

# Clifford Township

## *Comprehensive Plan*



**2014**

**Prepared for:**

*Clifford Township Board of Supervisors  
Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania*

**Prepared by:**

*Shepstone Management Company*

[www.shepstone.net/clifford](http://www.shepstone.net/clifford)

# **Table of Contents**

<b><u>1.0</u></b>	<b><u>Introduction</u></b>	<b>1-1</b>
<b><u>2.0</u></b>	<b><u>Background Studies</u></b>	<b>2-1</b>
2.1	<u>Regional Relationships</u>	2-1
2.2	<u>Natural and Historic Features</u>	2-1
2.3	<u>Existing Land Use</u>	2-9
2.4	<u>Population and Economic Base</u>	2-11
<b><u>3.0</u></b>	<b><u>Goals and Objectives</u></b>	<b>3-1</b>
3.1	<u>Land Use</u>	3-1
3.2	<u>Transportation</u>	3-4
3.3	<u>Community Facilities</u>	3-4
3.4	<u>Water Resource Protection</u>	3-5
3.5	<u>Open Space and Recreation</u>	3-6
3.6	<u>Economic Development</u>	3-6
<b><u>4.0</u></b>	<b><u>Plans</u></b>	<b>4-1</b>
4.1	<u>Land Use</u>	4-1
4.2	<u>Housing</u>	4-3
4.3	<u>Transportation</u>	4-5
4.4	<u>Community Facilities</u>	4-7
4.5	<u>Short and Long-Range Implementation Strategies</u>	4-11
<b><u>Appendices:</u></b>		
<u>A - Community Survey Results</u>		
<u>B - Recommended Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance</u>		
<u>C - Recommended Building Setback Ordinance</u>		
<u>D - Adoption</u>		

# **Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan**

## **1.0 Introduction and Interrelationships of Plan Components**

A Comprehensive Plan is one of the tools created under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code for communities to use in guiding land use and planning community facilities and transportation. It serves several purposes, among them being to serve as a policy guide, a source of information on the community and a legal foundation for land use regulations.

Clifford Township sits in the southeast corner of Susquehanna County. It includes several villages, including Clifford, Dundaff, Royal and West Clifford. It also includes roughly all or parts of six major bodies of water (Cotterel Lake, Crystal Lake, Lake Idlewild, Mud Pond, Round Pond and Stillwater Reservoir). Seasonal-home communities have arisen around some of these water bodies and some of the homes have converted to full-time residences.

This plan includes a thorough inventory of the township, looking at natural resources, demographic characteristics and related factors. It also encompasses a detailed set of community development goals and objectives based upon a combination of public comment at meetings, the input of steering committee members and a community survey. Finally, it includes specific plans relating to land use, community facilities and transportation.

This plan is intended to be a guide for the townships, but should not be considered the definitive answer to all policy or planning questions. Comprehensive plans offer a foundation upon which the other details can be built using municipal ordinances, specific policies and other tools available to local government.



Nevertheless, this *Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan*, by itself, does not limit the use of any private property. It does not have the force of law or regulation and should not

be interpreted as either limiting or directing the decisions of local officials in administering such laws or regulations. It is simply a plan.

This plan also recognizes the critical importance of private property rights to a free society. Planning should help in laying out common rules that protect everyone's property rights and ensure high standards. That is the purpose of this plan. It is not intended to supersede property rights so as to impose one particular vision over another. Rather, it proposes allowing the market to do that under common standards.

# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

## 2.0 Background Studies

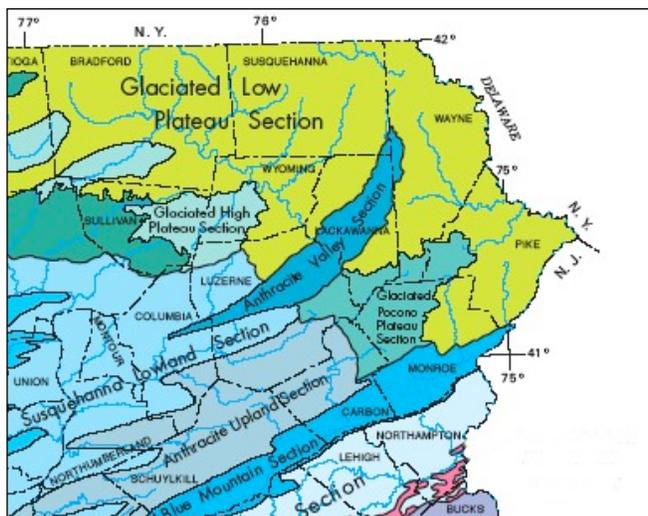
### 2.1 Regional Relationships

Clifford Township is located in the southeastern portion of Susquehanna County and adjoins two sides of Forest City Borough. It has a connection with Carbondale, as well, and, to a lesser extent, Scranton. The Township is part of the Mountain View School District. The Township has a strong relationship with adjoining communities in Susquehanna, Lackawanna and Wayne County and shares issues with them in many instances. Forest City Borough offers numerous shops and services frequented by Clifford Township residents and also has certain recreation facilities used by Clifford Township residents.

### 2.2 Natural and Historic Features

#### 2.2.1 Geology

The Clifford Township is almost entirely a part of the glaciated low plateau section of the Appalachian Plateaus Province although a small area of the Ridge and Valley province forms the eastern border of Clifford Township. The primary geologic formation is the Devonian Catskill Formation (formed from the ancient Catskill Delta that extends south and west into West Virginia) which includes many layers of sandstones, shale and conglomerates, the first of these generally being good water producers.



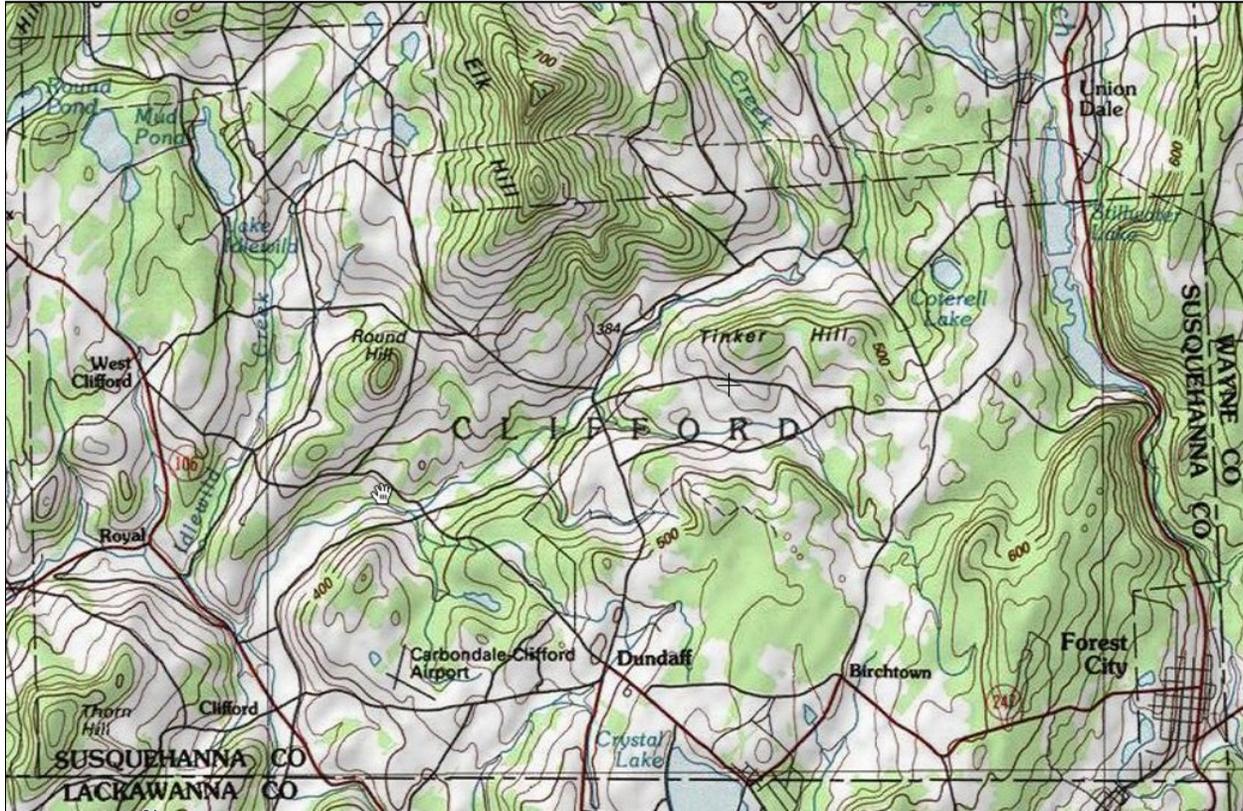
However, the glacial formation characteristics of the rock overlying the sandstone bedrock can be porous or highly permeable creating potential contamination problems for shallow aquifers. Other geologic limitations for development include; 1) low upper layer soil permeability that can slow the regeneration of ground water supplies, and 2) rock outcroppings, shallow depths to bedrock and seasonal high water tables making it difficult to locate on-site sewage disposal fields.

The Catskill Formation shale layers, particularly the Marcellus Shale, have become of great interest for natural gas production and large areas of the Clifford Township have been leased for this purpose with drilling having begun in selected nearby locations. The shale, found throughout the Catskill Delta region, is proving to be a tremendous economic resource of great importance to the area and landowners. The Townships can anticipate exploration, drilling, pipeline development and associated economic activity as a result of this new investment in the natural resources of the region.

# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

## 2.2.2 Topography

The topography of the Clifford Township varies considerably, with the highest elevation being near Elk Mountain's South Knob at 2,400 feet above sea level. This is the only areas of Clifford Township not covered by the glaciers of 14,000 years ago.



Despite the rolling nature of the area and its relatively high elevations, only small parts of the township are characterized by truly steep slopes (25%+ grades). The main concentrations of steep slopes generally consist of the areas nearest Elk Mountain (called "Elk Hill on the USGS map provided above).

