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Pinelands Preservation Alliance

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PPA
1989 - 2009

Celebrating 20 years of
Pinelands Preservation

December 23, 2009

Ms. Judeth Picinini Yeany
NJ DEP Green Acres
P.O. Box 402
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0402

**Re: Ocean County's request to remove properties from ROSI - Block 15,
Lots 1-3, 4.01, 5.02, 6 & 7.01; Block 16, Lot 1; Block 18, Lot 1.01 in Berkeley
Township and Block 2825, Lot 3 in Lacey Township**

Dear Ms. Yeany:

The Pinelands Preservation Alliance is aware the Ocean County Planning Office has made a request to remove the above listed Block and Lots, surrounding the Robert J. Miller Airpark, off its Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI). These properties have been listed on numerous ROSI's associated with Ocean County's funding for many years. Ocean County believes these parcels have been listed in error and wants them removed through the ROSI amendment process.

PPA feels that these parcels belong on the ROSI and submits the following items to support leaving these parcels on the county's open space inventory. To the extent some of these parcels have already been developed, the county should meet the requirements for a diversion of these parcels under the diversion regulations.

- A September 8, 1968, Asbury Park Press article (Exhibit 1a) indicates that when Ocean County established the Berkeley Township airport site it was 400 acres in size. It has from the beginning been called an air-park and not an airport. The attached August 17,

1970 article describes it as “a multi-use recreation-aviation park created to fulfill the needs of the residents and visitors to Ocean County.” (Exhibit 1b)

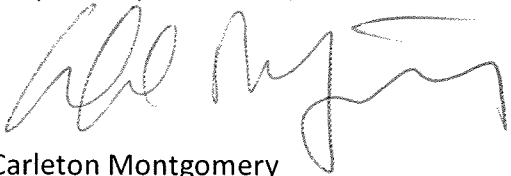
- A September 18, 1969, Asbury Park Press article (Exhibit 2) states that the county “was working on the acquisition of some 400 additional acres to enlarge the 400 acres” the airpark originally comprised. An April 16, 1970 article (Exhibit 3) states “the county is in the process of acquiring 417 additional acres which abut the 400 acre airpark site through a 50-50 purchase arrangement with State and Federal agencies.” These articles suggest that NJ State Green Acres dollars were used in the acquisition of the additional acres. The April article goes on to say that the 417 acres surrounded the present airpark site and was to the south and east and would be used for a nature trail and picnic grounds. This would be consistent with Green Acres restrictions for 50-50 grant dollars.
- A May 20, 1970 Daily Observer press article (Exhibit 4) indicates that the airpark with 435 acres devoted to recreation would double the 450 acres which was currently in the county park system, suggesting that the 435 acres were in fact being placed in the county park land inventory.
- In May 1970, (Exhibit 5, Daily Observer article) it is reported that the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders at its May 20th meeting passed an ordinance to purchase the 435 additional acres and again states that Ocean County applied for a 50 per cent Green Acres grant for this acquisition. **PPA has placed an OPRA request with Ocean County for a copy of the minutes and ordinance which was passed in 1970 and will forward if it is received.** The attached May 21, 1970, Asbury Park Press article suggest that this bond ordinance would be repaid with a \$150,000 Federal grant and \$150,000 from the state. PPA believes the state funds are NJ Green Acres dollars and the federal funds may be land acquisition dollars for the protection of the Cedar Creek watershed which were available in 1970.
- A March 30, 1972 Asbury Park Press article (Exhibit 6) talks about a master plan being created for the multi-use recreational area of the Robert J. Miller Airpark. PPA believes this multi-use is the small air strip and the passive recreation lands surrounding the airpark which were purchased with Green Acres dollars. **PPA has placed an OPRA request with Ocean County for a copy of the nature plan and will forward it to you if it is received.**
- In reference to Block 18, Lot 1.01 in Berkeley Township, PPA is submitting the April 20, 1972 Daily Observer article (Exhibit 7) which talks about an application being submitted to the NJ Green Acres program for acquisition dollars with one of the properties being on the north side of Route 530 in Berkeley Township opposite the Robert J. Miller Airpark. **PPA has placed an OPRA request with Ocean County for a copy of the April 19, 1972 meeting minutes and authorizing resolution and will forward to you if it is received.**

Lastly PPA has enclosed pages from a report prepared for the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders entitled *Robert J. Miller Airpark Economic Development Study* (Exhibit 8- 7 pages). There is no date on the study but page viii states "the instrument landing system is scheduled for completion in 1982" leading us to believe it is late 1981. Pages 4 & 5 indicate that the total amount of land that is reserved for the airpark is 500 acres and that there are recreation areas and conservation areas surrounding the airpark. It describes the recreation areas as being along the northwest side of Mule Road, consisting of 65 acres. This is possibly Block 1, Lot 12.01 which will be remaining on the ROSI. The conservation areas are described as being in the southerly portion of the Airpark southwest of Dover Forge Road and that this area was purchased by the county through the Green Acres Program of the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and is located entirely within Lacey Township. PPA believes this is Block 2825, Lot 3 in Lacey Township, which is confirmed by the map included in the study and is attached (Exhibit 9).

There have been several occasions in the past when Ocean County has acknowledged that the land surrounding the Robert J. Miller airpark is in fact restricted land. To support this are Asbury Park Press articles dated July 7, 1978 (Exhibit 10) and March 18, 1972 (Exhibit 11).

PPA feels that Ocean County's request to remove Block 15, Lots 1-3, 4.01, 5.02, 6 & 7.01; Block 16, Lot 1; Block 18, Lot 1.01 in Berkeley Township and Block 2825, Lot 3 in Lacey Township is a diversion of state park land and cannot be handled through an amendment to the ROSI. This is supported with the 1978 Asbury Park Press Article (Exhibit 12) which listed that 790 acres were acquired with matching state Green Acres money and a 1973 report on Cedar Creek which illustrated on page 18 that the entire site was park, recreation and open space lands (Exhibit 13).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carleton Montgomery". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "M".

Carleton Montgomery
Executive Director

Cc: John Flynn, NJ Green Acres
Kevin Koslosky, NJ Green Acres
Dave McKeon, Ocean County Planning
Stacey Roth, NJ Pinelands Commission



Some 2,000 persons were on hand yesterday at dedication ceremonies of Ocean County Airpark

2,000 Attend Opening Of New Airpark

BERKELEY TOWNSHIP — William P. Piper Sr., women pilots, and public officials were among some 2,000 persons who helped dedicate the 400-acre Ocean County Airpark yesterday.

As promised, there were gala exhibits, exciting air shows and "penny-a-pound" airplane rides. The price changed to two cents a pound when it was discovered a penny-a-pound was not profitable.

It's all part of festivities which continue today over the sprayed green ground — no grass yet — off Route 530, five miles southeast of Toms River.

The serious notes concerning the dedication were brief, with Oscar Bakke, associate administrator of the Federal Aviation Agency in Washington, D.C., culminating the terse speeches by quoting the Bible: "Ye shall mount up with wings as eagles."

sive piece being a retired World War II Navy fighter jet that the children crawled under, over and through.

There were also helicopter flights, jet plane formations

demonstrated in the air, and an acrobatic exhibition consisting of loops, dives, figure eights and turns by Arthur Medore of Dover and his Citabria single engine plane.

Mr. Bakke called the airport "an example of healthy growth . . . taking the burden off the transportation saturation that continues to afflict our largest cities."

The administrator said in an interview prior to the ceremonies the airport will provide respectable service, private and public, with service doubling and trebling itself within the next two to three years.

"I think this airport will supplement the whole regular airport system," Mr. Bakke said. "Smaller aircraft . . . can be accommodated quite well here."

Mr. Bakke unveiled a monument bearing the quote, "Man's never-ending flight," from John Milton's "Paradise Lost."

