

# Farmers and Land

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possibility in the next few years. This would affect land use. A home rule charter could, for example, give the county planning commission the power to enforce its policies. Presently the commission can only recommend a course of action to municipalities.

If the commission had the power to vigorously enforce its plans, those farmers who want to continue farming would probably be helped. Developments would be guided toward already settled areas. Homeowners would be located away from the sights, sounds and smells of agriculture.

Big land owners, though, such as farmers, whose aim was to speculate on the value of their holdings, would probably not be helped by a vigorously pursued public policy aimed at preserving open space. Such a policy would necessarily restrict the use of certain lands, thereby limiting the opportunities for speculation.

The planning commission's sketch plan is in two volumes. The second volume is 50 pages long and contains the plan's overall goals and objectives with a number of maps to illustrate

those goals and objectives. Presented here are certain excerpts from the plan which bear directly on agriculture.

The entire plan can be viewed at the Planning Commission office, 900 East King St., Lancaster. A Commission spokesman said the planners welcome comments from farmers and other private citizens.

The first goal listed in the sketch plan says, "Adherence to land development patterns which respond to both the needs and desires of the people and the limitations and potentialities of the natural and man-made environment."

Under that goal are listed 13 objectives. Among them are:

Preservation of agricultural land as an appropriate use of Lancaster County's outstanding soils, as a means of preserving our cultural heritage, as a means of preserving open space, and as a means of retaining agriculture as an important sector of the economy.

Encouragement of innovation in land development patterns through such means as planned unit developments.

Location of tourist-oriented facilities in such a way that they do not detract from the basic assets which have attracted tourism.

Designation of areas where extractive industries may be located with the least possible negative effect on their surroundings.

Preservation of areas which may ultimately be required for recreational, reservoir, or other open space sites.

Investigation of the applicability of new town development to Lancaster County.

Encouragement of development where it can be served most efficiently by public utilities.

Development of a County zoning ordinance, an official map, and - or other available means of guiding development.

Encouragement of concentrated development interspersed with open space to maximize the economy of utility service, to preserve open space for recreational purposes, and to provide environmental variety.

Encouragement of nodes of commercial development as an alternative to strip development.

Development of a countywide comprehensive plan for land use, transportation facilities, and community facilities to serve as a

guide for future countywide planning activities and as a guide for review of local planning activities.

Encouragement of revitalization of urban centers as commercial and residential areas.

Development of land use patterns which reflect compatibility of adjacent areas.

Addressing itself specifically to agriculture, the plan says Lancaster County contains some of the most productive farmlands in Pennsylvania. The agricultural lands are of considerable economic importance. They are also important to the sociological aspects of the County, and they provide the much desired and talked about "rural" atmosphere. The following objectives concerning agriculture relate to the Sketch Plan:

a. Preservation of agricultural land as an appropriate use of Lancaster County's outstanding soils, as a means of preserving our cultural heritage, as a means of preserving open space, and as a means of retaining agriculture as an important sector of the economy.

b. Exploration of the "multiple use concept" for agricultural

land, whereby agricultural land is used not only for farming, but also for outdoor recreation.

c. Discouragement of intense development on valuable mineral and agricultural lands.

Agricultural operations which result in the highest levels of production at the lowest levels of cost can best occur on Class I and Class II agricultural soils. Of the eight million acres of farmland in Pennsylvania, less than forty percent (40) fits into these classes. In Lancaster County, however, approximately seventy percent (70) of the agricultural land fits into the Class I and II categories. Thus the county food and fibre producing ability is important to a much larger region than that encompassed by the county boundaries.

The indicated agricultural areas are those lands which meet the criteria for agricultural preservation as established in the Pennsylvania Agricultural Land Conservation Plan. This plan, which was proposed to the Governor of Pennsylvania in 1969, suggests legislation to empower county commissioners to establish one or more agricultural use areas, with each area containing not less than 4,000 contiguous acres, fifty-one percent (51) of which must be in prime agricultural land. The major agricultural area on the Sketch Plan map is roughly in a belt from east to west through the north-central portion of the County; this is also the location of the Lancaster metropolitan core. Other major agricultural areas are south and southwest of Quarryville and southwest of Christiana.

## Consumers Need to Know

by LEE LANDIS

Consumerism is not an organized movement of millions of Americans speaking for a common cause in their own behalf. According to Dr. Max Brunk, professor of marketing at Cornell University, it is a movement of many fragments with issues frequently championed by small minorities.

Consequently, if we are to take a rational viewpoint on various issues, particularly those involving legislation, we need to know much more about consumerism.

Dr. Brunk points out that we must not make the mistake of assuming a universality of consumer values. As he explains it, we all tend to rationalize what we consider appropriate values for others and we have difficulty understanding and respecting values other than our own.

Traditionally our economy has been built around the market mechanism which has provided a voting place for the wants and needs of people. The uniqueness of this voting place is that it respects and responds to the will of minorities as well as majorities.

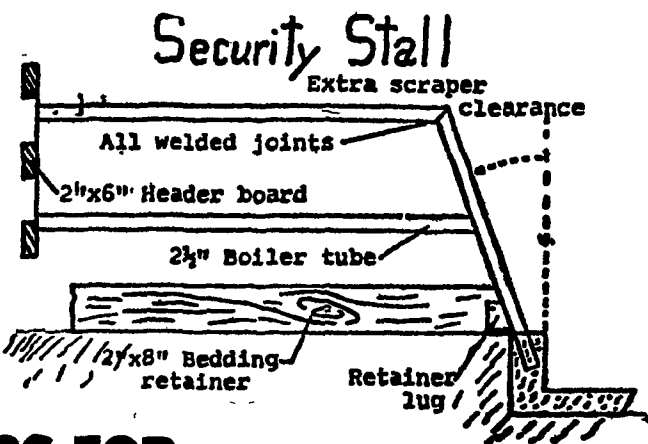
In the final analysis, he says, we must recognize that consumer protection does not come free. It must be paid by the consumer, either in added costs or through deprivation. If consumers were to be fully protected in all actions, they would become nothing more than wards of the State.

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