

**Town of Freedom  
Comprehensive Plan  
Adopted by the Town Board on**



**Currently Don and Becky Rule farm on Freedom Road**  
**Picture is from the 1950's**

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**Elton Baptist Church,**  
**built in 1873, has been**  
**added to and modernized**  
**several times.**

## **Section I.**

### **Infrastructure**

Infrastructure is a broad term, this is used to describe the utilities, roads, bridges, and other structural items that we depend upon to make our lives easier. It can be divided into two categories, publicly owned, as well as privately owned. Good and reliable infrastructure is essential for supporting the economic viability of a community and creating a business-friendly environment.

**\*Publicly owned infrastructure:**

- Streets and highways, sidewalks, public parking lots and streetlights.
- Public water
  - The Village of Arcade has a water supply tank located on Mutton Hollow Rd. This feeds most of the Village of Arcade residence, along with the 100 taps that run down Route 98 in Sandusky, as well as a part of Eagle Street. The main pipe from the tank comes down Mutton Hollow Road and follows the creek and comes out just south of Yorkshire Battery on Route 98.

**\* Private infrastructure or utilities as they are more commonly referred to:**

- Telecommunication facilities:
  - Cable and telephone lines  
The Town has two options that provide both. Verizon and Spectrum.
  - Fiber Optics  
Fiber Optics is a new and improved way into the future. Armstrong has put in fiber optics and is available to Freedom residences.
  - Cell Towers  
There are three cell towers throughout the town. One cell tower is on Galen Hill Road. Another is on Bixby Hill Road. The last one that is new to the town is off Jones Road.
  - Internet Service  
The town has many options of providers, Verizon, Southern Tier Wireless, Armstrong, and Spectrum.
  - Natural Gas  
It is provided by National Fuel.
  - Electric Service  
There are two electrical companies that service Freedom residence. The Village of Arcade, there are 200 meters read in the town. National Grid is the other company, and the number of reads is unknown.
  - Renewable Energy

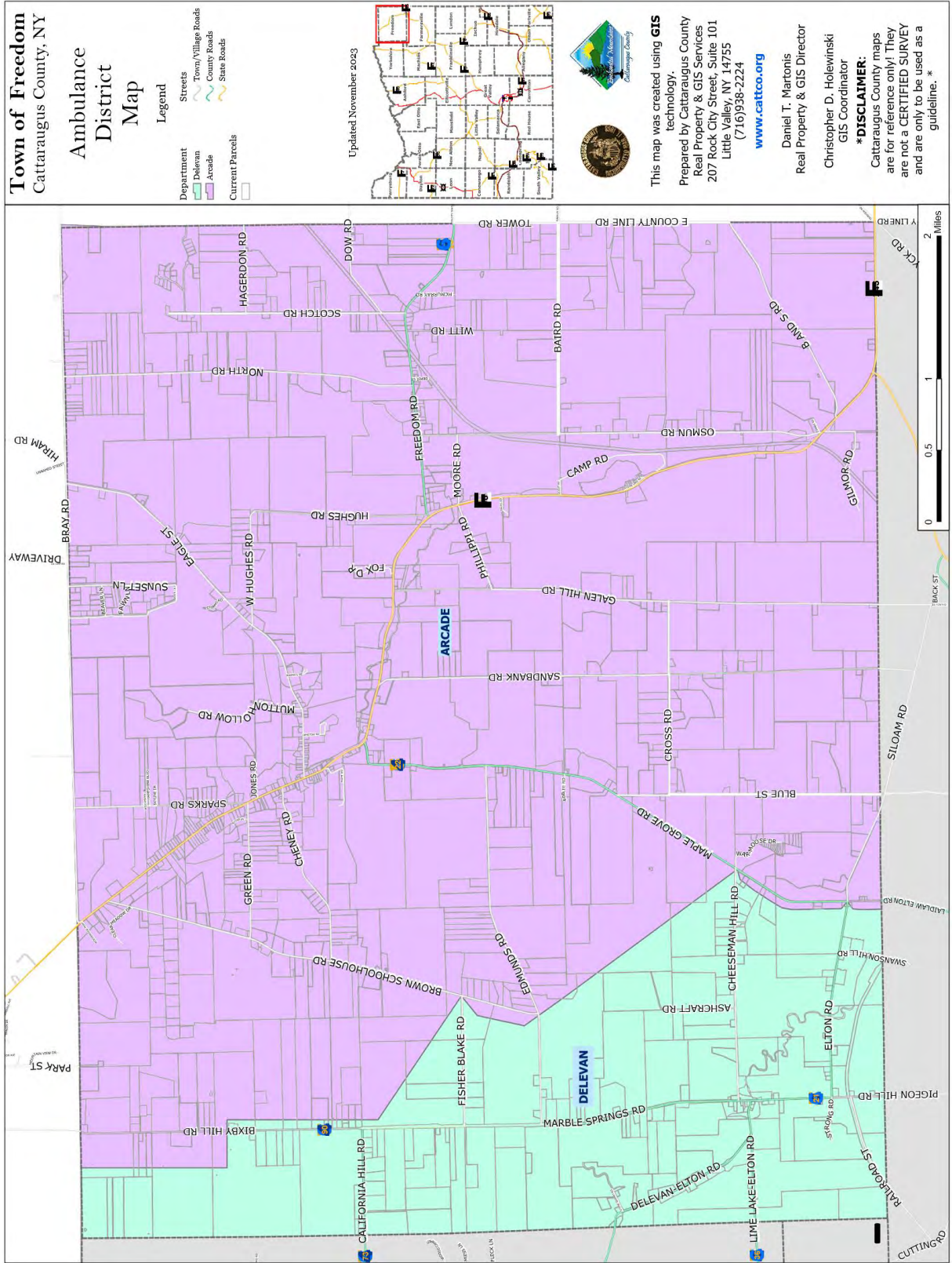
The Town has Wind Energy Laws in the books for potential wind farms. Solar Energy is something to investigate for the future. The Town Planning Board is currently reviewing solar energy requirements so as to maintain the rural quality of life in our town.

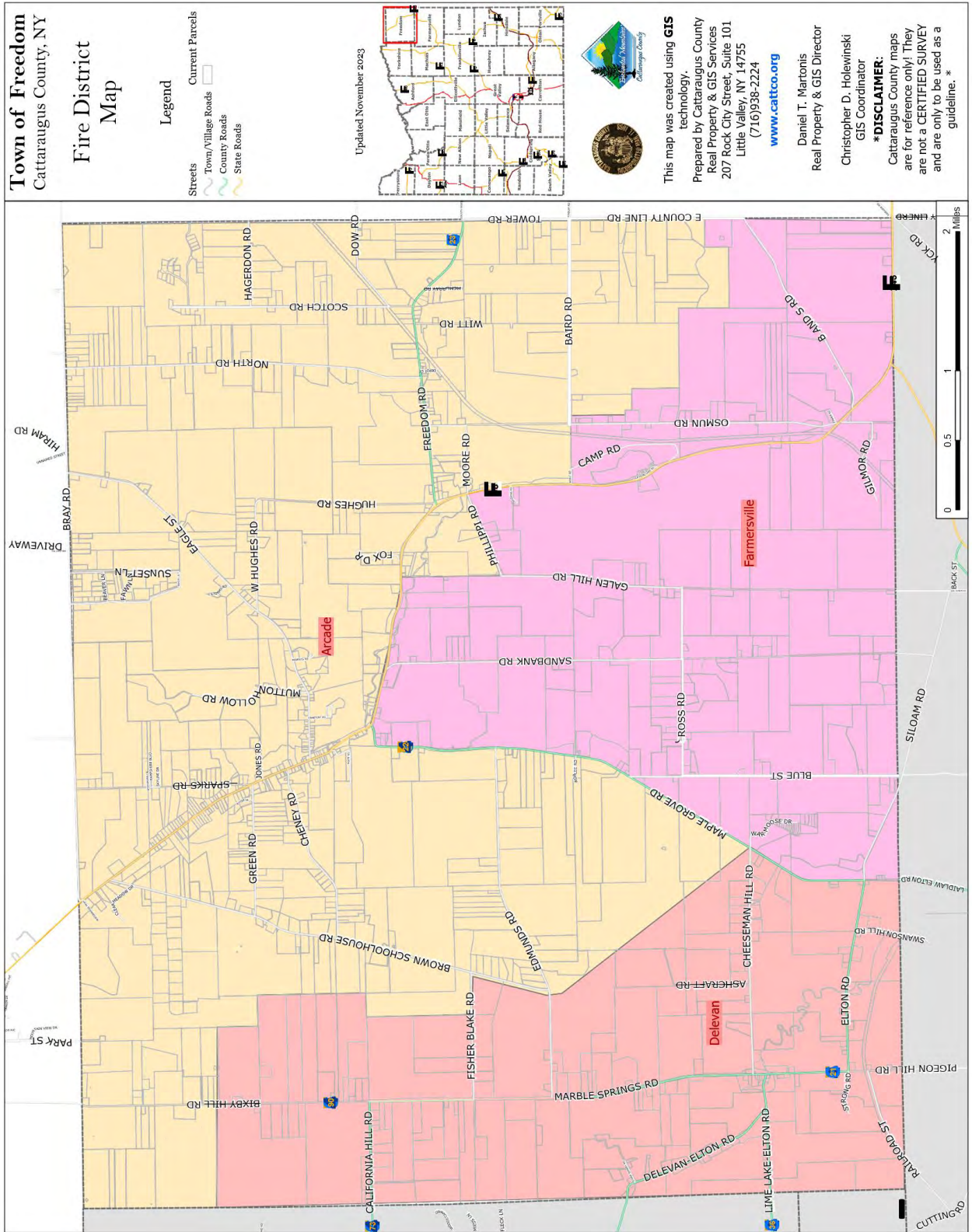
- Volunteer Fire Department  
Arcade Fire Department and Ambulance Service  
Farmersville Fire Department  
Delevan Fire Department and Ambulance Service
- School Districts  
There are two school districts in the Town of Freedom. Pioneer Central School and Cuba-Rushford Central School. Pioneer Central School covers the majority of the Town of Freedom. Cuba-Rushford Central School covers a small portion at the southeast corner of Freedom.