Steep slopes can present serious problems for intensive development, but offer opportunities for recreation (e.g. the skiing at Elk Mountain) and unique forms of low density development if clearing and disturbance are limited and proper stormwater management techniques are applied.

Given their relatively limited scope within the township, steep slopes are not a major issue. Nonetheless, erosion control and stormwater management remain important throughout the region and have been an issue with respect to local roads, driveways and the like, also contributing to flooding issues in the village of Clifford, for instance. Accordingly, township regulations regarding subdivision and land development should include performance standards for development on steep slopes and stormwater management.

## ***Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan***

### **2.2.3 Soils**

Clifford Township soils are relatively young and exhibit only limited development. Most were formed in materials deposited by the Wisconsin Glacier between 11,000 and 30,000 years ago. This till material originates mainly from local shale and sandstone that was ground up, mixed and moved around by the advancing glaciers. As the ice melted, it was redeposited in a very uneven pattern, leaving many outcrops and ledges. The upland areas and plateaus tend to be extremely stony.

Most of Clifford Township consists of one of two soil associations; (1) the Mardin-Volusia-Oquaga association or (2) the Morris-Wellsboro association.

The former consists sloping to steep soils which are somewhat poorly to well-drained, located chiefly on the sides and tops of hills next to major stream valleys. In the case of Clifford these are found in bands approximately one to one and one-half miles wide parallel to the Lackawanna River and Tunkhannock Creek. Although they exhibit slope limitation, these soils are generally among the better soils in the Township for subsurface sewage disposal.

The Morris-Wellsboro association consists of level to sloping, somewhat poorly drained to moderately well drained soils on high, dissected plateaus. It includes the northwest corner of the Township and a triangular-shaped area to be limited by seasonal high water tables.

A small area of the Chenango-Barbour-Volusia association is found in the area surrounding Stillwater Reservoir. These are level to sloping, well-drained soils on floodplains and terraces and somewhat poorly drained soils on lower valley slopes.

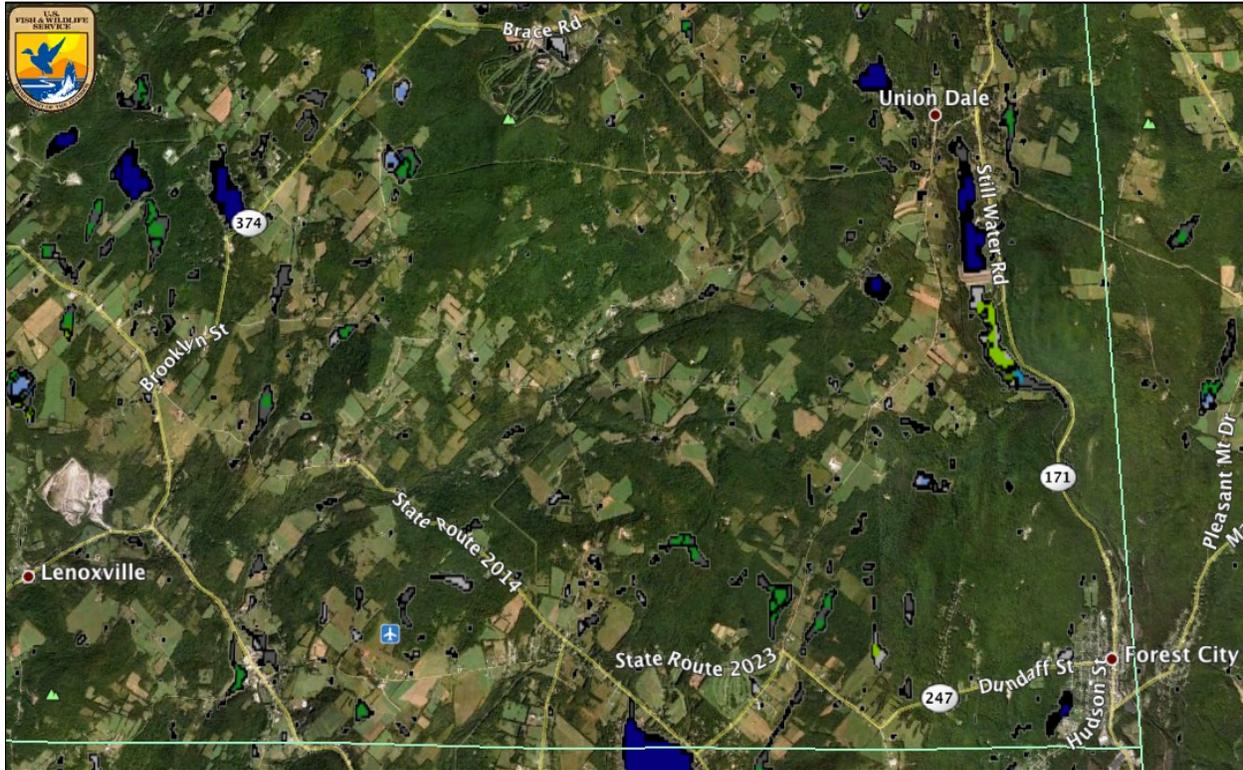
### **2.2.4 Wetlands**

There are limited areas of significant wetlands within Clifford Township including some located in undeveloped forestlands and others south of Stillwater Reservoir. An excerpt from Google Earth identifying large known wetlands mapped by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is found on the next page with these wetlands in bright green color.

Many additional smaller wetlands, subject to regulation by the Army Corps of Engineers, also exist throughout the region. These are identified through mapping at the time of development and comprise some of the more significant hindrances to development, although they are not a major issue in Clifford Township. Effective working of these wetlands into development designs as open space attractions, water traps for golf courses and similar uses is one technique for ensuring their most productive use.

There are many areas with fluctuating water tables just below the surface, rising to the surface only during wet periods. Lowlands along stream valleys are often poorly drained or water-saturated at certain times of the year. Some form the floodplains of these streams, as is the case in the village of Clifford. The soils along these floodplains are often made up of soft, sandy deposits from the water.

# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan



Numerous small swamps dot the countryside. Many of these swamps are located at the headwaters of streams and along or near their banks. Wetlands, nevertheless, are not limited to the lowlands. Early glaciation scraped out many depressions in which swamps have formed. These swampy depressions can be found throughout the area.

## 2.2.5 Watersheds

Clifford Township lies within the Susquehanna River Basin and, more specifically, the Upper Susquehanna - Lackawanna and Upper Susquehanna - Tunkhannock sub-watersheds of the basin. The primary streams draining the Township include the Dundaff Creek, the East Branch of the Tunhannock Creek and the West Branch of the Lackawanna River.

## 2.2.6 Historical Resources

This section of the *Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan* (prepared by Sally Fischbeck) summarizes the history of Clifford Township.

Clifford Township celebrated its bicentennial in the year 2006. When Clifford was declared a township in April of 1806, it was a part of Nicholson, Luzerne County, and comprised an area of 108 square miles, about twice its current size. In 1810, it became a part of Susquehanna County, when that county was split from Luzerne; then, through various divisions and separations to form other townships, Clifford was whittled to its present size.

## ***Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan***

When the first European settlers, mainly hunters and trappers, set foot in this area in the eighteenth century, they found no Native American settlements. The Iroquois who lived to the north, and the Lenni Lenape who lived in the Wyoming Valley to the south, used this vast unbroken wilderness filled with game as their hunting grounds.

Settlement in this area didn't start in earnest until the late 1790s, after the Pennimite Wars settled the claim for northeastern Pennsylvania in favor of Penn's Colony over Connecticut. Three important early highways in and near Clifford Township were instrumental in opening up the wilderness to increased settlement: the Newburgh-Great Bend Turnpike, which ran east and west; the Milford-Owego Turnpike, which ran diagonally across the region northwest and southeast; and the Wilkes-Barre Turnpike, which ran north and south.

Early settlers appeared, circa 1800, building their homes along the creeks in three main areas: Clifford Corners, Elkdale and Dundaff. The village of Clifford (Clifford Corners) grew up along the flats in the valley formed by tributaries of the East Tunkhannock Creek.

The first settler was Adam Miller arriving in the spring of 1799 with his family. At that time the land was covered with a dense forest with few natural clearings.



**Hoover School**

About a year later, Amos Harding bought some of Miller's land and their two families worked well together to improve the new community, establishing the first school (1814) and church (Clifford Baptist Church in 1817).

In 1799, William Moss (Morse) located on the creek a mile below Elkdale. As early as 1806, James Wells had a farm of 100 acres at Elkdale and had put up a small gristmill. The first stores in the township were located in Elkdale, as early as 1814. A clothing mill and distillery in Elkdale also prospered, although some businesses relocated to Dundaff after the Milford-Owego Turnpike was developed in the 1820s. Elkdale maintained some commerce with a general store and different mills (including a woolen factory and saw mill) well into the 1800s. Its first and only church was organized in 1851 (Elkdale Baptist).

The first clearing on the site of Dundaff was made about 1799 by Benjamin Bucklin, who in 1803 brought his family and became the first permanent settler. Dundaff soon prospered due to its favorable location at the intersection of the Milford-Owego Turnpike and the Wilkes-Barre Turnpike, the major highways of the day. Commerce serving both travelers and local residents soon flourished. Businesses included taverns, hotels,

## ***Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan***

blacksmith shops, tin shop, a newspaper, post office (1820), general stores, grist mill, physician, distillery, clothing mills, tanneries, and the first bank in the county (1825).



**Welsh Hill Church**

A glass factory was probably the most prosperous industry on the small stream, although it was short-lived (1831-1834). Its demise forebode the decline of the village of Dundaff. When anthracite coal was discovered and mining began to develop in the valley to the southeast, Dundaff's geographic position outside of this thriving new industry lead to the decline of its influence, and its population began to fall. The railroads never made it to Dundaff. Its best and brightest began to migrate to the more prospering town of Carbondale in the 1830s and the new town of Scranton in the 1850s.

