

II. PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The preservation of Rock Creek became an early objective of County policy. With the establishment of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) in 1927, and enactment of the Capper-Crampton Act by Congress in 1935, Rock Creek Park was gradually extended upstream from the District of Columbia line toward the headwaters of Rock Creek, located within the Upper Rock Creek Planning Area. Initially, this was seen as a simple extension of the park system in much the same manner as had been provided in the District of Columbia, except that it was narrower in width as it passed through the more spacious suburbs.

Beginning in 1956, emphasis was placed on extension of the park system into the sensitive headwaters area for conservation purposes. Led by the Rock Creek Watershed Association, the County began to plan in earnest to prevent the periodic, severe flooding of Rock Creek. The Montgomery County Council, the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, and the M-NCPPC sponsored a study of Upper Rock Creek under the federal Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 83-566). As a result of this study, Lake Needwood and Lake Bernard Frank were constructed at locations north of Norbeck Road. Today, these lakes are the featured attractions of Rock Creek Regional Park. They mitigate downstream flooding and erosion and trap sediment from their tributary areas, providing environmental protection of the watershed and environmental education for County citizens.

To further strengthen the conservation effort for the Rock Creek area, in 1968 the Montgomery County Planning Board prepared, and the County Council approved, the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan. It encompasses approximately 11,000 acres.² The Master Plan reflects the basic intent of the General Plan to provide a "step-down" in development between the urban areas to the east and west and the rural areas to the north. The General Plan states that "estate zoning should be employed in buffer areas between the corridor cities and the natural resource wedge to provide a reasonable transition and reduce pressures for the continuation of urban zones beyond their optimum limits."

The Master Plan is significant because it represents one of the earliest successful attempts of the County to rezone land by Sectional Map Amendment to lower densities. It proposes low-density, semi-rural land uses in the headwaters of Rock Creek as a protection for the lakes and the stream. This "end state" plan and proposed pattern of development provides a solution to the problem of development pressure in the wedge, while also providing protection to the two sedimentation and flood control lakes - Needwood and Frank - and protection to the Rock Creek Watershed in general.

² The relative position of the Upper Rock Creek Planning Area is shown on figure 1. More specifically, the planning area is bounded on the west by Frederick Road (MD 355) Redland Road, (including the Redland intersection), Muncaster Mill Road (MD 115), and Laytonsville Road (MD 124) north to its intersection with Warfield Road and then further northward to Olney-Laytonsville Road at the northern tip of the area. The northeastern and eastern boundaries are the Olney-Laytonsville Road (MD 108), a tributary of the North Branch of Rock Creek, and the North Branch to its confluence with Rock Creek. The southern boundary is the corporate limit of the City of Rockville.

TABLE 1
1968 UPPER ROCK CREEK MASTER PLAN
EXISTING ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS
(Acres)

Zoning Classification	Acres	% of Total (Acres)
RE-2C (2 Acre Lots with Cluster Option - Minimum Lot 25,000 Sq. Ft.)	4,200	38%
RE-1 (1 Acre Lots)	3,700	34%
R-200 (½ Acre Lots)	2,100	19%
R-200/PD-2 (½ Acre Lots with PD Option 2 Units Per Acre)	250	3%
R-90 (9,000 Sq. Ft. Lots)	25	
R-150 (15,000 Sq. Ft. Lots)	30	
R-T (12.5 Units Per Acre)	25	
C-1 (Convenience Commercial)	20	0.20%
C-3 (Highway Commercial)	6	
I-1 (Light Industrial)	400	6%
I-2 (Heavy Industrial)	200	
	<u>11,000</u> ± Acres*	

* Inclusive of areas studied in the Shady Grove Sector Plan and Olney Master Plan.

TABLE 2
SUBDIVISION ACTIVITY CHART
(Acres)

Total Acres	11,000
Committed	
Approved Subdivision Plan	1,000
Parkland (Existing/Approved)	3,700
Developed	<u>3,350</u>
Total	8,000
Acres Remaining Uncommitted	<u>3,000</u>

* Inclusive of areas studied in the Shady Grove Sector Plan and Olney Master Plan.

this pattern of development will ultimately be more than 3,700 acres³ of stream valley parkland, 500 acres of which remain to be acquired.

