

1.0 EXISTING LAND USE

The Town of Lewisboro encompasses an area of approximately 18,550 acres or 29 square miles. Portions of this land have been occupied by permanent settlements since the early 1700s. The first farm homesteads were slowly joined by new farms as land was cleared, roadways established, mills built along the streams and hamlets formed with small businesses and churches. Although the size of the population was small, the extent of settlement that existed by 1800 was such that Lewisboro's basic road pattern and large land tract property configuration has changed little since. To plan today for the future of the Town requires acknowledgement and understanding of the nearly 300 years of development that has created Lewisboro as it now exists.

1.1 Extent of Development

In 1984, approximately 35% of Lewisboro's total land area was classified as "developed land". On these 6,300 acres were located all of the Town's residences, businesses, public buildings and roads. Twenty percent of the total land area was committed open space and recreation land contained in Town parks, Westchester County parks and private recreation clubs or protected for conservation. The remaining 45% of the land, nearly 8,000 acres, was undeveloped. (Slightly less than 5% of Lewisboro's total area - 851 acres - is occupied by waterbodies. This area is excluded from the discussion of land area.)

Table 1, "Extent of Development", highlights the change in Lewisboro's land use over the 14 year period 1970 to 1984. Steady construction of new residences increased the amount of developed land by 43%, nearly 2,000 acres. Significantly, there was also a substantial 32% increase in designated open space lands. As a result of both trends, undeveloped land decreased by 26%.

1.2 Characteristics of Land Use

The pattern of existing use of land is best identified through field surveys. First in 1970 and then in 1981, such surveys were conducted. The location and extent of all land areas utilized for residences, businesses, recreation, highways, public buildings, churches and other facilities were identified as were vacant land areas. The results of the 1970 survey became the key research data used in preparing the 1973 Town Development Plan and its recommended pattern of future development. The findings of the 1981 survey have played an important role in the preparation of this Plan although weight has now also been given to natural development limitations on the use of land. Perhaps the greatest value of both surveys is found in what they reveal about trends in development when considered together.

Table 1
Town of Lewisboro
EXTENT OF DEVELOPMENT
1970 and 1984

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>1970</u>		<u>1984</u>		<u>Percentage Change 1970 to 1984</u>
	<u>Area in Acres</u>	<u>% of Total Land Area</u>	<u>Area in Acres</u>	<u>% of Total Land Area</u>	
Developed Land*	4,375	25	6,273	35	+ 43
Open Space and Recreation	2,652	15	3,505	20	+ 32
Undeveloped Land**	10,675	60	7,921	45	- 26
TOTAL LAND AREA	17,702	100	17,699	100	
Waterbodies	848		851		
TOTAL TOWN AREA	18,550		18,550		

*Includes maintained land devoted to all types of residential, commercial, public and semi-public facilities and road rights-of-way.

**Includes open vacant lands and agriculture uses.

Source: See Table 2.

Table 2, "Change in Land Use", and Table 3, "Existing Land Use October 1984", contain a wealth of information on development trends and the characteristics of Lewisboro's land use. (For these tables, the results of the 1981 land use survey were updated to include changes which occurred between June 1981 and October 1984.) A quick review confirms that the 1973 Plan's primary policy statement, that Lewisboro continue to be a low density single-family residential community, is being implemented. As reported on Table 2, the 2,035 acres of land which have been converted to single-family residential use since 1970 equals 70% of the land which fell out of the undeveloped and agriculture land categories. The increase of 851 acres in the open space and recreation land group nearly equals the remaining 30% of lost vacant land. Very little of other types of development has occurred.

