

***Master Plan Reexamination Report
and
Master Plan Land Use Element and
Housing Plan Amendments***

***BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP
SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY***

*Prepared by the
Bridgewater Township Planning Board*

Adopted
September 13, 2022

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**MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT-
A MASTER PLAN REVISION**

**BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP
SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

I. INTRODUCTION

The Master Plan Reexamination Report addresses the required areas outlined in the provisions of the Municipal Land Use Law: N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 and is intended to also be considered as an Amendment to the Master Plan Land Use Element and Housing Element.

- A. Identify the major problems and objectives relating to land development at the time of adoption of the last Reexamination Report.
- B. Discuss the extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- C. Discuss the extent to which there have been significant changes in 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 and energy, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, County and Municipal policies and objectives.
- D. Outline 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.
- E. Provide recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law" into the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan and recommended changes, if any, to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

II. AREAS OF DISCUSSION

**** 1 ****

- A. Identify the major problems and objectives relating to land development at the time of adoption of the last Reexamination Report.**

MAJOR PROBLEM: There has been recent concern regarding higher vehicular activity on Route 202/206 North and a concern over the need to keep large multifamily complexes to a minimum.

MAJOR OBJECTIVE: TO PRESERVE THE DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP. THIS OBJECTIVE APPLIES TO RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES.

- In the December 15, 2016 Master Plan and Reexamination report, there was increased municipal concern for the objective of identifying permitted uses along the major corridors of Route 22, 202 and 206 to improve the visual and economic benefit.
- There was increased municipal concern for study and recommendation of compatible land uses for the existing uses on land known as the SJP corporate complex.
- There was increased municipal concern to reconcile residential land uses along Route 202/206. As a first phase, the study should consider existing multifamily uses with the objective to reconcile the existing, stable multifamily neighborhoods with the single-family zone in which they lie.
- There was increased municipal concern to reinforce the residential zoning of an existing non-permitted use (Redwood Inn) so that the land use will strengthen the existing and stable character of the single-family zone that surrounds it.
- There was increased concern to proactively respond to the changing purchasing pattern and office employment patterns that have modified since the COVID 19 pandemic. It is perceived that retail purchasing is being conducted more on-line and working from home is more frequent. Relative to the yet-undeveloped Center of Excellence project on Route 202/206 which has high intensity retail and office component, there is agreement that certain additional uses for this R-SEED zone is timely and a responsible response to these changing lifestyles.

B. Extent that the objective has increased or decreased as a municipal concern:

The objective to reexamine the planning approaches remains as a strong municipal concern in order to improve and fortify the overall appeal of living in the township. Preserving the character of the individual neighborhoods remains a clear objective. Bridgewater Township should continue to strengthen the identity of its residential neighborhoods and its commercial sectors without creating undue intrusion from traffic, noise, light and degraded air quality.

This ongoing concern includes the desire to preserve the residential and corporate character of the township, particularly as viewed from the highway corridors. Further, adapting to changing circumstances caused by shifting social, demographic and economic trends increases the municipal challenge to update ordinances to respond to modern needs. Keeping in touch with changing circumstances is necessary in order to strengthen the identity of residential neighborhoods and promote a robust commercial sector.

C. Extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions/policies:

As is often the case, changes in land use are needed to adjust to lifestyle needs that may occur swiftly or gradually over time. Changes in Master Plan and Reexamination Report assumptions and policies must acknowledge and respond to changing circumstances. The Bridgewater policy is that a stable fiscal foundation is needed to strengthen the desirability of the Bridgewater lifestyle and thereby keep Bridgewater as one of the most sought-after communities in the state. Increased emphasis on Master Plan and Master Plan Reexaminations by the Planning Board was initiated in 1990. A summary of the Planning Board studies is summarized below and also

demonstrates the policy to focus on improvement of the commercial sector which contributes to fiscal stability.