The Dundaff Academy (1830) offered the area young people a good education. It aimed to teach algebra, geometry, measurements, surveying, civil engineering, natural philosophy, moral philosophy, evidences of Christianity, rhetoric, logic, geology, mineralogy, chemistry and astronomy; also, political economy and the art of teaching, if desired. To put this

ambitious curriculum in perspective, at the time, Dundaff vied with Montrose in population and in commerce. The academy was discontinued when the free schools became popular; the building then became the public schoolhouse.

Meanwhile, the growth of Clifford Corners was slow for most of its first fifty years. While nearby Dundaff was prospering, Clifford remained a quiet little farming area. The cluster of homes forming the nucleus of the village of Clifford was referred to as Farmersville even after the village was officially incorporated in 1847 as Clifford. Other small settlements throughout the township also grew slowly in the first half of the 19th century, including Welsh families farming to the west of Elk Mountain.

The Clifford-Carbondale Turnpike (the current Route 106, Main Street) was completed in 1847, the same year businesses are first reported in Clifford Corners: blacksmith shop, tavern and store. In 1851, a post office was established. The first hotel was built by 1852. More businesses, churches, community buildings and fine homes were established as the roadway opened the area up to commerce during the last half of the

## ***Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan***

century. The settlements of Royal and West Clifford, north of Clifford Corners on the Clifford-Carbondale Turnpike, also benefited from the improved roads.

In the spring of 1901, a creamery was opened in Clifford. (The first creamery in the township opened in Elkdale in 1887.) There was a stage line that transported passengers from Carbondale through Clifford to points north. Phone service came to Clifford in 1904. Clarence Stephens drove his gas-powered automobile from Lenoxville to Clifford in June of 1905, no doubt the first car many had ever seen. It would be more than twenty years before Main Street was paved.

In 1929, the businesses included: two grocery stores, garage, hotel, wagon repair and blacksmith shop. Electricity came to Clifford in the mid-1920s, although many businesses and homes were not wired until after 1930. Over the years, other small businesses appeared, such as an International Harvester Farm Equipment Store. Clifford had a new airport by 1947 built by Duane Johnson.

New excitement and volunteer spirit centered around the 1947 formation of the Clifford Township Volunteer Fire Company and its fund-raising picnics which began in 1949. The Consolidated Elementary School opened in Clifford in 1950.

Prior to this, as many as a dozen one-room school houses met the needs of the elementary students of the township. A dress factory opened in 1954. It wasn't until Dean F. Johnson built his Automotive Center in Clifford in 1955 and the Big Chief Market grocery store in 1956 that the sleepy little village of Clifford began its transformation into the commerce center of today.

Businesses in the village of Clifford in 2012 include many eating establishments, bars, motel, hotel, hardware store, automotive store, auto sales, auto body repair shops, garage, grocery, beer distributor, laundromat, sign store, funeral home, dance studio, karate studio, pharmacy, masonry construction, plumbing, magistrate office, post office, stone supplier, blue stone/quarry business, hair salons, smoke shop, day care, bank, short and long term storage facility, dentist and doctor offices.



**St. James Church - Dundaff**

## ***Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan***

Other businesses in the township include farms, stone quarries, ski shops, realtors, mobile home parks, smaller grocery/general stores, golf courses, auto sales and towing, restaurants, veterinarian, bed and breakfast lodging, farms, storage facilities, excavators, small equipment rental, day care, self-employed (carpenters, plumbers, electricians, artists, water well drillers, computer services, truck drivers, etc.), gas stations, garages, and automobile sales.

Clifford businesses have benefited over the years from seasonal populations: summer residents from nearby Crystal, Newton, Idlewild and Cottrell Lakes and the winter residents enjoying Elk Mountain Ski Resort which opened in 1959. There are currently eight active churches within Clifford Township (Methodist, Episcopal, Catholic, Russian Orthodox, Evangelical Wesleyan, Congregational and two Baptist). All of Clifford Township is part of the Mountain View School District.



The Clifford Township logo was designed for the bicentennial celebration in 2006. Each quadrant highlights a significant part of the township's history.

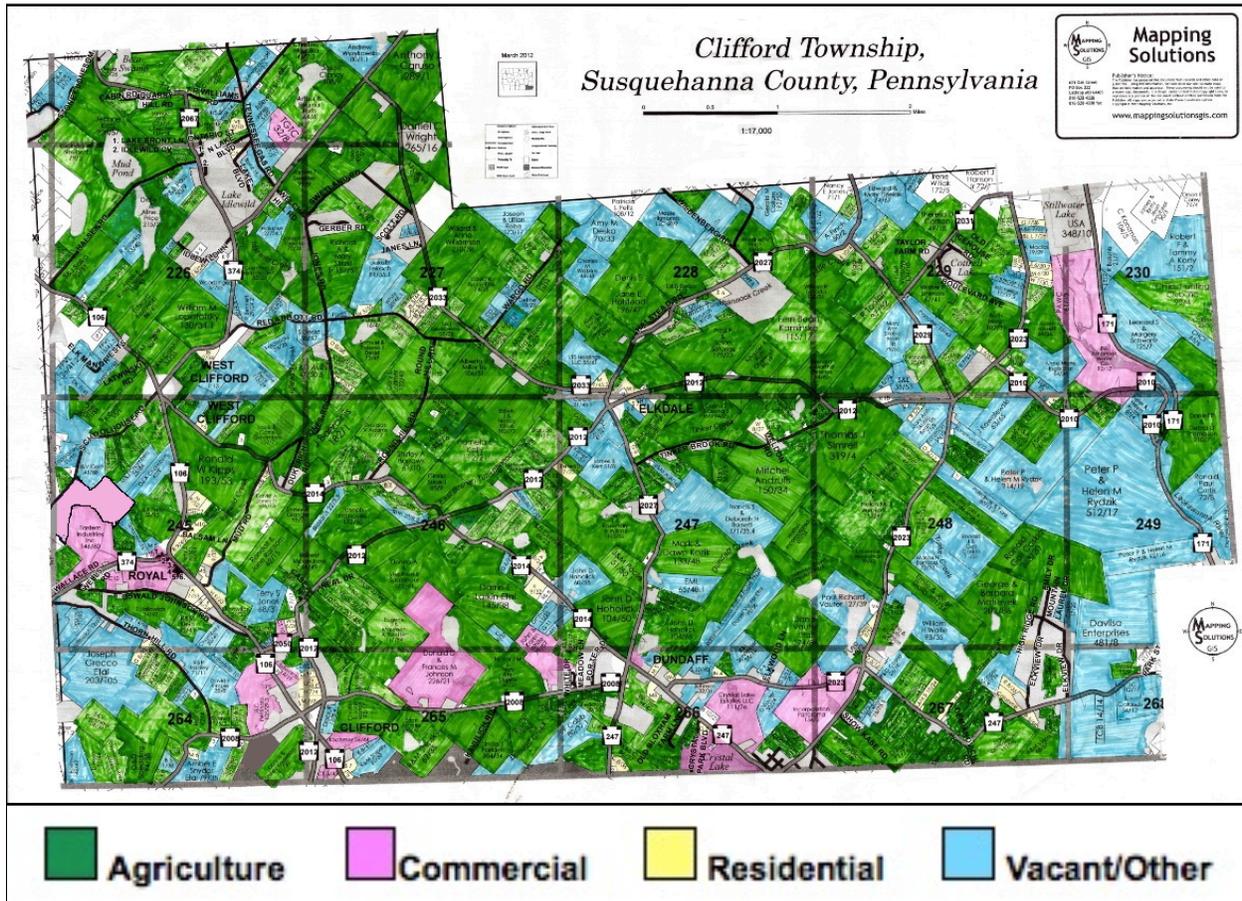
Going clockwise from the upper left, the first quadrant highlights the dominance of farming from the earliest days; the second refers to the natural beauty of the wooded mountains, wildlife and stone walls; the third speaks of volunteer work exemplified by the Clifford Township Volunteer Fire Company; and the last quadrant represents the importance of the community, its churches, the one-room schoolhouses and homes.

Clifford Township has a long tradition of people working together to make the community better for all, a characteristic feature of the community the logo is intended to capture. The Township's plan for historic preservation is to recognize these values by continuing to bring attention to its history in reviews of plans, support of the Hoover School and similar activities.

# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

## 2.3 Existing Land Use

Clifford Township existing land use was extensively analyzed as part of this Comprehensive Plan project, using volunteers to assist in the effort. Data from the Susquehanna County Assessment Office was combined with parcel maps supplied by Mapping Solutions GIS. The result was as follows (full-size copy separately provided):



Clifford Township is still predominately in agricultural use, with 15,793 acres or 59% of the land in this use, which establishes its overall character.