Between 1970 and 1984, the land area devoted to all residential uses has increased by over 60% and now covers 28% of the Town's total area, 83% of all developed land. The land area occupied by multi-family developments has more than quadrupled. While the growth in single-family housing units reflects a consistent trend, the increase in multi-family units is directly attributable to action by the Town to establish the R-MF zoning district which permits multi-family housing developments. Although the land area is small, less than 0.3% of the Town's total area as shown on Table 3, these 54 acres were the site of 12% of all of the Town's housing units in late 1984. The apparent decrease in two-family housing units is a result of different surveying methods in 1970 and 1981. As many two-family structures continue to be non-conforming under the Zoning Ordinance, their existence is difficult to identify and to verify.

Aside from the disappearance of quarry/gravel pit operations from Lewisboro, the amount of land occupied by commercial uses has been slowly increasing. However, in 1984, businesses covered only one-half of one percent of the Town's total area. As shown on Table 3, the 101 acres of commercial land represented less than 2% of all developed land. New commercial developments built since 1970 include: Westchester Ford Tractor, Thomas J. Burke and Son, Inc., and Estate Motors expansion in Goldens Bridge; Cross River Plaza and Yellow Monkey Village in Cross River; and the expansion of Oakridge Common in Vista.

Public and semi-public facilities including road rights-of-way continue to occupy approximately 5% of the Town's total area. There was a small increase in the amount of land owned and used by the Town government between 1970 and 1984 while residential development has led to a steady increase in land included in road rights-of-way. These road areas alone encompassed 11% of all developed land in 1984. (Of course, Interstate 684 accounts for a substantial land area by itself.)

Table 2
Town of Lewisboro
CHANGE IN LAND USE
1970 to 1984

<u>Type of Land Use</u>	1970	1984	<u>Change 1970 to 1984</u>	
	<u>Area in Acres</u>	<u>Area in Acres</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
RESIDENTIAL				
Single Family	3,103	5,138	+2,035	+ 66
Two-Family	62	33	- 29	- 47
Multi-Family	13	54	+ 41	+315
Total	<u>3,178</u>	<u>5,225</u>	+2,047	+ 64
COMMERCIAL				
Local Business	86*	95	+ 9	+ 10
Light Industry	5	6	+ 1	+ 20
Quarry/Gravel Pit	45	0	- 45	-100
Total	<u>136</u>	<u>101</u>	- 35	- 26
PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC FACILITIES				
School	55	55		no change
Municipal	25	31	+ 6	+ 24
Church/Hospital	59	59		no change
Cemetery	14	14		no change
Utility/Railroad and Road Rights-of-Way	768	788	+ 20	+ 3
Total	<u>921</u>	<u>947</u>	+ 26	+ 3
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION				
Town Park/Preserve	81	409	+ 328	+405
County Park	1,216	1,217		no change
Reservoir Watershed Land	985	960	- 25	- 3
Conservation Area	76	617	+ 541	+712
Private Recreation	204	212	+ 8	+ 4
School District	92	90	- 2	- 2
Total	<u>2,654</u>	<u>3,505</u>	+ 851	+ 32
WATERBODIES	848	851	+ 3	+ 1
AGRICULTURE	287	102	- 185	- 64
UNDEVELOPED	10,526	7,819	-2,707	- 26

*The 1970 survey included the lot area of all sites of Home Occupations in the Local Business Category; the 1984 column includes these lot areas in residential uses.

Source: 1970 survey as reported in the 1973 Lewisboro Town Development Plan and adjusted as discussed on page 10 of "Base Study 2: Existing Land Use".

1984 figures based on 1981 land use survey updated to October 1984 based on building permit data, site development plan approvals and tax records.

