

Preservation of Solberg Airport Lands

- Special Bond Referendum on May 16, 2006
- Approval of bond referendum will allow the Township to:
 - Complete Application for 2006 funding from the NJ Environmental Infrastructure Trust
 - Continue negotiations with ability to make a cash offer
 - Acquire the open space surrounding the airport and development rights on the airport itself

Township's Goal

Keep Readington a great place to live

How? Protection of rural character and natural resources

- Rural, environmentally sound zoning
- Preservation of farmland, open spaces
- Discouraging sprawl
- Encouraging smart growth

Readington's Preservation Goals

Preserving Open Spaces for:

- Environmental protection
- Farmland and Agriculture
- Recreation opportunities

Readington's Open Space Success Story

- **1978 Readington Open Space Referendum**
 - **First local referendum in New Jersey**
- **7,894 acres preserved, under contract**
 - **61 preserved farms, 4,414 acres**
 - **Readington Open Space, 1,925 acres**
 - **County Open Space, 686 acres**
 - **State Open Space, 869 acres**
- **26% of Readington's land area is preserved**

Results: Readington is a beautiful, livable community with open space rather than sprawl and a sense of place



Readington's early planning efforts supported open space and natural resource protection

"The value of open space in the State of New Jersey is understood and appreciated more each year. It is realized that the existence of open space is important to the quality of life in the State, helping not only to protect our air and water resources, but also the unique scenic and historic qualities of our remaining rural areas".

Introduction, Open Space Master Plan, Readington Township, 1979



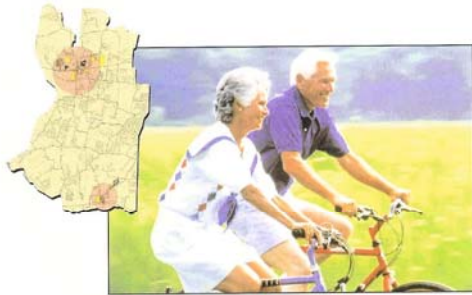
MASTER PLAN

1990

CLARKE & CATON
Architects and Planners

Readington's Master Plan: an excellent example of good planning

Senior Citizen Housing: Amendment to the Master Plan



Planning Board
Township of Readington
Hunterdon County, New Jersey

September 11, 2000

*Readington's Master
Planning efforts
have received Statewide
recognition*

Amendment to the Master Plan
TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON



Wallendjack Farm, Pine Bank Road

PLANNING BOARD
TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

November 23, 1998

Readington's Natural Resource Inventory

Amendment to the Master Plan TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON



Rockaway Creek at Island Road, Readington Township

WATER QUALITY

Elizabeth Goodwin
May 1, 2001
Revised by:
Gary A. Buchanan, Ph.D.
April 19, 2002

The Readington Township Natural Resource Inventory

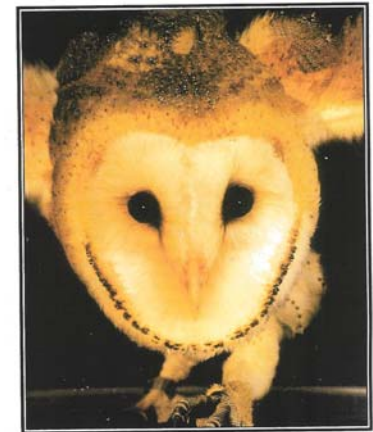


Prepared By ~
The Readington Township
Environmental Commission

Environmental Consultant ~
Princeton Hydro, LLC

~ March 2001 ~

Characteristic Flora & Fauna



of READINGTON TOWNSHIP
NEW JERSEY

Readington's Planning Goals Call for
the Protection of Its Natural Resources

Open Space Funding 1996-2006

Readington received approximately,

- \$37 million dollars in grants
- \$5.5 million in low interest loans

over a ten year period for various farmland preservation and open space projects

Readington has received approval for, but not yet received, approximately,

- \$10 million in grants
 - Includes 16 farms, \$9.3 million in preservation funding
 - Approximately \$700,000 in Green Acres funds

