

EXISTING LAND USE  
BOROUGH OF RIDGEFIELD, NJ MASTER PLAN  
REPORT 2

RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD

DORRAM ASSOCIATES INC.

January 1989

BOROUGH OF RIDGEFIELD, NEW JERSEY

1989

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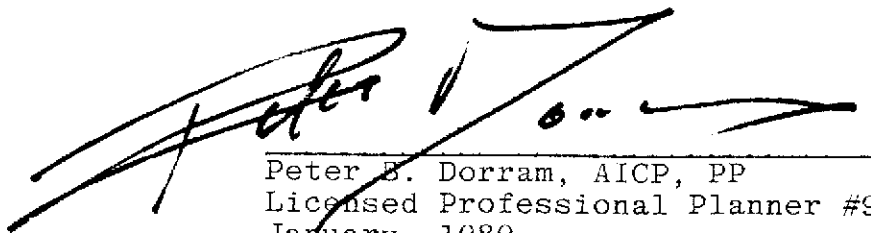
BUILDING DEPARTMENT

GENE BIALKOWSKI, (CONSTRUCTION CODE OFFICIAL)

\*

The help and cooperation of the above officials and many other at the Local, County and State levels is gratefully acknowledged by:

DORRAM ASSOCIATES INC., Planning Consultants  
265A - Route 46  
Totowa, New Jersey 07512

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter B. Dorram". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "P" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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Peter B. Dorram, AICP, PP  
Licensed Professional Planner #92  
January, 1989

EXISTING LAND USE  
RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH, NEW JERSEY

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The consultants are thankful to the many individuals, and agencies who helped with the preparation of this report. Special thanks are due to the following who gave so generously of their time, and without whose expert help this study would not have been complete:

JOHN POLITES, Councilman, who most generously gave of his time in the conducting of the land use survey, which included each parcel, and every structure in the borough.

SOPHIE "SANDY" HEGADORN, Borough Clerk, who knows where everything is, and how to find it.

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BETTY C. SCHACHER, Librarian, who knows how and where to find needed historical data.

LARS OYEN, Chief of Police, an unfailingly reliable reference source for hard to get information.

Our gratitude and thanks are due to the many other persons who helped and were not mentioned above.

## EXISTING LAND USE

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### BACKGROUND

This is the second volume of the 1988-1989 series of Ridgefield Borough Master Plan Reports. It is dedicated to the subject of Land Use. Land Use is a description of how land is occupied and utilized. The purpose of this Land Use study, and survey is to establish the Borough of Ridgefield's past growth trends, by surveying present conditions and comparing them with those reported in prior Master Plans.

The last master plan, prepared before this one, was done in 1979 by Stephen Sussna Associates.

#### THE TWO HALVES

An observer will note, when viewing Ridgefield Borough from the air, or from an aerial photograph that the community consists of two distinct halves. The eastern half is a fully developed Bergen County suburb, much like its abutting neighbors of Palisades Park, Fort Lee, Cliffside Park and Fairview. The western, and southwestern half is situated along the Hackensack River and thus located in the Hackensack Meadowlands. This half is either industrial or vacant and is quite similar to the abutting portions of Little Ferry, South Hackensack, Carlstadt and North Bergen. Zoning jurisdiction for the westerly portion rests with the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission, and for the easterly portion, with the Borough of Ridgefield.

Two separate lot-line base maps of the Borough were prepared in order to enable planners to conduct an in-depth study of both portions -- with particular emphasis on the easterly part where most of the Borough's population is located. The first base map at a scale of 1"=300' was made of the easterly section, and a second lot-line base map at 1"=400' scale was prepared of the entire Borough Area.

### THE CONTRASTS

There is a sharp contrast between the two halves of the town. The easterly portion consists mostly of one and two-family residential neighborhoods. The western part is occupied by the N.J. Turnpike, marshlands, utilities and industries. A broad industrial band of land partly in each half of town separates the two sections.

The early 1980's are witnessing new development trends in Ridgefield history, namely that of redevelopment, whereby marginal parcels of land, or low intensity land uses are redeveloped.

The current trend for developers is to assemble tracts of vacant, or not intensively used lands upon which they demolish the existing structures in order to develop a more intensive, and more profitable use of land.

Since all vacant lands are practically gone, and future Ridgefield Borough developments will consist mostly of redevelopment, it will be this Master Plan's objective and responsibility to guide the Planning Board in its deliberations.

We found in the course of our survey a current development trend towards increasingly higher densities. No one is building one-family homes any more in the Two-Family Residential Zones. The increased intensity of uses will invariably result in increased traffic, congestion, and other urban problems.

It will be the Land Use Plan portion of this Master Plan -- the final report in this report series -- which will present recommendations for the control of future developments.

For clarity's sake in communications, from herein the words diagram, map and plan shall mean the following:

- 1) DIAGRAM - A graphic design intended to explain an idea or concept in a generalized way without too much detail.
- 2) MAP - Is a graphic delineation of a survey, and is intended to be reasonably accurate, measurable, and to be presenting relevant detail.
- 3) PLAN - Is a graphic design or presentation devised for achieving an end, intended to present an idea or concept in generalized form, rather than in great detail.

\*\*\*

## II. HISTORY

Ridgefield Borough was formed by referendum of its residents from Ridgefield Township on May 25, 1892. The municipal area is 1,745 acres, or 2.727 square miles, located between the Hackensack River and the Overpeck Creek in Southeast Bergen. It is bounded by Ridgefield Park, Palisades Park, Cliffside Park, Fairview, Hudson County, Carlstadt, South Hackensack and Little Ferry; and is located three miles southwest of the George Washington Bridge.

Historically Ridgefield Borough was known to have three sections:

- 1) RIDGEFIELD - the oldest section, partly in the valley on both the east and west sides and partly on the first hill;
- 2) MORSEMERE, or Morsemere Park is the northern part of the Borough;
- 3) RIDGEFIELD HEIGHTS is on the second hill at the extreme eastern part of the Borough, running north and south.

During the middle 1800's, Samuel F. B. Morse, the inventor of the electric telegraph and the Morse Code, owned large tracts in Ridgefield and Morsemere was named after him.

The topography of the Borough is varied. The Borough is bounded by water bodies:

In the north by Overpeck Creek  
In the west by the Hackensack River  
In the south, Bellman's Creek and Wolf Creek.

Other water bodies include Mill Creek, southwest of Hendricks Causeway, and Martling Ditch, south of Mill Creek, and Skeetkill Creek which connects the Martling Ditch to Bellman's Creek.

That portion of Ridgefield Borough that includes most of these water bodies lies generally south and west of Hendricks Causeway, consist of low lands, and marshy



tidal meadows, which are part of the Hackensack Meadowlands. For this reason, this southwestern portion of the Borough comes for zoning and development purposes, under the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission's jurisdiction. The Meadowlands zoning classifies these areas into four zone districts:

- 1) Light Industrial (along the Railroad and Turnpike) Bellman's.
- 2) Marshland Preservation (near the Hackensack River and Creek).
- 3) Highway Commercial (near the N.J. Turnpike).
- 4) Park & Recreation.

Most of the southwestern portion of Ridgefield is below the 30 foot above mean, see level elevation. The higher grounds towards the Cliffside Park border range around the 250 foot elevation mark.

The Borough's development chronology is presented in following Table L-1:

TABLE L-1

BOROUGH OF RIDGEFIELD HISTORICAL CHRONOLOGY

- 1662 - The first settlers were two families who settled on the banks of Overpeck Creek where later the Township of Ridgefield was established.
- 1675 - Known as the English Neighborhood, it consisted of 12 homesteads on about ten square miles between the Hackensack River in the west, the Hudson River in the east, Englewood in the north, and Hudson County in the south.
- 1703 - A 600 acre island plantation isolated by marshes and creeks, called The Little Ferry Farm was so called because of a little ferry that crossed the Hackensack River between the farm, and what now is called Little Ferry. This farm produced the first commercially grown sugar beets in this Country.



