

**ECONOMIC CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT  
NORTH FORT DIX STREET  
WRIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY**



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The original of this document is signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 13:41-1.3(b). This document was prepared, in part, with funding from a Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) grant from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC).

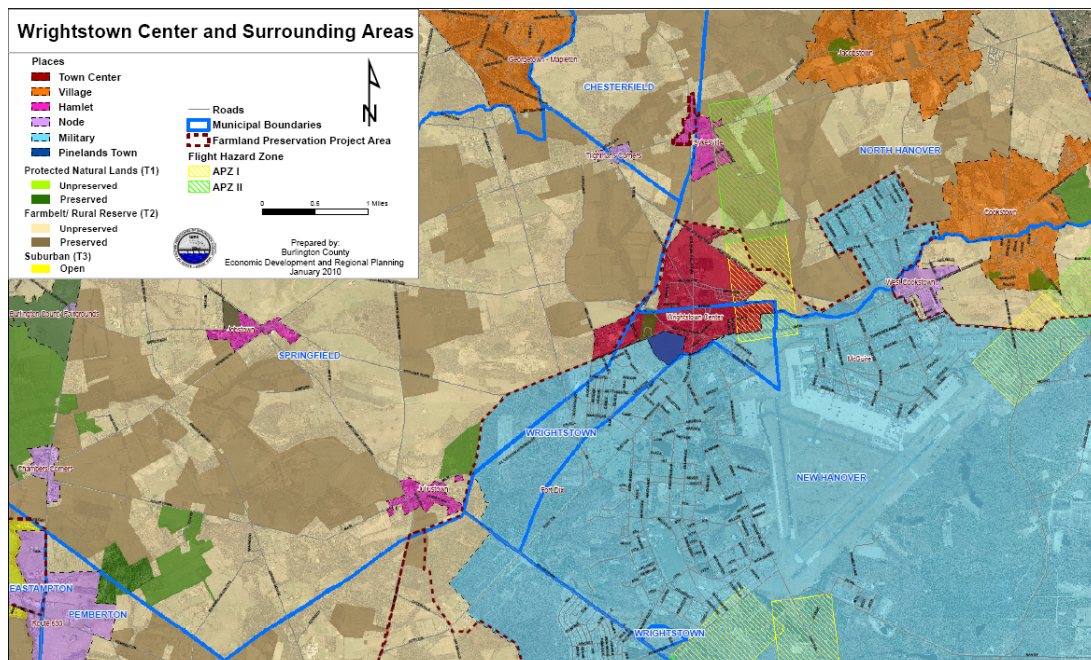
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# INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND

Wrightstown Borough is a small community surrounded by the Joint Military Base and agricultural communities in Burlington County, New Jersey. In its early history, Wrightstown was a farming community. The construction of the Pemberton-Hightstown Railroad in the 1860s significantly contributed to the Borough's development, as farmers from surrounding communities brought their produce and dairy to the Wrightstown station for transportation along the railroad. However, it was the creation of Camp Dix in 1917 that forever changed Wrightstown. Since then, the Military's presence has significantly shaped the Borough's physical, economic, and social development. Today, the federal government owns approximately 79% of the municipality, leaving 21% of the land under civilian control. The Borough quickly transformed from a rural community into a commercial center for Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base, providing goods and services for the men and women stationed at the Base.



Source: Burlington County Department of Economic Development and Regional Planning

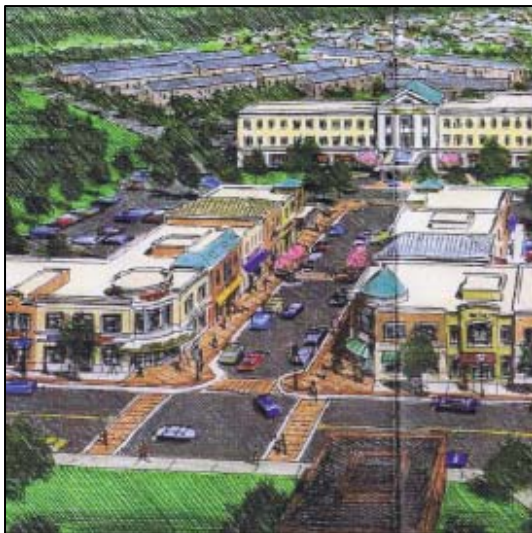
Over the years, the Borough has become dependent on the Base, making the Borough particularly susceptible to changing military policies. For instance, when military missions and on-base population diminish, many Wrightstown businesses struggle. In the 1990s, when Fort Dix lost its basic training role through the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, the diminished role of Fort Dix had a significant negative impact on the local economy, as many Wrightstown businesses provide services to military personnel. Heightened security measures at the Base also have negatively affected Borough businesses. The 2001 closing of Texas Avenue through the military complex eliminated direct access for civilians traveling to and from Browns Mills, a significant client base for Wrightstown businesses. It also affected persons who historically traveled through the Base (and through

Wrightstown) to get to the NJ Turnpike, Route 295, or to the shore. Additionally, AAFES' (Army and Air Force Exchange Service) continued development of retail stores and consumer services at the Base competes with off-base retail businesses. All of these factors dramatically affect the business climate and social vibrancy in the Borough.

On the other hand, when there is an increase in on-base population and activity, the Borough's economic outlook improves. In 2005, the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process recommended that the three military bases in central New Jersey: Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base, and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station (NAES) be enhanced and formally joined as Joint Base McGuire Fort Dix Lakehurst with an expected increase in activity and mission. It is anticipated that the new megabase will help booster the local economy and contribute to the revitalization of the Borough as a Town Center for the Base and the surrounding agricultural communities.

## PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

The Borough of Wrightstown Master Plan, adopted in 1992, has been the key component in guiding the Borough's redevelopment efforts. In 1995, Wrightstown's governing body organized an Economic Steering Committee to formulate and implement a redevelopment plan for various areas of the Borough, seeking to reenergize the economy and improve conditions along Fort Dix Street. In 1998, the Borough prepared a redevelopment needs assessment and in 1999, the Borough Council adopted a Redevelopment Plan, with goals of turning the downtown into a lively mixed-use center, creating a Wrightstown Office Park, as well as improving the economic and scenic conditions of the Fort Dix Street commercial corridor between Main Street and the North Hanover border (which is the subject of this Study).



After more than ten years of going through the visioning and planning process and monthly strategy meetings, the Borough is beginning to see its Redevelopment Plan come to fruition. In 2006, with the assistance of Congressman James Saxton, the Borough was successful in acquiring 42± acres adjacent to the downtown from Fort Dix. In 2008, the Borough demolished dilapidated and obsolete buildings along Fort Dix Street (south of the Study Area) with the assistance of grant funding. That same year, a Downtown Marketing and Facade Improvement Plan was completed, which was funded in part by a Smart Future grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA). It created a brand identity for the Borough, proposed marketing

strategies for the downtown area, and proposed architectural and design improvement guidelines.

Recently, a redeveloper has been selected to implement Phase One of Wrightstown's Redevelopment Plan for the downtown, known as Patriots' Walk, which is taking place along a portion of Fort Dix Street (south of the New Hanover School), as well as on a portion of the 42± acres of land that Fort Dix recently conveyed to the Borough. Plans for Phase One include: a



hotel with 120 rooms, a restaurant, approximately 30,000 square feet of professional medical offices, 15,000 square feet of retail space, and 16,000 square feet of higher educational facilities. Phase One will become a focal point of the downtown. For the remainder of the 42± acres, a redeveloper is under consideration for Phase Two of Wrightstown's Redevelopment Plan. Phase Three of the Borough's redevelopment activities will focus on redevelopment and infill in the downtown triangle, while Phase Four will focus on the segment of Fort Dix Street, north of Main Street.

On a separate, but related track, the Township of North Hanover is exploring a Transfer of Development Rights program that would transfer density from its agricultural areas to the Skyesville Road corridor (an area just north of the Study Area). In the big picture, North Hanover's Sykesville Road TDR receiving area would seamlessly blend with Wrightstown's Town Center. Thus, Wrightstown's redevelopment efforts fit into the broader regional context and should provide incentive to North Hanover to continue its planning efforts.

## **PURPOSE OF STUDY**

In 2007, Wrightstown received a Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) grant from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) to conduct an Economic Corridor Redevelopment Assessment for the North Fort Dix Street Commercial District, which is the subject of this Study. Overall, the purpose of this Study is to:

- ❑ Identify the economic redevelopment and commercial revitalization potential of the Study Area (defined below).
- ❑ Plan and design a new vibrant commercial corridor that serves as link between the planned redevelopment in Wrightstown's downtown area and the potential TDR receiving area in North Hanover.
- ❑ Develop marketing strategies to attract realistic private development opportunities and to promote existing businesses along the corridor.

## **OVERVIEW OF STUDY AREA**

The Study Area encompasses roughly 25 acres along Fort Dix Street (CR 545) in Wrightstown, New Jersey. The Study Area is bound to the north by the North Hanover Township municipal boundary, to the south by its intersection of Fort Dix Street and Main Street (CR 616), to the west by the Wrightstown Fire House on West Main Street (CR 670) and to the east by the Verizon Building on East Main Street (CR 616). Exhibit A, Street Panoramas, shows the current streetscape conditions.

To the east of the Study Area, there are two large-scale multi-family apartment complexes. To the west of the Study Area, there are single-family homes on Augusta Street, which are the most recent residential development in the Borough. To the south of the Study Area is the Downtown, which consists of commercial, residential, and civic uses in the downtown triangle (formed by Fort Dix Street, East Main Street, and Railroad Avenue), as well as vacant property that is destined for Phase One of Wrightstown's Redevelopment Plan, known as Patriots' Walk. Fort Dix Street (CR 545) continues south of the Study Area until it terminates at the Gate to the Joint Base.

## AERIAL OF STUDY AREA



## PROPERTIES IN THE STUDY AREA

Site Name or Description	Property Owner	Block, Lot	Street Address	Assessed Value
Burlington County Car Co	Auto Connection	501, 2.01	39 Fort Dix St	\$17,800
Vacant	Jantoro Inc	501,3	41 Fort Dix St	\$7,500
Sebastian's Schnitzelhaus	Krystyna Wittman	501, 4.03	43 Fort Dix St	\$145,000
Papa John's Restaurant	Jantoro Inc	501, 4.02	45 Fort Dix St	\$160,000
Single Family House	Ethel Edson	501, 5	47 Fort Dix St	\$122,750
Bird's Towing & Auto Repair	Almalee Davis	501, 4.01	67 Fort Dix St	\$272,550
Napa Auto Parts	Almalee Davis	501, 4.01	77 Fort Dix St	
Taco Bell	Ocean Bell Holdings	501, 8	85 Fort Dix St	\$235,500
SF Residence	Albert S Watsula	501, 9	89 Fort Dix St	\$45,000
Nite Dippers	Watsula	501, 10	1, 3 East Main St	\$140,000
Hair Salon & Apts	Watsula	501, 10	5A-F East Main St	
Mulberry Court Apts	Albert S Watsula	501, 11	2 Mulberry Ct	\$130,000
Verizon Building	Bell Atlantic Tax Dept	501, 12	9 East Main St	\$767,550
Vacant	Jantoro Inc	501, 4	Fort Dix St	\$50,000
Vacant (old sewer plant)	Borough	501, 7	Fort Dix St	\$7,250
Seven Eleven	The Southland Corp	302, 18, 19	88 Fort Dix St	\$361,500
Former Fire House	Borough	302, 16, 17	23, 25 W Main St	\$151,250
Korean, Liquor Store, Tax	Yuen Kin Cheung	302, 20 - 22	82 A-C Fort Dix	\$209,450
Sugar Cane Caribbean Grill	Silvero	302, 23, 24	68 Fort Dix St	\$126,850
TPs Car Wash	Timothy Price	302, 25	64 Fort Dix St	\$135,350
KFC	Wrightstown Investors	302, 26-30	62 Fort Dix St	\$213,400
Passport Inn	Bala Corp	302, 41	54 Fort Dix St	\$242,600
Tronco Apartments	52 Fort Dix St LLC	302, 33,33.01	52 Fort Dix St	\$141,500
Consolidated Transportation	48 Fort Dix St LLC	302, 37	48 Fort Dix St	\$103,050
Volmar Construction Co	Kithira Properties	302, 34-36	44 Fort Dix St	\$221,050
			<b>Total Assessed Value</b>	<b>\$4,006,900</b>

## ROADWAY ATTRIBUTES

Fort Dix Street is a two-lane County Road having a north-south orientation. The roadway varies in curb-to-curb width in the Study Area, with its narrowest section occurring where the North Run creek flows under the roadway, measuring at approximately 31'9" wide. The road's widest curb to curb width along the corridor is approximately 43'5". The width of the County Right of Way varies along Fort Dix Street. At its narrowest point, it is 49.5 feet and at its widest point, it is 57.5 feet. The speed limit on Fort Dix Street is 30 miles per hour. There is a dedicated center two-way left-turning lane that begins in the vicinity of the TP's carwash and Bird's Towing & Automotive and continues northward to North Hanover. There is one lane in each direction for through traffic. There are no dedicated bicycle lanes in the roadway. There is a four-way signalized intersection at the juncture of Fort Dix Street (CR 545) and Main Street (CR 616).



## PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES



There are sidewalks on both sides of the corridor. However, there are intermittent breaks in the sidewalks on the east side of the street, leaving continuous sidewalks on only one side of the street. The typical sidewalk width in the Study Area is 4 feet wide. In some instances, existing sidewalks abut the curb line and in other instances there is a grassy strip between the curb and the sidewalk. Multiple curb cuts exist throughout the corridor, resulting in a large number of pedestrian-vehicular conflict points. There is one mid-block crosswalk near the North Hanover

border to serve Wrightstown Arms Apartments. *See photo.* All Wrightstown children walk to school, while New Hanover children are bussed to school. Wrightstown provides crossing guards at this crosswalk and at the Main Street, Fort Dix Street intersection.

## PARKING

Off-street parking in the Study Area consists of privately-owned suburban-style single-user parking lots. Parking areas are typically located in front or to the side of buildings. There is only one small informal area of on-street parking available in the Study Area, which is located in front of the Sugar Cane Caribbean Grill Restaurant. The closest off-street public parking area is located outside of the Study Area on Railroad Avenue in the Downtown.



## ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE FEATURES



A stream corridor is located within the Study Area. The North Run Creek traverses the Borough west to east and crosses underneath Fort Dix Street approximately 1/3 of the way between Main Street and the North Hanover Township boundary. This creek is located within a 100-year floodplain, which precludes most land disturbing activities within 50 to 150 feet of the stream bank. However, over the years, development has occurred adjacent to the creek in several areas along North Fort Dix Street. These older buildings are in some instances well within 50 feet of the stream bank and are considered grandfathered structures.

## TOPOGRAPHY

There are significant grade changes in the Study Area. Beginning from the south, the Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection sits at an approximate elevation of 137. Moving northward, the road quickly drops at a 6% slope and then gradually feathers out to a low point of 122± at the creek. Thereafter, the road gradually rises with a modest slope just south of Augusta Street to an approximate elevation of 136 at the Wrightstown / North Hanover municipal boundary line.



Additionally, there are three significant grade changes that affect development and circulation opportunities in the Study Area. The first instance occurs between 7-11 (Block 302, Lots 18 & 19) and the Korean BBQ strip center (Block 302, Lots 20-22), which experiences at least a 10-foot grade difference. The second instance occurs between the Watsula residence (Block 501, Lot 9) and Taco Bell (Block 501, Lot 8), which experiences an 8-foot grade difference. The third instance occurs between the Bird's Towing Site (Block 501, Lot 4.01) and the Edson residence (Block 501, Lot 5), which experiences a 6-foot grade difference (along the street frontage).



7-11/Korean BBQ



Taco Bell/ Watsula Residence



Edson residence/Bird's Towing



## ZONING

The Study Area is located in the General Commercial (GC) zoning district, which is intended to provide general commercial services to the community and the public at large. Permitted uses include: 1) Retail sales, including shopping centers, 2) Restaurants, bars, nightclubs, 3) Banks including drive-ins, 4) Offices and office buildings, 5) Theaters and bowling alleys, 6) Hotels and motels, 7) Car wash. Conditional uses include: 1) Motor vehicle service stations, repair shops and 2) Motor vehicle sales and trailer sales. The minimum lot size for this zone is 20,000 square feet. The maximum building height for this zone is thirty-five (35) feet. The minimum gross floor area for each building is fifteen hundred (1,500) square feet. The maximum impervious coverage is 90%, the maximum amount of building coverage is 25% and the minimum green area is 10%.

## REDEVELOPMENT AREA

The Study Area is in a designated Redevelopment Area in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law. It is identified as Redevelopment Area 4 in the Borough of Wrightstown Redevelopment Plan, prepared by Ragan Design Group, adopted on June 1, 1999. Additionally, all of Wrightstown is located in a U.S. Small Business Administration HUBZone (Historically Underutilized Business Zone). The purpose of a HUBZone is to promote job growth, capital investment, and economic development to historically underutilized business zones, by providing contracting assistance to small businesses located in these economically distressed communities. The HUBZone Program provides federal contracting preferences to small businesses. It also allows HUBZone firms to qualify for higher SBA-guaranteed surety bonds on construction and service contract bids. These preferences go to small businesses that obtain HUBZone certification by employing staff who live in a HUBZone. The company must also maintain a "principal office" in one of these specially designated areas.

## KNOWN CONTAMINATED SITES

There are three sites in the Study Area with confirmed contamination listed on the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Known Contaminated Sites.

Name	Address	Block	Lot	Contaminates
Dynair Services Inc (Volmar Construction)	44 Fort Dix Street	302	36	Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPH) Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB)
Exxon (Bird's Towing & Automotive and Napa Auto Parts)	67 Fort Dix Street	501	4.01	Methyl Tert-Butyl Ether (MTBE)
BPG Car Co (Burlington Car and Truck Center)	39 Fort Dix Street	501	2.01	Methyl Tert-Butyl Ether (MTBE)

Dynair site – Volmar Construction now occupies the site. NJDEP has issued a “No Further Action” determination and “Covenant Not To Sue.” The Deed notice identifies levels of Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPH) and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB) above NJDEP Residential Direct Contact Soil Cleanup Criteria under the center portion of the building and along the west side of the building. Approximately one-half of the affected area is capped by the existing building and one-half is capped by fill cover.

While the Deed Notice states that the site cannot be used for residential purposes and removal or excavation of the floor slab and foundation in the affected area is prohibited, according to Rob Hoch, Division of Remediation Management and Response, Bureau of Operations Maintenance and Monitoring at NJDEP, despite the use restrictions on the property, the site can be redeveloped in the future. The building can be removed, provided that proper engineering controls on the contaminated soils is put in place or the contaminated soils are removed.

Exxon Station - Bird's Towing and Automotive repair and Napa Auto parts now occupy the site. The property is considered a "clean site," according to Dave Nickerson, Bureau of Underground Storage Tanks, NJDEP.<sup>1</sup> The underground gasoline tanks that were used in conjunction of the former Exxon station have been removed. While the groundwater was at one time contaminated, the Classification Exception Area (CEA) was lifted in July of 2009. CEA is a designation established whenever groundwater standards in a particular area are not met. It ensures the use of the aquifer in that area is restricted until standards are achieved. There are no known environmental restrictions on the site at this time.

BPG Car Company - Burlington Car and Truck Center now occupies the site. The property contained five underground gasoline tanks and one underground waste oil tank. As of this writing we are corresponding with NJDEP representatives in an attempt to confirm the continued presence or absence of any contaminate. Should the site be found to be contaminated, proper clean up or containment measures will be implemented to ensure the safe reuse of the property.

## UTILITIES



There are overhead and underground public utilities within the Study Area. Jersey Central Power & Light's (JCP&L) overhead distribution lines are highly visible along Fort Dix Street in the Study Area.

The Wrightstown MUA provides water service and collects and treats all sewerage that is discharged from the properties in the Study Area. *See Water Distribution System Map and Sewer Collection System Map, Exhibits B and C.* Sewer lines in the Study Area are in good condition and there is available capacity for future growth. The sewer main along Fort Dix Street was replaced in the 1980s.<sup>2</sup> A sewer line also crosses private property, through the Bird's Towing & Automotive Repair/NAPA auto parts site, as well as through Borough property (Block 501, lots 4.01 and lot 7). There is available sewer capacity as the Wrightstown MUA sewer plant is only using roughly 28% of its capacity, leaving an excess capacity of roughly 89 million gallons per year.

With respect to water services, the water lines in the Study Area and the MUA water facility are in good condition and there is available capacity for future growth. The MUA completed a total rehabilitation of the 300,000-gallon steel ground storage tank, water treatment facility, and booster system in 2008. There is also available water capacity for future development, as the

<sup>1</sup> Conversation with Dave Nickerson at NJDEP on February 24, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> MUA Supervisor, Steering Committee meeting on March 10, 2010.