**1947 – V Plow with Wing on North Road**







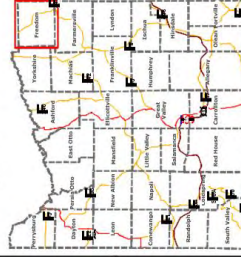


# Town of Freedom Cattaraugus County, NY

## School District Map

- Legend
- Streets
  - Current Parcels
  - Town/Village Roads
  - County Roads
  - State Roads

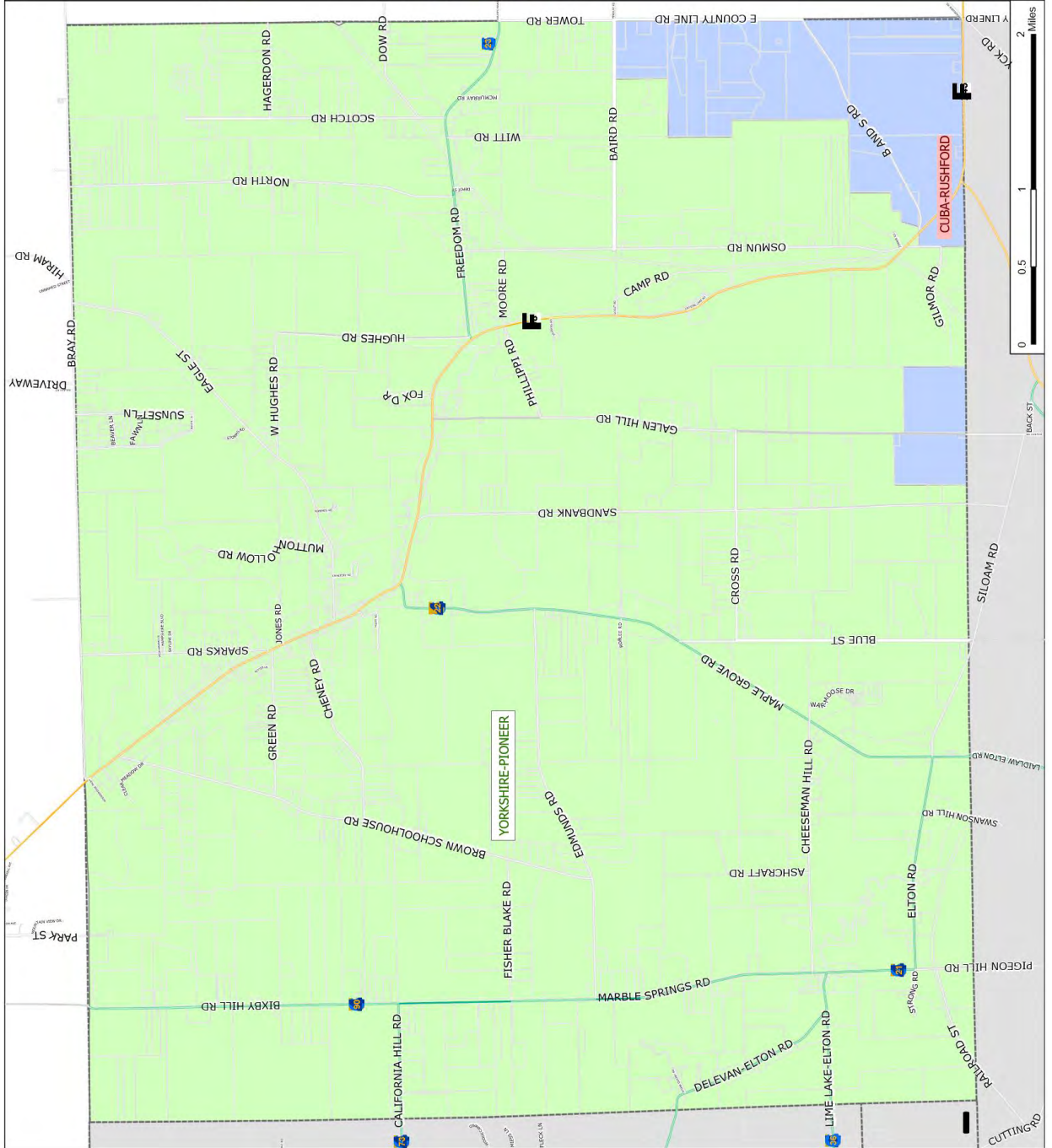
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## Section II.

## Town of Freedom Goals and Objectives

The goals herein reflect the hopes, desires, needs, and wants of the Town's residents. These will broadly shape and give guidance to the Town's future policy making decisions.

- Community Character and Town Development

### Goal

- Retain the rural, pastoral, and agricultural character of the Town while providing and supporting opportunities for measured development in well suited areas.

### Objectives

- Maintain and encourage continued conservation of wood plots, flood plains, and wetlands.
- Retain agricultural land in accordance with Cattaraugus County agricultural land retention guidelines.
- Preserve water quality in line with Cattaraugus County Health Department parameters.
- Support agricultural and forestry practices that protect the environment which include, but is not limited to, soil erosion minimization, surface water runoff, mitigation, and containment of fertilizer contamination to the Town's watershed.
- Promote smart growth strategies towards residential, commercial, and industrial endeavors that co-exist with the Town's rural character and the County's comprehensive master plan.

- Residential Development

### Goal

- Provide a quality living environment and encourage the sustainability and availability of a variety of housing types including single family homes, multi-unit housing, vacation, and seasonal homes, and preexisting and potential future building sites.

### Objectives

- Protect residential areas that would be negatively impacted by commercial, industrial, and commercial power generation development.
- Use site development and sound planning to minimize the potential loss of prime agricultural or forested land.
- Promote varied housing types for residential development to accommodate all income levels and age groups.
- Continued adherence to current local, county, state construction building standards and codes in the construction of new homes and the maintenance and improvement of existing structures.
- Ensure minimum lot size will accommodate a private well and septic system where required in accordance with Cattaraugus County Health Department regulations.
- Encourage remediation and reclamation of current structures that are feasibly viable.

- Commercial and Industrial Development



## Goal

- To encourage and promote business, commercial, and industrial ventures using sound planning and smart growth principles to enhance, promote and protect the economic stability of the town.

