

THE TOWNSHIP OF UPPER
CAPE MAY COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION
AND
MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

PREPARED BY
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UPPER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

In June of 1999, the Township of Upper authorized the formation of The Township of Upper Master Plan Reexamination Committee. The mission of this committee was to reexamine the 1994 Township Master Plan and to adopt any revisions to that master plan that may be required by changing conditions, both within the Township and within the State-wide regulatory environment. The subcommittee members included:

Ted Behr, Zoning Board Vice Chair
Elizabeth Bergus, Zoning Board
Bruce Breunig, Zoning Office
Robert Caldwell, Planning Board
Paul Casaccio, Zoning Board Chair
Paul Dietrich, Township Engineer
Edward Kenney, Construction Official
Daniel Young, Esquire, Board Solicitor
Walker, Previti, Holmes & Associates
James Schwab III, Professional Planner

The reexamination of the Township 1994 Master Plan required the committee to address the following items:

- 1) The problems identified during the preparation of the Master Plan and the extent to which these problems have been addressed.
- 2) The extent to which the assumptions that the Master Plan is based upon have changed.
- 3) The effect of any changes in State, County and Municipal policies on the Master Plan.
- 4) The extent to which existing land patterns may have changed since the Master Plan was created.

During the reexamination process, the committee held meetings to discuss various aspects of the Master Plan and existing community conditions. Various municipal departments were contacted for their input on changing conditions within those sections of the municipality they are responsible for, i.e., the Recreation Department, the Public Works Department, the Municipal

Recycling Coordinator, the various volunteer fire companies and the volunteer rescue squad, etc. Additionally, field investigations were made in certain areas of the Township where possible zoning changes are being considered. The committee's consultant met with representatives of the Pinelands Commission and with representatives of the State Council on Affordable Housing to discuss items of concern during the Master Plan reexamination. The impact of the Master Plan on surrounding communities and within the county of Cape May was also considered as part of this reexamination process. The Planning Board has considered the report prepared by the subcommittee. The Planning Board has held public meetings and has considered the testimony offered by the public at these meetings. The Planning Board has made changes and additions to the subcommittee's report and adopts this document as the Master Plan Reexamination and Master Plan Amendment.

For the purposes of convenience, this report is prepared in the same format as the existing Master Plan with the section cited herein corresponding to those sections of the Master Plan.

II. GOALS AND PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

The Goals and Policy Objectives section of the Master Plan states a goal under Residential Objectives of providing decent housing for all present and future residents of the Township. The Township should provide a full range of housing choices to low, moderate and upper income households.

This objective is being addressed as discussed under the Housing Element in Section IV of this reexamination.

The natural resources objective cited in the Master Plan notes the need to manage surface drainage to minimize the danger of flooding and to preserve water quality. To the extent that this

need has been addressed, it has been handled through the site plan review process by the Zoning and Planning Boards of the Township. This section also encourages the Township to help protect the Tuckahoe River by preparing a model local river management plan. The report on proposed zoning boundary changes contained within this reexamination does address this issue.

III. LAND USE PLAN

There has been, as predicted in the 1994 Master Plan, an increase in commercial use within the Township. However, this increase is not incompatible with the general overall increase in population predicted in this section of the Master Plan.

The demographics cited beginning on Page 22 of this section of the plan are amended to include the following information obtained from the year 2000 census data:

Population

Upper Township had a year 2000 population of 12,115. This is a 13% increase over the 1990 population of 10,681. This 13% growth in the 1990's is a substantially lower rate than the increase of 59% experienced in the 1980's.

Age Cohorts

The year 2000 census reveals that 31% of Township residents are under the age of 18 and that 12% of residents are over the age of 65. These figures are largely consistent with 1990 figures of 29% for ages less than 17 and 12% over the age of 65.