Rep. William T. Cahill, R-N.J., presented a flag to airport officials which he said once flew over the Capitol.

Most lucrative presentation of the day was a check for a federal grant of \$12,500 presented by Joseph Wilson of the FAA to airport officials. The money is to be used for emergency lighting of the airpark.

William P. Piper Sr., founder of the largest single engine plane producing company in the world, was a surprise guest.

Mr. Piper flew to the airpark in an eight-seater, \$123,000 Piper plane, which he opened for public inspection. Mr. Piper said he started flying in 1908 and was a close associate of the Wright Brothers.

Lady pilots, who flew most of the penny-a-pound flights, were members of "The 99ers," an international women's flying club that was started in 1929 by Amelia Earhart. The club had only 99 members when Miss Earhart started it.

Entertainment for the children included outdoor playground equipment — the most expen-

September 8, 1968

FOUR COUNTY AIRPORTS SERVICE FLYERS

TOMS RIVER—Whether you're a resident or visitor, you can fly into three privately-owned general purpose airports located in the southern and northern sections of the county: Eagles Nest, Manahawkin and Lakewood Airports. Then there is the county aviation facility, the Robert J. Miller Air Park, centrally located in Berkeley Township, seven miles south west of Tom's River.

Beating summer traffic by flying to and from Ocean County has become an avocation for many who fly here for fun and relaxation whether for a day or an extended vacation. The ownership of private aircraft and the rental of small airplanes has increased 50 per cent in the last decade, since 1960.

In the southern portion of Ocean County, Eagles Nest Airport is located in Eagleswood Township at West Creek. By car it can be reached by using Exit 63 of the Garden State Parkway, proceeding east on Route 72, taking Route 9 heading south, then by turning right on Starford Forge Road. It is eight miles from the Garden State Parkway.

Eagles Nest Airport has a 3,200-foot runway and 15 aircraft tie-downs. Its unicom radio frequency is 122.8mhz. There are no night operations. Flight instruction is available at this Piper Dealer Airport. Package and Club plans are available for discount flight instruction and plane rentals. Also available are car rentals, airport courtesy car, air taxi and sight-seeing rides. A boat is also available for rental. Both 80 and 100 octane aircraft fuels are sold. The normal hours of operation is from 8 a.m. to dusk. Walter E. Bartlett is the airport manager and is president of Eagles Nest Airport, Inc.

The aerial gateway to Magic Long Beach Island is the Manahawkin Airport off Route 72 outside Manahawkin, one half mile east of the Garden State Parkway. It is owned by North American Flying Service of Little Ferry. The Manahawkin Airport has a 2,700-foot hardtop runway with a 500-foot South runoff and a North runoff of 200 feet. It has a 50' x 40'

hangar and has 30 permanent aircraft tie-downs, with ample space for transient, visiting pilots. Manahawkin Airport has night lighting facilities which are lit upon request. The airport maintains a sales office for Ocean Aircraft, Taxi service, charter flights and FAA approved flight instructions are services available. Natalie DePivis is airport manager.

The northernmost air facility in Ocean County is Lakewood Airport at Cedar Bridge Avenue. It can be reached by using exit 88 of the Garden State Parkway. Ward D. Oakley is manager of the airport and president of Lakewood Flight Service, Inc. The length of the hardtop runway is 2,700-feet. Unicom frequency is 122.8mhz. The evening lighting facilities are kept on through the night. Fuel available is 80 and 100 octane. The administration building on the north side of the field has public restrooms, a lounge with the latest aviation magazines and a pilots' flight plan room.

Lakewood Flight Service also provides FAA Approved Flight Instruction School which is open seven days a week. Package discount plans are also offered for flight instruction. The airport has FAA approved aircraft repair hangar for inspection authorization for the 100 hour and annual check-up for safety preventative maintenance. Lakewood Airport has also a Cessna Sales Center for airplane sales purchases. The airport has 35 tie-downs and can accommodate approximately 30 visiting aircraft. Air-taxi service, sightseeing and charter flights are also available as services.

The Robert J. Miller Air Park, owned by the people of Ocean County and administered by the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Joseph S. Portash, non-salaried airport manager, is located in central Ocean County, Berkeley Township.

The airpark is a multi-use recreation-aviation park created to fulfill the needs of the residents and visitors to Ocean County. The future development of the recreational park will include picnic grounds, small camping site, nature trails, hiking paths, sport facilities and many other recreational activity areas.

SOUTHERN AIR FACILITY—Eagle's Nest Airport, Starford Forge Road, Eagleswood Township, is Ocean County's southernmost air facility. The private airstrip is operated by Eagle's Nest Airport, Inc., and is managed by Walter Bartlett, Eagle's Nest president.

The fixed base operator of the county-owned facility is Ocean Aviation, Inc. with Harold Walsh, president; Edward Walsh, vice-president; John Frank, secretary-treasurer; and Herb Bowcock, manager.

The hardtop runway is 6,000 feet with 500 foot overruns on each end of the field. It also has medium intensity runway lights, beacon paved taxi ways and ramp area, 80 and 100 octane fuel, 75 aircraft tie-downs, Rent-a-Cars on the premises, courtesy bus, individual radio frequency - Park 7 - 123.5mhz and Unicom frequency 122.8 mhz, also minor and major

repairs at a large modern hangar which also provides 100-hour inspection as well as the annual FAA certified mechanics.

Located at the airport is the Ocean Aviation Flight School which is approved by the Federal Aviation Agency, State of New Jersey Department of Education and the Veterans Administration for basic and advanced instruction. The administration building also has a lounge as well as pilots' flight plan room. The airport operations begin at 8 a.m. and conclude at dusk. Lighting and facilities are kept on through the

night.

The Ocean County Freeholders will cooperate with the Garden State Chapter of the Miney-Nines, International Women's Flying Organization, in presenting a bid for the 1972 Eastern terminus at the Robert J. Miller Air Park for the world-famous Powder Put Derby, which will originate that year somewhere on the West Coast. Ocean County had an official entry in the 1970 race sponsored by Harry and Dolle Sussner, The Level Line, Inc., Lakewood and flown by Captain Pilot Ellie McCullough and Co-Pilot-Navigator Alma Hitchings.





Freeholder Miller's Funeral

TOMS RIVER. - Robert J. Miller of 854 Breezy Oak Drive, who died late Tuesday afternoon from severe burns received in an airplane crash last Friday morning, was in his fourth term as an Ocean County freeholder.

He won his first term after defeating John G. Woods, then mayor of Dover Township, for a Republican nomination for county freeholder and went on to defeat his Democratic opponent, Robert F. Novins.

Born 46 years ago last Friday, the day of the crash, in Akron, Ohio, Miller settled in Lakewood after his discharge from the Army Air Corps. Here, he met and married the former Marilyn Applegate. Prior to his election as an Ocean County freeholder, Miller served from 1954 to 1957 as Undersheriff while Harry Roe was serving as sheriff. He was succeeded in that position by the present undersheriff, Arthur F. Brown.

From 1957 to 1959 when he was elected freeholder, Miller served as Clerk of the Small Claims Court.

Ironically, Miller will probably be remembered most for his untiring work in the establishment of the Ocean County Airpark, the site of his fatal crash.

He had been working steadily for the past seven years in attempting to establish the first general-airport built for and by a county. All other existing county airports were acquired as existing facilities.

Miller was working on the acquisition of some 400 additional acres to enlarge the 400 acres the airpark now comprises. The additional acreage, when it is acquired, is to be used as a recreational area rather than an addition to the present airport facilities.

He had hoped, however, to enlarge the existing 4,000-foot runway and add a taxi-runway so the airport would eventually be able to accommodate jets used by large business firms.