## Objectives

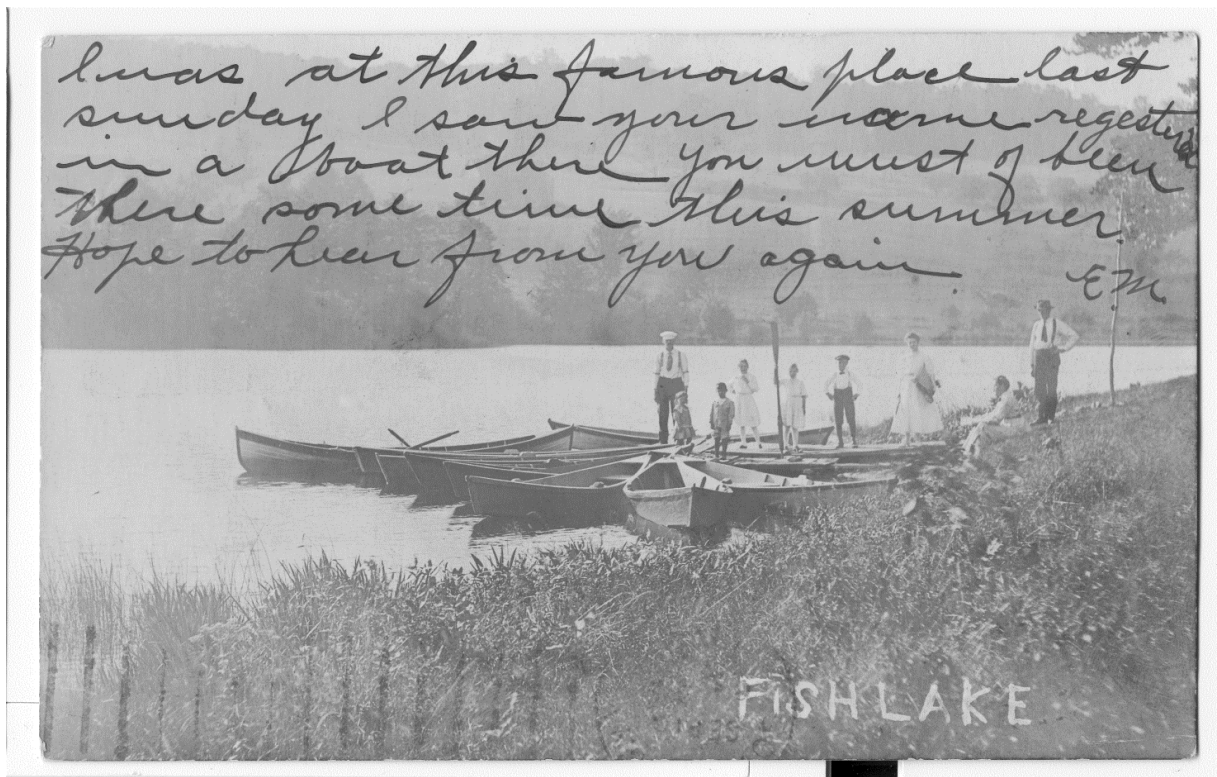
- Permit and encourage the development of commercial entities for the convenience of Town residents.
  - Promote and support the continued development and new start-ups of home-based businesses.
  - Encourage retail, commercial and industrial endeavors that add to the Town's tax base and potentially provide employment to town residents.
  - Require careful planning and site review for all new enterprises that intensifies traffic flow patterns as to not impinge on existing entities.
  - Maintain a balance between commercial and residential land uses while being mindful of the rural nature of the Town.
  - Encourage developers to use Town road standards when planning and constructing private roads and parking areas.
  - Encourage agricultural markets for Town produced crops and animal products.
  - Encourage small scale timber harvesting and wood products.
- Promote the development of bed and breakfast inns, day care facilities, home care, and medical/clinical services.



### Section III.

### Environment and Conservation

- Goal
  - Protect, maintain, and enhance the pastoral character of the Town through careful planning.
- Objectives
  - Prevent expansion and development of activities which would adversely impact the rural nature of the Town.
  - Promote the retention of forested lands through sound harvesting practices and reforestation.
  - Promote ecologically sound Gravel and mining operations and encourage site reclamation.
  - Promote and enforce local ordinances pertaining to littering, illegal dumping, improper burning or disposal of trash, dilapidated or unsafe buildings, and unregistered junk vehicle storage.
  - Support local, county, and state regulations to curb air and water pollution.
  - Develop and encourage tourism attractions and outdoor recreational activities with trails for hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross country skiing, ATV trails, and promote hunting, fishing and boating.



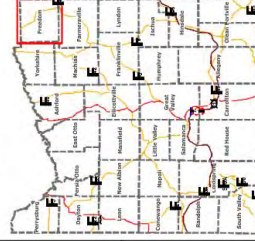
**Fish Lake is now Crystal Lake. Back in the day it was a big picnic area. Boats could be rented at Crystal Lake.**

# Town of Freedom Cattaraugus County, NY

## Agricultural Parcel Map

- Legend**
- Agricultural Parcels
  - Streets
  - Town/Village Roads
  - County Roads
  - State Roads
  - Current Parcels

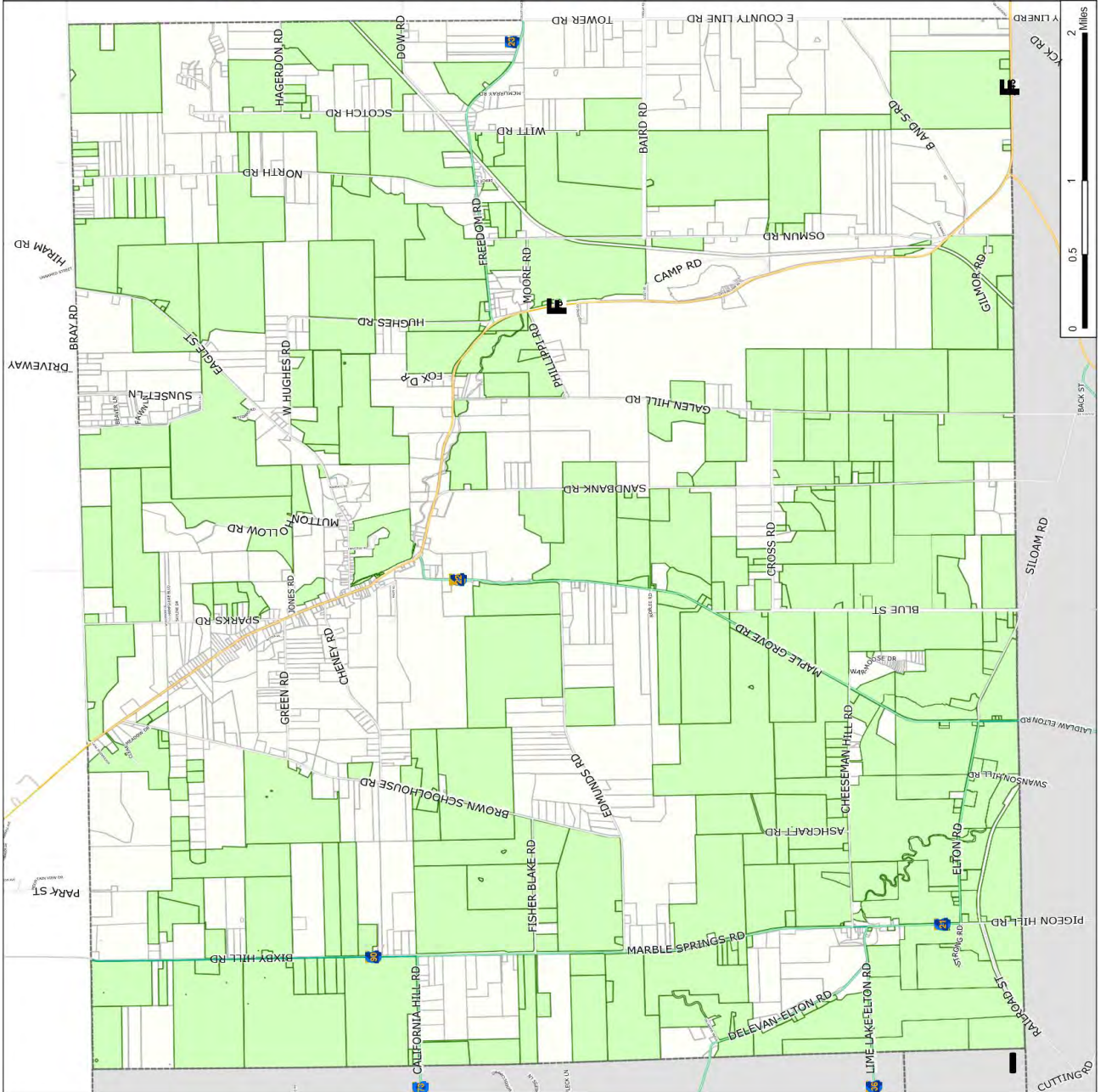
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## Geography

According to the United States Census Bureau, the town has a total area of 41.3 square miles (107.0 km<sup>2</sup>), of which 41.0 square miles (106.2 km<sup>2</sup>) is land and 0.35 square miles (0.9 km<sup>2</sup>), or 0.80%, is water. <sup>^</sup>[6]

The north town line is the border of Wyoming County, and the east town line is the border of Allegany County.