Race, Ethnicity and Gender

Upper Township shows little change in these areas. 2000 census figures show that 97.6% of residents are white with 1.3% being of Hispanic origin and 0.7% being African-American with the remainder being distributed among other ethnic groups. The Township

population is 48.2% male and 51.8% female. These figures are very close to those contained in 1990 census tables.

The Future Land Use section on Page 33 is amended to indicate that the Township has prepared and submitted a Centers Designation petition to the office of State Planning. This petition has been acknowledged by the Office of State Planning and is undergoing the review and approval process.

On February 7, 2000, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection enacted revisions to the Coastal Permit Program, rules for Coastal Zone Management, known as the CAFRA II Interim Centers. The Land Use Regulation Program of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection cites these new interim rules as temporary measures to help ensure present and future compliance with the State plan. These new rules limit development potential outside of five designated centers distributed throughout the Township. The affect of these interim rules on the Township will be considered as part of the Plan endorsement process with The Office of State Planning.

Map 3 contained within the Land Use Plan is amended to show the new Tuckahoe Village Zoning District. It is also amended to show the Tuckahoe Riverfront Zone being created as well as the Proposed Zoning Changes set forth in items 1, 2, 3, 5 and 9 at the end of this document.

IV. HOUSING PLAN

This section of the Master Plan is amended to note that the Township is now pursuing certification from the Council on Affordable Housing in order to meet the Township's fair share housing obligation. Mr. Schwab, the reexamination committee's consultant, met with Ms. Shirley Bishop, the Director of the Council of Affordable Housing, along with Mr. Jim

Cordingly of the council, regarding the Townships obligation. The Council on Affordable Housing's current inventory obligation for the Township is for the creation of 401 moderate and low income housing units.

There are a number of ways in which this obligation can be addressed. There are also methods by which the Township can address units which already help meet this obligation which the Council on Affordable Housing may not yet be aware of. The Township should explore all methods by which this obligation can be met.

It is recommended that the Township inventory its existing housing stock and then assess which of the available options best meet its needs.

V. CIRCULATION PLAN

The circulation plan is amended to note the following changes and improvements that have occurred to roads since the Master Plan was created.

The New Jersey D.O.T. has recently completed intersection improvements at State Highway Routes 9 and 50. These improvements included the installation of a signalized intersection and a reconfiguration of the approach lanes to the intersection. The D.O.T. has also installed traffic lights at the intersections of State Route 50 and County Route 610 in Petersburg. Traffic lights have also been installed by the New Jersey Highway Authority at County Road 662 at the Garden State Parkway interchange. The Department of Transportation is in the design stages for future improvements in the Tuckahoe area, specifically the installation of a signalized intersection at State Routes 50 and 49, and the replacement of the Route 50 Tuckahoe River Bridge. A traffic signal has been installed at Route 49 and Woodbine Road . The County has replaced the old deteriorated bridge on Tyler Road with a new structure capable of allowing

heavier truck traffic along this road.

In the past the Township has allowed the improvement of a number of older right of ways with gravel surfaces. Because of the problems associated with the maintenance of these roads and problems caused by the tracking of dirt onto adjoining roads the Township should avoid allowing this practice in the future.

VI. UTILITY SERVICE PLAN

This section is revised to note that water mains have been installed in the Marmora and Beesleys Point section of the Township due to the presence of contaminated ground water which made existing wells unusable. This area includes Route 631 from Stagecoach Road to Route 9, north to Roosevelt Boulevard from Old Tuckahoe Road east to the 34th Street Bridge, the entire portion of the district north of Roosevelt Boulevard to Cedar Hollow Court in Beesleys Point.

VII. COMMUNITIES FACILITIES PLAN

There have been a number of changes within the items cited in this section.

As before, police protection is provided by New Jersey State Police. In addition to the Woodbine barracks, the State Police now operates a temporary "substation" located in the Township Hall during the high traffic summer months. The Planning Board finds that the present police protection afforded to the Township by the New Jersey State Police is adequate for the Township's needs.

