REEXAMINATION OF THE MASTER PLAN AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE



OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

MARCH 2006

PREPARED BY

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The original of this report was signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45-14-12.

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INTRODUCTION

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires every municipality in New Jersey that has adopted a master plan and land development regulations to periodically review and revise, if necessary, those documents every six years (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89). The Township of Plumsted Land Use Board is responsible for the preparation and adoption of a report at least once every six (6) years from the previous reexamination. The reexamination report must be adopted by resolution of the Land Use Board, and forwarded to the Ocean County Planning Board and the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality.

The Plumsted Township Land Use Board adopted the last Reexamination Report on June 2, 2003. Prior to the 2003 Reexamination Report, a Reexamination Report was adopted on July 19, 1999, and a comprehensive Master Plan was adopted on February 6, 1995. Since 2003, the Township has recommended several zoning and land use revisions, adopted a Conservation Element, designated a portion of town as an area in need of redevelopment and adopted a redevelopment plan. While this Reexamination Report addresses the Township's recent land use policy changes and redevelopment efforts, it also recognizes a need to address water supply and potable water issues, as well as a continued need for innovative development, to promote open space preservation, interconnective greenways and natural areas preservation.

The MLUL requires a reexamination report to address five issues relating to the growth and development of the Township, including (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89):

- a. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the Municipality at the time of such adoption, last revision or re-examination, if any;
- b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date;
- c. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for such plan or 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;
- 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; and
- e. The recommendations of the Land Use Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C.40A:12 A-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.

PROBLEMS & OBJECTIVES: LAST REEXAMINATION 1.0

A Reexamination Report shall address the major problems and objectives relating to land development in the Municipality at the time of such adoption, last revision or re-

The Plumsted Township Land Use Board itemized several concerns in the 1995 Master Plan, many of which were validated in the Township's 2003 Reexamination Report. They

- 1. Preserving agriculture as an industry;
- 2. Preserving the rural character of the Township while promoting balanced
- 3. Providing parking in downtown New Egypt;
- 4. Improving circulation in both the northeastern portion of the Township and in
- 5. Addressing lack of public sewer facilities in New Egypt;
- 6. Ensuring for adequate community facilities, specifically the need for additional
- 7. Anticipated need for additional passive recreation facilities.

THE EXTENT OF INCREASE OR REDUCTION OF 2.0 PROBLEMS & OBJECTIVES

A Reexamination Report shall describe the extent to which such problems and objectives existing at the time of the last Master Plan have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date;

1. Preserving agriculture as an industry and preserving the rural character of the Township while promoting balanced economic growth.

Since the adoption of the last Reexamination, Plumsted has taken significant strides to retain agriculture as a viable industry, preserve valuable natural resources such as farmland and open space, and to protect the rural character of the Township.

A new Conservation Element was adopted by the Township in 2003 which identified the community's natural resources (i.e. soil, water, air, forests, fields, waterways), and established strategies to preserve, conserve and utilize those natural resources in order to maintain quality of life, economic success, and the public health, safety and general

The Conservation Plan established the following goals and objectives to ensure Environment and Natural Resources, Recreation and Open Space, Agricultural Land Use, and the Rural Character and Historic Preservation.

Environmental Protection

To promote the preservation of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas of the Township.

To give due consideration to environmental and public health impacts of air, water and noise pollution.

Recreation and Open Space

To upgrade existing recreation facilities and provide new recreation facilities, both passive and active, for the benefit of Township residents.

To acquire lands for inclusion in the Open Space Plan, and to create linkage with state and other publicly held tracts.

Agricultural Land Use

To encourage the preservation of farmland and promote and preserve the agricultural industry of the Township.

To create open space buffers between active farmlands and developed acres.

Rural Character and Historic Ptesenvation

To encourage Township planning efforts or techniques that conserve and preserve areas to maintain the rural, and historic characteristics of the Township.

The Conservation Plan provides a "baseline" for the Township's environmental conditions, including: Geography and Land Use (State Planning Areas) Physiography, Soils, Steep Slopes, Water Supply (aquifers, community wells, groundwater recharge), Critical Environmental Areas, Surface Water (watersheds, streams and lakes), Flood Hazard Areas, Wetlands (Landscape Project, vernal ponds, agricultural wetlands), Forests and Grasslands (Landscape Project), Natural Heritage Priority Sites and Records, Historic Resources, Contaminated Sites, Agriculture, Clustering and Conservation Design, Open Space and Recreation, and the Relationship to other State and County Plans..