- 1793 - The first known church, and the oldest structure of its kind in this region -- still standing -- was known as the Dutch Reform Church in the English Neighborhood. Renamed in 1933 to English Neighborhood Reformed Church.
- 1802-1915 - The Bergen Turnpike -- now Broad Avenue -- was for 113 years a toll road.
- 1859 - May 26. Northern Railroad starts new line west of Grand Avenue from Sparkill, N.Y. to Jersey City, N.J. This makes Ridgefield Borough accessible to New York City, starts suburbanization and subdivisions.
- 1867 - The beginning of the Ridgefield Section.
- 1870 - Broad Avenue constructed.
- 1871 - Name was changed from English Neighborhood to Ridgefield Township.
- 1875 - First store built along the Erie Railroad tracks.
- 1889 - A building and loan association formed, known as the Oritan Building & Loan Association, later taken over by the Oritani Savings & Loan Co.
- 1892 - May 26. Borough of Ridgefield Incorporated, with a municipal area of 2.7 square miles.
- 1896 - School No. 1 erected on Abbott Avenue, destroyed by fire in 1955.
- 1897 - Dallytown Road, now Bergen Boulevard was constructed.
- 1915 - Bergen County Chosen Freeholders bought the Bergen Turnpike, and it became a public right-of-way.
- 1920 - Trinity Spring, now known as The Great Bear Spring Water Co., became famous for its pure cold water, which comes through rock, a distance of over 100 miles from the Catskill Mountains. The bottling plant has been in operation since 1920. By the 1970-ies, the Great Bear Company outgrew its facilities and moved to Teterboro.
- 1921 - The Ridgefield National Bank was founded as the first bank in the Borough.

- 1924 - Two schools erected in this year: P.S. #2 at Prospect and Slocum Avenues, and P.S. #3 on Bergen Boulevard.
- 1929 - Public referendum approves library to become a municipally financed Free Public Library.
- 1933 - A new modern Parochial School erected at Prospect and Edgewater Avenues.
- 1939 - Borough purchases 16.5 acres for Veterans Memorial Park from Jacobus Estate.
- 1958 - Ridgefield Memorial High School erected at Walnut Street, south of Veterans Memorial Park.
- 1961 - Public Service Electric & Gas Co., erects a generating plant in the meadows.

\*

### III. EXISTING LAND USE AND LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

#### AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

Land uses change as time goes by. The indian trails, the ferry, the trolley, the toll road as well as many other former uses are gone.

The aerial view as presented by the 1980 Aerial Photo, at a scale of 1"=400', and presented separately, illustrates the high degree of urbanization prevailing in Ridgefield Borough and its surrounding area.

There are -- as if drawn by a giant hand -- a series of powerful north-south slashes bordering and bisecting the borough. The first of these is the Hackensack River which borders on the west. Next are the New York Susquehanna & Western Railroad; Conrail P.C. Westshore Railroad, and the Hudson Terminal Railroad traversing more or less parallel to the River. These railroad easements are accompanied by Interstate 95 -- the New Jersey Turnpike -- whose truck and car routes soaring over the railroads merge into a single right-of-way east of the Vince Lombardi Service Area.

From a further viewing, one can observe that generally portions of Ridgefield Borough east of Broad Avenue -- Routes 1 and 9 -- have been subdivided into smaller building lots, and are occupied by residential neighborhoods. In contrast, portions west of the Avenue were divided into larger parcels, and were developed for industrial uses along both sides of the Northern Railroad of New Jersey, and by increasingly less intensive land uses as approaching the Hackensack River area.

#### USGS

The U.S. Geological Survey Map, Weehawken Quadrangle, presents the locational characteristics of Ridgefield Borough. One can see that the urbanized areas of Pali-sades Park, Fort Lee, Cliffside Park and Fairview

surround the Borough abutting in the north, the east and the southeast. Ridgefield Borough is also abutting the northern terminus of the Hackensack Meadowlands, which have their northern extremity on both sides of the Hackensack River, generally south and west of the Borough. Here the topography is fairly low and level in the Hackensack Meadowland District area, and is rising to higher elevations toward the north and east.

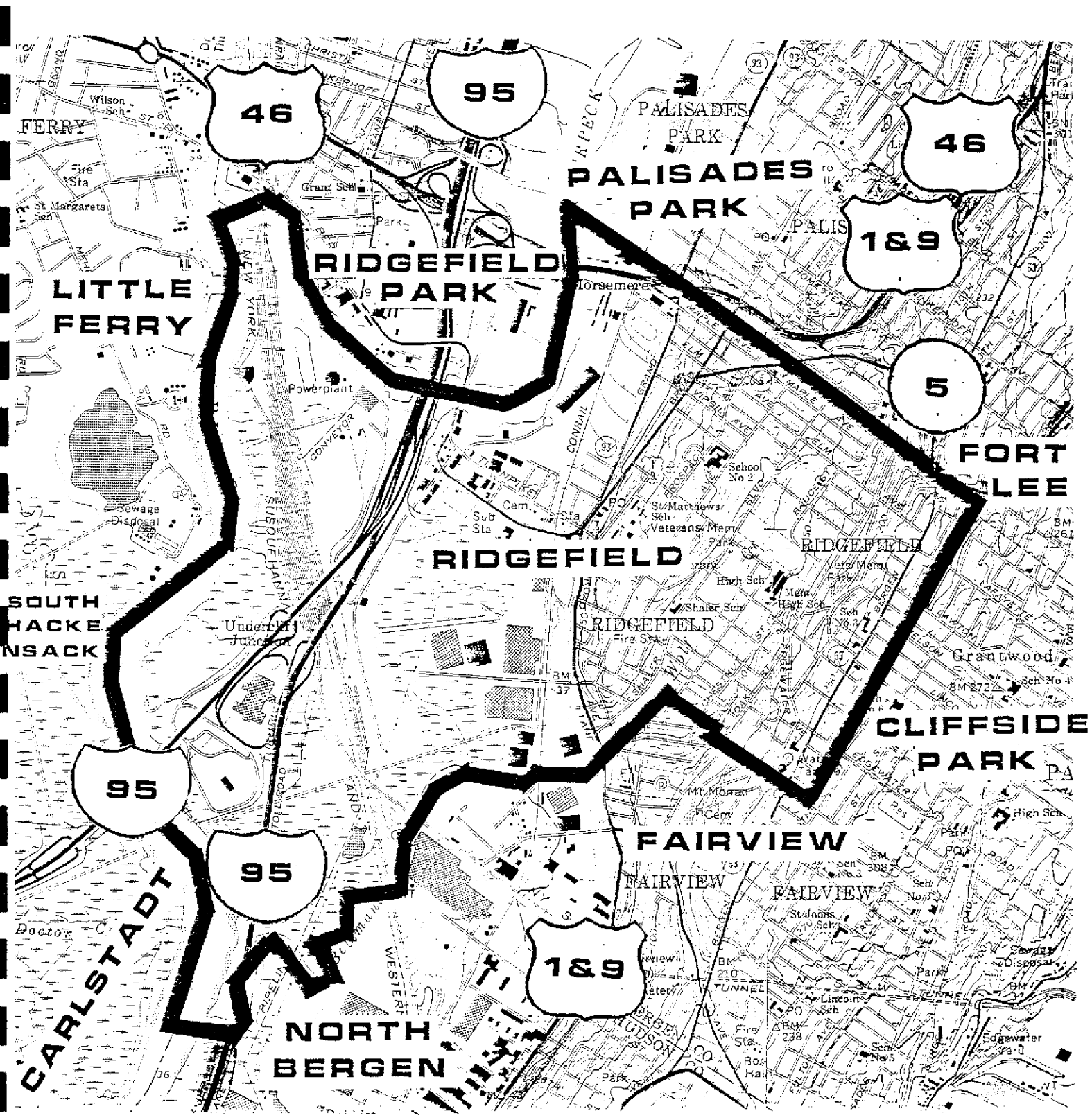
The shadings and the coloring of the U.S. Geodetic Map indicate also that the Ridgefield Borough neighborhoods were substantially developed by 1967. New developments as indicated on this map included the dualization of the New Jersey Turnpike; and various other utilities and industrial developments, mostly in the Hackensack Meadowlands jurisdictional area.

For many years it was a common belief that the Meadowlands along the Hackensack River were unbuildable tidal marshlands, good only for bird watching and muskrat hunting. In the last few years, with ever rising real estate prices, improved construction technology, and substantial regional highway accessibility, large portions of the Meadowlands were reclaimed. Not the least of these are Public Service Gas & Electric Company's Bergen Generating Station; miscellaneous industrial developments along Railroad Avenue and Pleasantview Terrace West; improved N.J. Turnpike interchanges with Route 46 and Interstate 80 nearby; the Meadowlands Sports Complex situated southwest from Little Ferry along the northern side of Route 3 and west of the new Interchange 16 W and 18 W on the New Jersey Turnpike. Such developments impacted strongly both the quality of the environment, and the regional economy.

#### THE MAP

Many significant changes took place during the past ten years, since the last master plan, but how much, and where?

In order to find these answers the consultants had to prepare new borough-wide lot-line base maps, conduct a new land use survey, map its findings on the new maps, and then -- analyze the maps.