He also hoped the airpark would become a nucleus of an ever-widening industrial complex to greater enhance the economic growth of Ocean County.

Miller was as equally concerned about the preservation of the county's many natural assets as witnessed by the growth of parklands from the 300 acres when he took over as Parks chairman six years ago to the nearly 1,000 acres now owned by the county.

At the time of his death, Miller was involved in the creation and improvement of Lake Shenandoah in Lakewood opposite state-owned Island Beach Park.

Miller was instrumental in establishing the state's first Police Academy which opened its 14th class this past Monday.

Here, officers and potential officers of the county's municipal police forces were expertly trained to better themselves and the communities.

Almost single-handedly, Miller was instrumental in the eventual adoption of a

psychological test being given for court and correctional officers as a prerequisite for Civil

Miller, as chairman of the county's Building and Grounds Department, pressed for the relocation of every major department of county

government and built for the new county complex at the corner of Avenue and Washington in Toms River.

At the time of Miller's death, he was engaged in planning a new multi-

Freeholder's Tributes Follow

TOMS RIVER. - As Freeholder Robert J. Miller lies in state awaiting his last resting place in Riverside Cemetery, tributes to his greatness pour out from those who knew him best.

Governor Richard J. Hughes first offered his condolences to the Miller family, as did all those who expressed their thoughts at this trying time, and then said he had gotten to know Bob Miller well while they were both in the political field.

He said although he and Miller were of different political parties, they were able to work together in all matters which pertained to the betterment of the state and especially of the County of Ocean.

Miller's two fellow-freeholders, Director George F. Makin and Howard Lambertson, both had warm expressions of the sorrow experienced by Miller's untimely passing and of the void created

Makin, quoting said, "In one sense death. The life of a man lasts beyond his death."

Continuing, he will always be touching yours speaking to you looking out of talking to you in things he touched loved as familiar friend on in your life and all others that knew

Makin said Bob left an indelible Ocean County air who were not priv and know him who be able to see indication of the man in those monuments that ability; the Ocean System, the Police the Airpark when spectre of death.

Lambertson said

Sept 18, 1969

To Develop Complex Surrounding Airpark

TOMS RIVER — Ocean County Freeholder Joseph S. Portash yesterday revealed a master plan for the development of the Ocean County Airpark, renamed the Robert J. Miller Airpark, and its surrounding acreage.

Portash said the master plan was developed by the County to protect the natural watershed in the immediate area and to provide controls for an orderly growth of industrial land use.

The Freeholder noted the county is in the process of acquiring 417 additional acres which about the 400-acre airpark site through a 50-50 purchase arrangement with State and Federal agencies. He said the state, itself, is considering the purchase of some 1500 acres which comprise the Bambar Tract under the second phase of Green Acre acquisitions. The tract is located easterly of the airport site.

"With this huge acreage of undeveloped land, it is necessary that, as conservationists, we utilize it wisely for the most sensible use. Therefore, we have prepared this master plan which

is to be presented sometime in May for consideration by both Berkeley and Lacey townships as they will be most interested in its immediate developemnt," Portash said.

Portash commented that the plan envisions an industrial park located easterly of the Airpark along Pinewald-Keswick and Dover roads which would be utilized strictly for compatible industries that could not and would not pollute the air or water in any way.

Portash said such an industry could be electronics by nature or some other comparable industry which would not use too much water, give off offensive odors or the like.

The Freeholder said the first stage would be a small industrial park adjacent to the airfield to which taxiways would be built to facilitate ease of transportation and utilization of the airfield. Growth of the main industrial area would be controlled by the limitation of three-acre tracts within the site.

At the intersection of the two roadways, Portash envisions a large shopping center and lake surrounded by such facilities as a motel and restaurant. Along Dover Road to the west of this envisioned shopping plaza, Portash foresees a stretch of land zoned for highway business.

The 417 acres which are to be acquired, surround the present Airpark site with a portion of it running along the paper street of Mule Road which will eventually be developed.

On both sides of Mule Road, Portash said the county plans a recreational development which would include such facilities as ballfields, volley ball courts and shuffleboard courts.

The area of the proposed purchase south and east of the airpark would be developed naturally for nature trails, picnic grounds and a small camping site.

"I want to make it clear to the people of Ocean County that our plans for the Robert J. Miller Airpark are not to be construed as the beginnings of a global jetport project. To the contrary, utilization of the entire region, as we propose, will mean that normal planned growth will take place without any one segment encroaching upon the other," Portash said.

Portash concluded, the Airpark and its entire environs would stimulate the economy of the County by providing more jobs while at the same time providing a recreational area which will not only provide a respite for the people, but protect the area's natural resources.

Boost in Costs Of Land Limits Park Expansion

TOMS RIVER — Spiraling property values around the Ocean County Airpark in Berkeley Township are making it hard for the county to buy more land there for park purposes.

Freeholder Joseph S. Portash said yesterday land owners are now asking \$1,400 to \$1,500 an acre for property sought for a county park as a result, he said, the county has

been able to buy only 221 of the 435 acres needed.

Mr. Portash had predicted last winter the county would have the entire tract bought, or under option, by April 15 at a price of \$750 an acre. That's the price the Board of Freeholders paid for the 221 acres already acquired.

The board plans a public hearing today on an ordinance appropriating \$300,000 to buy land at the airpark, but if land owners don't agree to cut their prices, or the freeholders can't get a lower price via condemnation, the money won't be sufficient.

The 221 acres cost the county more than \$165,000. If the remaining 214 acres cost \$1,400 an acre, the total cost would soar to \$299,600, more than \$106,000 over what the county can spend.

County officials had hoped the cost of the land would be offset by federal and state grants. The airpark, Mr. Portash said, is one of five major parks planned for the county.

The freeholder said the county must scrap its present county park system in favor of major parks at selected locations. He said many small parks should be turned over to the municipalities in which they're located for use as municipal parks or recreation areas.

The airpark, with 435 acres devoted to recreation, would almost double the 450 acres which now comprise the county park system. Even these park lands, Mr. Portash said, fail to meet federal recommendations of 10 acres of parks for each 1,000 residents.

Under this formula, Mr. Portash said, Ocean County should have 2,000 acres of parks. He bases the need on an estimated population of 200,000 and said the federal census now underway will show the county now has at least 192,000 residents.

Under Mr. Portash's plans, the county now has one of the five major parks in the former Rockefeller estate and Lake Shenandoah Park in Lakewood, and the nucleus of a second at the airpark.

Still needed, he said, are major parks in three other areas — the Jackson-Manchester Township section, the southern part of the county, and along Barnegat Bay.

The new parks, Mr. Portash said, would protect watershed areas in addition to meeting the recreational needs of county residents. The Lakewood Park complex, which is proposed to eventually link with a Forge Pond Park in Brick Township and Lake Casaljo in Lakewood, would protect the Metedeconk River Watershed.

The airpark, the freeholder said, would protect the Cedar Creek watershed.

Under Mr. Portash's proposal, the county would also re-

tain Berkeley Island Park, Berkeley Township; A. Paul King Park, Stafford Township and Tuckerton Park in that borough and Little Egg Harbor Township.

All three fail to meet the freeholder's size criteria for county parks, but all have valuable waterfront areas. Berkeley Island Park is in Barnegat Bay, the others front on fresh water lakes.

May 20, 1970

Freeholders Okay Plan For Airpark Expansion

TOMS RIVER—The Ocean County Board of Freeholders yesterday approved a final passage, an ordinance will permits the purchase of 435 additional acres of land adjoining the Robert J. Miller Airpark in Berkeley Township.

The ordinance appropriates \$300,000 for the purchase. The Freeholders have applied for 50 per cent of the purchase price to be paid from the State's Green Acres funds. An additional \$80,000 of the cost has been granted to the County from the federal government under the original purchase agreement. This figure may change, however, as the Freeholders have applied for additional funds from the government.

