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**THE PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS OPINIONS OF
TWO MICHIGAN TOWNSHIP BOARDS:
A Q-METHODOLOGY INQUIRY**

By

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ABSTRACT

THE PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS OPINIONS OF TWO MICHIGAN TOWNSHIP BOARDS: A Q-METHODOLOGY STUDY

By

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Our nations' land resources face great pressures from population and development. One of the greatest considerations that elected officials must make regarding growth in development is the ability to balance property rights. Over the last 20 years, property rights discourse has grown louder, especially evident from several U.S. Supreme Court cases.

In Michigan, some township boards have the responsibility for planning and land use regulations. This places these local entities on the front line with regards to property rights. Michigan is also like other states in that it is experiencing suburban sprawl and the loss of farmland and open space.

Therefore, this research examines two township boards' opinions about property rights. Questions the paper addresses include: Do township boards appear to be "gun shy" about "takings" when creating land use restrictions? Are there bi-polar and widely disparate opinions in property rights philosophy?

Through the use of Q-methodology, this research validates a previous study performed in 1976. The findings from this paper resemble similar factors from the 1976 study and identify three factor types: parochial proprietarians, responsible proprietarians and environmentalists.

Q-methodology provides for the "discovery" of subjective beliefs in a small population sample. It correlates people instead of tests, unlike standard survey research. Through factor analysis the methodology can group residents into discrete factors that share certain perspectives or points of view.

A key finding is that these locally elected officials want the state to provide technical assistance to them. However, they do not want direct state involvement. This bodes well for enhancing the outreach and extension efforts at Michigan State University. Through its resources it can disseminate crucial information to assist public officials in decision-making efforts.

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DEDICATION

To my parents...

At every turn in my life, you have always been there for my brothers and me. Without your unfailing love and patience, none of this would have been possible. To both of you I say "thank you," and dedicate this dissertation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As with any project or experience in life, there are certain people who have done a lot to ensure that a person stays on course. It is only right and just to recognize these individuals and this effort is no different.

Other than my parents, to whom this dissertation is dedicated, my teachers have also served as mentors and sources of inspiration. This author would have never reached this point in his education if it had not been for the efforts of four key teachers in my life. To Drs. Booker Ingram and J. David Gillespie - professors and friends at Presbyterian College - goes my utmost thanks. These two friends encouraged me to pursue a graduate education. Dr. Ingram prodded me to pursue a graduate education, and a career as a college professor, by inviting me back several times over the years to give presentations in his political science classes. Dr. Gillespie assisted me with the mechanics of the Q-METHOD software package and the initial interpretation of the data for this dissertation. Of course, any errors of commission or omission are strictly mine. A third teacher is my friend and master's advisor, Dr. Eric Fitch of Marietta College. He pushed me toward the goal of earning a doctorate. Finally, I would like to thank my Ph.D. advisor and committee chair, Dr. Eckhart Dersch, who

understood and supported my teaching interests and goals. His advice and friendship has been indispensable.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

The subjective differences in politicians' opinions toward land use activities are important in devising innovative public policies and fostering sustained communication. In Michigan, the group of politicians that will be studied are the township boards, one of the most local levels of government in the state. Many townships are seeing rapid development pressures which are impacting residents' way of life.¹ Therefore, it is important to determine how township boards perceive private property rights in order to understand their propensity for developing land use regulations. After all, any land management efforts created unilaterally in one community can impact another. Should not townships, then, be aware of how other township boards perceive property rights? This research will analyze how township boards view private property rights not only from its own particular township's perspective, but also from the perspective of the other townships. This research effort will compare the results of an earlier Q study on land use regulations with this study's findings.

¹ "Meridian Township residents have long been concerned about maintaining the quality of their community, particularly the quality of residential life.... By the year 2010, the population could increase to between 41,200 and 45,700 residents, assuming that previous trends and land use policies continue." Comprehensive Development Plan, Charter Township of Meridian, May 24, 1993, p.1.

Outline of the Research

Chapter One presents the background and lays the framework for the research. It will outline the method of the study in analyzing political opinions regarding property rights. The Second Chapter examines the legal framework of property rights and land use regulations, drawing from brief synopses of U.S. Supreme Court land use cases involving local governments and the issue of takings, and explores the property rights opinions of non-elected officials.

Chapter Three, Methods of the Research, covers Q-Methodology in greater detail.² It presents an historical introduction of the methodology, as well as how it has been used for this study. The chapter also provides a brief description of the computer software package employed in the analysis. Chapter Four consists of data interpretation. It also analyzes the results obtained from the township boards and their opinions about property rights compared with an earlier Q study. Finally, Chapter Five gives the recommendations and conclusions, and connects the results of the study with a policy prescription. The last chapter also makes recommendations for future research.

BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

In order to understand why this research is being undertaken, it is necessary to have the factual background. Management of the human/environment interface is an ongoing activity of society. Alterations have been made to the land for agriculture, development and construction. Land use changes have resulted in a decline of wildlife

² For an examination of how Q works and how it is implemented consult Chapter Three.

habitat and land and water drainage encroachment on farms, human overcrowding and congestion. Each of these issues leads to conflicts over competing land use.

Throughout history, however, governments have tried to stabilize these conflicts through effective regulation of certain land uses in order to maintain the social order.

Yet, the government's interest in maintaining order often clashes with property owners' often sacrosanct view of private property protections. Property owners stipulate that if land is taken by the government for any purpose, then the government is obligated to compensate for the its use.³ Sometimes compensation happens, sometimes it does not. Numerous Supreme Court cases have been decided on the "takings" issue and land use regulation. This research does not concentrate on the legal nuances or in the legal "hair splitting" of *takings*.

National research conducted by Steve Brown and James G. Coke (Brown and Coke 1977) in 1976 on Ohio and other selected states critiques the views of citizens and politicians on a proposed National Land Planning Act. Brown and Coke (1977) state that a public consensus could develop on land policy with three basic assumptions:

One was the continued faith in progress which translated into the view that economic growth per se was a good thing. The second was a corollary to the first: zoning and other land use controls should not interfere unduly with the engine of economic growth. The only defensible justification for interfering with property rights today would be to maintain property values in the future. The third assumption was that the application of land use regulations should be completely decentralized to local governments. These were police power regulations which state legislatures should make available on an optional basis to cities that wanted to use them. Beyond that, only the courts should be concerned with local government performance.

³ See Amendment V to the U.S. Constitution.

These three assumptions have formed the basis for the statements on land use regulation that have been distributed to township boards. At issue is the relevance of the human/ environment interface, although Brown does not use this terminology. Human values which favor growth and development are being heavily considered, with the resulting loss of many sensitive ecological areas. Legislation at the Federal level, though, stresses the protection of endangered species, coastal areas and farmland. Citizens are concerned that granting greater rights to species other than themselves threatens their way of life. To them, nature appears to be elevated to a higher plane and subverts human values.

In other places of the country, urban areas are spilling over into rural spaces, with residents in these rural parts of America also feeling challenged to preserve their way of life and communities, and the rural landscapes. These concerns have manifested themselves in the American West. In the West, residents' ways of life often conflict with the preservation or protection of an endangered species.

Many people in the West, and others in the U.S., voted in 1994 to send to Congress representatives who more accurately represented their interests. The 104th Congress reviewed such legislation as the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act and others that were seen as threatening to their constituents' way of life or to economic development. Attempts were made to roll back regulations such as Senator Bob Dole's sponsorship of the Private Property Protection Act. This about-face on the past 30 years of environmental legislation is due primarily to greater Federal government intrusion into private property rights. These assumptions entail judicial opinions that are counter to the Constitution, and arbitrary and capricious bureaucratic

rule-making. In effect, westerners and other natural resource users believe their rights are being taken from them by non-elected, unaccountable officials of the Federal government. In particular, these citizens, as well as others, believe local government is the best suited entity to make these decisions, and should be able to do so without interference.

At the heart of balancing the interests of competing land use policies, are elected officials entrusted with the responsibility of responding to citizens' demands for protecting their ways of life. Local governments must balance these diverse interests and yet contain unchecked growth while still providing for economic development. Others argue that the judicial system should not make these decisions on private property rights, but that such concerns ought to be left to the local governments to decide. Some legal scholars think that the judicial system is the most capable governmental entity to balance these interests. Yet in many instances, the judicial system acts as a *de facto* policy-making board which is not elected, and certainly not representative of the people. Fundamental, then, to understanding why land use regulations are implemented, is the importance of surveying local elected officials' opinions regarding property rights protection.

Through the use of Q-method and co-orientation, the subjective differences of two township boards will be illuminated. Co-orientation involves the respondent looking at how another person or group perceives an issue (Chaffe 1968). For instance, the subject is asked to look at the same issue through the lens of the other township, in essence placing themselves in the shoes of the other board members. Co-

orientation might best be accomplished through the use of operant subjectivity and Q methodology.

Steven Brown defines *operant subjectivity* to mean: "It is subjective since each person's viewpoint, on political or any other matters, is simply that - his viewpoint. It is operant because it exists naturally within a particular setting." (Brown 1980).

Therefore, each person may interpret discussion or ideas differently, leading to different ways of communicating. William Stephenson (1953) considers the "playing out" of beliefs and behavior to be the differences or similarities inherent in communication. This assumption means that decision makers may take for granted that solutions to problems are easily agreed upon. This also implies that problem solving may occur through like-minded individuals. However, individuals have different opinions, as do elected officials. Also, opinions are shared by other people but perhaps at a different level. It may be best to think of this as William Stephenson has, using the concept of quantum mechanics in physics.

In quantum mechanics, electrons are estimated through mathematical probability to be in a particular place in their orbit. In addition, the electron, when combined with other atoms, may be shared. Mathematical calculations represent the bonding of atoms based on the number of electrons each atom shares. Although bonding is not seen, again, probability estimates the behavior of atoms at the sub-atomic level and explains a "*quantum leap*" (Hazen and Trefil 1990; Stephenson 1982, 1987). In essence, an electron will jump to another atom's orbit; but it is not seen doing so, yet the electron is shared by differing atoms. This concept for *quantum mechanics* is the same principle on which Stephenson bases *Q-methodology* as a

means of determining those shared beliefs that appear and can be measured through probability. In the case of atoms it cannot be said, though, that the same electrons always appear in the same place on every atom, *but there is only a probability of where the researcher thinks the electron may appear*. Using factor analysis and Q methodology, Stephenson can *discover* the same phenomenon of human subjective beliefs (also measured within a realm of probability) uniquely held by a particular group of respondents. The researcher cannot claim that the observation of subjective beliefs holds to a general population, but only to a sub-population. The parallels are similar to those in quantum physics and represent *discovery* and *probability*.

From the standpoint of understanding subjective beliefs, it is not until people really communicate and appreciate other's opinions that any confusion is cleared up. Often, communicants share concerns, but these concerns are intentionally or unintentionally obfuscated or missed through written and oral dialogue, often resulting in hurt feelings or misunderstandings.

A lack of understanding regarding land use opinions between politicians could lead to boundary disputes and failure to establish a comprehensive and integrated planning approach that recognizes and protects private property rights. When disputes occur, it is generally a matter of assumed patterns of opinion (Soden 1990). Common attributes will be found on which to build sound land use policy in the future. The remainder of this chapter will cover the research strategy and expected outcomes.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Michigan Township Boards

Balancing the need for economic development and environmental protection often provides a difficult dilemma for elected officials. This dilemma generally takes the form of making land use decisions. After all, where or how economic development occurs depends on land use planning. Yet politicians must normally work within a system of institutional parameters. On one hand is the constitutional requirement to protect property rights; on the other hand, is the importance of balancing the needs of society by encouraging, mitigating or preventing certain noxious land uses that may influence the enjoyment, health or safety of another person. One way these concerns can be managed is by implementing land use regulations. Politicians walk a narrow line between supporting or violating constitutional rights of private property. Therefore, how they perceive land use regulations can influence how sincere or practical politicians will be in balancing economic growth (land development) and individual property rights.

In recent years, the U.S. Supreme Court decisions have favored the property owner and have made local governments compensate the owner for any public use of the land (*Lucas v South Carolina Coastal Council, 1992* and *Dolan v City of Tigard, 1994*). In some circumstances, governments are accused of "taking" land without providing just compensation to the landowner. Subjective opinions of the elected officials can be important, *because if we know what their opinions are toward land use regulations, then appropriate communication efforts can be established that may lead to clearer policies and intergovernmental cooperation.* This is especially true of

township boards in Michigan. In this research, the beliefs of two township boards, one urban charter township (Meridian) and one rural non-charter township (Alaiedon) are surveyed regarding their concerns about private property protections. Both townships are also adjacent to one another, thus each can make land use decisions that affect the other entity.

The charter township (Meridian) has a comprehensive (comp) plan for responding to growth occurring in the region. Many of the land use restrictions established in the comp plan could cause development to occur outside the township's jurisdiction. Alaiedon Township, south of Meridian Township, is expected to face greater development pressures in the future. Development pressures in Meridian are the heaviest on its south side, right up to the Alaiedon Township boundary. As a result, Alaiedon Township is beginning to feel the effects of urban sprawl on their township. However, at the present time, they lack the institutional capabilities to adapt to changes in land use that will occur in the foreseeable future.⁴ Is there a difference in how a more urban township board views land use regulations as opposed to a rural township board?

METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS

Using a methodological tool that *assesses subjective beliefs or opinions of the individual being researched is known as Q-Methodology* (Brown 1976). The research

⁴ Presently, there is no comprehensive plan, or other form of land use visioning effort, for Alaiedon Township.

takes a nonrandom approach, meaning that the respondents are current or past township board members.⁵

Research Questions

Since hypotheses in Q methodology are implicit, the research method is useful for *discovery*. Therefore, it is more appropriate for this research project to ask exploratory questions suited to Q-methodology. Research questions for this study reflect board members' opinions of private property rights, as well as how the opposite township board perceives the same question. The main focus of the research is:

- How local government officials perceive their duties to the community they were elected to serve.
- Whether or not township boards are concerned with their constituents' private property rights.
- Whether a paradigm shift has occurred within the population regarding environmental opinions.
- Do local officials consider environmental decisions above or over property rights.

The addition to Q-methodology in this study is co-orientation, which asks whether Alaiedon Township views property rights the same as Meridian Township or vice versa? In addition, are there similarities with the Brown and Coke study? This research and methodology expands the knowledge base in studying the exclusive property rights opinions of politicians.

⁵ The prior Meridian board was voted out and a new board installed. Only two members of the current board agreed to participate in the study.

Contribution to the Knowledge Base

This research expands the knowledge base in two major ways. First, it examines the opinions of township boards in Michigan. No written research is evident that focuses exclusively on township boards' opinions on anything, much less land regulations.⁶ Nor is research available on the counter views of others through the perspective of the respondent. The research base is furthered by comparing the results of the Brown and Coke study with the results from this study. It is contended that the Q method is replicable from other studies and this research validates these previous studies. Second, the research borrows from the co-orientation literature as described by Steven Chaffe. Co-orientation is the ability to simultaneously perceive one's view and another person's views. Therefore, the Q method is acceptable for this type of inquiry.

Research Process

For the purposes of this study, the research evaluates 11 to 13 township members from two adjoining townships. The data collection took place over a period of one hour at each township board's work session, or on a person-to-person basis. The study borrows and uses 34 of the previously tested 55 statements from the Brown and Coke Q study. Brown and Coke surveyed the opinions of state and local politicians, as well as citizens. The results were factor analyzed, yielding three belief types identified by the researchers.⁷ The 34 statements from the original 55

⁶ Based on the systematic literature review of dissertation abstracts, PAIS, planning literature and literature in political science.

⁷ Those same statements are apropos for today, considering the current "wise use" movement and U.S. Supreme Court decisions mentioned above, among other things.

concentrate on private property concerns, open space and what level of government is best equipped to handle land use regulation. The statements are placed one to a card in a 34 card deck. The respondent is told to sort all of the cards into three separate piles - agree, disagree or neutral - oriented to the individual's point of view. After conducting the entire sorting process and recording their answers, the township board is asked to make a second sort. Here, they are asked to sort the cards in the way they *think* the other township board views the statements. This is the co-orientation portion of the study. Results of the townships are compared with the outcomes from the Brown/Coke study.

EXPECTED RESULTS FROM THE RESEARCH

Local governments have similar knowledge and goals for local development. As a result, they may be able to pool their resources while balancing natural resource management with economic development practices. Doing so might help them attain a better quality of life in the township. This dissertation identifies certain opinions that are held by township boards charged with the daily management of the township.

By analyzing what board members from different perspectives think about land use regulations, researchers and others can examine the similar and dissimilar opinions held. How township boards perceive land use regulations hints at how land regulations are best utilized by these townships. Since the two townships studied share perspectives, they are more accepting of some forms of technical assistance provided by a legitimate organization. Other goals that can be accomplished from this research are as follows:

First, if township boards know what their differences in opinion are, then goals can be established to minimize these differences and possibly avert planning disputes.

Second, an educational outreach system can be established that teaches trustees about planning concepts, especially in conjunction with other township governments.

Another possible result from the research is that township boards can use the data to show the state or county government why they need assistance in establishing greater self-government in land use planning decisions. This especially holds true for Alaiedon Township, since it is a non-chartered township and needs permission from the county for greater land use planning. Meridian can argue that better land use is made if they were made a city, which discussion is being argued at the present time.

Other possibilities include:

- Recording opinions for future studies and to assess board changes over time.
- Analyzing the opinion of other members of the township, then comparing them with the township board.
- Application of these results in a survey method that can be generalized across the state.

In other words, the results of this study can serve as building blocks for designing a larger study that includes a bigger population. Through analyzing local opinions, researchers can gain some insight into whether township boards share opinions regarding land use policies and how they can better communicate with one another. Identifying shared opinions can lead to greater intergovernmental coordination and collaboration in land planning efforts, thus creating partnerships or joint task forces on land management issues.

Chapter Two reviews the literature on U.S. Supreme Court opinions as they relate to the "takings" issue and private property rights. It also provides background information on the Q-methodology and the Steven Brown study, outlines a comparison of Lester Milbrath's theory of paradigm shifts in attitude changes over time, and further explains the concept of co-orientation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Throughout American history, land has been at the center of our economic system (Friedenberg 1992; Madison et al. 1987). However, recent studies demonstrate differing societal views of land between citizens and public officials, both nationally and in Colorado (Brown and Coke 1976), Ohio (Brown and Coke 1977), and Michigan (Hembroff 1995), to name just a few. Most of American history shows land as the bedrock of our economic system. Some writers and thinkers, however, believe land ownership should take a back seat to human progress (Michigan Land Use Institute 1997). This latter view manifests itself in much of our country's environmental policy today. Some people within the environmental ranks believe that the quest for land has led to land abuse and loss of such things as wetlands and other ecologically fragile areas. As these fragile lands disappear, a person's rights to do as they wish with their property should either cease or be minimized.

Yet Rousseau spoke of a social contract of society. This social contract took the form of our U.S. Constitution and set forth the restrictions necessary to maintain liberty without creating an overly burdensome or restrictive government. Implicit in this understanding, also is social responsibility. Rousseau never claimed that people

are good, but maintained that by coming together and forming a set of rules that society could live by, proper behavior is rewarded and improper behavior is penalized.

Perhaps one way to look at land is as a "bundle of rights" or "bundle of sticks." Each stick represents a certain divisible use of land, i.e., development rights, mineral rights, easements, etc. (Barlowe 1986). Therefore, what someone can do with their land rests with the rights vested in each stick. This renders most property right's perspectives to be ones that value choice, and the belief that an owner can do with their land whatever they want.

Land is at the heart of America's economic system, and our country's founders realized the significance of property. Thomas Jefferson, in one of his early drafts of the Declaration of Independence, even referenced it as "life, liberty and the pursuit of property" (Friedenberg 1992). The final draft, of course, deletes this last word and replaces it with "happiness." Throughout America's history, economic expansion has been driven by the acquisition of property. With land, banks can give loans and the asset is protected. A person's station in life is measured by land ownership. Property rights were held sacrosanct by the founding fathers because they knew that once the erosion of property rights begins, so too does the basis of the economic system (Korves 1996). In particular, they realized that if land is seized by the government without the right to do so, or on a whim, then other liberties can also be usurped.

However, thought in the last three decades - from 1970 to the late 1990s - has centered on private property rights and has been concerned with where one person's property rights end and another person's begin (Smith 1995; Wenner 1994). Since property rights are at the center of our economic system, and this economic system

creates and enforces property rights, many people argue that the economic system is unjust to the environmental system (Wenner 1994). It can be said that land change is at the heart of the argument.

Land change, via agriculture, has been the fundamental goal of all human civilizations, both past and present (Ponting 1991). American history contains innumerable success stories of people acquiring land, then building their wealth and advancing society at the same time (Josephson 1921; Foster 1994; Diamond and Noonan 1996). Other than ownership in land there were other uses made of the natural resource base. For instance, settlers no longer harvested game for their own use, but began to take the surplus to sell to others. Similar concerns faced Europe in the middle ages, as the medieval society was leaving a feudal system and entering a mercantile system. Land began to be used for such other purposes as timber harvesting and construction. As in Europe, these uses have often been in conflict with one another. When population increases and land availability becomes scarce, conflicts emerge.

Many thinkers believe that by placing heavier rules on those with wealth and property ownership, or by establishing a wealth transfer program, that the "downtrodden or exploited" will be rewarded and share in the spoils (Harrington 1985). However, the economic system responds best to incentives - not regulations (Anderson 1991). This is not to say, however, that all regulations are intrinsically bad.

Due to resource conflicts, for instance, institutional constraints are established to protect an individual's use and to provide a sense of order in the community. From the Mayflower Compact to the U.S. Constitution, to state and local government

charters and ordinances, one of the chief concerns has been the protection of individual liberties and private property (Diamond and Noonan 1996; Korves 1996; Marzulla and Marzulla 1997). Often, however, the pursuit of happiness or liberty is in conflict with another person's use or enjoyment of their land. The early settlers brought with them their experiences of a legal system that saw property seized by government and citizens as liberty unprotected.

As American society advanced, certain individuals began to chronicle the changes taking place to the local environment. People like John James Audubon and Henry David Thoreau began to paint, think and write about humans' impact on nature (Hays 1987). Other individuals like George Perkins Marsh, John Muir and Gifford Pinchot, through empirical observations, debated the progress of America and its influence and pressures on the land (Shabecoff 1993). The battle over land use was joined in the 1920s and 30s by Aldo Leopold. In his book, *A Sand County Almanac*, Leopold explained his concept of a "land ethic" (Leopold 1990). Land ethics speaks to the need for wise stewardship of the land, primarily protecting the soils from erosion and making certain that human actions had little impact on the land.⁸

The rise of an affluent society after World War II led to the baby boom, which led to greater demands for housing, with a resulting greater urban concentration (Hays 1987). Businesses expanded with the aid of technological advances and more people began to move to the city for better economic opportunities. Those that could fled to the rural landscapes for serenity, but also because they could (Barth 1990). This

⁸ Along coasts and estuaries, John and Mildred Teale's work, *Life and Death of a Salt Marsh*, chronicled the land transformation of early settlers and urban society on the coastal environments; for example, the harvesting of salt marsh grass and the filling of wetlands.

concentration of businesses and housing placed unwanted land use pressures on the city. Cities then began to consider ways to manage development by passing ordinances that prohibited or restricted certain land use activities (Foster 1994; Platt 1996).

HISTORY AND THE CURRENT STATE OF LAND USE REGULATION

The first land use regulations can be traced back to medieval England when the King, seeing trees being destroyed, passed an order to protect this resource from the commoners' destructive behavior. Medieval society also spawned additional regulations for health and land protection, covering everything from minimizing air pollution to requiring sewers to be built in communities. The sovereign had as its responsibility the safety, health, welfare and morals of its citizenry. In a democracy, this is power on loan from the citizens, not from divine right or lineage.

Not until the early part of the twentieth century were land regulations implemented in the United States. Constitutional challenges led to much debate over the government's regulation of activities on private lands. People argued that since it was their property, they should be able to do as they pleased with their land (Pombo and Farah 1996). Noxious uses that originated from neighbors' land led other property owners to complain. These owners encouraged enactment of regulations so that they could enjoy their property without being burdened. Yet basic legal theory says that a property owner may enjoy the use of his or her property as long as that use does not harm the use of another's enjoyment of their property. For this reason, most property restrictions are handled at the local level of government.

One crucial element in the design of the colonies was representative government, where people vote and elect their political representatives. One local and effective form of government is the township. This model of government allows the citizens to know their elected officials and the issues these officials decide. As society has matured over the decades, other forms of government have strengthened, such as cities and special purpose governments. Most have the power to tax and provide for the public welfare. However, as more people move to towns, townships, cities, etc., politicians feel the pressure from citizens to maintain order while providing for greater opportunity for all residents (Porritt 1985; Paelkhe 1989). This requirement forces local governments to manage property disputes. As a result, property rights disputes become matters of local concern or take on a parochial interest (Michigan's Trends Future 1995).

THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE OF 1787

In Michigan, townships were originally created by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which established small, compact communities for commerce and protection. Obviously these small entities provided for local government control or direct democracy (Browne and VerBurg 1995). The Northwest Ordinance required a survey of land for "congressional townships," to be divided into 36 sections, each being one square mile (VerBurg 1990). Usually one of these sections was made into a "school section," publicly owned and providing for the encouragement of future education as expressed in Northwest Ordinance Article III (VerBurg 1990).

Township powers include constitutional and legislatively expressed powers, and case law as provided through strict construction (VerBurg 1990). However, state law does not require townships to establish zoning ordinances. Local zoning is only provided to a township through enabling legislation passed by the state. Over time, though, township powers have made "adaptive changes to lessen the negative impacts" to the township from the lack of zoning powers (VerBurg 1990). Yet, charter townships can often set their own course, while nonchartered townships must seek permission from county governments to adapt to local situations. In sum, what is significant is how township board members from differing townships view private property rights.⁹

SOME U.S. SUPREME COURT CASES ON LAND USE REGULATIONS

Although the idea of zoning is not widespread in the U.S., in the early 20th century property owners challenged it as burdensome in the U.S. Supreme Court case *Euclid v Ambler Realty* 1926). The court held that it is permissible for local governments to establish city-wide zoning regulations. Some cases like *Hadachek v Sebastian* (1915) and *Boomer v Atlantic Cement Co.* (1970) protect property owners from nuisance activities that occur principally in residential areas. This is one of the first ways the courts established to exclude some types of activities. Other cases protected property from coal mining, as in the cases of *Pennsylvania Coal Co. v Mahon* (1922) *DeBenedictis v Keystone Bituminous Coal* (1987), and from noxious

⁹ Differences in urban and rural townships are not what is being examined, but simply the subjective views of township officials toward private property rights.

activities like a cattle feed lot in *Spurr Industries v Del Webb* (1972). In each instance the courts interpreted the Constitution to protect the property interests of one party against another.

Still in dispute, though, is the proper moment when a government can take property for the public good. This usually stems from protecting the public safety and welfare of the community. It was not until a series of later cases in the 1960s and since that the issue of "taking" occurred. From *Just v Marinette County* (1972) through *Nollan v California Coastal Commission* (1987) and *First English Evangelical Lutheran Church v County of Los Angeles* (1987), the courts began to turn to protecting property rights and arguing for full compensation even if the landowner was only deprived of a partial use of their land. In dispute was whether a government had to compensate the property owner for a regulation that protected the public, but denied the owner beneficial use of their property. This meant that the uncompensated property owner would have to shoulder the social costs of society.

Then two cases in the 1990s - *Lucas v South Carolina Coastal Council* (1992) and *Dolan v City of Tigard* (1994) - addressed the issue of a takings claim. In *Lucas*, the South Carolina Beachfront Management Act (BMA) was contested. The BMA precluded shoreline development beyond the first dune; in essence, providing for a setback requirement. As the line was drawn, it essentially divided Lucas's property in half. He claimed the setback rule was *arbitrary and capricious*, and claimed that the state had denied him **all** use of his property. Yet, the U.S. Supreme Court and Justice Scalia, who wrote the majority opinion, agreed. As Justice Blackmun pointed out in his dissent, however, Lucas could still use the land, but he might not be able to use it

for what he had originally intended. The state was ordered to compensate him for the loss of his property.

In the *Dollan* case, the city of Tigard granted a building permit to a store owner *if* the store would provide a public easement for residents. Again the Supreme Court issued an opinion stating that where there was not a clear nexus between the use of a permit and a public good, then a taking occurs.

During this time of takings decisions, many property owners in the Western U.S. and other locations have felt what they consider to be the overreaching hand of government when it comes to property rights (Pombo and Farah 1996). One recent U.S. Supreme Court case *Bennett v Spear* (1997), deals with ranchers along an Oregon stream who were denied ongoing irrigation use of their water due to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's biological opinion that claimed an endangered species was present in the stream. The biological opinion emphasized that according to the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the instream flow had to be maintained since this species depended on higher water levels for its survival. The ranchers, though, filed suit under the Endangered Species Act challenging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decision, claiming they were in the "zone of interest" of those affected by an ESA decision. This zone of interest is designed to protect all parties who have an interest in any ESA decision. Historically, the courts had ruled that environmental organizations could sue to uphold or compel an ESA decision (*Tennessee Valley Authority v Hill* 1978). Property owners were never granted that same opportunity or standing to sue until the *Bennett* case (Stone 1988). The case reached the U.S. Supreme Court, and in an unanimous decision (9-0), the Court voted in favor of the ranchers. The Court stated

that landowners can indeed challenge a biological opinion since they are in the zone of interest.

The significance of these cases may lead to local governments reconsidering any land use regulations that might be perceived as a taking. Case law is divided on when a taking occurs and at what level property rights "trump" the public interest. The legal gray lines are blurred, but the rhetoric over property rights is often bi-polar and pits the wise-use crowd (Bosso 1994) against environmentalists (Dunlap and Mertig 1992). Since compensation might be owed to the owner, would local governments have to set aside additional tax dollars for purchasing land before beginning a project? Does this mean local politicians are "gun shy" when it comes to passing land use regulations? Are local elected officials sensitive to property owners' concerns? Do some elected local government officials in adjacent municipalities share the same concerns?

BI-POLAR VIEWS ON RESOURCE AND PROPERTY ISSUES

These fundamental questions of property rights and governance are guided by a person's belief systems. It is not the purpose of this study to explore the literature of belief systems, since Conover (1969) and Milbrath (1989) have written a great deal on the subject. In the previous debates regarding environmental policy, Malthusians (those who believed the resources were being lost) have predicted doom and gloom in resource scarcity (Gore 1992; Meadows, Meadows and Randers 1992; Ophuls 1992). Most of their prognostications have been proven false, may not have occurred at all, or not to the degree predicted (Global 2000 Report 1978). On the other hand, Neo-

Cornucopians (those who believe there are plenty of resources) state that through intelligence and technology, humans can adjust to environmental changes before imperiling the species (Simon and Kahn 1984; Bast, Hill and Rue 1994). Both views represent the polar ends of a widely debated view on the state of the environment. This same polarity also results in property rights disputes among citizens and activist organizations.¹⁰ Instead, this researcher is interested in the views of these polar positions as they relate to private property rights.

Today the views manifest themselves in shaping environmental policy; in particular, land use policy (Caldwell 1993; Mueller 1995). One group argues for conservation of the resource and another argues for growth and development. Yet, society is able to tolerate both ideals of conserving the resource and maintaining their quality of life, all the while encouraging well-conceived growth (Daly and Cobb 1989). Since most development and protection decisions are made by elected officials, this research assesses the subjectivity of beliefs held by local government officials. **If we can understand these differences and build on our agreements, then the policy-making process may work better.**

DEMOGRAPHIC LITERATURE

When it comes time for identifying attitudes, it has been found that most are based on education, culture, age and gender (Merchant 1989; Stern and Dietz 1994).

¹⁰ In the Brown and Coke study of 1976, the Colorado Farm Bureau was surveyed, and appeared to be loaded on one factor. The researchers commented that they had never seen such a homogenous group of people. Inferred from this is they all perceived the issues in the same way. Certain groups can then take bi-polar approaches in policy formulation.

For instance, people with less education regarding environmental issues do not easily alter their behaviors or actions that impact local natural resources. Many studies have shown that income is not much of a factor in predicting beliefs. Previous research on environmental values (Pierce 1979; Axelrod 1994), environmental concerns, technical knowledge (Pierce and Lovrich 1986; Syme, Beven and Sumner 1993) and public opinion have measured the effects of demographic information on beliefs and opinions. The biggest differences seem to be in education and gender, with age and income showing less correlation.

STATE OF RESEARCH OF POLITICIANS' ENVIRONMENTAL OPINIONS

The opinions of politicians can cause them to take similar or different positions on a policy issue. Thus far, most of the literature involves assessing the attitudes of citizens about environmental beliefs (Milbrath 1984). Little, if any, of the literature exclusively focuses on the subjective values of decision makers, especially local elected officials. However, one piece of literature affecting the area of the public and government officials is the work by Pierce and Lovrich (1986). They evaluated the attitudes of Idaho state legislators toward water resource management. They determined that in most cases, public officials have a higher level of knowledge about the issue than the public. Pierce and Lovrich called this the "technical information quandary" (Pierce and Lovrich 1986). The resulting gap of knowledge lies between what the decision-makers know and what the citizens know. Generally, too, elected officials and experts track evenly, with a large gap of knowledge holding between themselves and their constituents. In a similar study from Florida, Dennis Soden

(1990) examined the attitudes and technical complexity of government officials and the public toward coastal resources. Again, he found correlations between the level of education, knowledge holding and respondents' attitudes toward growth management and coastal protection. Then local officials are considered experts and they can see the complexity of property rights issues, and thus they are more moderate in outlook and not bipolar.

Lester Milbrath conducted an international study of citizens, public officials and industry leaders in the U.S., England and Germany (1984). Milbrath's research identified the environmental beliefs of three dominant groups. First is the New Environmental Paradigm, those who seem to lead the way and instill a new way of thinking about environmental issues. Second, Environmental Sympathizers align themselves with environmental causes some of the time. And third, the Rearguard maintains the status quo and does not support environmental efforts. In sum, Milbrath argues that a paradigm shift needs to occur to achieve a sustainable society (Kuhn 1970).

A recent study in Cape May, New Jersey, highlights the diverse pressures placed on the coast by competing resource users. Cape May must balance recreation, tourist and environmental amenities, while at the same time providing a solid economic footing. The authors, O'Connor, Bord and Plugh (1994) identified strict regulatory enforcement and opposition to development as one facet of environmentalism. Their research also showed that people think taxes and clean bays and coasts are "critical" or "very serious" concerns. They also identified two labels - "environ" and "crowd." The "environ" label centers around four principle concerns:

maintenance of clean drinking water supplies, protection of the bay, wildlife protection and sewage treatment. The "crowd" label is concerned with the seasonal congestion of traffic and crowds on the coast.

A recent survey on citizens' opinions regarding land use and growth was conducted in Michigan by Public Sector Consultants (PSC 1997). Two revealing conflicts became evident; first, citizens want to protect the environment and urge something be done to control sprawl. Second when they were asked where they wanted to live, the majority responded that they wanted to live on a large rural lot. These conclusions from the PSC survey reflect the literature that growth controls must originate from the executive branch of government (DeGrove 1992), and this is particularly true for Michigan (DeGrove 1996). Other states show that local control is not the way to manage growth, and there is a need for intergovernmental cooperation (Durant, Thomas and Haynes 1993). This gap between what the respondent really thinks and what questions the researcher presents is an opportunity to utilize an alternative methodology for opinion research.

USE OF AN ALTERNATIVE METHODOLOGY FOR OPINION STUDY

Most of the above-mentioned studies, though, involved analyzing attitudes or beliefs with a traditional method of survey research. Traditional methods are not well suited for assessing the *subjectivity* of respondents, especially for a small sample population. However, Q-methodology was designed specifically for determining subjectivity in a subject. (In other words, this is how an individual views an issue.) Q-method has been used over the last 60 years in fields as diverse as psychology,

nursing, political science and parks and recreation, according to recent literature reviews by Steven Brown (Brown 1968 and 1993). Recently, Q-methodology was used in natural resource and environmental attitudes research. Gauger and Wyckoff (1973) used Q-methodology to evaluate the beliefs of photographers and town assessors regarding their aesthetic preferences for water projects among different groups. One study at Michigan State used Q-methodology to examine environmental interpreters in parks and recreation in southern Michigan (Hinkle 1976), and another assessed the environmental attitudes of participants in Michigan's Youth Conservation Corps (Kinzel 1977). A third study using Q-methodology examined the views of Michigan township officials regarding watershed management (Comstock 1997). Other studies have centered on environmental issues like forestry education (Hooker 1992) and common beliefs held within the environmental community (Spearman and Gillespie 1994).

What politicians think about land use regulations can ultimately influence growth management policies in areas that have such policies or wish to adopt them (DeGrove 1992; 1996). Perceptions also change the way problems are addressed. Q-methodology can discern these differing viewpoints. Ultimately, policy making is based on perceptions of expected outcomes, prior history and cultural elements, all of which are founded on human beliefs - of which there are many types. The perceptions and attitudes of local elected officials can influence the type of strategies needed for balancing competing interests in land use, but we must first know what they think about private property rights.

Perhaps the classic study in environmental opinion research utilizing Q-methodology was performed by Steve Brown and James Coke, who assessed the political subjectivity of decision makers in land use planning. In their 1976 study of land use decisions in Ohio and on a limited national scale, they administered a series of statements which measured subjectivity--the belief held by that person. Two labels emerged--environmentalists and localists. Environmentalists are those who exhibit environmental beliefs and support state level protection measures. Localists are those who believe that environmental protection should be accomplished at the local level of government without the direct involvement of the state or Federal government. Through further analysis, it has been discovered that there is not a great deal of difference between the two ideas. Environmentalists also believe in maintaining the economy, but with the use of a more responsible and integrative approach.

This current research replicated similar results from the Brown and Coke study through the use of Q-methodology regarding property rights by analyzing the opinions of local officials in two adjoining Michigan township boards. Thirty-four of the fifty-five statements used by Brown and Coke, exclusively focused on property rights, are the centerpiece of this study. There are two dominant factors in this project that align to similar factors in the Brown and Coke research (1976).

Opinions of the township board can be important, *because if we know how they view an issue and why, then appropriate education and communication efforts can be established*. A detailed account of Q-methodology and how it functions is provided in Chapter Four. That chapter also presents the data interpretation of the study, and demonstrates how the results are similar to those from the Brown and Coke

study. It shows that Q-methodology can be replicated and strengthens its utility for future research.

CHAPTER III

METHODS OF THE RESEARCH

Again, the goal of this research is to identify the opinions of elected officials toward land use regulations. To accomplish this, it is necessary to employ a methodological device that assesses the subjective beliefs of individuals rather than the objective methods used in standard survey research. Toward this end, Q-methodology was employed and the responses were factor analyzed to yield a factor belief type. These typologies are useful in identifying the beliefs held within a small sample of subjects.

This chapter covers an introduction to Q-methodology, explaining its genesis and distinctiveness from typical objective research, as well as offering a brief discussion of its methodological soundness. In addition, the chapter explains the research protocol, how the subjects were sampled, and the steps taken to complete the research. The strengths and limitations of the research are also covered here. Finally, a brief profile of the statistical computer package used to analyze the responses is also presented. Following Chapter Three is a brief discussion of factor analysis. In order to understand the research, it is necessary to understand how Q-methodology was created and something about its purpose.

INTRODUCTION TO Q-METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Q-methodology is a methodological tool created by William Stephenson, a scholar with a Ph.D. in Physics and Psychology. Its purpose is to analyze the subjective beliefs of individuals in a systematic and quantified manner. Dr. Stephenson understood that standard objective research was meaningless insofar as it attempted to understand individuals' beliefs. In his classic paper, *Correlation of Persons Instead of Tests* (Stephenson 1939), he tested a subject's response to tests, rather than testing the test itself. In essence, he inverted standard research. The fundamental point of Q-research is that statements are presented to a subject in order to get an opinion on that person's interpretation of the statement. Statements consist of any written or oral source that reflects ongoing dialogue or *concourse* on an issue. He defines a concourse as the ongoing dialogue on a subject of concern to the respondent. By increasing the number of statements to which a subject responds, the researcher can also reduce the overall number of respondents. Items for the concourse can be gleaned through electronic or print media, personal experiences or the like, and can be recorded in simple statements placed one to a card. Each statement represents a perspective on the issue. *In no way should statements be considered as including all perspectives.* Also, the respondent can freely interpret the statements according to his or her own orientation or perspective; therefore, the wording of the statements is not significant.

As a result, the researcher can fashion a series of statements very quickly without worrying about pre-testing, since an individual's beliefs are uniquely held. *In short, the individual's response is what is sought, not responses to tests.* Once the statements are compiled, the study subject can sort the deck of cards into three piles:

one pile for those statements which are in the most agreement, a second pile for those in the most disagreement, and a final stack for those statements about which the individual feels ambiguous or neutral. Once three piles are formed, the subjects revisit the separate piles. For instance, they sort through the agreement pile and record the statement number in forced sort distribution grid. A forced sort makes the respondent distinguish between statements of importance and least importance. In general, they write the number of the statement on the forced distribution grid corresponding with the space in the grid. This research agenda connects with applied research because understanding the opinions of local government officials fosters better communication. Shared communication minimizes the potential for conflict and facilitates better dialogue and consensus.

Sort Number: 1 or 2

Township _____

Political Party Affiliation _____

Date _____

Time _____

[illegible]

As a reminder: "You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire."

Rationale for Using Q-Methodology

The current research did not use traditional probability sampling. Probability sampling yields views of a population based on a structured response to a sample of discrete questions (Spearman and Gillespie 1994). Instead, this research project selected Q-methodology, which uses non-probability sampling. Steve Brown, the protégé of the creator of Q-methodology, defines it this way:

Q-technique has several advantages over that of most attitude surveys, not the least being that it gives the reader a chance to judge for himself whether the old attitudes still prevail. Q-methodology is an approach that determines the major points of agreement or disagreement--and their relative significance--in the population by analyzing the responses of a rather small number of people, selected to represent the major perspectives on an issue, to a set of statements chosen to cover a wide range of viewpoints on the subject (the Q-sample). Each respondent provides a Q-sort, a ranking of his agreement or disagreement with the statements. The statements are then correlated and factor analyzed to isolate the various common attitudes' (Brown and Coke 1977).

Non-probability sampling is used since the subjects are not randomly selected, but are from a particular group. In addition, plus Q-methodology does not use probability sampling. The available population of township board members number seven and five for Alaiedon and Meridian townships, respectively, for a total of twelve respondents. Some demographic information is collected indicating political party affiliation, education, gender and income. It is important to note that not all board members of a political party be represented; simply, if there is one Republican, then there needs to be one Democrat or Independent. All that needs to be present is one of each, not a one-for-one representation. For instance, the present research was done with one Republican in one township and a Democrat in the other township (Gillespie 1995).

Although Q-methodology has been employed in over 3,000 refereed studies, few environmental and natural resources studies have ever used it (Brown 1968, 1992, 1993; Hooker 1994). Steven Brown maintains a tally of all Q-literature and provides semi-annual updates to subscribers of the Q-METHODS list server over the internet (Brown 1997). However, as of late, more attention is being paid to the methodology's utility in natural resource policy making (Gauger and Wyckoff 1973; Hooker 1994; Focht 1995). This means that studying the opinions of township politicians can be invaluable for Q-methodology, as well as for policy goals in land use planning and management. Furthermore, township boards' concerns are recorded in order to implement future township land use regulations. In other words, it will lend an element of understanding in communicating policy outcomes determined by decision makers' subjective beliefs.

Distinction Between Q- and R-Methodology

Methodologists are in conflict when deciding whether to implement qualitative research at the expense of quantification, or using quantifiable research at the expense of the qualitative elements. In this light, the Q-method bridges this dilemma while separating itself from R-methodological concerns.¹¹ The question most often asked in the discussion of Q-methodology is, *"What separates or makes the Q-method different from standard research methods?"* Q-methods differ from survey research in many ways.

¹¹ R-methodology refers to standard survey research.

First, it is different because it emphasizes discovery. In other words, the researcher does not establish a set of formal hypotheses *a priori*, but the hypotheses are *implicit* in the design. After all, a researcher cannot establish a hypothesis that has subjective elements within a group of individuals. Stephenson felt that to do so was to impose researcher bias,¹² which is not the point of Q-methodology. Another way the Q-method differs from standard survey research is that Q-methodology measures the overall patterning of the opinion, "the simultaneous relationships among all of the opinions, with those opinions eliciting the most intense feeling showing the highest scores, both positively and negatively" (Brown and Coke 1977). Indeed, the Q-method is unique in sampling small populations, from one person to a few dozen. In general, the smaller the population or sample size the better, since handling the sorting task becomes more complex as the sample size increases (McKeown and Thomas 1988). Third, Q-methodology emphasizes subjectivity of the respondent from their unique perspective or, in the Q-lexicon, *self operantly determined*. Finally, Q-methodology is different in that the respondent can decide how to most appropriately answer the statement. With the R-method, the respondent must make arbitrary decisions on what they think about a subject from the researcher's perspective.

¹² Its objective is that the hypothesis is determined and tested by the researcher and not determined by the results of the study. Stephenson believed that when a researcher placed his bias on what the respondent was to observe, the respondent's true opinions were obfuscated, because it was hard to distinguish between where the researcher's bias stopped and the respondent's answer began. By permitting the respondent to answer in a forced sort, Stephenson felt a more accurate determination of a respondent's truer feelings or opinions could be obtained.

For instance, a recent passage in the magazine, *American Enterprise*, talks about the problems inherent with using R-methodology without labeling it as such. In a short piece on political polling, the editors comment that the problem with polls is that they leave decisions in "crude yes/no or for it/against it replies that can mis-portray public sentiments" (*American Enterprise* 1996). The article goes on to say that this research spends too much time on the averages of a larger population set rather than concentrating on the smaller population set. Most significantly, the editors say that polls "often ask about things that the average respondent simply does not understand or care about" (*American Enterprise* 1996). Q-methodology can remedy these concerns because, again, the statements are designed from the current dialogue on a certain subject. This means that the subjects are interested in, and able to give their opinion as they see it, rather than having their answer imposed from standard survey research. Therefore, the Q-methodology makes it possible to measure the attitudes of a small sample of township board members in Michigan as they understand private property rights.

The results of a Q-sort are framed in a way that standard survey research can replicate. Several studies do this with almost identical results to the initial Q-sort (Brouwer 1992). This makes the Q-method even more attractive as a means of studying a small population sample. Again, the research is exploratory, so that the researcher never knows what the results will be, making the research truly novel and capable of developing insight into shared or contradictory beliefs. Finally, the research is inductive rather than deductive. Rather than following the researcher's bias in an objective research protocol, the respondent sets the parameters through a forced sort.

Q-methodology can comport with other methods of study. The best purpose for Q-methodology is in quantifying focus group studies. Other areas for application of Q-methodology include *public opinion and attitudes, political imagery, communication, political and social roles, group behavior, decision making, personality, philosophies and value systems* (Brown 1980). The Q-method is best suited for fundamental research on a subjective level that can serve as a baseline or benchmark for other studies or additional analyses. In essence, it is the first step in measuring the subjective values of an individual or a small group. In this regard, Q-methodology is unique and in a research category all by itself. It is safe to say that Q-methodology can be the first step in intensive analysis or for designing a broader research tool. One caveat, Q-methods, cannot be juxtaposed with other research protocols because of its design in measuring subjective beliefs and behaviors. Other methodological concerns about the Q-method include its validity and reliability.

Validity and Reliability

As with most research, concerns regarding validity and reliability enter the picture, but for this study, neither pose a problem. Since the researcher cannot presume to set criteria on what a person believes, it becomes difficult to test for validity *a priori* (Brouwer 1992). Because a viewpoint is open to selective perception, it is uniquely possessed by each respondent (Samuels 1992). Reliability simply requires that the instrument be capable of getting the same results repeatedly (Singleton et al., 1988). One way of maintaining reliability is to use an instrument that is proven to be accurate.

Two researchers have conducted a similar study nationwide using Q-methodology. Drs. Steven R. Brown and James G. Coke studied the subjective opinions of citizens and political elites toward a national planning policy. They created 55 statements from the literature, focus groups, and dialogue of the time [see Appendix 1]. The current research used 34 of these same 55 statements while specifically looking at the opinions of Michigan Township Board members.

To repeat, the statements in the Brown and Coke study evaluated the beliefs of political elites and citizens regarding debate over a Federal bill to establish national planning in the early 1970s. Part of the debate centered on Federal planning with state's being responsible to develop their own plans, individuals' property use and compensation concerns, as well as beliefs on establishing land use regulations and whether or not such beliefs are perceived to burden economic development. The wise-use movement, a more organized response to environmentalism than the Sagebrush rebellion of 20 years ago, is currently voicing some of these same concerns today (Pombo and Farah 1996). Therefore, the statements from Brown and Cook's research project are still appropriate for today.

Research Design

The data was collected from a regular township meeting, in small groups, and individually. The group data is from former township members who attended lunch together. The time needed to conduct the study was 30 to 45 minutes for the sort and the brief demographic profile. In the demographic information it is not necessary to identify the respective township board members by name. Due to the small population,

most of the demographic information was not recorded in the analysis, in order to preserve the respondents' anonymity. Only the demographic data that was found to be useful in the interpretation is presented. To protect confidentiality, each subject indicated on a consent form, included in the instruction page, whether they chose to have the results shared or not, and indicated their voluntary participation during the study.

Respondents were given instructions as to the length of time needed for of the survey and demographic profile, and told how to sort the cards into three piles--agree, neutral and disagree. To begin sorting, a condition of instruction is necessary. A condition of instruction (COI) is a question that serves to measure the subject's perspective. This study applied two conditions of instruction. The first COI was: *"What is your opinion of these statements?"* The second COI was: *"How do you think the other township views these statements?"*¹³ In this way, the COI can establish the parameters on how each township views the statements, thereby placing themselves in the other township's shoes. In order to distinguish the board member's opinions and their importance to each member, cards were sorted via forced distribution as per the explanation below.

In a forced distribution, a grid [See Appendix], with each cell corresponding to the number of cards and ranging from +5 to -5, is used for the purpose of recording the number of each card sorted. All of the cards are first sorted for the COI and placed into three piles as defined above. Once the cards have been sorted into agree, disagree and neutral stacks, the respondents are asked to sort through the cards in each stack in

¹³ This is the co-orientation alluded to earlier in Chapter One.

order to rank them from most to least. Once the cards are sorted, the corresponding number of each card is recorded in the forced distribution grid. For instance, the number of an agree card, in which the respondent is in most agreement, is placed in the grid under the +5 column. In a forced distribution, this means that township board members can only place the number of cards in a column that correspond with the number of spaces in the grid. If there are three spaces under the +5 column, but the respondent selects more than three cards, the respondent is forced to choose which three statements are the strongest and place those under the +5 column. The remaining statements are placed under the +4 column in a continuum until all of the agree cards are exhausted and placed in the grid from +5 to 0.

In the second step, the respondent sorts those cards with which he disagrees, repeating the procedure as in the first step, but placing the statements he disagrees with the most under the -5 column. This continues until all of the cards are exhausted, moving from -5 to 0. When the subject does not have enough cards in either the agree or disagree stacks, he must then re-sort the neutral stack. The sorter must find a statement that corresponds to the stack with the shortage of cards. This procedure allows the respondent to again discriminate between cards. Finally, the neutral pile is sorted into the remaining spaces of the grid until the neutral cards are placed under the 0 column.

Sometimes during the process of sorting, respondents discover that the initial cards they placed in a pile may not be what they mean. For example, they may put a card under the +3 column, agreeing somewhat strongly with that statement, but realize during the sorting that they hold a more neutral opinion for that statement in

comparison to another statement. They are allowed to switch cards from column to column at any time during the sort in order to reflect the appropriate relationship of one statement to another. Once the sort is completed, statements are entered into the computer and factor analyzed. Factor analysis determines patterns of responses and makes it possible to label the patterns identified.

Analysis of Q-Sorts

Using factor analysis,¹⁴ the statements are weighted and analyzed to determine special groupings of shared beliefs. In Q-methodology, "factor analysis will isolate the number of distinctly different ways in which the statements are sorted, each called a factor" (Brown and Coke 1977). Factor analysis is performed by identifying shared attributes and labeling any new attributes discovered. Q-sorts between individuals are correlated. For instance, if two people sort the statements in exactly the same order (although this is very rare), they will have a correlation of 1.00. Similarly, individuals ranking statements in exact reverse order (which is equally rare), receive a correlation of -1.00, representing diametrically opposite views on those statements. Any groups that share attitudes are correlated among themselves as well.

Q-METHODOLOGY AND APPLICATION TO STUDY

As can be seen from the above discussion, Q-methodology is one way to measure the subjective opinions of a research subject. This can be especially useful for determining the opinions of township officials toward land use regulations. Meridian

¹⁴ Factor analysis is the preferred statistical analysis for use with Q-methodology.

and Alaiedon Townships are both facing development pressures. Meridian has a comprehensive plan in place to address land use decisions. Alaiedon Township does not, yet its proximity to Meridian Township makes it susceptible to development overflow or development pressure arising from restricted development in Meridian.¹⁵

What politicians believe about land use regulations can impact public policy.

Development can either be managed or allowed to continue uncontrolled, thereby affecting the quality of life for its residents (DeGrove 1992). DeGrove (1992) also suggests that politicians must exhibit leadership in making wise land use decisions.

Development pressure also affects the local environment, such as wildlife, watersheds and overall congestion (Kaiser, Godschalk and Chapin 1995; Healy 1976). The rationale for this study is to examine the opinions of politicians, particularly in relation to property rights. In this regard, the literature is absent, especially in utilizing Q-methodology. This makes the Q-method a valuable tool for contributing to the knowledge base in this area.

Township boards were studied because they are the chief legislative arm of the township and are charged with passing land use ordinances; therefore, knowing what other township officials believe about land use regulations is essential in the development of effective policies. In addition, these township boards were ripe for study because they must decide not only land use issues, but also the overall quality of

¹⁵ The southern boundary of Meridian Township is well developed and abuts the northern boundary of Alaiedon Township. As seen from practice, adjacent development often spills over into other jurisdictions. When the adjacent area is more rural than the other area, it serves as a magnet for bedroom communities or back office shops for businesses (Kaiser, Godschalk and Chapin 1995). In either scenario, Alaiedon Township may see development pressures with which they are unprepared to deal.

life concerns. Furthermore, these townships could be researched with minimal expense for the researcher, and they provided contrary development patterns. Meridian, for instance, is more developed, while Alaiedon is rural, and has the opportunity to avoid some of the same mistakes that Meridian Township has made. The question I sought to answer is, *"Do the township boards exhibit different opinions among members and boards?" and, if so, by using this data, can Alaiedon's land use patterns be shaped early enough to avoid some of the same pitfalls that Meridian Township has made?"*¹⁶

Moreover, Steve Brown's and James Coke's study, referred to elsewhere in this research, can be re-examined from a local perspective. By using the same statements, the results we obtained comport with the Brown and Coke study. From this point, the research results are used to study residents' beliefs with those of public officials, performed at a different time using standard survey research, thereby providing a baseline from which to measure changes in beliefs.

Finally, the researcher could study a variety of opinions regarding land use beliefs, using a simple method that can quickly and inexpensively sample small populations. One recommendation for further study is to use Q-methodology and the same questionnaire in other townships around the state and compare the data from previous studies. *Remember, Q-method cannot be used to generalize to the entire population of research subjects, but it can avail itself for studying other small sample sizes.* The results, statements and interviews are also useful for structuring a larger

¹⁶ Although Meridian Township has a comprehensive plan, the township has failed in some respects to work its plan.

survey instrument that can be implemented statewide. Armed with this knowledge and research tool, outreach efforts can include establishing continuing education courses on land use law and economics, while stressing dispute resolution techniques for public officials, thereby minimizing township conflict and engaging citizen participation.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As with any study or model, there are certain assumptions that are made, each with a set of strengths and limitations. This is even true when the methodology selected is unfamiliar to other researchers. This section will highlight the strengths and limitations of the study using Q-methodology.

Strengths and Limitations of Q-Methodology

One strength of the Q-method is that the research centers on operant subjectivity. Operant in this case means that each township board member will interpret the statements based on their own beliefs, which are subjective; meaning that each statement can be interpreted differently. Each interpretation forms a factor, or a type of belief system, which is labeled by the researcher. Moreover, Q-factor analyzes all respondents, even those typically not used in survey research. In R-studies for example, if 80 people are surveyed, 55 might say yes they agree and 20 disagree, but the remaining five respondents are not used since there are concerns that five subjects cannot be generalized. In Q-methodology, though, these remaining respondents make another factor or belief type, thus forming a third factor type. If a third factor is identified, then a label that takes into account why that factor is significant is

warranted. In the Brown and Coke study, the third factor was made up of the ambivalent types. They interpreted these subjects as being of mixed opinion or perhaps ignorant of land use regulations. This also means that since Q-methodology emphasizes discovery, it is difficult, if not inappropriate, for the researcher to predict the number of belief types. Q-methodology is not without some bias, however. For instance, the researcher can choose to label each factor based on what the statements as a whole represent. This is the reason for 1) using the statements and factor labels of the Brown and Coke study, and 2) the reason for connecting politicians' answers to land use regulations. Additional strengths of the methodology are 1) the results are used to build larger R-studies, 2) the appropriateness of using factor analysis, and 3) it is exploratory in nature, making it inductive rather than deductive.

Yet the methodology does have its limitations. One aspect of Q-methodology is that it is not generalizable or capable of reflecting the views of the larger population. This means that the results obtained in the two townships surveyed for this project cannot be said to be the exclusive beliefs of all township officials within the state. Secondly, the statements used do not pretend to reflect all of the views on a given topic, just most of the common concerns.

The data from the Q-study can be used to develop and implement an objective survey instrument that can assess the beliefs of township officials across the state. In this way, the results can be generalizable to the larger population. If such a study is performed, the results would comport with the Q-study, and thereby validate it further. The next section will detail the computer package used and the process of factor analysis.

CHAPTER IV

INTERPRETATION AND RESULTS

Introduction

To recap the previous three chapters, this study focuses on the opinions of two adjoining Michigan townships, Meridian and Alaiedon townships, respectively. The study is modeled after a 1976 Steven Brown and James Coke study done in Ohio and nationally. They used a 55-statement survey instrument distributed to obtain the opinions of citizens and elected officials regarding land use regulations.

The current study is different in that 34 statements are used from the original 55, and elected officials represent the central focus of the study. The statements were selected to reflect the ongoing dialogue and debate centered around private property rights. Although the actual statements are over 20 years old, the data points to the fact that the statements elicited similar responses from both study populations.

The intent of this study was to find similarities and differences between the townships, as well as within the townships, on the issue of private property rights. The differences and similarities among urban and rural townships is not as evident as it is between individual members of each township. This study did not demonstrate a difference between townships. Not only does this study look at the Brown and Coke efforts from 20 years ago, but it also connects Lester Millbrath's work on a New

Environmental Paradigm (NEP). The research reflects any bi-polar movement in opinions to see if groups reflect the NEP. Q-methods, therefore, support opinions along a continuum, thereby demonstrating a more discrete difference in people's subjective beliefs. This study achieves that goal. This chapter covers the data collection and the methodology, interpretation of the data, and co-orientation application to Q-methodology.

DATA COLLECTION

The initial 55 statements from the Brown and Coke study were pared down to 34 statements that focused on property rights. Again the study assessed the opinions of local officials about property rights. The reason for this is that the media and some environmental organizations believe the property rights debate is bi-polar. Two views have arisen that resemble a land preservationist perspective and a "wise-use" view. The first favors greater public participation and less support for property rights, with the latter wanting property rights protection at all costs, with environmental safeguards secondary. Public policy issues cannot be reduced to such "either/or" choices. Often public policy questions revolve around the details and gray areas, not absolutes. Q-methodology can ferret out these gray areas and provide a more solid definition to a person's or group's opinions on statements that represent a world-view on a given dialogue or concourse (Stephenson 1954; Brown 1980).

The mechanics of the methodology proceeded as follows: 34 statements were placed one statement per card, for a total of 34 cards, and were then sorted into three piles representing agree, disagree and neutral. Township officials were interviewed at

their homes either individually, at a work session, or at a local restaurant over a meal. Of the thirteen township officials surveyed, seven were from Meridian Township and six from Alaiedon Township. Also, of the seven Meridian officials examined, two are current board members. The remaining five Meridian Township officials reflect a previous township board, and all had served with each other. Each of the Meridian Township board members, both former and current members, were either surveyed at a restaurant or at their homes. The six Alaiedon Township officials were all surveyed during an Alaiedon Township work session.

The Q-sort takes approximately forty-five minutes to an hour-and-a-half for each participant. Of the 13 total respondents and 26 sorts, 3 respondents were disqualified during the course of interpretation due to incomplete Q-sorts and data. Among these three respondents, some statements were either not recorded, more than one statement was placed in a cell, or a cell was left empty. Although the confounding data was in the +1,0 and -1 columns of the forced grid diagram, and in Q-methodology as the sort gets closer to zero, a respondent becomes less decisive or ambiguous with their responses, the sorts were disregarded. As a result, the following analysis is based on 9 respondents and 18 sorts.

Data entry was accomplished with the assistance of Dr. David Gillespie, Professor in the Department of Political Science at Presbyterian College in Clinton, South Carolina. Dr. Gillespie's job was to serve as technician and mentor in the data entry process. He also assisted this researcher in establishing the initial interpretation. Statement scores were entered into a desktop version of the Q-METHOD computer package.

The entry portion was accomplished very easily. The Q-METHOD program is extremely user friendly. Once the data is ready to be entered, the computer provides step-by-step directions for input. It first asks for the parameters as established in the grid distribution diagram. In this case, the range of the grid went from plus five to minus five. Then the technician is asked to input the scores for the first respondent. The parameters are then set for the next columns--plus four and minus four, respectively. The steps are repeated for the first respondent's scores for Meridian Township. The rest of the Meridian Township responses are entered the same way, for a total of six sorts and respondents. Again the steps are repeated for the three Alaiedon Township respondents.

At the completion of all nine entries, the computer program double checks to ensure that there is one response per cell, no duplication of responses, and that all the statements were used. The double check feature of the program is quite useful. This feature prevents the analyst from having to check all the cells from each of the nine respondents. In larger population samples, double checking is an inefficient use of time. The cross check ensures that all the statements were utilized.

Once all nine Q-sorts are entered into the Q-METHOD program, a simple correlation coefficient is run. Again, one key stroke is all that is needed to begin the correlation coefficient. The mathematics are nicely performed in the background, leaving the researcher to contemplate the responses. The computer then asks for the next step, and the researcher again uses one key stroke to factor analyze the sorts.

Initially there were seven factors present, but only the first three of the seven are significantly loaded and worth additional exploration. A significant loading is

anything .51 or greater. All factors with at least one statement .51 or greater were flagged by the researcher. The flagged statements were then rotated to "sift" or present the statements' sensitivity. In other words, during the rotation the statements are factor analyzed to see if any loadings either increased or decreased from the .51 threshold.

Once the data is analyzed, the computer generates the output for each of the 34 statements, along with the widest deviations for each factor at that statement. After all the rotations were completed, three factors were defined from the analysis. The remaining four factors were not examined since the sorts were not significantly loaded. The output presents three key pieces of data for interpretation. The first, and most significant output, is the 34 factor arrays. Second is the unrotated and rotated factor loadings. The third piece of data output is the correlation coefficient. These three key items are the heart of a Q-analysis and can reveal much about the subjective opinions of the respondents. The rotation presents three strong and significantly loaded factors, which are presented in the next section, Data Interpretation.

Data Interpretation

Upon interpretation of the three factors, the results reflected the research questions presented in Chapter One. Before the three factors were generated, the computer software package produced a series of unrotated loadings for each sort (Table 1). Notice that seven factors were produced, many with insignificant loadings. These factors were then rotated to generate three factors. The three factors are discussed in the next section and the significant loaded factors are flagged (Table 2). In order to generate significant loadings, the unrotated factors are rotated. Up to this

point in the Q-study, researcher bias is absent. The only place in the methodology where the researcher bias is inserted is in the labeling of the factors. A descriptive label is designed for each factor that captures the meaning of that particular factor. For example, the three factors identified closely resembled those from the Brown and Coke study done in 1976. The three labels are localists, environmentalists and ambiguous types.

If the labels from the Lester Millbrath study are then applied to the Brown and Coke research, the environmentalist label is now considered the New Environmental Paradigm or the vanguard in knowledge holding. The Brown and Coke label for localists is considered to be the rearguard in the Milbrath definition. The ambiguous types identified are labeled environmental sympathizers in the Milbrath example. It is evident that Q-methodology can place a keener "edge" on the labels of a select group of respondents and provide a richer interpretation of their opinions on key policy issues.

The research at issue also developed three distinct and significant factors. For ease of understanding, and because the terms are used elsewhere in the study, these factors are labeled as follows. Factor A - Parochial Propertarians, Factor B - Responsible Propertarians, and Factor C - Environmentalist. In the section below, each of the three factors are more closely examined. To provide greater clarity in analysis, the actual statement with factor loadings is reproduced. The factor arrays are next to the respective statements included at the end of the chapter. The factor arrays are the respective loadings of each factor for a particular statement.

Table 1. Unrotated Factor Matrix.

This table represents the seven initial unrotated sorts. Sorts with a score of .51 or greater were kept and those sorts with less than .51 were not considered for rotation. In this instance, sorts one, two and five met the criteria. These three sorts were identified and rotated.

SORTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	.68	.53	.43	-.26	.10	.14	.03
2	.68	.23	.06	-.03	.00	.07	.01
3	.64	.25	.07	-.30	.15	-.19	.07
4	.36	-.44	.18	.13	.01	.23	.09
5	.39	-.57	.37	-.15	.03	-.11	.02
6	.70	.12	.02	.44	.51	.30	.20
7	.44	.13	.02	.17	.01	.02	.00
8	.58	-.13	.01	.11	.01	-.27	.16

LABELED FACTORS

Terminology for the interpretation of property rights includes the use of parochial, local control and public interest. The term "parochial" is defined as a local or regional outlook unique to a group or individuals. In this case the group consisted of two Michigan township boards. The parochial point of view serves as an introduction to local control. Local control is best understood as "home rule," with locally elected officials wanting to preserve their authority as it relates to activities within their township. Both of these definitions and perspectives serve to establish an "us-versus-them" mindset between politicians and citizens. Therefore, public interest

can be defined as outside involvement in township affairs. This outside involvement can be township residents, special interest groups, or even other elected officials at the local, state or Federal level. As a result, involvement goes beyond simple public input, but includes input from a variety of sources all acting on one another. With these definitions in mind, it makes the interpretation of the three factor types easier.

Parochial Propertarians

As in the Brown/Coke study, it was found in our current research that one factor develops a stronger localist concern. For purposes of this study, the factor was labeled the parochial propertarians, due to their dominant tendency to support local efforts in land use decisions rather than to seek outside input. This group exhibits strong local decision-making for land use regulations, yet demonstrates a great sensitivity to the needs of private property rights and land owners. Parochial propertarians reject any direct state involvement that is seen as interfering with local land use regulations. Note, though, that the parochial propertarians do not exhibit any hostility for or against private property rights, but seem to place more emphasis on local control of land use issues. Local determination and private property rights are their main concerns, followed by support for some limited public involvement land use decisions. Ancillary concerns are environmental in nature, but still with an orientation toward the land owner and his property rights.

Table 2. Factor Matrix with an "X" Indicating a Defining Factor

Table 2 represents the nine sorts grouped into three factors. Factor A is Parochial Propertarians, Factor B is Responsible Propertarians and Factor C is the Environmentalist. Only one sort loads on Factor C – Environmentalist.

	FACTORS		
	A	B	C
1	-.12	.85X	.10
2	.14	.70X	.00
3	.01	.68X	.14
4	.56X	.08	.02
5	.69X	.08	.03
6	.25	.67X	.51X
7	.11	.45	.03
8	.57X	.67X	.01
9	.41	.43	.00

<.51 significant loadings

>.51 significant loadings

Three definable factors loaded significantly on Factor A. Two of the sorters were from Meridian Township and one was from Alaiedon Township. The two from Meridian were females, both Republicans, with less than five years of board service. Both respondents either have some college or advance degrees. The Alaiedon Township official was a male Republican with a graduate or professional degree, and had been on the township board for over ten years. Unfortunately, the demographic

profile sheet does not include a response for the respondent's profession. Not including the profession is an attempt to maintain the anonymity of each respondent.

Interpretation of the factor arrays is performed in the following manner. Each statement is recorded, with the common factor score showing for each factor. For instance, the first number represents the score for Factor A, the second for Factor B and the final number for Factor C. For instance, in our research, statement five loaded -4 for Factor A. For purposes of clarity each statement will be referenced in parentheses.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
-4	2	-1	5. Even relatively severe government restrictions on land use are not an unconstitutional taking of land, since the property would still remain in the hands of its owner. The government would merely be preventing the owner from conducting a land use, which would interfere with the paramount rights of the public.
-5	-5	-4	27. A person who owns property should have the right to do with it as he pleases.

All three respondents viewed statement 27 very strongly in the minus five column. These township officials were saying that they strongly disagree with the idea that a person can do whatever they want with their property. Their perspective interprets some government restriction as necessary in the public interest. For instance, they favor regulation if other property owners are harmed from someone else's unwise use of land. Interestingly, the Alaiedon official placed statement five under the zero column. This person may perceive statement five as inconsequential in the grand scheme of land use decisions. He may also realize, due to his wealth of township

experience, that some moderation might be necessary in how the township balances property ownership and the public interest. Evidently the other two seemed to think that the township could err on the side of the public interest in drafting land use regulations.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
-3	-3	-4	11. The rights of property should not be abridged even in critical environmental areas. It is the marketplace that should determine which land is worthy of preservation, and state government should restrict itself to assuring that the market operates effectively.
-3	-4	-5	30. The township should not restrict the use of land in a way that will limit growth, because growth attracts more people, and new people bring in more tax money to the community, thereby easing the burden on the rest of us.
-2	-5	-5	33. Instead of placing complicated and time-consuming controls on developers, the state should facilitate development, e.g., by clearing away the red tape and simplifying the procedures required to obtain building and zoning permits.

All respondents disagreed rather strongly to a laissez-faire approach to wanton development (Statements 11, 30 and 33) in Factor A. Moreover, these township officials seemed to infer that maintaining local control versus allowing the state to make growth decisions could occur in their townships. The Alaiedon official appeared to disagree more strongly than the other two that the state should stay out of a township's land use decision-making process. The one Meridian official with more than one year's worth of experience on the board ranked Statement 33 neutrally. Based on the person's political orientation and income level, it might be said that this person would be more accepting of development than state control. To leave land use

decisions to the market, though, was not appealing to most of them. All three respondents disagreed rather strongly with all three statements.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
0	-1	-1	1. The citizens of a locality are best able to decide the proper use of privately held land in that community. This is a great American principle upon which a state land use program would wreak irreparable damage.
-3	0	0	7. I, for one, question the desirability of more growth. Development itself appears to be the enemy, a kind of pollution that causes congestion and destroys scenic views, and one that ought to be cleaned up.
2	4	5	9. The township government has an obligation to control the use of land, and just because a property owner cannot make the most personally beneficial use of his property, or is unable to realize speculative investment gains, does not mean that he must be compensated for the undeveloped potential.
-1	0	2	20. Instead of developing regulations for what land uses should go where, we should stress the creation of a more adequate review process, one that recognizes the right of a wide variety of legitimate interests--local governments, regional planning organizations, state agencies, adjacent property owners, etc.--to comment on specific proposals.
-2	-1	2	26. The state government should have enough power to override local zoning decisions if necessary to preserve unique historical, ecological and cultural sites, as well as prime agricultural land.

As far as local control is concerned, the reactions were mixed regarding decisions with the citizens of a local government. In each of the statements (Statements 1, 7, 9, 20 and 26), the respondents believed in less direct outside interest and more local township board member control. Society's interests should be considered, but no one appeared to overwhelmingly support the public interest. They might think that allowing too much citizen involvement could impede township growth

or land ownership. If this is true, the Pierce and Lovrich study, which explains a technical-information quandary, might apply. Pierce and Lovrich both studied decision making in water issues in Idaho and concluded that experts and elected officials tended to have a higher level of information holding than did the citizens, in essence making the citizenry removed from decision making. The local township officials in Michigan may think the same thing based on their experiences.

Apparently these statements gave Factor A pause in deciding policies that could impose on property rights. They reinforced the belief that local governments feel competent in handling most land management decisions. Since they are closer to the issue, this sensitivity of property rights allows officials to be cautious in any policy that might impact a resident's property rights. Further, these township officials found the property rights issue to be situational. In essence, they feel that local government officials could decide more readily whether a landowner's property use would interfere with neighbors if there was a need to balance growth and protect environmental resources.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
-4	2	-1	5. Even relatively severe government restrictions on land use are not an unconstitutional taking of land, since the property would still remain in the hands of its owner. The government would merely be preventing the owner from conducting a land use, which would interfere with the paramount rights of the public.
2	-3	-3	8. If the regulation of privately owned land goes too far, it really amounts to a taking. We are in danger of forgetting that the public desire to improve conditions is not enough to warrant bypassing the constitutional way of paying for the change.

In statements 8 and 5, the township officials wanted minimal government intrusion, and did not appear to zealously protect property rights. Factor A thinks that regulations are necessary, albeit promulgated at the local level.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
-4	-1	-2	14. The solution to ineffective local zoning has been to separate the planning decisions further from the local community, to rely on some higher government to resolve local problems. This process is to the detriment of local growth and must be reversed.
1	0	3	19. I would like for land use considerations to be decided locally, because if we start giving state officials power over land use, the next thing you know we will have national zoning from Washington, D.C.
5	0	0	24. A state land use program will work best when local prerogatives and property rights are preserved. State policy, to the extent there is one, should be limited to providing advice, guidelines and technical assistance to the localities.

The Parochial Propertarians would be willing to accept some state assistance, but it is only that – *assistance*. Namely, townships would be willing to accept technical assistance in dollars, expertise, etc., but no direct state involvement in deciding land use activities, as per Statements 14, 19 and 24.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
0	1	5	18. First priority should be given to preservation of agricultural land. Otherwise, in just a few years there will not be enough food to go around.
0	0	0	32. I would just as soon leave open spaces open. Just because no people live in an area does not make it a place for a highway, an apartment complex or a factory.

These township officials apparently did not think that resolving land issues was urgent; they were also indifferent to open space and farmland preservation (see Statements 18 and 32). It may be that the township members do not want to limit choices for growth or alternative uses for the land. This element of choice may be especially true for the Alaiedon official. The Meridian board members, on the other hand, may be so new to the board that they may not have established any land use priorities.

Responsible Propertarians

This group consisted of five respondents, four from Meridian Township and one from Alaiedon Township. The Meridian group consisted of two men and two women, all with some college or advanced degrees. Three officials were Democrats and one was a Republican. The Alaiedon official from Factor A also shared Factor B and was the only Alaiedon official who loaded on Factor B--Responsible Propertarians. Township experience ran from less than one year for one of the Meridian officials to ten years for the Alaiedon official. The Alaiedon sort appeared on both factors and tended to make him more progressive on property rights issues than the other board members. Again, his township experience may have something to do with his moderated opinions. Experience probably leads him to conclude that land use issues are intractable; thus, he is able to see beyond the rhetoric from both sides and develop his own moderate beliefs.

Factor B was more demographically diverse than Factor A, which may explain the Responsible Propertarian view and the support for public interest that this group

shares. It also appears that they all had college degrees at a minimum, with many holding post-graduate degrees.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
-2	-3	-3	6. The constitutional right of private property, respected as a fundamental to individual freedom, is being endangered. We may be on the verge of total government control of all land in the name of "environmental concern."
-5	-5	-4	27. A person who owns property should have the right to do with it as he pleases.

This Factor did not support property rights at all costs, as evident from their highly negative loading on Statement 27. They tended to support property rights, but not to the point that they would consider themselves "radical environmentalists." Responsible Propertarians do not think property rights are in danger of being subverted, and believe that a person cannot do whatever they want to with their land. This indicates a strong desire to protect the public interest.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
1	3	1	10. Since essential needs can only be met through development and since the environment must be protected for the long run good of us all, it would seem that both developers and conservationists have a stake in achieving an accommodation with one another.
3	5	0	17. Permits for development should be denied unless the developer can show that his project will not have an unduly adverse effect on the environment and is in conformity with local or state land use plans.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
-1	4	2	34. Land use decisions must allow the participation of all people who would feel the impact--not just those who live within the jurisdiction of the decision-maker or have the best means to influence him, but all who would benefit or be harmed by the decision.

Of interest in Factor B was the willingness to accept accommodation from the public, as evidenced by Statements 10 and 34. This also strikes the theme that Responsible Propertarians are interested in responsible land ownership, and they tend to balance individual desires with the public interest. Factor B would deny permits when the project was expected to unduly harm the local environment and the proposed development was not in conformity with local or state land use plans (Statement 17). Again, Factor B wants to protect the public interest and the environment first, and is concerned secondarily with individual property rights.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
4	-2	-3	4. There is a hazy boundary between "taking" land and "controlling" it. It is not fair to take land for the public good under the guise of regulation without compensation. The individual property owner should not have to bear the burden of public benefit.
2	-3	-3	8. If the regulation of privately owned land goes too far, it really amounts to a taking. We are in danger of forgetting that the public desire to improve conditions is not enough to warrant bypassing the constitutional way of paying for the change.
4	1	4	25. An effective land use policy should not restrict freedom of choice, but should assure that choices are made wisely, that alternatives are considered, and that important decisions take into account the interests of society.

Factor B would be willing to support greater choice in land use decisions. In essence, they were not willing to ban all development or support all environmental efforts. These township officials were more willing to place greater public benefit responsibility on private landowners. There was also an element of choice for land uses. Responsible Proprietarians acknowledge that development is necessary, but how and where development takes place can be controlled. Choice is often best accomplished at the local level of government, since they know best what the local situation is like.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
2	0	1	28. We can no longer consider land as merely another factor of production to be bought cheaply and sold to the highest bidder. It is a social resource which private individuals may own, use and trade, but subject to guidelines designed to protect localities and regions.
-3	-4	-5	30. The township should not restrict the use of land in a way that will limit growth, because growth attracts more people, and new people bring in more tax money to the community, thereby easing the burden on the rest of us.
0	0	0	32. I would just as soon leave open spaces open. Just because no people live in an area does not make it a place for a highway, an apartment complex or a factory.

Factor B does not know what to think about land as a social resource. This reflects their understanding that people will sell and develop their land, but that how this is done is crucial. It may also be why this factor was consistent with the others for statement 32. Open space represents undeveloped land and the potential for additional township development. Development should not be wanton, but selective and done responsibly, as supported by statement 30.

Also significant was that these officials wanted to take an active role in doing something about growth and land use. They were willing to approve of some higher authority to control land uses.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
-4	-1	-2	14. The solution to ineffective local zoning has been to separate the planning decisions further from the local community, to rely on some higher government to resolve local problems. This process is to the detriment of local growth and must be reversed.
0	3	3	16. I want to choose the environment in which I live. I do not want land use to be something that just happens to me. I want land use to be something in which I can be actively involved as a deliberator and voter.
0	1	5	18. First priority should be given to preservation of agricultural land. Otherwise, in just a few years there will not be enough food to go around.
-1	5	3	23. I would like to see more green belts around cities, and buffer zones between and within regions, because I am seriously concerned that there will not be enough green space in our metropolitan areas five or ten years from now.

They thought land use was best decided on the local level (Statement 14) and seemed to be proactive in shaping land use policy (Statement 16). For instance they were willing to consider the protection of agricultural land as a priority (Statement 18), but not at the same level as open space and environmental worth (Statement 23). It is interesting that factor B loaded heavily on statement 23 since open space registered a neutral response in statement 32. They wanted additional green space, but green space can be relative, especially when farmland can serve the same purpose.

They supported farmland preservation, however, half-heartedly. This means that they felt there was a distinction between farmland as open space and other land areas.

Factor B also shared some traits with Factor A, as in statement 27. Neither favored property rights as sacrosanct, but were willing to balance property rights with the interests of society. Both favored maintaining local control over land use decisions. These two factors are indeed both sides of the same coin. They want to control land use and do so right now. They are willing to make a start and err on the side of doing something about land use, rather than waiting.

Where the two factors clearly diverged was in their support, or lack thereof, for public involvement in land use decision making. The Parochial Propertarians wanted greater local control with less outside meddling, but the Responsible Propertarians favored more public involvement--to a point--but clearly not when it would jeopardize local control. A hazy line existed between "some" and "a little" public involvement.

This Factor also wanted to share information with other local governments and regional planning authorities. However, Responsible Propertarians, because they are willing to compensate land owners for private property rights, are sensitive to property rights. Factor B may have more environmental sensitivity than Factor A, but less than Factor C. Due to a lack of environmental statements, however, this group did not lean heavily toward any environmental response. When this study was compared with the Brown and Coke analysis, many of the people loaded on Factor Two were identified as Environmentalists. The next factor is labeled Environmentalist in world-view.

Environmental Propertarians

This view reflected the view of only one of the nine respondents. This person also shared Factors B and C, with support for Factor B and slightly loaded on Factor C. She obviously, though, has a separate perspective from other board members.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
-3	-4	-5	30. The township should not restrict the use of land in a way that will limit growth, because growth attracts more people, and new people bring in more tax money to the community, thereby easing the burden on the rest of us.
-2	-5	-5	33. Instead of placing complicated and time-consuming controls on developers, the state should facilitate development, e.g., by clearing away the red tape and simplifying the procedures required to obtain building and zoning permits.

She was adamantly opposed to unrestrained growth, as evidenced by the heavy negative loading on Statements 30 and 33. In Statement 33, she was also wary of state involvement in local decision making.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
3	3	0	12. The township needs to adopt land use guidelines right now, so even if a policy has its critics, it should be passed if it is fundamentally equitable. We cannot afford to wait for perfection. We must make a beginning.
3	5	0	17. Permits for development should be denied unless the developer can show that his project will not have an unduly adverse effect on the environment, and it is in conformity with local or state land use plans.
5	2	0	21. I tend to think of land as a kind of transcendental prerogative. None of us individually or collectively should be allowed to do whatever we wish with a piece of land merely because we "own" it in the legal sense.

Factors**A B C****Statement**

-5 -5 -4 27. A person who owns property should have the right to do with it as he pleases.

Interestingly, on some very sensitive property rights and environmental questions, she appeared to be neutral. However, one could say that her neutrality was due to inexperience on the township board. She could also be taking a "wait-and-see approach" to land use policy.

Factors**A B C****Statement**

-3 0 0 7. I, for one, question the desirability of more growth. Development itself appears to be the enemy, a kind of pollution that causes congestion and destroys scenic views, and one that ought to be cleaned up.

0 0 0 32. I would just as soon leave open spaces open. Just because no people live in an area does not make it a place for a highway, an apartment complex or a factory.

Inexperience can probably be attributed to the way she considered statements 7 and 32 on Factor C.

Factors**A B C****Statement**

4 -2 -3 4. There is a hazy boundary between "taking" land and "controlling" it. It is not fair to take land for the public good under the guise of regulation without compensation. The individual property owner should not have to bear the burden of public benefit.

-2 -3 -3 6. The constitutional right of private property, respected as a fundamental to individual freedom, is being endangered. We may be on the verge of total government control of all land in the name of "environmental concern."

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
2	-3	-3	8. If the regulation of privately owned land goes too far, it really amounts to a taking. We are in danger of forgetting that the public desire to improve conditions is not enough to warrant bypassing the constitutional way of paying for the change.
-3	-3	-4	11. The rights of property should not be abridged even in critical environmental areas. It is the marketplace that should determine which land is worthy of preservation, and state government should restrict itself to assuring that the market operates effectively.

She supported stronger no-growth legislation and would limit *willy nilly* private use of land (Statement 11). Her sensitivity toward the environment appeared to even transcend Constitutional and takings issues (see Statements 4, 6 and 8).

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
2	4	5	9. The township government has an obligation to control the use of land, and just because a property owner cannot make the most personally beneficial use of his property, or is unable to realize speculative investment gains, does not mean that he must be compensated for the undeveloped potential.
0	1	5	18. First priority should be given to preservation of agricultural land. Otherwise, in just a few years there will not be enough food to go around.
4	1	4	25. An effective land use policy should not restrict freedom of choice, but should assure that choices are made wisely, that alternatives are considered, and that important decisions take into account the interests of society.

The above statements illustrate Factor C's commitment to the environment and public interest. She was adamantly opposed to a diminished value of a person's property if the property could still be used, but just for some other purpose, as in statements 9 and 25. Her interest in farmland preservation (Statement 18) also

signified her commitment to public good over private benefit. Yet, she also supports local control and fiscal responsibility.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
1	0	3	19. I would like for land use considerations to be decided locally, because if we start giving state officials power over land use, the next thing you know we will have national zoning from Washington, D.C.
0	1	4	22. Government at all levels should actively solicit open space donations and should facilitate the work of responsible private organizations by granting them charitable status for real estate purposes.

In summary, the Environmentalist was slightly loaded on this factor, but this person favored more environmental control, was more willing to sacrifice private property rights for public interest, and accepted greater public participation. All of these are traits and characteristics of strong environmental attitudes and opinions (Milbrath 1984). It is possible this person, as well as others who load on Factor B, might have taken a stronger environmental worldview if the remaining Brown and Coke statements had been used in this study. If this had been the case, it is reasonable that there could have been two factors, both resembling the Brown/Coke typology.

Summary of Their Individual Perspectives

Each of the three factors identified reflected the Brown and Coke study almost to the exact scores. However, this study went one step further by discretely identifying factors A and B by examining private property rights. Recall the wide disparity between localists and environmentalists from the Brown and Coke analysis and how they loaded onto each statement. This study seemed to reflect greater symmetry,

homogeneity and moderation toward private property rights, with less emphasis toward bi-polar views.

Parochial and Responsible Propertarians reflected both sides of the same coin. There were no radical thoughts except perhaps slightly on the Environmentalist factor. If the additional environmental statements had been used, it is very possible that the Responsible Propertarian factor would have loaded somewhat onto the Environmentalist factor as well. One great point for this study is the fact that it supported the Brown and Coke study even over time, and demonstrated that property rights statements are indeed pertinent to today's dialogue. More importantly, perhaps, was the discrete analysis of the Parochial and Responsible Propertarians, and a paradigm shift in thoughts on private property rights over the last 20 years.

Table 3 illustrates the correlations between factors. The Responsible Propertarians and the Environmentalist reflected a stronger correlation in attitudes than did the relationship between the Parochial and Responsible Propertarians. The difference lies in the environmental statements and interest in public involvement. The correlation matrix supports the concept that if the previous Brown/Coke statements on the environment had been used, there would have been a stronger correlation between Factors B and C.

Table 3. Correlations Between Factors

	Factors		
Factors	A	B	C
A	1.00	.46	.36
B	.46	1.00	.71
C	.36	.71	1.00

The Milbrath study, with its New Environmental Paradigm, Environmental Sympathizers and Rearguard, essentially stated that environmental opinions or attitudes will tend to move in a continuum. If this is true, then there may indeed be a New Environmental Paradigm or new way of thinking evolving within local governments. It is evident from this study that the township officials surveyed here are aware of land use regulation and private property rights. Most township officials seem to be very sensitive toward the whole issue of private property rights. As a result, there is a balancing of interests between property rights, public interest and environmental protection. These two townships reflected the opinions and views of the New Environmental Paradigm and, certainly, Environmental Sympathizers. None of these township officials could be considered part of the rearguard.

CO-ORIENTATION

Recall that co-orientation is an extra analytical twist on Q-methodology. Co-orientation provides the opportunity for a research subject to look at an issue from their own perspective and to see the same subject from another person's point of view.

This unique twist is placed on Q-methodology to further the methodology and establish parameters of understanding between individuals. It highlights the similarities and differences in policy debates. In the Q-universe, co-orientation enhances the methodology. This methodology goes beyond that of Q-methodology and has each township sort the cards in a way they think the other township views these statements. In essence, Meridian Township views itself, and then is asked how they think the other township, in this instance Alaiedon Township, would perceive these statements, and vice versa.

Due to the way the data was entered and analyzed, it was not possible to examine the data on a factor-to-factor comparison, as was anticipated. Each township needed to be entered separately, and this renders factor analysis meaningless when all the sorts cannot be factor analyzed together. Instead, this interpretation centered on a pattern of responses across factors from the original Q-sort and the co-orientation sort. For instance, analysis hinges on grouping or patterns of responses. In particular, the analysis showed the similarity, agreement or disagreement on certain statements across factors. These similar and dissimilar statements formed the parameters around township opinions on property rights and environmental awareness.

The co-orientation approach also formed three distinct factors, but most of the factors were negatively loaded. Further examination was made of all three co-orientation factors and the original factors to identify shared or dissimilar statements held in common between both views.

Shared statements are those that are loaded virtually identical on each factor. When a factor or range of factors load as a group, either positively or negatively, it

can be said that all respondents viewed those statements in the same way, although individual loadings might vary by degree. It was this grouping or pattern of responses, though, that was used in this study. All three factors were analyzed across the Q-sort and co-orientation sort. The following statements seemed to be shared among the factors and co-orientation approach.

<u>Factors</u>			<u>Statement</u>
A	B	C	
-2	-3	-3	6. The constitutional right of private property, respected as a fundamental to individual freedom, is being endangered. We may be on the verge of total government control of all land in the name of "environmental concern."
0	3	3	16. I want to choose the environment in which I live. I do not want land use to be something that just happens to me. I want land use to be something in which I can be actively involved as a deliberator and voter.
0	1	5	18. First priority should be given to preservation of agricultural land. Otherwise, in just a few years there will not be enough food to go around.
-1	0	2	20. Instead of developing regulations for what land uses should go where, we should stress the creation of a more adequate review process, one that recognizes the right of a wide variety of legitimate interests-- local governments, regional planning organizations, state agencies, adjacent property owners, etc.--to comment on specific proposals.
-5	-5	-4	27. A person who owns property should have the right to do with it as he pleases.
2	0	1	28. We can no longer consider land as merely another factor of production to be bought cheaply and sold to the highest bidder. It is a social resource which private individuals may own, use and trade but subject to guidelines designed to protect localities and regions.

Shared responses across townships seemed to indicate a support for property rights. No one from either perspective appeared to think that property rights were

eroding, or that society was entering a stage of radical environmental concern (Statement 6). Moreover, these officials wanted to be involved in land use decision making. They wanted to take an active role and were not willing to sit back and let development just happen (Statement 16).

It is also interesting that both perspectives were sensitive to farmland preservation (Statement 18) and recognized the fact that farms are disappearing. This would indicate they understand the effects of urban sprawl in the region. This is also significant for rural Alaieton Township. At this point, Meridian Township realizes they have lost most of their farmland. The only thing that the groups could not decide on was setting priorities on what land use protection effort would be targeted (Statement 18). Indeed, they did think that any area in jeopardy should be bought rather than heavily regulated (Statement 2). This indicates a sustainable development ethic and allows for growth, but does not accept growth for growth's sake.

All of these views were reinforced by the idea that no one can do with their land as they please (Statement 27). This opinion seemed to reflect the townships' opinion that some regulation is either needed, or inevitable up to a point (Statement 28).

These statements did not reflect a bi-polar point of view within the group but rather, a need for sharing information in support of land use regulations. These statements illustrated a fundamental base of knowledge or shared attitudes across factors. The shared ideas and opinions on these six statements also indicated that there was greater moderation or room for compromise on private property rights than appears in the public discourse. No bi-polar view was exemplified in this group of

township officials. Common themes within the group were to maintain local government control (probably home rule), accept some state involvement through technical assistance, and hold a pre-disposition toward limited or balanced growth within the township.

What was also interesting was the identification of four dissimilar opinions across all the factors. Differences were determined by subtracting the difference between one statement loading from another. Two figures are established--one for each township's view and one for the other township's view. These figures represent a number for each factor and statement. When the difference was greater than three, it yielded four consistent statements. In other words, those same four statements identified by each of the factors were held in common, but had the greatest disparity (see Statements 8 and 20).

Factors

A B C

Statement

2	-3	-3	8. If the regulation of privately owned land goes too far, it really amounts to a taking. We are in danger of forgetting that the public desire to improve conditions is not enough to warrant bypassing the constitutional way of paying for the change.
-1	0	2	20. Instead of developing regulations for what land uses should go where, we should stress the creation of a more adequate review process, one that recognizes the right of a wide variety of legitimate interests--local governments, regional planning organizations, state agencies, adjacent property owners, etc.--to comment on specific proposals.
-3	-4	-5	30. The township should not restrict the use of land in a way that will limit growth, because growth attracts more people, and new people bring in more tax money to the community, thereby easing the burden on the rest of us.

Factors**Statement****A B C**

-2	-5	-5	33. Instead of placing complicated and time consuming controls on developers, the state should facilitate development, e.g., by clearing away the red tape and simplifying the procedures required to obtain building and zoning permits.
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The biggest disparity across statements rested with the interpretation of takings.

If township boards have a difficult time recognizing takings, then this could account for their lack of prioritizing land preservation and why they were willing to leave open space open. U.S. Supreme Court cases may have had an impact on how local government officials view property rights (Statement 8).

They also differed on local control and public input. There was division between how much public involvement is needed and what decisions a local government can make on its own (Statement 20). Absolute local control was split, with some evidence of the state facilitating economic development (Statement 33). Along these lines rests the idea of restricting additional growth or allowing growth to continue. There was more agreement to limit growth, but by how much is the question.

Summary

These four statements (8, 20, 33, 33) were split between protecting the landowner and providing for the public good. Each of the factors believed there should be greater local control, which would ensure "balancing of the interests" among environmentalists and developers. The township board wanted to support the public interest, but realized that too much public input could result in a loss of control by the

local township officials, perhaps even a loss of home rule. There was a sense that greater public participation could result in diluting the decisions of experts, and that the people could "muck things up." Growth versus no-growth appears to show considerable disparity. A difference of opinion existed as to how much growth a township would be willing to receive. Supporting this concern regarding growth were the issues of costs and fiscal responsibility.

Some township officials wanted state involvement, while others want greater local control. There is a fine line, however, between too much state control and not enough. The issue of control could also be related to what type of state involvement is needed for the township--technical assistance or day-to-day land use decision making. Yet, all factors and all views within the township reflected some acceptance of state assistance.

All township officials within the study believed in property rights, but said that paying for those property rights were situationally dependent. It should be stressed that local government officials in this study believed that they knew best how to decide land use decisions, and would shun any direct outside involvement, yet would appreciate any state or Federal government assistance from outreach and communication efforts to provide cost share monies. It is also significant that each of the township officials supported the Constitution and held property rights as a given for society. However, they believed that in certain circumstances, total payment for a partial taking would not be justified, especially when juxtaposed to the public interest. Indeed, they did not want to take land for the sake of taking land, but only when the public interest should prevail.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research connected a methodology of subjectivity with a politician's opinions on private property. The 34 statements in this research were from the Brown/Coke study described in Chapter Two. Each statement appeared one to a card and was sorted in a forced grid distribution. Using a process of co-orientation, where each respondent not only sorted the cards from his or her own particular point of view, but also from that of the other board members in the adjacent township, this research determined what perspectives were shared or not between rural/urban townships.

Overall, this study was in line with the Brown and Coke analysis. Factor A was parochial, with some tendency toward public interest. Factor B was more responsive to the citizens, thus making this factor more prone to support the public interest than Factor A. Neither factor, however, forsook property rights or the environment. Indeed these factors were moderate in temperament. The result was a more discrete delineation of the localist attitude, since it seemed that local control was desired among both factors.

It should be noted that these views are subject to change based on the particular circumstances facing each of these respective townships. Opinions are flexible and case sensitive. For instance, one township official may favor the public

interest for wetlands, yet also allow for development in other areas of the township. Factor C, on the other hand, was slightly loaded for one member of Meridian Township. This person tended to be oriented toward an environmental ethic more than the others. Yet, it is difficult to make too strong a determination on environmental opinions due to the lack of additional statements which could have exposed these environmental tendencies.

In the co-orientation approach to Q-methodology, two key points were identified. One point is that all factors shared six of the same statements, yet also had the greatest disparity over the same statements across factors. The statements held in common established a loose framework from which to begin more intense analysis of township officials' opinions on property rights. Co-orientation establishes a parameter where township officials agree and where there is disagreement in property rights. In essence, the six shared statements illustrated where both Alaieton and Meridian Townships share common ground or have fundamental attitudes and opinions toward property rights. Where there were disparities between factors, there was a gap in understanding for these township officials on land use regulations and private property rights. This indicates that additional work needs to be done in streamlining intergovernmental communications and staying informed on the land use issues of the other township. *Although one township is urban and the other is rural, they did not differ markedly in their overall concerns for land use within their townships.* As a result there was no difference in outlook between these urban and rural townships.

Meridian Township was in greater favor of some restraint on private property, especially when that land use interferes with the goals of the township's

comprehensive plan or the quest for more open space. Population increase and development pressures were the greatest concerns for restraining private property rights in this instance. Alaiedon Township, on the other hand, is more rural in nature and does not want to encroach on its quality of life, but realized that some land use controls were necessary. Alaiedon Township was sensitive and aware of development pressures, and seemed willing to address the problem sooner, rather than later.

What, if anything, was found from this research? Several tenets of private property theory were discovered. First, is that private property does not appear to be sacrosanct from the stand-point of the "wise use" or Western U.S. philosophy. Politicians seemed willing to accept certain government restriction on the use of someone's private property, especially in the name of the public interest. When the statements reflected compensable takings for public purposes, politicians were undecided as to what path to take. Yet in some circumstance, they felt it would be better to take land for a public purpose, like open space designation or flood mitigation purposes, rather than to seize it for some other purpose.

The only difference in demographic variables was the education level of the respondents. Political party affiliation, gender, age, race and income, in this group of respondents, did not present convincing differences in opinions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Possible recommendations to improve this study would be to intensively analyze these respondents through several conditions of instruction (COI) and not use co-orientation. Co-orientation leads to confusion in interpreting the results, because

individuals are first asked to give their opinion on the statements, then asked to give an individual opinion on an entire township board. In essence, opinion ranged from the self to one of a group, when it is probably best to analyze the respondents on a one-to-one basis. Second, the statements could have been amended to reveal any special circumstances on private property within Michigan. However, this may have yielded very little additional information for the study. After all, it is the dialogue at the local level that drives the Federal, which means that general attributes are wanted, not traits endemic to one region or state.

The research demonstrated that there are certain similarities, differences and misconceptions of opinion when dealing with private property concerns. Certain statements consistently resonated a stronger response with other statements. The delicate balance between property rights, growth and environmental protection shows that these local government officials understand and appreciate the sensitivity of the property rights debate. It also means that when local officials are not certain on land use issues, they recognize that they need technical assistance from other sources to assist with decision making. This lack of technical assistance appears to be the greatest finding, but one that was anticipated. Township officials indicated, that when there is not enough information available to make a decision, they needed to turn to an outside source for assistance and support. As evident in this study, however, the outside source must provide information, education and even dollars--but not direct involvement.

With this being the case, Michigan State University Extension can play a role in information dissemination and education of township officials, as well as even planning for these townships and local governments. The attractiveness of Michigan

State University Extension to facilitate information is the fact that it is recognized and respected within the community, and does not take a heavy hand or a big government approach to local decision making. Michigan State University Extension can do several things to address this desire by local government officials to have information provided on land use issues:

- There needs to be a Land Use Information Center created at the University that provides world wide web access, as well as current and yet accessible data for township officials.
- Provide greater education decision-making models, seminars and workshops for local government officials. Develop a directory of land use experts within the state who understand local government issues.
- Identify possible funding sources, both on a state and local level, for the purpose of purchasing sensitive lands.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Ideas for future research abound. First, expand the statements utilized so as to look exclusively at private property rights among more townships. Second, multiple conditions of instruction should be given for intensive analysis of the respondents. Third, a statewide survey on the demographic variables associated with private property rights is also invaluable to see if the sorts correlate and validate the demographic variables. Fourth, the data collected from the Q-study can be used to construct and implement a larger survey instrument for a larger sample size.

Furthermore, analysis of concerns regarding road building, crime, safety, and public health would be interesting, solely to establish the differences between urban

and rural townships. In this manner, certain areas might need prioritization to keep the township boards informed and up-to-date. Another possibility for future research would be to track this issue of development and property rights over time to see if personnel changes on township boards reflect radical changes. For instance, would new township board members change their opinions over time concerning land use regulations? Also, a comparison could be made between politicians, citizens and bureaucrats to see if communities share the same concerns. One way of doing this would be to conduct an intensive analysis on one issue with a series of conditions of instruction. For example:

- 1.) What do these statements mean to you? (politicians, citizens and bureaucrats)
- 2.) How would a politician, citizen or bureaucrat perceive the statements?

Finally, deleting and adding statements that would be relevant to specific situations would be valuable. Not only would the statements contain statements concerning private property rights, but they could also include statements on specific cases occurring within their jurisdiction or actions that might affect their jurisdictions. These case-specific statements could be topically geared to particular issues salient within a township. Remember, any increase in statements usually results in a smaller population sample. *A research agenda that evolves as times or conditions change, however, would be of infinite worth in monitoring land use programs.* Additional Q-studies should be done utilizing the entire Brown and Coke statements on private property rights and land use regulations, in order to validate township officials'

opinions about land use regulations. Clearly the field of environmental policy is ripe for future Q-methodological inquiries.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

DIRECTIONS FOR PERFORMING THE Q-SORT

Attached to these directions are 34 statements, one to a card, for a total of 34 cards, as well as a forced grid distribution form to be completed as described in the directions.

INFORMED CONSENT

This research is based on a study conducted 20 years ago that assessed the land use opinions of the public and politicians in Ohio. The result was three typologies of opinions and it highlighted the similarities and dissimilarities between the opinions. A policy outcome gave impetus to designing better communication strategies for the respondents to share opinions and current knowledge on the field of land use regulations. With current U.S. Supreme Court and Michigan Supreme Court decisions dealing with private property rights and public use, (declaration of open spaces for instance), I felt this research should be tried again, but this time studying politicians in neighboring political jurisdictions. The results are expected to mirror those of the study from 20 years ago.

This research will require your voluntary participation for approximately one to one and half hours regarding your opinions on land use regulations. It will involve one session of testing and two tests will be given during that time. The first test will require you to look at the statements from your perspective and record your responses. The second test will require you interpreting the statements from what you think the other township's perspective is on those statements. I foresee no risks to you by participating in this study.

Please initial one of the spaces below to indicate your willingness to participate, that you understand the experiment as it has been explained to you, and that you understand any risks or discomforts involved.

Yes, the directions have been explained and I am willing to participate _____.

No, the directions have not been explained and I do not wish to participate _____.

"You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire."

At any point in this research you can terminate your participation without threat of penalty or coercion. It is hoped, though, that you can participate to the fullest extent

possible. To insure you that the results will remain confidential and anonymous, your completion of the research will not be released in any way to a third party nor will an individuals' identity be revealed by the researcher, even if I discover it after the fact.

Your participation in this research implies your consent. It also signifies that you have read the directions and agreed to them. As a reminder, you may terminate, at your choice, this research at any point.

Contact person(s) for additional questions or concerns that may be raised from participation in the study:

Eckhart Dersch, Professor
Department of Resource Development
323 Natural Resources Building
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1222
(517) 353-1921

OR

Jefferson G. Edgens, Ph.C. candidate
1642 F Spartan Village
East Lansing, Michigan 48823
(517) 353-6871

STEP 1.

Each participant has an instruction packet which present your informed consent, directions, 34 statements, (2) statement grids and demographic information. First, please read the informed consent paragraph contained within this directions page. Once you have read the paragraph and agree to continue your involvement, please read further. Remember you may terminate your participation at any time.

You will notice that you have 34 cards, each containing one statement on land use issues, as well as 3 additional cards labeled AGREE, DISAGREE and NEUTRAL. Please place these 3 cards on the table in front of you from left to right respectively. (Please be sure that you have enough room in front of you to spread out the cards). Please read through the 34 statements on land use regulation.

STEP 2.

**** What is your opinion on each of the statements on land use regulations? With which are you in greatest agreement?**

Sort the cards removing all of those with which you agree and place them under the label listed AGREE. {At anytime during the sort, you may move any card that you feel more appropriately represents your opinion}.

Next, sort the remaining cards and place those with which you disagree under the corresponding label. Finally, all remaining cards can be placed under the neutral label.

Example:

DISAGREE
Pile 1

AGREE
Pile 2

NEUTRAL
Pile 3

STEP 3.

Return to the agree stack and sort these statements, so that they reflect those opinions with which you are in greatest agreement. To aid you in this task please consult the grid distribution enclosed with this packet. Have the grid available to answer and record your decisions.

First, look at the grid distribution labeled from -5 through 5 along the top. The -5 to 0 portion of the grid will represent the answers to the disagree cards. Under -5 notice that you have only two spaces, this means that you must find in the disagree stack the two cards with which you are in strongest disagreement. Then proceed to -4, sorting the cards each time to find those statement with which you disagree. Do this until the disagree stack is exhausted.

[If you run out of disagree cards before you reach the 0 column, then sort your neutral pile to find those cards or statements with which you find some disagreement so that you can finish the sort].

STEP 4.

Follow the same procedure for the agree pile as you did for did for the disagree pile. Remember to begin from 5 and work toward 0 placing the corresponding number of cards for each space under the number.

[If you run out of cards before you reach the 0 column, then sort your neutral pile to find those cards or statements with which you find some agreement so that you can finish the sort].

STEP 5.

Now sort the neutral stack. At this point, there should be spaces available on the grid under the -1, 0 and 1 columns. Sort the cards again from disagree, agree to neutral. The most neutral or ambivalent cards should be under the 0 column.

Once all of the cards are recorded, please circle the entire group of those numbers represented under the neutral label. Do not circle the numbers individually, but as a group, being careful not to include agree or disagree cards. Please hand me the completed grid once you are finished.

STEP 6.

At this point, some of you may be asked certain questions that relate to why you sorted the cards the way you did.

STEP 7.

Once the instructions are given to begin a new sort, prepare to sort the cards and use the second grid.

**** This time sort each card on the basis of how *you* think each board member from **Meridian Township** will perceive them. This means you should be looking at these statements from what you think is *their* point of view, not yours.**

Again, place the cards into three piles and follow the instructions above. At the completion of this sort, again please hand me the completed grid with recorded statement numbers.

STEP 8.

Once all of the sorts are completed for your point of view and the point of view of the board member from the other township, the sorts are completed. Another post sort interview may take place to ask some of you why cards were sorted a certain way.

STEP 9.

The last sheet in the packet is the demographic form. Please answer as many of these questions as you can. Return the demographic sheet when you are finished.

This completes the research exercise. Thank you very much for your participation.

I will gladly share the results with each township board, preserving the anonymity of each board member, that requests the results.

APPENDIX B

FORCED GRID DISTRIBUTION DIAGRAM

Sort Number: 1 or 2

Political Party Affiliation _____

Date _____

Time _____

[illegible]

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APPENDIX C

Appendix C

Statements and Factor Arrays

Property Rights Statements

	<i>Factors</i>		
	A	B	C
1. The citizens of a locality are best able to decide the proper use of privately held land in that community. This is a great American principle upon which a state land use program would wreak irreparable damage.	0	-1	-1
2. If some areas are of such concern that they ought to be protected from development, then the state ought to buy those areas outright rather than attempt to regulate the private use of them.	1	-2	-2
3. We need something like a land trust to assist localities in the designation, planning and conservation of extensive green space.	0	1	-1
4. There is a hazy boundary between "taking" land and "controlling" it. It is not fair to take land for the public good under the guise of regulation without compensation. The individual property owner should not have to bear the burden of public benefit.	4	-2	-3

Property Rights Statements

	<i>Factors</i>		
	A	B	C
5. Even relatively severe government restrictions on land use are not an unconstitutional taking of land, since the property would still remain in the hand of its owner. The government would merely be preventing the owner from conducting a land use, which would interfere with the paramount rights of the public.	-4	2	-1
6. The constitutional right of private property, respected as fundamental to individual freedom, is being endangered. We may be on the verge of total government control of all land in the name of "environmental concern."	-2	-3	-3
7. I for one question the desirability of more growth. Development itself appears to be the enemy, a kind of pollution that causes congestion and destroys scenic views, and one that ought to be cleaned up.	-3	0	0
8. If the regulation of privately owned land goes too far, it really amounts to a taking of property. We are in danger of forgetting that the public desire to improve conditions is not enough to warrant bypassing the constitutional way of paying for the change.	2	-3	-3
9. The township government has an obligation to control the use of land, and just because a property owner cannot make the most personally beneficial use of his property, or is unable to realize speculative investment gains, does not mean that he must be compensated for the undeveloped potential.	2	4	5

Property Rights Statements

	<i>Factors</i>		
	A	B	C
10. Since essential needs can only be met through development and since the environment must be protected for the long run good of us all, it would seem that both developers and conservationists have a stake in achieving an accommodation with one another.	1	3	1
11. The rights of property should not be abridged even in critical environmental areas. It is the marketplace that should determine which land is worthy of preservation, and state government should restrict itself to assuring that the market operates effectively.	-3	-3	-4
12. The township needs to adopt land use guidelines right now, so even if a policy has its critics, it should be passed if it is fundamentally equitable. We cannot afford to wait for perfection. We must make a beginning.	3	3	0
13. The state should require developers of subdivisions and new towns to reserve enough parkland and open space to serve the needs of the residents of their projects.	3	2	-2
14. The solution to ineffective local zoning has been to separate the planning decisions, further from the local community, to rely on some higher government to resolve local problems. This process is to the detriment of local growth and must be reversed.	-4	-1	-2
15. When government compensates landowners affected by new regulations, it should be required to pay the landowner what he would get if he could develop the property.	-1	-4	-1

Property Rights Statements

	<i>Factors</i>		
	A	B	C
16. I want to choose the environment in which I live. I do not want land use to be something that just happens to me. I want land use to be something which I can be actively involved as a deliberator and voter.	0	3	3
17. Permits for development should be denied unless the developer can show that his project will not have an unduly adverse effect on the environment and is unconformity with locator state land use plans.	3	5	0
18. First priority should be given to preservation of agricultural land. Otherwise, in just a few years there will not be enough food to go around.	0	1	5
19. I would like for land use considerations to be decided locally, because if we start giving state officials power over land use, the next thing you know we will have national zoning from Washington, D.C.	1	0	3
20. Instead of developing regulations for what land uses should go where, we should stress the creation of a more adequate review process, one that recognizes the right of a wide variety of legitimate interests (local governments, regional planning organizations, state agencies, adjacent property owners, etc.) to comment on specific proposals.	-1	0	2
21. I prefer to think of land use as a kind of transcendental prerogative. None of us, individually or collectively, should be allowed to do whatever we wish with a piece of land merely because we "own" it in a legal sense.	5	2	0

Property Rights Statements

	<i>Factors</i>		
	A	B	C
22. Governments at all levels should actively solicit open space donations and should facilitate the work of responsible private organizations by granting them charitable status for real estate purposes.	0	1	4
23. I would like to see more green belts around cities and buffer zones between and with in regions, because I'm seriously concerned that there will not be enough green space in our metropolitan areas five or ten years from now.	-1	5	3
24. A state land use program will work best when local prerogatives and property rights are preserved. State policy, to the extent there is one, should be limited to providing advice, guidelines, and technical assistance to the localities.	5	0	0
25. An effective land use policy should not restrict freedom of choice, but should assure that choices are made wisely, that alternatives are considered, and that important decisions take into account the interests of society.	4	1	4
26. The state government should have enough power to override local zoning decision if necessary to preserve unique historical, ecological and cultural sites, as well as prime agricultural lands.	-2	-1	2
27. A person who owns property should have the right to do with it as he pleases.	-5	-5	-4

Property Rights Statements

	<i>Factors</i>		
	A	B	C
28. We can no longer consider land as merely another factor of production to be bought cheaply and sold to the highest bidder. It is a social resource which private individuals may own, use and trade but subject to guidelines designed to protect localities and regions.	2	0	1
29. Open spaces need not be publicly owned. In fact, land kept open for purposes other than recreation is best left in private hands, while being regulated to prohibit uses inconsistent with the conservation of scenic and ecological characteristics.	1	-1	1
30. The township should not restrict the use of land in a way that will limit growth, because growth attracts more people and new people bring in more tax money to the community, thereby easing the burden on the rest of us.	-3	-4	-5
31. Eventually, I think local governments in metropolitan areas will have to set an absolute limit on their total populations. No matter how well planned future development may be, the quality of life will deteriorate as new residents continue to move in.	-5	-2	1
32. I would just as soon leave open spaces open. Just because no people live in an area doesn't make it a place for a highway or an apartment complex or a factory.	0	0	0
33. Instead of placing complicated and time consuming controls on developers, the state should facilitate development – e.g., by clearing away the red tape and simplifying the procedures required to obtain building and zoning permits.	-2	-5	-5

Property Rights Statements

34. Land use decisions must allow the participation of all people who would feel the impact – not just those who live within the jurisdiction of the decision-maker or have the best means to influence him, but all who would benefit or be harmed by the decision.

<i>Factors</i>		
A	B	C
-1	4	2

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