Emergency 911 System

In January of 1998, the Township entered into a municipal services contract with the City of Ocean City, whereby the City of Ocean City provides answering and dispatch services for

Township residents on the mainland. As before, the City of Sea Isle City continues to provide answering and dispatch services to residents of the Township residing in Strathmere.

PUBLIC SAFETY
Fire Protection

Fire protection in Upper Township is provided by four volunteer fire companies, located in Strathmere, Marmora, Tuckahoe, and Seaville. (See Map 5 - Historic Community and Recreation Facilities Plan). All of the fire companies and rescue squads are housed in the same facilities as described in the 1994 Master Plan.

In addition to providing around the clock fire protection, the Marmora, Seaville and Tuckahoe Volunteer Fire Companies, in the summer of 1995, implemented a First Responder Program. This program was designed to assist the Upper Township Rescue Squad during medical emergencies specifically during the hours from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. The Strathmere Fire Company runs a similar program to assist the Sea Isle Ambulance Corps. The program has been a complete success and has greatly benefited the mainland residents of the Township by providing quicker responses during emergencies and by increasing the number of certified Emergency Medical Technicians throughout the Township.

All fire companies have expressed the desire to be involved in planning and decisions relating to volunteer recruitment, general municipal revenue, school safety, technology and land development.

Marmora Volunteer Fire Company

The Marmora Fire Company has a year 2001 budget of \$327,000. The Fire Company presently has ample space in its building as well as sufficient volunteers.

A large portion of the Marmora Fire District now has a public water hydrant system. This area includes Route 631, from Stagecoach Road to Route 9, north to Roosevelt Boulevard from Old Tuckahoe Road east to the 34th Street Bridge, and the entire portion of the district north of Roosevelt Boulevard to Cedar Hollow Court in Beesleys Point. All structures in this area from Roosevelt Boulevard to Cedar Hollow Court are more or less within 1,000 feet of a hydrant. The Marmora Fire Company would like to see the water main extended south along the Route 9 corridor and Stagecoach Road so hydrants could be installed along these primary roads.

Seaville Volunteer Fire Company and Rescue Squad

The Seaville Company has a year 2001 budget of \$234,612. The Seaville Fire Company serves the district by way of fire equipment with onboard water tanks. The fire company is beginning to see the need for expansion. The current fire hall is becoming too small to house the equipment and meet the needs of the company.

Strathmere Volunteer Fire Company

The Volunteer Fire Company of Strathmere has a 14 year old fire hall located on Commonwealth Avenue, between Whitter and Williard Avenues. Operating on a 2001 budget of \$56,588, the fire company presently has 18 firemen and 3 fire police that serves the Strathmere fire district which encompasses primarily residential homes and some commercial structures. The fire district is connected to a public water system throughout and has a mutual aid agreement with neighboring communities of Ocean City, Sea Isle City, and Marmora.

Tuckahoe Volunteer Fire Company

The Tuckahoe Company has a year 2001 budget of \$224,500. The company would like to

see the existing water mains extended through other portions of their district where feasible.

Emergency Medical Services

The Township's Emergency Medical Services is provided by the Upper Township Division of EMS (Municipal) and Upper Township Rescue Squad (Volunteer). All Emergency Medical Service's vehicles are located at the Rescue Squad Building at 2028 Tuckahoe Road, Petersburg, next to the County Library and Township Hall. The vehicles consist of three ambulances (one owned by the Township), one rescue truck, one rescue boat, and one command vehicle.

Division of EMS (Municipal)

This is the Township department that provides primary emergency medical services Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 5:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. These Township employees are stationed at the Rescue Squad building during these hours. The department is made up of one Chief Emergency Medical Technician and one Senior Emergency Medical Technician, both of these are full time positions. There are also 28 part-time Emergency Medical Technicians. There are three Emergency Medical Technicians on each shift.