Borough is only using about one-half of its water source allocation. However, the MUA wells are located within a Water Supply Critical Area.<sup>3</sup> This limits the amount of water the MUA may withdraw from the Potomac-Raritan-Magothy (PRM) aquifer system. The Burlington County Resource Conservation Department, in conjunction with the NJDEP Bureau of Water Allocation, has assigned the MUA a limited water source allocation of 60 million gallons per year and 6 million gallons per month, which has not been exceeded. The MUA currently pumps about 85,000 gallons per day. In 2008, the Wrightstown MUA pumped 31 million gallons over the course of the year, leaving an excess capacity of roughly 29 million gallons per year. Therefore, the Borough is currently only using about one-half of its water source allocation. The Borough will seek an increase in its water source allocation as the Borough embarks on its redevelopment efforts, if needed.

## **HISTORIC AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES**

There are no historic resources located within the Study Area. While there are two significant historic resources in Wrightstown located within close proximity to the Study Area, including the former Methodist Church on West Main Street and the Davis Grainery on Railroad Avenue, it is unlikely that these historic properties would be impacted by redevelopment or infill on North Fort Dix Street. With respect to recreational resources, there is no central gathering space for residents and visitors to enjoy within the Study Area. The nearest recreation area is located at Wrightstown Arms Apartments, which is only available to residents. It is anticipated that there will be a central gathering place developed outside Study Area as part of Phase One of the Borough's Redevelopment Plan, known as Patriots Walk, in the downtown area.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

Public input has been an integral part of the planning process in developing a vision for the Study Area. Throughout the site analysis and data gathering process, residents, business owners, property owners, developers, local and County officials shared their thoughts and visions about redevelopment prospects in the Study Area. Numerous opportunities for public participation included the following:

- ❑ Monthly Steering Committee meetings
- ❑ Borough Council and Joint Land Use Board Public Meetings
- ❑ Public Stakeholder meetings



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<sup>3</sup> Water Supply Critical Areas are regions of the State where excessive water use presents undue stress or poses a significant threat to the integrity of a water-supply source. Recovery of Ground-Water Levels from 1988 to 2003 and Analysis of Effects of 2003 and Full-Allocation Withdrawals in Critical Area 2, Southern New Jersey, Scientific Investigations Report 2008-5142, prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey in cooperation with the NJDEP (2008), p.2 (citing N.J.A.C. 2005)



North Fort Dix Street stakeholders were invited to public meetings via mailings to property owners, hand-delivered invitations to businesses, advertisements in the newspaper, and postings in the Municipal Building. Attendees at the Fort Dix Street stakeholder meetings included:

- ❑ North Fort Dix Street Property owners
- ❑ North Fort Dix Street Business owners
- ❑ Borough residents
- ❑ Members of Borough Council
- ❑ Community Planner at the Joint Base
- ❑ Burlington County Planning Board Engineer
- ❑ Strategy Committee Members
- ❑ Plan Endorsement Advisory Committee Members



At these meetings, a number of very important issues relevant to the planning process were identified. The planning team carefully reviewed these topics, as they served as a foundation for this Economic Redevelopment Corridor Assessment Report. The following is a summary of the **positive attributes** of the Study Area identified by the area's businesses, citizens, planners, government officials and stakeholder groups (not listed in any particular order):

- ❑ Proximity to the Joint Base Access Gate, which draws customers to local businesses
- ❑ Easy Access to Major Thoroughfares: Route 206, NJ Turnpike and Route 295
- ❑ Serviced by municipal water and sewer utilities with available excess capacity
- ❑ Unique ethnic restaurants- Schnitzelhaus, Sugar Cane Caribbean Grille
- ❑ Continuous sidewalks on west side of the street, mid-block crosswalk near Apartments
- ❑ Stable government (i.e., stability in decision making and commitment to land use planning from vision to implementation)



The following is a summary of the **weaknesses** identified (not listed in any particular order):

- ❑ Vacant building sites - affects vitality of corridor and affects surrounding property values
- ❑ Lack of image/aesthetics – oversized signs, overhead utilities, large amount of asphalt, limited landscaping, lack of architecturally distinct buildings
- ❑ Limited variety of land uses - mostly auto-related businesses and quick service restaurants. No offices and few personal service businesses along the corridor.
- ❑ Not pedestrian-oriented –Land uses, architecture, and building siting does not encourage pedestrian activity. Sidewalks are not continuous.
- ❑ Unsuitable land uses adjacent to Creek – potential to contaminate the water
- ❑ Condition of pedestrian infrastructure (ex. curbing at Nite Dippers site)
- ❑ Lack of synergy between land uses.
- ❑ No local business association.

The following is a summary of the **challenges** that are confronting Fort Dix Street businesses and property owners:

- ❑ Reduced vehicular traffic due to closing of Texas Avenue, which reduces the number of potential customers visiting North Fort Dix Street
- ❑ Small client draw because of small civilian population with limited buying power
- ❑ Small number of large parcels to attract larger user
- ❑ Environmental constraints- proximity to North Run creek
- ❑ Topography - elevation changes (challenge for interconnecting driveways between land uses, connecting sidewalks)
- ❑ Known contaminated sites – will require more care when redeveloping to ensure that contamination remains properly capped.
- ❑ Traffic delays during peak hours at Intersection of Fort Dix St and Main St
- ❑ High municipal water costs (due to small number of users)

The following is a summary of **opportunities** identified for improving North Fort Dix Street (not listed in any particular order):

- ❑ Redevelop vacant and blighting sites
- ❑ Renovate existing buildings
- ❑ Add more types of uses, including office, personal service, retail, residential to create greater synergy between land uses
- ❑ Make more efficient use of small amount of land (use of two-story buildings and develop vacant land)
- ❑ Add more attractive buildings with distinct architectural features
- ❑ Increase Pedestrian Activity
  - Interconnect sidewalks on east side of the street
  - Add more mid-block crosswalks
  - Add place for civil interaction
  - Add pedestrian linkages to adjacent multi-family apartments
  - More compact design, bring buildings closer to street with on-street parking
  - Install pedestrian-oriented light fixtures
- ❑ Incorporate more landscape elements to make corridor more attractive and to hold the street line when buildings are not present
- ❑ Implement marketing strategies to attract new businesses and visitors to the Borough.



Therefore, the stakeholder discussions focused on structural and nonstructural issues. *Structural* issues are the physical components that define the arrangement, appearance and functionality of the Study Area, such as buildings, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, signage, parking and public space. On the other hand, *nonstructural* issues include marketing, and non-tangible aspects that make up the “culture” of a community; in other words, how the community leaders, business owners, and residents perceive and communicate who/what Wrightstown is about, including recruitment and retention marketing efforts to bring both retailers and people (via events) together.

# MARKET ANALYSIS

## CURRENT POPULATION

To gain an understanding of the market, it is important to recognize existing conditions and trends of the local and regional economy. Population and socio-economic status are typically the basis for quantifying market size and growth trends, both of which are used to measure consumer demand.

**Summary of Municipal, County, and State Demographics**

	Municipal	County	New Jersey
Population	748	423,394	8,414,350
Households	312	154,371	3,064,645
Average Household Size	2.37	2.65	2.68
Housing Units	339	161,311	3,310,275
Home Ownership Rate	25%	77%	66%
Vacancy Rate	7.9%	4.3%	7.4%
Median Household Income	27,500	58,608	\$55,146
Per Capita Income	14,489	26,339	\$27,006
Poverty Rate	24%	4.7%	8.5%
Unemployment Rate (NJDOL 2007)	5.7%	3.8%	4.2%
High School Graduates	80.4%	87.2%	82.1%

*Source: 2000 Census*

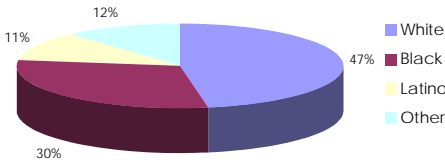
As of the 2000 census, there were 748 persons living in 339 housing units in the civilian portion of the Borough. Wrightstown has experienced a slight increase in population since 2000, due to the construction of 12 housing units since 2000, resulting in an estimated population of 776 persons. The median household income in 2000 was \$27,500 and the per capita income was \$14,489, roughly half what they are for residents living in the County and the State. As of the 2000 Census, the poverty rate in Wrightstown was 24%, compared to 4.7% in the County, and 8.5% in the State. With respect to education, 80% of Wrightstown residents are high school graduates or higher, compared to 87% in the County, and 82% in New Jersey. 8% of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 29% in the County and 30% in New Jersey. Therefore, Wrightstown has a small civilian population with relatively low social-economic status.

Nevertheless, there are circumstances that allow Wrightstown to serve a much larger market than other towns of its size and demographic composition. As the federal government owns almost 80% of the Borough, Wrightstown's market reaches far beyond its civilian borders, drawing upon the resident population and personnel at the Joint Base. Wrightstown also draws upon the residential population of bordering communities. Based on ESRI forecasts from the 2000 Census there were 34,074 people residing within five miles of Wrightstown in 2007.<sup>4</sup>

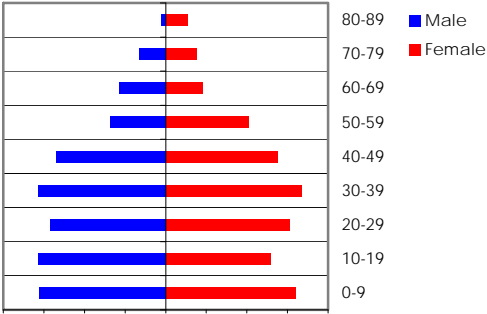
<sup>4</sup> Saylor/Pond Fort Dix Mixed Use Redevelopment Project Economic Development Strategy: Market Study prepared by TRIAD Associates, p. 4 (October 2007).



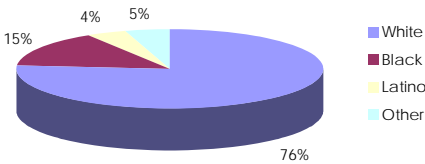
Municipality Racial/Ethnic Breakdown



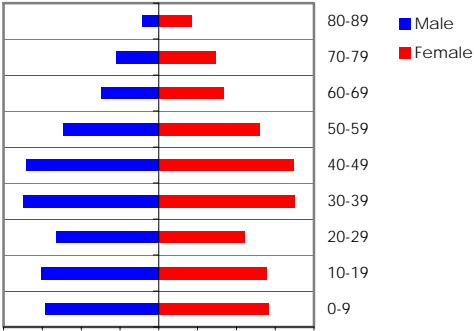
Municipality Age Distribution



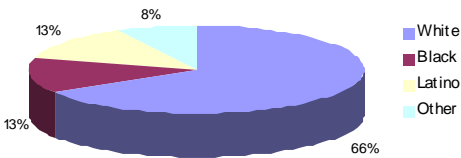
County Racial/Ethnic Breakdown



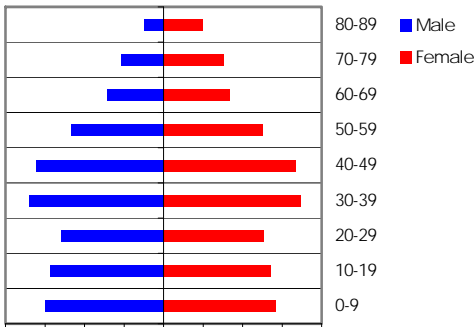
County Age Distribution



New Jersey Racial/Ethnic Breakdown



New Jersey Age Distribution



With respect to the resident population at the Joint Base, there are 5,477 persons living in 1,730 occupied family housing units on the Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force portions of the Base as of June 2010.<sup>5</sup> Dormitories on base provide housing for 3,467 unaccompanied personnel, including visitor quarters.<sup>6</sup> Together, they total 8,944 military residents staying at the Base. Additionally, there are approximately 676 persons living in a portion of North Hanover that is considered part of “Wrightstown Center.”<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the total Wrightstown resident population (civilian and military) to draw from is currently 10,396. *See chart below for details.*

#### **Current Civilian and Military Residential Population in Wrightstown Center**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Population</b>
Civilian Resident Population	Wrightstown Borough	776
	North Hanover Receiving Area in Wrightstown Center	676
Military Resident Population	Family-Style Housing Residents at Fort Dix and MAFB	5,477
	Unaccompanied Dormitory Residents at Fort Dix and MAFB	3,467
<b>Total</b>		<b>10,396</b>

When taking into consideration the persons who are employed at the Base and who travel to the base on a regular basis (retirees, contractors, reservists), the population at McGuire AFB is approximately 17,000 and the population at Fort Dix is 21,275, totaling 38,275 persons at the Base at any given time.<sup>8</sup> The Base employees, contractors, retirees, residents are potential consumers in the trade area.

#### **Joint Base Baseline Demographics<sup>9</sup>**

	<b>McGuire AFB</b>	<b>Fort Dix</b>
Military	4,347	17
Civilian	779	1,431
NAF	287	334
Contractor	652	1,046
Guard/Reservists	3,919	1,128
Students/Mobilization	8	2,843
Other Supported Groups*	7,000	14,476
Subtotal	17,000	21,275
<b>Total</b>		<b>38,275</b>

\*Includes dependents, retirees, tenants, non-DoD training.

According to a report from the Center for Urban Policy Research at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Public Planning and Policy, the total earnings for FY2003 at Fort Dix and McGuire

<sup>5</sup> E-mail correspondence from Harry Bagot, a representative from United Communities, the private housing developer and property manager at the Base, dated June 3, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/mcguire.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> Northern Burlington County GAPP, pp.34-36 (citing DVRPC Analytical Data Report, No. 14, released August 2007). 260 housing units x 2.6 average persons per housing unit = 676± persons.

<sup>8</sup> E-mail correspondence from Rick Dean, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst dated November 9, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Joint Base Demographics, Baseline population from Rick Dean, Community Planner at the Joint Base. These figures include residential population.

Air Force Base was \$473,963,000.<sup>10</sup> Based on the number of military base personnel identified in that study at Fort Dix and McGuire in 2003, this equates to an average per capita income of \$31,570 for military personnel and \$42,286 for civilian personnel.<sup>11</sup> Almost half the number of jobs includes reservists or members of the National Guard. These are jobs that are generally used to supplement incomes of area households. Thus, the relatively low resident earnings of civilian residents are offset by the purchasing power of the military and civilian personnel, spouses, and retirees at the nearby Joint Base.

#### **FY 2003 Earnings at Military Base<sup>12</sup>**

<b>Military Base</b>	<b>Military</b>	<b>Civilian</b>	<b>Total</b>
Fort Dix	\$83,951,000	\$51,599,000	\$135,550,000
McGuire Air Force Base	\$284,339,000	\$54,074,000	\$338,413,000
	<b>\$368,290,000</b>	<b>\$105,673,000</b>	<b>\$473,963,000</b>

## **FUTURE POPULATION**

When looking at market potential, future demographic projections should be taken into consideration. According to United Communities, the private housing developer and property manager at the Base, it is anticipated that there will be an additional 354 family housing units constructed and/or occupied on the Base by 2012, which correlates to an additional 1,121 persons projected to live in family-style housing on the Base.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, it is expected that there will be approximately 6,600 persons living in family-style housing and 3,467 unaccompanied military personnel living in dormitories, resulting in a total resident population of 10,067 on the Base by 2012.

#### **Wrightstown Center Future Population**

<b>Area</b>	<b>2005 Housing Units</b>	<b>2035 Housing Units</b>	<b>2000-2035 Housing Unit Growth</b>	<b>2035 Total Population Forecast</b>
<b>N. Hanover's Receiving Area</b>	260	660	400	1,716
<b>Wrightstown</b>	340	366	26	867
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>1,026</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>2,583</b>

For the civilian part of the equation, the Burlington County Department of Economic Development and Regional Planning forecasts the construction of 400 housing units in North Hanover's potential receiving area by the year 2035 that will add to the existing 260 housing units in the receiving area.<sup>14</sup> Applying an average household size of 2.6 persons to the expected 660 housing units, this results in an estimated total population of 1,716 persons by the year 2035

<sup>10</sup> Report of Research submitted to Governor James E. McGreevey on the Economic Contribution of Military and Coast Guard Installations to the State of New Jersey, submitted by Michael L. Lahr, Associate Professor at the Center for Urban Policy Research at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, p.1 (April 29, 2004).

<sup>11</sup> Id. at pp. 12, 14.

<sup>12</sup> Id. at p. 14.

<sup>13</sup> Correspondence with Harry Bagot, United Communities, November 5, 2009, June 3, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> Northern Burlington County GAPP, pp.34-36 (citing DVRPC Analytical Data Report, No. 14, released August 2007).



in the receiving area. Together with Wrightstown's expected 366 housing units and average household size of 2.37 persons, resulting in a future population of 867 persons for Wrightstown, the expected civilian population in the "Wrightstown Center" is expected to be approximately 2,583 persons by the year 2035. *See chart above for details.* Therefore, the total Wrightstown resident population (civilian and military) to draw from is expected to grow to 12,650 in the future.<sup>15</sup> *See chart below for details.*

#### **Future Civilian and Military Residential Population**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Future Population</b>
Civilian Population	Wrightstown Borough	867
	North Hanover Receiving Area in Wrightstown Center	1,716
Military Population	Family-Style Housing Residents at Fort Dix and MAFB	6,600
	Unaccompanied Dormitory Residents at Fort Dix and MAFB	3,467
<b>Total</b>		<b>12,650</b>

Lastly, as the Department of Defense's Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process enhanced and formally joined McGuire Air Force Base, Fort Dix, and Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station, each base is expected to have an increase in activity and mission. It is expected that Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base will increase by 682 full time personnel and 1,522 reservists, who will be there on weekends and on reserve deployments, bringing the future Base population (residents, employees, retirees, contractors) to 40,479.<sup>16</sup> This figure, together with the projected Wrightstown Center residential population of 2,583, will bring the entire civilian and military future population to approximately 43,000 persons (including residents, employees, retirees, contractors generated by the Base).

## **TRAFFIC VOLUME**

Traffic patterns provide a good indicator of the movement of people to and through the community. Data on traffic volume provides information on the amount, time of and location of travel. Activity generators, such as the Joint Base, are major determinants in local travel. Retailers typically seek locations on major arteries and often require minimum average daily traffic counts to survive. Businesses such as gasoline stations, convenience stores and fast food restaurants are typically located based on traffic volume and access to and visibility from high traffic streets. Thus, examining counts assists in determining the feasibility of various types of businesses. Conversely, while high traffic counts are desirable, extreme traffic congestion can be a deterrent to consumers. High traffic may hinder visibility, parking and pedestrian friendliness.

The Burlington County Engineer's Office conducted a seven-day continuous traffic volume count in the Study Area. The traffic volume count was conducted April 19-27, 2004 on North Fort Dix Street where the North Run Creek flows under the roadway, which indicated an AADT

<sup>15</sup> 10,067 future Base residential population +2,583 future Wrightstown Center residential population= 12,650 persons.

<sup>16</sup> 38,275+682+1522=40,479. Correspondence from Rick Dean, dated November 10, 2009, stating that Base is anticipated to see increase of 682 full time and 1522 reservists in next two years.

of 7,393 vehicles on North Fort Dix Street. The northbound AADT was 3,684; the southbound AADT was 3,658.<sup>17</sup>

**Peak northbound volumes:**

Monday: 4pm  
Tuesday: 11am, 4pm  
Wednesday: 11am, 4pm  
Thursday: 11am, 4pm  
Friday: 11am, 4pm  
Saturday: 11am, 1pm  
Sunday: 11am, 1pm  
**Peak Avg: 11am, 4pm**

**Peak southbound volumes:**

Monday: 4pm  
Tuesday: 7am, 12pm  
Wednesday: 7am, 12pm  
Thursday: 7am, 12pm  
Friday: 7am, 5pm  
Saturday: 11am, 12pm  
Sunday: 11am, 12pm  
**Peak Avg: 7am, 12pm**

The peak traffic volume is primarily due to vehicular movement generated by Base activities, as Fort Dix Street terminates at the gate to the Joint Base (outside of the Study Area). The southbound peak volume is for the hour beginning at 7 am, when people are beginning the workday at the Base, and the hour beginning at 12pm when people are returning to the Base from lunch. The northbound peak volume is for the hour beginning at 11am when people are presumably leaving the Base for lunch and for the hour beginning at 4pm when the workday is ending. Traffic volume counts predating 2001 were requested from the Burlington County Engineer's office, as well as from the DVRPC, in order to document the change in traffic volume that occurred on North Fort Dix Street as a result of the closing of Texas Avenue through the Military Complex, but there are no traffic volume reports on record.<sup>18</sup>

The following are traffic counts for street segments near the Study Area. In August 2009, the average daily 2-way traffic volume on Fort Dix Street, south of Railroad Avenue, was 9,000 vehicles and the average daily 2-way traffic volume was 7,500 vehicles for Saylor's Pond Road, west of the intersection with Meeting House Road.<sup>19</sup> In 2004, there was an average daily 2-way traffic volume of 9,808 on East Main Street at Kings Academy Church.<sup>20</sup> In 2003, there was an average daily 2-way traffic volume of 9,773 vehicles on East Main Street at Martha Avenue.<sup>21</sup> In 1997, Wrightstown Sykesville Road is reported to have had a daily volume of 10,000 vehicles.<sup>22</sup>

## **EXISTING BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS**

An analysis of local employers provides insight into the types of businesses in the area that may provide drawing power. The Study Area consists primarily of commercial and light industrial

<sup>17</sup> DVRPC Travel Monitoring Report from Charles F. Henry, Traffic Counting Supervisor at DVRPC.