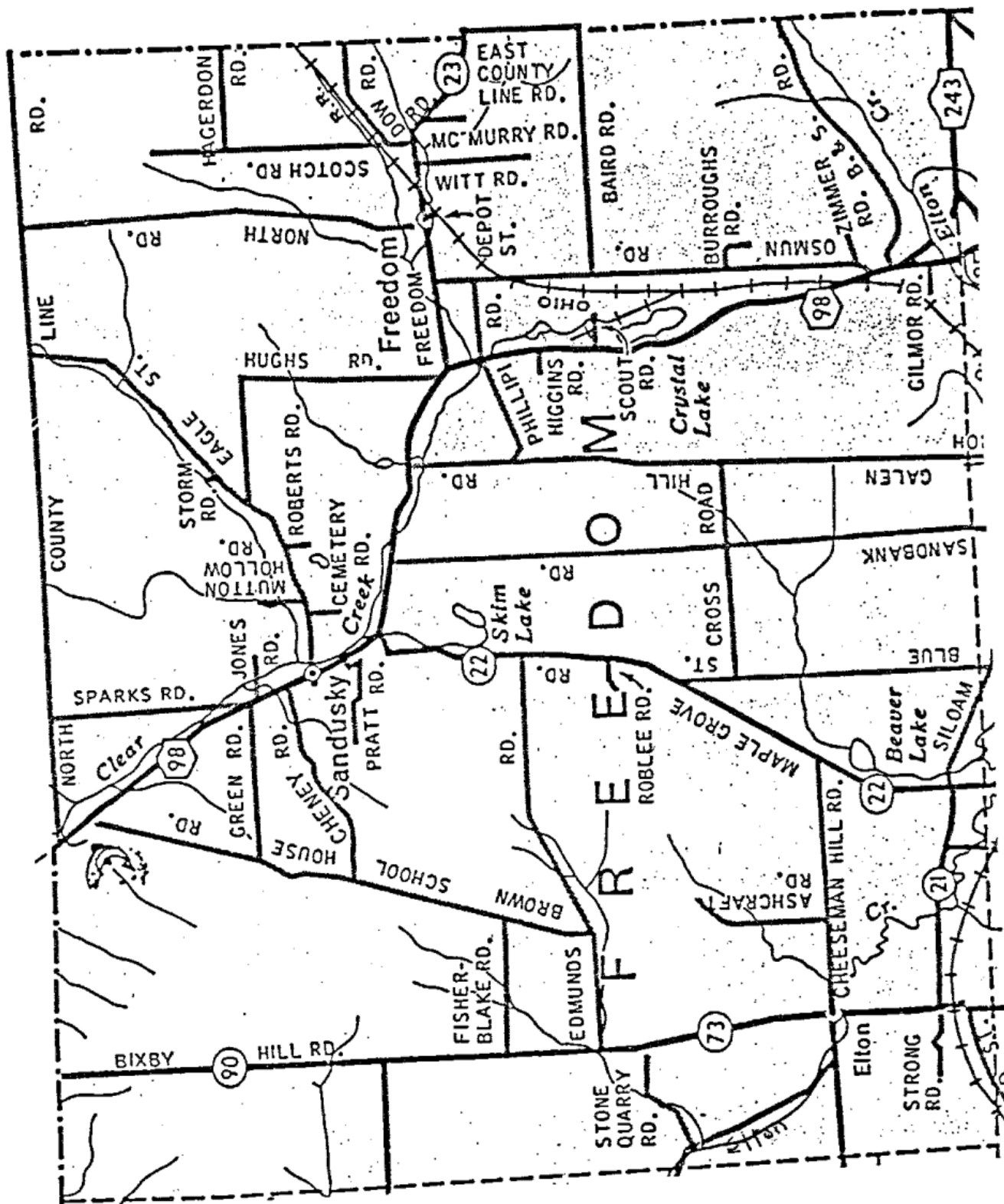
New York State Route 98 is a major north-south highway through the town, and New York State Route 243 begins at the southeast town line.

## Adjacent towns and areas

To the east is the town of Centerville in Allegany County, and to the west are the towns of Yorkshire and Machias. The north town line is formed with the town of Arcade in Wyoming County. The town of Farmersville is on the south.



**The Salem Church was organized in 1850, and is used only one day a year and is well maintained.**



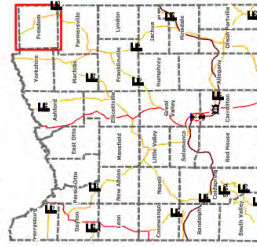
# Town of Freedom Cattaraugus County, NY

## Street Map

### Legend

- Streets
- Town/Village Roads
- County Roads
- State Roads
- Streams

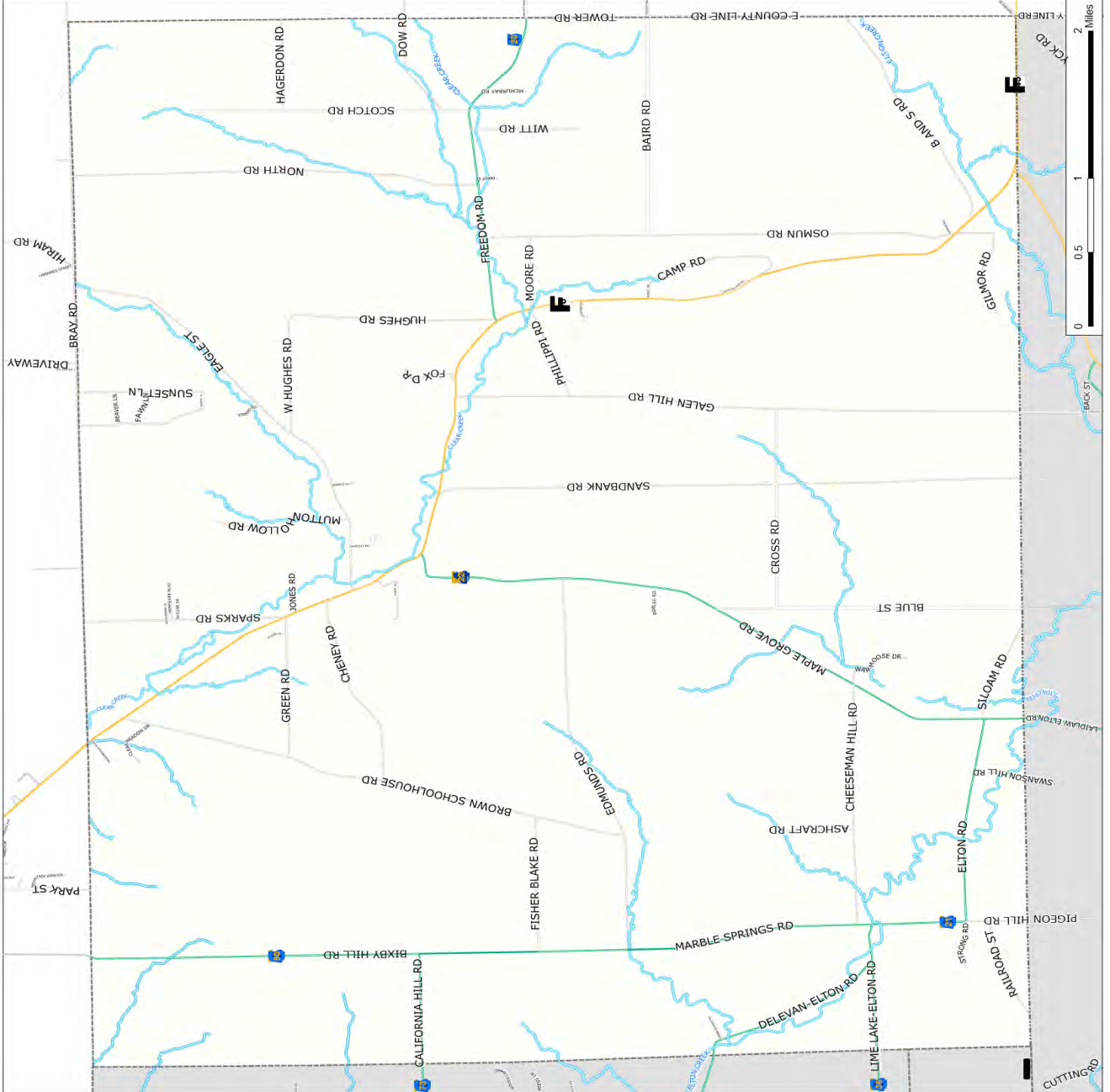
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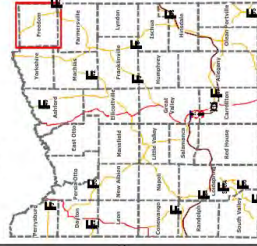
# Town of Freedom Cattaraugus County, NY