# U.S.G.S. REGIONAL RELATIONSHIP

# 3

1:250,000 Scale  
 1:50,000 Scale  
 1:25,000 Scale

**WEEHAWKEN QUADRANGLE**  
 NEW JERSEY-NEW YORK  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
 1983 CORRECTIONS AND REVISIONS IN EFFECT  
 THE NATIONAL STRIPES THAT RUN ACROSS THE MAP  
 INDICATE BOUNDARIES OF FEDERAL AND STATE JURISDICTION  
 THE DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE  
 MAP AND COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACTUARY STANDARDS  
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY (SECTION 10630100 2200)  
 A RELATED TOPOGRAPHIC QUADRANGLE MAP AND STRIPES IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

**ROAD CLASSIFICATION**

Interstate	State	County	Local	Light	Trail
—————	—————	—————	—————	—————	—————
○	○	○	○	○	○

UNITED STATES  
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

WEEHAWKEN, N.J.-N.Y.  
 1:250,000 Scale  
 PHOTOGRAPHED 1981  
 344 61M 1 8A-WEH85 1000

Revised, edited, and published by the Geologic Survey  
 Reprints in cooperation with New York  
 Department of Transportation  
 Control by MISS USGALS and New Jersey Highway Survey  
 Purchases by organizations interested in maps USGALS Charts T-9487  
 T-9488, T-9489, T-9490, T-9491, T-9492, T-9493, T-9494, T-9495, T-9496, T-9497, T-9498  
 and T-9499. Transfers by photographic method from some original  
 maps 1954 and subsequent surveys 1954  
 Revised from some measurements taken 1964. First printed 1966  
 Successor unnumbered 6000 quadrangle from USGALS Charts 226, 274, 281,  
 282, and 283 (1964). This unnumbered 6000 quadrangle is not included in subsequent surveys  
 Mapping practices: 1977 Survey standards apply  
 1:250,000 scale based on New York quadrange system. Long scale map,  
 and fine detail complete revision  
 1:250,000 scale (United States Geological Survey and New York State)  
 Rail line indicates route in which only quadrangle boundaries are shown

This sounds simple, because once the land use map is colored, one can view it as one would view a large X-ray photograph, and thus gain similar insights to that which is not readily visible to the naked eye, but it took considerable time to get to this point. Reduced size copies of these base maps are presented on the following pages.

### THE SURVEY

The 1988 Land Use Survey identified land uses by 19 different categories as follows:

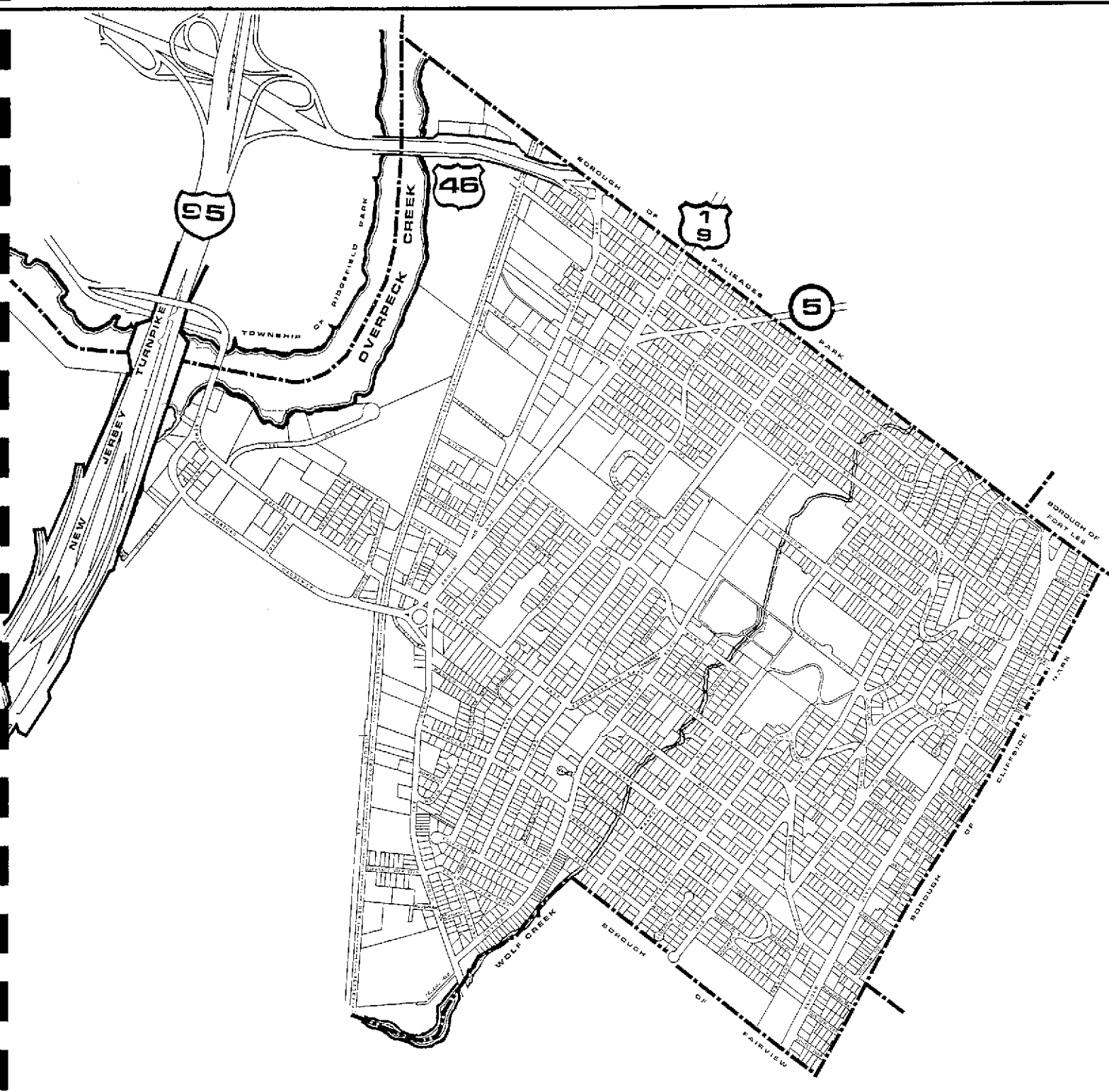
#### RESIDENTIAL

- One-Family Residential
- Two-Family Residential
- Three and Four Family Residential
- Three-Five Story Apartments
- Garden Apartments
- Mixed Residential - Nonresidential
- Public
- Semi-Public

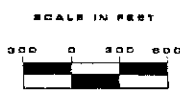
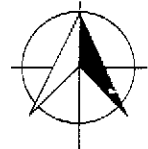
#### NON-RESIDENTIAL

- Commercial
- Office
- Industry
- Utility
- Vacant

Upon completion of the survey its findings were mapped in color on two large 1'=300', and 1"=400' scale presentation drawings. A simplified and diagrammatic version of that map is presented following.



MASTER  
PLAN  
MAP



# RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH, NJ

## EASTERN PORTION

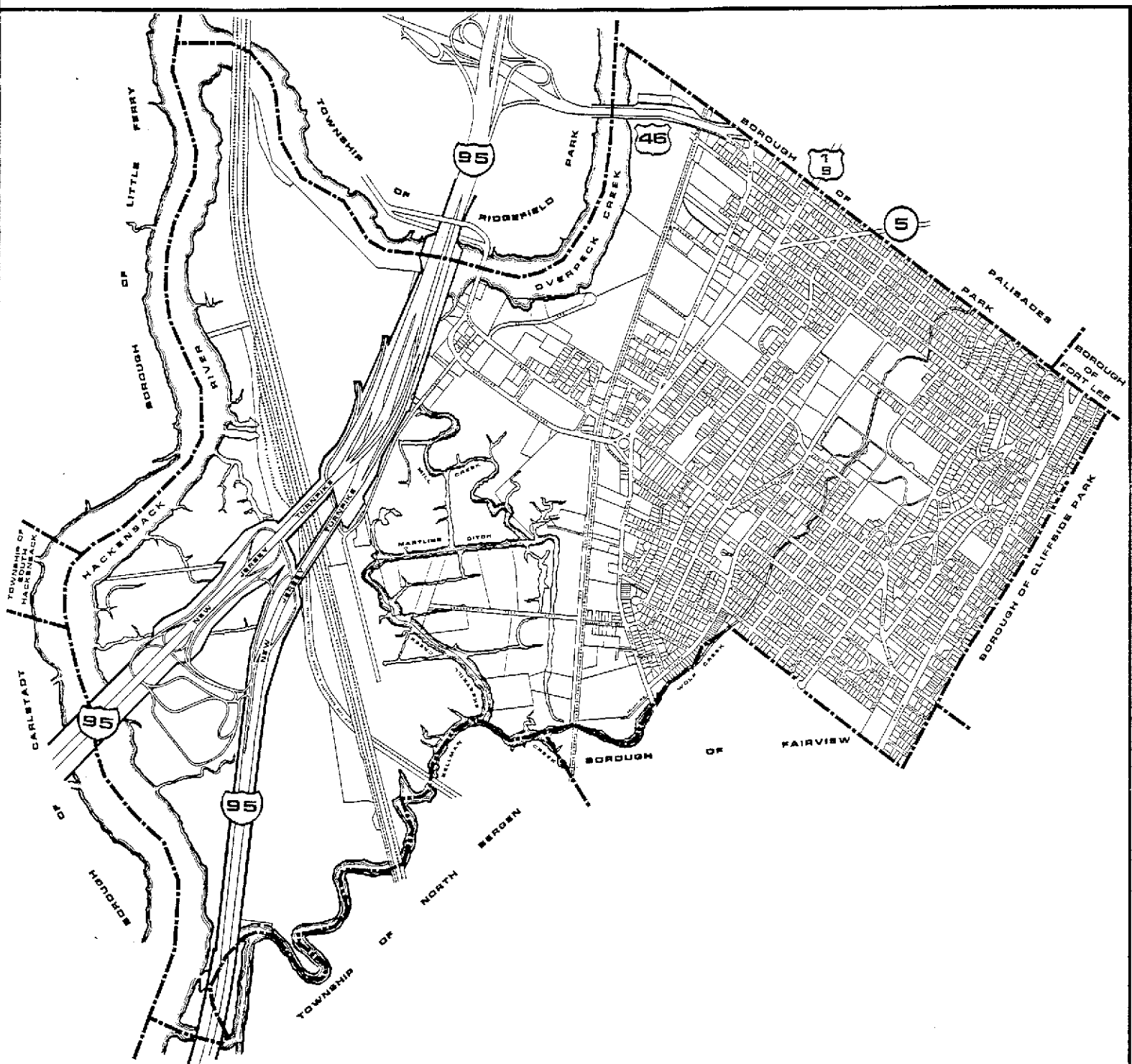
SCALE: 1" = 300'