The Conservation Plan recommended several implementation-strategies to protect the Township's valuable natural resource and advance the goals and objectives of the Plan,

As a result, Plumsted has implemented the following ordinances:

Woodland Protection Ordinance

The intent and purpose of the Woodlands Protection Ordinance is to "preserve coniferous and deciduous trees, flowering trees, shrubs and vegetated areas growing in a natural state within the municipality." The Township recognized that the natural woodlands vegetation was integral to the community's rural character and a valuable scenic resource that needed protection. A Woodlands Preservation Plan must be submitted as part of any Major Site Plan or Subdivision application.

The following additional ordinances have been recommended to the Township Committee by the Land Use Board for review:

- 1. Land Subdivision and Site Plan Review Ordinances
- 2. Amendments to the RA-5 (Rural Agriculture) District
- 3. Steep Slope Ordinance
- Land Subdivision and Site Plan Review Ordinances

The purpose and intent of the amendments to the Land Subdivision and Site Plan Review procedures is not only to offer the applicant guidance throughout the major subdivision and site plan application process, but to also identify environmental constraints and natural resources prior to development. As part of the preliminary plan, the revised Subdivision and Site Plan Review Ordinance requires that an applicant submit the following information as part of any major application:

- a. Drafting Standards
- b. Basic Preliminary Plan Information
- c. Site Context Map
- d. Natural Resources and Site Analysis Plan
- e. 4 Step Design Process for all Districts
- f. Site Design and Layout Plan
- g. Construction Improvement Plan
- h. Area of Disturbance
- i. Greenway Ownership and Management Plan
- j. Engineering Certification
- k. Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control Plan
- l. Community Impact Statement
- m. Lighting Plan
- n. Environmental Impact Statements
- o. Historic Pesticide Contamination Report, if applicable.

Prior to the submission of the preliminary plan, the applicant is required to submit a Sketch Plan which serves as a "diagrammatic basis for informal discussion with the Land Use Board regarding the design of a proposed major subdivision or site plan." The Sketch Plan allows the Land Use Board to provide feedback to the applicant prior to any major costs that would be incurred by the applicant during the preliminary and final plan review stages.

Amendments to the RA-5 (Rural Agriculture) District

The RA-5 District was amended to allow for conservation design standards with required open space set-asides and promoting greenways and deed-restricted land. These amendments only apply to tracts of land that are 20 acres or greater in size. These actions were taken prior to the formulation and adoption of the Conservation Plan Element of the Master Plan in 2005. Since that time, the Township has become aware of serious water supply issues which have come to light as part of ongoing efforts to implement the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan. These water supply issues are directly related to the availability of groundwater for additional wells and the constraints on existing aquifers. As part of a broader effort to protect these sensitive aquifer systems, the Township and its Land Use Board have revisited the RA-5 zoning district throughout the Township. As shown on Map 1, the Township intends to identify other areas within the Township where the expansion of the RA-5 District would be appropriate. An expanded RA-5 boundary would not only reduce demand on the limited groundwater supply, but allow for additional greenways and interconnections and restrict clear-cutting of woodlands.

· Steep Slope Ordinance

In addition, the Township has added provisions to ensure the conservation of steep slopes. The intent of the ordinance is to minimize disturbance on lands where the slope is 15% or greater, limit stormwater runoff, erosion, sedimentation and siltation of nearby streams, downstream flooding, and increase stability of the slope itself. While the ordinance permits limited development on slopes of 15% or greater, lands with 20% or greater slope should not be altered, re-graded, cleared, built upon or otherwise disturbed.

2. Parking in downtown New Egypt;

The 2003 Reexamination Report indicated that additional parking is still required in the downtown to address parking requirements for downtown business establishments.