## Elevation Map

### Legend

- Streets**  
 Streets  
 Town/Village Roads  
 County Roads  
 State Roads
- Elevation**  
 20ft Contours  
 100ft Contours

Updated November 2023



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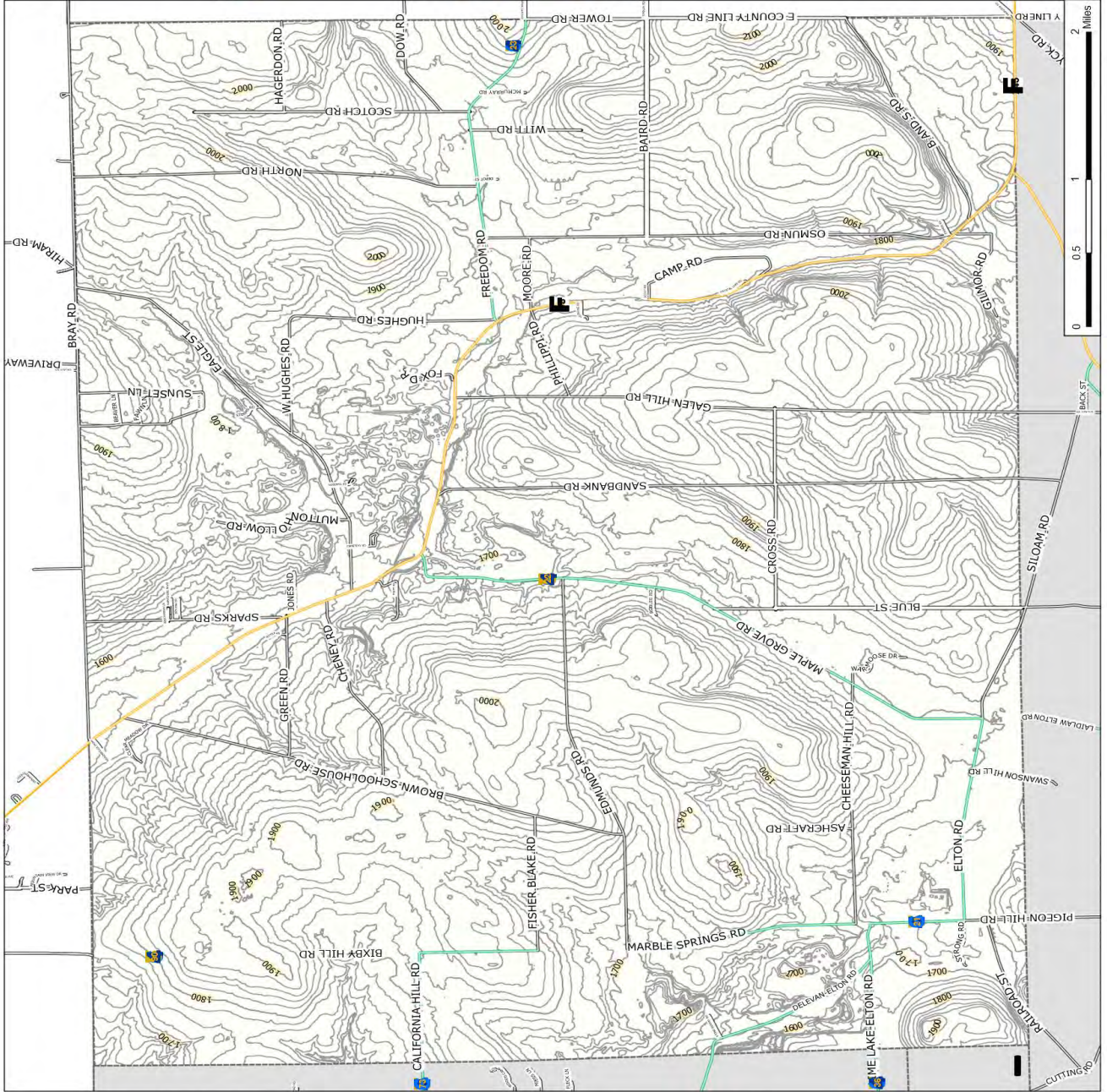
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## Section V.

### Freedom Town Improvements

- Goal
  - To provide for adequate and increased public assembly areas and continued maintenance of all town property.
- Objectives
  - Maintain, repair, and improve the Town Hall and highway department building.
  - Maintain safe and secure storage of all Town records both electronic and paper.
  - Maintain and upgrade all electronic and data processing equipment to ensure adequate communications for Town residents and corresponding administrative agencies.
  - Set aside money annually for capital improvements and equipment replacement.
  - Seek grant funding for all types of capital improvements.
  - Encourage and promote public participation in Town Board and planning committee affairs.
  - Maintain and improve Town parks and cemeteries.



**The Elton Store & Post Office, which was lost in the 1916 flood. C. C. Newman had sold the buisness to J. E. Wright shortley before the flood.**

## Section VI.

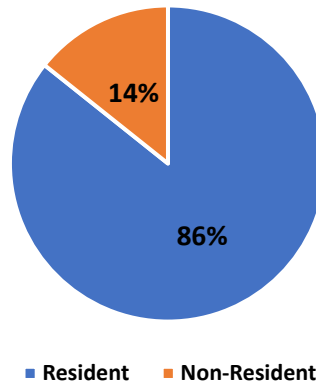
## Survey Responses

### Town Property Owners

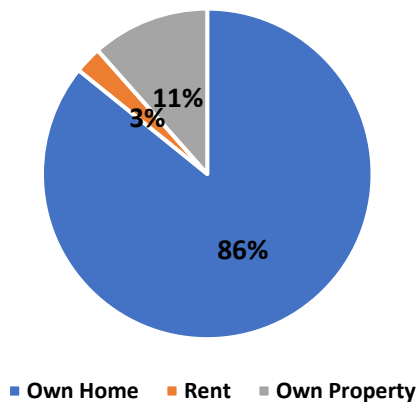
86% reside in town.

14% resides out of town.

### Town Residents



### Own Home, Own Property, or Rent



Residents who own homes, own property, or rent.

The number of people who own homes in Freedom is 86%.

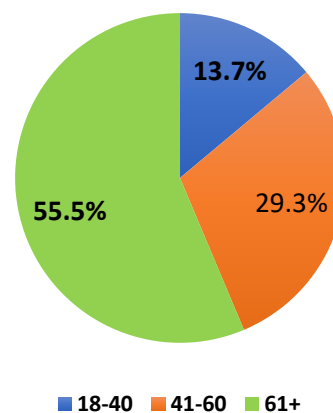
The number of people who just own vacant land is 11%.

The number of people who rent is 3%.

The age groups that were surveyed are as follows.

18-40	13.7%
41-60	29.3%
61+	55.5%

### Age Groups

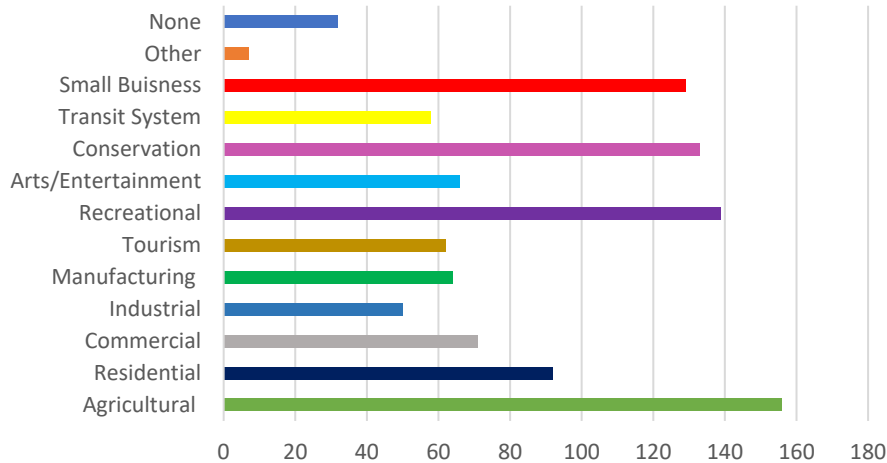




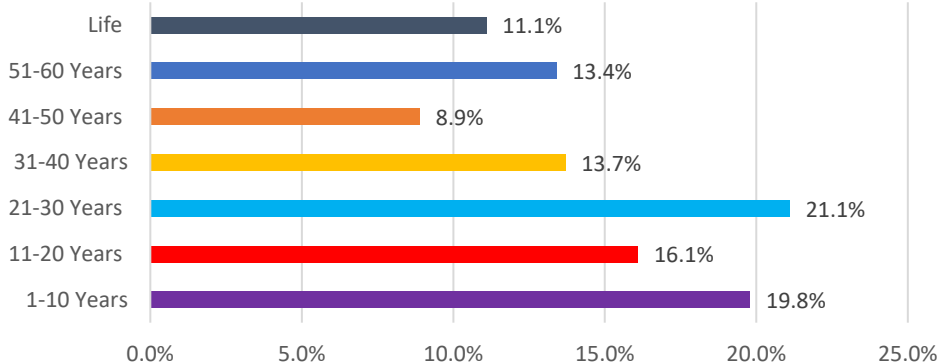
### How the survey was ranked for desired growth.