Freeholder Joseph S. Portash told the audience present yesterday that the land to be acquired is actually disassociated from the Airpark itself and will be used as a buffer zone and will include multi-use recreational areas. It will also assist in protecting the natural environment and assure protection of the Cedar Creek

drainage and watershed area.

Mr. Portash cited the national ratio of 15 acres of park lands per 1,000 population and compared it with Ocean County which has ratio of only 2.70 acres of parks for each 1,000 residents. With the acquisition of the additional land, that ratio will be increased to 4.87 acres for each 1,000 in Ocean County.

The Freeholder pointed out, however, that these figures are not as gum as they may appear since the County's residents are fortunate enough to have the Atlantic Ocean and Barnegat Bay at their doorsteps.

There are currently five owners involved in the land to be purchased. The initial tract of land to be bought will include 221 acres with the purchase price expected to be \$750 per acre, including real estate agent's fees. Mr. Portash said he believes the prices for the remaining four tracts will be comparable.

In other action, the Freeholders decided to readvertise for bids for the clearing of land at the Airpark. Two bids were received and

rejected yesterday as being too high. The lowest of the two would assess the county \$600 per acre for clearing. The estimate the county had had in the area cleared, the price between \$150 and \$175 per acre.

James J. Kelly, of Mount Holly, was reappointed County Coroner, beginning in a period of one year.

The Freeholders also passed a resolution appointing representatives from the Ocean County Chapter of the 99th woman pilot organization based at the local Airpark. The two women, Mrs. Ann Hinchings of Lakewood and Mrs. Ely McCullough of Long Island, who is also Governor of the New York-New Jersey Section of the 99th, will represent Ocean County in the International Powder Puff Derby. The Derby will be launched July 4 from Monterey, Calif., and will end in Bristol, Pa. The local entrants are being sponsored by Harry Sussna, president of the Level Line Corporation, Lakewood.

Master Nature Plan Set Near Airpark

TOMS RIVER— A master nature plan is being created for the multi-use recreational area of the Robert J. Miller Airpark in Berkeley Township under the direction of Ocean County Freeholder Joseph S. Portash, director of the county parks system.

Portash conferred yesterday with William G. Baranyay, an official with the National Audubon Society, and A. Morton Cooper, chairman of the Ocean County Environmental Agency.

The freeholder, in commenting on the project, said the county was intent upon preserving the environment for future generations as well as for the enjoyment of its residents and

visitors in the present.

"We are enthused with the visit of Mr. Baranyay, who will study the park site and propose a master nature plan for the 400-plus acres situated south and east of the airfield," Portash said.

Portash said Baranyay and Cooper began the study this week and are due to report back with a proposal within the next two weeks.

A physical inventory of the plants and animals within the "passive" area of the park site as opposed to the "active" sports area to the east. Physical characteristics will be studied and trails for nature walks marked for eventual mapping.

Thursday
March 30, 1972

April 20, 1972, Thursday

Seeking Funds To Buy Island

TOMS RIVER— The Ocean County Board of Freeholders yesterday authorized the submission of an application to the Federal Open Spaces and the State Green Acres Programs for the acquisition of 79-acre Flat Island.

The proposed acquisition stands off Long Beach Township in Barnegat Bay and is the fourth major park acquisition undertaken by the freeholders this year.

Freeholder Joseph S. Portash, chairman of the County Parks Department, said if all projects are approved, the county would hold park lands to satisfy population demands through 1980.

The freeholder noted the other contemplated purchases include Gull Island in the Manasquan

River off Point Pleasant Beach, a tract in the Kettle Creek area of Brick Township and the 400-acre Calvus Island tract off Fischer Boulevard in Dover Township.

To Exceed Assessment

It is estimated the purchase price of the newly proposed acquisition of Flat Island will exceed the assessed value of the land which is \$400 an acre for a total of roughly \$28,000.

Also authorized was the purchase of a 56-acre tract on the north side of Route 530 in Berkeley Township opposite the Robert J. Miller Airpark.

Portash explained the Federal Aviation Agency would participate in the purchase and pay for half the cost. He said the cost factor had not as yet been

(See FUNDS Page 3)

Funds

(Continued From Page 1)

determined but noted the last purchase price for land in the area was \$900 an acre.

U. S. Requirement

Portash continued the purchase was a requirement of the federal agency in order that the approaches to the airport runway may not be hampered by commercial or residential growth.

Exhibit 8

Robert J. Miller Airpark Economic Development Study

First 7 pages

(full report available upon request)

ROBERT J. MILLER AIRPARK

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STUDY

BERKELEY TOWNSHIP
INDUSTRIAL PARK

Prepared For

OCEAN COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY RIGHT-OF-WAY

E-3
0-2

PROPOSED MULE ROAD EXTENSION

BRANCH 530

PINEWALD

WAREHOUSE

HANGER

POWER SUPPLY
BEACH TERMINAL BLDG.

PARKING AREA

CIVIL AIR PATROL

OCEAN COUNTY ROAD DEPARTMENT GARAGE

DOVER

FORGE

ROAD

IRISH

TENT

BRANCH

CREEK

CEDAR



BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

The Robert J. Miller Airpark is situated on a 945-acre tract in the western portions of Berkeley and Lacey Townships in central Ocean County and has the potential of being a catalyst for future economic development in the County. At the present time, the Airpark is utilized for general aviation and recreational purposes, and averages approximately 300-500 operations (takeoffs and landings) per week. Given socio-economic trends and the increased demands for general aviation facilities, expanded utilization of the Airpark can be anticipated during the next twenty years. Expanded uses of the facility could include increased storage of corporate jets, the initiation of regularly scheduled commuter air service to major regional airports, and the development of adjoining parcels of land for light industrial uses which would complement and be compatible with the operation of the Airpark as a general aviation facility.

The Robert J. Miller Airpark was dedicated on June 6, 1968 and has developed steadily as an integral facility in the N. J. Airport System. The Airpark is a major longterm economic asset to Ocean County for a variety of reasons. First, the Airpark is owned by Ocean County and is the only publicly-owned facility in Ocean County. The County has the ability to exercise direct control over the general operation and development of the Airpark and can establish policies and programs in conjunction with other public agencies to guide the future development in and around the facility in a manner which will provide the maximum benefits to the public.

Second, the Airpark is centrally located within the County, being approximately five miles from Toms River, the government center of Ocean County, and within a 40-minute driving radius of most of the County's 330,000 residents. The close proximity of the Airpark to the various industrial/commercial areas of the County is a major asset, especially when considering the potential of the facility for expanded corporate aviation use. The Airpark has good highway access, being within five miles of the Garden State Parkway and within six miles of N. J. Routes 37 and 70.

Section 4, Airport Development Alternative, presents alternate scenarios for the Airpark facility, focusing on different levels of use intensity. In addition, three options for airport management are identified, along with respective implications of each.

Section 5 presents findings and recommendations which the County may consider in guiding future growth in and around the Airpark facility. In particular, the prospects of acquiring additional land around the facility for airport-related activities are discussed, as well as the availability of Federal and State funds to assist in the financing of future development proposals in and around the Airpark.

Of the four projects, the extension of the primary runway and the introduction of the Instrument Landing System are scheduled for completion in 1982. Construction of the crosswind runway has been granted FAA approval and the area has been partially cleared, although a construction timetable has not been established. No timetable has been established for the widening of Runway 6-24. Upon the completion of these improvements, the Airpark facility would meet FAA criteria for a Basic Transport Airport.

The major advantage of a Basic Transport Airport classification for the Robert J. Miller Airpark would be the ability of the facility to accommodate larger, heavier aircraft, including commuter carriers and corporate jets. By definition, Basic Transport Airports can accommodate most turbine aircraft including business jets up to a gross weight of 60,000 pounds.

