

MASTER PLAN
REEXAMINATION REPORT


Township of East Brunswick
Middlesex County, New Jersey

April, 2005

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Department of Planning & Engineering


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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:

"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 clerk 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 adopted a new comprehensive Master Plan on April 4, 1990. A reexamination report was adopted on January 18, 1995. Pursuant to the recommendations of the 1995 Reexamination Report, the Planning Board adopted an updated Housing Plan element in 1995 and petitioned the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) for substantive certification, which was granted in June 1997. As a result of the approval by COAH, the Manufactured Modular Housing Contingency (MMHC) zone for the provision of affordable housing was no longer needed, and the Township authorized the Planning Board to examine alternative zoning approaches for the west and southwest portions of the Township, including the MMHC, Rural Preservation (RP), and Single Family Rural Residence (R-1) Zones. In February 1999, a Reexamination Report and Land Use Plan Amendment was adopted which included recommendations concerning the RP, R-1 and MMHC zoning districts.

MUNICIPAL LAND USE LAW REQUIREMENTS

As mandated by the MLUL, the following five topics are required to be addressed within a municipality's reexamination report.

1. **“The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.”**
(MLUL C.40:55D-89a)

The 1995 and 1999 Reexamination Reports and 1999 Land Use Plan Amendment readopted the goals and objectives from the 1990 Master Plan with the addition of several new goals to refine the Township's vision for its future. The following is a composite listing of all adopted goals with major problems, changes in assumptions, policies, or objectives relating to land development since the last reexamination noted in **bold print**.

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.

In accordance with the 1999 Reexamination Report the Township rezoned the RP, R-1 and MMHC zones for lower density to preserve environmentally sensitive areas.

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.

Portions of the Kelemen and Lapinski farms were purchased to permanently preserve the land for open space.

6. To encourage existing agricultural areas to remain.

The Township purchased the development rights to the Giamarese Farm. The Township also adopted a Farmland Preservation Plan on February 9, 2000.

7. To continue to meet the housing needs of wide ranges of incomes and age levels.

The Township amended the Master Plan and rezoned the former Gist Brocades Yeast Plant property for Senior Citizen Mixed Use Development on July 8, 2002.

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

The Township received substantive certification from the COAH in 1997 for the period of 1987-1999. The Township's cumulative obligation was 723 units. East Brunswick has produced 729 units for an excess of 6 credits.

A petition to extend substantive certification until December 20, 2004, which is one year from the date the 3rd Round Rules were adopted, was granted by COAH. The new regulations adopted by COAH requires each municipality to calculate its obligation based on a growth share formula.

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.

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.

A redevelopment plan was adopted on May 5, 2004 for the Golden Triangle Area on Route 18 and Tices Lane. The redevelopment area is to be designed as a mixed use transit village with new housing in close proximity to the Township's bus transportation center.

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.

A Municipal Stormwater Management Plan was adopted by the Planning Board on March 9, 2005.

17. To ensure all development is adequately served by public water, storm drainage and other utility systems in an economic and coordinated manner.
18. To develop coordinated open space and recreational programs, both for improving utilization of existing areas as well as newly acquired park areas.

An Open Space and Recreation Plan was adopted by the Planning Board on March 7, 2001. The 148 acre Heavenly Farms parcel was acquired for park and recreational use.

19. To continue to relate school and park areas to existing and future development patterns.

The East Brunswick High School and Churchill Middle School were substantially enlarged and remodeled to meet the school populations changing needs. Plans are underway for similar improvements to Hammarskjold School and the elementary schools.

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.
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.

A major roadway improvement and intersection reconfiguration will be under construction at the intersections of Route 18/ Tices Lane/ W. Prospect Street in mid 2005.

25. To develop a safe, efficient, local circulation system with maximum convenience and minimum adverse effect on land traversed.
26. To promote the construction of bikeways and pedestrian ways.

A bikeway was completed along Ryders Lane which connects the Municipal complex to Brunswick Square Mall in 2004.

27. 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.
28. To address the particular problems involved in establishing appropriate development standards for lots which adjoin high density residential and commercial areas.
29. To promote the retention of existing agricultural lands and to support ongoing agricultural activities through a combination of land use policy, acquisition of development rights, creative development techniques and limitations on land use activities that interfere with continued farming.