1988

DESIGNED BY: [unreadable]  
DRAWN BY: [unreadable]  
CHECKED BY: [unreadable]  
DATE: [unreadable]

DORRAN ASSOCIATES, INC.,

CONSULTANTS



MASTER  
PLAN  
MAP



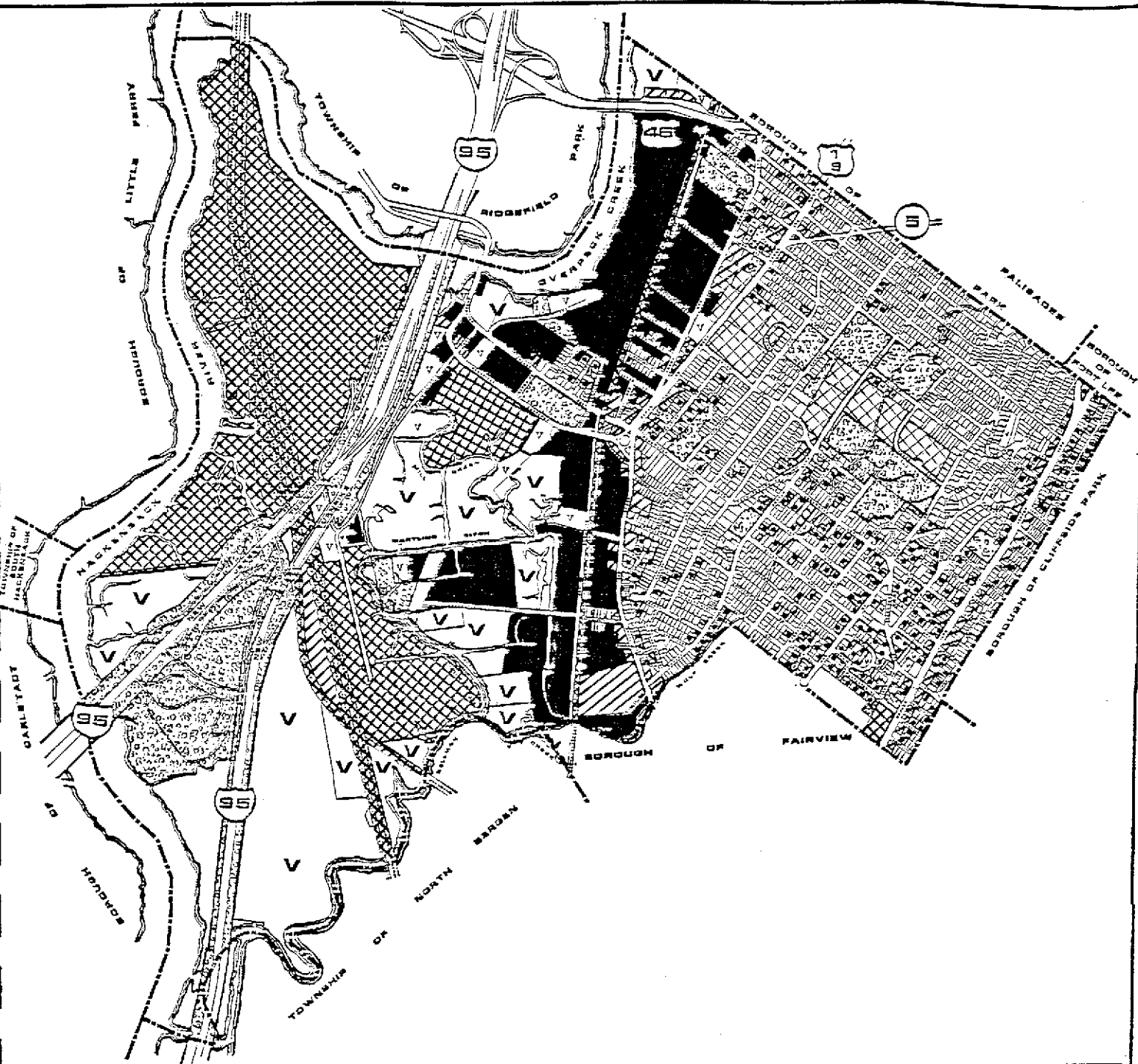
BOROUGH TAX MAP  
RECORDED: 1987, P.L. 44-1  
PREPARED BY: HARRIS, INC.  
OFFICIAL TAX MAP: 1987

**RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH, NJ**

SCALE: 1" = 400'

DORRAN ASSOCIATES, INC., CONSULTANTS

1988



MASTER  
PLAN  
MAP



**LEGEND**

	ONE FAM. RES.		COMMERCIAL & OFFICE
	TWO FAM. RES.		PUBLIC & SEMI PUBLIC
	3&4 FAM. RES. & 3-5 ST'Y APTS.		UTILITY
	GARDEN APTS.		INDUSTRY
			VACANT

SOURCE: DAI SURVEY, 1988.



SCALE IN FEET  
0 400 800

DESIGNED BY: DORRAM ASSOCIATES, INC. ENGINEERS & ARCHITECTS, INC. 1000 WEST 100TH STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10024

**EXISTING LAND USE**

**1988**

**RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH, NJ**

SCALE: 1" = 400'

DORRAM ASSOCIATES, INC.

CONSULTANTS

TABLE I.-1  
LAND USE DISTRIBUTION BY ACREAGE  
BOROUGH OF RIDGEFIELD, NJ 1988

<u>LAND USE CATEGORY</u>	<u>RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH</u> <u>EASTERN PORTION</u>		<u>AREA UNDER HACKEN-</u> <u>SACK MEADOWLANDS ZONING</u>		<u>TOTAL AREA</u>	
	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Residential</u>						
One & Two Family Residential	320.0	36.4%	.10	0%	320.10	18.0%
Three or More Family and Apartment Houses	2.0	0.2%	-		2.0	.1%
Garden Apartments	36.0	4.1%	-		36.0	2.0%
<u>Non-Residential</u>						
Commercial						
Office	38.0	4.3%	8.0	0.9%	46.0	3.0%
Industrial	11.0	1.2%	-		11.0	1.0%
Utility & Railroad	130.0	14.9%	58.0	6.6%	188.0	11.0%
	14.0	1.5%	316.0	36.5%	330.0	18.9%
<u>Miscellaneous</u>						
Public and Semi-Public						
Streets and Highways	75.0	8.5%	4.0	0.4%	79.0	5.0%
Vacant	180.0	20.6%	157.0	18.2%	337.0	19.0%
Rivers and Creeks	37.0	4.2%	176.9	20.5%	213.90	12.0%
	35.0	3.9%	147.0	16.9%	182.0	10.0%
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>878</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>867</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>1745</u>	<u>100%</u>

SOURCE: Dorram Associates Inc. Survey, 1988.