The Robert J. Miller Airpark Economic Development Study evaluates the Airpark facility in terms of its ability to enhance future economic development in Ocean County and to attract light industrial development to the Airpark vicinity.

Section 1, Project Area Description, provides an overview of the project area, focusing on existing land use patterns, provisions of municipal zoning, availability of public infrastructure, and an analysis of environmental features, including environmentally critical areas at the site.

Section 2, Socio-economic Conditions and Trends, presents current population, employment, and income data for Ocean County. In general, the latest census and economic indicators reflect the substantial increases in population and employment in Ocean County during the past three decades, and the projected major increases through the next twenty years.

Section 3, Planning and Development Constraints, describes the major constraints to development at the Airpark. In particular, this study assesses the impacts of the N. J. Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan on future development proposals; the lack of public sanitary sewers at the Airpark; and the compatibility of industrial and airport-related land uses adjacent to the Airpark. In addition, the potential for future employment and tax ratables in the Airpark area is assessed.

Third, the potential exists for increased aviation and aviation-related development at the Airpark and for light industrial development adjacent to the Airpark in Berkeley Township. At the present time, there is only limited industrial development northwest and east of the Airpark. Primary development potential exists at the Berkeley Township Industrial Park northwest of the Airpark. Additional development of the Industrial Park would benefit the County and Berkeley Township through increased employment opportunities and additional tax ratables.

Finally, the Robert J. Miller Airpark is included within the State Airport System Plan and is eligible for Federal funding assistance for airport-related projects. Under the N. J. State Airport System Plan, which was developed by the N. J. Department of Transportation in 1975, a system of 43 airports has been identified in order to meet the growing needs of general aviation throughout the State. The plan incorporates the current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) classification system of airports and conforms with the National Airport System Plan. The classification of airports, in order of importance, are Air Carrier Airports, Basic Transport Airports, General Utility Airports, and Basic Utility Airports.

The Robert J. Miller Airpark is classified as a "General Utility Airport." This classification limits the maximum allowable weight of aircraft using this facility to 12,500 pounds. However, several airport improvements are being considered for the Airpark which, if completed, would upgrade the Airpark to a "Basic Transport Airport" classification. Four improvements are planned to upgrade the Airpark:

1. Extension of Primary Runway 6-24 (the identification of the runway as "6-24" refers to the southwest-northeast orientation of 60° and 240°) from 4,782 feet to 5,782 feet to accommodate medium sized aircraft and increase the safety factor for takeoffs and landings;
2. Installation of an Instrument Landing System (ILS) which will provide for precision landing technology;
3. Construction of a crosswind runway to ensure greater safety during changing wind conditions and improved emergency landing facilities; and
4. Widening of Primary Runway 6-24 from 80 feet to 150 feet for greater safety and physical ability to accommodate larger aircraft.

1.0 PROJECT AREA DESCRIPTION

1.1 Geographical Location

The Robert J. Miller Airpark is situated on approximately 945 acres along the boundary of Berkeley and Lacey Townships in the central portion of Ocean County, New Jersey. The Airpark is centrally located between New York City and Philadelphia with New York being approximately 55 miles north-northwest and Philadelphia located approximately 50 miles southwest. Toms River, a major commercial center and County seat, is located approximately five (5) miles northeast of the facility, in Dover Township.

In general, Robert J. Miller Airpark is bordered on the north by Pinewald-Keswick Road (County Route 530) and on the southeast by Dover Road. The Airpark is located within 5 miles of the intersection of U.S. Route 9 and the Garden State Parkway and 6 miles from New Jersey Routes 37 to the northeast and 6 miles from Route 70 to the west.

Figure 1-A, Regional Site Location, illustrates the general location of the Robert J. Miller Airpark in relation to the New York and Philadelphia metropolitan regions. Figure 1-B, Site Location, shows the Airpark facility in relation to the immediately surrounding area of Berkeley and Lacey Townships.

1.2 Existing Land Use

At present, the land uses occurring in and around the Robert J. Miller Airpark contain a mixture of recreation, conservation, public works, industrial, residential and airport-related activities. The existing land uses at the Airpark and its environs are described below.

1.2.1 Airpark Land Use

The Master Plan and Site development of the Robert J. Miller Airpark, prepared in 1974, provides for a variety of land uses, including recreation, conservation, County and airport-related activities. The following inventories the land uses currently existing at the Airpark.

Airfield - The existing airfield consists of a single paved runway, 4,872 feet long and 80 feet wide, with paved overruns of 600 feet and 478 feet at the south and north ends of the runway, respectively. The runway has a hard asphalt surface constructed at a southwest-northeast orientation of 60° and 240°, with a magnetic declination of 10° 57'. A full length parallel taxiway is located on the northwest side of the runway, with five (5) taxiway approaches connecting the runway to the terminal and apron area. A helipad, which is used primarily by the State Forestry Department, is located adjacent to the apron area.

Airfield support facilities are located directly northwest of the runway and apron areas, and include hangars, a terminal building, beacon, power supply building and parking areas. Two hangars, one of which is used primarily for aircraft maintenance and the other for the storage of a maximum of four (4) aircraft, are located adjacent to each other along the apron. The two hangars and terminal building are operated by the fixed base operator, Ocean Aviation.

Four (4) "T-hangars", which are used for the storage of individual aircraft, are located along the southwestern end of the taxiway. In addition, the Civil Air Patrol maintains a hangar along the southwest corner of the airfield, near the intersection of Mule Road and Dover Forge Road.

In total, the amount of land reserved for airfield related activities is approximately 500 acres or 53 percent of the Robert J. Miller Airpark property. Figure 1-C, Existing Land Use, illustrates the location of the airport-related facilities at the Robert J. Miller Airpark.

Recreation - Recreation areas at the Robert J. Miller Airpark are located along the northwest side of Mule Road; the major airport access road extending from County Route 530. The recreation area, which is approximately 65 acres in size, includes soccer and baseball fields as well as areas used for other activities, such as horse shows. Parking and restroom facilities are also located adjacent to the athletic fields.

Conservation - The southerly portion of the Airpark property located southwest of Dover Forge Road has been designated as a conservation area and will be minimally utilized for low intensity uses. This area which was purchased by the County through the Green Acres Program of the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, is entirely located within Lacey Township and partially within the Cedar Creek watershed. A County arboretum has been developed on a 10 acre parcel opposite the Civil Air Patrol facilities. In addition, a Nature Center has been proposed for a location south of the airfield "clear zone." A large camping area is also planned for the southern portion of the Airpark property, adjacent to Dover Road.

County Garage - Ocean County maintains a garage and maintenance facility at the western corner of the Airpark property, near the intersection of Mule Road and Dover Forge Road. The garage is utilized by the County Road Department for the storage and maintenance of Road Department vehicles and equipment.

County Warehouse - Ocean County maintains a storage warehouse along Mule Road near the entrance drive to the terminal area. In the past, the warehouse has been used for storage of County documents, files and equipment.