3. Circulation in both the northeastern portion of the Township and in New Egypt;

The 2003 Reexamination Report indicated that the recommended traffic studies of New Egypt have not been performed

4. Lack of public sewer facilities in New Egypt;

Lack of public sewer facilities in New Egypt is still a valid issue in the Township and has created an impediment to growth within the Town Center. It is anticipated, however, that sewers will be included throughout a majority of the downtown as part of the implementation of the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan. This will be accomplished pursuant to a redeveloper agreement between the Township and the redeveloper

designated to construct a project within the Planned Residential Retirement Community (PRRC) Overlay portion of the Town Center Rehabilitation Area. The project will cover the cost of the wastewater treatment plant and the sanitary sewer lines necessary to enable the existing developed portion of the downtown to connect to the system.

In addition, since the last Reexamination Report, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Water Allocation has designated nearly the entire town as a threatened water supply critical aquifer area. In order to support the first major redevelopment project within the Town Center Rehabilitation Area, the Township expects to designate a private water and sewer company as the redeveloper responsible for not only constructing and operating the wastewater collection and treatment system, but to provide water to be piped to the redevelopment project from an source outside of Plumsted.

5. <u>Inadequate community facilities, specifically the capacity of the municipal building and annex, and the need for additional educational facilities; and</u>

The School District educates more than 1,850 students in kindergarten though grade 12 including special education students in pre-kindergarten. Students in Pre-kindergarten to Grade 1 attend the New Egypt Primary School. Students in Grades 2-5 attend the Dr. Gerald H. Woehr Elementary School. Students in grades 6-8 attend the New Egypt Middle School. The Plumsted High School educates more than 500 students. Also within Plumsted is a branch of the Ocean County library system, located at 119 Evergreen Road.

Specifically, since the last Master Plan Reexamination, a new municipal building was constructed at 121 Evergreen Road. The facility houses all of the municipal offices and the court.

6. Anticipated need for additional passive recreation facilities.

A comprehensive Open Space and Recreation Element was adopted as part of the Township's Master Plan on July 5, 2000. The plan noted 736 acres of open space and recreation lands under public ownership. Of the 736 acres, 586 acres are part of the state owned Colliers Mills Wildlife Management Area. The Ocean County Natural Lands Trust and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection have been major funding sources for open space protection and acquisition. Since 2000, another 59 acres were added to the Colliers Mills Wildlife Area, and approximately 23 acres are held for conservation in the northeastern quadrant.

The Township's Open Space and Recreation Element includes an action plan with a map of potential areas for dedication, acquisition and easements. Priority sites include two

parcels located in the northeast quadrant-known as the "Coastal Divide" and the "Lakewood Road" target area. In total, these lands constitute over 400 acres. In 2001, a third area, "Pinehurst Preservation Area," roughly 200 acres in size was designated for acquisition. These lands are depicted on the Vacant Lands, Farmland, Preservation & Greenways Areas Map. It should be noted that in an effort to continue open space preservation, several additional properties have been recommended for inclusion on the Township's Open Space Plan, see Section 7.

In addition to the passive lands, Plumsted Township also provides and maintains nearly 40 acres of recreation areas. The REC Park offers baseball, softball, football, basketball courts, tennis courts, roller hockey and soccer fields. Brindletown Lake Park, located at end of Brindletown Road, has fishing and picnic areas. Oakford Lake Park has a gazebo for concerts and a tot lot, and areas for ice skating, fishing and boating.

3.0 THE EXTENT OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES & OBJECTIVES

A Reexamination Report shall describe the extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan or 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;

1. Census 2000 Population & Data

In February 2001, the United States Census Bureau released population data for all New Jersey municipalities. Table 4 shows that Plumsted's 2000 population stands at 7,275 total persons, which represents a 21.1% increase from the Borough's 1990 population of 6,005. Tables 4, 5 and 6 provide a comparison of selected 1990 and 2000 Census data.

TABLE 4: Plumsted Township Selected Population and Age Characteristics

1990 and 2000						
	1990	2000	% Change			
Total Population	6,005	7,275	+21.1			
Male	3,007	3,620	+20.4			
Female	2,998	3,655	+21.9			
Under 5	453	501	+10.6			

5 to 9	456	641	+40.6
10 to 14	434	610	+40.6
15 to 19	439	489	+11.4
20 to 24	414	344	-16.9
25 to 34	1,114	904	-18.9
35 to 44	1,004	1,567	+56.1
45 to 54	674	1,010	+49.9
55 to 59	252	349	+38.5
60 to 64	184	239	+29.9
65 to 74	387	380	-1.8
75 to 84	161	192	+19.3
85+	33	49	+48.5
Median age	32	36	+11.1
Householder 65 and over	149	134	-10.1

SOURCE: US Census Bureau

Noteworthy statistics from Table 4 include:

- Total population increase of 21%;
- 56.1% increase in 35 to 44-year old persons;
- 49.9% increase in 45 to 54-year old persons;
- 40.6% increase in both 5 to 9- and 10 to 14-year old persons;
- 48.5% increase in 85-year old and over persons;
- 35.8% decrease in 20 to 34-year old persons; and
- 11.1% increase in median age.