Thousands of dollars have been invested by federal, state, and local governments to provide an extensive network of recreational activities in the District of Columbia and Montgomery County. Protection of the watershed will continue to enhance the investment. In addition, the Rock Creek stream system ultimately reaches a major tributary of the Chesapeake Bay, thereby affecting its water quality. Efforts to maintain the overall water quality of the watershed will support State initiatives to protect the Chesapeake Bay.

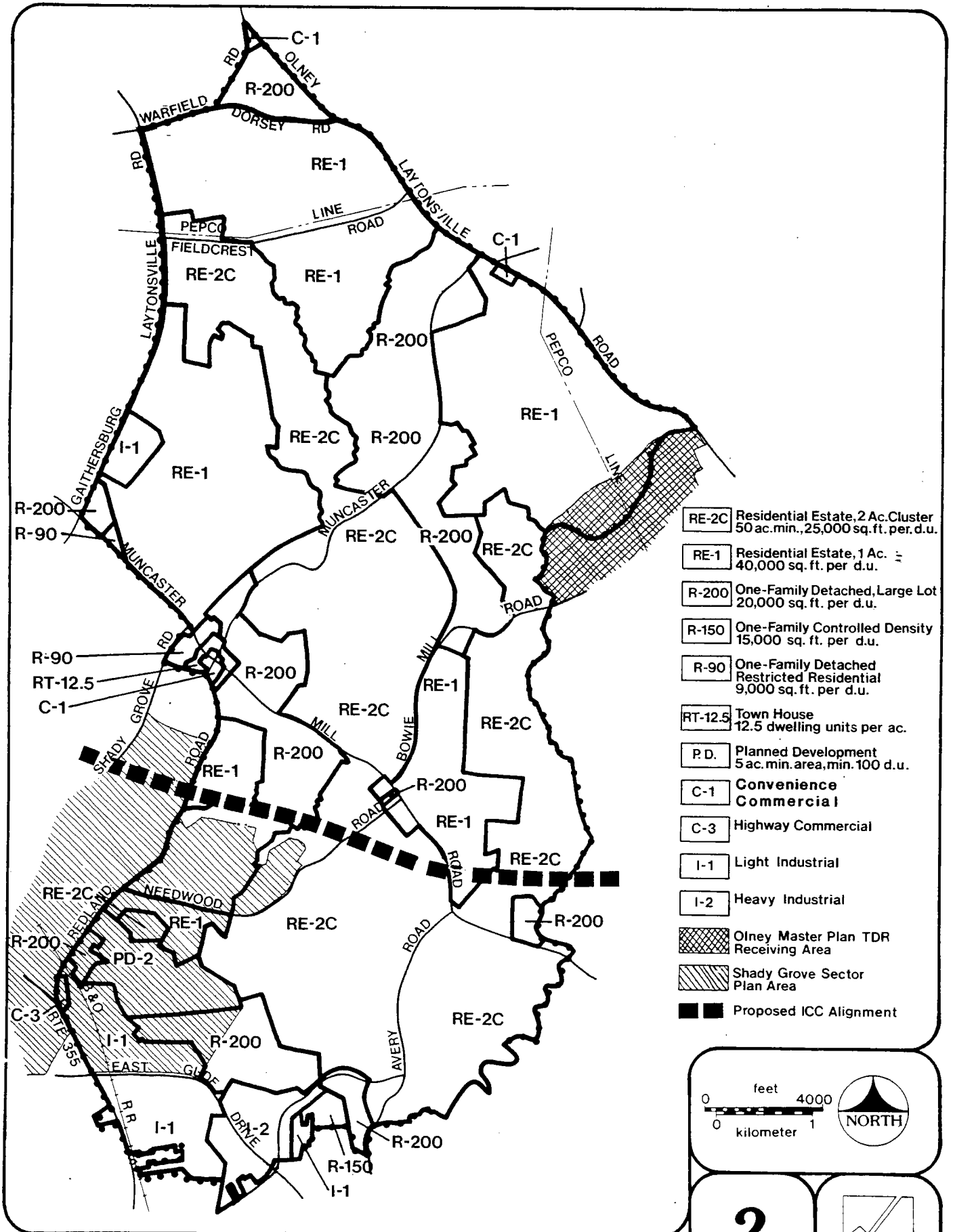
The Master Plan and this Amendment recommends a land use pattern sensitive to the natural environment. The watershed is comprised of three distinct land forms -- the valley floor, the valley walls, and the high ground (ridges). Generally, lower density residential uses (RE-1 and RE-2C zoning) are established surrounding and adjacent to public open spaces in the Rock Creek Valley, with medium residential densities (R-200 zoning) established on land along the ridges. The result is a linear pattern of proposed medium density development along two ridges of high ground above Muncaster Mill Road. Industrial uses (I-1 and I-2 zoning) are provided in the area generally along Gude Drive and the B & O Railroad in the southern portion of the planning area, south of Lakes Needwood and Frank. Redland Center, located near the intersection of Shady Grove Road and Muncaster Mill Road, provides local commercial services (C-1 zoning) surrounded by higher-density residential uses in the R-200, R-90, and R-T Zones. Figures 2, 3, and 4, and table 1 illustrate and define the existing zoning classifications for the entire planning area.