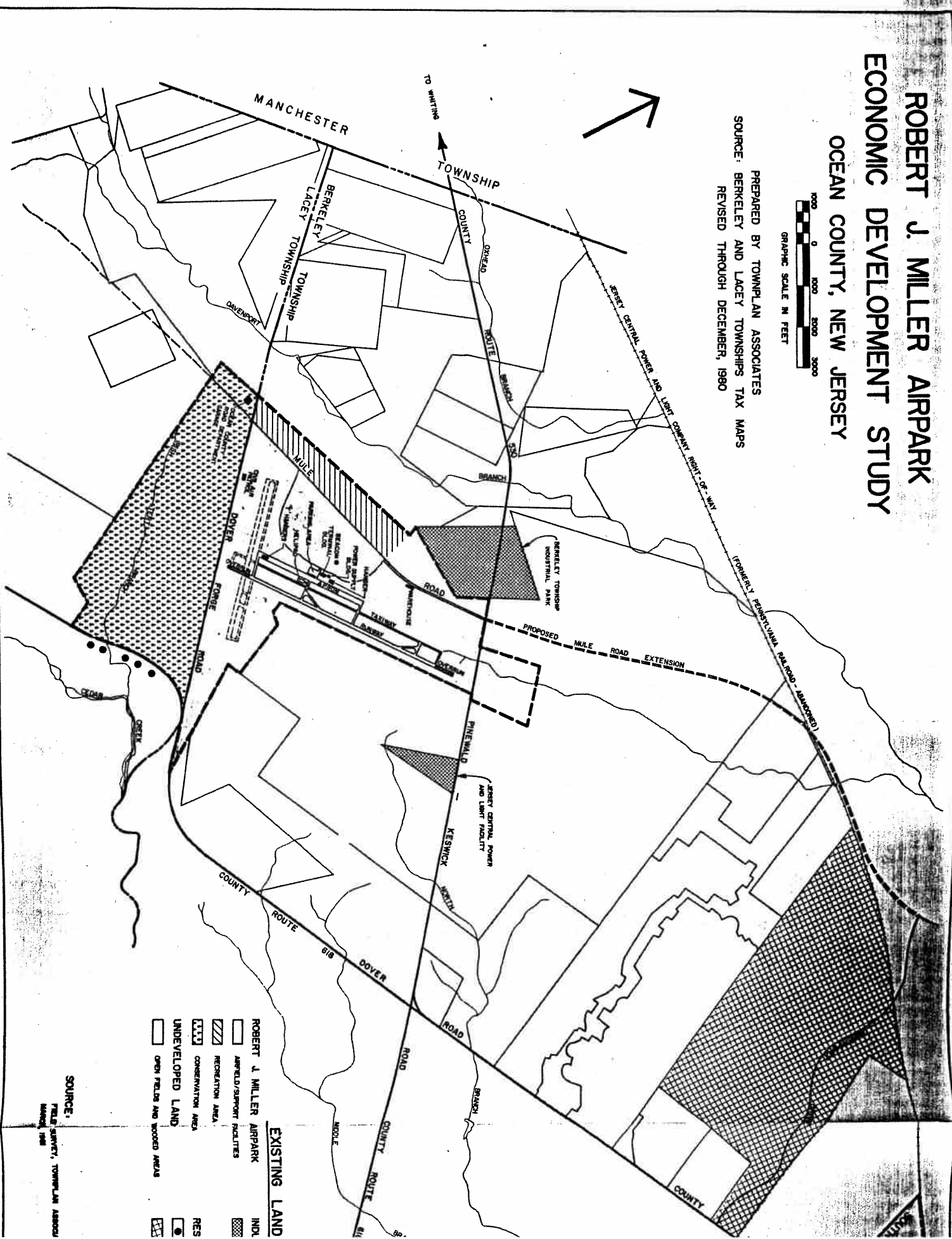
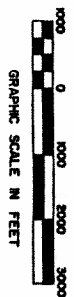
County Temporary Inmate Housing Facility - Due to overcrowding at the existing County jail, the Ocean County Board of Freeholders have authorized the construction of a temporary minimum security correctional facility for inmates and those involved with work-release programs. Approvals for the facility have been received from State and County agencies. The facility, to be located adjacent to and east of the County Warehouse, will house approximately 58 inmates.

1.2.2 Area Land Use

With few exceptions, the land within a two (2) mile radius of the Robert J. Miller Airpark is largely undeveloped, consisting primarily of pine-oak vegetation typically of the New Jersey Pine Barrens region. A detailed assessment of the existing vegetation is presented in Section 1.5.3 of this report. For purposes of this report, the land uses around the Airpark have been divided into four quadrants, with the Airpark located at the center, Figure 1-C, Existing Land Use, illustrates the existing pattern of land use around the Robert J. Miller Airpark.

ROBERT J. MILLER AIRPARK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STUDY OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

PREPARED BY TOWNPLAN ASSOCIATES
SOURCE: BERKELEY AND LACEY TOWNSHIPS TAX MAPS
REVISED THROUGH DECEMBER, 1980



- EXISTING LAND**
- INDL. ROBERT J. MILLER AIRPARK
 - AREFIELD/SUPPORT FACILITIES
 - RECREATION AREA
 - CONSERVATION AREA
 - UNDEVELOPED LAND
 - OPEN FIELDS AND WOODED AREAS
 - RES.

SOURCE:
TOWNSHIP TAX MAPS
MAY 1980

County Meeting Praised

Berkeley to Accept Jail Plans

By LESLIE POSDON
Staff Writer

BERKELEY TWP. — Locating the multimillion dollar county jail and administration complex on Pinewald-Keswick Road was tentatively agreed upon Thursday by representatives of the Township Committee and the Board of Freeholders.

The 70,000-foot jail administration complex would be located approximately one-quarter of a mile north-west from the township's municip-

pal complex now under construction. Committee member Edward T. Tolbert said the meeting with the county concerning the proposed jail site was "very constructive. Much more than previous meetings."

The full committee will review the proposal and make recommendations to the county before any final site decisions are made, Tolbert said.

Freeholder George J. Hoffmann said the Pinewald-Keswick site meets county criteria because it is not within

one mile of residential homes on the east or west.

"It's a prime site since the township is considering establishing this area as the hub or downtown district of the township," he said.

He also said the county is willing to locate the \$18 million jail and administration complex between 300 and 500 feet back from the road to allow for commercial development and not take away township taxables.

The county is also considering the possibility of renting a portion of the county administration complex to the township for a county library, Tolbert said.

The county initially suggested the township give the current town hall on Route 9 to the county for a library when it is vacated. Tolbert said township officials are opposed to this as they are considering using the vacated building as a community center.

He said the committee's initial recommendation to locate the complex in the Robert J. Miller Airpark is no longer a consideration because of major obstacles.

He said the county would not be permitted to build a jail complex on land funded through Green Acres. Those funds are designated by the state for recreational development only.

Hoffmann said the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations would also prevent the county from building a watch tower due to height restrictions near the runway.

County Planner Steven L. Pollock will draw up definitive plans citing

exact tract location, road size and an artist's rendering of the proposed complex, Hoffmann said.

The committee hopes to review these plans and get back to the county by Aug. 1.

Hoffmann said the main reason for the

(Continued on Page A11)

★ Jail

(Continued From Page A1)

August deadline is to finalize plans. A new jail complex has been discussed since 1974 and completion may reach into the year 2000.

Land for the 57-acre complex will most likely be acquired from private owners. Hoffmann and Tolbert said Leisure Technology owns some 600 acres in the Pinewald-Keswick Road vicinity.

Hoffmann said no plans for land acquisition have been made yet, but does not anticipate any objection from Leisure Technology.

Bonding finalization for \$30 million will be made in January, 1979, Freeholder Leonard Connors said. He said the bond includes courtrooms in Toms River road construction, renovations and county garages.

O.C. Observer
July 7, 1978

SECTION B

WEDNESDAY

MARCH 18, 1992

Berkeley Airpark May Cease Operation

TOMS RIVER - Should Ocean County continue to operate the airpark in Berkeley Township, a facility where it loses money each year?

For Manchester Township's Arthur Silverstein the answer is a resounding "no" but county officials say intangible benefits are reason enough to keep pumping in the dough.

Deputy County Planning Director, Alan Avery Jr., said the airpark helps benefit business and industry in the county, even though the county loses more than \$50,000 a year in operating it.