TABLE L-2  
LAND USE SUMMARY  
BOROUGH OF RIDGEFIELD, NJ 1988

LAND USE	EASTERN SECTION		WESTERN & SW SECTION		TOTAL BOROUGH AREA	
	ACRES	%	ACRES	%	ACRES	%
RESIDENTIAL	358.0	40.3	0.10	0	358.1	20.1
NONRESIDENTIAL*	193.0	21.9	382.0	44.0	575.0	33.9
MISCELLANEOUS**	327.0	37.2	484.9	56.0	811.9	46.0
TOTAL	878.0	100%	867.0	100%	1,745.0	100%

SOURCE: Dorram Associates Inc. Survey, 1988.

\* Includes: Commercial, Office Industrial, Utilities & Railroads.

\*\* Includes: Public, Semi-Public, Streets & Highways, Vacant, River & Creeks.

The various land classifications were measured and tabulated carefully in order to assess land use trends. Unfortunately, the 1979 master plan was most generalized, in that it did not distinguish, nor measure separately areas under water, or land used for roads and highways, or land that remained vacant. In contrast, this current master plan is rather careful about use classifications and availability of developable vacant lands, because the community's regional fair share obligation for providing low and moderate income housing in conformance with the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) requirements, which might well depend on such measurements. Thus while land use trends cannot very well be established on comparisons made with the 1979 master plan, we find that correlation with the 1967 U.S. Geodetic Survey Map, as photo revised in 1981 with the 1980 Aerial Photo, and with the very detailed 1988 Land Use Survey findings, reveals emerging land use trends, as described below.

From an analysis of the Existing Land Use Map, and the preceding Table L-1 presenting land use distribution statistics, we derive the following:

1) RESIDENTIAL

Contrary to common belief, only 2% of the borough area is used for residential purposes! It is a fact that residential uses account for 40% of the easterly built-up portion of the borough, but represent only 20% of the total municipal area.

a) ONE-FAMILY HOMES

The land use survey established that one-family homes are by far the predominant residential use. North of Banta Place and west of the homes fronting on Bergen Boulevard, in the northern half of the residential areas there are barely any two-family homes.

During the survey two-family homes were distinguished by observing the number of entrance doors, door bells, electric meters and television aerials. While none of these factors is a fool-proof indicator, a combination of such signs invariably is a good measure of the intensity of use of a home.

One and two-family homes account for 320 acres, or 18% of the municipal area.

b) TWO-FAMILY HOMES

There is a detectable pattern to the two-family home distribution. The largest concentration is in the southeasterly quadrant of the borough, generally south of Veteran's Park and east of Shaler Boulevard. Other lesser two-family home concentrations are along, and east of Bergen Boulevard; along Broad Avenue; Mayer Court; Hillside Street; Lowe Avenue and west of Broad Avenue North, near Palisades Park.

c) ONE & TWO-FAMILY HOMES, occupy 320 acres, or 36% of the easterly portion of the Borough.

Turning to the 1980 U.S. Census of Housing, we find that in 1980, there were 4,744 persons residing in one-family detached homes, and 3,543 persons in two-family homes, and 1,860 persons in three, or more dwelling unit structures.

At first, these statistics seem to be surprising, because there are so many more one-family homes visible than are other types of dwellings. However, what one needs to keep in mind is that when one of two look alike homes is converted to a two-family use, then the converted unit will remain appearing the same, except that most likely the number of occupants, and the number of motor vehicles will double!

Following are two tabulations from the 1980 Census:

1) YEAR-ROUND HOUSING UNITS BY UNITS - 1980

1.....	1,973
2 to 9.....	1,869
10 Or More.....	159
Mobile Home Or Trailer.....	1

2) PERSONS IN OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS BY TENURE BY UNITS IN STRUCTURE 1980

1 Detached.....	4,744
1 Attached.....	107
2.....	3,543
3 And 4.....	496
5 Or More.....	1,364
Mobile Home Or Trailer (25)	36

SOURCE: U.S. Census of Housing, 1980.

Judging by trends observed in the surrounding communities, it is predictable that pressures for the conversions of one-family homes to multi-family uses, and for higher density uses such as townhouses, garden apartments and highrise structures will mount. Therefore, it will be the purpose of this master plan to provide guidance and direction in matters of densities.

Overly simplifying the problem, we could state that the residential areas are bounded generally by Broad Avenue in the west and Bergen Boulevard in the east, and the areas nearest these thoroughfares will most likely become the first targets for redevelopment.

d) GARDEN APARTMENTS

There were in 1980 about 1,900 persons, or 18% of the borough's population residing in structures of three dwelling units or more. Most of these persons resided in one of the 4 or 5 larger garden apartment developments such as Ridgely Gardens, Rose Tree Gardens, Shaler Properties, Hillside Village and Highland Briar Condominiums. These developments represent the bulk of Ridgely Borough's higher density residential areas, which on the whole were well planned, and strategically located. For example: the Shaler Properties and Hillside Village Garden Apartments are strategically located in the geographic center of the easterly part of Ridgely, bordering Veteran's Park, the Community Center and other large beautiful open spaces. To locate higher densities along

the open spaces constituted good planning. So was the locating of Ridgefield Gardens and the Highland Briar Condominiums on Broad Avenue North -- which is also Routes 1 & 9 -- and thus well accessible.

e) APARTMENT BUILDINGS

The bulk of the Ridgefield Borough housing stock is in 2 and 2.5 story structures. Apartment buildings such as the 3 story building at the corner of Broad and Edgewater Avenues; the 4 story apartments at the corner of Shaler Boulevard and Elizabeth Street, and the 5 story apartments on Broad Avenue North and corner of Maple Avenue are the exception.

f) BILLBOARDS

While commendable efforts must have been made by present and past administrations to protect the residential neighborhoods of Ridgefield, a good number of large objectionable billboards have escaped scrutiny. Future planning efforts for the reduction of billboards would help enhance the appearance of an otherwise fine looking borough.

g) MIXED USES

There are a number of mixed residential and commercial uses, consisting of offices or stores at street level with apartments above, mostly along Broad Avenue and Bergen Boulevard. Planning theories hold, that with the exceptions of colorful ethnic areas such as Chinatown, mixed uses should be avoided.

2) NON-RESIDENTIAL

Non-residential uses including commercial, office, industrial, utilities and railroad uses occupy about 193 acres, or 22% of the easterly developed portion of the borough and about twice that much, or 382 acres and 44% of the area of the west, southwest portion of Ridgefield. The Borough of Ridgefield is an industrialized suburb where utilities and railroads occupy more land than residences.

Broad Avenue is the dividing line between the industrial uses on its west side and residential uses on the east side. The industries have quite logically located along the railroad. Post 1967 utilities and industrial developments have located also west of the Northern Railroad of New Jersey, on lands now under the Hackensack Meadowlands District zoning jurisdiction. This is illustrated well on the U.S.G.S. maps. Many of the industrial plants are of older vintage with newer plants having located along Railroad Avenue and Pleasantview Terrace West.

The largest land users are the Public Service Gas and Electric Company Bergen Generating Plant; the Conrail Yard Automotive Terminal, and the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, hosts to the Vince Lombardi Service Area, and the maintainers of rather substantial toll road right-of-way areas.

#### COMMERCIAL

Most of the 38 acres of commercial uses in the easterly section of Ridgefield are concentrated along Bergen Boulevard, Broad Avenue South and North (Routes 1 & 9) and Route 46 near Overpeck Creek. A sizeable shopping center with Shoprite Supermarket, and Channel Lumber is located between the railroad and Broad Avenue South, near the southerly borough boundary with Fairview.

An eight acre area in the southwesterly part of Ridgefield Borough bounded by the New York Susquehanna & Western Railroad Hudson River Terminal and the New York Susquehanna and Western Line is used for truck and container parking, and was hence also classified as a commercial use.

Proportionately, commercial uses occupy only 46 acres, or 3% of the borough's area.

#### OFFICE

Office uses are scattered among the commercial uses mostly along Broad Avenue and Bergen Boulevard accounting for only 11 acres.

### INDUSTRIAL

Industrial uses were described briefly in the preamble. Industries first located along the railroad lines, and tended to locate on the higher grounds in the Meadowland and marsh areas, after most of the land along the railroads, and their spurs were occupied. The total area occupied by industries is 188 acres, or 11% of the municipal area.

### RAILROADS & UTILITIES

Level lands are most suitable for railroads, that shun steep inclines. Thus, the railroad lines, and yards located east of the Hackensack River -- seeking to minimize the need for river crossings -- and west of the industrial areas.

The Public Service Gas & Electric Bergen Generating Station occupies a large area between the Hackensack River and the New Jersey Turnpike. This important and remote area is dependent on a single access point, and hence prudently maintains its own Heli-Spot.

The combined areas of the railroads and the utilities in the western portion of Ridgefield encompass about 330 acres, or 19% of the Ridgefield Borough area.

