund. Since the creation of this fund, over one thousand acres of land has been preserved. A highlight of the program is the permanent protection of the Clyde Potts Reservoir and its surrounding watershed, a regional resource for drinking water. Figure IX-1 *Existing Public Parks, Schools, and Open Space* identifies those lands that are:

- Township-owned parks and open space
- County and State-owned land
- Government/school institutions
- Watershed Protection Areas
- County Farmland Preservation Areas
- Semi-Public golf course

The Township also identified parcels whose acquisition is near completion, those that are a high priority for future acquisition and those whose acquisition is under consideration but, at this time, a low priority (Please see Table IX-3 through Table IX-5). These parcels are listed below by category. They are also identified on Figure IX-2 *Open Space Acquisition and Trail Plan* with the Township's trail plan illustrated as interconnecting all park land and open space.

Acquisition Near Completion

Table IX-3			
BLOCK	LOT	ACRES	PROPERTY LOCATION
202	3	2.91 Ac	Openaki Road
86	75	8.37 Ac	147 Morris Turnpike
87	86.02	3.91 Ac	152.5 Park Avenue
194	2	13.64 Ac	Rockaway Road

High Priority

Table IX-4			
BLOCK	LOT	ACRES	PROPERTY LOCATION
199	9	25.75 Ac	Off Appio Drive
146	72	120.81 Ac	12 Piersons Hill Road
146	85	19.78 Ac	Off Grist Mill Road
115	77	3.01 Ac	53 Fords Road
146	81	7.30 Ac	40 Piersons Hill Road
115	80	8.26 Ac	
86	63	34.61 Ac	1275 Sussex Turnpike
199	6	34.02 Ac	141 Route 10

Low Priority

Table IX-5			
BLOCK	LOT	ACRES	PROPERTY LOCATION
142	8	8.76 Ac	255 Route 10
142	14	8.49 Ac	29 Mountainside Drive
199	48	23.13 Ac	58 Mountainside Drive
111	21	2.88 Ac	161 Quaker Church Road
73	16	19.37 Ac	648 Route 10
44	4	42.62 Ac	931 Route 10
20	4	15.40 Ac	1049 Route 10
147	14	12.98 Ac	107 Everdale Road
44	41	19.65 Ac	65 Morris Turnpike
21	7	8.53 Ac	1518 Sussex Turnpike
21	9	7.81 Ac	
82	94	6.31 Ac	257 Center Grove Road
21	20	1.97 Ac	1466 Sussex Turnpike
21	12	5.59 Ac	54 Park Avenue
21	31	32.32 Ac	
47	2	32.59 Ac	1420 Sussex Turnpike
47	3	1.11 Ac	1416 Sussex Turnpike
47	5	12.98 Ac	1408 Sussex Turnpike
47	6	6.09 Ac	1398 Sussex Turnpike
47	11	.62 Ac	1376 Sussex Turnpike
47	9	9.66 Ac	1382 Sussex Turnpike
14	28	5.31 Ac	142 Selma Boulevard
119	130	18.41 Ac	1 W. Hanover Avenue
224	1	.39 Ac	1174 Sussex Turnpike
224	2	2.21 Ac	
224	3	.42 Ac	
224	84	.13 Ac	5 Brookside Road
224	4	.60 Ac	1164 Sussex Turnpike
224	83	9.02 Ac	11 Brookside Road
224	5	7.00 Ac	1162 Sussex Turnpike
224	85	.45 Ac	Sussex Turnpike
224	86	1.06 Ac	1164A Sussex Turnpike
49	30	16.49 Ac	75 Doby Road
199	1	46.12 Ac	217 Route 10

7.0 PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations refer to both active and passive type recreation and open space. Significant progress has been made since the preparation of the 1992 Master Plan towards meeting the recreation needs of the Township residents. A few general recommendations remain.

1. The Engineering and Parks and Recreation Departments should continue to work together to identify appropriate lands within the Township that should be purchased and set aside as parkland. The Natural Resource Protection Plan that will be completed in early 2006 will assist in identifying those lands for future acquisition.
2. Linkages in the trail system discussed in the Circulation Element and illustrated in Figure VI-2 *Trail Map* should be completed between existing parks and open space areas in conjunction with other agencies.
3. The Township should budget funds and apply for grants to expand its existing inventory of recreation facilities identified above in terms of high, medium and low priority.
4. The development of active recreation facilities should occur within the boundaries of existing parks until the recreation needs of the Township residents are reassessed. This should occur in a minimum of five (5) years.
5. Active and passive recreation facilities and trail extensions should be constructed in a manner which does not adversely impact sensitive environmental areas or features.