2001 Master Plan discusses Solberg Airport Lands as a Priority for Open Space Preservation

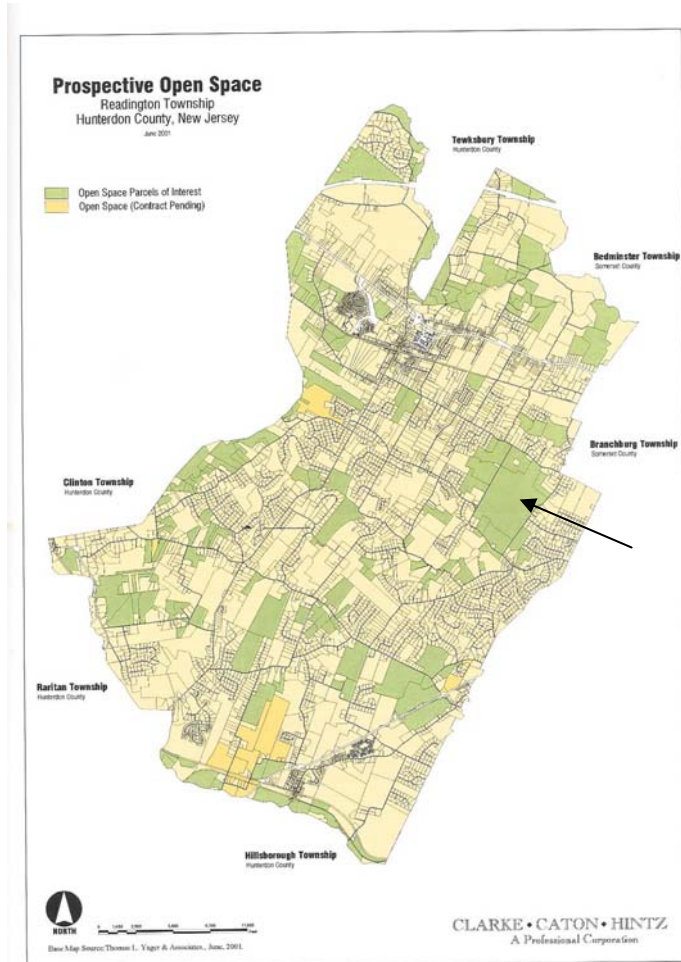
Amendment to the Master Plan **TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON**

GOALS AND POLICIES
•
PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE
•
CIRCULATION

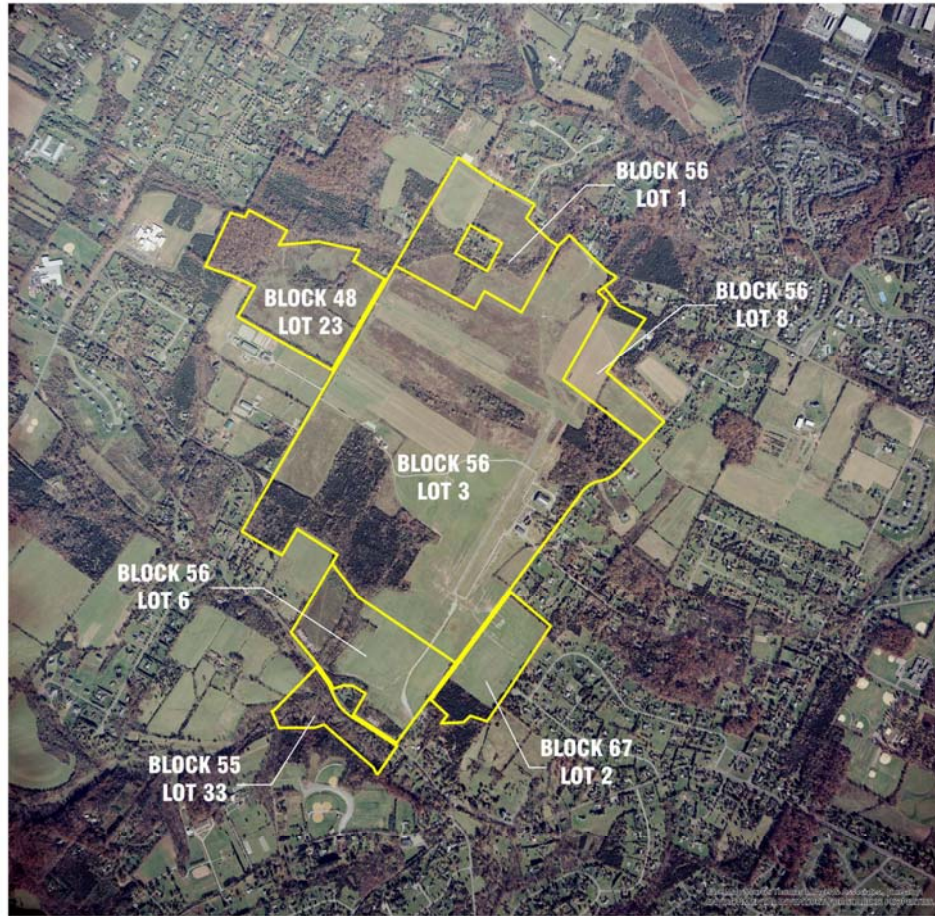
PLANNING BOARD
TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
HUNTERDON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