TABLE 5: Plumsted Township Selected Household Characteristics, 1990 and 2000

·	1990	2000	% Change
Total Households	2,089	2,510	+20.2
Average household size (persons)	2.87	2.9	+1.0
Families	1,649	2,002	+21.4
Families with child. Under 18	824	1,032	+25.2
Married Couple Families	1,395	1,682	+20.6
Marr. Coup. with child. Under 18	699	858	+22.7
Unmarried partners	71	155	+118.3
Nonfamily households	440	508	+15.5
Householder living alone	345	400	+15.9
Households with ind. 65 and over	436	465	+6.7

SOURCE: US Census Bureau

Noteworthy statistics from Table 5 include:

- 20.2% increase in total number of households;
- Slight (1.0%) increase in average persons per household;
- 21.4% increase in number of families;
- 25.2% increase in number of families with children under 18-years;
- 118.3% increase in number of unmarried partners; and
- 6.7% increase in number of households with an individual aged 65-years or older.

TABLE 6: Plumsted Township Selected Housing Characteristics, 1990 and 2000

1990	2000	% Change
2,200	2,628	+19.5
2,089		+20.2
111	118	+6.3
2,089	2,510	+20.2
1,692		+26.1
397	377	-5.0
	2,200 2,089 111 2,089 1,692	2,200 2,628 2,089 2,510 111 118 2,089 2,510 1,692 2,133

SOURCE: US Census Bureau

Noteworthy statistics from Table 6 include:

- 19.5% increase in total housing units;
- 20.2% increase in total occupied housing units;
- 6.3% increase in total number of vacant-occupied units; and
- 5% decrease in total number of renter-occupied units

2. Rural Character

It has always been a goal of the Township to preserve its rural character while promoting balanced economic growth. However, a greater amount of growth and development has been occurring outside of the Town Center boundaries — a designated area as per the State Development and Redevelopment Plan - rather than inside the Town Center which should contain diverse residential neighborhoods served by a mixed-use Core offering locally oriented goods and services. Through the adoption of the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan and several zoning provisions to decrease the permitted residential density, the Township promotes growth and development in the redevelopment area and Town Center.

3. Downtown Revitalization

In March 2004, the Township Committee adopted a Redevelopment Plan pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing law (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A et seq) for the area designated

as a "Town Center" by the State Planning Commission. The purpose and intent of the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan is to provide a comprehensive economic development strategy for the "Town Center Rehabilitation Area," specifically to include provisions to develop vacant land as a retirement community, enhance the Township's light industrial economic base, and to promote infill construction of mixed-use buildings in the C-4 Downtown Business District. The Redevelopment Plan established an overlay zone for the "Town Center Rehabilitation Area" in addition to the existing zoning standards to allow for new permitted uses, and specialized bulk and design standards. For more detailed information about the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan see Section 5 in this Report.

4. Water Supply and Potable Issues

The availability of public water is a significant problem for the Township. As shown on the Water Supply Critical Areas Map, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Water Allocation has designated nearly the entire town with a threatened water supply and as a critical aquifer area, indicating that the ability of an aquifer to meet future water demand is compromised, and limiting new development to find other water sources. This creates an issue especially in areas where the town is trying to focus development and redevelopment.

While it is anticipated that infrastructure will be completed throughout the downtown as part of the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan implementation, other areas of the town-especially those identified in the Conservation Element as critical groundwater recharge areas (11-17 inches/year), potential greenways and preservation areas, and those outside of the designated town center have been recommended to be changed to RA-5 because of being within proximity to the depleted and threatened aquifer area as per New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Development intensity and impervious cover should be limited, especially in those areas outside of the town center where highest groundwater recharge occurs. The recommended zone changes are shown on the Zone Map Proposed Amendments.