- Master Plan, dated 1990 provides a vision for the Township, citing valued policies and objectives for the township. The Master Plan recommends that:
 - a) *'The Township continue to investigate and adopt development controls for conservation such as clustering...'*
 - b) *'Municipal ordinances should be adopted to permit clustering.'*
- Master Plan Amendment and Reexamination Report, dated February 28, 2005 addresses newly-developed policies and development strategies intended to serve as a basis for focused study in an effort to preserve the goals outlined in the 1990 Master Plan and to further enhance the quality of life in the township through additional sound planning policies.
- Master Plan Amendment and Reexamination Report, dated November 11, 2008 deals with impervious coverage and floor area ratio standards to maintain the established scale within several residential and non-residential districts.
- Master Plan Amendment of the Recreation Element of the Master Plan adopted on May 24, 2010 sets forth a plan for facilities and uses on public lands.
- Master Plan Amendment and Reexamination Report-Economic Element, was adopted on April 13, 2010. This study was developed in response to the Master Plan Amendment and Reexamination Report, dated February 28, 2005, where the study was recommended to, "Encourage appropriate development of land use focus areas in the Township that will, within the limits of zoning, return underutilized land to productive use, generate economic development activity, diversify the municipal economic base, create new employment opportunities, and strengthen the tax base." This particular study, and the resulting reports, focus on non-residential improvements along much of the Route 22 corridor in an effort to bring land use along the highway to its higher potential.
- Master Plan Amendment and Reexamination Report-Circulation Element, dated September 2010 studied traffic circulation and modes of transportation throughout the Township which resulted in recommendations to be addressed moving forward. The focus of this study and resulting reports was to establish modernized criteria for commercial-based development, parking and sound strategies for site plan evaluation of such development.
- Reexamination Report dated February 8, 2011 addressed recommendations for places of assembly (e.g., Houses of Worship), focusing these on roadways that can better accommodate higher volumes of traffic.

- In 2014, Bridgewater tackled the redevelopment criteria which included the study of ‘areas in need of redevelopment’. The Plan accelerated the goal to identify “areas in need of redevelopment” and design Redevelopment Plans offered a framework to bring underdeveloped or underutilized lands into productive use.
- The Reexamination Report of April 27, 2015 addressed several issues that were documented in prior Master Plans and Reexamination Reports, most particularly dealing with areas in need of redevelopment and also addressed the need to revisit zoning districts along the highway corridors.

Below is a condensed excerpt of the matters that address study and recommendations in the April 27, 2015 Reexamination Report which highlights significant changes:

Master Plan studies should be conducted to offer development regulations for the Route 22, Route 202/206 and the Route 202 corridors should be considered as a continuation of the corridor studies conducted in 2010.

The Reexamination Report also suggests review of residential development along the highway.

Studies should also be conducted for zoning districts along the highway corridors. Studies should consider the residential character....

The Reexamination Report also specifically addresses the need to study residential zones along Route 202-206 and also identifies the increase in interest to reconcile existing uses with their zoning:

...there is an enhanced interest and objective toward evaluation of the highway corridors and regulations which will continue to have a mix of uses which are compatible with and complimentary to their surroundings.

- The Reexamination Report of December 13, 2016 responds to a municipal settlement agreement with a religious organization, another matter presents itself as a significant change in a policy and assumption – to study non-permitted premises that was not located on the highway corridor. Evaluation of this non-permitted land use was viewed as an opportunity to bring the original land use (non-conforming commercial use) into conformity with the surrounding single-family residential neighborhood.
- The Master Plan Amendment and Reexamination Report of December 13, 2016 addressed needs for zoning changes that deal with environmental needs, such as cluster zoning measures, to better address objective of preservation of neighborhoods and the environment, as well as to address zoning inconsistencies. This aspect of the Reexamination Report was in furtherance of the 1990 Master Plan which recommends

that: *The Township continue to investigate and adopt development controls for conservation such as clustering...*

Complimentary permitted Principal uses were also encouraged through zoning ordinance recommendations.

- A Master Plan Amendment and Reexamination Report was adopted in February, 2022. Amendments include elimination of the Active Adult Residential zone (AAR) and bringing this area into the R-40 Single Family zone, rezoning areas along Union Avenue in order to respond to the need to provide meaningful development options, recommendations for craft brewery permitted uses, relaxation of setback requirements for certain porches and decks and clarifications in the Definitions section of the ordinance.