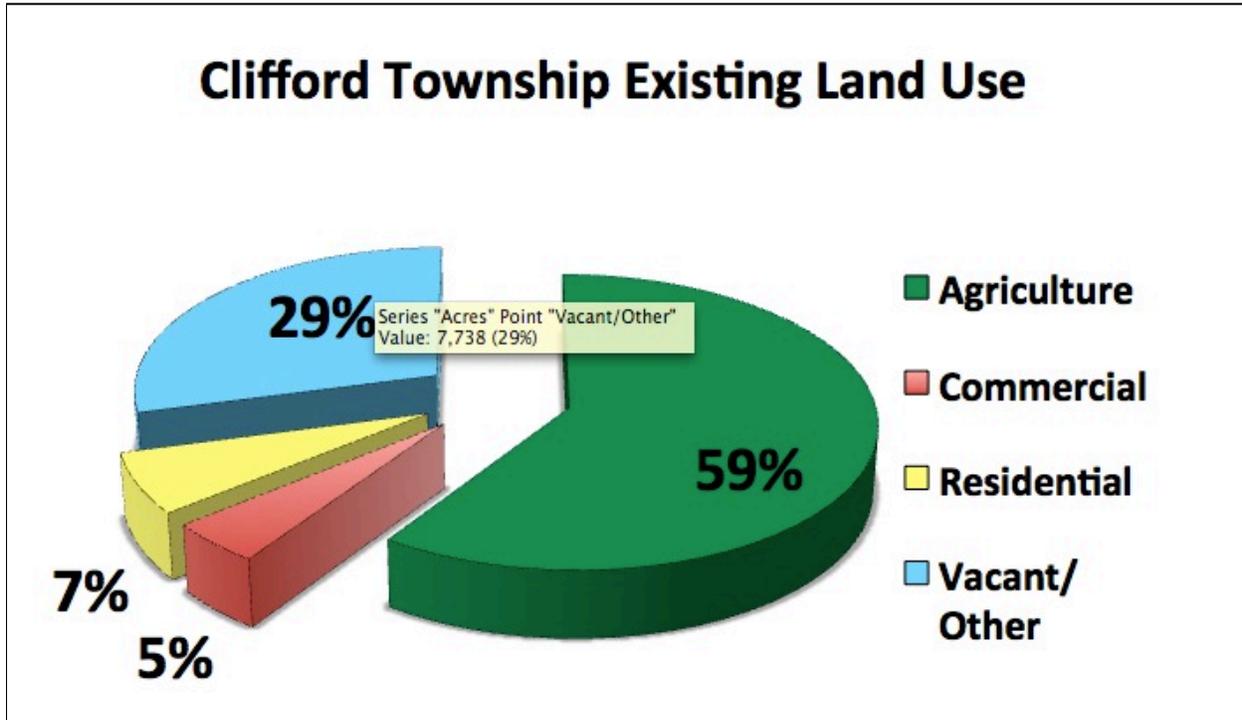
Another 7,738 acres or 29% are in the vacant land use category, which includes fallow land, largely forested parcels and other passive uses.

Residential land uses, most of which are too small to plot on a map of this nature account for only 1,780 acres or 7% of the township's land. This development is scattered across the township along public roads which makes it stand out but it occupies very little land as a whole.

Commercial land is highly visible, being located along the more traveled highways but is limited to 1,227 acres of land or 5% of the total and this includes commercial quarry/ mining activity, that accounts for relatively large acreages.

## Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

Overall, Clifford Township is distinctly rural with farms (including horse farms such as the Birchtown equine facility depicted below) and lakes giving it a certain image that appeals not only to residents, but also second-home owners. It is, in this respect, an economic asset as well as an element that helps to define the quality of life that residents of the township have come to expect.



# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

## 2.4 Population and Economic Base

### 2.4.1 Population Trends

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Clifford Township experienced very slight population growth for the period of 2000-2010, increasing by only 27 people (1.1%) and adding but 0.7 persons per square mile for the decade. This is roughly half the rates experienced for the surrounding area and Susquehanna County as a whole, the latter having expanded by 2.6% and added 1.4 persons per square mile in population density.

Putting this growth in perspective, Pennsylvania added 9.4 persons per square mile between 2000 and 2010, or more than 10 times as much density as Clifford Township. Moreover, the rate of growth for Clifford Township was also well below the U.S. average of 9.7% for the decade, which itself was the lowest rate since the decade ended in 1940. There is overall population growth within Clifford over the long term, but it is still relatively slow.

Figure 2-1 Population Changes, 1990 - 2010										
Area	1990	2000	Change 90-00	% Chg. 90-00	2010	Change 00-10	% Chg. 00-10	Persons Per Square Mile 2000	Persons Per Square Mile 2010	Change
Pennsylvania	11,881,643	12,281,054	399,411	3.4%	12,702,379	421,325	3.4%	274.5	283.9	9.4
Lackawanna	219,039	213,295	-5,744	-2.6%	214,437	1,142	0.5%	464.6	467.1	2.5
Susquehanna	40,380	42,238	1,858	4.6%	43,356	1,118	2.6%	51.3	52.7	1.4
Wayne	39,944	47,722	7,778	19.5%	52,822	5,100	10.7%	65.8	72.8	7.0
Fell	2,426	2,331	-95	-3.9%	2,178	-153	-6.6%	151.4	141.4	-9.9
Greenfield	1,743	1,990	247	14.2%	2,105	115	5.8%	92.6	97.9	5.3
Vandling	660	738	78	11.8%	751	13	1.8%	567.7	577.7	10.0
Clifford	2,161	2,381	220	10.2%	2,408	27	1.1%	58.8	59.5	0.7
Forest City	1,870	1,855	-15	-0.8%	1,911	56	3.0%	2,061.1	2,123.3	62.2
Gibson	1,022	1,129	107	10.5%	1,221	92	8.1%	35.4	38.3	2.9
Herrick	564	599	35	6.2%	713	114	19.0%	24.3	28.9	4.6
Lenox	1,593	1,832	239	15.0%	1,934	102	5.6%	38.5	40.6	2.1
Uniondale	305	368	63	20.7%	267	-101	-27.4%	153.3	111.3	-42.1
Clinton	1,582	1,926	344	21.7%	2,053	127	6.6%	50.4	53.7	3.3
Mt. Pleasant	1,271	1,345	74	5.8%	1,357	12	0.9%	23.8	24.0	0.2
Clifford Area	15,197	16,494	1,297	8.5%	16,898	404	2.4%	58.7	60.2	1.4

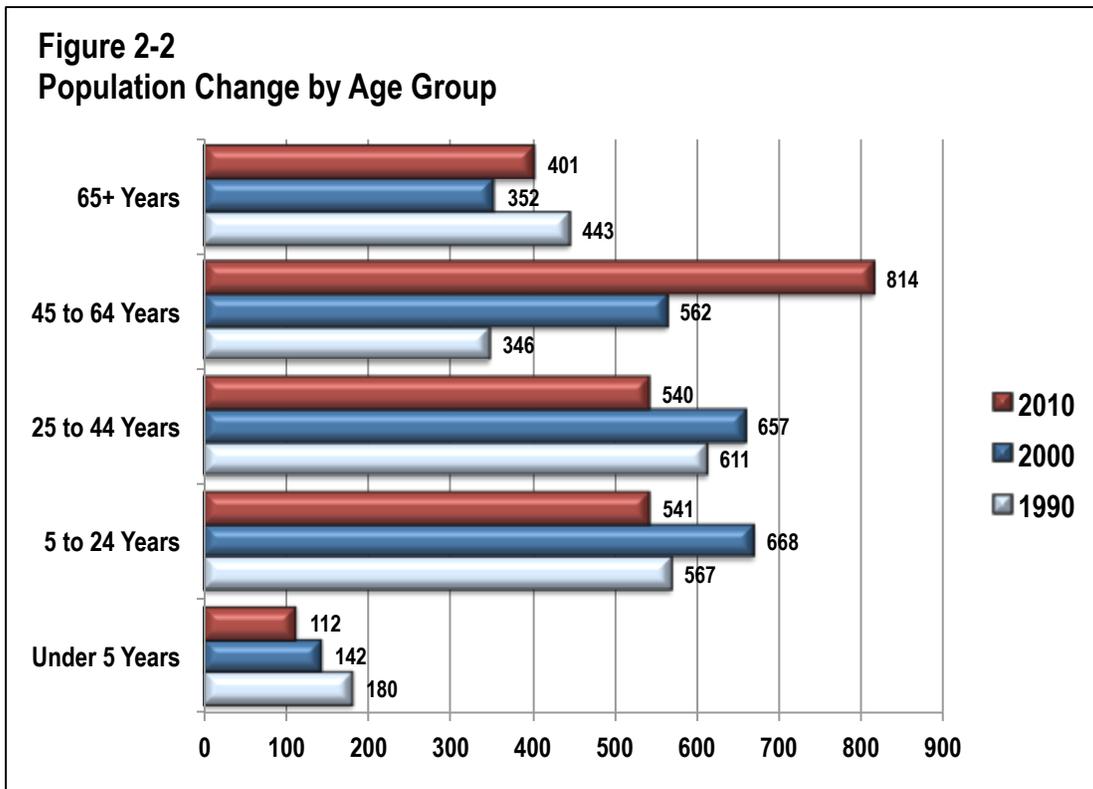
Despite the relatively stable population, there has been growth in housing. The Township gained 117 housing units during the 1990's and another 80 units over the last decade. There has also been a reduction in second home ownership with large numbers of second home conversions to permanent residences. Second homes declined from 270 homes in 1990 to 235 units in 2000 and 217 units in 2010. Simultaneously, the number of occupied housing units rose from 731 units in 1990 to 990 units in 2010, or 35.4% despite the much smaller population increase of 11.4% for the same period. The explanation for this divergence in trends lies in the aging of the population and related decline in average household sizes from 2.75 persons in 1990 to 2.43 in 2010.

# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

## 2.4.2 Population by Age

Clifford Township exhibits major aging of the population, as the chart following demonstrates. The median age in 1990 was 35.5 years. It grew to 38.5 years in 2000 (adding three years in a decade), and, in 2010, reached 45.3 years (adding another 6.8 years).

The township experienced major increases in population in the 45 to 64 years of age category and, more recently, large decreases in school-age and younger adults. These trends are raise several issues with the ability of the township and surrounding areas (e.g., schools) to support infrastructure and raise the distinct possibility it will lose population in coming years absent in-migration from other areas.



## 2.4.3 Income

Census data indicates Clifford Township is losing ground with respect to incomes. The inflation-adjusted decrease was -8.3% in per capita income, -5.5% in median household income, and 2.6% in median family income.

The reasons for these declines are probably related to the smaller household sizes and an aging population, households tending to have fewer wage earners and somewhat lower incomes as heads of households have retired.

## Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

Figure 2-3 Incomes, 1999 - 2009	
Incomes	Clifford Township
Per Capita (2009)	\$20,618
\$ Gain 1999 to 2009*	-\$1,708
% Gain	-8.3%
Median Household (2009)	\$44,892
\$ Gain 1999 to 2009*	-\$2,488
% Gain	-5.5%
Median Family (2009)	\$53,038
\$ Gain 1999 to 2009*	-\$1,372
% Gain	-2.6%

\* 1999 figures adjusted for inflation to 2009 dollars.