5. Historic Preservation

In 2005, Plumsted was awarded a \$20,000 grant to prepare a historic analysis and inventory of its historic sites. In conjunction with the historic analysis, Plumsted will prepare a Historic Preservation Master Plan Element. The element will identify those properties listed by the State and National Historic Preservation Office, and recommend changes to regulations of historic sites located in the New Egypt Redevelopment Area.

6. Military Base Overlay

As indicated in the Conservation Element, of the Township's total land area (40.7 square miles), 47% or 12,221 acres are part of the Fort Dix Military Reservation and under Federal government management. Currently, this serves as the Township's largest tax exempt parcel.

Given the uncertainty of military facilities within this region, and the significant impact that the Township's schools and services would face should conditions change, the Township should consider instituting a Military Base Planned Unit Development Overlay which would outline zoning perimeters, i.e. land uses and densities, provided that available infrastructure exists.

In addition, the town many also consider establishing an appropriate mix of retail and commercial development with specific percentages to provide a more advantageous impact from a fiscal perspective.

7. Recreation Open Space Inventory (ROSI)

In an effort to continue open space preservation, the following properties have been recommended for inclusion on the Township's Open Space Plan:

- Block 55, Lot 149
- Block 19, Lot 2
- Block 19, Lot 3
- Block 1, Lot 36
- Block 29, Lot 38
- Block 47, Lot 26

4.0 MASTER PLAN & ORDINANCE CHANGES

The Reexamination shall describe 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.

4.1 Master Plan Changes

- 1. The current Master Plan addresses all of the required areas and presents information on the general conditions of the Township. Many of the concepts indicated within the Plan are still valid.
- 2. It should be noted, however, the Township has identified several properties to be included on their Recreation Open Space Inventory. The Township should amend the Open Space and Recreation Plan to reflect these changes.
- 3. In 2006, Plumsted will be preparing a Historic Preservation Master Plan Element which should be implemented and adopted as part of the town's comprehensive Master Plan.
- 4. Plumsted Township adopted and submitted a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan to the Council On Affordable Housing several years ago, but did not proceed to obtain Substantive Certification. As a result, a new Housing Element and Fair Share Plan is required in accordance with COAH's Third Round rules. The Township will be preparing and submitting a Housing Element and Fair Share Compliance Plan during 2006-2007 and intends to petition for Substantive Certification. While the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan provides for a Growth Share obligation on new redevelopment projects, the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan will address affordable housing on a Township-wide basis.

4.2 Land Development Ordinance Changes

- Update zoning map to reflect preserved farmland and natural lands since August 2004;
- 2. Implement zoning recommendations as indicated on the enclosed Zone Map Proposed Amendments;
- 3. Adopt Land Subdivision and Site Plan Review amendments;
- 4. Adopt RA-5 (Rural Agriculture) District amendments; An expanded RA-5 boundary would not only reduce demand on the limited groundwater supply, but allow for additional greenways and interconnections and restrict clear-cutting of woodlands.
- 5. Update and codify zoning ordinance;
- 6. Reduce impervious coverage requirements within the C-3 District.

5.0 REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

The Reexamination Report shall include the recommendations of the Land Use Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C.40A:12 A-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.