Since adoption of the Master Plan in 1968, the Upper Rock Creek Planning Area has been affected by the Shady Grove Sector Plan and the Olney Master Plan, as well as two master plan amendments.

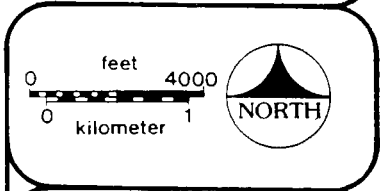
The 238-acre area studied in the 1977 Shady Grove Sector Plan, within the Upper Rock Creek Planning Area, is the area southeast of Redland Road. Land use recommendations for undeveloped property in this area followed the same principles as outlined in the 1968 Master Plan; the only exception being a planned development option (PD-2) on an R-200 zoned parcel. (See figure 2.) An area studied in the 1980 Olney Master Plan also is located within the Upper Rock Creek Planning Area. It is a 22-acre parcel north of Bowie Mill Road and west of the Pepco right-of-way. The Olney Master Plan recommends "residential, one family" with a Transfer of Development Right (TDR) density of two units per acre. (See figure 2.)

In addition to the aforementioned master planning efforts, two amendments to the Master Plan have been approved. In 1979, a master plan amendment was approved that showed the proposed access route to the County landfill (Fieldcrest Road), confirmed the proposed low-density land use pattern for the area traversed by the access route, updated park boundary lines, and designated an area appropriate for a TDR receiving area study as part of the Olney Master Plan TDR program. In early 1983 another master plan amendment was approved that deleted two arterial roadways and the proposed relocation of Muncaster Mill Road east of the proposed ICC.

³ Currently, 3,200 acres of stream valley parkland have been acquired.



- RE-2C** Residential Estate, 2 Ac. Cluster
50 ac. min., 25,000 sq. ft. per d.u.
- RE-1** Residential Estate, 1 Ac. ±
40,000 sq. ft. per d.u.
- R-200** One-Family Detached, Large Lot
20,000 sq. ft. per d.u.
- R-150** One-Family Controlled Density
15,000 sq. ft. per d.u.
- R-90** One-Family Detached
Restricted Residential
9,000 sq. ft. per d.u.
- RT-12.5** Town House
12.5 dwelling units per ac.
- P.D.** Planned Development
5 ac. min. area, min. 100 d.u.
- C-1** Convenience
Commercial
- C-3** Highway Commercial
- I-1** Light Industrial
- I-2** Heavy Industrial
-  Olney Master Plan TDR
Receiving Area
-  Shady Grove Sector
Plan Area
-  Proposed ICC Alignment