D. Specific changes recommended for the Master Plan or development regulations for land development, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared:

- A new Master Plan is recommended at this time. The study of zoning changes should include additional permitted uses, where appropriate. Consideration should be made to offer revisions, clarifications and amplification of uses that are viewed as archaic. Amending bulk standards may be considered to achieve consistency with lot sizes and neighborhood development patterns.

E. Provide recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law” into the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan and recommended changes, if any, to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

As noted, the more recent redevelopment areas have been adopted by the Township Council for the Eden Woods neighborhood (Finderne) and Center of Excellence (Route 202/206) sites. These redevelopment plans have included an obligation for construction of affordable housing units for low, moderate, and very low-income persons and families. There are no plans for studies of additional ‘areas in need of redevelopment’ or for redevelopment plans at this time; however, the Council has recently amended the Redevelopment Plan for the Center of Excellence, where an ordinance was adopted to permit alternative uses for the R-SEED zone. The ordinance amendment is strongly endorsed.

**** 2 ****

A. Identify the major problems and objectives relating to land development at the time of adoption of the last Reexamination Report.

MAJOR PROBLEM: There were no Major Problems cited at that time.

MAJOR OBJECTIVE: TO PROMOTE A WELL-BALANCED VARIETY OF RESIDENTIAL, RECREATIONAL PUBLIC, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL AND CONSERVATION LAND USES.

B. Extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.

The extent of the concern for such balance is currently reduced due to being addressed by conserving lands through the cluster development option. With the purchase of Camp Cromwell, a site having more than 100 acres, the Township has demonstrated its commitment to offering high-value land conservation and recreational facilities to its residents.

As it relates to the balance for a variety of residential uses, housing options for its seniors, was particularly evident in the zoning and approval of two major sites previously envisioned for senior housing, one on Route 28 (an apartment complex) and one on Route 202/206 North (A large lot in the AAR zone), were either converted to unrestricted housing by the state legislature, or developed instead for house of worship purposes. The Four Seasons complex on Route 202/206 North is an existing owner-occupied townhouse community for seniors. The new Master Plan should present attention to other potential locations for owner-occupied senior citizen housing communities within the township. Approval was recently granted for an age-restricted community, with individual housing units, in the Martinsville village.

In order to achieve an acceptable balance between uses, there is need to consider planning and zoning decisions that will reconcile traffic impacts of a land use with the objective not to cause traffic congestion along the roadways.

C. Extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan or development regulations as last revised.

Since adoption of the Amendments to the Master Plan Reexamination Report of February 2022 there is significant change in policy regarding the evaluation of the highway corridors and regulations which will continue to encourage a mix of compatible uses without over-burdening its residents with frustrating and inconvenient traffic congestion.

Additionally, there is general acknowledgement that retail purchasing is being conducted more by on-line and working is being done more from home than it has previously. Relative to the yet-undeveloped Center of Excellence project on Route 202/206, which had a high-intensity retail and office component, there was agreement that the addition of certain alternative uses for this R-SEED zone was timely and a responsible response to these changing dynamics.

D. 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.

In conformance with objectives and policies noted in the February 2022 Master Plan Amendment and Reexamination Report, the Township should continue to consider appropriate uses that have limited traffic impacts on the highways, county and local roads. Developing zone change strategies to produce an economically-viable uses along Route 202/206 have been studied. Adoption of alternative uses for the Redevelopment area of the Center of Excellence was explored and ordinance revisions were enacted, ensuring in lower peak-time traffic and the otherwise resulting traffic congestion.

Creation of new employment opportunities in existing commercial zones would help diversify the economy, as well as offer local residents more service options, particularly within the Regional Center.

The February, 2022 Master Plan suggested consideration of having a licensed consultant architect at the service of the Planning and Zoning Boards, similar to that of a consultant traffic engineer, so that the Board can be advised of architectural designs and revisions to architectural designs which would make proposed structures more compatible with the community in which a building lies. This service would be borne by the developer of the project. The recommendation remains valid in this document.