Avery said the airport facility is worth \$10 million and most of the money that has developed it has come from aviation fuel taxes funneled through the Federal Aviation Administration.

He said it is unlikely the FAA would consent to the sale of the airpark. State Green Acres restrictions would also block efforts to sell it because the adjoining park property is in the county's inventory of open or recreational space.

Avery said businesses use the airpark as do tourists and emergency response agencies like the Coast Guard, State Division of Forestry and Civil Air Patrol.

Exhibit 13

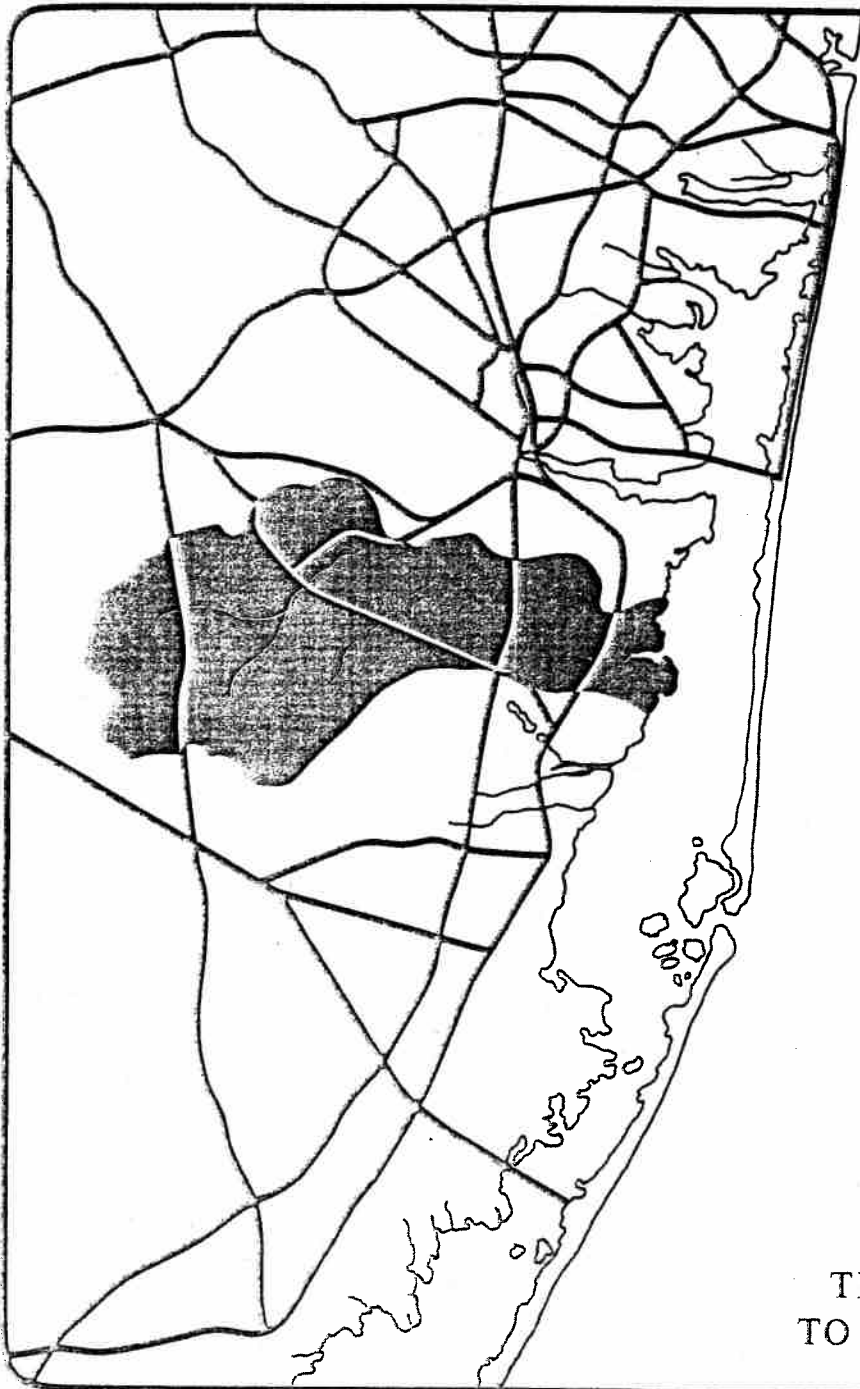
Cedar Creek

A Unique Open Space Conservation and Recreation Resource

August 1975

CEDAR CREEK

A UNIQUE OPEN SPACE
CONSERVATION AND
RECREATION RESOURCE



OCEAN COUNTY
NEW JERSEY

AUGUST 1975

PREPARED BY
THE AD HOC COMMITTEE
TO PRESERVE CEDAR CREEK

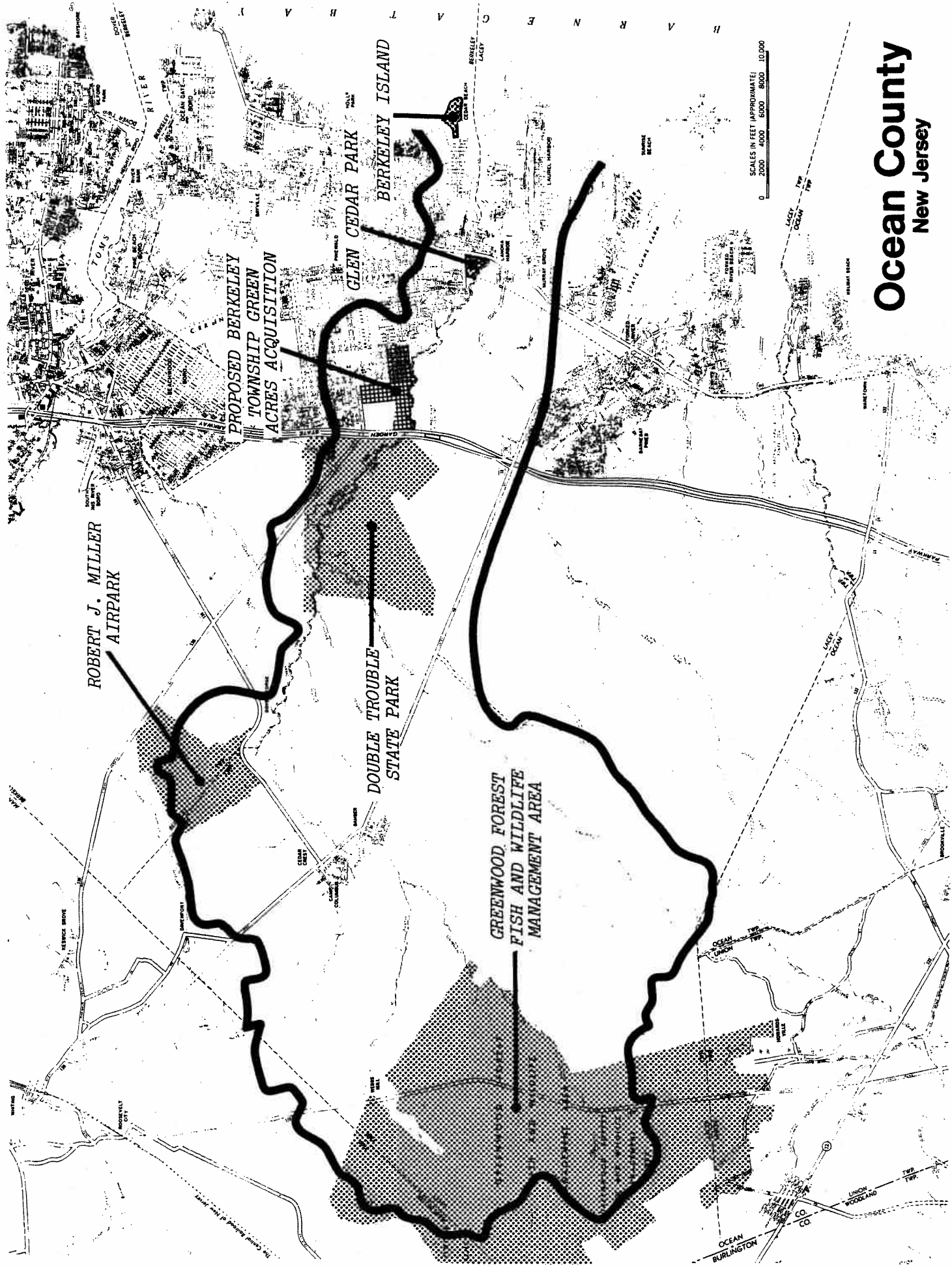
At the County level the Ocean County Park System maintains the Robert J. Miller Air Park and Recreational Area which includes part of the watershed of the Cedar Creek basin. The master plan for the Airpark includes development of outdoor recreation facilities along the Creek. At the municipal level Berkeley Township has developed park facilities along the Creek. The Township is applying under the Green Acres Program of 1974 for the purchase of 250 acres along the stream corridor of Cedar Creek.