### 2.4.4 Employment Status

Figures 2-4 and 2-5 detail the general classification of the township workforce in 2010.

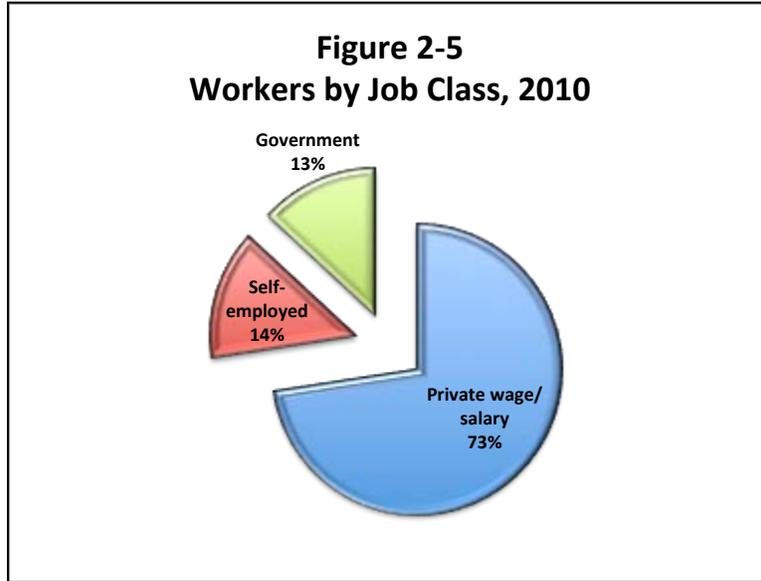
Figure 2-4 Workers by Job Class, 2010	
Class	Clifford Township
Private wage/salary	779
Self-employed	153
<b>Total Private</b>	<b>932</b>
Government	141
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,073</b>

Source: U.S. Census, 2010

The township exhibits relatively high self-employment and that may be a factor in the lower incomes over the last 10 years as certain industries suffered from a real estate recession for much of the early and very late parts of the decade. Self-employed household income is also often reinvested or under-reported.

This data is based on the employment of residents and not necessarily within the township. Therefore, it may well reflect employment conditions in areas outside the township (e.g., the Binghamton, Carbondale or Scranton). It's also apparent there has been a relatively large increase in employment since 2009 in the natural gas and related industries in Susquehanna County, a factor likely to increase private employment.

## Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan



### 2.4.5 Employment by Industry

Table 2-6 breaks down the combined employed township population aged 16 years or more in 2010 by industry.

Figure 2-6 Employment (16 + Years) by Industry, 2010		
Industry	Clifford Twp. Workers	% of Total
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	200	18.6%
Construction	143	13.3%
Retail trade	131	12.2%
Manufacturing	118	11.0%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	95	8.9%
Professional, scientific, and management and administrative services, etc.	93	8.7%
Other services, except public administration	79	7.4%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	61	5.7%
Public administration	47	4.4%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	40	3.7%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	30	2.8%
Wholesale trade	25	2.3%
Information	11	1.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>100%</b>

The largest single industry in which Clifford Township residents were employed in 2010 was the category of education, health, and social services, which comprised an 18.6%

## **Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan**

share of the employment base. This was followed closely by construction employment with 13.3%. Retail trade accounted for 12.2% and manufacturing represented 11.0%. Remaining employment was parceled among various industries, all with single digit percentages. Ideally, Clifford Township would be less dependent on governmentally supported activities and more reliant upon private industry. Yet, there is considerable employment in the private sector among township residents and that employment is distributed fairly evenly among the top sectors.

An analysis of employment by occupation shows a relatively high percentage of employment in management, business, science and arts occupations. Other categories above average in 2010 included: sales; production, transportation and materials moving; and natural resources, construction and maintenance occupations. It exhibited lower than average employment among service occupations, which helps explain the fairly balanced employment by industry.

Much of the region has been experiencing a shift away from an agricultural based way of life toward a slightly more exurban atmosphere but Clifford is, once again, fairly balanced. The nearby Elk Mountain Ski Resort and lakes, commercial development in the village of Clifford and proximity to Carbondale-Scranton all play a role in ensuring a diversity of job opportunities..

Figure 2-7 Employment (16+ Years) by Occupation, 2010				
Occupation	Clifford Township		Susquehanna County	Pennsylvania
	Persons Employed	%	%	%
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	325	30.3%	27.2%	35.2%
Sales and office occupations	297	27.7%	22.9%	25.4%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	182	17.0%	19.2%	13.9%
Service occupations	135	12.6%	16.0%	16.6%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	134	12.5%	14.7%	8.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

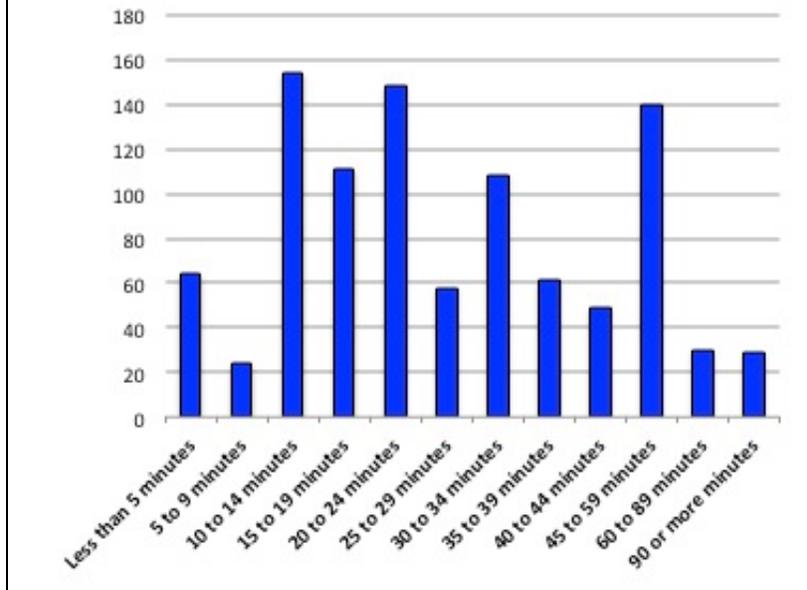
Source: U.S. Census (American Community Survey), 2006-2010

### **2.4.6 Travel to Work**

The township's mean travel time to work was 29.1 minutes in 2010, reflecting the relative isolation of the township and the need for increased employment opportunities locally. The breakdown is found in Figure 2-7, which indicates 20.4% travel more than 45 minutes one-way to work. Interestingly a fairly high number of people, 8.1%, carpooled to get to work. Another 6.6% worked at home. The great majority of residents drive alone in their car, truck or van (81.4%).

# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

**Figure 2-7**  
**Travel Time to Work**



# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

## 3.0 Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives form the foundation of this Plan.

### 3.1 Land Use

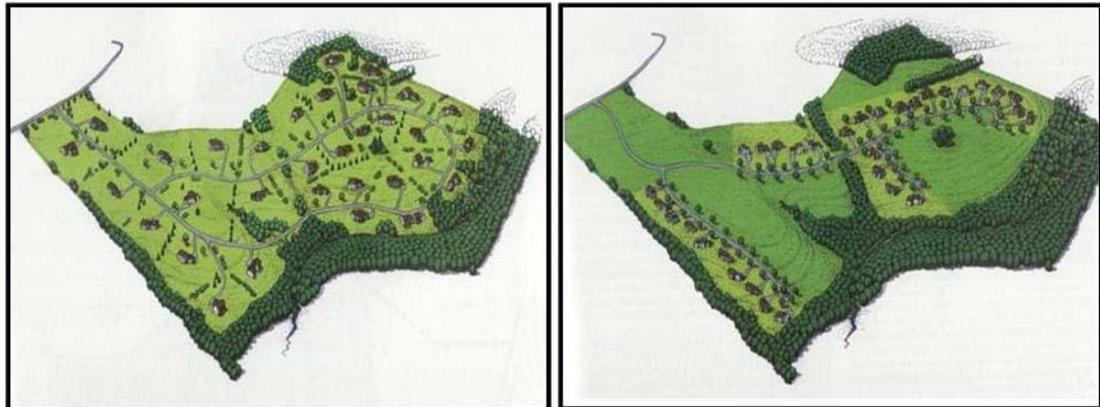
3.1.1 Protect private property rights by putting the emphasis, in all land use regulations, on the balancing of competing rights with the least possible intervention into the private market place.

a) *Employ incentive-based performance criteria in land use regulations wherever possible to allow for flexibility and accommodate new technology with land development (e.g., offering smaller lot sizes and higher density where a higher percentage of land is dedicated to open space; or stormwater flow is reduced from current levels).*

b) *Employ design measures such as buffering, landscaping and natural methods of stormwater control to mitigate the impacts of development while allowing it to go forward.*

3.1.2 Provide for the use of conservation subdivision techniques as an option for residential land development.

a) *Allow for conservation subdivision options in cases where on-site sewage disposal methods are employed as well as those instances where central sewage are involved, provided that protections are in place to ensure performance and no landowner is mandated to use this particular technique.*



b) *Provide for flexibility in design of conservation subdivisions as a trade-off for protection of open spaces and special natural resources such as farmland and wetlands, offering incentives and options tied to the amount of open space preserved, starting at a threshold level of 40% open space.*

## Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

- c) *Promote the use of agricultural and conservation easements to permanently protect open spaces.*

- 3.1.3 Support the strengthening of existing village centers, including Clifford, Dundaff, Royal and West Clifford.



- a) *Provide for traditional neighborhood design of mixed residential - commercial development in village centers.*

- b) *Reinforce traditional neighborhood development concepts by encouraging interconnected parking lots in the rear and similar measures.*

- 3.1.4 Provide wide flexibility for the establishment, throughout the region, of small businesses and industrial enterprises that do not require extensive infrastructure or generate major environmental impacts.