E. Provide recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law” into the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan and recommended changes, if any, to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

There are no new redevelopment plans recommended at this time; however, there was an amendment to the then-existing Redevelopment Plan for the Center of Excellence that was adopted in response to changing employment and purchasing patterns. Tangentially associated with this amendment, the proposed 400-unit townhouse and apartment complex in the Center of Excellence was addressed. This residential complex included 40 affordable rental units for families, which was part of the municipal obligation. The Master Plan’s Land Use Element and Housing Plan, attached hereto, includes suggestion for a replacement location for the 40 inclusionary affordable housing rental family units. The remaining proposed 360 market units would not be constructed.

**** 3 ****

A. Identify the major problems and objectives relating to land development at the time of adoption of the last Reexamination Report

MAJOR PROBLEM: There were no Major Problems cited at that time.

MAJOR OBJECTIVE: TO GUIDE LAND DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS AND TO PROMOTE THE PRESERVATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

B. Extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.

The matter of open space remains a strong municipal interest. A Recreation Plan Element to the Master Plan was adopted in 2010. Bridgewater Township Open Space Advisory Board and Park Board continue to actively analyze municipal lands for possible Green Acres, Recreation and Open Space (ROSI) designation. With the acquisition of Camp Cromwell, there is a strong commitment to expand the inventory of recreational opportunities, along with assuring conservation of valuable woodland assets.

C. Extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan or development regulations as last revised.

There are no significant changes in assumptions, policies or objectives for open space since the time of adoption of the last Reexamination Report, with the exception that the purchase of Camp Cromwell added to the open space inventory. Camp Cromwell is considered to be an extraordinary piece of land that will be improved for sports activities, art activities and other purposes.

D. 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.

While there are no specific changes recommended for open space beyond the expansion of lands if the opportunity proves favorable for the residents, the purchase of Camp Cromwell is one of the current open space and recreation initiatives in the township that will receive focus on new recreational facilities. There are no specific facilities that have been formalized.

E. Provide recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law” into the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan and recommended changes, if any, to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

There are no new redevelopment plans recommended at this time. However, associated with the Center of Excellence Redevelopment Plan, the Township should adopt an ordinance, at an appropriate location, where affordable housing can be provided for rental, family units.

**** 4 ****

A. Identify the major problems and objectives relating to land development at the time of adoption of the last Reexamination Report.

MAJOR PROBLEM: There were no Major Problems cited.

MAJOR OBJECTIVE: COORDINATE FUTURE GROWTH WITH NEEDED EXPANSION OF PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES.

B. Extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.

The extent of the objective has been reduced. There are no major problems relating to expansion of public facilities and services. The municipal complex was constructed; the new animal shelter was completed, the senior citizens community center is operational; the recreational turf field adjacent to the municipal building is completed and the various venues on municipal, private and county lands for the use by many Bridgewater sports teams have been arranged for. Also see Open Space discussion found in #3 above.

C. Extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan or development regulations as last revised.

There have been no significant changes in assumptions, policies or objectives.

D. 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.

Although specific development regulations are not recommended for Public Facilities and Services, Bridgewater Township intends to continue to monitor and implement, where possible, quality of life amenities, including the initiative to consider programs that will encourage some expansion of activities in the arts as well as physical sporting activities.

E. Provide recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law" into the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan and recommended changes, if any, to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

There are no new recommended new redevelopment plans recommended at this time.

**** 5 ****

A. Identify the major problems and objectives relating to land development at the time of adoption of the last Reexamination Report.

MAJOR PROBLEM: There were no Major Problems cited.

MAJOR OBJECTIVE: TO PROMOTE THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL SYSTEMS, ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES, RURAL APPEARANCE, AND THE NATURAL AMENITIES WHICH PRESENTLY CHARACTERIZE BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP.

B. Extent that the objective has increased or decreased as a municipal concern:

The objective remains an ongoing and important objective, and has not changed as a municipal concern.

C. Extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions/policies:

There have been no significant changes in assumptions or policies, but this objective remains strongly-held.