<sup>18</sup> Fax received on April 22, 2010 from Ralph Shrom, County Customidan of Public Records. E-mail correspondence from Chip Henry on April 9, 2010.

<sup>19</sup> E-mail correspondence from Frank Miskovich of Birdsall Engineering, dated June 29, 2010.

<sup>20</sup> Traffic counts conducted by Burlington County Engineer's office in April 2004 on East Main Street, 230 feet west of Francis Street at Kings Academy Church.

<sup>21</sup> Saylor's Pond/Fort Dix Mixed Use Redevelopment Project Economic Development strategy: Market Study conducted by TRIAD Associates, p.7 and Traffic Profile Report (October 2007), citing 2007 MPSI Systems Inc data generated in an ESRI report.

<sup>22</sup> Id.

uses, with a high proportion of quick-service restaurants and auto-related businesses (car wash, auto parts retail, auto repair). Given the small size of the Study Area as well as the small size of the municipality, for the marketing portion of this report, the entire Borough is taken into consideration. The table below represents an inventory of the 68 businesses in the Borough.

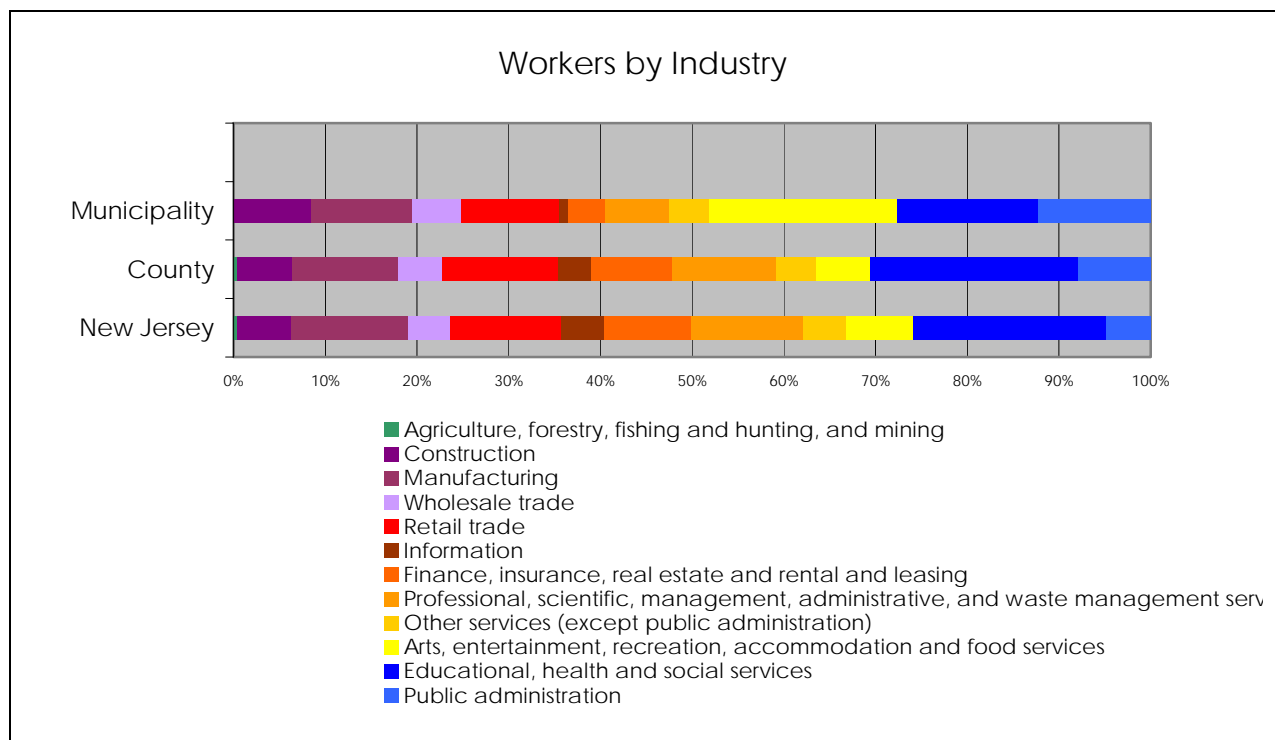
INDUSTRY TYPE	NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
<b>RETAIL:</b>		
Motor vehicle	1	S&H auto sales
Motor vehicle parts	1	Napa
Furniture and home furnishings	1	House of Furniture
Food & beverage stores	1	7-11
Gasoline stations	1	Tom's Service Center
General merchandise stores	1	Dollar General
Miscellaneous store retailers	2	Asian market, Amy's Specialty Shop
Beer, wine, liquor store	2	Wrightstown Liquors, N. Fort Dix St Liquors
<b>ACCOMMODATION &amp; FOOD SERVICES:</b>		
Restaurants	16	Schnitzel, Taco Bell, KFC, Sugar Cane, Wendys, DD, Tokyo, Subway, McDonalds, Golden BoBo, R&D Deli Mexican, Espositos, Richmans, Korean bbq, Stone House
Drinking places	2	Nite Dippers, Kellys
Hotel	2	days inn, passport inn
<b>ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT AND REC:</b>		
Bowling center	1	Thunderbird Lanes
Karate	1	Star Karate
<b>REAL ESTATE AND RENTAL AND LEASING:</b>		
Lessors of residential buildings and dwellings	15	Maple Court, Wrightstown Arms, Mulberry Ct, 9 Francis Tronco, Rooming, Tom Harper, YiChen, Fernandez Ayers, Lennon, Frank, Byron, Watsula, Puglia,
General rental centers	1	B&J Rentals
<b>HEALTHCARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE:</b>		
Child day care services	1	King's Academy
<b>PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC, TECH SERVS:</b>		
Tax preparation services	1	Tax service on N. Fort Dix St.
<b>INFORMATION:</b>		
Wired telecommunications carriers	1	Verizon
<b>OTHER SERVICES:</b>		
Car wash	1	TPs carwash
Auto body, paint, interior repair, towing	2	BPG, Bird's
Beauty salon (hair, nails)	2	Linda's salon, Spectacular Salon
Laundry and drycleaning services	2	Good Cleaners and Wrightstown Laundromat
Religious organizations	4	Methodist, Cornerstone, New Life, Christian Center
Misc	1	Post Office
<b>TRANSPORTATION AND WAREHOUSING:</b>		
Agricultural transportation	1	HAC Farmlines
<b>CONSTRUCTION:</b>		
Contractor	3	Volmar, Tito, Puente
<b>MANUFACTURING:</b>	1	EP Henry (located partially in Springfield)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68</b>	

Census sources have been historically erroneous with respect to business statistics for the Borough. For example, Selected Statistics from the 2007 Economic Census for Wrightstown

Borough indicates 28 businesses in the Borough, while the 2006 Industry Code Survey for zip code 08562 indicated 146 businesses. Therefore, a windshield survey was conducted.

The largest numbers of businesses in the Borough are located within the retail trade, accommodation/food service industries, real estate rental, and other service industries. This is expected, as these are sectors that service the population at the nearby Military base and due to the relatively high transient population in the Borough. There is also a significant construction industry presence, as Wrightstown is located in a HUBzone. This is expected to increase as construction activities are growing at the Joint Base. Looking at Wrightstown's primary commercial industries, there is limited diversity in Wrightstown's commercial/retail base and the Borough lacks many of the services and retail establishments that are characteristic of most downtowns. There is a notable lack of professional services in the Borough (i.e. lawyer, insurance, or engineering office). The largest civilian employer is E.P. Henry, a manufacturer of unit concrete products, which was attracted to the area in 2007 as a result of various marketing outreach efforts. EP Henry is located in the Wrightstown Industrial Park and has approximately 120 employees. As the site straddles the municipal boundaries of Springfield and Wrightstown, there is an inter-local service agreement to share the real estate taxes and the service requirements between the two communities.

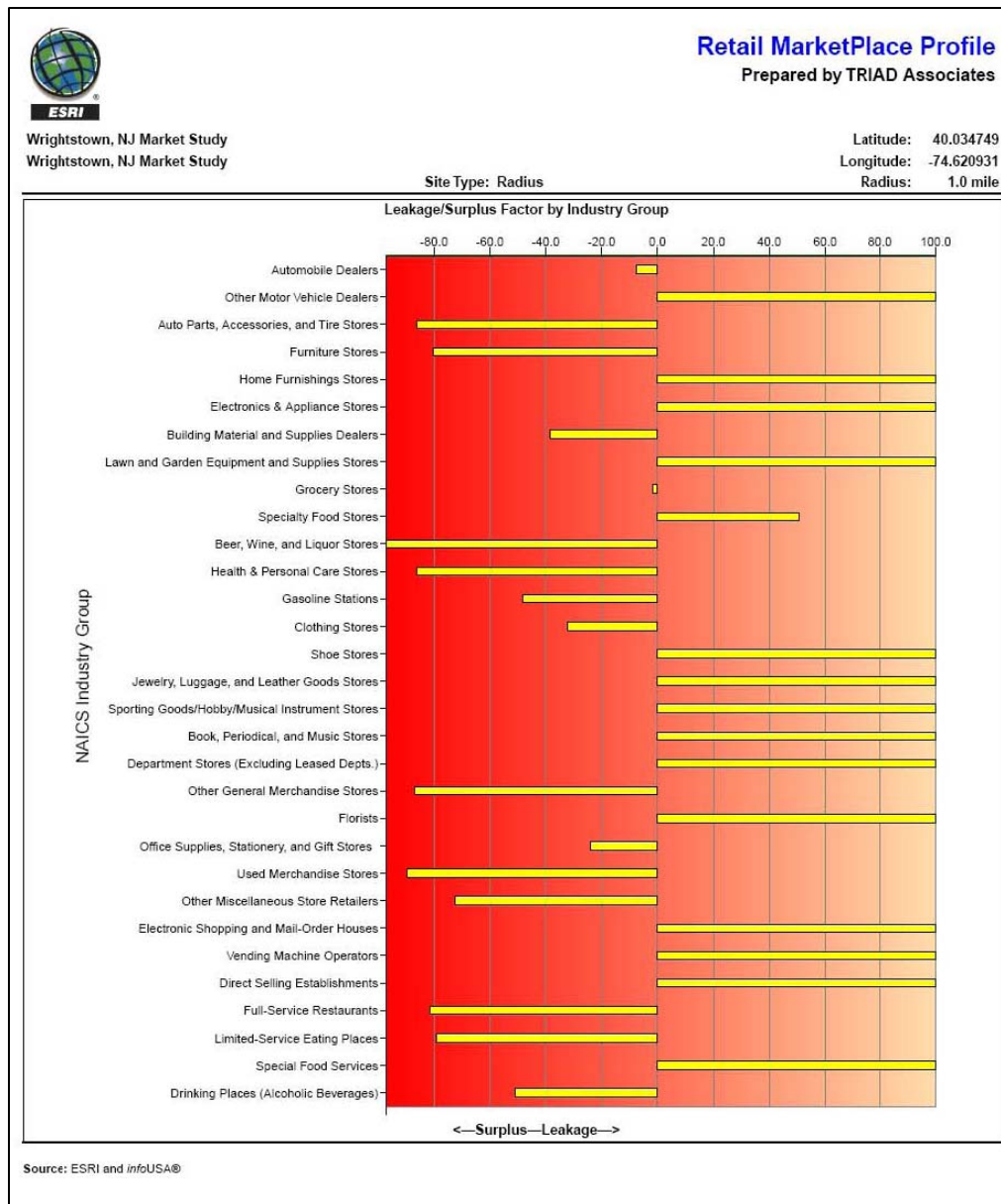
Similar to the business composition, the workers in various sectors provide a snapshot of the industry mix in the area. Wrightstown has a large amount of workers in the accommodation and food services industry and the construction industry, compared to the County and New Jersey. Comparing the numbers for a local area to those of a larger area, such as the State and County, point to differences in the local economy.





## SPENDING ANALYSIS

The most important component of a market analysis is the estimation of a retail market's potential. TRIAD Associates conducted a retail spending analysis for the Borough of Wrightstown using a 1-mile radius and a 5-mile radius.<sup>23</sup> The Retail Marketplace Profile identified spending patterns in market segments as either a “surplus” or a “leakage.” A surplus indicates that the defined area sells a greater percentage of a particular good/service than would be expected (the actual sales are greater than the potential sales). A leakage identifies a retail trade gap for a particular good/service (the actual sales are less than the potential sales) so customers must go outside of the defined area to obtain those goods/services.



<sup>23</sup> Saylor/Pond Fort Dix Mixed Use Redevelopment Project Economic Development Strategy: Market Study prepared by TRIAD Associates, pp. 6-7 (October 2007).

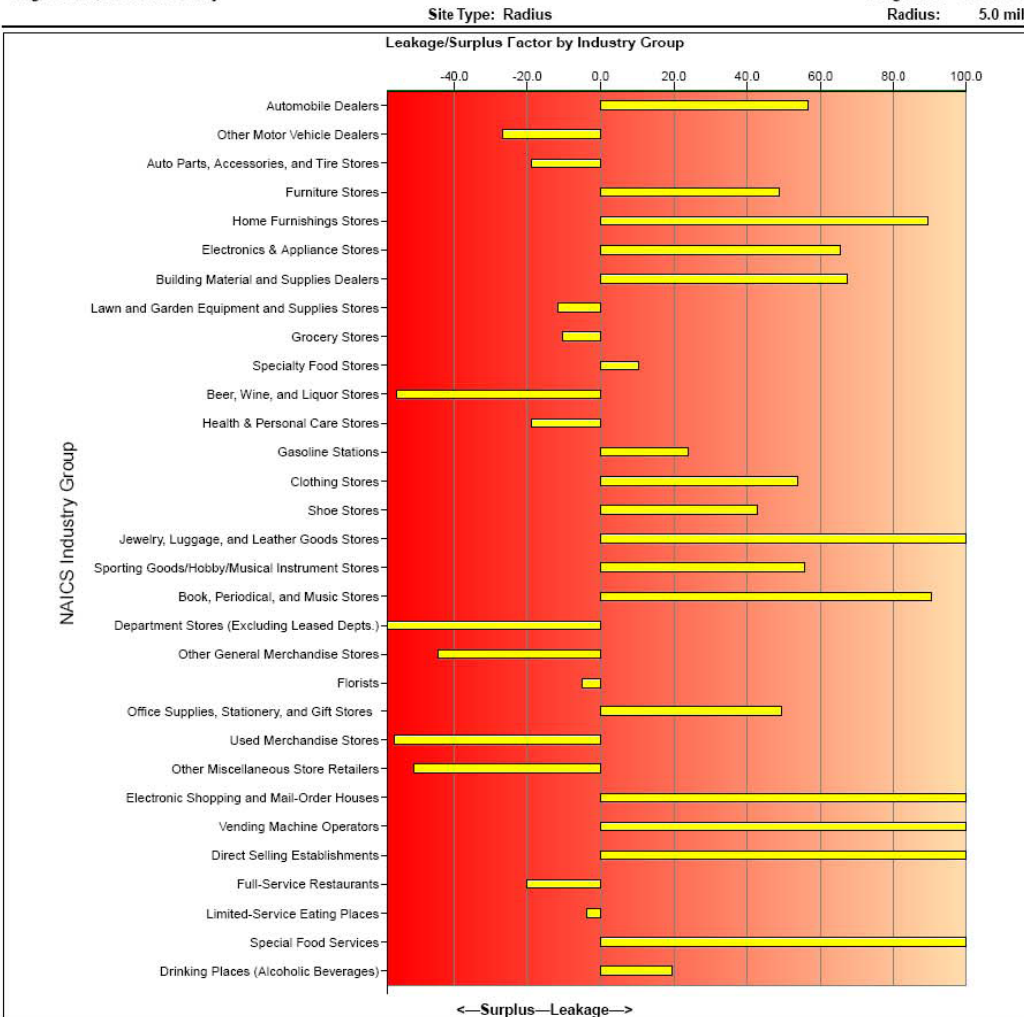


Wrightstown, NJ Market Study  
Wrightstown, NJ Market Study

## Retail MarketPlace Profile

Prepared by TRIAD Associates

Latitude: 40.034749  
Longitude: -74.620931  
Radius: 5.0 mile



Source: ESRI and infoUSA®

The Retail MarketPlace Profile indicates a need for the following types of retail businesses in Wrightstown as there is a leakage in the following categories:

home furnishings stores  
specialty food stores  
shoe stores  
luggage and leather goods stores  
hobby  
book, periodical and music stores  
florists

electronics and appliance stores  
lawn and garden equipment and supplies stores  
jewelry  
sporting goods  
musical instrument stores  
department stores  
special food services

Not surprisingly, the Borough is doing much better than expected in some categories, including beer, wine, liquor stores and auto parts and accessories stores. This is because the Borough

generates retail sales far in excess of what its market potential would otherwise indicate due to the proximity of the Joint Base. As noted above, the symbiotic relationship between Wrightstown and the Joint Base allows for a market potential far beyond that of Wrightstown alone.<sup>24</sup>

## LOCAL MARKET NEEDS

The Spending Analysis above, which identifies opportunities in the market based on an analysis of spending patterns, is based on census data. Local market needs have also been analyzed at monthly strategy meetings. The following summarizes specific recommendations obtained from civic leaders, Joint Base representatives, residents, strategy committee members and Borough planners with respect to needs in the local market. The goal is to provide all the goods and services that the community needs, increase the number of choices encountered, and maximize the range of products sold.

- **Full Service Hotel (small)**

While there are few motels in the area (such as the Passport Inn and the Days Inn in Wrightstown and the Quality Inn in Cookstown), members of the military have expressed difficulty finding suitable accommodations nearby during reserve training weekends and for visiting families and friends. During Reserve training weekends or other temporary assignments, military personnel often seek lodging up to 30 minutes away. Military personnel specifically identified the need for additional full-service accommodations within Wrightstown. With such a large contingent of transient troops, consistent utilization of a hotel facility is assured. Therefore, lodging is recommended.

- **Family and Specialty Restaurants (Applebee's, vegetarian, WWII Theme)**

Restaurants are one of the most successful commercial uses in Wrightstown. Even though on-base food opportunities exist, many personnel choose to leave the Base at lunchtime. Rick Dean, Community Planner at the Joint Base, has suggested family dining choices for the families living at the base, as dining on the base is limited and at peak times can be crowded. Although market analysis indicates a surplus of retail sales in full-service dining, as noted above, the symbiotic relationship between Wrightstown and the Joint Base allows for a market potential far beyond that of Wrightstown alone. The need for more dining choices would also be paramount with the addition of a proposed hotel. Hotel guests will be attracted by the convenient location of dining, retail and entertainment venues near the site.

Additionally, theme restaurants could act as a destination for many diners, including residents from the surrounding communities. Military personnel have indicated that theme restaurants would provide an inviting alternative to dining options on the base. Strategy Committee members have discussed restaurants such as: Applebee's, vegetarian, and a WWII Theme restaurant. Also, the Borough has a fair number of multi-cultural restaurants already, including Sugar Cane Grill, Sebastian's Shnitzelhaus, Korean BBQ, and Japanese. As military personnel embark from Wrightstown to travel the globe, an opportunity exists to bring those worldly experiences back to Wrightstown. An international restaurant row would be an authentic

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<sup>24</sup> Saylor/Pond Fort Dix Mixed Use Redevelopment Project Economic Development Strategy: Market Study prepared by TRIAD Associates, p. 3 (October 2007).

marketing niche for Wrightstown. The average household in Wrightstown spends \$2,732 annually on dining outside of the home. Military households spend a large amount of money on dining, as well.

#### • **Medical Offices**

The personnel on Ft. Dix/McGuire AFB have indicated a desire for medical professionals outside of those provided by the military, particularly for female officers. In 2007, households falling within five miles of the target area spent on average \$3,500 for health care and \$1,757 for health insurance.<sup>25</sup> These numbers are slightly less than the national average but they clearly indicate a market for medical services. By positioning medical offices in close proximity to the base Wrightstown could capture this potential revenue. It is expected that this will create more synergy in the Borough as employees of the office space can generate additional sales for the retail facilities and restaurants beyond what would be expected from area residents.

#### • **Childcare**

There is one childcare facility in Wrightstown, Kings Academy, which is affiliated with the adjacent church. While the Pemberton School District offers free preschool programs for military children three to five years old, there is often a long waiting list for daycare services for the youngest children at the Base's infant toddler child development center.<sup>26</sup> As such, military and civilian personnel have suggested a day care facility in Wrightstown.