### RESOURCE RECOVERY PLANT

There is a proposed Bergen County Resource Recovery Plant planned near the Hackensack River in Ridgefield. This, in essence, will be a large, garbage incinerating facility that will convert energy from the heat, to electricity, and then in turn sell this electricity to Public Service. Proposed access and egress will be provided by way of the N.J. Turnpike.

Ridgefield residents voted overwhelmingly against the locating of the Recovery Plant in the borough in two referendums, and currently there is litigation in process instituted by the Borough of Ridgefield in an effort to prevent the flow of Bergen County's garbage to this small community, and to prevent the possible air pollution. It is the contention of the

Bergen County Utilities Authority that the Resource Recovery Plant will meet all the strict standards and requirements of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The New Jersey standards are reportedly the strictest in the nation.

3) MISCELLANEOUS

PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC USES

Public and Semi-Public land uses include public schools, the municipal building, parks, firehouses, churches, cemeteries and like civic uses.

A forthcoming master plan study, the Community Facilities Report will study the extent and needs of such facilities in the borough. Presently they occupy 79 acres, or 5% of the municipal area.

STREETS & HIGHWAYS

Streets and highways occupy an impressive 337 acres, or 19% of the Ridgelyfield Borough area. A fair portion of this acreage is represented by lands owned by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority. Other major highways include Route 46, Routes 1 & 9 (Broad Avenue and Route 5).

RIVERS & CREEKS

Rivers & Creeks in Ridgelyfield cover about 182 acres, or 10% of the borough area.

TAX EXEMPT USES

Carrying the preceding analyses a step further, we find that when adding:

Public & Semi-Public uses...	79 acres
Streets & Highways.....	337 acres
Rivers & Creeks.....	<u>182 acres</u>
Total tax exempt uses equal.	<u>598 acres</u> , or 34% of the total area.

VACANT LAND

In the eastern, developed portion of the borough there are only limited vacant areas remaining: 37 acres, or 4.2% of the easterly portion of Ridgefield.

In the westerly and southwesterly portion, there are considerable lowlands and marshlands left undeveloped totaling about 177 acres or 20.5% of the westerly portion.

Statistically when combining buildable lands with marshlands, we find that about 214 acres or 12% of the municipal area are vacant, of these, however, only 37 acres or 2% are not under the jurisdiction of the Hackensack Meadowlands Commission's zoning.

\* \* \*

#### IV. THE WESTERLY HALF OF RIDGEFIELD AND THE HACKENSACK MEADOWLANDS

Almost one-half, or 867 acres of the Borough of Ridgefield are within the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission District. This means that in this half of the Borough, the zoning established by the Development Commission supersedes local zoning.

#### PURPOSES OF HACKENSACK MEADOWLANDS DISTRICT\*

- "1. To provide for the orderly and comprehensive development of the Hackensack Meadowlands District;
2. To provide space for industrial, commercial, residential, recreational, and other uses;
3. To provide that such uses are suitably sited and placed in order to secure safety from fire, provide adequate light and air, prevent the overcrowding of land and undue concentration of population, prevent traffic congestion, and, in general, relate buildings and uses to each other so that aesthetic and use values are maximized;
4. To provide for community appearance;
5. To provide for improvements of the land adequate to serve the uses to be developed on that land;
6. To protect the Hackensack Meadowlands District from air and water pollution;
7. To preserve an ecological balance between natural and open areas and development, and
8. To provide for a comprehensive treatment of the ecological factors constituting the delicate environmental balance of the Meadowlands."

\*SOURCE: New Jersey Administrative Code, HACKENSACK MEADOWLANDS DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, 19:4-1.4.

The Official Zoning Map of the Hackensack Meadowlands District delineates zone districts within Ridgefield Borough as follows:

1. Marshland Preservation
2. Park & Recreation
3. Highway Commercial
4. Light Industrial & Distribution B
5. Heavy Industrial
6. Public Utilities.

PURPOSES OF HACKENSACK MEADOWLANDS ZONE DISTRICTS

The purposes of the Hackensack Meadowlands Zone Districts are as stated in the Ordinance as follows:

1. Marshland preservation zone; purposes

This zone is designed to preserve and enhance the ecological values of those areas of wetlands and open water within the Meadowlands District, so that real estate development and urbanization inconsistent with ecological preservation will not destroy the areas of the Hackensack Meadowlands District that, based upon environmental considerations, are worthy of preservation in their natural state.

2. Park and recreation zone; purposes

This zone is designed to maintain a necessary supply of open and recreation space.

3. Highway commercial zone; purposes

This zone is designed to accommodate a selected group of commercial uses that are best located in close proximity to highways.

4. Light industrial zone B; purposes

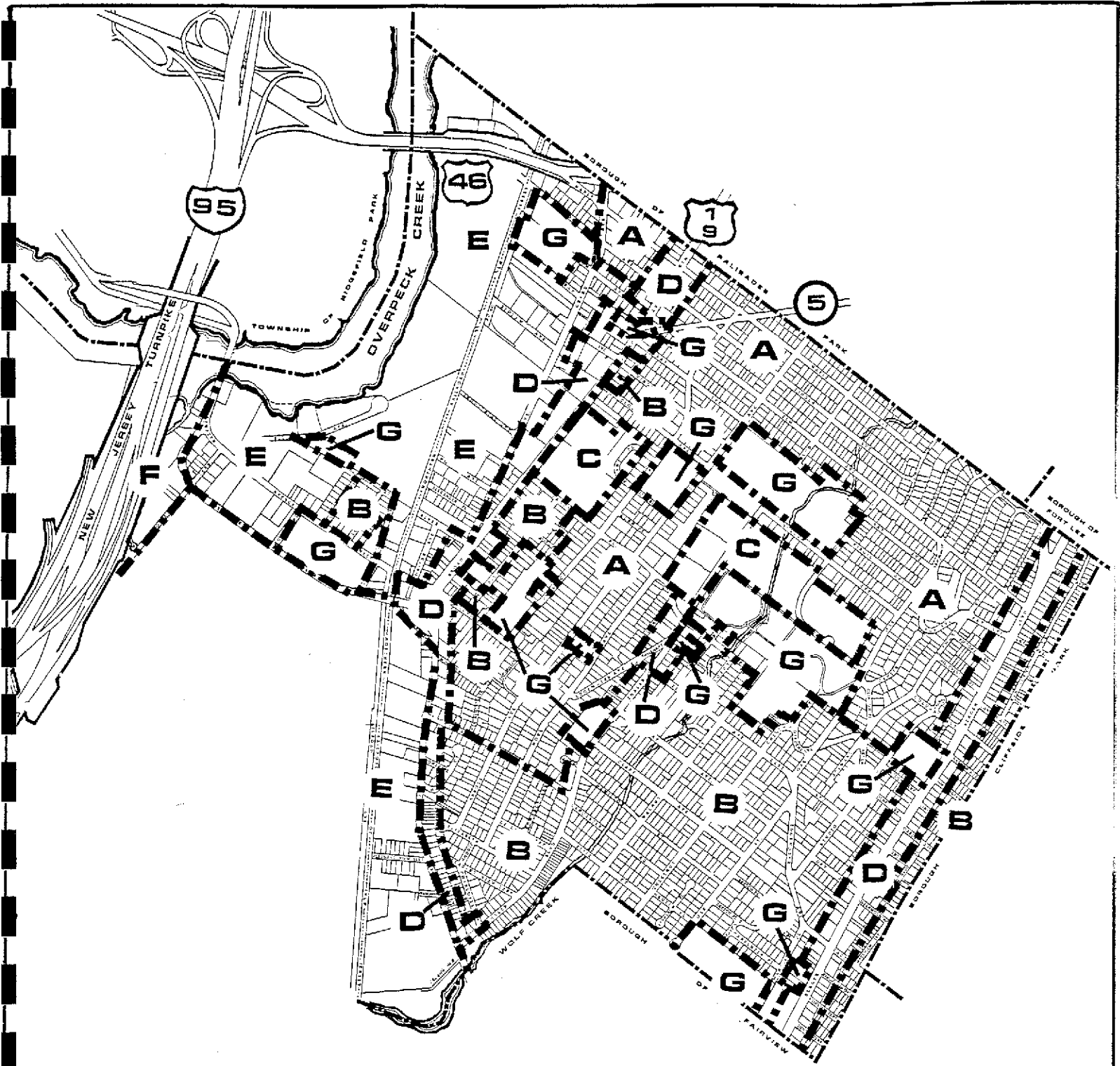
This zone is designed to accommodate a wide range of industrial, distribution, commercial and business uses that generate a minimum of detrimental environmental effects.

5. Heavy industrial zone: purposes

This zone is designed to accommodate industrial and commercial uses that are not appropriate in other industrial districts.