D. 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.

On July 2021, NJ Governor Murphy signed a law that amended the MLUL, which became effective immediately. The law stated that Make-Ready (electric charging infrastructure) and electric charging stations (EVSE) must be provided for Site Plans. Some of the following is required by the amendment to the MLU:

- a. Install at least 1 Make-Ready equipped or EVSE parking space if there are 50 or fewer spaces.
- b. Install at least two Make-Ready parking spaces if there will be 51 to 75 off street spaces.
- c. Install at least three Make-Ready parking spaces if there will be 76 to 100 off street spaces
- d. Install at least four Make-Ready parking spaces if there will be 101 to 150 parking spaces
- e. Install at least 4% Make-Ready parking spaces if there will be 151 or more off street spaces.
- f. A Make-Ready equipped or EVSE parking space may count as 2 parking spaces so long as the total required spaces does not result in a reduction more than 10% of the total required parking.

There is also a State requirement to convert 'Make-Ready' parking spaces into full EVSE spaces over a prescribed time.

An important addition to the law is that a site plan application solely for parking space installations will not be required, unless the installation conflicts with bulk requirements applicable to the property.

Bridgewater should adopt an ordinance to require an Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan for all commercial and multifamily developments in the Township. This conservation element should require applicants to develop more detailed site design review for all new parking stalls that are required pursuant to 126-169. This will require detailed site design review.

Bridgewater Township has already been successful in securing electric vehicle charging stations at some offices and there is a bank of charging stations that has been approved for the parking area at the Wawa, near the Promenade Shopping Center, as well as at the Bridgewater Commons Mall.

- E. Provide recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law” into the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan and recommended changes, if any, to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.**

There are no new redevelopment plans recommended at this time.

**** 6 ****

- A. Identify the major problems and objectives relating to land development at the time of adoption of the last Reexamination Report.**

MAJOR PROBLEM: There were no Major Problems cited.

MAJOR OBJECTIVE: RECONCILE USES ALONG THE HIGHWAY CORRIDORS TO CORRELATE TO ZONING.

- B. Extent that the objective has increased or decreased as a municipal concern:**

The following objective has decreased in municipal concern:

As recommended in the February 2022 Master Plan Amendment and Reexamination Report, the Active Adult Residential zone has been eliminated from the zoning ordinance since this land is totally developed for religious institution purposes.

With the development of the hotel, restaurant and Lifetime Fitness at the SJP property located along the highway, the municipal concern for compatible zoning for the existing uses on land known as the SJP corporate complex has decreased since the SJP tract is now fully developed.

- C. Extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions/policies:**

Although not a significant change in assumptions and policies, the Planning Board emphasizes that zoning of the land should be in continual review in order to proactively adapt to the evolving lifestyle and development patterns.

- D. 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.**

A new Master Plan is suggested. With the increased concern over policies cited in this report, the need for expanded opportunities for its citizens, and improved zoning consistency, ordinance amendments are recommended for consideration throughout many zones in the Township.

Having experienced the widespread and devastating impact of Tropical Storm Ida, the Township should revisit and strengthen the design standards and maintenance procedures for stormwater management in an effort to improve overall drainage during and after storm events.

- E. Provide recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law” into the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan and recommended changes, if any, to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.**

There are no new redevelopment plans recommended at this time.

**** 7 ****

- A. Identify the major problems and objectives relating to land development at the time of the adoption of the last Reexamination Report.**

MAJOR PROBLEM: There were no Major Problems cited at the time.

MAJOR OBJECTIVE: IDENTIFY THE MUNICIPAL NEED TO DEVELOP PLANNING STRATEGIES WHICH WOULD ENHANCE BRIDGEWATER’S QUALITY OF LIFE.

- B. Extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.**

Maintaining a high quality of life for its residents and commercial partners remains as a strong objective in the Township.

The development alternatives recently added for the Center of Excellence site has resulted in the strengthening of elements that add to the quality of Bridgewater life since it eliminates 400 new dwelling units and reduces the traffic from approximately 1 million square feet of retail and grocery stores. This reduces the residential and commercial peak traffic demands on the highway.