Upper Township Rescue Squad (Volunteer)

The Rescue Squad provides Emergency Medical Services to Upper Township, Corbin City and part of Estell Manor. The Rescue Squad has 35 members. There is a duty crew on from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. every night. All other times are covered by "on calls." The Rescue Squad responds on calls during paid hours when the paid crew is on a call or needs assistance. The Rescue Squad operates primarily on donations and fund raisers. The Township donates \$35,000.00 and Corbin City donates \$2,500.00 a year. The Rescue Squad operating budget for

2000 is \$148,000.00.

Administrative Facilities

The Administrative Facilities section is amended to note that the Township has constructed a new municipal complex located on County Route 631 just east of Perry Road. This complex lies between the Middle School and the Cape May County Branch Library. This building houses all administrative offices for the Township, along with the Township Meeting Hall/Court, and in the summertime, the New Jersey State Police Temporary "Substation." The Municipal Complex is equipped with an emergency generator so the building can be used in emergencies.

School System

There have been a few substantial changes to the existing school facilities in the Township. The construction of a new high school facility to be located across Perry Road from the existing Middle School is an increasing possibility. The construction of this new high school has been recommended by the Citizens Advisory Committee appointed by the Cape May County Board of Education. This proposal is presently in the discussion stage.

An addition to the Primary School has been completed since the Master Plan was written. An addition to the Middle School with additional parking across Perry Road from the school is presently under construction.

The Township School Board has recently presented their Long Range Facilities Plan to the Planning Board. As a result of discussion during this presentation the School Board is further reviewing this plan.

VIII. RECREATION PLAN

There have been a number of changes to the recreation facilities inventory since the 1994 Master Plan was created. The Township has leased the new Community Center building on Route 50 in Tuckahoe. This building formerly housed the Wheaton Candle Factory. It was purchased by the County of Cape May and leased to the Township on a long term basis for use as a community center.

The Township has constructed new sports fields located on Old Tuckahoe Road behind the new Township municipal complex.

Township recreation efforts have been changing in the past few years from a policy of creating small localized recreational facilities back to more traditional, larger, multi-use facilities in centralized locations.

The Recreation Committee is planning recreational improvements to the former Betts property, located on Route 50 in Petersburg.

IX. HISTORICAL PRESERVATION PLAN

The Planning Board makes no changes to this section.

X. CONSERVATION PLAN

The energy conservation element of this section recommends the construction of cluster and mixed use development to help reduce car dependency. This statement is noted as being largely in conformance with the objectives of the State Plan.

There is an ever increasing pressure to develop properties near environmentally sensitive areas. The Township should require developmental setbacks to be measured from wetland

buffer lines and dune lines and require signage or fencing on these lines to protect these environmentally sensitive areas.

XI. ECONOMIC PLAN

The Planning Board makes no changes to this section.

XII. RECYCLING PLAN

The Township provides trash collection services for residential properties. There is also a drop off area located at 1690 Mount Pleasant Road. There has been no change to the recycling procedures of the Township. Commercial trash hauling is still private, however, the Township will take four 40 gallon containers per week from business uses. Residential recycling is collected once a week.

PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

The Planning Board amends the Master Plan as appropriate and recommends the following with regard to the Zoning Boundaries Map of the Township:

1. In the area lying between N.J. Route 50 and Tyler Road, the Planning Board recommends that two recently developed residential properties, located on Tyler Road, which lie within the Commercial Zone be made part of the adjacent Agricultural and Low Density Single Family Residential zone. This will be in keeping with the Zoning Board's Decision and Resolution approving the creation of these lots. A map prepared by the Township Engineer detailing these lots is attached.
2. The Planning Board recommends adoption of the proposed Tuckahoe River district in the Marshallville section of the Township. A field inventory of the proposed Tuckahoe

River Zone revealed that most of the properties in the proposed zone are either heavily encumbered by wetlands or are already developed in residential use. Much of this residential use is already non-conforming for the present AR District standards. Those properties that are not already non-conforming, will largely conform with the proposed Tuckahoe River District regulations. The creation of this zone will help ensure the protection of the Tuckahoe River as a scenic recreational environment. A copy of the Future Land Use Plan showing this change is attached.