Clearly, cooperative action on all levels of government has resulted in progress toward the preservation of Cedar Creek. Total realization of the goal of preserving the Cedar Creek basin, however, requires renewed State action. Lacking continued State action, the efforts at the County and municipal level cannot protect the integrity of the basin as a pure water preservation area.

The following map illustrates the extent of present State, County and municipal ownership of park, recreation and open space lands. *

CEDAR CREEK - RECOMMENDATION FOR STATE ACTION

The Cedar Creek basin is an environmentally sensitive area. State land use planning, water quality management and open space acquisition policies have recognized the critical nature of this watershed. The New Jersey Open Space Plan calls for the preservation of the Cedar Creek basin. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has assigned its highest water quality classifications to Cedar Creek. And the Green Acres Program for State open space acquisitions in the North Shore Region included plans for acquiring over 9,000 acres along Cedar Creek as part of the Double Trouble Park. At present, all of the areas identified in the State's plan for the North Shore Region have been acquired, with the exception of the Cedar Creek properties! Monmouth Battlefield has been purchased. Assunpink Creek Fish and Wildlife area has been acquired. Allaire State Park has undergone major expansion. Double Trouble State Park has not been completed.



Ocean County

New Jersey

SCALE IN FEET (APPROXIMATE)
 0 2000 4000 6000 8000 10,000

ROBERT J. MILLER
AIRPARK

PROPOSED BERKELEY
TOWNSHIP GREEN
ACRES ACQUISITION

GLEN CEDAR PARK

BERKELEY ISLAND

DOUBLE TROUBLE
STATE PARK

GREENWOOD FOREST
FISH AND WILDLIFE
MANAGEMENT AREA

OCEAN
BURLINGTON

UNION
WOODLAND

LAKE
OCEAN

LAKE
OCEAN

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Ocean Airport Moves Ahead

Asbury Park Press 6/25/78

By W. RAY OLLWERTHER
Press Staff Writer

BERKELEY TOWNSHIP — Ten years after its dedication, Ocean County's airport is just getting off the ground.

Held back by cautious operators and freeholder inattention, the Robert J. Miller Airpark has attracted few of the recreational and industrial facilities that were promised by its creators.

But county officials are predicting that the airport will begin to show some results this year with both the county and the operators planning major investments.

Completion is expected by next week of four small hangars that will be rented to owners of private planes.

The 4,300-foot runway, resurfaced last year, will receive a more permanent asphalt overlay this year at a cost of about \$200,000.

And Sana Air Inc., a Pennsylvania-based company which took over the lease to manage the airport in April, is promising a new hangar and other facilities to support the commuter service it hopes to begin by the end of the summer.

"OUR TIME is coming," says County Administrator Frank B. Holman, a pilot who strongly supports the airport. "The airport was built when money was available, but they were looking 10 to 20 years down the road."

Development of the airport, while slow, has occurred with a minimum of county tax funds.

The 790-acre site was acquired with matching state Green Acres money and with private donations of land to the county.

Federal funds put up 90 cents for each dollar spent in building the airport. The freeholders have continued to move slowly while waiting for additional federal funds, which paid for most of a longrange master plan and recently for lighting along the taxiway.

The county is responsible for keeping the runways and lights in good shape and providing trash collection and security, while Sana Air — which pays a percentage of its gross receipts to the county — runs the operations.

In the five years ending in 1977, the county received \$89,928 from airport operations and spent \$65,062.

LAST YEAR the county lost \$7,867, however, as the result of spending about \$8,000 to resurface the runway.

Holman says the county is in a good position to make a profit in coming years; Chuck Wilson, the assistant manager of the airport, says there may be a profit.

But both men say a good airport is needed for a total transportation system in a

county and that all means of transportation are subsidized in one way or another.

The most pressing need at the airport is for an instrument landing system to assist pilots during bad weather.

That could cost up to \$1 million, Holman said.

But the county has already had preliminary discussions in seeking a 100 percent federal grant for the system, and the base operators would like to see it in operation by the fall of next year.

The airport here could end up competing for federal funds with a county-owned airport in Monmouth County, Wilson said.

Because federal grants for airport development are not available to private owners, the same competition is not in effect with Monmouth at this time.

But Wilson said he believes Ocean County would have an advantage in any contest with Monmouth for funds because it has a completed master plan and because it meets all federal safety requirements.

WHILE the improvements recommended by consultants for Monmouth Airport would increase the competition for air traffic, Wilson said, the expected general increase in plane use "should make up for any losses to either facility."

The airport has maintained a low profile over the years in its location in the pines, about six miles southwest of Toms River.

It has not been a major political issue, although Democratic Freeholder Robert A. Gasser has regularly criticized it for failing to meet its potential and for serving only a small number of wealthy persons. Gasser has said the money could be better spent on other county projects.

There's one man who wants to get the airport back into the news, however — Kenneth J. Hetland, vice president of Sana Air Inc.

"When the freeholders put up this airport 10 years ago, they wanted to play it low-key," Hetland said.

"But if we pump \$4 million into new facilities, then we're not going to play it low-key," he said. "The freeholders have been doing everything else in the county except the airport, so we're going to make a lot of demands on them."

AMONG those demands are more signs around the county pointing to the airport, new taxiway and running lights, a repair of the rotating beacons, and new tiedown pins for private aircraft.

Sana, which is owned by Thomas Nardozzo and Henry Sahakian of State College, Pa., has big plans for the future.

Hetland said the company hopes to begin commuter service to Newark Airport by the

end of the summer, with a possibility of routes to Philadelphia, New York City and Atlantic City.

A 40,000-square-foot hangar is expected to be built by December, which will contain offices and storage space.

The market is seen in connecting persons on pleasure trips with the metropolitan airports; and in providing a base for corporate aircraft.

Wilson is optimistic that once an instrument landing system is installed, larger companies will take a closer look at Ocean County for their corporate offices.

"BRING MONEY to Ocean County — that's what that facility has got to do," Wilson said. "And as the revenues begin to come in, they should be plowed back into the operation."

Wilson, a Leisure Technology employee, is resigning his \$2,500-a-year part-time job as airport assistant manager this week.

The county may not replace him, Holman said, but may instead delegate a management specialist in the county administrator's office to take charge of airport business.

The airport's future depends on the freeholders, Wilson said.

"After Bob Miller died everybody knew it was there, but nobody knew what to do with it," Wilson said. "It was too big to hide, so it just kind of sat there."

"But if it begins to show results, then they won't be able to turn their backs on it," he said. "In two or three years there could be some real returns coming back to the county."