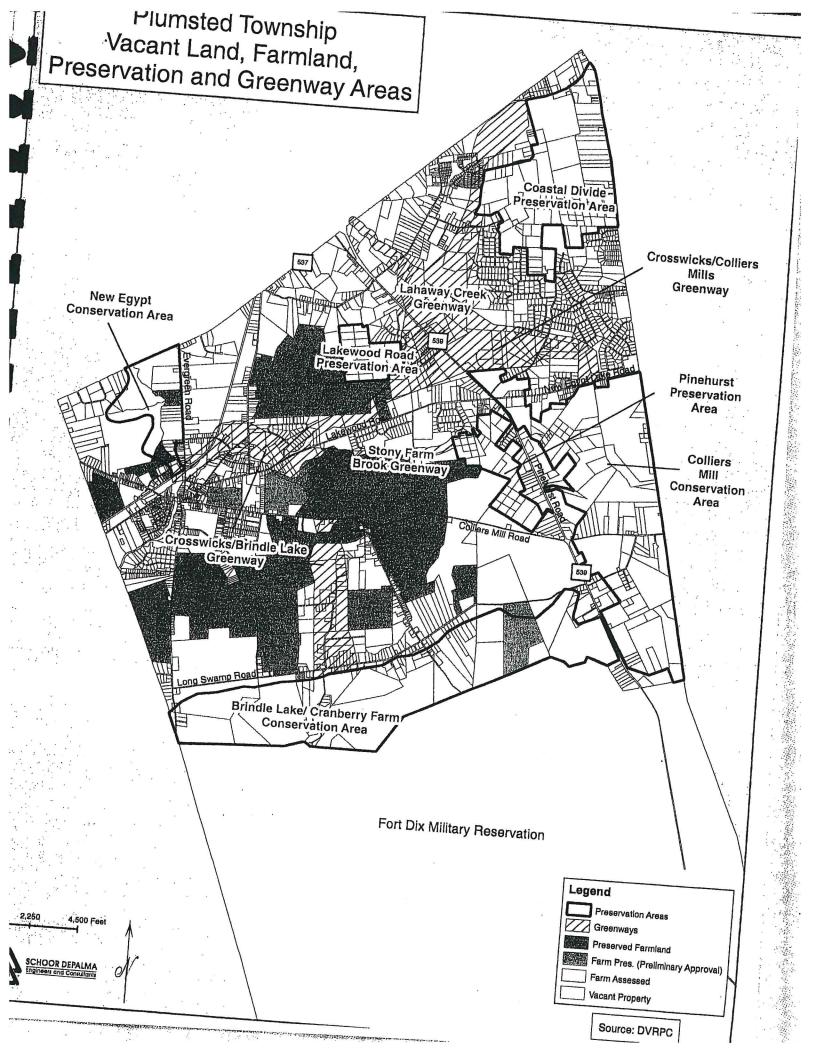
In 2003, the Plumsted Township Committee directed the Land Use Board to investigate whether the area designated as a "Town Center" by the New Jersey State Planning Commission meets the statutory criteria for designating an "area in need of rehabilitation" pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL). The New Egypt Redevelopment Plan was adopted in March of 2004 and amended in July of 2005. Prior to the adoption of the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan, the area within the Town Center boundaries was designated as an "area in need of rehabilitation" under Section 14 and 15 of the LRHL in 2003, and the C-4 Zone of the Plumsted Zoning Ordinance, which is the downtown business district, was designated as an "area in need of redevelopment" pursuant to the LRHL in February of 2004.

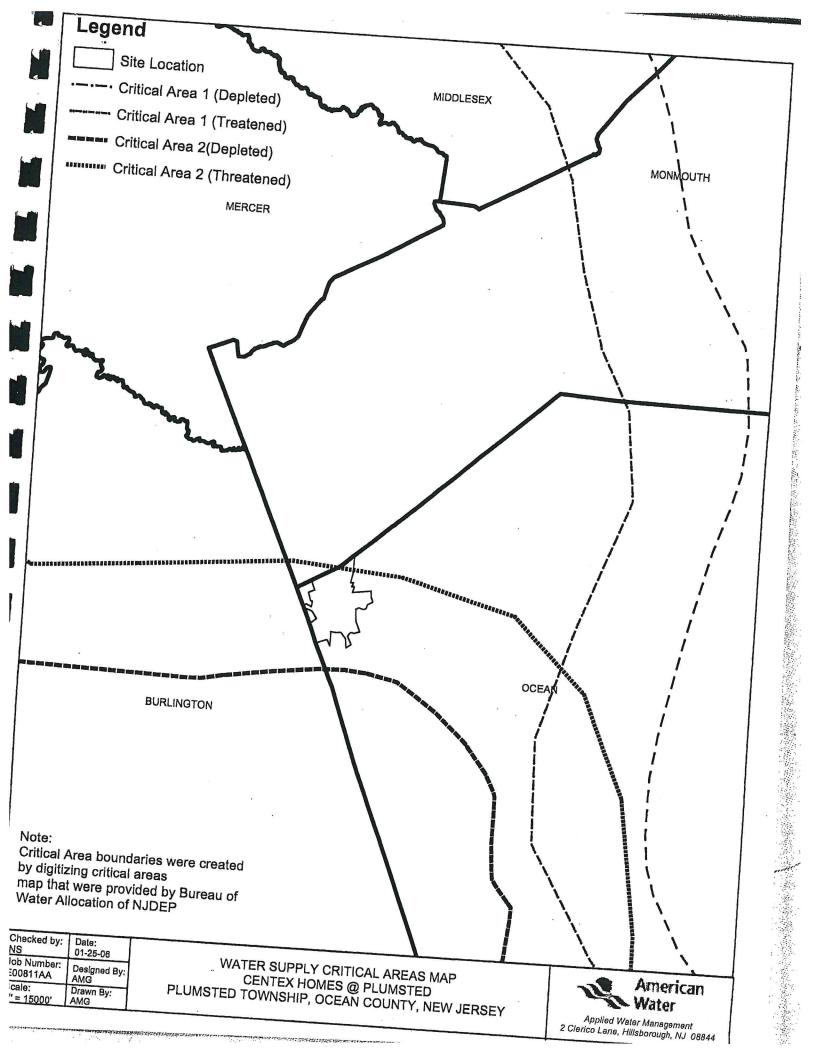
The New Egypt Redevelopment Area is located in the northwest quadrant of the Township and comprises the New Egypt downtown area of Plumsted. As a result of the Redevelopment Plan, the downtown area will become "a more vibrant, culturally interesting and attractive downtown area to serve as a "Growth Center to attract new businesses and shoppers." The goals of the Redevelopment Plan are:

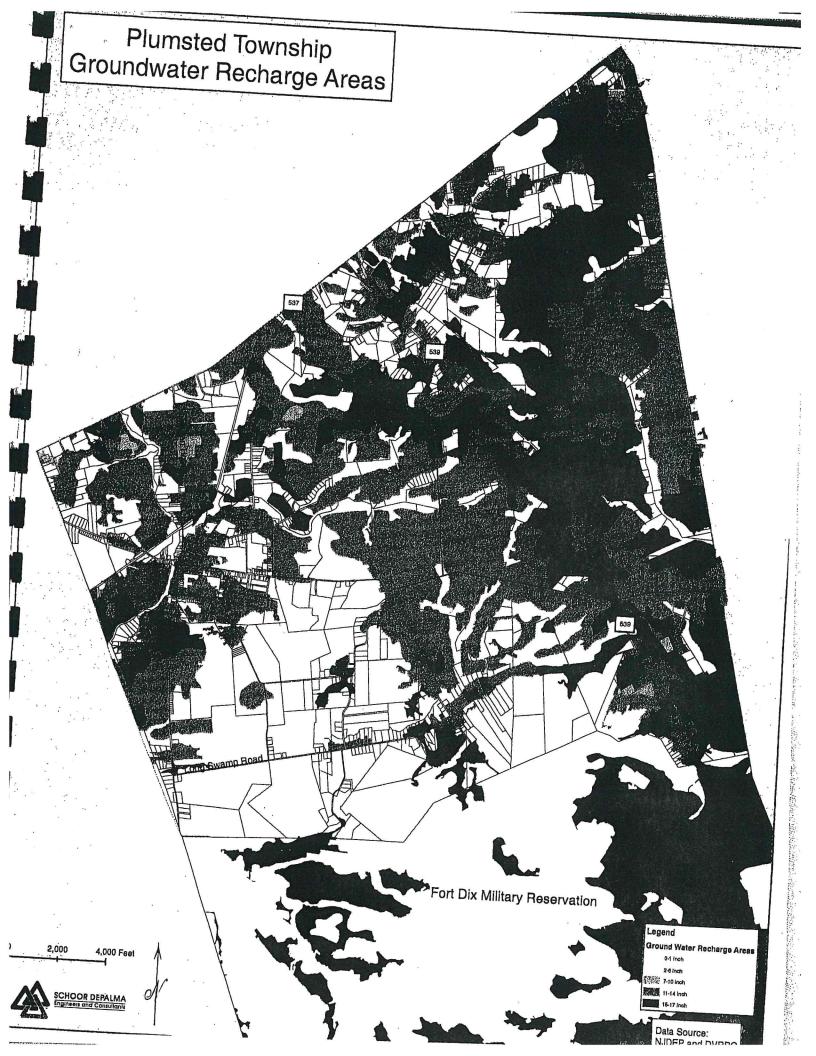
- To transform underutilized buildings and properties in the New Egypt Downtown Redevelopment Area into fully productive uses;
- To serve as the guiding document required for the Township Committee and Land Use Board; and
- To achieve a "Smart Growth Vision" that channels residential and commercial development into designated areas in order to preserve open space in surrounding sections of Plumsted.