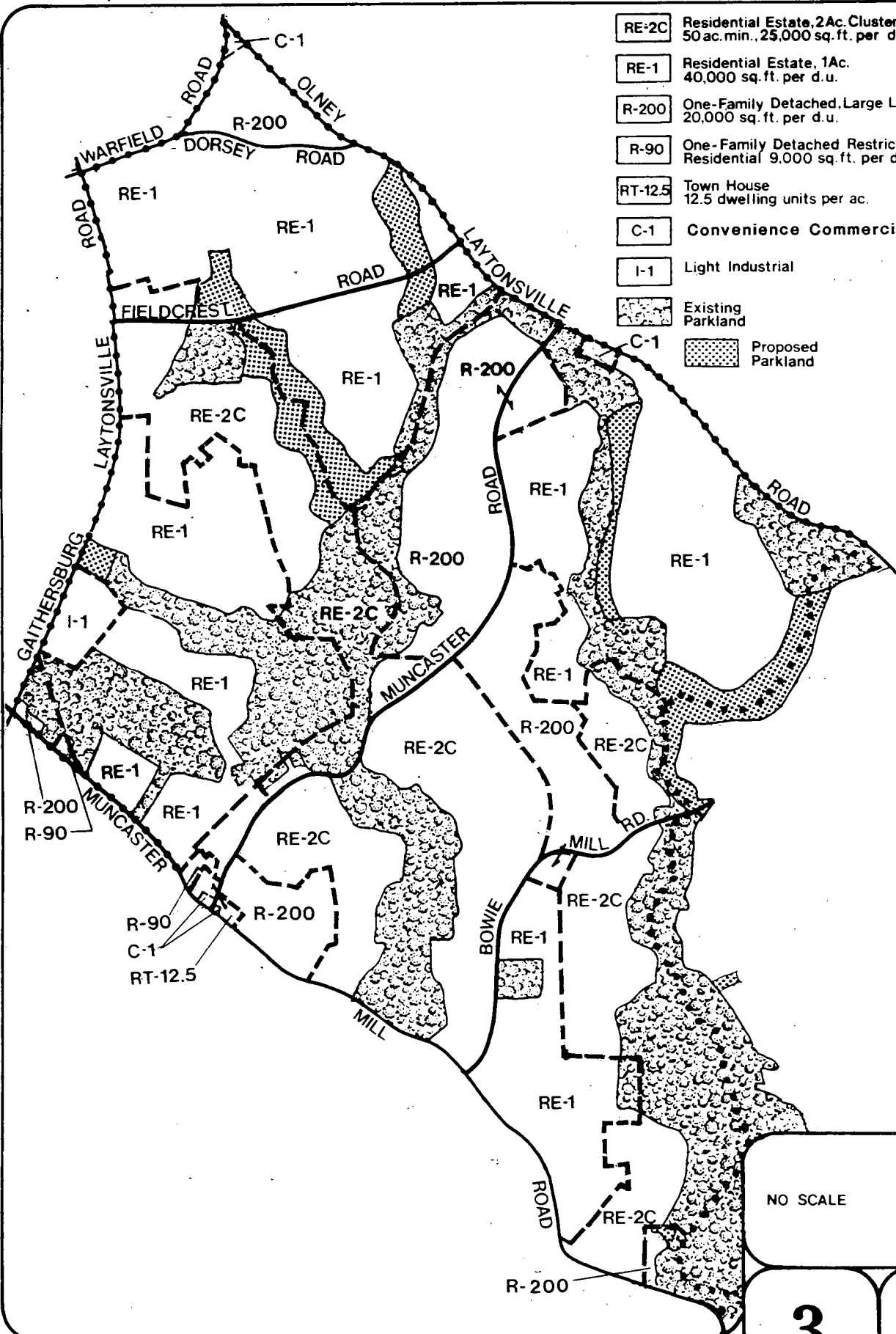
MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT FOR
ROCK CREEK
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

EXISTING ZONING

2
 FIGURE



- RE-2C** Residential Estate, 2Ac. Cluster
50 ac. min., 25,000 sq. ft. per d.u.
- RE-1** Residential Estate, 1Ac.
40,000 sq. ft. per d.u.
- R-200** One-Family Detached, Large Lot
20,000 sq. ft. per d.u.
- R-90** One-Family Detached Restricted
Residential 9,000 sq. ft. per d.u.
- RT-12.5** Town House
12.5 dwelling units per ac.
- C-1** Convenience Commercial
- I-1** Light Industrial
-  Existing Parkland
-  Proposed Parkland



MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT FOR
ROCK CREEK
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