- a) *Provide for the development of small business and industrial enterprises.*

- b) *Provide for a full-range of home-based businesses in land use regulations.*

- c) *Incorporate land use ordinance provisions that both allow for and protect the right to farm and conduct ancillary agricultural businesses.*

- d) *Establish performance standards that can be evaluated at the time of development application, this being the appropriate enforcement mechanism.*

- 3.1.5 Provide for a mix of housing types and densities to accommodate the needs of all income segments of the population at assured high levels of quality in design, construction and location.

- a) *Provide for various types of housing ranging from affordable higher-density models, such as multi-family dwellings, to large single-family dwellings.*

- b) *Provide for mixtures of housing types within specific projects, using the conservation subdivision option to accommodate multi-family as well as single-family development.*

- c) *Establish performance standards for mobile home parks, multi-family dwellings, senior housing and other forms of housing demanding special treatment to be successful and ensure high-quality development.*

## **Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan**

- 3.1.6 Protect the natural character of the region as development takes place.
- a) *Establish performance standards for buffering of commercial development via existing tree preservation, use of landscaping and maintenance of historical features as design features.*
  - b) *Provide for a stepped subdivision design process that begins by identifying conservation areas and proceeds to lot layout as a final step.*
  - c) *Develop criteria, in land development ordinances, that protect natural features through limits on clearing and the construction of impervious surfaces.*
  - d) *Provide for flexible parking requirements that do not result in overbuilding of impervious surfaces.*
  - e) *Provide incentives for use of natural stormwater control measures and minimizing intrusion into steep slopes.*
  - f) *Provide for the use of active farmland and recreation areas as open space, offering developers incentives to preserve such areas.*
- 3.1.7 Continue to improve land development standards to better address development impacts.
- a) *Develop land development standards for non-residential uses that addresses parking, buffering, landscaping and special categories of cases (e.g., multi-family).*
  - b) *Develop a set of natural resource design standards to ensure land development is conducted in ways that protect the wetlands, steep slopes and other special areas while allowing for reasonable use of land.*
  - c) *Regulate the development of adult uses to control nuisance impacts.*
- 3.1.8 Should a public sewage collection and treatment system be determined necessary for the village of Clifford, for example, this may one reason to consider the adoption of zoning regulations as a means of accommodating and guiding the more intensive growth that can be expected under that circumstance.
- a) *Maintain the density and range of land uses now permitted under land development regulations in those areas of the Township without public sewage facilities.*
  - b) *Allow for higher densities in areas proposed for public sewage facilities, together with appropriate standards on landscaping, yards and other design criteria appropriate for areas of more intense development.*

## **Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan**

- c) *Ensure any set of zoning regulations are focused on allowing the broadest range of uses with a minimum number of districts and the least regulation necessary.*

### **3.2 Transportation**

3.2.1 Develop a long-term road improvement plan that serves to reinforce a functional road plan and meet the needs of a rapidly growing population.

- a) *Establish a functional road plan for the region identifying those roads that will need to play higher roles in the future, as collector or arterial roads based on current growth patterns.*
- b) *Identify accident-prone areas and needed safety improvements.*
- c) *Develop an annually updated 10 year capital budgeting process for road and associated drainage improvements.*
- d) *Establish up-to-date and specific performance standards for private road construction, public road dedication, driveway construction and other road occupancies, with inspections required during and following construction.*
- e) *Tailor road standards for new private roads to the size of developments and the character of the area being developed, avoiding excessive clearing or pavement widths, but ensuring appropriate sized turnarounds and accesses for emergency and maintenance vehicles and proper accesses to Clifford Township roads.*
- f) *Coordinate road improvements with PennDOT and provide on-going input to the County and PennDOT in their 12-year road planning process.*
- g) *Develop financial guarantee procedures that ensure protection of local roads from damage from heavy uses such as but not limited to natural gas drilling.*

3.2.2 Cooperate with Susquehanna County to facilitate limited demand-responsive public transportation to meet needs of seniors and others with special transportation needs.

### **3.3 Community Facilities**

3.3.1 Provide for essential community facilities to meet the needs of the region's rapidly growing population.

- a) *Limit infrastructure development to areas of critical needs with preference for individual on-lot solutions that are targeted to specific needs, with emphasis*

## **Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan**

*on limited Township management and property owners taking responsibility for proper performance.*

- b) Ensure water supply standards are established at the time new developments are reviewed and approved.*
- c) Continue to upgrade and maximize the use of the Township Building as a community center.*
- d) Develop a capital improvements budgeting program similar to that for road improvements.*
- e) Coordinate with emergency service providers in developing and maintaining infrastructure and recruiting and sustaining volunteer support.*

3.3.2 Ensure that new development pays its own way with respect to community facility needs it generates.

- a) Establish recreation standards for all new residential development that require the installation of facilities as needed or financial contributions to public projects in lieu of installing such facilities.*
- b) Lay a foundation for payment in lieu of recreation facilities by developing a regional park and recreation plan.*
- c) Develop performance criteria for new development with respect to emergency access, fire safety, school bus stops, mailbox areas and similar matters.*
- d) Establish public-private partnerships wherever possible to pursue the development of community facilities, employing non-profit groups as partners, developing mixed-use facilities where private tenants help to pay for the public space created and similar techniques.*

3.3.3 Improve access to broadband internet and cellular phone service throughout the region.

- a) Ensure local land development regulations provide for the construction of additional communications infrastructure.*
- b) Promote improved access by working directly with providers to identify sites for towers and other infrastructure.*

### **3.4 Water Resource Protection**

3.4.1 Protect the water quality of the region's many lakes.

## **Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan**

- a) *Support periodic water quality testing of major lakes and water bodies.*
- b) *Establish appropriate setbacks from lakes and tributaries to ensure buffering of these water bodies from runoff.*
- c) *Adopt water well construction standards.*

3.4.2 Provide for improved stormwater management throughout the region.

- a) *Employ land development standards to limit the percentage of clearing and the construction of extended impervious surfaces in favor of buffered development that allows for protection of water bodies from runoff.*
- b) *Implement stormwater management programs that encourage the use of natural control techniques.*

### **3.5 Open Space and Recreation**

3.5.1 Continue to enhance existing recreation facilities within the constraints of the Township budget.

- a) *Continually review recreation facility usage to determine the need to expand facilities.*
- b) *Coordinate the development or enhancement of recreational facilities with adjoining municipalities.*

3.5.2 Identify important open spaces for use in evaluating and potentially modifying subdivision and land development proposals so as to preserve them (using incentives that reward conservation design).

### **3.6 Economic Development**

3.6.1 Ensure land use regulations accommodate economic development activities and avoid placing an undue burden upon commercial and industrial expansion as may be needed within the community.

3.6.2 Promote agricultural activities, small business, tourism and other niche enterprises that capitalize on visitation to the area, its natural resources, recreation facilities and cultural heritage.

3.6.3 Employ the region's appeal as a recreational attraction to leverage the development of complementary tourism enterprises and attract new visitors.

3.6.4 Encourage commercial development to locate in Clifford, Dundaff, Royal and West Clifford as existing village centers within the region.

# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

## 4.0 Plans

The following four plans relating to land use, housing, community facilities and transportation set forth specific strategies for development of the Clifford Township. The land use element, together with Section 2.2 hereof, is also intended to serve as a plan for the protection of natural and historic resources.

### 4.1 Land Use

#### 4.1.1 Future Land Use

Seasonal visitation, reflected in cottages around Crystal Lake and Lake Idlewild and the businesses catering to Elk Mountain traffic have greatly influenced the character of the Clifford Township. There are also modest agricultural and commercial sectors that help define the character of the Township. Future land use, given the relatively slow rate of growth, is unlikely to be much different than today and residents surveyed suggest they like it that way. Whatever new development does occur is difficult to predict and likely to be limited in nature. There are no strong existing development patterns from which create a definitive zoning scheme.

The township must also be prepared for the land use impacts that may be associated with natural gas exploration in the region. Each well pad is expected to occupy approximately five acres of land collecting natural gas from approximately 640 acres (one square mile). Completed wells will involve less land and be relatively unobtrusive.

However, the commercial demands created during the drilling phase may be significant and result in new and expanded mining, retail, dining, lodging and other activities with associated land use impacts. There will also additional infrastructure, although the Tennessee Gas Pipeline has existing for years.



Therefore, land use controls must provide flexibility to accommodate the sporadic development in these areas but in a manner that allows the township to exercise reasonable control to deal with the impacts of that development, especially within the gateway areas to the lakes and Elk Mountain. These types of measures enjoyed strong support in the community survey and public participation process as this plan was being developed. There is considerable interest in protecting the Clifford Township's existing rural character while accommodating some level of development.

# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

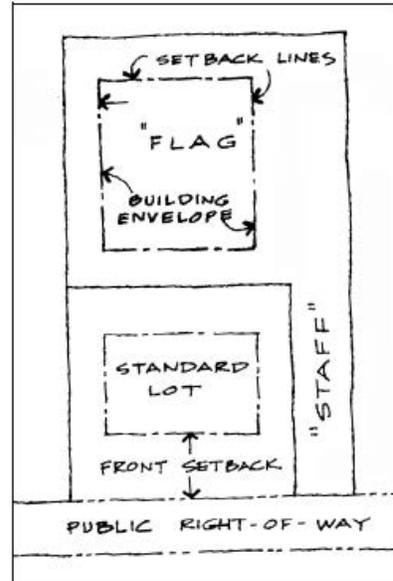
## 4.1.2 Land Use Recommendations

Three specific major recommendations relating to land use in Clifford Township are provided below. The foregoing Goals and Objectives deal with other related recommendations.