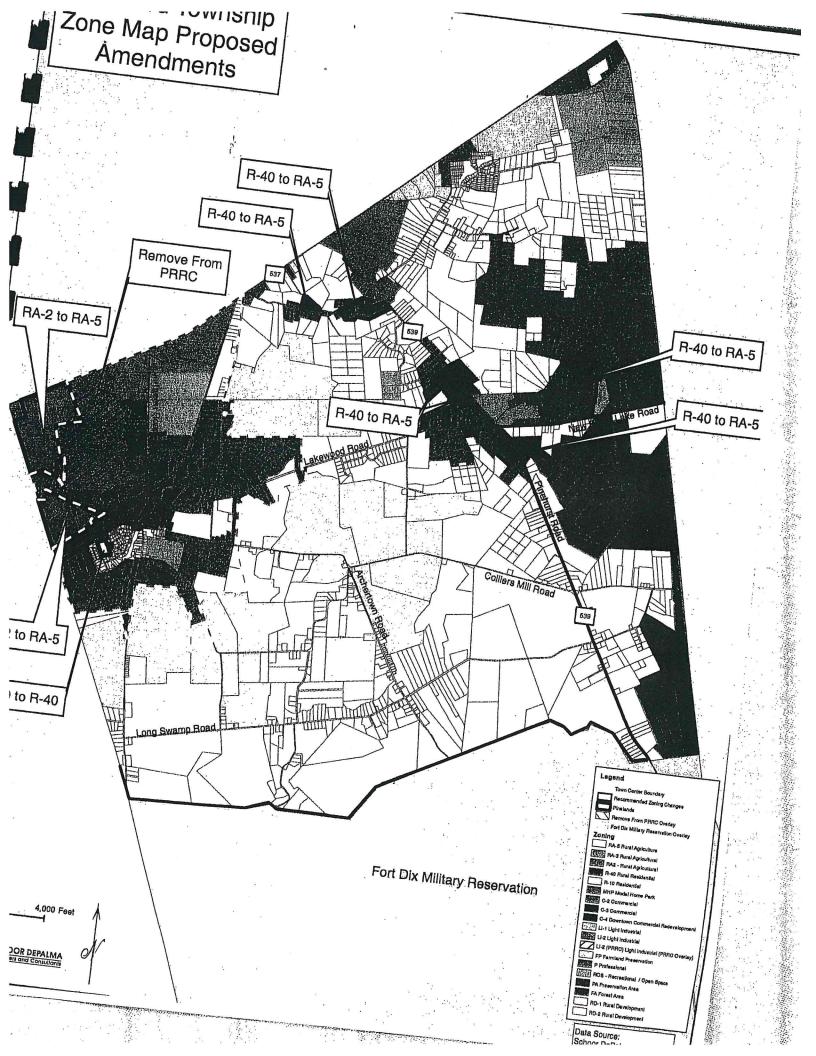
The main objectives of the Redevelopment Plan are consistent with the Township-wide Master Plan goals. The Redevelopment Plan creates land use and building requirements, and business opportunities that are specific to the redevelopment area and sensitive to the community's needs for an economically viable, fully productive Plumsted Industrial Park. A plan to create a sewer system in the Town Center was established as a main objective along with utilization of high quality design and preservation standards, and provision of infrastructure improvements.

Appendices









Township of Plumsted

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MEMO TO: Township Committee

FROM:

Monica Raulf, Secretary to the Land Use Board Jy Rave

RE:

Master Plan Reexamination

DATE:

March 24, 2006

At the March 21, 2006 special meeting of the Land Use Board a motion was made and seconded to adopt the March 2006 Reexamination of the Master Plan and Land Development Ordinance and to refer the report to the Township Committee.

mr

RECEIVED

MAR 24 2006

PLUMSTED TOWNSHIP CLERK'S OFFICE