EXISTING ZONING
ABOVE MUNCASTER MILL ROAD

NO SCALE

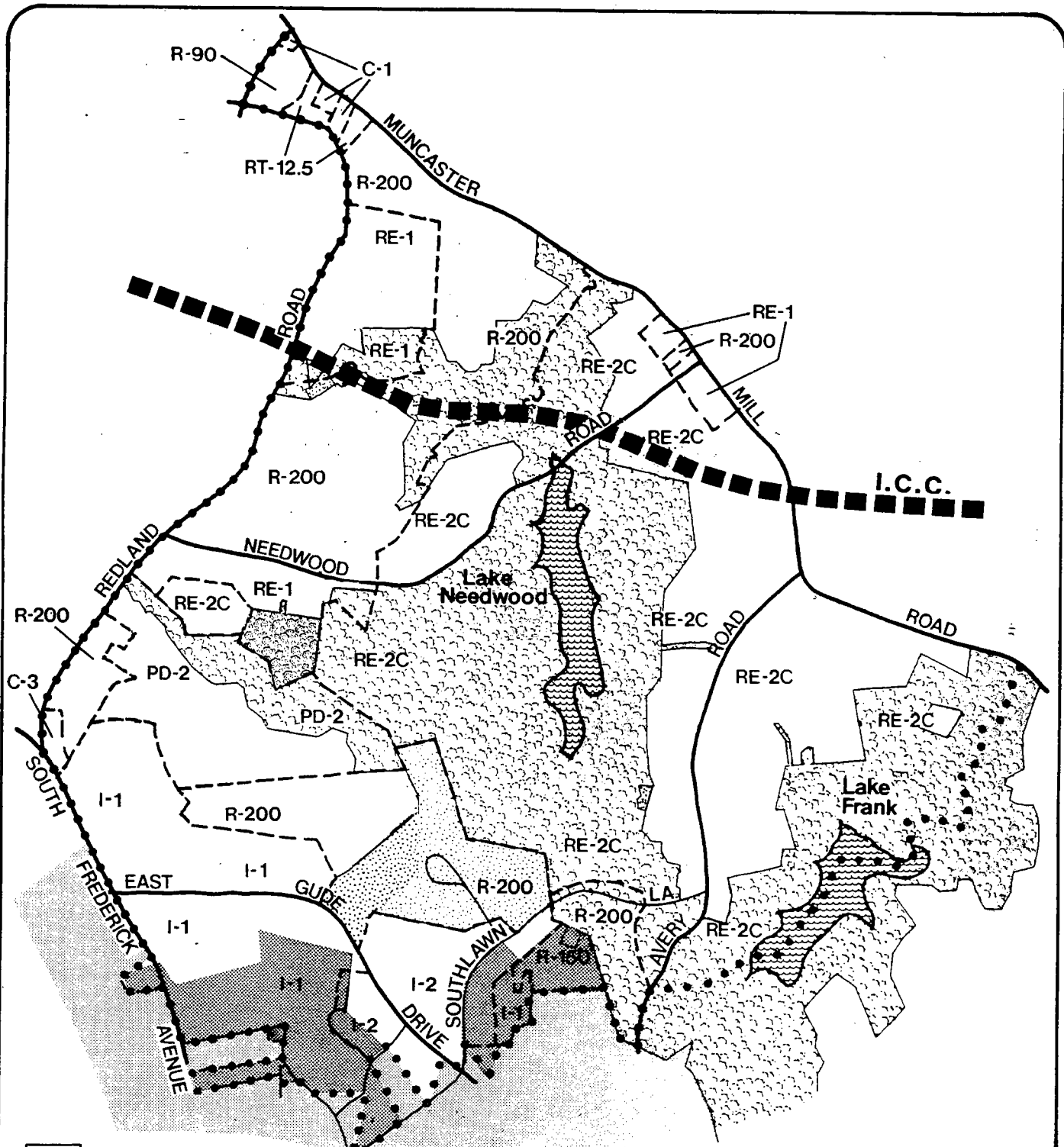


3

FIGURE



MNCPPC



- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------|
| RE-2C Residential Estate, 2Ac. Cluster
50ac. min., 25,000 sq. ft. per d.u. | PD Planned Development Zone
Five Ac. Min. Area, Min. 100 d.u. | Existing Parkland |
| RE-1 Residential Estate, 1Ac.
40,000 sq. ft. per d.u. | C-1 Convenience Commercial | Proposed Parkland |
| R-200 One-Family Detached, Large Lot
20,000 sq. ft. per d.u. | C-3 Highway Commercial | City of Rockville |
| R-150 One-Family Controlled Density
15,000 sq. ft. per d.u. | I-1 Light Industrial | Maximum Expansion Limits |
| R-90 One-Family Detached Restricted Residential
9,000 sq. ft. per d.u. | I-2 Heavy Industrial | |
| RT-12.5 Town House
12.5 dwelling units per ac. | | |

NO SCALE

4
FIGURE

MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT FOR
ROCK CREEK
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

EXISTING ZONING
BELOW MUNCASTER MILL ROAD