- C. Extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions, policies and objectives**

Bridgewater is at the forefront of continually reexamining its Master Plan to better achieve its policies and objectives. Bridgewater desires to accommodate changes in residential lifestyles and corporate needs by evaluation of the planning regulations. While a continual series of Reexamination reports were considered to be adequate to deal with changes in assumptions, policies and objectives, a new Master Plan is now recommended.

- D. 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.**

In large part, highway corridors, with their high volume of drivers, establish a perception of the quality of life that living and working in Bridgewater offers. It is desirable for the sustained quality of the township that existing uses be evaluated for consistency with zoning and compatibility with the preferences toward that of the citizenry. It is suggested that the Master Plan study and provide revisions, where applicable, for permitted uses along the major corridors of Somerset County roads as well as the state highways of Routes 22, 28,

202 and 202/206 to improve upon the visual and economic assets that the township derives from these corridors.

E. Provide recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law” into the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan and recommended changes, if any, to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

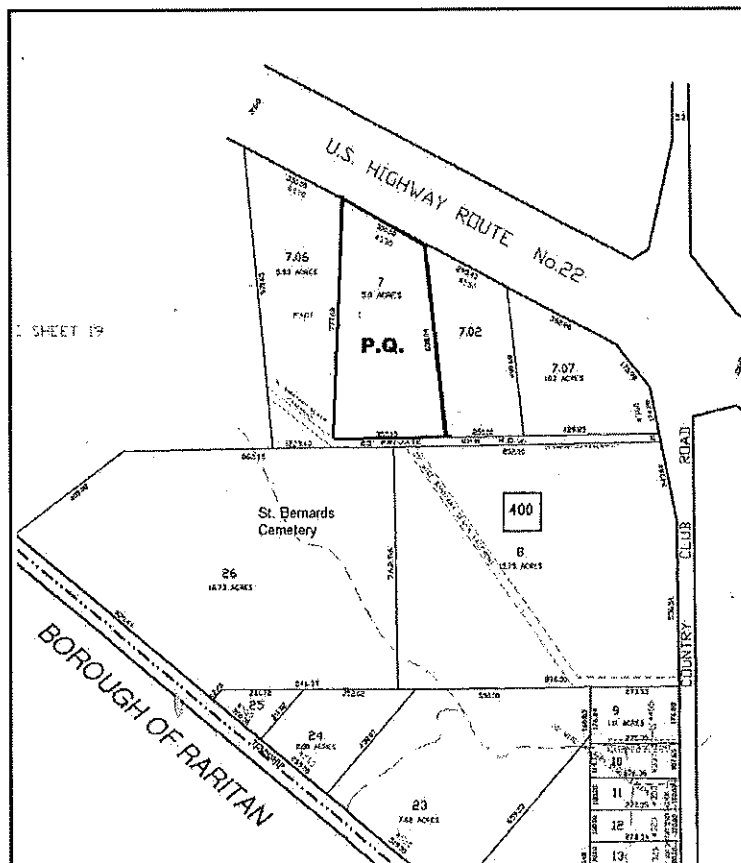
Bridgewater Township has redevelopment areas known as The Commons at Route 202/206 and Route 22, The Sixth Avenue Redevelopment Tract located on North Bridge Street and Prince Rodgers Road, and more recently the Eden Woods site on East Main Street and the Center of Excellence on Route 202/206. There are no plans for consideration of new ‘areas in need of redevelopment’ or new redevelopment plans.

However, ordinance revisions are recommended for a new, inclusionary affordable housing zone since the affordable housing location for 40 affordable units on Route 202/206 will not be constructed. This zone is recommended in response to a determination that inclusionary affordable housing for Block 400 Lot 7 is in the best interest of the Township. The site currently has a modern, fully-furnished executive housing that serves the local corporate community. The executive complex also has a swimming pool, recreation plaza with barbecue pit and a sport court and even a dog walking area in the perimeter of the site.

Block 400 Lot 7 is uniquely positioned for this use. Currently, the lot is developed into 128 one and two-bedroom housing units and abuts an office complex to the west, a cemetery to

the south, a building of house of worship community services and bank institution to the east and a 4-lane divided highway with grassed median to the north.