6. Public utilities zone: purposes

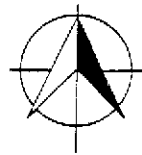
This zone is designed to accommodate certain heavy public utility uses that are not appropriate in any other industrial district.



## LEGEND

- A** ONE FAMILY
- B** TWO FAMILY
- C** MULTIPLE FAMILY
- D** COMMERCIAL
- E** LIGHT MANUFACTURING
- F** HEAVY MANUFACTURING
- G** PUBLIC USE

SOURCE: OFFICIAL  
ZONING MAPS, 1988.



SCALE IN FEET



PREPARED BY:  
DORRAM ASSOCIATES, INC.  
100 N. 11th St.  
Fairfield, NJ 07004  
OFFICIAL TAX MAPS, 1988

# ZONING

RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH, NJ

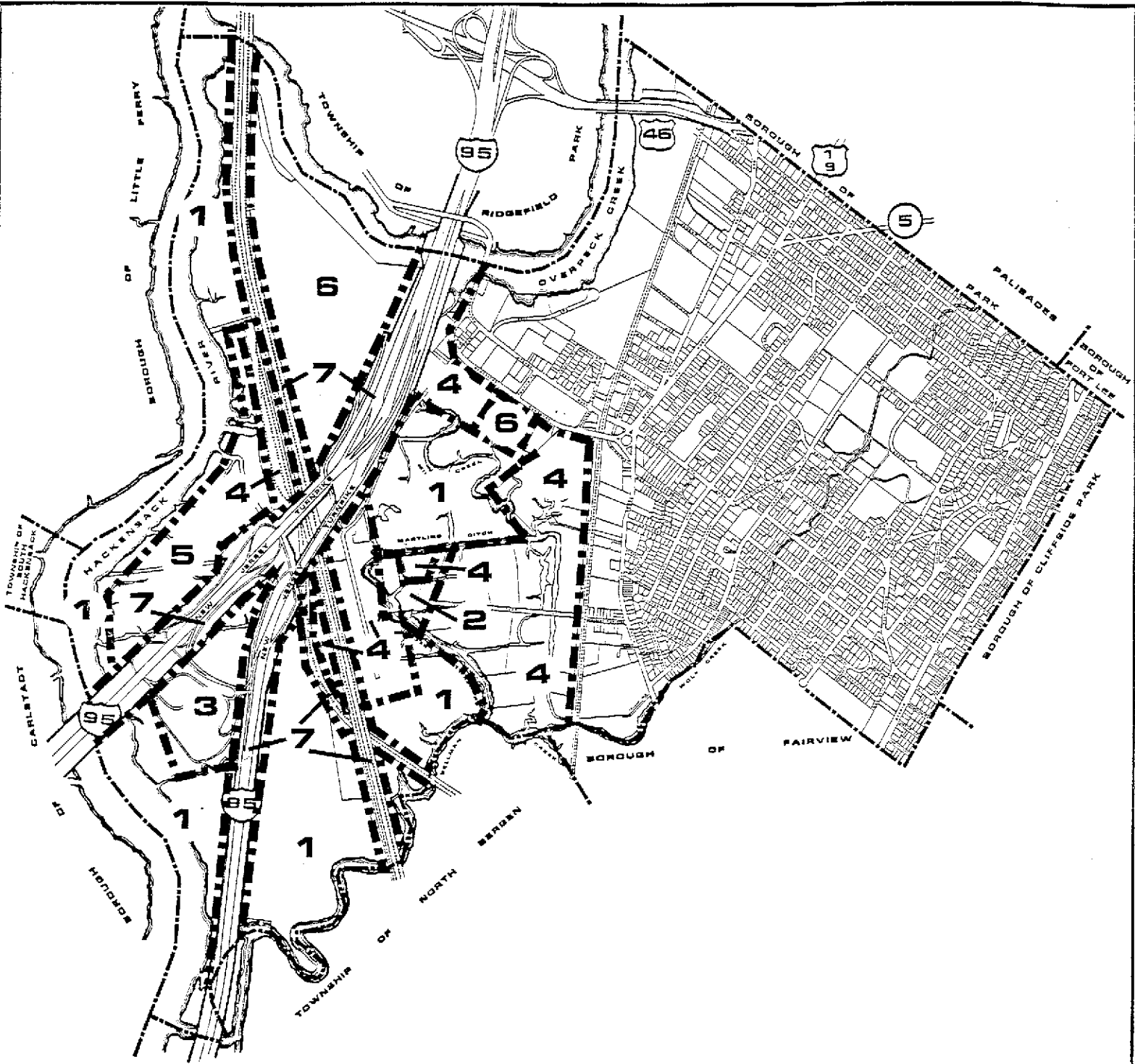
EASTERN PORTION

SCALE: 1" = 300'

1988

DORRAM ASSOCIATES, INC.

CONSULTANTS



MASTERS  
PLAN  
MAP

**8**

## LEGEND

- 1** MARSHLAND PRESERV.
  - 2** PARKS & REC.
  - 3** HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
  - 4** LT. INDUSTRIAL & DISTRIB. B
  - 5** HVY' INDUSTRIAL
  - 6** PUBLIC UTILITIES
  - 7** ROADS, RR TRANS LINES ETC.
- SOURCE: OFFICIAL ZONING MAPS, 1988.



SCALE IN FEET



PREPARED BY: DORRAN ASSOCIATES, INC., 1000 ROUTE 100, SUITE 200, CLIFTON, NJ 07011

# ZONING

HACKENSACK MEADOWLANDS DISTRICT

**RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH, NJ**

SCALE: 1" = 400'

DORRAN ASSOCIATES, INC. CONSULTANTS

V. ZONING COMPARISON\*

Table L-3 following presents a comparison of zoning acreages between Ridgefield Borough and its surrounding Bergen County communities as well as with Bergen County as a whole.

From this tabulation we can observe the following:

1. Ridgefield Borough is an urbanized community, as are the six other towns it is compared to, because none of them have any low density, one family zoning (one to five dwelling units per acre), with the exception of Fort Lee, that also has 18% of its area in highrise apartments. It is of interest to note that Bergen County as a whole has 45% of its area zoned for low density residential uses in its more suburban communities.
2. Ridgefield Borough seems to be average among the seven communities when compared for medium density residential zoning of one and two family homes at the density of five to twenty units per acre. Cliffside Park, Fairview, Carlstadt and Bergen County as a whole; have lesser proportions with 29%, 24%, 10% and 21% respectively, and Little Ferry, Fort Lee, and Palisades Park have larger areas zoned for such uses by having earmarked 32%, 45%, and 66% of their respective areas.
3. Ridgefield Borough has only a small proportion of land zoned for medium density, two family uses at twenty dwelling units per acre, and multi-family uses at five to twenty-two dwelling units per acre, and is comparable to the Bergen County averages in this regard.
4. Ridgefield and Palisades Park have no land zoned for high density, multi-family uses at twenty-two dwelling units per acre or more, whereas the

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\* This section is based on 1984 data, which are the latest available at the time of this writing.

TABLE L-3  
ZONING COMPARISON AS PERCENTAGE OF MUNICIPAL ACREAGE

RIDGEFIELD AND ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

JULY 1984

	RESIDENTIAL				NON-RESIDENTIAL			
	Low Density One Family 1-5 DU/AC	Medium Density One & Two Family 5-20 DU/AC	Medium Density Two Family 20 DU/AC + Multi-Family 5-22 DU/AC	High Density Multi-Family 22 DU/AC +	Commercial	Office and Industrial	Park, Public Cemetery or Con- servation	Special Zones Right Of Way And Other
RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH	0	32%	2%	0	6%	32%	22%	6%
PALISADE PARK	0	66%	0	0	10%	24%	0	0
FORT LEE	13%	45%	0	18%	13%	11%	0	0
CLIFFSIDE PARK	0	29%	41%	12%	16%	2%	0	0
FAIRVIEW	0	24%	36%	7%	18%	15%	0	0
CARLSTADT	0	10%	0	32%	1%	47%	6%	4%
LITTLE FERRY	0	32%	15%	0	11%	21%	21%	0
BERGEN COUNTY	45%	21%	3%	2%	5%	10%	6%	8%

SOURCE: Bergen County Planning Board, 1987.

other surrounding communities zoned anywhere from 7-31% of their areas for such densities. These densities are much higher than the Bergen County averages. This reflects that Ridgefield is an "island" in this regard among its neighbors, having steadfastly resisted the temptations of highrise living.

5. Among the non-residential zone districts, we find that Ridgefield Borough has a rather low proportion of land dedicated to commercial uses (6%), when compared to abutting towns, but not unlike the 5% so zoned county wide.
6. When comparing Ridgefield Borough to the six surrounding towns, we find that it has the second largest amount of land zoned for office and industrial uses accounting for 32% of the municipal area.