### a) **Building Setback Ordinance**

*The Township should enact a simple ordinance founded on authority in the Second Class Township Code and the responsibilities for administering the Uniform Construction Code to establish building setbacks for existing properties not subject to the setbacks found in the SALDO. A recommended draft is attached as Appendix B.*

*The purpose of this proposed Building Setback Ordinance is to ensure setbacks adopted in the township's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances (SALDO) also apply to existing recorded lots. The township has, as a matter of practice, been applying these setbacks to existing lots when building permit applications are made, but the authority to do so needs to be more explicit from a legal perspective and the proposed Building Setback Ordinance will provide such authority.*



Flag Lot

### b) **SALDO Updates**

*The township should update its Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances to reflect the latest requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Such updates should also address the latest industry standards with respect to storm water management and specific types of land developments with particular technical issues.*

*The township should use the Susquehanna County SALDO as model for these regulations to ensure consistency with the activities of adjoining communities and reasonable certainty for businesses operating in the area. A recommended draft is separately published as Appendix C.*

### c) **Floodplain Development**

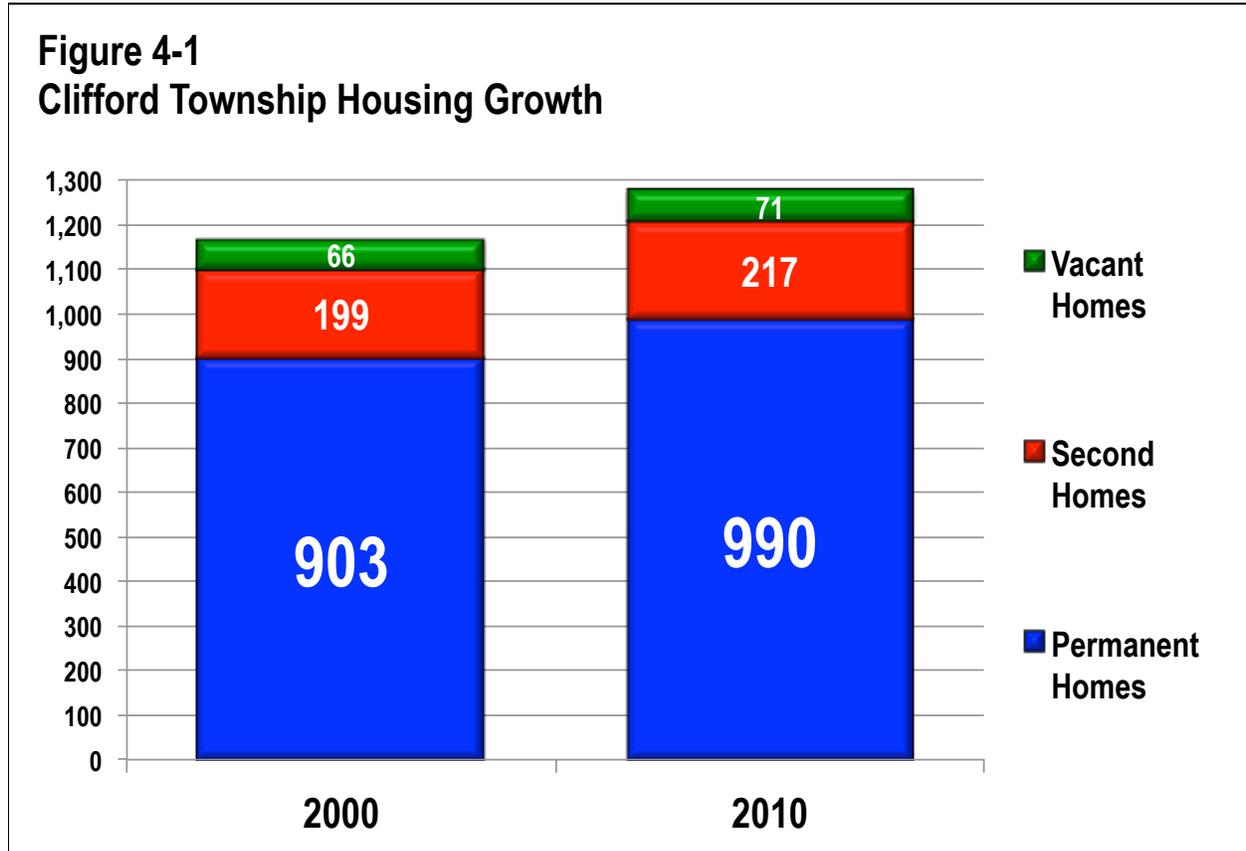
*The Township should update its floodplain regulations for consistency with current FEMA and state regulations.*

# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

## 4.2 Housing

### 4.2.1 Housing Analysis

Clifford Township had 1,278 housing units according to the 2010 US Census. Some 110 new units were added since 2000, yielding a housing growth rate of 0.65% per year.



Roughly 17% of the housing stock in Clifford Township consists of second homes. New housing units constructed over the decade were predominately primary homes, growing by 9.6%, while second homes grew by 9.0%. The gain in second home units could, although it wouldn't necessarily, lead to additional future population growth should these second homes be converted to full time residences over time as is common in seasonal home areas.

### 4.2.2 Housing Recommendations

Clifford Township's land use regulations should not unnecessarily raise the cost of moderate income housing by requiring excessive lot sizes or adding too many regulatory oversight costs. This can be accomplished to a large extent by offering density or other incentives for the use of the cost-effective Conservation Subdivision design illustrated on the following page.

## ***Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan***



This technique typically reduces the cost of infrastructure such as internal roads, while also minimizing disturbance that, in turn, serves to further alleviate need for infrastructure improvements such as stormwater management measures. These savings in development costs, combined with density incentives to encourage clustering and open space preservation on the site can make housing more affordable while retaining and often improving quality.

Minimum lot sizes should, in any case, be maintained at reasonable levels (two acres maximum) to reduce land costs and avoid unnecessarily increasing infrastructure expense. Flexibility in the administration of subdivision and land development or zoning regulations to accommodate the creation of affordable housing is also warranted. Such flexibility can take the form, not only of clustering or conservation subdivision, but also planned unit development, mixed-use traditional neighborhood type development and other similar approaches. The goals in these cases should be to adapt to existing development patterns in village areas such as Clifford and allow for innovative design where sufficient land area is available to accommodate it.

Finally, although manufactured housing is declining in relative importance as a housing option, there is a continued need to provide for this option while also establishing standards for such housing to ensure adequate recreation areas are provided and all health and safety issues are addressed. Provisions need to be made for individual manufactured homes as well as manufactured home parks. Likewise, the township needs to provide and set standards for multi-family housing, which is likely to become more prevalent in future years. There are already a number of seasonal townhouse units in the area. Similar projects can be reasonably expected within Clifford Township.

# **Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan**

## **4.3 Transportation**

### **4.3.1 Municipal Road Inventory and Conditions**

Altogether, Clifford Township maintains 26.09 miles of roads. There are also 52.43 miles of State road.

Many townships throughout the Commonwealth have made road agreements with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDot) to assume the basic maintenance responsibility for portions of the State road system within their respective municipalities. These agreements provide townships with additional Liquid Fuels tax revenue to support the cost of maintaining such road sections. Townships typically assume maintenance responsibility in these situations because they already use the State roads to access their own, creating some efficiencies. Clifford Township has assumed responsibility for the maintenance of 2.62 miles of State road under Act 32. Preston Township has not assumed responsibility for maintenance of any State roads.

The township roads have been fully surveyed and videoed. They are in overall good condition and, generally, they require only normal maintenance and repair. There are some roads that need long-term attention, however. These include some paved road sections in Welsh Hill that have deteriorated. Tinker Brook Road (T-397) also lacks a sign where it intersects with State Route 2023 and there are similar other isolated problems but most are minor, not major. Other roads are narrow (see example below) but, again, are in relatively good condition, as the photo illustrates.

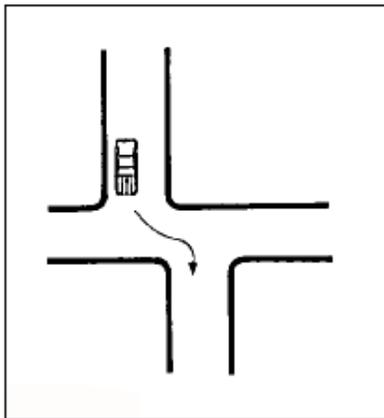


# Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

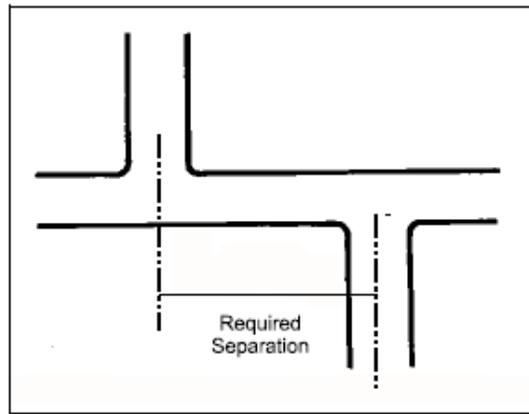
## 4.3.2 Transportation Recommendations

Recommended transportation actions are as follows:

- a) *Clifford Township should work with the Susquehanna County Planning Department to identify accident-prone areas and needed safety improvements for placement on the PennDOT transportation improvement program. Pennsylvania State Route 2023, for example, should be upgraded to address issues relating its steep slope.*
- c) *The township should develop 10 year capital improvement budget for road and associated stormwater drainage improvements and this budget should be updated annually.*
- d) *The township should maintain up-to-date performance standards for private road construction, public road dedication, driveway construction and other road occupancies. Standards for new private roads should be placed in each Township's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, while public dedication standards should be incorporated in separate road ordinances, so as to be able to impose such higher requirements (e.g., paving) on the latter as are appropriate to lower burdens on taxpayers.*



Corner Cutting



Required Centerline Separation

- e) *Township road standards for new private roads should be tailored to the size of developments and the character of the area being developed, avoiding excessive clearing or pavement widths, but ensuring appropriate sized turnarounds and accesses for emergency and maintenance vehicles.*
- f) *The township should develop financial guarantee procedures that ensure protection of local roads from damage from heavy uses such as, but not limited to, natural gas drilling. These procedures can be most easily effectuated through private agreements negotiated with companies.*

# ***Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan***

## **4.4 Community Facilities**

### **4.4.1 Municipal Buildings**

Clifford Township has an excellent municipal building from which local officials provide municipal services, including day to day operations. The facility includes meeting rooms and offices, as well as both indoor and outdoor recreation, museum space and ancillary space available for both community and private use on a rental basis.