Conversion of these suites to affordable housing with one, two, and three-bedroom apartments is an opportunity to provide these required units without any new unit construction in Bridgewater. An ancillary benefit is that the 400 units originally proposed for the Center of Excellence use will not be constructed.



The intention is to develop the land as a single development entity for the purpose of non-age restricted multifamily housing, including of non-age restricted multifamily rental affordable dwellings.

All affordable units should be rental units, and the development is not subject to spot zoning issues. Block 400 Lot 7 abuts an office complex to the west, a cemetery to the south, a building of house of worship community services, a bank to the east and a 4-lane divided highway with grassed median to the north.

The intention is to develop the lands in Block 400 Lot 7 as a single development entity, in accordance with this RMDU-26, Multifamily Residential Zone standards which are described in the attached Amendment to the Master Plan Amendment Land Use Element and Housing Element. The zone regulations address Bridgewater's affordable housing obligations and provides for non-age restricted market multifamily housing, as well as multifamily rental affordable dwellings on this lot. All affordable units must be rental units, and the development is not subject to spot zoning issues.

Master Plan Land Use Element and Housing Plan Amendment

The Township modified the ordinance terms of the redevelopment land use and housing within the R-SEED zone. Previously, the Township Council adopted a Redevelopment Plan Ordinance for portions of the Center of Excellence site known as Tax Map Block 483 Lots 17, 18 and 19. The Redevelopment area, located along Route 202/206 North was zoned to the Redevelopment Special Economic and Employment District (R-SEED).

The Planning Board adopted a resolution for the R-SEED zone which granted site plan approval for a mixed-retail, office uses and a multifamily dwelling complex of 400 apartment/condominium dwelling units. There were 40 affordable (low and moderate income) units required to be constructed within the 400-unit complex. The low- and moderate-income units were part of Bridgewater's state-mandated obligation.

The Township and owner of the property negotiated this plan and agreed that additional, alternative uses more focused on Research and Development and limited services, would be a suitable development alternative for the redevelopment site.

As part of the plan to change the residential development trajectory of the R-SEED tract, the residential component will not be constructed. With this plan, there still was need to find a site where the 40-affordable, family rental units could be located.

An alternate location for all 40 affordable, family rental housing units in conformance with state requirements has been designated as Block 400 Lot 7. The 5.01-acre property currently offers 128 units of long-term executive housing which was approved for use in 1996. The makeup of these 128 units and associated parking requirements are as follows:

- 71 - 1 Bedroom unit
- 38 - 2 Bedroom unit
- 10 - "Trio" units
- 7 - Handicap units
- 2 Rooms used as conference suites

Currently, the well-landscaped property offers a swimming pool, spa, ball court, and party patio area in the center of the complex. The buildings will remain, with the Guest House and Trio units permitted to be renovated internally in order to accommodate the need for three-bedroom rental affordable housing units (a state requirement). Sufficient parking should be provided as part of a Minor Site Plan application.

The owner of this tract has held discussions with the Township Administration and it is anticipated that this plan will completely replenish the affordable housing obligation without the addition of dwellings beyond the existing 128 units.

The following design standards for the RMDU-26 zone are recommended:

126-309.3.1 RMDU-26, Multifamily Residential Zone.

A. Permitted principal uses in the RMDU-26, Multifamily Residential Zone:

- (1)** Multifamily dwellings, with a rental affordable housing component.
- (2)** Rental multifamily affordable housing. In no event shall affordable units be other than rental units.

B. Permitted accessory uses: Users and structures customarily incidental to the principal use, including the following:

- (1)** Community rooms and buildings.
- (2)** Rental office and gatehouse.
- (3)** Signs. (See 126-336, 126-162 and 126-195)
- (4)** Recreational equipment, swimming pool, bathhouse and pool equipment building.
- (5)** Street furniture, bike racks, benches.
- (6)** Storage buildings for equipment with a total maximum of 900 square feet.
- (7)** School bus and jitney pads and shelters.
- (8)** Park areas for the multifamily community.