July 9, 2001

CLARKE • CATON • HINTZ
A Professional Corporation



Solberg Airport Lands are mostly Open Space



STUDY AREA
2000 Aerial Photo

Readington Township, Hunterdon County, NJ March 2005



Clarke Caton Hintz

Architects
Planners
Landscape Architects



Negotiations with the Solberg Aviation

- **Solberg's retain the airport as it exists today**
 - Airport is to be preserved
 - Existing runways are not to be lengthened
- **Township acquires and preserves 625 acres of open space**
 - Open Space around the airport would be permanently preserved for conservation and passive recreation
 - Bond of up to \$22 million to be used for purchase
 - Approximately \$22 million dollar cost would be funded by
 - Low interest loans
 - Open Space preservation grants


Prospective Funding Partners

- Green Acres Municipal Grant Program
- Hunterdon Land Trust Alliance
- Hunterdon County Open Space Trust Fund
- New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust

Green Acres










50% grants to Municipalities

[njhome](#) | [citizen](#) | [business](#) | [government](#) | [services A to Z](#) | [departments](#)

 newjersey **njdep**
department of environmental protection


Green Acres Program

[njdep home](#) | [ga home](#)

-  [Site Index](#)
-  [Green Acres Success Stories](#)
-  [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
-  [Program Areas](#)
-  [Program Forms](#)
-  [Links to Some Partners](#)
-  [Search Open Space Database](#)
-  [Directions to Our Office](#)
-  [Contact Us](#)

To achieve, in partnership with others, a system of interconnected open spaces, whose protection will preserve and enhance New Jersey's natural environment and its historic, scenic, and recreational resources for public use and enjoyment.

The Green Acres Program was created in 1961 to meet New Jersey's growing recreation and conservation needs. From 1961 through 1995 New Jersey's voters overwhelmingly approved nine bond issues, earmarking over \$1.4 billion for land acquisition and park development.



What's New

- ▶ **Green Acres Adopts New Regulations** (Pdf Format)
- ▶ **Green Acres announces extension of funding application deadline until April 14, 2006 for local governments and nonprofit organizations**
- ▶ **Local and Nonprofit Applications Updated 1/30/2006**
- ▶ **DEP and Bergen County Partner to Acquire Property to Expand Historic New Bridge Landing State Park**
- ▶ **Application for Sale of Real Estate to NJDEP updated 1/26/2006** (Pdf Format | MS Word Format)

New Jersey Infrastructure Trust

1% Low interest Loans



**NEW JERSEY ENVIRONMENTAL
INFRASTRUCTURE TRUST**

AN INDEPENDENT STATE FINANCING AUTHORITY

[About Us](#) [FAQs](#) [Forms](#) [Publications](#)

PROGRAM INFO

- » How the Loan Process Works
- » Projects We Fund
- » Success Stories
- » 2005 Borrowers
- » Financing Schedule
- » Interest Rates and Bond Sale

RELATED LINKS

- » Department of Environmental Protection
- » DEP Division of Water Quality
- » DEP Municipal Finance
- » DEP Green Acres Program
- » DCA Local Finance Board

SMART GROWTH FINANCING PROGRAM

Loans 75% Below Market Rate!

To encourage development in urban areas and preserve open space, the Environmental Financing Program (EIFF) offers a special low-rate loan for qualifying Smart Growth projects.
The current rate is only 1.07%!



Under a regular EIFF loan, 50 percent of the loan is from zero interest State Revolving Funds and 50 percent is funded through a market-rate Trust loan (50/50 split). By combining the funds, program participants' loans are half the market rate.