3. The zoning map should be amended to indicate the required Airport Zone in the vicinity of the private airfield located on Route 9, between Route 9 and the Garden State Parkway in the Palermo section of the township.
4. The Planning Board also considered a proposal to re-zone portions of the commercial corridor along Roosevelt Boulevard into a residential use. A field inventory was made of the blocks involved in this proposal to determine the location of existing commercial and residential uses. This inventory revealed an existing mingling of residential and commercial uses to the extent that no change is recommended for this area.
5. The Planning Board examined a proposal to re-zone portions of the Pinelands Area in Tuckahoe and Petersburg. Pursuant to investigation by the township engineer, the proposed zone change will change approximately 921 acres within the RD Zoning District to the F25 District; which is bounded along south of Mill Road, southwest along Beesley's Point Secondary Railroad tracks and west along Mt. Pleasant-Tuckahoe Road. The properties within this area have potential environmental conditions which limit development.

The proposed zone change will change approximately 334 acres within the F25

Zoning District to RD; which is bounded northeast along Mr. Pleasant-Tuckahoe Road, along the southerly edge of the Sunset Acres subdivision and is west of the Beesley's Point Secondary Railroad tracks. Numerous properties within this area are already developed and the remaining properties have less potential environmental conditions which would limit development.

The proposed zone change will expand the TV Zone by 5 acres, across from the railroad station. The proposed zone change will change approximately 74 acres within the PU Zoning District to RD; which is north of Mill Road and west of Cedar Avenue (see attached plan).

The Planning Board closely examined this issue and does recommend this re-zoning with the recommendation that the Township Committee notify property owners in the same manner as would be required if this change were not recommended pursuant to a Master Plan Reexamination.

6. A proposal to re-zone Lot 38 Block 736 from the Conservation Zone to a zone which would allow commercial development was considered. This lot lies on the south side of Roosevelt Boulevard a few hundred feet east of the Garden State Parkway. A site visit made it clear that this site is in an isolated location bounded by environmentally sensitive salt water wetlands. It is recommended that this lot remain in the Conservation Zone. The Planning Board does not recommend this re-zoning.
7. A request to re-zone Lot 10 Block 549 located on Stagecoach Road into the Mining Zone was also reviewed. The Planning Board does not recommend this proposed

re-zoning.

8. Another request to re-zone Lots 48.01 and 48.02 Block 479 located on Willets Road from the Conservation Zone to the Residential Zone was reviewed. The Planning Board does not recommend this proposed re-zoning.
9. The owners of Lot 2 Block 825, located on Bayview Drive opposite Otis Avenue in Strathmere, have requested a zoning change from the Conservation Zone to the Resort Residential Zone. This property is split by the zoning boundary line which extends along the center of Otis Avenue . It is developed consistent with the adjoining properties. Further, that portion of the property in the Conservation Zone is elevated ground and is protected by a bulkhead. Because of these conditions the Planning Board recommends that all of Lot 2 be placed in the Resort Residential Zone (see attached plan).



STRATHMERE BAY

814

APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF EXISTING BULKHEAD

AREA TO BE CHANGED FROM C ZONE TO RR ZONE

813

1.55 AC.

C

815

2.28 AC.

820

1.15 AC.

825

DRIVE

812

1.69 AC.

MORRIS AVE

NELSON AVE

819

1.10 AC.

821

824

811

COMMONWEALTH AVENUE

PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE
TAX BLOCK 825 LOT 2
PORTION OF TAX MAP SHEET 33.01
TOWNSHIP OF UPPER
CAPE MAY COUNTY, NJ
SCALE: 1"=200'

REV. 7/24/01 REMOVED LOT 1 PER PLANNING BOARD COMMENT

Plot Date: 6/18/01

Xref Files: /033-01.JPG

Drawing File: /ut/paving01/Zoningchg-BayviewAve.DWG