None	32
Other	7
Small Business	129
Transit System	58
Conservation	133
Arts/Entertainment	66
Recreational	139
Tourism	62
Manufacturing	64
Industrial	50
Commercial	71
Residential	92
Agricultural	156

### Desired Growth



### Years Lived in Freedom

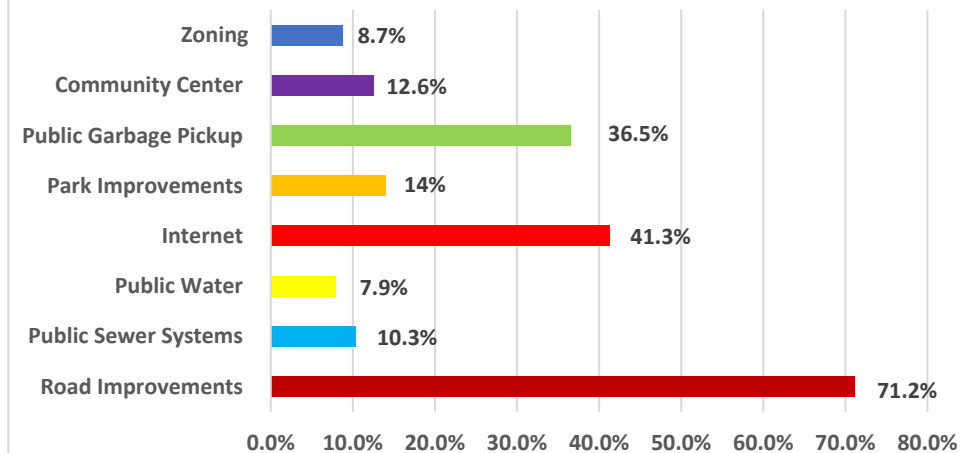


Out of 378 that responded to the Survey here is the response by percentage.

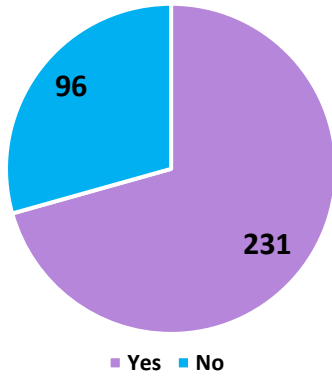
Life	11.1%
51-60 Years	13.4%
41-50 Years	8.9%
31-40 Years	13.7%
21-30 Years	21.1%
11-20 Years	16.1%
1-10 Years	19.8%

Zoning	8.7%
Community Center	12.6%
Public Garbage Pickup	36.5%
Park Improvements	14%
Internet	41.3%
Public Water	7.9%
Public Sewer Systems	10.3%
Road Improvements	71.2%

### Residents Request



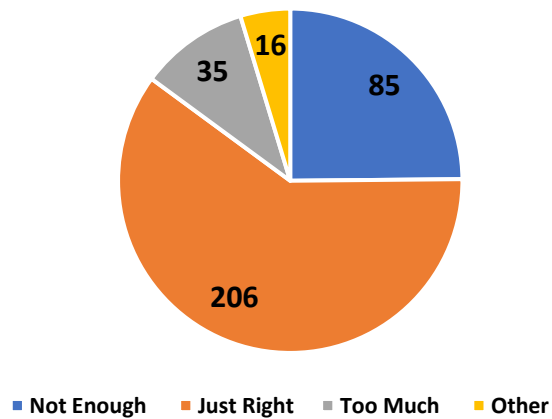
### Towns development



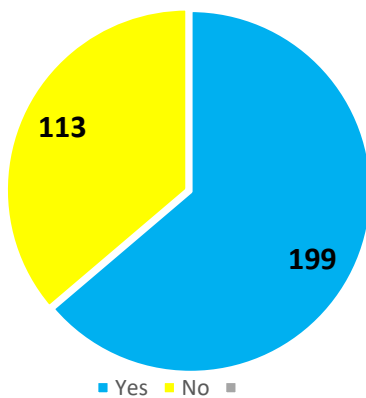
How satisfied with the development of the town so far.

How the town feels on the growth overall.

### Town Growth Overall



### More Recreation



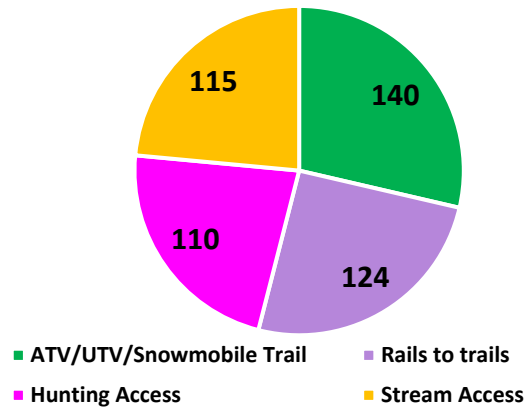
The residents would like to see more recreation in the town.

Yes 199

No 113

Maybe 1

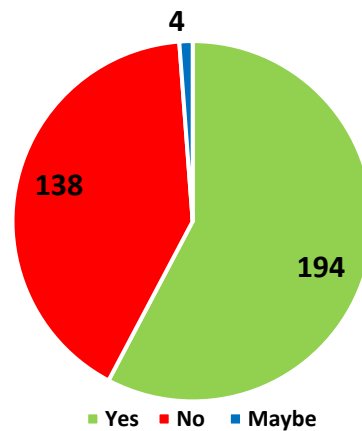
### Ideas for recreation



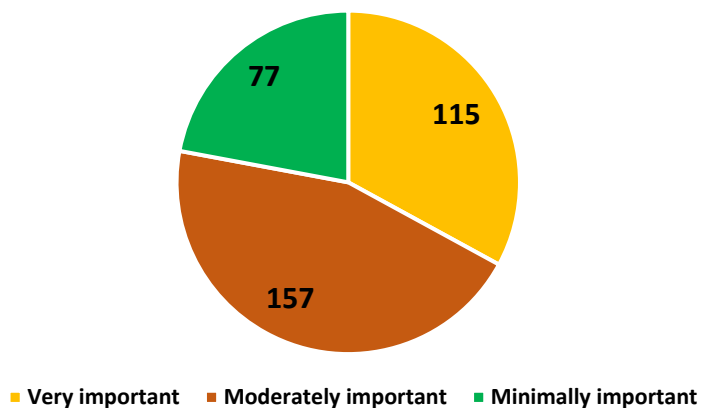
When asked in the survey what the public would like to see for recreation, rails to trails were the most popular.

When asked if the public would attend a meeting to discuss the future of the town, 194 said yes.

### Attending a public meeting



### Historical Preservation



In the survey the question was how important historical preservation is. Most answered moderately important.



## Section VII.

### Town of Freedom Socioeconomic Conditions

The Town of Freedom has several types of big and small businesses within it, we have some larger dairy farms that employ several people, along with a few smaller ones. We also have gravel pits throughout the town that provide employment and resources to several customers. Also, there are construction companies, aggregate haulers, auto repair shops, salvage facilities, golf course/restaurant, racetrack as just an example of the businesses in our community. We have several Amish farmers and businesses involved in our community as well.

We are within reasonable driving distances of many other businesses in other townships. Many of our younger people choose to move closer to those, but some choose to stay and make Freedom their home.

Many of the people who responded to our survey are happy living in a small-town environment in the county, many are happy to see things stay the same.