Smart Growth loans receive 75 percent of project costs from zero interest State Revolving Funds and 25 percent from a market-rate Trust loan (75/25 split). This results in a loan that is one quarter the market rate. For example, at the Trust's last sale, bonds sold for 4.26%. Under the regular 50/50 split program, borrowers paid 2.14%. Under the Smart Growth 75/25 split program, borrowers paid 1.07%.

The following projects qualify for this special low-interest rate program:

County Open
Space,
Farmland, and
Historic
Preservation
Trust Fund Plan

Hunterdon County
collects a three cent
annual tax, reserved
for the Trust

*Hunterdon County Open Space, Farmland,
and Historic Preservation Trust Fund Plan*



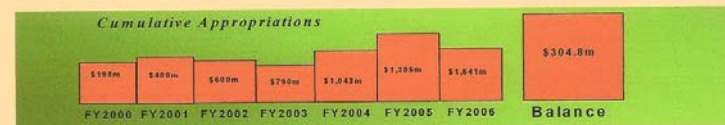
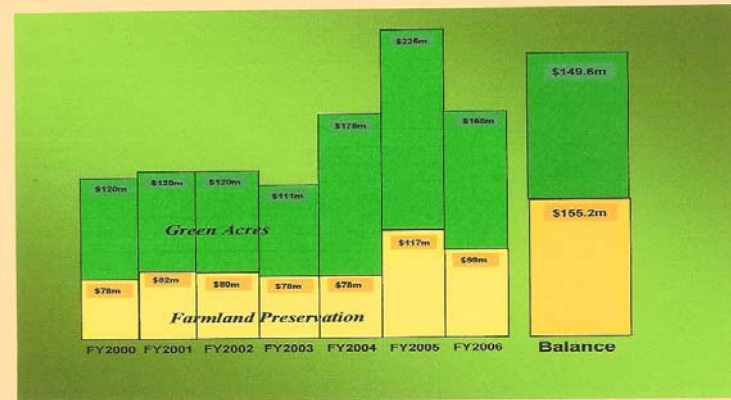
*Prepared for the Hunterdon County Board of Chosen Freeholders
by the Hunterdon County Planning Board
June, 2000*

Garden State Preservation Trust



Garden State Preservation Trust

GSPT Appropriations



Today, New Jersey has the second largest land preservation program in the nation. It is financed with Garden State Preservation Trust funds through two partnering agencies:

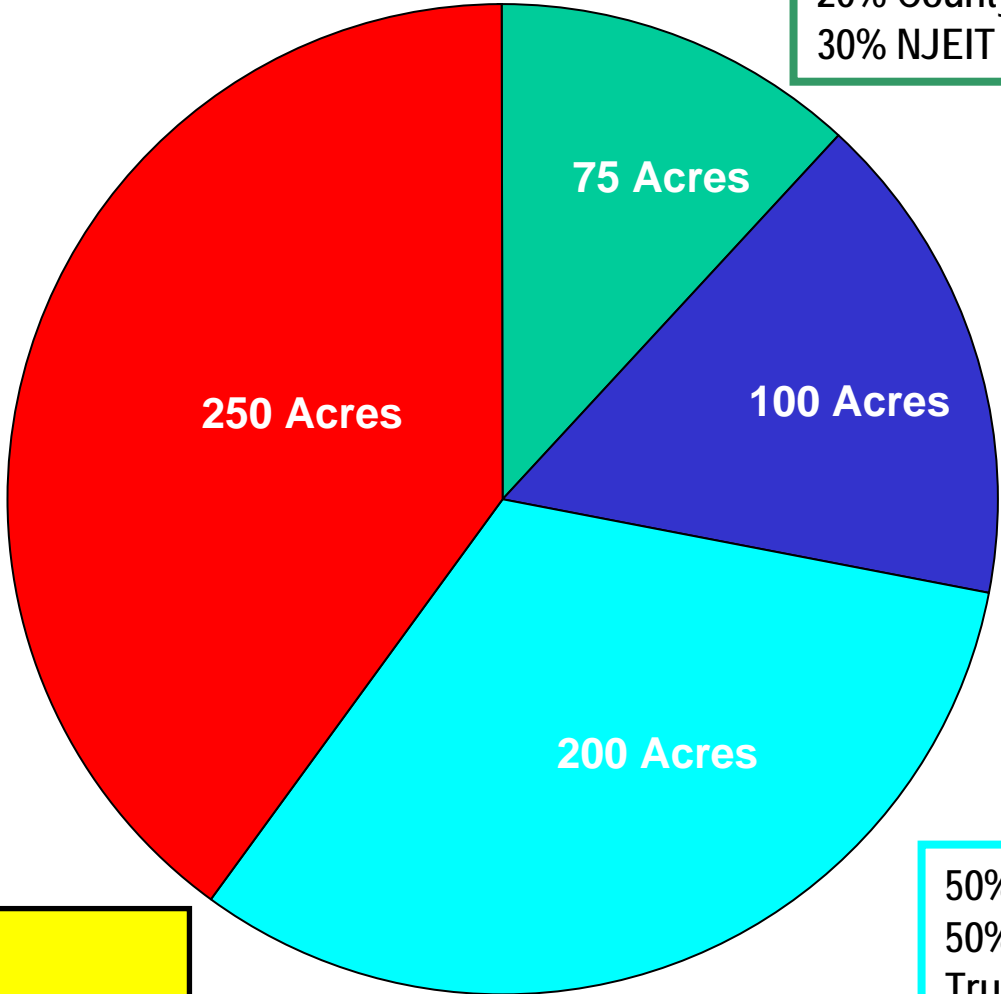
- The Green Acres Program, a division of the Department of Environmental Protection to preserve natural lands and recreational parks.
- The Farmland Preservation Program, administered by the independent State Agriculture Development Committee to acquire the development rights on privately owned farmland.