#### • **Grocery Store**

Wrightstown residents strongly desire a supermarket. The nearest grocery stores are ACME in Browns Mills (8.9 miles) and a Home Town in Cream Ridge (8.5 miles). A fair number of Borough residents do not possess automobiles, which limits their access to food choices. The only local shopping options are the 7-11 convenience store, which offers few food choices at higher prices than supermarkets, and the Dollar General discount store in the east end of town, which does not have the same variety of fresh, high quality foods as a traditional supermarket. The reality is that many poor and/or rural communities like Wrightstown lack a market or income base to sustain a supermarket-sized grocer. Grocery retailers, such as Aldi or Save-A-Lot, which typically cater to lower-income consumers with a small range of products would be most successful in Wrightstown.

#### • **Specialty Grocery Store**

Members of the military have expressed an interest in a specialty food store. Specifically noted are stores that sell produce, as fresh produce is not always available at the base, as well as stores that sell organic or other health foods. The average household in Wrightstown spends \$4,032 annually on food at home. Currently, there are no retailers meeting the specialty grocery store need in Wrightstown other than the oriental food and gift store on south Fort Dix Street. As Wrightstown is located in the Burlington County Farm Belt, opportunities, even in the form of an open-air farmer's market, exist.

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<sup>25</sup> Saylor/Pond Fort Dix Mixed Use Redevelopment Project Economic Development Strategy: Market Study prepared by TRIAD Associates, p. 11 (October 2007).

<sup>26</sup> Military Homefront, Supporting our Troops & their Families, Plan My Move- Installation Information (4/15/2010).



- **Convenience Banking/ATM**

Wrightstown has very few banking options, with no bank branches and only six ATMs. Some form of convenience banking would benefit the Borough. A smaller bank branch would provide much needed services the residents of Wrightstown, while ATMs could provide fast and convenient access to commuters and visitors. An opportunity exists to combine convenience banking with a grocery store. A grocery store location is attractive to banks because it provides a lower cost opportunity to offer services to customers than in a traditional bank office and it would also allow the bank to tap new customers through the grocery store, who typically shop 1 to 2 times per week.

- **Electronics Store (small scale)/ Communications Store**

Military personnel identified a retailer selling electronics, accessories, and cellular services as a desired establishment. As the target demographic for video games is adult males aged 18-35, a video gaming store, like Gamestop, would fill a market need, given the number of young men stationed at the base. Additionally, the market data shows a complete leakage in electronics sales. All electronics purchases are conducted outside of the one- mile radius surrounding the project area and at five miles the leakage is still at 65.3 points; this represents \$6,341,343 in lost revenues.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to the market needs identified during strategy meetings, TRIAD Associates has recommended the following additional types of uses in their report, as well.<sup>28</sup>

- **Upscale Pub/Tavern**

Wrightstown enjoys a large market draw for alcohol sales posting a market surplus of 97.2 points, which means Wrightstown is a drawing in \$12,654,915 more dollars in alcohol sales than would be expected based on Wrightstown's population alone. Furthermore, an upscale drinking establishment would be complementary to the proposed hotel in Patriots Walk, giving hotel guests access to evening entertainment and socializing.

- **Dry Cleaning**

Dry cleaning facilities right outside of a military base generally enjoy consistent business. Members of the military often have uniforms cleaned and pressed as to maintain a sharp military appearance. Also, located on the west side of Fort Dix Street, a dry cleaning establishment would be a convenient stop for military personnel entering the base.

- **Convenience Store**

Convenience shopping would benefit the large transient population of Wrightstown. TRIAD's study likens the Borough to a transit village, which is typically found on passenger rail lines, given the high level of transient activity in the Borough due to the number of employees, retirees, and reservists traveling to the Joint Base on a daily basis and therefore recommends that the Borough focus on retail convenience stores that a transient population might purchase on their

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<sup>27</sup> Id.

<sup>28</sup> Id. at pp. 8-12 (Uses identified during strategy meetings are not listed here as they've already been identified above. Also, RDG has modified some of the recommendations).

way to and from work.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, convenience stores can provide daily essentials to residents of Wrightstown.

- **Military Gear Retailer (Army/Navy Store)**

These retailers provide a venue to pick up non-issue or upgraded items designed to make life easier or uniforms sharper for the military personnel. They also attract military retirees who are looking to stock up on military gear and supplies. Many military bases have these types of retailers just outside the gates and they create a large retail draw. Examples of these retailers would be U.S. Cavalry or Ranger Joe's.

- **Coffee Shop**

There is currently only one morning meeting place in the Borough, Dunkin Donuts, in the east end of the municipality (near New Hanover). There is no morning breakfast/coffee spot for commuters traveling along Fort Dix Street, nor along West Main Street from Route 68, the Turnpike, or Route 295. Coffee shops provide another aspect of convenience shopping. It would be perfect for capturing revenues from commuters with a quick and easy stop for morning coffee. A nice coffee shop could also provide a gathering spot for residents of Wrightstown.

- **Book, Periodical and Music Store**

A small-scale bookstore or even a periodicals retailer would provide a product, which is glaringly absent from Wrightstown. Market data shows a 100- point leakage from Wrightstown, meaning that there is a high probability that all book and periodical retailers are outside of a one-mile radius. Book, periodical, and music stores have a market potential of \$71,009 within the one mile radius and \$1,823,956 within the five mile radius. Even at the five- mile radius, the leakage is still at 90.4 points. Additionally, retailers of this type would fit within the expected retailers next to a Military Base, given the need for books, periodicals, and music cds to entertain soldiers on deployment.

- **Gift Store**

While the market data shows a small surplus of gift stores for the one- mile radius, at the five-mile radius, there is a retail gap of \$1,340,812. The category that covers gift stores also accounts for office supplies and stationary stores. A gift store would be a complementary use for the proposed hotel, as hotel guests will be attracted by a convenient location of retail near the site.

- **Florist**

The market data shows a complete leakage from the one- mile radius, representing a loss of \$18,138 in potential revenue for Wrightstown, while the five- mile radius shows a surplus in retail sales. The best way to reclaim some of this potential revenue is by combining a florist with some other type of retail establishment, such as a gift store or periodical store, particularly since the Base already has a florist on-site. It is noteworthy that there is also market potential for persons who are traveling through Wrightstown (specifically along Main Street) to go to Deborah hospital. The local florist need could also be met through a farmers market in Wrightstown that would allow local farmers to access the market with little overhead.

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<sup>29</sup> Id. at p.7.

- **Bakery**

Aside from Dunkin Donuts, there is only one bakery in the Borough, known as County Deli and Donuts, which is located in the shopping center at the east end of the Borough near the North Hanover border. There is an opportunity to draw transient customers, by combine a bakery and coffee shop in the Borough, particularly along Fort Dix Street and/or Main Street, the highest traveled segments of the Borough.

- **Barbershop**

Barbershops present another opportunity to draw military personnel, by meeting another of their needs. Additionally, a barbershop would provide a necessary service for residents of Wrightstown.

- **Home Décor**

The market analysis shows a complete loss of Home Furnishings market potential at the one mile radius and an 89.7 point loss at the five mile radius, this number represents \$3,239,838 going to retailers outside of the five mile radius. Despite the leakage identified in the market analysis, there is one small home furnishings store in the shopping center at the east end of the Borough. However, home furnishings are the type of goods that people are willing to travel a further distance to find the right item or the right price. A small home décor retail establishment can capture a portion of this otherwise lost revenue. Also, a home furnishings rental center may be most appropriate in this military town, given the temporary nature of military residencies.

- **Shoeshine**

TRIAD recommends a shoeshine establishment, as shoeshine businesses are often found outside of military bases given the draw from military personnel. However, these types of business rely heavily on foot traffic. This may be more appropriate for a use in the downtown, perhaps adjacent to the hotel, rather than on North Fort Dix Street.

- **Small Vendor Kiosks**

Kiosks represent an opportunity for unique items to become part of the economic engine driving Wrightstown. These venues are generally small with a very particular group of products. Because of the small outlay of capital for kiosks they allow retailers an opportunity to turn a profit on smaller or less demanded items. Kiosks could also be used a venues for some of the smaller retail options recommended in TRIAD's report.

One primary goal of the study is to encourage retail use that can help existing businesses prosper. TRIAD recommends that Wrightstown focus on attracting small to medium sized chain and non-chain stores. These types of businesses have reduced overhead, which would allow them to profit from a smaller base of customers and would fit nicely into the rather small town feel of Wrightstown.<sup>30</sup> A mega "Big Box" retailer such as Wal-Mart or Best Buy would potentially compete with the small town merchants and ultimately hinder their ability to survive. However, a few "Big Box" retailers such as a Borders book store, a furniture store, or Pier One Imports could compliment the smaller businesses. Special care should be taken to ensure compatibility and to avoid competition with established businesses.

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<sup>30</sup> Sailors/Pond Fort Dix Mixed Use Redevelopment Project Economic Development Strategy: Market Study prepared by TRIAD Associates, p. 7 (October 2007).

## **ADDITIONAL LOCAL MARKET NEEDS**

### **• Office**

For longer term planning, the Borough should market itself to office uses. Very little office space exists within the Borough. With the development of Patriots' Walk medical offices, the need for office space within the Study Area should intensify. Ideally, office space should be between 3,000 – 15,000 square feet. A flexible mix of office/retail is suggested for small, locally owned service businesses throughout Study Area and the Borough. This would include professional office space on second floors with retail on first floors for a more cohesive mixture.

An industrial use exists at the northern most end of the Study Area. As one of the goals of the study is to create a more socially vibrant and pedestrian-oriented corridor, no additional industrial space is recommended for the Study Area. All industrial uses should be directed to the Wrightstown Industrial Park.

### **• Residential Condominiums**

All vibrant commercial center locations include a resident population to patronize local shopping and events. A residential population currently exists around the Study Area. A slight increase in residential population is recommended to bring additional people and diversity to the Study Area. Higher density residential development near the Study Area should be considered to support the proposed retail development. While there are a considerable number of apartment units in the Borough, these units are affordable housing units rented to families on fixed incomes. A mix of residential, in all market segments (affordable to luxury, in both rental and for-sale housing) should be considered. Attractive condominiums would provide harmony with the adjacent single- family neighborhoods and an appropriate transition from the commercial uses. Careful attention should be given to creating pedestrian and vehicular connections to the adjacent commercial uses and the Downtown.

### **• Civic/Public**

Also important to the heart of the community are civic/public venues for events/cultural activities. In conjunction with this retail, consideration should be given to the design of public parking areas and alternative uses such as fairs, seasonal concerts, farmers' market, or other events to bring people into the community.

## **MARKET COMPETITION**

The surrounding municipalities are primarily agricultural communities, lacking a strong commercial base that would pose direct competition with businesses in Wrightstown. The nearest major retail center is outside of a ten mile radius.<sup>31</sup> It is expected that residents of surrounding municipalities within a five mile radius would choose to shop in Wrightstown, as opposed to a further shopping designation, particularly for convenient commodity groups. Therefore, Wrightstown has the potential to have a fair amount of drawing power of customers from surrounding communities.

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<sup>31</sup> Id. at p.4.

There are particular goods that are considered convenient goods. Staple goods like food, gasoline, drug items, hardware items are purchased on such a regular basis that people will tend to make their purchases as close to their residence as possible. People are usually unwilling to travel great distances to purchase convenient goods. Conversely, for larger ticket items that are purchased on a much less frequent basis, such as furniture and automobiles, people are often willing to travel great distances for the right item or for a good deal. Therefore, a retailer dealing in these types of goods can have a much wider trading area without a heavily trafficked location with the help of adequate promotion.

While there is limited market competition from businesses in surrounding communities, on-base commerce has a significant impact on the local market. The Department of Defense provides a wide array of retail stores and consumer services at the Joint Base for the benefit of current and retired military personnel and their dependents. The use of below-market prices to attract active-duty personnel, retirees, and reservists who live off-base, as well as the proliferation of on-site amenities, makes it difficult for local businesses to compete. The Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA), which runs the commissary (akin to civilian supermarket), sells goods at a uniform 5 percent above the wholesale cost.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES), which runs the military exchanges on the base as a non appropriated-fund (NAF) activity, provides goods and services at a significant discount (typically 20% less than civilian competitors) and consumers do not pay state sales tax.<sup>33</sup> Roughly two-thirds of NAF earnings go to supporting morale, welfare and recreation programs, including libraries, fitness centers, golf courses, and clubs. Therefore, there is a secondary impact on the local economy as military personnel do not need to leave the base for recreation and quality of life activities.

Currently, the Base has the following retail and service opportunities:

a BX/PX Food court	a commissary (supermarket)
liquor stores	fast food restaurants
coffee spots	a movie theater
barber shop	beauty shop
car wash	car rental
bank	dry cleaner
flower shop	UPS Store
shoe repair	optical shop
gas station	auto repair
hardware store	home and garden supply

The civilian personnel at the base are not permitted to use the Commissary or BX. However, they are allowed to use some of the peripheral retail stores.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> The Costs and Benefits of Retail Activities At Military Bases, prepared by Congressional Budget Office, Summary, p. xii (October 1997).

<sup>33</sup> Shopping Centers Today: How the U.S. military develops shopping centers, [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) notes, (March 18, 2010).

<sup>34</sup> E-mail correspondence with Rick Dean, Community Planner at the Joint Base, May 20, 2010.



Historically, sectors that service the population at the nearby Military base have succeeded in Wrightstown. However, retail, service, and food industry will likely capture less and less of the market generated by the Base, given the proliferation of on-base retail and services market competition as described above. Local businesses cannot easily overcome the hurdles associated with the convenience of obtaining goods on the Base, coupled with the below-market costs of products and services. The Borough, then, needs to adjust its market stance in response to these changed conditions.

## MARKETING STRATEGY

### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

**Create a Sense of Place by Capitalizing on Military Heritage.** It is essential that the Borough create a “sense of place.” A sense of place is what draws people to an area. It is a perception that a particular environment is unique and special. In order to successfully compete with on-Base retail and services, the Borough must draw residents, personnel, and retirees off the base who could otherwise shop or eat less expensively on-base. The Borough must also draw residents from surrounding areas and capture the number of transients who pass through the Borough to shop or work on the Base. In essence, the Borough must become a destination.

As the Borough has a strong military heritage dating back to World War I and Wrightstown is intrinsically linked to Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base, the Borough should create a signature space that provides a welcoming, interesting experience for people living, working, and visiting the Base, by making the most out of the Borough’s strong military roots. The Borough’s association with the military should be used as a marketing tool, as well as a means of creating a sense of place. *See discussion below in Land Use Section.*

**Enhance Market Niche.** It is recommended that Wrightstown enhance its market niche. A market niche is a specialized concentration of goods or services. One suggestion is to create an International Restaurant Row in the Study Area, building on the restaurant base that has historically done well in Wrightstown. For decades, people have passed through Fort Dix to travel to military destinations around the world, experiencing many different cultures. This would be an opportunity to bring some of the international cuisines experienced all over the globe back to Wrightstown. Currently, there is German, Korean, and Caribbean fare in the Study Area, as well as several fast food restaurants. In this way, the businesses along Fort Dix Street could concentrate on a specialized market that has historically fared well in Wrightstown.

### SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETING: YEAR 1

**Convert Strategy Committee into Business and Intergovernmental Association.** Over the past 7 years, the Wrightstown Strategy Committee has been meeting on a monthly basis to make sure that the Borough’s vision for redevelopment remains on track. Stakeholders who attend the committee meetings on a regular basis include: the Mayor, members of Borough Council and the Burlington County Economic Development and Regional Planning office, Ragan Design Group, Triad Associates, a member of the School Board, the Borough and Joint Land Use Board solicitors, Borough Engineer, Borough Clerk, Jersey Central Power and Light representatives,

and recently several residents who serve on the Plan Endorsement Advisory Committee. From time to time, former Congressman James Saxton, Richard Dean, Community Planner at the Joint Base, Colonel Ronald Thaxton, former Commander of Fort Dix, Susan Grogan from the Pinelands Commission, the realtor for the Wrightstown Industrial Park, the designated redeveloper of Phase One, and others participate in the Strategy Committee meetings. We recommend that members of the business community participate in the Borough's Strategy Committee meetings.

As the Borough moves into the next phase of redevelopment, it will be particularly important for existing and new businesses to participate in discussions related to business retention, new business attraction, and Borough marketing efforts. By maintaining an open line of communication between local businesses, Borough leaders, and residents, all stakeholders will be involved in molding the Borough's future. Therefore, it is recommended that the strategy committee be converted into a Wrightstown Business and Intergovernmental Association. Ragan Design Group will continue to be the moderator and provide staff support. The group should consider activities such as co-op marketing, launching the branding, creating a visitor's brochure, and event series coordination, as well as hosting periodic business roundtables or breakfasts, as local business associations typically do.

**Membership in the Burlington County Chamber of Commerce.** Wrightstown's low population density and the recent closing of Texas Avenue, combined with stricter access to the Base presents a marketing challenge in conventional terms to businesses in the Study Area. Building a successful business environment requires a multitude of strategies. As Wrightstown businesses, government, and residents are limited in their ability to commit time, money, and know-how to improve economic conditions in the Borough, it is recommended that representatives from the Wrightstown Business and Intergovernmental Association participate as members in the Burlington County Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber of Commerce is comprised of businesses, non-profit organizations and government entities that work together to improve the economic viability of Burlington County and the business potential of its members. It hosts monthly luncheon programs, education seminars such as Internet marketing, general membership meetings and legislative programs. The Chamber makes available the combined business experiences of hundreds of businesses. Tapping into this network offers solutions, sometimes mundane, sometimes creative, to common marketing problems. Its membership also has political clout that may assist with regional concerns.

Members of the Wrightstown Business and Intergovernmental Association should participate in the Burlington County Chamber of Commerce events, such as the Local Business Association Quarterly Meetings where joint representatives from local business associations come together to collaborate on events, share ideas, and learn how to improve their associations. Membership will also provide another venue for publicizing the Borough's successes and changing perceptions of Wrightstown in the region.

**Adopt a Uniform Logo for Marketing and Branding.** Residents and visitors form ideas about a municipality based on appearance, experiences, information in media outlets such as newspapers, magazines, websites, as well as word-of-mouth. Wrightstown, which at one time

had an excess of businesses that catered exclusively to adults, is perceived in the region as a ‘down and out’ community. Therefore, any marketing and branding strategy for the Study Area must incorporate a region-wide strategy to change its reputation. The Borough’s strong military heritage should serve as a source of pride, rather than as a blemish.

Brand identity is one important aspect of marketing the Borough. Branding is the message, i.e., how the Borough is being pitched to others. The logo is a component of branding. It is an image that is used on signage, marketing materials, and the Borough’s website. In order to establish brand identity, the logo should be instantly recognizable, reflect confidence and credibility, while communicating what the Borough offers. The logo is much more than a symbol or image, it essentially becomes the face of the Borough.

As a component of the Downtown Marketing and Façade Improvement Plan completed in 2008 a new logo was created and proposed for the Borough. At the time, the strategy committee wanted to create a new logo and theme that captures the historical essence of Wrightstown and its strong ties to the military. The community selected “*Wrightstown: Gateway to Freedom.*” The Borough’s governing body and the Strategy Committee are in the midst of reviewing final designs for the Borough logo, which has evolved through the course of this Study. It is recommended that the Wrightstown Business and Intergovernmental Committee and governing body implement the logo. Once the final design is selected, it is recommended that the logo be placed on municipal letterhead, on gateway signs, on the Borough’s proposed web page, on banners in the Study Area, in visitors’ brochures, etc. A landscape element, such as the one below, can also be incorporated that mimics the proposed logo for the Borough.



**Develop User-Friendly Borough Website.** Wrightstown is one of only six municipalities in the County that do not have a website (out of 40). A user-friendly website would not only improve customer service to local residents and businesses by providing answers to common municipal information requests, but it would also be a great marketing tool to advertise existing businesses to visitors, to recruit new businesses to the Borough, and to publicize Borough events that would draw people to the community. The Borough’s branding message and logo should appear on the homepage of the website and the website should be professionally designed. Local businesses should be given the opportunity to advertise on the Borough website and links should be provided to local businesses websites. When it comes to a municipality website, the usability

of the site by its citizens and visitors is essential. If the website is difficult to navigate, people will not use it.

Business owners and investors conduct much of their market research analysis on the Internet. It is recommended that the Borough work with local real estate brokers, investors, and developers to create a website link that provides an inventory of vacant commercial and industrial properties, lease rates, building square footages and areas for infill development. Borough utility rates and demographic information should also be available on the site. At our public stakeholder meeting, the Mayor stated that a company has offered to set up and manage a website for the Borough in exchange for being able to advertise on the website. If such an arrangement does not work, real estate brokers, banks, and local businesses should be able to purchase ad space on the Borough's website to subsidize the cost associated with maintaining a website, if needed.