A favorable sign in the community is that of the 1026 households, 792 are owner occupied and only 96 are rented. Unfortunately, 138 are vacant. US. Census data reports that 8.2% of Freedom residents live below the poverty line which is roughly half the rate in Cattaraugus County (17.3%) and about 3/5 ths of the rate in New York (13.5%).

Another favorable aspect of living in Freedom is that it has a favorable cost of living index, and the housing affordability index is also very favorable compared to other communities. The crime rate in Freedom is 10.42 per 1000 people according to crimegrade.org. This is a good rating compared to the county rate of 17.57 per 1000 residents. In addition to that Cattaraugus County itself is in the 95th percentile for safety, meaning 5% of New York Counties are safer and 95% of counties are more dangerous according to crimegrade.org also. Overall, Freedom is a good place to live economically, and safely compared to other communities in our state. Also, within a 45-minute drive radius we have a large variety and access to many services. From supermarket shopping, auto parts, hospitals. There are also many shops and services provided by Amish communities.



**Freedom Union School was  
destroyed by fire in February  
1913, and a new building was  
put up and was in use by  
November 1913.**

**Section VIII.****Demographics and Survey Results**

Demo Surplus	
Total population	2,003
Male population	1,005
Female population	998
Male median age	33.7
Female median age	34.5
Under 20 years	667
Males under 20	334
Females under 20	333
Population 18+ years	1,396
Percent of Catt County population	2.4%

Population in family households	1,803
Population in non-family households	196
Households with one + person under 18	303
Households with one + person 65+	131
Average household size	2.87
Average family size	3.23

Median household income (2022)	56,983
Per capital income	31,267
Median home value	126,172
Mean home prices	145,996
1- Cost of living index	96.9
1- 100 is the US average, below 100 is more cost effective	
2- housing affordability index	163
2- 100 is the US average, above this number is more affordable	

Marital States	
Married	56.3%
Separated	2.5%
Never married	26.7%
Widowed	4.2%
Divorced	10.3%

Poverty of Disability	
Below poverty level	11.9%
50% below poverty level	1.5%
Rate among disabled males	20.8%
Rate among disabled females	26.1%

Children below poverty level	11.2
------------------------------	------

# of households	1,026
Owner occupied	792 (77.2%)
Renter occupied	96 (9.4%)
Vacant	138 (13.5%)

Education	
Less than high school	11.5%
High school grad	43.3%
Some college or associates	31.5%
Bachelors	5.8%
Graduate degree	7.9%

Ages	
Under 18	29.5%
18-24	8.0%
25-44	30.0%
45-64	23.0%
65+	9.5%



**Main Street of Sandusky during the winter, 1930's.**

## Section IX.

### Creating the Comprehensive Master Plan

In early 2022, the town of Freedom began creating a Comprehensive Master Plan to help guide our community for the next 10 years. This plan is mandated by the state legislature for all towns in New York State.

The key component of this comprehensive plan is community input. This was primarily accomplished by participation of our residents in a survey mailed to all households in our town, it was also available online through the town's website. Notices were posted at several retail stores and advertised in the local Pennysaver and newspaper encouraging the participation of our residents. The results of this particular endeavor were better than expected, with over 36% of households responding. The town has also posted the planning board's schedule and welcomed in person involvement during this endeavor. This continues to be an ongoing process and public input is welcomed at any time. Addendums and amendments to this plan will be made, when necessary, as this is a live or living document.

The data collected from the public identified what issues are paramount in their concerns. This data has guided the town's planning committee, who have been primarily tasked with the comprehensive plan, to incorporate it into a framework for the town's future.



**B & S Railroad, Sandusky Trestle by Route 98**



## Section X.

## Natural Resources

Clear Creek drains a wooded portion of the eastern portion of the Town of Freedom and a wooded area in Allegheny County.

Clear Creek starts in Allegheny County and flows through the Town of Freedom and through the hamlet of Sandusky. At the Wyoming County line at Bray Rd, it continues for about a mile and a half and flows into Cattaraugus Creek. Clear Creek has about 5.5 miles of public fishing rights, found in the Town of Freedom.

Clear Creek is noted for the excellent fishing of Brown and Rainbow Trout.

Crystal lake flows into Moore's Pond which flows into Clear Creek, plus several small streams feed into it. The area in Alleghany County to route 98 sometimes dries up from Moore's Pond (Philippi Rd) it maintains a constant flow.

It also feeds the gravel ground and is a natural resource. There are several commercial gravel pits in the Town of Freedom.

Maple Trees in the town are another natural resource, there are also several maple producers in the town.

- Community Facilities
  - Churches
  - Convenient Store and Gas Station
  - Social Clubs - Senior Citizens
  - Post Office
- Recreation
  - Sandusky Town Park
  - Baseball field at town hall
  - Freedom Park
  - Freedom Raceway
  - Turkey Run Golf Course + Restaurant.
  - Trail systems
  - Snowmobile Trail System
  - Clear Creek
  - Fishing



**Hamlet of Sandusky, looking north**

# Town of Freedom Cattaraugus County, NY

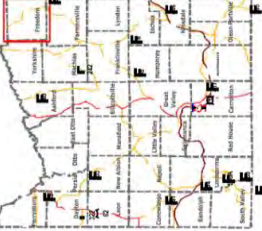
## Floodblain

### Map

### Legend

- Floodplains
- Streams
- Streets
- Town/Village Roads
- County Roads
- State Roads
- Current Parcels
- State Roads

Updated November 2023

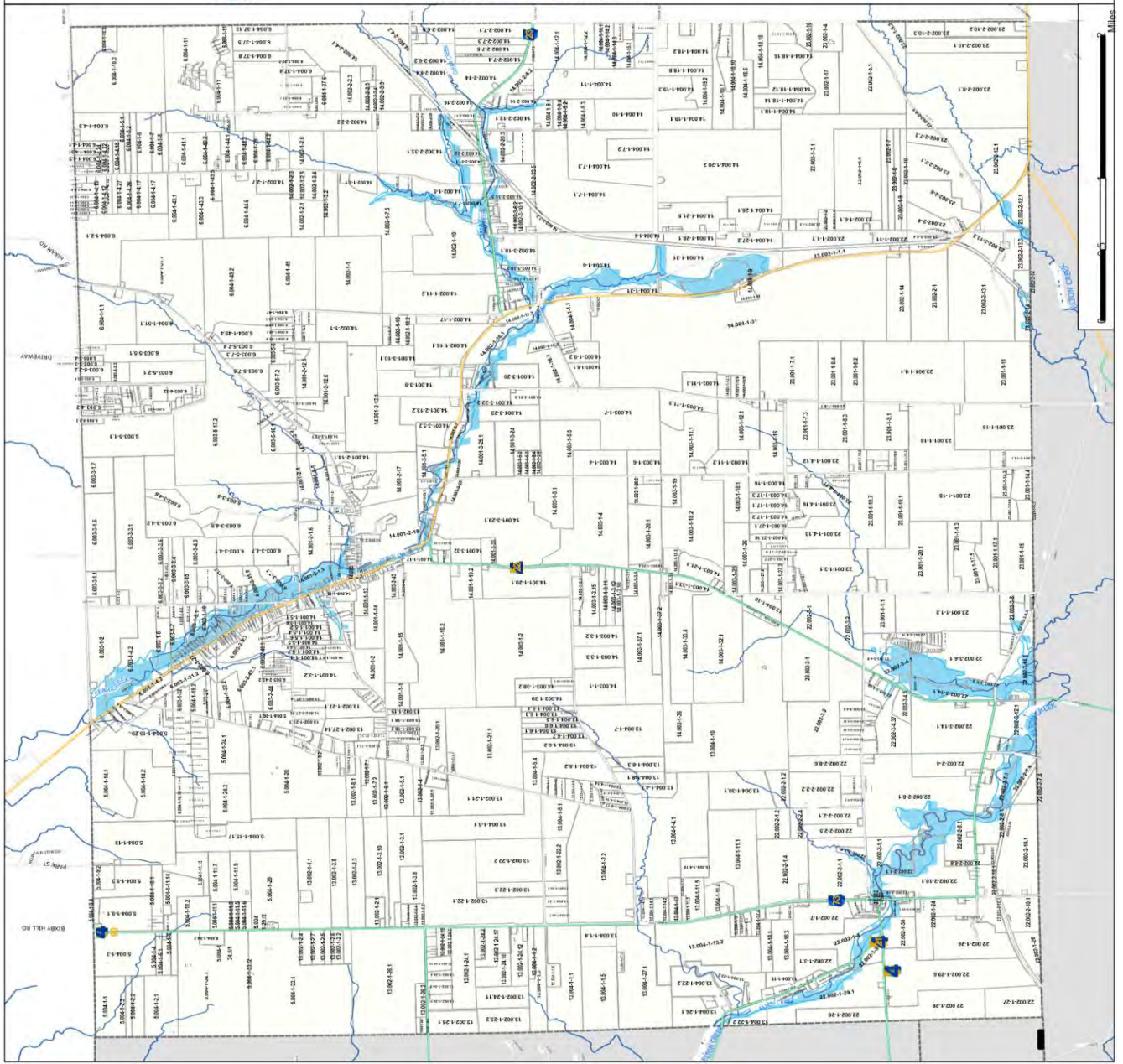


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## **Section XI.**

### **Town of Freedom Cemeteries**

#### **Freedom Rural Cemetery also known as Freedom English Cemetery**

Located on the corner of Freedom Road and Osmun Road in the hamlet of Freedom.