30. To provide land use management strategies which promote the conservation of sensitive natural resources and which limit the impact of future development in this area.
31. To retain the largely undeveloped and rural character which pervades western and southwestern East Brunswick, in part by limiting the introduction of growth-inducing infrastructure.
32. To promote the conservation of open space through public acquisition, acquisition of less than fee interests and implementation of land use policies supportive of the permanent preservation of open space areas.
33. To support the objectives of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan including the retention of large contiguous areas of agriculture and open space, and providing for development which respects the carrying capacity of land and water resources while also preserving unique and sensitive natural 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. The RP zoning was upheld on initial appeal. The results of an appeal of the initial decision is pending.
2. COAH Substantive Certification was extended until December 2005. This extension is conditioned on the Township's submittal of a third round petition for substantive certification, which includes an updated Housing Element, by December 2005.
3. Providing a variety of housing types to serve the needs of the Township's aging population.
4. Providing for bikeways and pedestrian paths as alternative transportation modes.
5. Implementation of the Golden Triangle Redevelopment Plan.
6. Implementation of the State mandated Stormwater Management plan and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

7. Revision to the Township Zoning Code to allow exceptions for non-conforming lots in the R-1, R-2, R-3 and R-4 zones have led to a decrease in residential bulk variances for many types of additions.

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, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives."

Since the 1999 Master Plan, the following changes have occurred which have a bearing on the planning process in the Township:

1. The 2000 Census was released providing updated demographic information about the characteristics of the population and housing stock in the Township. The significant changes based on an analysis of this data (see attachment one) are as follows:
 - a. The population is aging as indicated by the median age and the growth in the 65 & over population.
 - b. The level of educational attainment continues to show improvement by the percentage of high school and the number of college graduates.
 - c. The labor force is becoming increasingly white collar, while fewer workers are in blue collar jobs.
2. COAH adopted Third Round Rules and Regulations in December 2004.
3. The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, "Communities of Place" was originally adopted on June 12, 1992. The Plan was readopted on March 1, 2001. As part of the cross-acceptance process the Township applied for Village Center designation for the Historic District of Old Bridge. Village Center designation was received on May 19, 2004.
4. The Site Improvement Standards Act was adopted by the State in 1993. The Site Improvement Advisory Board adopted uniform site standards which are also updated annually.
5. Traffic signals installed, modified or approved include: Ryders Lane/Dunhams Corner Road; Summerhill Road/Ryders Lane; Ryders Lane/Peach Orchard Drive;

Rues Lane/New Brunswick Avenue. A new traffic signal is planned for Main Street/River Road.

Major road improvements installed or approved include: Jensen Street; Dunhams Corner Road; Cotters Lane/Elkins Road; Kossman Street; Fresh Ponds Road; Fern Road; Eggers Street; Hollis and Grace Roads; Civic Center Drive; Rues Lane; Stratford Road.

Middlesex County plans to construct improvements to Ryders Lane and the intersections of Summerhill Road/Old Stage Road and Main Street/River Road.

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. The Bikeway/Pedway Element should be updated to reflect existing bikeways & pedways, new development and locations for future bikeway/pedways;
2. The Housing Element should be updated to meet COAH Third Round Rules;
3. A Stormwater Control Ordinance consistent with the adopted Stormwater Management Plan should be enacted;
4. An evaluation of the maximum allowable impervious cover for each zone should be completed to determine whether a reduction in allowable pervious cover is appropriate;
5. The following locations should be studied for possible rezoning as noted due to incompatibility with existing land use patterns:
 - a. Change the I/M lands on River Rd. to residential
 - b. Change Schoolhouse Lane C-3 to residential.
 - c. Turnpike Headquarters change to office.
 - d. Milltown Rd./Ryders Lane intersection - review OP-1 and R-3 designations.

- e. Delete P-I by Turnpike & Milltown Rd., change to R-3.
 - f. R-3 / R-4 boundary line south of Rues Lane should follow property lines.
 - g. Review C-2 zones on Summerhill Road.
 - h. Review outparcels with PURD option which have insufficient qualifying acreage for deletion of the PURD option and investigate a transition lot option.
6. Recommendations not already implemented from the 1990 Land Use Element of the Master Plan should be reviewed and implemented. These are as follows:
- a. Rezone Briar Ridge to VG;
 - b. Review Sunrise Landing for R-3;
 - c. Review Sunburst Hills for VG;
 - d. Remove underlying zone for developed PURD's.