Table 3
Town of Lewisboro
EXISTING LAND USE
October 1984

<u>Type of Land Use</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of Developed Land</u>	<u>% of Total Town Area</u>
RESIDENTIAL			
Single-Family	5,138	81.9	27.7
Two-Family	33	0.5	0.2
Multi-Family	54	0.9	0.3
	<u>5,225</u>	<u>83.3</u>	<u>28.2</u>
COMMERCIAL			
Retail/Service	72	1.1	0.4
Office	7	0.1	*
Automotive	16	0.3	*
Light Industry	6	*	*
	<u>101</u>	<u>1.6</u>	<u>0.5</u>
PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC FACILITIES			
School	55	0.9	0.3
Municipal	31	0.5	0.2
Church/Hospital	59	0.9	0.3
Cemetery	14	0.2	*
Utility/Railroad	75	1.2	0.4
	<u>234</u>	<u>3.7</u>	<u>1.3</u>
ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY	713	11.4	3.8
[TOTAL DEVELOPED LAND	6,273	100.0	33.8]
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION			
Town Park (developed)	147		0.8
Town Preserve (passive use or undeveloped)	262		1.4
County Park	1,217		6.6
Reservoir Watershed Land	960		5.2
Conservation Group Holdings	365		2.0
Section 281 Subdivisions	189		1.0
Conservation Easements	63		0.3
Private Recreation	212		1.1
School District	90		0.5
	<u>3,505</u>		<u>18.9</u>
WATERBODIES	851		4.6
AGRICULTURE	102		0.5
UNDEVELOPED LAND	<u>7,819</u>		<u>42.1</u>
	18,550		100.0

*Less than 0.1%.

Source: 1981 Land Use Survey prepared by Frederick P. Clark Associates updated to October 1984 based on building permit data, site development plan approvals and tax records.

Major changes took place in the open space and recreation land category between 1970 and 1984. The Town government fully implemented the 1973 Plan's recommendation for the establishment of additional public park land in both Vista and Goldens Bridge through the acquisition of Onatru Farm Park, Fox Valley Park and the Brownell tract. In total, 328 acres of land were added to the 81 acres of parkland existing in 1970. An even larger amount of land, 541 acres, was set aside for conservation purposes including 189 acres through application of Section 281 of the Town Law in the subdivision approval process and 267 acres through purchase by various private conservation groups such as the Nature Conservancy and Wildlife Preserves. In total, committed open space land increased from 14% of the Town's total area in 1970 to nearly 19% in 1984.

Although the 1981 land use survey listed 102 acres as being in agricultural use, a decrease of 64% since 1970, traditional agricultural use had already disappeared from Lewisboro. The two properties still included receive agriculture tax assessments and are used for the planting of nursery stock and poultry breeding experimentation.

All of the land use data referenced above has been mapped. A review of this map shows a remarkably diverse locational pattern of development and committed open space lands. No one area of Lewisboro has been the site of a substantial proportion of development in relation to other areas. Instead, there have been several large and small projects in each area maintaining a balance in terms of the number of housing units in each area. Each area also still has several large undeveloped areas and a share of open space and recreation land.

1.3 Zoning

Lewisboro, in 1984, was divided into thirteen mapped zoning districts. The current Zoning Ordinance, originally adopted by the Town Board in 1974 and substantially revised in 1977, reflects the recommendations of the 1973 Town Development Plan as it provides for development of the Town as a predominantly low density residential community with a limited amount of moderately high density multi-family construction and commercial supporting facilities. Approximately 98% of the total Town area is included in one of the nine residential zoning districts with the remaining 2% located in one of the four commercial districts. The residential districts represent a wide range of minimum lot size requirements from single-family homes on four acres to two-family dwellings on 7,500 square feet. In addition there is a multi-family district which permits four two-bedroom units per acre.

As summarized on Table 4, "Total Area by Zoning District", the two acre residential district includes 51% of the total Town area. The zoning district encompassing the next highest percentage of total Town area is the four acre residential district with 31%. The amount of undeveloped land in each zoning district varies considerably. The district with the largest land area, R-2A, also has the highest percentage of undeveloped land for any single-family district (51%). The R-1A and R-MF Districts have at least one-half of their land area in the undeveloped category. While the R-1/2A and R-1/4A Districts are shown to have approximately 25% of their land area undeveloped, it is questionable if most of this land can be developed without improved central sewer and water systems. Approximately 28 of the 36 acres listed as undeveloped in the RB District are located on one lot which also contains the Goldens Bridge shopping center. The other undeveloped acres in the RB and GB Districts consist of small separate lots and undeveloped portions of properties already containing businesses.