**Develop Internet Marketing for Local Businesses.** Visitors and newcomers to the area commonly research activities to do, places to eat, and available services in the area via the Internet. The Internet provides an inexpensive medium for business owners and retailers to market their products and services. Only a handful of businesses in the Study Area have websites. It is essential in this technology- driven economy, that local business establishments develop websites as a component of their marketing campaigns. Local businesses, perhaps through the Business Association, may want to pool their resources to hire a web designer who will conduct site management and internet marketing for various businesses at a reduced cost than it would otherwise cost if they were seeking such services individually.

Additionally, many Borough businesses, such as Sebastian's Schnitzelhaus or Bird's Automotive, would benefit from using e-mail marketing to draw in customers via e-mailings (i.e., sending birthday e-mail discount coupons, oil change reminders, etc.). Opportunities for getting subscribers for an e-mail marketing campaign include having a signup form on the business' website, e-mail sign up on comment cards in person at the business, and e-mail sign up during client intake.

**Submit Press Releases on Borough Progress and Community Events to Media Outlets.** The Borough should continue to solicit the news coverage that it has received describing the redevelopment activities in the Borough and community events by submitting press releases to the various media outlets. This has advised the public, businesses, realtors, and investors of the opportunities in Wrightstown and will begin to change people's perception of Wrightstown over time. Several news mediums, such as the *Burlington County Times*, *Courier Post*, and *Philadelphia Inquirer* have covered the redevelopment activities in Wrightstown. In Spring 2008, *Philadelphia CBS3* did a story describing Wrightstown and its redevelopment efforts and redevelopment plans. These stories have been instrumental in getting the word out to investors and business owners that Wrightstown is a promising place to conduct business. Therefore, it is recommended that the Borough and Wrightstown Business Association continue to submit press releases to media outlets. Any news articles or features should be highlighted on the Borough's website.

## **SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETING: YEAR 2**

**Create Marketing Brochure to Attract Regional Merchants and Businesses.** Attracting new businesses and investments is important in building and maintaining a successful economic base in the Borough. The Borough should create and distribute a professionally designed marketing brochure designed to solicit businesses to Wrightstown. Such a brochure would contain the most essential information to draw businesses to Wrightstown, including local and Joint Base demographics, tax rate, availability of utilities, traffic counts, and contact information. The Borough should use the marketing brochure to conduct a direct mail campaign to commercial realtors and targeted businesses and industries. Saylor's Pond LLC, the Redeveloper of Patriots Walk, has expressed an interest in partnering in a marketing effort with the Borough. Phase One Patriots Walk demonstrates to business owners and investors that the Borough has made a commitment to reinvigorating the Borough, which will assist in attracting additional merchants and businesses as they will recognize the potential for synergy that will follow.

**Create Marketing Brochure to Attract Visitors.** Similar to the Marketing brochure to attract regional merchants and businesses, the Wrightstown Business Intergovernmental Association should create and distribute a professionally designed marketing brochure illustrating the shopping, dining, and activities to bring people to the Borough. The brochure should include the historical aspects of the community, important community contact information, and it should profile the shopping and dining opportunities in the Borough, as well as seasonal promotions and events. The brochure should contain high quality pictures, color maps with the location of businesses and have space for retailers to advertise. The brochures should be placed in high traffic areas and locations with a large volume of visitors, including at information kiosks located on the Joint Base (such as the Visitor's Center), hotel lobbies, the municipal building and within regional retail and dining establishments.

**Continue to Meet with Joint Base Representatives to Identify Additional Marketing Opportunities on Base.** It is recommended that the Wrightstown Business and Intergovernmental Association continue meet with Base representatives to explore marketing opportunities on the Base. As the host community to the Base, the Borough should have better marketing access to Base residents, personnel, and retirees. There is a Visitor's Center on the Base and there is also a monthly activity calendar at [www.gomdl.com](http://www.gomdl.com). However, it is unclear whether local businesses avail themselves of these opportunities. While regional and local businesses currently advertise in the Military Buyer's Guide portion of the Newcomers Guide that is available online at [www.mybaseguide.com](http://www.mybaseguide.com), additional marketing opportunities on the Base need to be explored.

## ***SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETING: YEARS 3 – 5***

**Implement Spring and Fall Event Series.** These should be SMALL, regularly scheduled events centered on music, art, food, and recreation. Wrightstown currently has a fall event, Wrightstown Community Day that takes place at Croshaw Park. Other events to consider include a Farmers Market, a Spring Festival, or car show, that will complement Wrightstown's fall event. The Business and Intergovernmental Association should staff the events with strong staffing support from Borough personnel and volunteers. The events should be marketed on the



Borough's website, through press releases, and in marketing materials to the Joint Base, as discussed above.

**Embark on Signage Campaign.** Gateway signs are an inexpensive tool used to attract motorists and visitors to the Borough. They are used to inform people how to get to the Borough and what amenities are located in the area such as shops, entertainment venues, and restaurants. We suggest signs that use the new logo and are consistent in size, color and text. Banner signs affixed to the street light fixtures would be most appropriate in the Study Area. The logo and branding can be carried out very effectively in a festive banner program. It is also recommended that the Borough consider placing signage along Route 206, Route 38, and Route 70. In addition to state and interstate highways, gateway signs should be installed on county roads.

**Begin Selective Co-Op Ad Placement.** In year three the Wrightstown Business and Intergovernmental Association should begin working on co-op ads that are strategically placed in resident, visitor, and military-oriented publications. Co-op advertising will allow businesses to pool their financial resources for advertising, supported by the Borough. Local real estate publications are good ways to gain access to the population moving into the community, while local and Joint Base newspapers and newsletters are excellent options to reach existing Borough residents and residents on the Base. As stated above, the Base publishes a Newcomers Guide, which is available online at [www.mybaseguide.com](http://www.mybaseguide.com). Regional and local businesses advertise in the Military Buyer's Guide portion of the Newcomers Guide.

### ***SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETING: YEARS 5+***

**Business Improvement District.** Upon further development in the Borough, it is recommended that the Wrightstown Business and Intergovernmental Association evaluate whether a Business Improvement District (BID) should be implemented for targeted areas. A BID utilizes a special tax assessment to fund a comprehensive program for scenic and capital improvements, as well as marketing.

## **STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS**

A structural analysis is the analysis of the physical components that define the arrangement, appearance and functionality of the Study Area, including buildings, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, signage, parking, and the public space. Currently, Fort Dix Street is primarily an auto-oriented arterial road, with limited aesthetics, and a limited offering of land uses. The architecture consists primarily of single-story, one-dimensional suburban forms of development that lack a distinct sense of place or community. Improvements to the structural features are needed to promote a more people-centered approach in the Study Area.

## **VISION FOR STUDY AREA**

It is envisioned that future patterns of development in the Study Area will be driven by the importance of community life and the quality of the human experience. The Study Area will be a denser, more dynamic, mixed-use center that promotes personal interaction, walking and civic life. The predominant building form will consist of two-story buildings, accommodating retail and restaurants on the ground floors with office or residential uses above. Buildings will be

architecturally interesting, incorporating quality craftsmanship and the use of ornamentation and architectural details. There will be greater synergy between land uses, a network of pedestrian connections, and there will be landscape features that are inviting to pedestrians and motorists. People will want to walk from site to site and spend time in the Study Area. The Study Area will function as an extension of the Downtown, rather than a corridor you travel through to get to the Joint Base.

## LAND USE STRATEGIES

The following describes overall land use strategies for improving the corridor and enhancing the form and pattern of development for optimal use. The general land use principles are followed specific structural recommendations for achieving the Vision for the Study Area.

**Create A Sense Of Place.** As noted above, it is essential that the Borough create a “sense of place.” A sense of place is what draws people to an area. In order to successfully compete with on-Base retail and services, the Borough must draw residents, personnel, and retirees off the base who could otherwise shop or eat less expensively on-base. The Borough must also draw residents from surrounding areas and capture the number of transients who pass through the Borough to shop or work on the Base. In essence, the Borough must become a destination.

Structural features, such as building placement, architectural style, pedestrian-orientation of buildings, pedestrian amenities, parking layouts, signage, lighting, and public art help define a sense of place while it is the people who frequent the businesses and spend time in the town who create the vitality. Building aspects that isolate people and discourage pedestrian activity should be prohibited as they contribute to placeless landscapes that have no special relationship to the places in which they are located—they could be anywhere. Wrightstown is a special place that welcomes people from all over the country, serving as their home away from home until they embark on travels and missions all over the world. Wrightstown’s structural and non-structural features should reflect that special relationship with the Military.

It is anticipated that Phase One of the Borough’s Redevelopment Plan in the downtown known as Patriots Walk, a mixed-use development, will jumpstart the effort of recreating the sense of place and vitality that Wrightstown once had. It will bring retail, educational and professional office uses to the downtown that will also provide opportunities for complementary types of uses. It will consist of interesting and architecturally distinct buildings and pedestrian-friendly wide sidewalks and storefronts.



It will be augmented by a concept called “Patriots’ Walk” that was developed during monthly strategy committee meetings. The committee envisioned creating a Walk-of-Fame sidewalk in Wrightstown to commemorate all the men and women who served in the military, as well as the historic events that Fort Dix and McGuire Air Force Base have contributed to American history.

It is anticipated that a sidewalk will be developed with granite markers signifying important dates, people, and events in the military's history. The proposed sidewalk could start at Phase One, known as Patriot's Walk, and then head north to Main Street, east along East Main Street, then south along Railroad Avenue. The governing body is working with the selected redeveloper and the military on implementing this walking sidewalk tour throughout Wrightstown's downtown. *See Exhibit E, Conceptual Sketch of Patriots Walk.*

Once Patriots Walk in the downtown is completed as planned, it is anticipated that a gain in momentum will occur, generating additional retail and office opportunities to other areas of Wrightstown, including North Fort Dix St. The Walk-of-Fame is one of the elements that will help create a sense of place that is unique to Wrightstown. It will make people at the Base feel a connection to Wrightstown as the soldiers' home away from home and will also provide an attraction for people spending time in the area. There are similar opportunities for creating signature spaces in the Study Area using landscape features or public art. *See below.*

**Redevelop Vacant and Underutilized Sites in the Study Area.** As Wrightstown is so small, it is particularly important for Wrightstown to maximize its limited amount of land. Redevelopment of vacant and underutilized parcels is essential. For example, the former Consolidated Transportation site at 48 Fort Dix Street has long been vacant. The roof needs replacement, causing the interior of the building to be exposed to the weather elements. The condition of the building is currently not fit for people to work in. It also has an expanse of pavement surrounding the building that is deteriorating. This is one of the first sites that you see as you enter the corridor from the north. Another example is the former Korean BBQ Restaurant at 82 Fort Dix Street, which was the subject of a fire in November 2009 and is still under investigation. The storefront has been boarded up for a long time and is not currently usable.



Existing Conditions



Potential

Vacant lots and burned out buildings blemish the vitality of the corridor and send out signals to passersby that this is a community in distress. They also negatively affect surrounding property values. It is critical that sites like these be put into productive reuse.



**Improve Aesthetics In The Corridor.** People go to places that appeal to them. The visual clutter of oversized signs and utility poles, coupled with large stretches of pavement dominate the Fort Dix Street corridor. Buildings in the Study Area are primarily one-story structures with limited architectural detail. As the streetscape can have a significant impact on how people perceive and interact within the community, it is recommended that the Borough continue to work on improving the aesthetic quality of the streetscape along North Fort Dix Street.

Careful attention should be given to creating an attractive streetscape in the Study Area, including architecturally interesting buildings, sidewalks, street trees, lighting, landscaping and signage, so as to create an identity for the Study Area. New buildings and renovated buildings should pay attention to quality craftsmanship and the use of ornamentation and architectural details. Architectural details play a key role in defining the style and character of a building and will have a significant impact on the corridor.



All of the proposed concepts under this study consider greening up the corridor by reducing the amount of asphalt in front of buildings and implementing a landscaping and street tree planting program. This will help create a more attractive streetscape. For example, the corner of Fort Dix Street and Main Street would be vastly improved by the incorporation of more diverse landscaping.



Existing Conditions



Potential

Landscape features should be used to hold the street line when buildings are not present. For instance, landscaping should be incorporated into the northwest corner of the Fort Dix/Main Street Intersection, shown in the first picture above. Low brick walls or pergolas can be used along parking area frontages to maintain the building setback visually when buildings are not



present and to reduce the aesthetic impact of parking lots. This design element is used along the proposed parking area for West Main Street in one of the concept plans the design team developed for the Study Area. *See examples below.*



Example of Pergola to hold street line



Example of brick wall to hold street line

Also, overhead utility poles dominate the streetscape. It is recognized that relocating telephone and electric utility lines underground would be costly. In the long run, however, when other utilities like sewer or water mains need to be replaced, the Borough should consider also relocating the electric and telephone lines underground. It would have a significant aesthetic impact on the streetscape.

**Diversify Land Uses.** Currently, there are a limited variety of land uses in the Study Area. The land uses along Fort Dix Street consist primarily of quick service restaurants and auto-oriented land uses (auto repair, towing, car wash). There are a few pockets of single family and small-scale multi-family uses. There are no office uses, no personal service types of uses, and only limited types of retail. The Borough should strive to create more diverse uses along the corridor for a better balance and improved synergy.



Increasing the mix of land uses is essential to creating a symbiotic relationship between various uses. To the extent that a retail use is located near other retailers and service providers, especially those that appeal to the same target market, the result is that they all benefit more than they would if they were each alone at that location. Encouraging a mix of uses will be significant ingredient to this corridor's success.

Diversifying the land uses will also provide the secondary benefit of allowing a single auto trip to serve two or more purposes without additional auto travel. This will bring transportation and land use more in sync with each other. Therefore, in addition to the existing retail uses, Fort Dix Street should also contain office uses, personal service businesses, and diverse retail types that can be accessed via shared driveways and internal circulation pathways.

**Make More Efficient Use Of Land.** All of the buildings along this corridor are one-story buildings. One-story structures are an inefficient use of land in Wrightstown, given the Borough's limited supply of land. One means of increasing the number of land uses along the



corridor is to provide opportunities for uses on upper floors of buildings. Upper floors provide additional opportunities for office, residence, or other compatible uses, thereby helping to make the corridor a more active place and to create more synergy.



For owners, the additional floors would offer an opportunity to generate additional revenue and increase the value of their property. Several new two-story buildings are proposed in the various concept plans that the planning and design team developed for the corridor, allowing the first floor to be used for retail use and second floors to be used for office or residential uses. Additionally, there is vacant land in the corridor that is not being utilized. Land, such as the vacant parcel behind Poppa Johns and the small parcel of land next to the Schnitzelhaus should be put into

productive use in this commercial corridor.

**Renovate Existing Buildings.** Opportunities exist to significantly improve facades with relatively inexpensive solutions. For example, Nite Dippers, a mixed-use building pictured below, can easily be transformed into a more attractive building like the photo to the right with the use of paint and decorative features, such as shutters, awnings, planters, new signage. Renovating existing buildings can have a significant impact on the attractiveness and vibrancy of the streetscape.



**Increase Pedestrian Attractions and Activity.** Pedestrian traffic is an important tool to add to the attractiveness and economic vitality of the corridor. It is the presence of other people and the ability to interact with and watch them in a safe and energized environment that creates the most memorable and successful places.



Development design should encourage walking and social interaction. Outdoor activities that encourage people to shop, eat, and linger should be encouraged. Retail and service-oriented businesses should be located on first floors of buildings. Buildings and public space should be visually interesting to invite exploration of the area by pedestrians. Street furniture, like benches, bicycle racks, trash

receptacles, and café seating, should be incorporated, particularly outside of restaurants, convenience stores, and heavily trafficked pedestrian locations.

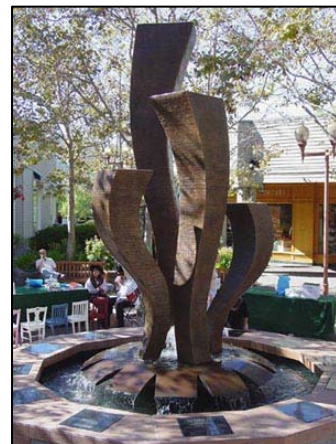
The form and character of buildings is important. First floor of commercial buildings should mostly be transparent, with a pedestrian orientation. Building facades that present large, over-scaled architectural elements to the sidewalk without breaking down the size to relate to a more human scale will be inappropriate. The proportion of building walls to openings plays an important factor in the character and vitality of the streetscape. Building aspects that isolate people and discourage pedestrian activity, such as faceless buildings without windows or doors at eye level are inappropriate. Doorways, windows, and other openings in the façade should be proportioned to reflect pedestrian scale and movement and to encourage interest at the street level. Windows on the street level should be transparent or lightly tinted to provide views into the interior.

Sidewalks in the Study Area should be continuous to allow pedestrians to walk from the northern end of the corridor to the Downtown. There should be additional opportunities for crossing the street in the middle of the block to encourage people to walk between sites. Also, there should be pedestrian connections to the adjacent multi-family apartment complexes to encourage people to walk to businesses in the Study Area from their residence. The concept plans show linkages to Wrightstown Arms Apartments and Maple Court Apartments, as well as a recreation trail along the creek. *Also see pedestrian circulation recommendations below.*



Additionally, many communities have incorporated public art into their sidewalks and public spaces. Art in public spaces enriches the streetscape. It beautifies the space, fosters community dialogue, reflects civic pride, and projects the community's support of artists and related businesses. Local colleges and universities are a good resource for public art.

While there is a mural on the side of a blank wall in the downtown triangle that celebrates the Borough's military heritage (see photo above) and there is a memorial monument at Croshaw Park, there are no other works of art that celebrate the Borough's military roots. This is an opportunity to add public art into the Study Area, which will help to create a sense of place. For example, there is an opportunity to incorporate public art into a commercial center green, such as in Concept 3. A water feature, sculpture, or landscaping can be incorporated with benches that could serve as a landmark and gathering place. The Borough should initiate communication with EP Henry to see whether the company would be willing to donate any landscape products for this purpose in exchange for acknowledging their contribution on the site.



**Better Integrate Residential Uses.** Currently there are several pockets of single family and small-scale multi-family uses along Fort Dix Street. However, they appear out-of-sync and isolated from the rest of the land uses along the corridor. While mixing residential and retail uses is normally encouraged in a Town Center environment, particularly as it provides a captive market for retailers, it is important that it be done in a well-designed manner that provides an attractive and convenient setting for residents. Any new residential uses should provide a sense of community by developing public gathering places, a more livable environment, and more convenience in daily life. This will require new types of housing products, such as residential condominiums over shops, in the corridor.



Existing isolated multi-family structure at 52 Fort Dix Street.



Residential mailboxes at the curb for 52 Fort Dix Street.

## ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

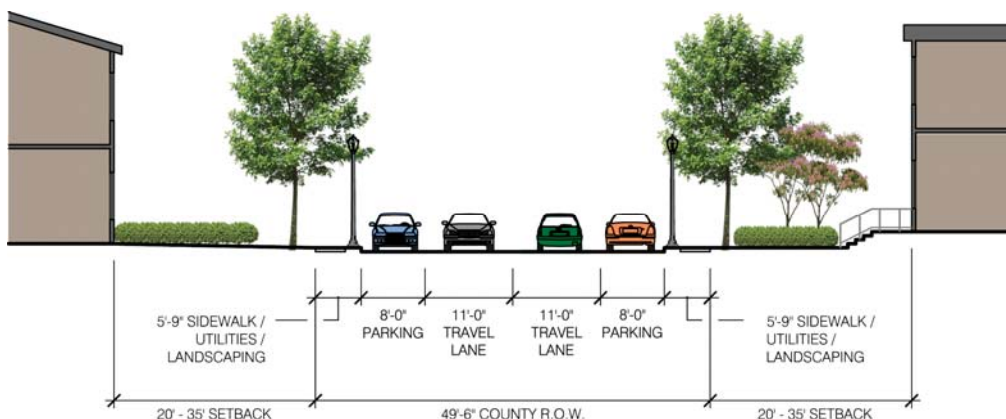
While the community leaders perceive there to be a pro-business environment to encourage growth and development, the supporting processes (i.e.; planning, zoning, inspection) should be streamlined to support that goal. With structural changes and continued renovation and/or new construction, the underlying zoning and regulatory structure must support the land use policies and concepts identified in this Study. The following are zoning recommendations that complement the land use policies outlined above for North Fort Dix Street. They are intended to provide guidance in the form and character of desired future renovations and new construction, as well as predictability in local decision-making for this corridor.

**Reduce Minimum Building Setbacks.** There are a myriad of building setbacks along the corridor. In some instances, buildings are sited very close to the ROW. For example, there are negligible building setbacks for several sites, including Nite Dippers (0'±), Passport Inn (2'±), and Korean BBQ strip mall (0'±). On the other hand, there are other buildings that are set back a distance from the ROW, such as Volmar Construction (180'±), NAPA Auto Parts (140'±), and 7-11 (120'±). The average building setback is approximately 45 feet. The median building setback is approximately 25 feet and the most frequently occurring (mode) building setback is approximately 20 feet. Many buildings are set back a distance from Fort Dix Street with parking located between the structure and the roadway.

One of the purposes of this study is to create and design a more vibrant corridor. We seek to alter the typical suburban style development that has occurred on the corridor. It should be more pedestrian- friendly and the street level activity should be enhanced. The concept plans in this study bring many retail structures closer to the road, with off-street parking primarily located behind buildings and introduce on-street parallel parking as the Borough would like to see this

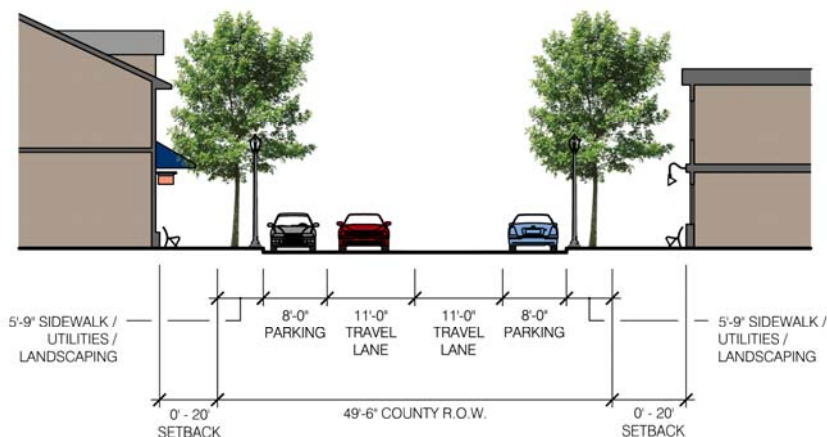


corridor serve as an extension of the downtown. However, by its nature, Fort Dix Street is currently served primarily by the automobile. Therefore, this study seeks to balance a certain tension between providing vehicular access to the retail and services of this corridor, and creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment. We must acknowledge that what may work for a downtown, may not be practicable here. However, there are some changes that can be implemented to improve conditions in the Study Area.



TYPICAL FORT DIX STREET SECTION

NOT TO SCALE



FORT DIX STREET SECTION AT MAIN STREET INTERSECTION

NOT TO SCALE

One of the most important aspects of urban design is the relationship of the building to the street. Currently, Section 402E6 of the Zoning Ordinance states that the minimum front yard setback in the GC zone is 50 feet. In order to achieve a more pedestrian-friendly corridor, the building setback should be amended to reflect a minimum building setback of twenty (20) feet and a

maximum building setback of thirty-five (35) feet.<sup>35</sup> This is intended to bring buildings closer to the street to create a more pedestrian-centric experience than is currently experienced.

However, a zero setback line would be appropriate near the Fort Dix Street/Main Street intersection. Some buildings at the intersection already maintain a zero setback. As this intersection virtually serves as the key entrance to the downtown, buildings should be located close to the street to maintain connectivity to street level activity. This will help to define a sense of place and focus pedestrian activity within the public realm. Then, as one travels northward along the corridor, the buildings can feather out up to a maximum of thirty-five (35) feet. Therefore, it is recommended that there be a separate setback for buildings in the General Commercial Zone that are sited with 200 feet of the Fort Dix Street/Main Street intersection. In those instances, the minimum building setback should be zero (0) and the maximum building setback should be twenty (20) feet.

**Reduce Maximum Impervious Coverage.** Currently the Zoning Ordinance encourages large off-street parking areas and discourages green areas. The importance of the building is deemphasized. The Zoning Ordinance currently allows 90% impervious coverage and 25% building coverage. It only requires 10% green area in the GC district. The maximum building coverage amount of 25% is more akin to the typical amount permitted for single-family suburban residential building sites. There should be more flexibility in building footprints for commercial areas. The focus should be on the buildings and to improve the aesthetics in the corridor, rather than on the parking areas. Therefore, it is recommended that the Zoning Ordinance be amended to reduce the amount of permitted impervious coverage to 75%, to increase the maximum building coverage amount to 35%, and to increase the green area to 25%.

**Modify Location Of Parking.** There are four guiding philosophies about parking that are applied to this Plan:

1. Parking should be viewed as a public utility, like streets, water, sewer, and parks.
2. Parking should be strategically located and designed to provide an adequate supply of parking, while being supportive of a pedestrian-friendly environment.
3. Parking areas should be convenient, easy to find and safe, but should not dominate the visual landscape.
4. The most successful parking arrangements are ones which encourage patrons to "park once and walk."



It is recommended that retail structures be brought closer to the road, with off-street parking primarily located behind buildings so that buildings can be uniformly pulled to the fronts of their lots, or single-loaded along sides of buildings so that buildings are not pushed far apart from each other, creating a more aesthetically pleasing and pedestrian-friendly environment. Thus, the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to prohibit off-

<sup>35</sup> It is recognized that building sites that do not have frontage on the corridor (for example, Block 501, Lot 4, the lot behind Papa Johns) will not need to adhere to the maximum building setbacks provided that building arrangements and internal pedestrian connections are made to enhance the walkability of the site.



street parking in front of buildings in the General Commercial Zone. The only exception should be when there is another building sited in between the parking lot and the street. Off-street parking areas should only be permitted to the side or rear of buildings, like existing KFC.

**Reduce Amount Of Parking.** Parking lots impact the vitality of the street. Off-street parking lots should be designed for reasonable demand, rather than peak parking demand, particularly as parking areas are in such close proximity that parking could be shared in times of overflow. The off-street parking requirements in the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to include a parking space maximum and to allow the number of parking spaces to be reduced when shared parking is implemented. The following are suggested minimum and maximum parking standards for the General Commercial zoning district. Auto related uses (car wash, auto repair) should remain as currently provided in the Zoning Ordinance (but should incorporate a maximum).

Proposed Use	Minimum	Maximum
Retail/Office/Bank	4/1000 GFA	5/1000 GFA
Hotel	1 per room	1.25 per room
Medical Office	4.5/1000 GFA	5.5/1000 GFA
Restaurant, Bars, Taverns	1 per 4 seats	1 per 3 seats
Daycare Facility	1 per employee plus 1 for 10 students	1 per employee plus 1 for 8 students
Health Club/Dance or Music Studio	3/1000 GFA	4/1000 GFA
Theater	1 per 5 seats	1 per 4 seats
Bowling Alley	3 spaces per bowling lane	4 spaces per bowling lane

**Amend Permitted Use Section For GC Zone.** There are a high proportion of auto-focused land uses in the Study Area, including towing, auto repair, auto parts retail, and car wash. The (GC) zoning district is intended to provide general commercial services to the community and the public at large. Permitted uses include: 1) Retail sales, including shopping centers, 2) Restaurants, bars, nightclubs, 3) Banks including drive-ins, 4) Offices and office buildings, 5) Theaters and bowling alleys, 6) Hotels and motels, 7) Car wash. Conditional uses include: 1) Motor vehicle service stations, repair shops and 2) Motor vehicle sales and trailer sales. It is recommended that residential uses be permitted in the GC district provided they are located on second-stories of buildings. Condominiums are preferred.

**Amend Sign Regulations.** Currently, business signage in the Study Area is primarily suburban-style signage. In some instances, signs are out-dated and excessively large, like in the examples below at the car wash and the Passport Inn. The Passport Inn signage also violates the County's Right-of-Way Control regulations that prohibit advertising signs in the right of way. *See Section 12.07 of Land Development Review Resolution adopted by Burlington County Planning Board.*



Existing Conditions



Existing Conditions

Signage is one component of the environment that can quickly convey a suburban or urban setting depending on its design. As this corridor begins to change over to a more pedestrian-oriented environment, new types of downtown-type signage will be needed in the future. Awning signs, projecting signs, and flush-mounted wall signs should replace the existing oversized free-standing auto-oriented signs. A facade improvement program should be examined to include signage specifically to encourage new and interesting pedestrian-oriented signage types. This ultimately should lead to a new sign ordinance written specifically for the Study Area.

## CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

**Eliminate Center Turning Lane.** The goal of access management is to encourage the safe and efficient flow of traffic. This goal is achieved through the regulation of driveways, turning lanes, medians, median openings and traffic signals. Good access management results in fewer accidents, increased capacity and reduced travel time on our roads. Conflict points frequently occur at intersections, driveways on busy roads, or places where drivers make left hand turns across traffic. The more conflict points present on a road, the greater the number of accidents on the road. Center two-way-left turn lanes pose a significant conflict point. They begin to lose their effectiveness in situations where commercial driveway densities are high and the driveways are closely spaced. In such a situation, the number of conflict points is high.



It is recommended that the center two-way-left turn lane turning lane on North Fort Dix Street be eliminated. This will eliminate the potential for head-on collisions between drivers. It reduces the number of conflict points. This allows drivers more space to anticipate and react to conflicts. It will also have the secondary benefit of additional roadway space to incorporate on-street parking (north of the Creek).

**Incorporate On-Street Parking.** As this report recommends eliminating some of the existing off-street parking areas in order to bring buildings closer to the street and to include more generous landscaping along the corridor, on-street parking will help to offset the elimination of

some off-street parking spaces in front of buildings. The County's preliminary assessment of on-street parking for the corridor resulted in the addition of 28 on-street parking spaces in our Study Area based on existing conditions.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, it is recommended that the center-turning lane be eliminated and on-street parking be introduced on both sides of North Fort Dix Street (north of the creek). On-street parking should have 2-hour parking limits to ensure a turnover of these parking spaces.

**Consolidate Driveways.** Additionally, it is recommended that developments located adjacent to each other should be encouraged to consolidate driveways, provide cross-access, and utilize a shared rear alley so that parking lots and driveways are connected and shared so that automobile movement is possible without going out onto the arterial road. Too many curb cuts are inefficient and dangerous. Encouraging cross-access between adjacent developments reduces the number of vehicles that are required to re-enter North Fort Dix Street. Likewise, driveways should be set a safe distance apart. The Burlington County Access Management Standards for development recommends a minimum of 150 feet between driveways for commercial developments.



While Section 405H9 of the Zoning Ordinance states “[p]arking areas for individual uses shall be designed to be interconnected with adjacent properties and shall utilize common entrance(s) and exit(s) where feasible to minimize access points to the street,” shared parking and shared driveways has not been put into practice. The photo above is an example of two adjacent parking areas (Shnitzelhaus and Pappa Johns) that could easily be combined to allow for a more efficient parking area, as well as beautification of the corridor. Some of the parking spaces could be replaced with landscaping and/or outside dining areas. Therefore, the Borough should actively work to improve the organization of existing private lots in the corridor through cross access easements between lots, improved signage, restriping, and coordinated driveways and lighting.

**Change Signal Timing at Intersection.** The four-way signalized intersection at the juncture of Fort Dix Street (CR 545) and Main Street (CR 616) is controlled by a three-phase traffic signal operation. Right turn on red is prohibited on each approach to the intersection. There is a dedicated left-turning lane when traveling on the approach to the intersection, increasing the capacity of the road to carry through traffic via a shared



<sup>36</sup> The County Engineer's office preliminary drawing introduced on-street parking approximately 600 feet north of Main Street and took into consideration the existing mid block crosswalk, breaks for driveways and municipal streets. It permits 40 spaces between Sykesville Road and a point 600 feet north of Main Street (28 in Wrightstown, 12 in North Hanover). However, additional mid-block crosswalks would likely reduce the number of viable parking spaces.

through/right turn lane on the approach to the intersection.

In March 2006, Burlington County conducted a manual turning movement count to establish the existing traffic conditions at the intersection of Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection in the Study Area. The total morning (7am-8:45am), mid-day (11am-12:45pm), and afternoon counts (3pm-5:45pm) totaled 8,671 occurrences. Of these counts, there were 8,505 vehicles and 166 pedestrians. A capacity and level of service analysis was not conducted for the intersection at that time. The peak flow in the intersection occurred at 7:15am during the morning count, at 12pm during the mid-day count and at 4:30pm during the afternoon count, which is consistent with the peak traffic counts described above on Fort Dix Street.

More recently, a private consulting firm, BSG/Birdsall Engineering Inc., conducted a manual turning movement traffic count at the Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection on August 20, 2009 and analyzed the Level of Service (LOS) for the intersection.<sup>37</sup> Level of Service is an indication, from LOS A (best condition) to LOS F (worst condition) of the delay experienced by vehicles waiting to execute a desired traffic movement. A summary of the LOS results is provided in the following table:

MOVEMENT	AM PEAK HOUR LOS	PM PEAK HOUR LOS	SAT PEAK HOUR LOS
Main St EB Left	B	C	B
Main St EB T, R	F	E	C
Main St WB, Left	B	B	C
Main St WB, T,R	B	C	B
Fort Dix St NB Left	B	B	B
Fort Dix St NB T, R	B	C	B
Fort Dix St SB Left	B	B	B
Fort Dix St SB T, R	B	B	B

As the table indicates, while the intersection is operating successfully for Fort Dix Street, the movement through the intersection along Main Street is failing in the eastbound direction under existing conditions. Birdsall Engineering suggested that the levels of service can be improved by increasing the signal timing and increasing the green time for each approach.<sup>38</sup>

**Replace Cracked Sidewalks and Curbing at Intersection.** It is recommended that the cracked sidewalk at the northwest corner of the intersection and the crumbling curbing at the northeast section of the intersection be replaced. The uneven concrete can present a tripping hazard and as curbing generally serves to separate vehicular travel from the pedestrian domain, the crumbled curbing would make it easier for a mismanaged vehicle to trespass into the pedestrian path. Therefore, the sidewalks and curbing should be replaced for safety reasons, as well as to create a more attractive setting at this core intersection. Generally, property owners are responsible for

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<sup>37</sup> Traffic Impact Report Patriots Walk, prepared by BSG/Birdsall Engineering, Inc for Saylor's Pond LLC (October 26, 2009), p.7. The table represents the "No build" conditions. The existing traffic volumes on the roadways were projected to the anticipated build year of 2012 using a background growth rate of 2%. They used the background traffic on the roadway network without the anticipated site-generated traffic from Patriots Walk.

<sup>38</sup> Id. at p.13.

maintaining sidewalks and curbs on County roads. However, the Borough should pursue funding for a streetscape improvement program to improve this important intersection.



Crumbling Sidewalk



Sidewalk in Poor Condition

**Incorporate Information Features At Intersection And Mid-Block Crosswalk For Visually Impaired.** It is recommended that information features be incorporated into the intersection crossings and mid-block crosswalk for persons with visual impairments. The crosswalk locations are only detectable by sight. Only one of the curb ramps includes information features for persons with visual impairments (such as ladder markings at crosswalks or curb ramps with detectable warnings).

**Improve Intersection Aesthetically.** It is also recommended that the Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection be improved aesthetically, such as with decorative colored, stamped concrete that resemble bricks. *See Exhibit E, Fort Dix Street, Main Street Intersection Proposed Concept.* As noted above, the Borough should pursue a streetscape improvement program.

**Incorporate Additional Mid-Block Crosswalks.** There is only one mid-block crosswalk in the Study Area that begins in the vicinity of Sebastian's Schnitzelhaus (near the North Hanover border). One of the goals of this study is to change auto-oriented Fort Dix Street into a more pedestrian-oriented environment. Therefore, physical design features that enhance public safety, encourage pedestrian activity, and reduce dependency on the automobile should be incorporated. Thus, it is recommended that additional mid-block crosswalks be incorporated.

Additional pedestrian crossings at targeted mid-block locations would allow pedestrians to safely cross the street at multiple locations. At mid-block crossings, pedestrians encounter traffic moving in two directions. Marked crosswalks are intended to provide pedestrians with a feeling of confidence that it is safe to cross a street at the marked location and to give motorists adequate warning to expect pedestrians to be in the roadway. Additional crosswalks are suggested near proposed mixed-use buildings and in the vicinity of the proposed trail system to facilitate pedestrian crossing. Signage that emphasizes that pedestrians have the right of way should be installed in association with the proposed crosswalks should be used for traffic calming measures. The 30 miles per hour speed limit should not be increased.

**Connect Sidewalks on East Side of the Street.** There are intermittent breaks in the sidewalk on the eastern side of the street. In some instances, this is due to the auto-focused nature of the associated land uses, such as Bird's Towing and Auto Repair. In other cases, the elevation of



abutting properties seems to be the major obstacle. For example, for Block 501, Lot 5 (Edson residence), sidewalk construction would require significant regrading and/or installation of a retaining wall. Likewise, for Block 501, Lot 9 (Watsula residence), sidewalk construction would require significant regrading and relocation of a retaining wall closer to the house. This would result in a reduction of the front yard and potentially injure a mature tree and impact the use of the existing driveway. As sidewalks are needed on both sides of the streets to encourage walkability and to make people feel safe and comfortable, the gaps in the sidewalks should be eliminated if and when the sites are redeveloped in the future.



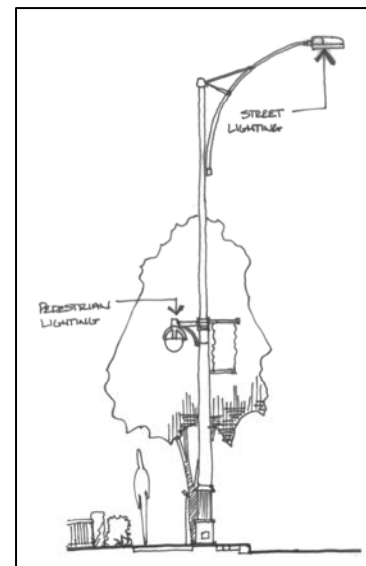
Sidewalk missing in front of Block 501, Lot 5 (Edson House)



Sidewalk missing in front of Block 501, Lot 9 (Watsula House)

**Incorporate Additional Pedestrian Linkages.** There should be pedestrian connections to the adjacent multi-family apartment complexes to encourage people to walk to businesses in the Study Area from their residence. The concept plans show linkages to Wrightstown Arms Apartments and Maple Court Apartments. The concept plans also show the installation of a pedestrian footbridge across the North Run creek that would provide greater accessibility for tenants of Maple Court of Apartments, a 92-unit apartment complex, to the Fort Dix commercial corridor. A trail system along the creek is also incorporated into the concept plans to provide scenic and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

**Incorporate Pedestrian-Oriented Light Fixtures.** It is also recommended that streetlights be installed that contain pedestrian-oriented light fixtures with flag mountings to welcome visitors to Wrightstown. The pedestrian-oriented light fixtures would illuminate walkways, enhance safety, and provide sight lines.



**Pursue Public Transportation in Study Area.** There is no public transportation available in the Study Area. NJ Transit operates the 317 Asbury Park-Philadelphia bus route through Wrightstown. However, the bus route does not travel through the Study Area. Instead, buses travel through the Base, along Railroad Avenue and East Main Street. RDG contacted NJ Transit about the possibility of initiating a bus stop in the Study Area as it would be particularly beneficial for the residents of Wrightstown Arms Apartments, a 52-unit family rental Section 8 apartment complex. Many residents who are of low and moderate income are less likely to own

a car. Beth Waltrip, Senior Services Planner at New Jersey Transit, stated that although NJ Transit is currently reviewing their travel route due to significant delays being experienced because of heightened security at the Base after 9/11, she does not believe that the Study Area would be included in their future travel routes unless and until a larger concentration of persons would be serviced. The population concentration is not large enough to alter the route pattern. It is recommended that when there are more concrete plans for North Hanover's receiving area in Wrightstown Center, Wrightstown and North Hanover should formally request that North Fort Dix Street be added to the bus route.

Additionally, it is recommended that the Borough request that the Joint Base consider instituting a military-run shuttle bus that would bring Base personnel and residents off-base to various destinations in the Borough, including the Downtown and the North Fort Dix Street Corridor. This would bring additional persons to the Borough's commercial areas. Many servicemen and women do not have cars on the Base. This would provide a needed service to military personnel and residents, as well as benefit local businesses.

## **CONCEPT PLANS FOR NORTH FORT DIX STREET**

Based upon the foregoing land use principles and structural recommendations, the design team put together various concept plans for the Study Area. A "ripe and firm" analysis was completed for all of the properties in the Study Area prior to the completion of any design work for the various concepts for this corridor. "Firm" properties are those that are generally in their final building /use pattern, and are also reflected as the "highest and best use" by the real estate and appraisal community. Once determined, little change is recommended to them.

Properties that are determined to be "ripe" for development / redevelopment include those that are currently undeveloped, under-developed (additional development opportunities exist on the property including expansion of existing buildings and new construction), or can be redeveloped (such as an old, vacant building). This type of analysis is necessary to identify both those properties that should be left alone, and development opportunities. While most development possibilities were identified through a combination of a windshield survey and a walking survey, some properties were classified after interviews with the property owner. Exhibit F, the Existing Land Use Conditions Plan, identifies the existing land uses located along North Fort Dix Street.