C. Requirements for development:

- (1)** Minimum lot area: 5 acres.
- (2)** Minimum yard setbacks.
 - (a)** From public streets: 100 feet.
 - (b)** Minimum side yard for principal and accessory building setbacks: 50 feet from all perimeter tract boundaries.
 - (c)** Minimum rear yard for principal and accessory building setbacks: 100 feet.
 - (d)** Minimum distance between buildings: 14 feet.

(e) Minimum parking setbacks:

1. Side yard: 6 feet.
2. Front Yard: 25 feet.
3. Rear Yard: 75 feet.

(f) Banked parking may be provided on abutting property, if needed.

(3) Maximum percent of impervious lot coverage: 65%.

(4) Minimum lot width: 250 feet.

(5) Maximum building stories and maximum building height: three (3) stories and forty-five (45) feet. There may be no more than two dwelling units in a vertical plane of the building.

(6) Maximum floor area ratio (FAR): 0.45.

(7) Maximum density: The maximum density for the tract is 26 dwelling units per acre, except that a maximum of 128 residential units shall be permitted.

(8) The buildings must be served by public water and public sewer.

(9) Maximum building length: 140 feet.

(10) There shall be 40 family, rental affordable units in the inclusionary community, which are to be constructed in accordance with Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) regulations and Uniform Housing and Affordability Controls (UHAC) standards and guidelines, including, but not limited to, the requirements regarding unit size, a bedroom mix of eight efficiency/1-bedroom, twenty-four 2-bedroom and eight 3-bedroom units and income requirements for low, very low, and moderate income households (Current requirements for Moderate income: eight units; Low income: six units; Very low income: three units.)

(11) In addition to the 40 affordable units, there shall be up to 88 market units. Of the 88 market units, at least 65 units shall have one bedroom and the remaining 23 units may have - 2 two bedrooms.

(12) Exclusive of the required buffer/building setback area, specifically designated green space and recreational space shall be provided. These areas shall be landscaped.

(13) The buffer/building setback area along Route 22 will be landscaped with an evergreen screen, planted in a double staggered row in accordance with 126-191.D.

(14) Minimum street rights-of-way and off-street parking: street design, resident and guest parking shall meet RSIS standards or, per 126-169.B(3), shall offer data from the Institute of Transportation Engineers to confirm that a lower number of parking spaces is reasonable and same is to be satisfactory to the Township Engineer.

(15) In order to ensure the development will result in an aesthetically harmonious architectural design, the buildings shall demonstrate a common theme and compatible architectural features with respect to design, textures, facade modulation and roof scape.

D. Design requirements.

(1) Indoor and outdoor recreation and community facilities shall be located so as to be accessible by handicapped residents and guests of residents.

(2) The main entry of each dwelling must be roofed for protection against inclement weather.

(3) All landscaping shall be in accordance with landscaping requirements of the Township Land Use Ordinance, Chapter **126**.

(4) The Planning Board may require the developer to construct jitney or bus stop pads at areas that are deemed to be appropriate by the Board.

(5) Unless otherwise permitted, trash enclosures, with source separation will be provided and will be landscaped. If trash enclosures are not provided, in no event is trash to be left outside so as to become a nuisance. Brochures for recycling should be presented to the tenants upon occupancy.

(6) Pedestrian sidewalks should be provided to access the community building, recreation space, green space areas, bus stops and any other areas where the Planning Board believes that pedestrian access is likely or convenient.

E. Other Requirements.

(1) Except as otherwise provided herein, all provisions of the Land Use Ordinance, Chapter **126**, shall apply.

(2) If the developer has a future difficulty in renting the market units, the developer may provide factual basis for the request to seek approval from the Township Council to sell the market units rather than rent them. Any decision given by the Township Council shall be at its sole discretion and shall be subject to all other applicable laws.

(3) A Developer's Agreement shall be provided and executed which is acceptable to the Township Attorney as to both form and substance.

(4) Rental affordable housing shall be provided as set forth in Subsections **C10 and C11**), which includes, but is not limited to, unit size, bedroom mix and income requirements.

(5) A Minor Site Plan shall be required.

Below is a schematic of what currently exists in terms of structural improvements on Block 400 Lot 7. The sketch does not depict the areas of green spaces that are found along the perimeter areas of the tract.