The indication from this comparison appears to be that Ridgefield is one of the more industrialized communities in this part of Bergen County.

#### SUMMARY

In conclusion, we find that proportionately in Ridgefield Borough, land has been evenly zoned for medium density residential, and office-industrial uses with 32% each. The balance of the area, or about one-third of the borough is zoned for all the other remaining uses.

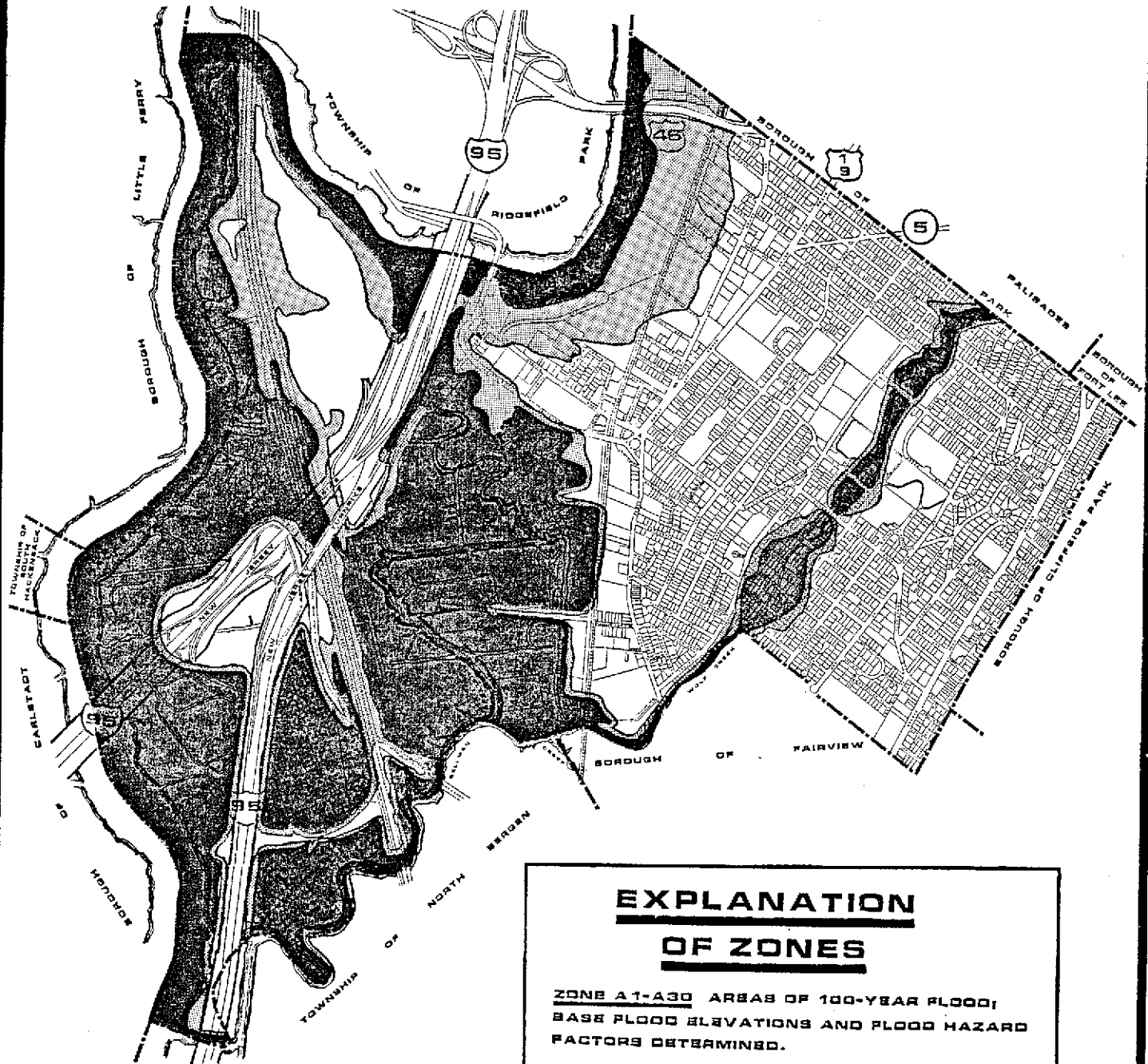
## VI. FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP

The Flood Insurance Rate Map has been developed as part of the National Flood Insurance Program by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The original purpose of such maps is to establish flood hazard boundaries and subsequently, areas eligible for federally funded flood insurance, and to inform mortgagors if a property requires flood insurance.

The Flood Insurance Rate Map shows three classifications:

- Zone A-1, which is the area of 100 year floods;
- Zone B, which are areas between the limit 100 and 500 year floods, or areas subject to 100 year flooding with average depths to water table less than one foot, or where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile;
- Zone C, which are areas classified as minimal flooding, outside 500 year flood.

\* \* \*



**EXPLANATION  
OF ZONES**

**ZONE A1-A30** AREAS OF 100-YEAR FLOOD; BASE FLOOD ELEVATIONS AND FLOOD HAZARD FACTORS DETERMINED.




**ZONE B** AREA BETWEEN LIMITS OF 100-YEAR FLOOD AND 500-YEAR FLOOD; AREAS OF 100-YEAR SHALLOW FLOODING WHERE DEPTHS LESS THAN 1 FOOT.

**ZONE C** AREAS OUTSIDE 500-YEAR FLOOD.

MAP  
PLAN  
MAP

5

**LEGEND**

	<b>ZONE A1 - A30</b>		<b>ZONE B</b>
	<b>ZONE C</b>		

SOURCE: U.S. DEPT. OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT, FEDERAL INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION, MARCH 15, 1977.



SCALE IN FEET



GRAPHIC SCALE BAR:  
TERRACE CONSULTANTS, INC.  
1000 WEST 10TH STREET  
ANN ARBOR, MI 48106

**FLOOD INSURANCE  
RATE MAP**

**RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH, NJ**

SCALE: 1" = 400'

1977

**DORRAN ASSOCIATES, INC.**      **CONSULTANTS**

# APPENDIX

TABLE  
EXISTING AND PROPOSED MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING  
RIDGEFIELD BOROUGH, N.J. 01/14/88

NAME & ADDRESS	CONDOMINIUM OR COOP NEW CONST. OR CONVERSION BUILDING TYPE	LOT(S) BLOCK(S)	CENSUS TRACT	NJ DCA REG	ACRES	D.U.'s	YEAR BUILT	BC SP NO SP FILED APPROVED
Grandview Condominium	Condominium Conversion			04-17-87		16 d.u.		
Ridgefield	Rental	3 1				4 d.u.		
Maple Gardens 855 Broad Avenue	Rental (3 Stories)	29-33 33	452		.23	48 d.u.	1929	
Ridgefield	Rental	9 & 10 42				8 d.u.		
Highland Briar Apartments 715-729 Broad Avenue	Condominium Conversion	3 69	452		2.06	63 d.u.	1955-1987	
Tall Trees Condominium 733 Broad Avenue	Condominium Conversion	29 69	452	09-21-83	.87	24 d.u.	1942	
Hillside Village	Rental Garden	1D & 1E 77			8.64	174 d.u.	1947	
Rose Tree Gardens 1 Rose Tree Terr. & Sloan Avenue	Rental (3 Stories)	3A & 4A			3.40	78 d.u.	1949	
Ridgefield	Rental	1-5 99				4 d.u.		
510 Broad Avenue	Rental (3 Stories)	3 109				8 d.u.	1900	
951 Edgewater Avenue	Rental	6 109			.10	13 d.u.	1929	
1025-1027 Hoyt Avenue	Rental (3 Stories)	11-15 112			.23	12 d.u.	1925	
Devon Corporation Edgewater Avenue	New Construction	5C, 7 & 8 119			.40	6 d.u.		06-20-73 02-01-74
Studio Development 529 Studio Drive	Rental	3 119			.33	6 d.u.	1920	
Ridgefield	Rental	28 160				4 d.u.		
One Elizabeth Street	Rental (5 Stories)	25 170			.21	16 d.u.	1921	
316 Broad Avenue	Rental	1-5 173				5 d.u.	1929	
Ridgefield	Rental	18 173				4 d.u.		
Ridgefield	Rental	15A-17A 173				4 d.u.		
Ridgefield	Rental	19-21 173				4 d.u.		
Shaler Properties Shaler Boulevard	Rental Garden	1B:1J, 2, 2A, 1X:1L 77: 78; 76			10.58	228 d.u.		
<u>Total</u>						<u>739 d.u.s</u>		

Source: Bergen County Planning Board, 1988.