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 Planning Board adopted the Golden Triangle Redevelopment Plan on May 5, 2004. The Township Council adopted the Redevelopment Plan and authorized negotiations with a selected redeveloper on May 24, 2004.

Attachment One

1990 - 2000 Census Data Comparison

The following charts compare 1990 and 2000 census data.

General Population Characteristics

	<u>1990</u>		<u>2000</u>		<u>%Change</u>
Population	43,548		46,756		7.4
Pop. Density (sq. mi.)	1,962		2,106		7.3
Med. Household Income	\$58,769		\$75,956		29.2
Housing Units	15,395		16,640		8.1
Single-fam. Det. Units	10,462		11,133		6.4
<u>Age Groups</u>		<u>% of Pop.</u>		<u>% of Pop.</u>	
Under 5	2,864	6.6%	2,768	5.9%	-3.4
5-17	7,526	17.3%	9,400	20.1%	2.5
18-64	29,403	67.5%	29,159	62.4%	-1.0
65 & over	3,755	8.6%	5,429	11.6%	44.6
Median Age	35.1		39.1		11.4
<u>Housing Values</u>	<u>1990</u>		<u>2000</u>		<u>%Change</u>
Owner Occup. Med. Val.	\$189,300		\$212,800		12.4
Renter Occup. Med. Val.	\$731		\$877		20.0
<u>Educational Attainment</u>		<u>% of Pop.</u>		<u>% of Pop.</u>	
Grades Completed					
0-8	1209	4.2	1004	3.2	-17.0

		<u>1990</u>	<u>% of Pop.</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>% of Pop.</u>	<u>%Change</u>
High Sch.	1-3	2268	7.8	1484	4.7	-34.5
	4	7448	25.7	7050	22.3	-5.3
College	1-3	6198	21.4	7204	22.8	16.2
	4+	11,871	40.9	14,910	47.1	25.6
% of H.S. Grads or higher		25,517	88.0	29,164	92.1	14.3
<u>Labor Force Status</u>						
Civilian Labor Force		24,978		25,008		00.1
	Employed	24,013		24,136		00.5
	Unemployed	965		872		-10.7
	% of Civ. Lab. Force unemployed	3.9		3.5		
Armed Forces		35		11		-68.6
Not in Labor Force		9332		10,999		17.9
<u>Industry of Employed</u>						
Agriculture		145		16		-89.0
Construction		1072		863		-19.5
Manufacturing		4096		2791		-31.9
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities		1969		1158		-41.2
Wholesale Trade		1477		1176		-20.4
Retail Trade		3521		2746		-22.0
Finance., Insur & Real Est.		2334		2805		20.2
Services		8736		10,338		18.3
Public Administration		648		777		19.9

TOWNSHIP OF EAST BRUNSWICK, N.J.
PLANNING BOARD

RESOLUTION

2005 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT

WHEREAS, the Planning Board of the Township of East Brunswick is a duly constituted body as authorized by statute with the responsibility to supervise and be concerned with the orderly development and planning of the Township as authorized by the statutes and ordinances made and provided; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the requirements of N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89, a Master Plan Reexamination Report, dated April 2005, prepared by the Department of Planning and Engineering was reviewed by the Planning Board on April 27, 2005; and

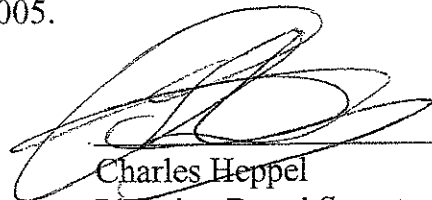
WHEREAS, the Planning Board has reviewed and discussed the contents of the Reexamination Report and the recommendations contained therein;

WHEREAS, the Planning Board finds the report dated April 2005 accurately reflects the policies of the Planning Board .

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the East Brunswick Planning Board hereby adopts the Reexamination Report of the Master Plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the report and resolution be sent to the Middlesex County Planning Board and to the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true copy of a Resolution adopted by the Planning Board of the Township of East Brunswick at its public meeting held on April 27, 2005.



Charles Heppel
Planning Board Secretary