There are three idiosyncratic development plan scenarios for North Fort Dix Street, with progressive degrees of redevelopment. Concept one is the least aggressive of the three scenarios; it seeks to maintain viable (non-blighted buildings or sites) existing structures (but not necessarily the existing use) and permit limited infill on vacant parcels. Blighted and obsolete buildings are eliminated. Concept one also proposes a series of streetscape and landscape improvements, including continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street, the addition of another mid-block crosswalk, and more generous landscaping between storefronts and the curb.

Concept two is more progressive, demolishing blighted and non-usable buildings, as well as other undesirable buildings, and proposes a number of infill developments. Concept two brings buildings closer to street in order to make the corridor more pedestrian-friendly. It also proposes two sites designated for larger retail opportunities, reflecting the desire for larger store footprints

in the modern retail market. It eliminates the center turning lane in order to create on-street parallel parking on both sides of North Fort Dix Street (north of North Run Creek) to offset the elimination of parking spaces in front of some of the buildings. It also incorporates a series of streetscape and landscape improvements, including continuous sidewalks on both sides of the streets, the addition of two more mid-block crosswalks, as well as more generous landscaping between storefronts and the curb.

Lastly, Concept three proposes a “no restraints” approach that includes demolition of blighted and non-usable buildings, demolition of other buildings and a redevelopment opportunity for uses more appropriate for the corridor, as well as one site designated for large retail, reflecting the desire for larger store footprints in the modern retail market. Consistent with the prior plan, scenario number three also proposes elimination of the center turning lane in order to incorporate on-street parallel parking on both sides of North Fort Dix Street (north of North Run Creek). It also incorporates a series of streetscape and landscape improvements, including continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street, the addition of two more mid-block crosswalks, more generous landscaping between storefronts and the curb, and pedestrian linkages to the adjacent multi-family developments and a pedestrian trail along the North Run Creek.

## **CONCEPT #1: EXISTING BUILDING RE-USE AND INFILL BUILDINGS**

There are a number of redevelopment opportunities within the framework of maintaining viable existing buildings and proposing infill development on vacant lots. Beginning slightly east of the North Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection, the existing Verizon building located on Block 501, Lot 12 will remain. The adjacent apartment complex on Block 501, Lot 11 consisting of a two-story, three-unit apartment building, two one-story four-unit apartment buildings, and a hair salon of approximately 500 square feet will remain.

Continuing at the northeast side of the North Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection and progressing north, the existing Nite Dippers bar and four apartments (Block 501, Lot 10), the single-family detached home (Block 501, Lot 9), and the existing Taco Bell Restaurant (Block 501, Lot 8) will remain. However, Nite Dippers and the attached apartments will be renovated. The property north of North Run Creek (Block 501, lot 4.01) containing Bird’s Towing and Auto Repair (2,340 square feet) is proposed for renovation and reuse as new retail space with ancillary parking. The adjacent NAPA Auto Parts Store (6,000 square feet) will remain. However, the site will be improved with more landscaping and organized parking.

Continuing north, the existing single-family detached unit on Block 501, Lot 5 will be expanded and converted into 6,400 square feet of office space. The vacant lot (Block 501, Lot 6) located to the rear of Lot 5 will accommodate a new two-story office building of 5,000 square feet with ancillary parking. Continuing north, the existing Papa Johns Pizza Restaurant located on Block 501, Lot 4.02 and the Sebastian’s Schnitzelhaus located on Block 501, Lot 4.03 will remain. A new one-story retail building of 900 square feet is being proposed on Block 501, Lot 3, which is currently vacant. The parking areas of all of the above listed properties will be interconnected via cross easements thereby reducing traffic along North Fort Dix Street and reducing some of the curb cuts.

Crossing over North Fort Dix Street and continuing south, the existing Volmar Construction industrial building located on Block 302, Lots 36 & 38 will remain. The vacant building on Block 302, Lot 37 and the two-unit house on Block 302, Lot 33 will be razed and replaced with a two-story multi-use retail/office/condominium building of 10,000 square feet of retail on the first floor and 10,000 square feet of office on the second floor. The existing two-story multi-family structure located on adjacent Block 302, Lot 33.01 and the existing motel located on Block 302, Lot 41 will remain. Continuing south across Augusta Street, the existing Kentucky Fried Chicken Restaurant located on Block 302, Lots 27-31 will remain. The existing self-service car wash located on Block 302, Lot 25 will also remain. However, the site will incorporate additional landscaping. The existing Sugar Cane Caribbean Grill Restaurant located on adjacent Block 302, Lots 23 & 24 will remain, but the building will be renovated.

Crossing the North Run Creek and continuing south, the existing multi-tenant building located on Block 302, Lots 23 & 24 consisting of a restaurant, liquor store, and tax service office will remain. The Seven-Eleven convenience store located at the northwest corner of North Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection (Block 302, Lot 19) will remain however, a kiosk and/or public art space with upgraded landscaping is proposed at the corner of the intersection. Finally, the vacant Wrightstown Fire House located on Block 302, Lot 16 will be renovated and reused for office space totaling 2,400 square feet with ancillary parking. Exhibit G, Concept Map 1, identifies the proposed vision plan as described above. Table 1 identifies the amount of existing and proposed square footage of the various uses as depicted on Concept #1.

**Table 1: Building Inventory Concept #1**

USE	EXISTING SQ. FT.	PROPOSED SQ. FT.	DEMO/DISCO SQ. FT.	TOTAL SQ. FT.	NET CHANGE
Retail/Commercial	40,515	13,138	0	53,653	+13,138
Institutional	2,762	0	-2,762	0	-2,762
Industrial	25,972	0	-3,582	22,390	-3,582
Office	0	23,986	0	23,986	+23,986
Lodging	6,600	0	0	6,600	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>75,849</b>	<b>37,124</b>	<b>-6,344</b>	<b>106,629</b>	<b>+30,780</b>
	EXISTING UNITS	PROPOSED UNITS	DEMO/DISCO UNITS	TOTAL UNITS	NET CHANGE
Single-Family Residential	2	0	-1	1	-1
Attached Residential	18	0	-2	16	-2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>-3</b>

## CONCEPT #2: SELECTIVE DEMOLITION & INFILL BUILDINGS

Concept two builds upon the planning vision of the first scenario by recommending selective demolition of additional buildings and proposes a number of infill developments. Repeating the same rotation as depicted in scenario #1, we begin slightly east of the North Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection. The existing Verizon building located on Block 501, Lot 12 is to be converted into 5,250 square feet of retail space while maintaining 5,250 square feet of industrial

space. The north-east side of the North Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection consisting of the existing Nite Dippers bar and four apartments, (Block 501, Lot 10), the apartment buildings totaling seven units and hair salon (Block 501, Lot 11), and the single-family detached home (Block 501, Lot 9) are being comprehensively redesigned into a two-story building consisting of 6,786 square feet of retail and 6,786 square feet of office and four residential units. The corner of the building has been angled to add a more inviting entrance and to allow for a greater sidewalk area. Continuing north, the existing Taco Bell Restaurant (Block 501, Lot 8) will remain.

The properties north of North Run Creek consisting of Bird's Towing and Automotive (Block 501, Lot 4.01), NAPA Auto Parts, a residential property (Block 501, Lot 5), and three vacant lots (Block 501, Lot 6, Block 501, Lot 7, and Block 501, Lot 4) are proposed to be comprehensively redeveloped into three, two-story mixed use buildings fronting along North Fort Dix Street, which will total 20,000 square feet of retail and office space. A one-story retail "anchor" building of 30,000 square feet is also being proposed behind the buildings fronting North Fort Dix Street with pedestrian linkages to the mixed-use buildings in the front and to adjacent multi-family apartment complexes. It is contemplated that NAPA Auto parts could remain on-site in one of the retail spaces. Ancillary parking, streetscape and landscaping are being proposed. Continuing north, both the existing Papa Johns Pizza Restaurant located on Block 501, Lot 4.02 and the Sebastian's Schnitzelhaus located on Block 501, Lot 4.03 will remain. An outside dining area is included in front of Papa Johns, which is currently occupied by parking in front of the building. A new one-story retail building of 900 square feet is being proposed on Block 501, Lot 3 that would be suitable for a Rita's Water Ice or similar retail use with parking located behind the building. Continuing the theme of scenario #1, the parking areas will be interconnected via cross easements thereby reducing traffic along North Fort Dix Street.

Crossing over North Fort Dix Street and continuing south, the properties consisting of the existing Volmar Construction industrial building located on Block 302, Lots 36 & 38, the vacant building on Block 302, Lot 37, the two unit house on Block 302, Lot 33, and multi-family structure on Block 302, Lot 33.01 will all be razed and replaced with a two-story mixed-use retail/office building of 12,100 square feet and a one-story retail "anchor" building of 22,500 square feet. The existing motel located on Block 302, Lot 41 will remain. Ancillary parking, streetscape and landscape improvements are also being proposed. Continuing south across Augusta Street, the existing Kentucky Fried Chicken Restaurant located on Block 302, Lots 27-31 will remain. Continuing south, the existing self-service car wash located on Block 302, Lot 25 and the Sugar Cane Caribbean Grill Restaurant located on adjacent Block 302, Lots 23 & 24 will be razed and comprehensively redeveloped into two, two-story mixed use buildings fronting along North Fort Dix Street which will total 6,043 square feet of retail space with five residences above. It is anticipated that the Sugar Cane Grille would remain a tenant in one of the buildings.

Crossing the North Run Creek and continuing south the existing multi-use building located on Block 302, Lots 23 & 24 consisting of the restaurant, liquor store, and tax service will remain. It will be augmented by an outside dining area along the creek. Finally, the Seven-Eleven convenience store located at the northwest corner of North Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection (Block 302, Lots 18 & 19) will be razed and relocated into a new two-story mixed use retail and residential building totaling 6,700 square feet of retail space and five residences



above. The L-shaped building will hug the street line, having frontage along North Fort Dix Street and Main Street. The architecture will be similar to the architecture proposed in Patriots Walk in order to engender a continuation of sense of place being created in the downtown. The vacant Wrightstown Fire House located on Block 302, Lot 16 will also be razed and the site will be used for parking to support the new two-story mixed- use building. A pergola, brick wall, or other landscape element will be installed to hold the street line visually in front of the parking area. Exhibit H, Concept map #2, identifies the proposed vision plan as described above. Table 2 identifies the amount of existing and proposed square footage of the various uses as depicted on concept #2.

**Table 2: Building Inventory Concept #2**

<b>USE</b>	<b>EXISTING SQ. FT.</b>	<b>PROPOSED SQ. FT.</b>	<b>DEMO./DISCO SQ. FT.</b>	<b>TOTAL SQ. FT.</b>	<b>NET CHANGE</b>
Retail/Commercial	40,515	92,410	-14,984	117,941	+77,426
Institutional	2,762	0	-2,762	0	-2,762
Industrial	25,972	0	-19,770	6,202	-19,770
Office	0	25,060	0	25,060	+25,060
Lodging	6,600	0	0	6,600	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>75,849</b>	<b>117,470</b>	<b>-37,516</b>	<b>155,803</b>	<b>+79,954</b>
	<b>EXISTING UNITS</b>	<b>PROPOSED UNITS</b>	<b>DEMO/DISCO UNITS</b>	<b>TOTAL UNITS</b>	<b>NET CHANGE</b>
Single-Family Residential	2	0	-2	0	-2
Attached Residential	18	10	-14	14	-4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>-16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>-6</b>

### **CONCEPT #3: NO RESTRAINTS**

Concept three builds upon the planning vision of the first two scenarios and takes a more liberal approach to redevelopment by creating a vision plan that emphasizes total redevelopment with little regard to the built environment. The “no restraints” approach includes demolition of blighted and non-usable buildings, demolition of other buildings and a redevelopment opportunity for uses more appropriate for creating a pedestrian-friendly environment with more diversity of uses.

Repeating the same rotation as depicted in scenarios #1 & #2, we begin slightly east of the North Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection. The existing Verizon building located on Block 501, Lot 12 is to be converted into 5,250 square feet of retail space and maintain 5,250 square feet of industrial space. The northeast side of the North Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection consisting of the existing Nite Dippers bar and four apartments, (Block 501, Lot 10), the apartment buildings totaling seven units and hair salon (Block 501, Lot 11), and the single-family detached home (Block 501, Lot 9) are being comprehensively redesigned into a two-story multi-use retail/office building with 7,270 square feet of retail on the first floor and 7,270 square feet of office on the second floor. Continuing north, the existing Taco Bell Restaurant (Block 501, Lot 8) will remain.

The properties north of North Run Creek consisting of an automobile repair facility (Block 501, Lot 4.01), a residential property (Block 501, Lot 5), and three vacant lots (Block 501, Lot 6, Block 501, Lot 7, and Block 501, Lot 4) is proposed to be comprehensively redeveloped into three two-story mixed use buildings fronting along North Fort Dix Street which will total which will total 20,000 square feet of retail and office space. A one-story retail “anchor” building of 30,000 square feet is also being proposed behind the mixed-use buildings fronting North Fort Dix Street with pedestrian linkages to the mixed- use buildings in the front and to adjacent multi-family apartment complexes. A village green is proposed between two of the buildings and extends into a secondary green corridor. It is envisioned that this place for civil interaction will be highly visible from Fort Dix Street and will be flanked with public art and seating areas. Continuing north, the existing Papa Johns Pizza Restaurant located on Block 501, Lot 4.02 and the Sebastian’s Schnitzel Hus located on Block 501, Lot 4.03 will remain. A new one-story retail building of 4000 square feet is being proposed on Block 501, Lots 2.01 & 3 with parking behind the building. The redevelopment of this site also extends into North Hanover Township and therefore will require approval by both municipalities. Continuing the theme of previous scenarios, the parking areas will be interconnected via cross easements thereby reducing traffic along North Fort Dix Street.

Crossing over North Fort Dix Street and continuing south, the properties consisting of the existing Volmar Construction industrial building located on Block 302, Lots 36 & 38, the vacant building on Block 302, Lot 37, the two unit house on Block 302, Lot 33, a two unit house on Block 302, Lot 35 & p/o Lot 33.01, and the Passport Inn lodge (Block 302, Lot 41) will all be razed and replaced with two comprehensively designed two-story multi-use retail/office building. Each building will have 17,800 square feet of retail space on the first floor and nine residential units on the second floor for a total of 35,600 square feet of commercial space and 20 residential units. These buildings will front North Fort Dix Street and the parking proposed for the buildings will be located behind the buildings with secondary access from Augusta Street. Streetscape and landscape improvements along the frontage of North Fort Dix Street and within the parking area are also being proposed.

Continuing south across Augusta Street, the existing Kentucky Fried Chicken Restaurant located on Block 302, Lots 27-31 will remain. Continuing south, the existing self-service car wash located on Block 302, Lot 25 and the Sugar Cane Caribbean Grill Restaurant located on adjacent Block 302, Lots 23 & 24 will be razed and comprehensively redeveloped into two, two-story mixed use buildings fronting along North Fort Dix Street which will total 12,000 square feet of retail and office space. It is anticipated that the Sugar Cane Grille would remain a tenant in one of the buildings.

Crossing the North Run Creek and continuing south the existing multi-use building located on Block 302, Lots 23 & 24 consisting of restaurant, liquor store, and tax service will remain. Finally, the Seven-Eleven convenience store located at the northwest corner of North Fort Dix Street and Main Street intersection (Block 302, Lots 18 & 19) will be razed and relocated into a new two-story mixed- use retail and office building totaling 13,400 square feet. The L-shaped building will hug the street line, having frontage along North Fort Dix Street and Main Street. The architecture will be similar to the architecture proposed in Patriots Walk in order to

engender a continuation of sense of place being created in the downtown. The architecture for this building is particularly important at this key intersection in order to create a core of development that is a unique point of reference. The vacant Wrightstown Fire House located on Block 302, Lot 16 will also be razed and the site will be used for parking to support the new two-story mixed-use building. Landscape elements such as a pergola or brick wall will be utilized in front of the parking area to maintain the street line visually. Pedestrian linkages to the adjacent multi-family developments (Wrightstown Arms Apartments and Maple Court Apartments) are incorporated into the plan, as well as pedestrian and bicycle trails along the North Run Creek. Exhibit I, Concept map #3, depicts the proposed vision plan as described above. Table 3 identifies the amount of existing and proposed square footage of the various uses as depicted on Concept #3.

**Table 3: Building Inventory Concept #3**

<b>USE</b>	<b>EXISTING SQ. FT.</b>	<b>PROPOSED SQ. FT.</b>	<b>DEMO./DISCONTINUED SQ. FT.</b>	<b>TOTAL SQ. FT.</b>	<b>NET CHANGE</b>
Retail/Commercial	40,515	107,600	-14,984	133,151	+92,636
Institutional	2,762	0	-2,762	0	-2,762
Industrial	25,972	0	-19,770	6,202	-19,770
Office	0	42,861	0	42,861	+42,861
Lodging	6,600	0	-6,600	0	-6,600
<b>Totals</b>	<b>75,849</b>	<b>150,481</b>	<b>-44,116</b>	<b>182,214</b>	<b>+106,365</b>
	<b>EXISTING UNITS</b>	<b>PROPOSED UNITS</b>	<b>DEMO/DISCO UNITS</b>	<b>TOTAL UNITS</b>	<b>NET CHANGE</b>
Single-Family Residential	2	0	-2	0	-2
Attached Residential	18	20	-18	20	+2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>-20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>

## DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

The existing square footage of 75,849 square feet of commercial, lodging, and industrial uses, combined with the existing 20 residential units in the Study Area, have a total assessed value of over \$4 million.<sup>39</sup> The proposed development in Concept #3 more than doubles the square footage of business properties in the Study Area, resulting in 182,214 square feet of commercial and office space. It also maintains 20 residential units in the Study Area, albeit in a new and improved arrangement. Using an estimate of \$90/sq ft for commercial and office space, it is anticipated that Concept# 3 would have a total investment value of over \$16 million,<sup>40</sup> resulting in a net assessed value gain of approximately \$12 million.

<sup>39</sup> Wrightstown Tax Account Listing by Block/Lot, dated March 16, 2010.

<sup>40</sup> It is assumed for the purpose of this section of the report that there will be no net gain in residential assessed value, as there is no net gain in residential units. However, the reality is that it is likely that the new units would be assessed higher than the existing units.

Consequently, the Study Area currently generates roughly \$71,918 in taxes annually, of which only \$18,678 goes into the Borough's treasury.<sup>41</sup> Assuming a consistent tax rate, it is estimated that the additional \$12 million in development taxable assessed value would generate \$395,564 in tax revenue annually for County, School, and local purposes, resulting in \$102,732 being apportioned to the Borough on a yearly basis.<sup>42</sup>

Based on a 20-year period, the Borough would receive over \$2 million in annual taxes (not including interest). Public investment for streetscape improvements, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and landscaping is estimated to be approximately \$800,000. Thus, it would take approximately eight years for the streetscape improvements to pay for themselves. As the Study Area is located in a Redevelopment Area, there is also an opportunity for the Borough to utilize a PILOT program on new development in the Study Area, which would allow a more substantial amount of the tax revenues to come to the Borough, rather than being redirected to other entities.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

In order for the vision and recommendations set forth in this Study to be realized, specific implementation steps will need to be taken by the Borough of Wrightstown. Many of the implementation steps seek to provide the conditions under which the vision can be achieved, by way of providing sensible land use regulation, necessary public investments, the development of appropriate programs and policies, and other actions.

The execution of the implementation steps will likely be phased and is subject to a variety of factors, which determine their timing. These include:

- The availability of financial resources necessary to implement specific proposals;
- Whether an implementation step is a necessary precursor to or component of the rational evaluation of a new development project;
- The interdependence of the various implementation tasks, in particular, the degree to which implementing one item is dependent upon the successful completion of another item; and,
- The relative severity of the challenge which a particular implementation task is designed to remedy.

In view of these factors, it is not possible to put forward a precise timetable for the various implementation items. The priority for implementation will be listed by the period in which items should be completed. Year 1 items are the highest priority or easily achievable, while Year 10+ project could be completed as resources allow. It is expected that Year 1 items would be completed during the 2011-2012 Fiscal Year.

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<sup>41</sup>In 2009, the applied tax rate was 3.192, which consists of .564 County Tax, .054 County Library Tax, .073 County Open Space Tax, 1.762 Regional School Tax, .829 local municipal tax, and a REAP credit of .090, which varies year to year. The tax rate is a multiplier for use in determining the amount of tax levied upon each property. It is expressed as \$1 per \$100 of taxable assessed value. The tax rate is applied to existing assessed values after the EAV of 56.23 is taken into consideration. The EAV is not taken into consideration for future development, as it is believed that there will be a full revaluation in the near future.

<sup>42</sup> It is assumed for the purposes of this report that new construction would be assessed at full value and would not be subject to the EAV.

