TOWNSHIP OF DELANCO
1996 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT
BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

STATUTORY REEXAMINATION OF MASTER PLAN

N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq. entitled Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires all municipalities to reexamine their master plans at least every six years. The purpose of this requirement is for municipalities to have regular, periodic reviews of current information and changing conditions within the municipality in the interest of keeping long-range planning as up-to-date as possible.

In N.J.S.A.40:55D-89 of the MLUL, the following language is set forth:

> The governing body shall, at least every six years, provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the planning board which shall prepare and adopt by resolution a report on the findings of such reexamination, a copy of which report and resolution shall be sent to the county planning board and the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality...

The Township of Delanco Master Plan Land Use Element was completed in 1973, with updates performed in 1982 and 1990. The Township's Zoning Ordinance was revised in 1993 to address the 1990 Master Plan Update.

The MLUL requires consideration of five areas of concern within the statutory reexamination report. Those areas and corresponding response statements are set forth below.

A. REVIEW OF PAST CONDITIONS

N.J.S.A.40:55D-89a. of the MLUL provides that the reexamination report shall review:

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

The 1990 Master Plan identified the following goals and objectives:

GOAL #1: RESIDENTIAL LAND USE/AFFORDABLE HOUSING

> Preserve the established residential districts and provide the opportunity for a range of housing types to meet the varied income and age level needs of residents.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Preserve the existing single-family residential neighborhoods and maintain public health and safety through continued physical maintenance of housing.

2. Encourage the concept of clustering housing with supporting land use types in a neighborhood environment.

3. Provide opportunities for residents to obtain satisfactory housing at affordable prices through encouraging the provision of a range of housing types where appropriate.

GOAL #2: COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Offer opportunities for varied commercial activities and services in appropriate areas while maintaining the Township's quality of life.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Encourage the continuation of a variety of types of commercial land use within the Township's existing commercial districts.

2. Promote provision of varied and convenient shopping and services for residents of the Township in commercial districts and other areas where appropriate access infrastructure is available.

3. Maintain the Township's visual quality by control of commercial land use patterns and adoption of improved design and performance standards for land use in commercial areas.

GOAL #3: RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Enhance the Township's open space system and upgrade recreational land use to meet the needs of residents.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Seek opportunities for preservation and upgrading of accessible open spaces.

2. Improve and diversify recreation uses offered by municipal parks.

3. Consider the recreation needs of Township residents through the preservation of open space within proposed residential developments.

GOAL #4: WATERFRONT LAND USE

Promote quality waterfront land use and encourage public access.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Ensure continued public access to waterfront areas. This should include provision of physical and visual access.

2. Authorize the preparation of a Hawk Island Waterfront Master Plan Feasibility Study to protect the environment of the island and promote water dependent land uses and other recreational land uses in that area.

3. Encourage cluster development in order to preserve the environmental integrity of the waterfront lands.

4. Encourage cluster development at lower densities for Hawk Island.

GOAL #5: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Protect the quality of Delanco Township's natural and manmade environment in order to preserve the balance of its ecological systems and safeguard the future health and welfare of residents.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide for the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands in order to protect the environmental integrity of the Township.

2. Encourage the adoption of design standards which will minimize negative effects of development upon the environment in all areas of the Township.

GOAL #6: INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

Continue to permit existing industrial businesses to operate while being more specific about land use in those zones.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide standards to guarantee quality light industrial development without minimizing the existing tax base.

2. Create a light industrial classification to protect industrial development along the sensitive waterfront area.

3. Attempt to limit port activities adjacent to residential land uses.

B. CHANGING CONDITIONS

N.J.S.A.40:55D-89b. provides that the following shall be stated in the reexamination report:

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

The following problems have increased despite setting forth the objectives of the 1990 Master Plan:

GOAL #1: The affordable housing supply for young couples and growing families is ample; however, there is a need to provide housing for the aged in the Township.

GOAL #2: The need for varied commercial activities and services in appropriate areas still exists. The need to improve the commercially zoned district remains.

GOAL #3: The need for open space preservation in the Township still exists.

GOAL #4: Public access to waterfront areas in the township is in need of improvement, particularly along the Rancocas Creek.

GOAL #5: Environmentally sensitive lands located along the Delaware River and the Rancocas Creek have not been preserved. A need to preserve portions of and/or entire parcels still exists.

GOAL #6: A light industrial zoning classification has been created in the Township. Port activities have been non-existent to date. Delanco continues to experience a loss of industry.

C. CHANGING OBJECTIVES AND ASSUMPTIONS

N.J.S.A.40:55D-89c. provides that the reexamination report shall state:

> The extent to which there have been significant changes in the

assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, County and Municipal policies and objectives.

CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The following changes in assumptions form the basis for the update of the master plan:

1. There will be a continued increase in retirement age (65+ years) segment of the population.

2. Light rail passenger service will become available to the Township within the next four to five years. This assumption is based upon the preliminary information from the Burlington County Office of Land Use Planning and New Jersey Transit.

3. Light Rail has the potential to spur economic development in the area of a new park-and-ride station.

4. The Route 130/Delaware River Corridor Consensus Planning Study, a revitalization initiative sponsored by Burlington County, will have specific recommendations and facilitate significant impacts for improving the corridor including Delanco Township. The township will participate in the corridor planning process.

5. Environmentally sensitive lands will not be protected without proactive strategies aimed at preserving all or parts of the parcels containing such lands, i.e., Hawk Island and other undeveloped lands along the Rancocas Creek.

6. Commercially zoned lands located within residential neighborhoods are no longer beneficial to the township because of the disruptive and incompatible nature of such nonresidential uses in a residential area.

7. The COAH designated site is still valid and should remain zoned for low and moderate income housing pursuant to the Order of Repose which expires April 1997.

CHANGES IN PLANNING OBJECTIVES

GOAL #1: This goal remains valid. Objectives #1 and #3 remain valid. Objective #2 should state that "housing should be clustered in the neo-traditional

style of development to reflect the development style and patterns of Delanco proper." An Objective #4 should be added to state that "there is a need to provide a balance of age-restricted housing in the Township."

GOAL #2: This goal and its objectives remain valid.

GOAL #3: This goal and objectives #1 through #3 remain valid. An objective #4 should be added to preserve at least fifty percent (50%) of each parcel of the vacant lands located along the Rancocas Creek as open space.

GOAL #4: Goal #4 remains valid. Objective #1 is valid. Objective #2 refers to a Hawk Island Master Plan Feasibility Study which was never prepared. However, Citizens United to Protect Hawk Island (CUPHI) is currently in the process of preparing a Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) for Hawk Island which may serve as a base document, providing information about the Island which could be utilized in a feasibility study. The NRI is scheduled to be completed in December 1996. Objectives #3 and #4 remain valid.

GOAL #5: Goal #5 and Objectives #1 and #2 remain valid.

GOAL #6: Goal #6 and Objectives #1 and #3 remain valid. Objective #2 has been achieved and should be eliminated. Objective #4 should be added to halt the loss of industrial uses and encourage and promote the development of new light industrial uses which have minimal negative impacts on the Township.

D. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

N.J.S.A.40:55D-89d. provides that the reexamination report shall state:

> 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.

1. Pursuant to the mandates set forth in the judgement of repose, Delanco Township's Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) obligation has been sufficiently addressed by zoning a portion of the Township as the Waterfront

Development Center (WFD) which provides for affordable housing development. To that end, said zoning should remain intact. The Planning Board should review the judgement of repose and determine the best approach to take to ensure that the Township's COAH obligation will continue to be met upon the expiration of the judgement of repose in April 1997.

2. The Township should encourage the construction of age restricted dwellings in the area zoned as RW-CD1 in order to address the identified need of housing for the aged in the Township. The current overlay zoning for the RW-CD1 zoning district provides increased density for age restricted development. The Planning Board should study the gross density of one unit per acre and the overlay zoning for the RW-CD1 zoning district to determine if these densities are appropriate for this area of the Township. It is further recommended that the Planning Board review the concept of the zero lot line, where the building is set on one of the side property lines, in the RW-CD1 zoning district.

3. In order to remain consistent with the Zoning Ordinance (Township of Delanco Ordinance 1993-12), the Master Plan shall require that a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of each parcel in the entire RW-CD1 zoning district remain as open space. The Planning Board should review the definition of open space in the Master Plan, study the areas in the Township to which this definition applies, and, if necessary, clarify the definition of open space in the Master Plan.

4. In light of the proposed passenger rail service to be provided to the Township, the Planning Board should examine the township to identify a suitable site for a park and ride station and a possible commercial area.

5. The Township should encourage the reuse of vacant industrial buildings with new light industrial uses.

6. The area currently zoned for commercial uses between Poplar and Buttonwood Avenues, the Rancocas Creek and Franklin Street should be rezoned as residential to remain compatible with the existing surrounding residential development. The Planning Board should carefully examine said area to determine what kind of residential uses, i.e., multifamily, single family, etc., would be suitable for the parcels affected.

7. The Planning Board should examine the Township for suitable sites for cellular towers and antennas and develop a township-wide plan identifying general areas in

the Township suitable for such sites.

E. REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

N.J.S.A.40:55D-89e. provides that the reexamination report shall state:

> The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-1 et. seq.) 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.

This area of concern does not apply to Delanco since the Township has not adopted any development regulations under the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law.