May 1820, Rufus Metcalf deeded ½ acre of land. 1831 Rufus again deeded more land to the cemetery.

Active cemetery. Merged with Forest Lawn Cemetery in August 2023.

#### **Freedom Cemetery Society also known as Freedom Welsh Cemetery**

Located on the corner of Freedom Road and Osmun Road. It is adjacent to the English Section.

This cemetery was originally a part of the yard of the Ebenezer Baptist Church on land sold by John Lewis, in August 1850. This cemetery has been added to several times. The Freedom Cemetery Society, Inc. installed a 24-niche columbarium. This was dedicated during the Freedom Bicentennial weekend in 2011.

Active cemetery. Merged with Forest Lawn Cemetery in August 2023.

#### **Sandusky Cemetery Association**

Located off the south side of Eagle St. on Cemetery Road in the hamlet of Sandusky.

In 1857 there were two deeds to this cemetery. Leroy and Mary J. Brown sold a plot of 4 acres and 30 rods to the Trustees of the Sandusky Cemetery Association. Three days later, Nathan & Sally Lewis sold to the Association 2 ¼ acres and 39 rods. The most noted veteran is Daniel Frederick Bakeman, the proven last surviving pensioned soldier of the Revolution, who died April 5, 1869 aged 109 years, 8 months and 8 days.

Active cemetery.

#### **Salem Cemetery Society**

Located on the corner of Rt. 98 and Galen Hill Road.

In May of 1855, Moses W. and Amanda Alden sold ½ acre of land to the Trustees of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church, called Salem. This cemetery is an old fashioned “churchyard burying ground” as the graves are all around the church building.

Salem is a privately owned cemetery. Plots are issued to Salem Cemetery Society members and only Welsh descendants and their families can be interred.

### **Maple Grove Cemetery**

Located on Maple Grove Road, on the east side of the road near the corner of Blue Street.

In the old days it was also known as Mason Cemetery and Crandall Cemetery. When information was copied from the stones there were only stones visible for 69 burials. This cemetery is not in use now and has been turned over to the Town of Freedom.

### **Siloam Cemetery also known as Schutt's Cemetery**

Located on Maple Grove Rd, it is on the west side of the road between Siloam Rd. and Cheeseman Hill Road.

The Siloam cemetery is on land that was owned by Stephen Schutt. In 1889 - the heirs of Stephen Schutt deeded this land to the trustees of the Siloam Church, which was over the town line on Siloam Road, in Farmersville. In July 1904 the Schutts Corners Cemetery was incorporated as Siloam Cemetery. A few weeks later, the lot owners organized as an Association.

This cemetery is active and has been added to several times.

### **Elton Cemetery - 1<sup>st</sup> known as Cole Settlement Cemetery**

Located on the east side of Pigeon Hill Road, going south out of Elton.

The deed for the Elton Cemetery is for March 5, 1855, Azro and Malvina Jaquish deeded this cemetery, of one acre, to the Freewill Baptist Church. On August 4, 1920, a group of lot owners assembled for a meeting to incorporate the cemetery. In November 1929 Mrs. Adell Arnold sold them more land.

Active cemetery, cemetery was turned over to the town in 2001.

### **Pioneer Cemetery**

When Harry Douglas, historian of the Town & Village of Arcade, and of Wyoming County, wrote the history of Arcade in 1957, he mentioned the cemetery on the Bray farm, on the western side of what is now Rt. 98 at the county line. It was between an orchard and the road. He had heard that the early settlers in that section used it until about 1850. In 1930 a woman doing research went into the area, which had become overgrown. The woman saw evidence of about 20 graves. There were no stones to be seen, but she was told there were two being used as steps at the nearby farmhouse. The inscriptions on these stones were for Elihu Daggett, died March 11, 1837, and for Hannah, his wife, died April 12, 1846. A neighbor lady told her that there were Moyer, Plucker, DeBow and Bateman family members buried there. Mr. Douglas stated that some of them had been removed to the Arcade cemetery on Prospect St. but there were no records of it.





**Sandusky Baptist Church built in 1846,  
active and modernized.**



**Ebenezer Baptist Church, built to serve the Welsh speaking families. Collapsed in January 2001 after  
standing idle for many years.**

## **Section XII.**

### **Town of Freedom History**

The first settlers arrived around 1811. The Town of Freedom is in the northeast corner of Cattaraugus County, with Wyoming Co. to the north and Allegany Co. to the east and contains 26,144 acres. It was set off from Ischua on April 13, 1820. A part of Yorkshire was annexed in 1844. It is a moderately hilly area with gravelly loam soil. Clear Creek and the south branch of Cattaraugus Creek is the principal streams. Beaver Lake is in the south part, Crystal Lake (formerly Fish Lake) in the east, and Skim Lake is in the center, there are several ponds also. There are several big quarries of good building stone found in different parts of town. Today there are several big and small gravel pits in the town where several types of aggregates may be purchased.

The town has several creeks flowing through it and the earliest settlers chose lots along them. The hamlets of Elton, Freedom, and Sandusky are each located along a stream.

The history books tell us that Jemima Clark taught the first school in 1815 and the first schoolhouse was built in 1819. The 1840 census lists 14 schools with 415 scholars. 1822 - the first frame house was built— Earl Sawyer. There were also several churches in the town over the years. Enoch Howlett erected the first sawmill and kept the first store and inn. Willard Law set up a sawmill in Sandusky in 1820, Elam Ellithorpe had a tannery by 1824. As with any of the townships and all the hamlets within them, there was a huge variety of small business to serve customers' needs through the years.

In the first years of settlement here, there was little easy communication with the rest of the world. By the early 1820's there were roads kept open so letters could be carried in or out at first on horseback. The first Freedom Post Office was in the hamlet of Freedom in 1823-24. This would have been in someone's home or place of business. The Sandusky Post Office opened in December of 1830. A post office was opened in the Elton area in February of 1830. When the Rochester and State line railroad came to Freedom hamlet in 1878 there was a station there. The mail was taken by stagecoach to Sandusky and Elton. Over the years there were a few other railroads that went through our town, but none exist today.

Today our town still has a large variety of small and large businesses in our rural setting. Dairy farms, vegetable farms, beef, etc. Also gravel pits, salvage yards, auto repair shops, a golf course, and many others. The Town of Freedom also has churches, maple producers, and many other points of interest as tourists travel through our township to their destinations no matter what direction you choose.

Information taken from the Cattaraugus County website and the Freedom Bicentennial celebration book of 2011.

## Resources:

Census Reporter. Org  
Wikipedia. Org  
New York Demographics.com  
Cit. date. Com  
Office of New York State Comptroller  
Town of Freedom Bicentennial Book  
Freedom's 200 Years of Freedom Calendar  
Village of Arcade  
Cattaraugus County Real Property  
Marie Myers Shearing, Catt. Co Dept. of Economic Development, Planning & Tourism  
Freedom Historian Lorna Spencer  
Town of Freedom Comprehensive Plan Survey



**Freedom Bethel Baptist Church, organized for English speaking Welsh; built in 1896.**

## Comprehensive Committee Members

Norm Feldman, Planning Board Chairman

Lyle Morgan, Planning Board Member

Michael Kaufman, Planning Board Member

David Reinhard, Planning Board Member

Josh Cutler, Town Board Councilman/ Liaison to the Planning Board

Sherry Bernard, Deputy Historian

Keeley Holland, Layout and Graphics Specialist

Mindy Holland, Town Clerk



**Freedom Depot, in January 1928, a fire destroyed the depot and other buildings. By July 1928 the new depot opened.**





**The Freedom Town Hall**