Responsible Party/Parties	Description	Timeframe	Associated Cost
<b>Private Development/Redevelopment Actions:</b>			
Borough, Local Businesses	Encourage Redevelopment of Vacant and Underutilized Sites	Year 1+	Marketing and Development Costs to Developer
Borough, Local Businesses	Encourage Exterior Renovation of Targeted Sites using Design Guidelines developed in this Study	Year 1+	Renovation Costs to Private Business
<b>Zoning Changes</b>			
Borough	Adopt Zoning Ordinance amendments that reflect land use principles developed in this Study, including building setbacks, impervious coverage, parking requirements, permitted uses and signage	Year 1-2	Planning, Solicitor, and Public Advertising Fees
<b>Marketing Strategies</b>			
Borough, Local Businesses	Convert Strategy Committee to Wrightstown Business Intergovernmental Association (WBIA)	Year 1	Planning Consultant Fees
WBIA	Membership in Burlington County Chamber of Commerce	Year 1	Annual Dues
Borough, WBIA	Adopt Logo and Branding	Year 1	
Borough, Web Designer	Develop Borough Website	Year 1	Web Design, Maintenance Fees
Borough, RDG	Submit press releases to Media Outlets	Year 1	Planning Fees
Local Businesses, Web Designer	Develop Internet marketing for local businesses (websites and e-mail campaigns)	Year 1	Web Design, Maintenance Fees
Borough, Saylors Pond LLC	Create marketing brochure to attract regional merchants and businesses	Year 2	Graphic Design, Reproduction costs, Postage
Borough, WBIA	Create marketing brochure to attract visitors	Year 2	Graphic Design, Reproduction Fees, staff time distributing
Borough, WBIA	Continue dialogue with Joint Base Representatives to Identify Additional Marketing Opportunities at Joint Base	Year 1-2	
Borough, WBIA	Implement Spring and Fall Event Series	Year 3	Entertainment Costs, Promotion Costs, Security, Volunteer and Borough staff time
Borough	Design and install new signs	Year 3	Sign Costs, Installation Costs
Borough, WBIA	Co-op Advertising	Year 3	Advertising Design Costs, Ad Placement Costs
Borough, WBIA	Consider Business Improvement District	Year 5-10	Tax Assessor, Staff Time
<b>Civic Infrastructure Improvements</b>			
Borough, County	Design, purchase, and install new streetscape elements including decorative lighting with banner arms, street trees, landscaping, public art. (Starting South of	Year 5-10	Plan costs, Light Fixture Costs, Banner Costs, Tree and Landscaping and



	Main Street in 2010-2011).		art Costs
<b>Transportation, Circulation, &amp; Parking Improvements</b>			
Property Owner, Borough	Install Continuous Sidewalks on Eastern Side of Street upon Redevelopment	Year 5-10	Easement acquisition, engineering costs, construction costs
Borough	Design and install additional mid-block crosswalks	Year 3-5	Engineering fees, construction costs
Borough, County	Eliminate Center-Turning Lane and Install on-street parking with 2-hour parking signs on Fort Dix St	Year 3-5	County Planning Board fees, Engineering Fees, Paint, Signs
Borough, County	Change Signal Timing at Intersection	Year 3-5	County Planning Board fees, Traffic engineer fees
Property Owners, Borough, County	Encourage businesses to consolidate driveways, provide cross access and utilize shared rear alleys	Year 1+	
Property Owner	Replace cracked sidewalk and curbing at Fort Dix Street/Main Street intersection	Year 1-3	Construction Costs, County Access Permit Costs
Borough, County	Upgrade intersection by incorporating information features for visually impaired and aesthetic improvements	Year 1-5	Design and Construction costs, Planning Bord fees,
Borough	Contact EP Henry to determine if interested in donating products to upgrade intersection	Year 1	
Borough, Property Owners	Develop and implement plans to provide pedestrian connections to multi-family apartment complexes when new development occurs	Year 5-10	Design and construction costs
Borough Property Owners	Develop and implement plans to install pedestrian footbridge across creek in conjunction with the development of a trail system along the creek.	Year 5-10	Design, Engineer and construction costs and NJDEP permitting fees
Borough	Contact Joint Base representatives to discuss shuttle bus	Year 1	
Borough, North Hanover	Petition NJ Transit to install bus shelter and implement new bus route upon further development of North Hanover's TDR receiving area	Year 10+	

## CONCLUSION

This Study is intended to establish a framework for the revitalization of the corridor through a series of incremental private and public development decisions. Future development decisions must be carefully guided by the Borough Council and Joint Land Use Board to ensure that this vision is implemented. Most importantly, it must be stressed that the Plan represents the *conceptual* build-out of the planning area. The recommendations set forth in this document are suggestions intended to guide the Borough of Wrightstown in realizing the potential for development. Patience will be necessary as components of this plan may exceed fifteen to twenty (15-20) years before their realization. However, progress is already beginning. As a consequence of our initial visioning sessions, one owner has acquired a second property and is

pursuing a third property. A recent meeting with the Mayor, property owner, and Ragan Design Group was fruitful and marks the beginning of private sector investment in the Study Area.

## **LIST OF EXHIBITS**

EXHIBIT A, Street Panoramas

EXHIBIT B, Water Distribution System

EXHIBIT C, Sewer Collection System

EXHIBIT D, Conceptual Sketch Of Patriots Walk Of Fame

EXHIBIT E, Fort Dix Street, Main Street Intersection Proposed Concept

EXHIBIT F, Existing Land Use Conditions

EXHIBIT G, Concept 1

EXHIBIT H, Concept 2

EXHIBIT I, Concept 3



FORMER FIREHOUSE

7-11 CONVENIENT STORE

FORT DIX STREET  
INTERSECTION



NIGHT DIPPERS

APARTMENTS

HAIR SALON &  
APARTMENTS



VERIZON

MARTHA AVENUE

EXISTING CONDITIONS - NORTH SIDE OF MAIN STREET  
FORT DIX STREET REVITALIZATION PLAN  
Borough of Wrightstown, Burlington County, NJ





BURLINGTON CAR  
COMPANY

SEBASTIAN'S  
SCHNITZEL HOUSE

PAPA JOHNS



SINGLE FAMILY  
HOUSE

BIRD'S TOWING

NAPA AUTO PARTS



CREEK

TACO BELL

SINGLE FAMILY  
HOUSE

NIGHT DIPPERS

EXISTING CONDITIONS - EAST SIDE OF FORT DIX ROAD  
FORT DIX STREET REVITALIZATION PLAN  
Borough of Wrightstown, Burlington County, NJ

EXHIBIT **A-2**





MAIN STREET

7-11 CONVENIENT STORE

COMMERCIAL STRIP



SUGAR CANE  
CARRIBEAN GRILL

CAR WASH

KENTUCKY FRIED  
CHICKEN

AUGUSTA STREET



PASSPORT INN

TRONCO APARTMENTS

VACANT PROPERTY

VOLMAR CONSTRUCTION

EXISTING CONDITIONS - WEST SIDE OF FORT DIX ROAD  
FORT DIX STREET REVITALIZATION PLAN  
Borough of Wrightstown, Burlington County, NJ



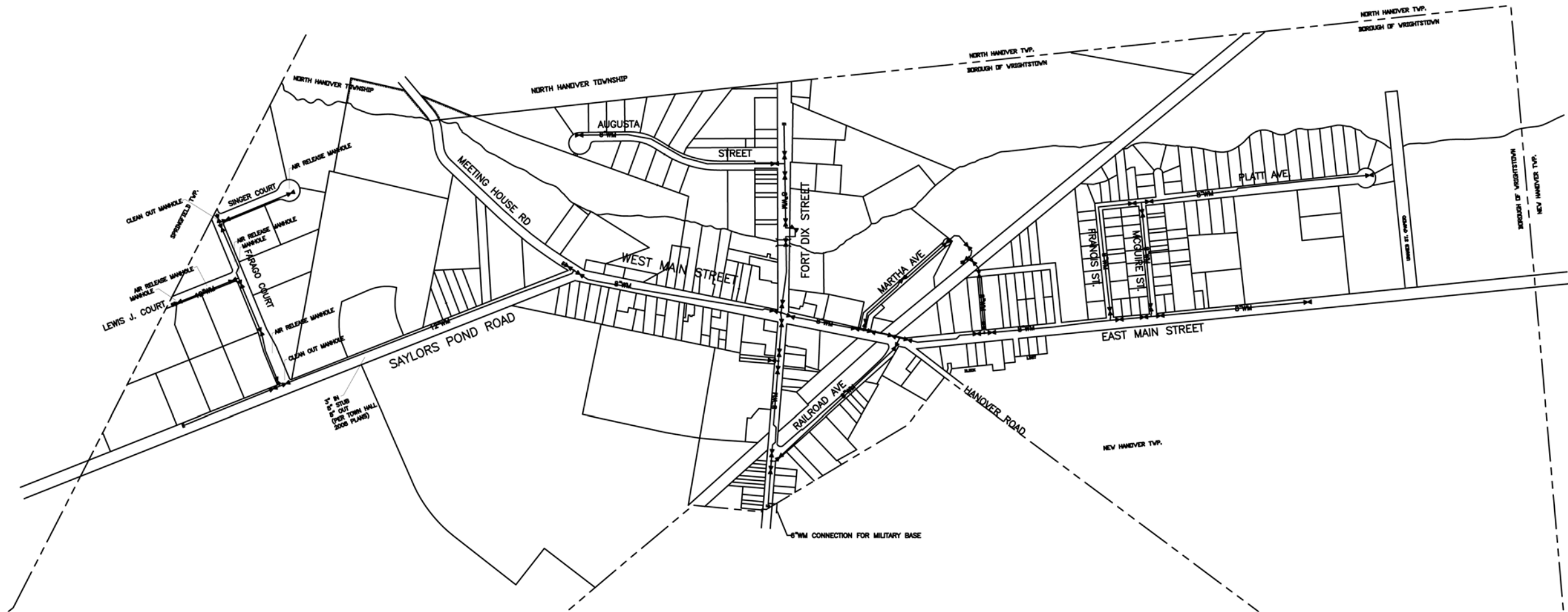


EXHIBIT **B**

REV. NO.		DATE :	05/11/09	REVISION:	BY:	W
DATE :		05/11/09				
DRAWN BY :		WTS				
SCALE :		1"=300'				
APPLICATION NO. :						
WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM				KLUK CONSULTANTS		
WRIGHTSTOWN MUA				2 EASTWICK DRIVE - SUITE 202 GIBBSBORO, NEW JERSEY 08026		
WRIGHTSTOWN, BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY				TEL. (856) 566-0013, FAX (856) 346-1340		

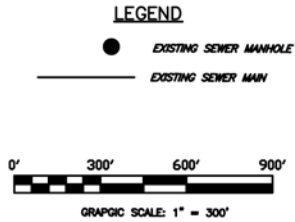
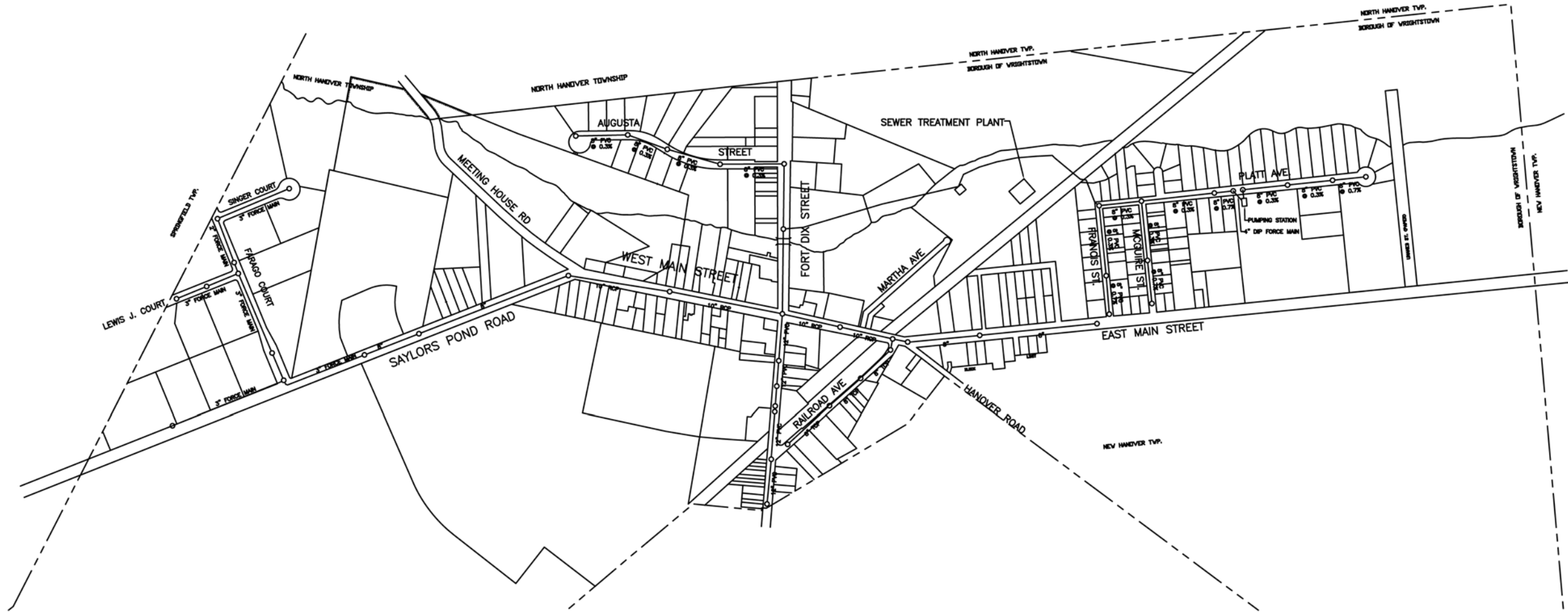
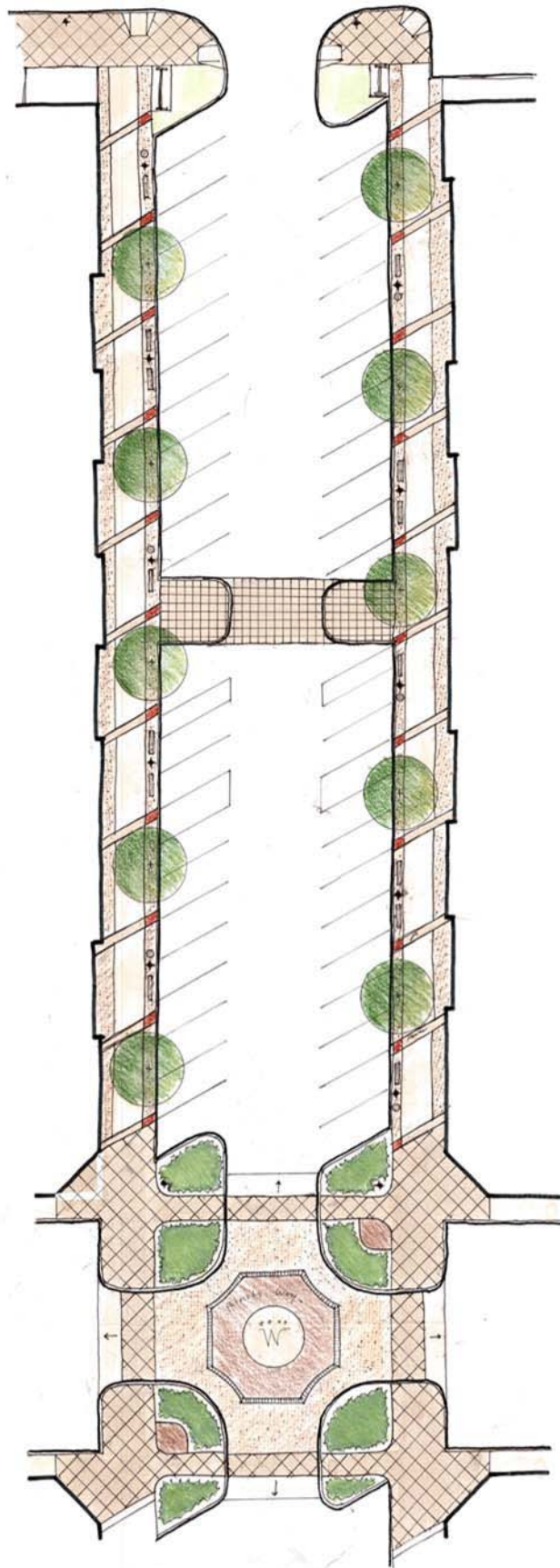


EXHIBIT C

WW	REV. NO.	DATE :	REVISION:	SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM WRIGHTSTOWN MUA WRIGHTSTOWN, BURLINGTON COUNTY, NEW JERSEY	KLUK CONSULTANTS 2 EASTWICK DRIVE - SUITE 202 GIBBSBORO, NEW JERSEY 08026 TEL. (856) 566-0013. FAX (856) 346-1340
	DATE :	05/11/09	BY:		
	DRAWN BY :	WTS			
	SCALE :	1"=300'			
	APPLICATION NO. :				



CONCEPTUAL SKETCH OF PATRIOT'S WALK OF FAME

NOT TO SCALE

EXHIBIT **D**

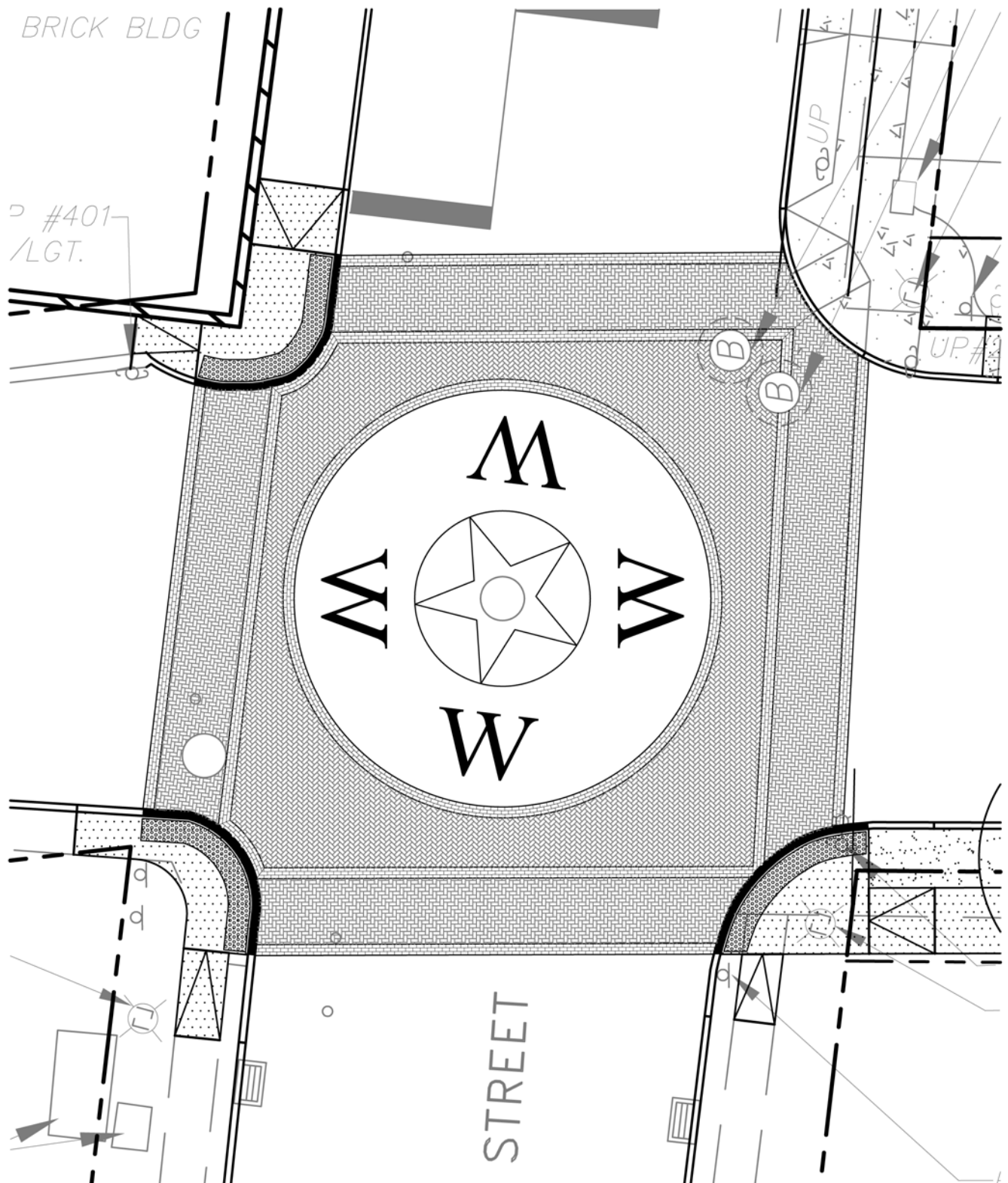


EXHIBIT **E**

FORT DIX STREET AND MAIN STREET INTERSECTION CONCEPT PLAN

NOT TO SCALE