There is also a separate facility on the property to store and maintain municipal road equipment and supplies.



## ***Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan***

The municipal building is a former school the Township has converted into a Community Center for use by residents and visitors to the Township and it has, with a combination of professional and volunteer help, been retro-fitted so as to substantially reduce its energy consumption, especially for heating, but also with regard to lighting and other features. Individuals rooms have been gradually converted to spaces for specific Township and community activities and some space is available for rent. Priority has been placed on Township and community use, however, and, as a result of deliberations during the preparation of this plan, it is expected meeting and kitchen space will be available to various organizations for activities subject to reservations and approval by the Township.

### ***4.4.2 Township Recreation Facilities***

Clifford Township's municipal building / community center includes a community park, complete with a ball field, picnic facilities and playground equipment. There is also firemen's field used for an annual carnival and other events from time to time. There appear to be no particular unmet needs in regard to recreation, although there are some drainage issues in the parking area for the recreational facilities at the municipal building.



## ***Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan***

### ***4.4.3 Water and Sewage Systems***

There are no municipal water supply systems in Clifford Township and no documented needs for such service.

The Township's Wastewater Facilities Plan is now being updated as the original plan was ultimately determined to be unacceptable. It had recommended sewage collection and treatment in the Clifford village area but the plan now being developed will, based on the lack of extensive documented needs for such service anywhere in the township, be focused on subsurface on-lot treatment, including more intensive management of the same in those relatively few cases where problems have been documented.

It is anticipated this approach will involve upgrade of some systems and better maintenance protocols, but no new infrastructure that would impact land use patterns. This is consistent with the land use objectives.

### ***4.4.4 Fire and Ambulance Services***

Clifford Township is served by local volunteer fire and ambulance services with more than adequate facilities and equipment. The principal issue facing these services, as is the case in most rural areas with aging populations, is maintaining adequate volunteer support.



## Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan

### 4.4.5 Community Facility and Service Recommendations

Most of Clifford Township's community facilities and services are in good condition or standing. The following are the needs pinpointed by local officials:

- a) *Emergency services personnel need to be expanded through the recruitment and retention of an active pool of volunteers. The township can assist in this regard by cooperation with providers, moral support and incentives in the form of recognition.*



- b) *Capital improvements programming should be used to ensure the continued improvement of township equipment, buildings and other infrastructure. Capital improvements programming, specifically provided under Pennsylvania law is an under-utilized tool for keeping the cost of government under control and steering development to existing or new centers. It is recommended this tool be used on an on-going basis, with annual updates.*
- c) *Cell phone and internet services need to be continually enhanced. Cell phone services are available but service gaps exist. Internet service is likewise available but high speed internet connections need to be expanded. The Township's regulations governing communications facilities need to be periodically reviewed to ensure they are up-to-date and accommodating.*
- d) *The update of the Wastewater Facilities Plan should continue on its current path toward on-lot subsurface treatment options and be completed as soon as possible to put the Township on a sound common footing with the Department of Environmental Protection.*
- e) *The municipal building and community center is an ideal location for educational programs through Penn State Cooperative Extension and other regional colleges and universities. It should be marketed to these institutions and others (including private job training programs) for education and training uses. It is also a superb location for more displays such as this one of a dugout canoe found in the township.*



## ***Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan***

### ***4.5 Short and Long-Range Implementation Strategies***

Implementation of this Wayne County Comprehensive Plan will involve a number of short and long-range plan implementation strategies. Short-range implementation strategies include the following:

- Enacting a Building Setback Ordinance.
- Updating the Township's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.
- Updating the Township's floodplain regulations.
- Completing the update of the Townships Wastewater Facilities Plan.

Long-range implementation strategies include:

- Developing a 10-year capital improvements program for Township roads.
- Creating a financial model agreement to protect roads under heavy use.
- Developing a 10-year capital improvements program for community facilities.
- Expand the use of the municipal building for educational and other activities.

# **APPENDICES**

**A - Community Survey Results**

**B - Subdivision Ordinance**

**C - Building Setback Ordinance**

**D - Signature Pages**

# **APPENDIX A**

## **COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS**

# **APPENDIX B**

## **RECOMMENDED SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE**

**[Published Separately]**

**APPENDIX C**  
**RECOMMENDED BUILDING**  
**SETBACK ORDINANCE**

# **Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan**

## **Recommended Clifford Township Building Setback Ordinance**

### **§ 25-1 Intent and authority.**

The intent of this ordinance is to promote the general health, welfare and safety of the community. It is adopted under the authority granted to Clifford Township under Sections 1517 and 1519 of the Pennsylvania Second Class Township Code.

### **§ 25-2 Abrogation and greater restrictions.**

This ordinance supersedes any provisions currently in effect. However, any underlying ordinance shall remain in full force and effect to the extent that those provisions are more restrictive.

### **§ 25-3 Municipal liability.**

This ordinance shall not create liability on the part of the municipality or any officer or employee thereof for any damages that result from reliance on this ordinance or any administrative decision lawfully made hereunder.

### **§ 25-4 Setback requirements.**

The following building setback requirements shall apply to all existing lots within Clifford Township, which requirements are intended to complement those applicable to new lots and land developments under the Clifford Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

- A. No building or structure, or any addition to an existing building or structure, shall be constructed within a distance equal to one-half the width of road right-of-way or 25 feet, whichever shall be less, of the road right-of-way line or front lot line.
- B. No building or structure, or any addition to an existing building or structure, shall be constructed within 30 feet of the side lot line, provided that this setback shall be reduced to 15 feet in the case of lots under two acres in lot area.
- C. No building or structure, or any addition to an existing building or structure, shall be constructed within 30 feet of the rear lot line, provided that this setback shall be reduced to 15 feet in the case of lots under two acres in lot area.
- D. The minimum required setback from all bodies of water at the normal high-water mark shall be not less than 50 feet.

### **§ 25-5 Nonconforming uses.**

The regulations prescribed in this ordinance shall not be construed to require removal or other changes or alteration of any structure not conforming to the regulations set forth herein existing as of the effective date of this ordinance. Nothing contained herein shall require any change in the construction, alteration or intended use of any structure, the construction or alteration of which began prior to the effective date of this ordinance and is diligently prosecuted.

### **§ 25-6 Variances.**

- A. Any person desiring to erect, alter, or construct a building or structure not in compliance with the regulations set forth herein may apply to the Board of Appeals for a variance from such regulations. Such variance shall be allowed where it is duly found that a literal application or enforcement of the regulations will result in practical difficulty or unnecessary hardship, and relief granted will not be contrary to the public interest, will not create a hazard, will do substantial justice, and will be in accordance with the spirit of this ordinance. Any

## **Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan**

variance granted may be made subject to any reasonable conditions that the Board of Appeals may deem necessary to effectuate the purposes of this ordinance.

- B. A request for variance must be addressed in writing to the Board of Appeals stating the reason for the request and all pertinent information relating to the request. A hearing will be scheduled within 45 days of receipt of such request. The Board of Appeals will have 30 days to deliver its decision.

### **§ 25-7 Violations and penalties.**

Any person who violates or permits a violation of this ordinance shall, upon being found liable therefor in a civil enforcement proceeding commenced by the Township before a Magisterial District Judge, pay a fine of not more than \$600, plus all court costs, including reasonable attorneys' fees, incurred by the Township in the enforcement of this ordinance. No judgment shall be imposed until the date of the determination of the violation by the Magisterial District Judge. If the defendant neither pays nor timely appeals the judgment, the Township may enforce the judgment pursuant to the applicable Rules of Civil Procedure. Each day a violation exists shall constitute a separate offense. Further, the appropriate officers or agents of the Township are hereby authorized to seek equitable relief, including injunction, to enforce compliance herewith.

### **§ 25-8 Word usage.**

Unless specifically defined in § 25-9, words and phrases used in this ordinance shall be interpreted so as to give this ordinance its most reasonable application.

### **§ 25-9 Definitions.**

As used in this ordinance, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

**BOARD OF APPEALS:** Constitutes the Board of Supervisors or its designees.

**FRONT LOT LINE:** Any dividing line between the street and the lot. The dividing line between the street and the lot shall be the same as the legal right-of-way for the street, provided, where a future right-of-way width for a road or street has been established, that width shall determine the location of the dividing line between the street and the lot. A lot may have more than one front lot line if it borders upon more than one roadway or street. In the case of a lot with no street or road frontage, the line closest to any public roadway or street shall be considered the front lot line.

**LOT LINE:** Any boundary line of a lot.

**REAR LOT LINE:** Any lot line which is parallel to or within 45° of being parallel to a front lot line, except for a lot line that is itself a front lot line. In the case of a lot having no street frontage or a lot of an odd shape, only the one lot line the farthest from any street shall be considered a rear lot line. Where there is only one lot line other than front lot lines, it shall be considered the rear lot line.

**SIDE LOT LINE:** Any lot line which is not a front lot line or a rear lot line. In the case of a triangular lot, those lot lines other than the front lot line shall be considered side lot lines.

**STRUCTURE:** Anything constructed or erected on the ground or attached to the ground, including, but not limited to, buildings, sheds, barns, other outbuildings and other similar items.

### **§ 25-10 Effective date.**

This ordinance shall become effective on December 1, 2013, and shall remain in force until modified, amended, or rescinded by the Township of Clifford, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania.

# **APPENDIX D**

## **ADOPTION**

## **Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan**

The Board of Supervisors of Clifford Township, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania hereby adopts the *Clifford Township Comprehensive Plan* as presented on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2014.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

Seal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor