

REEXAMINATION REPORT

Township of East Brunswick
Middlesex County, New Jersey

January 18, 1995

For Consideration and Adoption by the East Brunswick Planning Board

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INTRODUCTION

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires municipalities to reexamine their master plans at least every six years. The purpose of this requirement is to have regular reviews of current information and changing conditions in the interest of keeping long-range planning as up to date as possible.

In C. 40:55D-89 of the MLUL, the following language is set forth, as recently amended by the New Jersey Legislature:

"The governing body shall, at least every 6 years, provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the planning board which shall prepare and adopt by resolution a report on the findings of such reexamination, a copy of which report and resolution shall be sent to the county planning board and the municipal clerks of each adjoining municipality. The first such reexamination shall have been completed by August 1, 1982. The next reexamination shall be completed by August 1, 1988. Thereafter, a reexamination shall be completed at least once every six years from the previous examination."

The Planning Board most recently adopted a Master Plan on April 4, 1990. Prior to that a reexamination report was prepared and adopted in July 1988.

The Planning Board is not required to hold a hearing on the reexamination report. It must simply prepare the report, adopt it by resolution, and submit it to the County Planning Board and the municipal clerks of adjoining municipalities.

The statute requires consideration of five topics within the reexamination report. Those areas are identified below along with areas for discussion in bold.

C.40:55D-89a

This provision of the MLUL reads as follows:

"a. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report."

The 1990 Master Plan contained a statement of goals and objectives that was based on an update of the 1976 Master Plan goals and objectives. The following is a listing of the 1990 goals and objectives with comments in **bold** to identify changes in assumptions, policies and objectives.

1. To protect and preserve established residential areas, including single family, townhouse and multifamily areas.
2. To conserve as many environmentally sensitive areas in the township as feasible, with particular attention given to wetlands, areas with steep slopes, and those areas which are served by septic systems but which have seasonally high water tables.

An ordinance amendment dealing with critical areas was added to the Zoning Ordinance in 1993.

3. To enhance services and accessibility to existing industrial and commercial concentrations located in the township.
4. To encourage preservation of historical landmarks.
5. To encourage development of a unified town center around the existing Civic Center as the major source of community identity, providing opportunities for a full range of activities and services to include: recreation and open space; additional governmental and educational offices; as well as civic, cultural, social and community services.
6. To encourage existing agricultural areas to remain.
7. To continue to meet the housing needs of wide ranges of incomes and age levels.

To provide areas for a nursing home and other types of housing for older residents.

8. To continue to provide varied housing types in meeting these needs.

The consent order to provide zoning for affordable housing expired in 1991. Under the consent order, the settlement number of affordable units was 1,188. The Council for Affordable Housing (COAH) for 1994-2000 has stated East Brunswick's "pre-credited need" is 723 units. Based on the Township's current zoning and affordable units built, East Brunswick has a calculated need of zero. The areas zoned for affordable housing and the current Township ordinances should be reexamined and a

housing plan element prepared.

9. To utilize planning and development techniques which consider social and environmental factors in meeting future housing needs.
10. To locate higher density housing near public transportation.
11. To locate public transit facilities near higher density housing.
12. To continue to evaluate the role of industrial development in the township to ensure that the land use plan is balanced as well as being realistically responsive to regional growth opportunity.
13. To encourage additional tax producing uses in appropriate locations, such as office facilities, to assist in meeting local fiscal needs, to provide professional support services for the residents of the township and to provide additional local job opportunities.

To facilitate the provision of technology for professional support services, local job opportunities and for residences.

14. To continue to recognize the role of Route 18 as a major regional commercial retail area, but to continue to tightly define the extent of commercially-zoned land along Route 18 to minimize adverse impacts on nearby residential areas and to improve the quality of existing commercial development along the highway.
15. To promote adequacy, variety, convenience and pleasantness of shopping for local residents.
16. To utilize modern water runoff control techniques to improve local drainage patterns and enhance the environment, applying such controls in a manner which would enhance the safety of residents and animals.

To promote regional management of stormwater runoff and to seek downstream drainage contributions to implement regional stormwater control plans.

17. To ensure all development is adequately served by public water, storm drainage and other utility systems in an economic and coordinated manner.

To continue a comprehensive update of the sewer pumping stations and public sewer system.

18. To develop coordinated open space and recreational programs, both for improving utilization of existing areas as well as newly acquired park areas.

Community Beach was revitalized as Crystal Springs and Great Oak Park had landscaping and play equipment added.

19. To continue to relate school and park areas to existing and future development patterns.
20. To provide quality education at all levels for residents of the township.
21. To promote the full use of school facilities for recreational and community activities.
22. To continue adequate fire and police services with appropriate facilities, manpower and equipment distributed according to need.

A new communications system for police, fire and emergency services has been designed and planned.

23. To cooperate in improvement and provision of local health and social services coordinated with regional efforts.
24. To encourage continued monitoring of needed regional highway improvements, particularly on Route 18 and the New Jersey Turnpike, to assure that they will not adversely affect township residents and that they will be designed to best serve the township and its immediate environs.
25. To develop a safe, efficient, local circulation system with maximum convenience and minimum adverse effect on land traversed.

To promote the construction of bikeways and pedestrian ways.

26. To continue to evaluate existing development controls regarding design standards, lot sizes, building setbacks, coverage and density of various land uses, in order to ensure compatible development with the existing environment and nearby developed areas.

An ordinance to rezone existing nonconforming residential areas is proposed.

27. To address the particular problems involved in establishing appropriate development standards for lots which adjoin high density residential and commercial areas.

C.40:55D-89b.

This provision of the MLUL reads as follows:

"b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date."

Many of the problems and objectives continue as stated in the Master Plan. The following matters are of particular interest to the Planning Board as of the date of the preparation of this report:

1. An amendment to the zoning ordinance dealing with critical areas was adopted in 1993.
2. The consent order to provide zoning for affordable housing expired in 1991.
3. As the population ages, providing enough of a variety of housing types for all ages and needs.
4. Providing for bikeways and pedestrian paths as alternative transportation modes and to comply with the Clean Air Act.
5. An ordinance to rezone existing nonconforming residential areas is proposed to make residential areas conforming to the way they were built.

C.40:55D-89c.

This provision of the MLUL reads as follows:

"c. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives."

Since the 1990 Master Plan, the following changes have occurred which have a bearing on the planning process in the Township:

1. The 1990 Census was released providing demographic information about the characteristics of the population

and housing stock in the Township. (see attachment)

2. The Township's court order to zone for affordable housing expired in 1991. The Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) has stated East Brunswick's pre-credited need is 723. Based on current zoning and units built, East Brunswick's calculated need is zero.
3. The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, "Communities of Place" was adopted on June 12, 1992.
4. The Permit Extension Act was adopted and extended through December 31, 1996. Board approvals from the mid-80's are still valid.
5. The Site Improvement Standards Act was adopted by the State in 1993. The Site Improvement Advisory Board is in the process of adopting uniform site standards and a model application form for residential developments.
6. The MLUL was amended to allow family day care homes as a permitted use in all residential zones and child care centers as a permitted use in all nonresidential zones.
7. The New Jersey Highway Management Access Code, now a rule under NJDOT, encourages a comprehensive access design plan and alternative circulation system along state highways.
8. A new jughandle at Edgeboro Road and Route 18 was installed to get more cars off of Route 18 and facilitate better traffic flow.
9. Traffic signals installed or approved include: Ryders Lane and Sullivan Way, Ryders Lane and Winton Road, Cranbury Road and Evergreen Blvd., New Brunswick Avenue and Old Stage Road, Tices Lane and Renee Road, Tices Lane and University Avenue, Hardenburg Lane and Riva Avenue, Church Lane and Riva Avenue, Ryders Lane and Civic Center Drive, Main Street and Old Stage Road and Dunhams Corner Road and Hardenburg Lane. A flashing signal was installed at Church Lane and Fresh Ponds Road.

Road improvements installed or approved include: reconstruction and repaving of New Brunswick Avenue, resurfacing and reconstruction of Branton Drive and Overhill Road, improvements to Hardenburg Lane, improvements to McGuire Street/Kennedy Blvd./Suydam Road intersections, Kossman Street and Old Bridge Turnpike reconfiguration, Tices Lane at Route 18 and improvements to Dunhams Corner Road.

Middlesex County plans to construct improvements to Cranbury Road Phase III including traffic signals at Henley Drive and Lexington Ave./Cornwall Ct.

C.40:55D-89d.

This provision of the MLUL reads as follows:

"d. The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared."

The following changes are recommended:

1. An ordinance to rezone existing nonconforming residential areas is proposed to make residential areas conforming to the way they were built.
2. A housing plan element should be undertaken.
3. Recommendations not already implemented from the 1990 Land Use Element of the Master Plan should be reviewed and implemented. These are as follows:
 - a. Eliminate the C-2 Neighborhood Business District at Helmetta Boulevard and Cranbury Road.
 - b. The Town Center area should be rezoned for R-3 development.
 - c. Provide for transition lot zoning from higher to lower density residential developments and between non-residential (commercial and industrial) developments and residential areas.

C.40:55D-89e.

This provision of the MLUL reads as follows:

"e. The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L.1992,c. 79 (C.40A:12A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality."

The Township does not have any redevelopment plans adopted.

1980 - 1990 Census Data Comparison

1990 census data that was not available at the time of the last Master Plan has been reviewed and compared with 1980 data. The following pages contain charts comparing the 1980 and 1990 data.

The significant changes based on this analysis are as follows:

1. The population is aging as indicated by the median age and the growth in the 65 & over population.
2. The under 5 population is increasing.
3. The level of educational attainment continues to show improvement by the percentage of high school and the number of college graduates.

General Population Characteristics

	1980		1990	%Change	
Population	37,711		43,548	15.5	
Pop. Density (sq. mi.)	1,699		1,962	15.5	
Med. Household Income	\$30,498		\$58,769	92.7	
Housing Units	11,450		15,395	34.5	
Single-fam. Det. Units	9,698		10,462	7.9	
<u>Age Groups</u>		<u>% of Pop.</u>		<u>% of Pop.</u>	
Under 5	2,147	5.7%	2,864	6.6%	33.4
5-17	9,753	25.9%	7,526	17.3%	-22.8
18-64	23,894	63.4%	29,403	67.5%	23.1
65 & over	1,917	5.1%	3,755	8.6%	95.9
Median Age	31.0		35.1		

	<u>1980</u>		<u>1990</u>		<u>%Change</u>
<u>Housing Values</u>					
Owner Occup. Med. Val.	\$80,200		\$189,300		136.0
Renter Occup. Med. Val.	\$339		\$731		115.6
<u>Educational Attainment</u>		<u>% of Pop.</u>		<u>% of Pop.</u>	
<u>Grades Completed</u>					
0-8	1936	8.8	1209	4.2	-37.6
High Sch. 1-3	2047	9.3	2268	7.8	10.8
4	7895	36.0	7448	25.7	-5.7
College 1-3	3397	15.5	6198	21.4	82.5
4+	6663	30.4	11,871	40.9	78.2
# of H.S. Grads	17,955	81.8	25,517	88.0	42.1
<u>Labor Force Status</u>					
Civilian Labor Force	19,442		24,978		28.5
Employed	18,448		24,013		30.2
Unemployed	994		965		-2.9
% of Civ. Lab. For. unemployed	5.1		3.9		
Armed Forces	0		35		
Not in Labor Force	8161		9332		14.3
<u>Industry of Employed</u>					
Construction	668		1072		60.5
Manufacturing	5185		4096		-21.0
Transportation	869		1140		31.2
Commun. & Other Pub. Ut.	477		829		73.8
Wholesale Trade	991		1477		49.0
Retail Trade	3094		3521		13.8
Fin., Ins. & Real Est.	1024		2334		125.8

Business & Repair Serv.	1041	1267	21.7
	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>%Change</u>
Personal Service	516	557	7.9
<u>Industry of Employed</u>			
Health Services	782	1759	124.5
Educational Services	2157	2709	25.6
Other Professional	849	2268	167.1
Public Administration	658	648	-1.5
Other	138	160	15.9
TOTAL	18,448	24,013	