

WHAT ARE GREENWAYS?

Greenways are linear parks or corridors of undeveloped land. These corridors interconnect natural areas and can serve a variety of purposes.

Greenways may consist of publicly owned land or may be limited to an easement across private land. These corridors may be as wide as a mountain range or as narrow as a footpath. Greenways can follow stream corridors or canals, abandoned railroads, steep slopes or ridgetops, streams or wetlands and may include forested tracts. Where natural areas are not continuous, greenways may be linked across agricultural fields or even via sidewalks.

BENEFITS

The benefits of preserving greenways are many. Among other things, greenways:

- are easily accessed open space for passive and active recreation;
- provide valuable corridors for wildlife movement;
- preserve ecological diversity by protecting valuable habitats;
- protect water quality and control flooding by providing buffers between developed areas and streams, wetlands and floodplains;
- save tax dollars by controlling development;
- Preserve the local character of the community;
- Provide outdoor classrooms where people can study the natural environment.

Numerous studies have shown that parks and greenways increase nearby property values and that homes adjacent to open space lands are more desirable. The Greenways Plan can provide valuable guidance to the development community so that their projects can contribute to the development of the community in a controlled and planned manner.

VISION

A Greenways Plan provides the vision necessary to ensure that new development is designed to accommodate the long-range goals of the community. Haphazard and unplanned growth results in fragmentation and isolation of habitats and lost opportunities for developing an important link between the community and the natural environment.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Hillsborough contains a variety of important natural resources. A portion of the Sourland Mountain is found in the southwestern corner of the Township. This unique natural area is recognized as the largest remaining unfragmented forest in central New Jersey. A park, known as the Sourland Mountain Preserve has been established by Somerset County in the Hillsborough portion of the Sourland Mountain. The Millstone River forms much of Township's eastern border while the South Branch of the Raritan River forms the northern border of the Township. Several State parks have been established paralleling these rivers. Numerous smaller surface waters such as the Neshanic River, Rock Brook, Cattail Brook, Pike Run, Royces Brook, and Liberty Schoolhouse Branch to name a few are also found within Hillsborough. The riparian habitats that parallel these water bodies contain valuable areas of wetlands and floodplains.

THE GREENWAYS PLAN

The Hillsborough Greenways Plan was designed to provide interconnections between the natural resources within the Township as well as providing connections to the adjacent Townships of East Amwell and Montgomery which have prepared similar plans. Where practical, the greenways were also designed to provide links between schools and natural areas. The greenways corridors are generally a minimum of 600 feet in width which is a width recommended to benefit wildlife.

Greenways can be utilized for passive or active recreation. Passive recreation consists of activities such as walking, jogging, day hiking and bird watching. Suitable portions of the greenway can also be dedicated to active recreation such as bicycle and horse back riding or cross country skiing. Parking and public access will need to be provided at convenient locations as the greenways are developed.

CATEGORIES ON THE PLAN:

EXISTING DEDICATED OPEN SPACE:

These areas consist of public lands, greenacres parks, county parks, state parks, golf courses, easements and dedicated open space. These are areas that are protected from future development.

PROPOSED GREENWAYS:

These are conceptual corridors and broad linkages that have been developed to connect existing open space. In many cases the proposed greenways parallel surface waters and include significant areas of wetlands and floodplains. These areas provide a framework for the purchase of open land and for guiding future development decisions.

PRIVATE OPEN SPACE RESERVES:

These areas consist of the Duke Estate in the northeastern part of the township, farms preserved through the sale of development easements, a commercial mining operation, several golf courses, a Girl Scout camp, and other private set-aside areas. Open Space Reserves are privately held, maintained, and accessed by permission only.

PREPARED BY:

Initiated and prepared by the Hillsborough Township Environmental Commission with the aid of a matching grant from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and the assistance of the Hillsborough Township Committee.