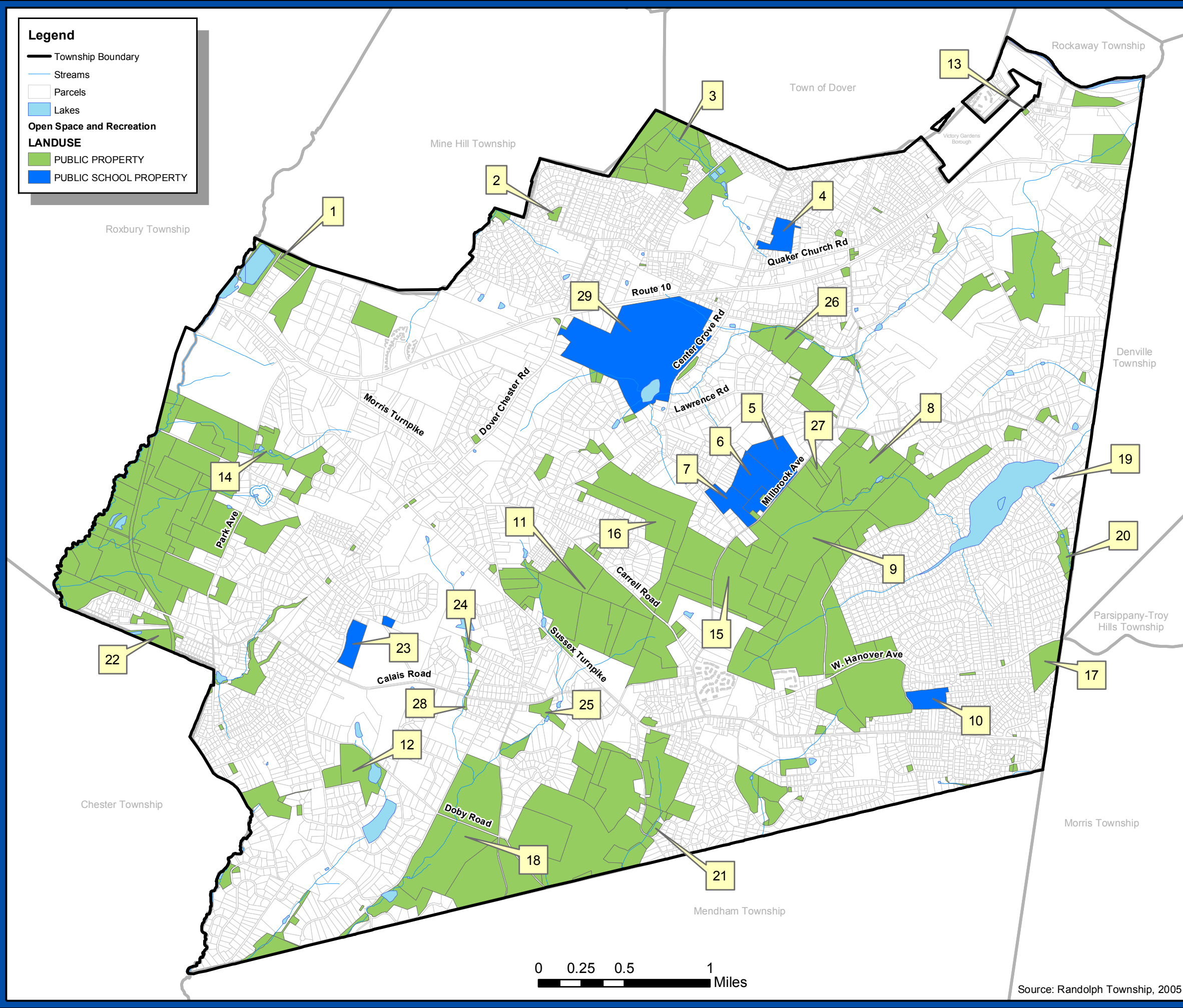
Legend

- Township Boundary
- Streams
- Parcels
- Lakes

Open Space and Recreation

LANDUSE

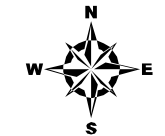
- PUBLIC PROPERTY
- PUBLIC SCHOOL PROPERTY



EXISTING PUBLIC PARKS, SCHOOLS & OPEN SPACE

Randolph Master Plan

Randolph Township, New Jersey



List of Public Parks and Schools

1. Randolph Municipal Park and Lake
2. Kiwanis Municipal Park
3. Hedden County Park
4. Fernbrook Elementary School
5. Randolph Intermediate School
6. Randolph High School
7. Center Grove Elementary School
8. Hidden Valley Municipal Park
9. James Andrews County Park
10. Shongum Elementary School
11. Brundage Municipal Park
12. Heinstein Municipal Park
13. Rosenfarb Park
14. Stony Brook Municipal Park
15. Freedom Municipal Park
16. Cohen Farm Park
17. Armory Property
18. Combs Hollow/Clyde Potts Area
19. Shongum Lake Association
20. The Glen at Shongum Municipal Park
21. Old Brookside Municipal Park
22. State DEP Fish and Game Open Space
23. Ironia Elementary
24. Golden's Corner Municipal Park
25. Senior Center
26. Millbrook Valley Park
27. Lots Next to Town Hall
28. Farmstead Court Municipal Park
29. Morris County Community College

Note: Some publicly owned properties are identified on this map but remain unnamed.

FIGURE IX-1



ROBERT
MICHAELS
& ASSOCIATES

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CLOUGH HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES LLP

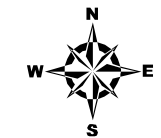
Source: Randolph Township, 2005

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OPEN SPACE PROGRAM ACQUISITION AND TRAIL PLAN

Randolph Master Plan

Randolph Township, New Jersey



Legend

- Township Boundary
- Existing Trails
- Future Trails
- Patriots Path - Future Trails
- MCPC Future Trails
- Open Space Program**
- Parcels
- Open Space
- County and State Land
- Acquisitions Near Completion
- High Priority
- Potential Properties - Low Priority
- Government/School Institutions
- Watershed Protection Area
- County Farmland Preservation Area
- Golf Course Parcels

FIGURE IX-2



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& ASSOCIATES

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0 0.25 0.5 1
Miles

Source: Randolph Township, 2005

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