In partnership with county governments, municipalities and non-profit preservation trusts, these agencies are using GSPT funds to preserve acreage at a rate *three times faster* than land is being lost to development. To keep this momentum going, the GSPT in the past two years has approved a record \$710 million for Green Acres and Farmland Preservation.

\$304.8 million
Funding Balance
Remaining,
FY 2007-2009

PROSPECTIVE FUNDING SUMMARY

GRANTS AND LOW INTEREST LOANS



100% NJEIT
Low Interest Loan

50% Green Acres Grant
20% County Open Space Trust Grant
30% NJEIT Low Interest Loan

50% Green Acres
Non-profit Grant

50% Green acres Grant
50% County Open Space
Trust Grant

ESTIMATE
\$9 million Grants
\$9 million Low Interest Loans

Estimated cost To average Property Tax payer
Average house is assessed at \$400,000

With full open space funding:

- \$55/year first three years, short term notes
- \$60/year per household for 20 years

Unlikely worst case, no Open Space funding:

- \$55/year first three years, short term notes
- \$165/year per household for 20 years

Cost of Not Preserving 625 acres of land

The tax benefit of preserving land is superior to letting it develop;

- School taxes make up 65% of the total tax bill
- Property tax increases in developing communities are driven by an increase in school population
- The airport lands are not a tax ratable because close to 700 acres are taxed at a much reduced rate under the State's Farmland Assessment Program.
- Preserved land requires few municipal services

Special Bond Referendum on May 16, 2006
Will Involve the public in decision making process

The following question will be on the ballot:

Shall an ordinance of the Township Committee of the Township of Readington entitled “*Bond ordinance providing for acquisition of airport and land or interest in land for preservation (block 48, lot 23; Block 55, lot 33; Block 56, lots 1, 3, 6, & 8, block 39, lot 24 and block 67, lot 2, owner: Solberg Aviation/Hromoho), in and by the Township of Readington, in the county of Hunterdon, New Jersey, appropriating \$22,000,000 therefor and authorizing the issuance of \$21,700,000 bonds or notes of the township to finance part of the cost thereof,*” adopted on February 21, 2006, be ratified?

Interpretive Statement

A “YES” vote to ratify this ordinance would provide the funding needed to acquire various parcels of land, including the open space lands surrounding the airport, and the development rights on lands currently used by the airport, for a purchase price of not to exceed \$22 million dollars.

A “NO” vote would defeat the bond ordinance and not permit the Township to obtain the funds and acquire the property.

Recent Legal Decisions Affecting Open Space Preservation

Land Conservation Rally
March 25, 2006

Sandy Batty
Association of NJ Environmental
Commissions

Defensible Open Space Plan

- Built on solid data
- Developed with public input and support
- Uses defensible criteria for open space site selection
- Demonstrates public benefits

Planned Preservation

- Not in reaction to a proposed development
- demonstrated public benefits
 - drinking water
 - public access
 - quality of life
 - Threatened and Endangered species