A detailed review of the land use by zoning district information was made in a research study for this Town Plan ("Base Study 2: Existing Land Use", October 1981). It found that:

- o 50% of the total area in the R-4A District is occupied by open space/recreation lands and water-bodies and only 14% is occupied by single-family residences.
- o Semi-public facilities are primarily located in the R-4A and R-2A Districts.
- o The office/research/light industry district is virtually undeveloped by its intended uses.
- o 51 acres or 54% of the total 95 acres of land in the retail/service and automotive service use categories are located in residential zoning districts.
- o Only 9% of the land occupied by two-family housing is located in the two-family zoning district.

1.4 Development in Progress

By necessity, land use surveys are based on a particular point in time. However, development in Lewisboro has been a continual process. Development projects often take a long period of time from the date they are first proposed

Table 4
Town of Lewisboro
TOTAL AREA AND UNDEVELOPED LAND AREA
BY ZONING DISTRICT

<u>Zoning District</u>	<u>Area in Acres</u>	<u>% of Total Town Area</u>	<u>Undeveloped** Land in Acres</u>	<u>% of Zoning District Undeveloped</u>
RESIDENTIAL				
R-4A	5,814	31.3	1,735	30
R-2A	9,553	51.5	4,885	51
R-1A	1,539	8.3	776	50
R-1/2A	840	4.5	215	26
R-1/4A	117	6.3	28	24
R-7.5	217	11.7	42	19
R-2F10	16	*	1	6
R-2F7.5	9	*	1	11
R-MF	149	.8	86	58
	18,254	98.4	7,769	43
COMMERCIAL				
ORL-10	167	0.9	108	65
OHP	13	*	5	38
RB	77	.4	36	47
GB	39	.2	3	8
	296	1.6	152	51
Total	18,550	100.0	7,921	43

* Less than 0.1%

**Includes open vacant lands and agricultural uses

Source: 1981 Land Use Survey prepared by Frederick P. Clark Associates (updated through October 1984) and measurements based upon the Town of Lewisboro Zoning Map. All measurements are approximate.

to the date construction is ended and the project is fully occupied. An examination of the level of development activity in the Town in late 1984 provides an additional informative perspective for reviewing land use trends.

Twenty-two residential developments of four or more housing units had received approval of the Lewisboro Planning Board but were not fully constructed as of October 1984. Of the total 1062 acres encompassed within these projects, approximately 800 acres are included in the "undeveloped" land use category in the preceding discussion. When construction of these approved developments is complete, there will be a 10% decrease in the 1984 Town-wide total of undeveloped land. There will also be an increase of 600 new housing units - 256 single-family and 344 multi-family. The land included within those two residential land use categories will increase by 14% and 70% respectively.

Nine additional major residential developments were before the Planning Board for approval in November 1984. While all of them may not reach the construction stage as originally proposed, they provide an indication of the level of development activity. In total, these projects propose the construction of 381 housing units, 255 single-family and 126 multi-family, on 740 acres of land now classified as undeveloped.

If all of the approved developments and all of the proposed developments were to be constructed, the following approximate changes would occur after a period of several years in the land use data presented previously in this section:

- o The undeveloped land category would decrease by 1,540 acres (20%) reducing its percentage of total Town area from 42% to 34%.
- o The single-family land category would increase by 1,400 acres (27%) increasing its percentage of total Town area from 28% to 35%.
- o The multi-family land category would increase by 63 acres (116%) increasing its percentage of total Town area from 0.3% to 0.6%.
- o The total number of housing units would increase by 981 units of which 511 would be single-family and 470 would be multi-family.