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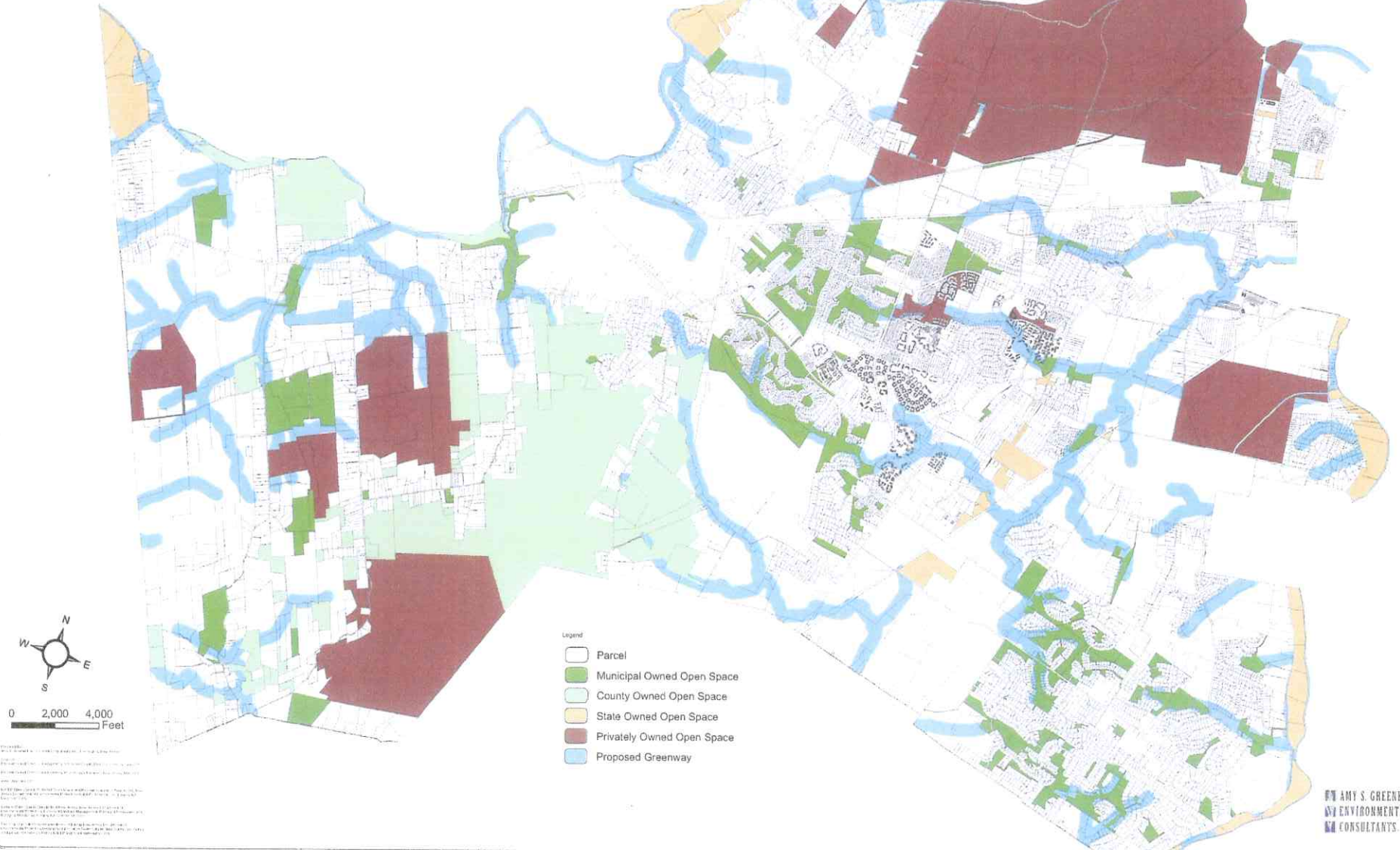
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Hillsborough Township Greenways Plan – 2007

Greenways Plan - 2007

Hillsborough Township
Somerset County, New Jersey



- Legend
- Parcel
 - Municipal Owned Open Space
 - County Owned Open Space
 - State Owned Open Space
 - Privately Owned Open Space
 - Proposed Greenway

PROJECT:
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