

**Master Plan
Reexamination Report
Township of Eastampton
Burlington County, New Jersey**



Prepared For:

**Eastampton Township Land Use Planning Board
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November, 2006

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1.0 A report on the reexamination of the master plan and development ordinances

1.1 Purpose of reexamination. The Municipal Land Use Law - NJSA 40:55D-89 (MLUL) requires the Township Council, at least every six years, to provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the Land Use Planning Board. The purpose for this periodic review is to examine the impact that the forces of change are having on the community and its goals and objectives. The chapter headings of the Reexamination Report follow the format established by NJSA 40:55D-89.

The MLUL states that failure to comply with the reexamination requirement “shall constitute a rebuttable presumption that the municipal development regulations are no longer reasonable.”

Beyond the statutory requirements, the Reexamination Report is a tool to identify outdated zoning, land use conflicts and point to land use and development controls that should be updated. Further, it also provides the community with an opportunity to review the needs and initiatives of other governmental bodies operating in the municipality. Thus, the Reexamination Report sets the Township’s planning agenda for the next six years.

1.2. Documents reviewed during preparation of report.

1998 Master Plan - The last comprehensive review of the Eastampton Township Master Plan occurred in 1998 in the form of a new master plan, which also provided for new zoning and development regulations. The 1998 Plan was a continuation of the 1988 Plan, which provided a comprehensive baseline of information about the Township’s land capacity and introduced new growth management concepts. The Township’s priorities over the past seventeen (17) years are reflected in this document, which established a broad “Smart Growth” vision.

2001 Master Plan Revisions – These revisions provided an Open Space Element along with related changes to the Land Use Element.

2003 Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRCP) Transportation and Circulation Study, Route 206/Farmbelt Corridor.

2004 Smart Growth Grant: Town Center Design Plan – This plan was prepared through a Smart Growth Grant from the NJDCA and was based upon a comprehensive public input process that included a planning policy questionnaire and a Visual Preference Survey™.

2005 Redevelopment Plan - This plan replaced the 1999 Redevelopment Plan.

2005 Stormwater Management Plan.

2005 Housing Plan Element/Fair Share Plan. This replaced a 2004 version in response to new Round Three requirements established by the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH).

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

The major problems and objectives outlined in the 1998 Plan are as follows:

2.1 Conserve natural resources and preserve open space. This objective called for guiding growth away from environmentally sensitive areas and directing it to more suitable locations. The 2001 Open Space Plan Element identified areas for preservation and called for the creation of a green belt around the Township's developed core, in the form of new parks, preserved farmland and conservation areas.

2.2 Promote beneficial economic growth. The 1998 Plan called for achieving a greater diversity in the Township's ratable base through the creation of new business facilities near or adjacent to the Route 206 corridor. In 1988, 4.3 percent of the Township's total taxable land area was in commercial or industrial use and remained the same through 1998. It also encouraged the use of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) to foster more productive use of commercial lands in places where infrastructure was already established.

2.3 Protect environment and clean up pollution. The 1998 Plan linked environmental protection with economic growth. It referenced the desire to redevelop areas in order to conserve resources, and promote pedestrianism in order to reduce congestion and energy consumption. The 1998 Plan also set out to protect existing trees and vegetation, encourage recycling and improve stormwater management.

2.4 Provide adequate public facilities and services. The 1998 Plan expressed a preference for the location of public facilities in ways that maximized the availability of infrastructure in developed areas.

2.5 Provide adequate housing at reasonable cost. The Fair Housing Act of 1985 resulted in the establishment of the Council on Affordable Housing, which will periodically set affordable housing goals for each municipality. The 1998 Plan and 2001 Revisions acknowledged the need to address the obligation at the time and identified a strategy to meet this requirement.

2.6 Encourage redevelopment. The majority of Eastampton was developed during a period when land use planning emphasized a strict separation of uses, which is sometimes referred to as "Euclidean Zoning." The development of a mixed use Town Center, which the Town has considered a desirable feature since the 1988 Plan, has proven to be difficult to accomplish through this planning approach. The 1998 Plan acknowledged many of the desirable features of a Town Center, but called for the use of the LRHL to encourage redevelopment in the existing commercial area to achieve this goal.

3.0 The extent to which such problems have been reduced or increased since that time

3.1 Conserve natural resources and preserve open space. The goal of preserving and protecting open space and farmland in Eastampton has been completed. Through the use of various tools, the amount of permanently preserved open space, farmland and conservation areas increased from 6.3 percent of the Township’s land area in 1998 to 33.7 percent by 2005 as indicated in the table below. Financing of the open space program was achieved through a local open space tax and grants from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection - Green Acres Program, the Burlington County Open Space Program, and the Burlington County Farmland Preservation Program. The residents authorized the Township Council to set a maximum local open space tax at 23 cents per \$100 of assessed value for land acquisition that generates approximately \$450,000 a year in revenue for this purpose based on a current rate of 18 cents.

The Township also created a zone that allowed for Wetlands Mitigation, which reserved a portion of the Township to serve as a receiving area for wetlands restoration projects. These strategies allowed the Township to secure most of the open space priorities listed in the 2001 Open Space Plan Element.

The open space program resulted in an open space inventory totaling +/- 1,230 acres of land.

Eastampton Township Open Space Conservation Table	Acres
Twp. parks and open space in 1998	80
County parks and open space in 1998	151
Total parks and open space in 1998	231
Total as percentage of land area	6.3 %
New preserved farmland since 1998	352
New municipal parks and open space since 1998	203
New regional parks and open space since 1998 (high school and county park facilities)	120
New conservation and wetland protection areas	325
Total new municipal and regional open space, farms, conservation areas since 1998	1,000
Total parks, open space, farmland and conservation areas	1,231
Total as percentage of land area	33.7%

3.2 Promote beneficial economic growth. The need to diversify the Township’s tax base, provide residents with local employment opportunities and commercial, professional and retail services remains a Township priority. In 1988, only 4.3 percent of the Township’s land area was classified as commercial or industrial, which has remained generally unchanged as indicated in the following table of land uses for 2006.

TAX ASSESSORS UPDATE TABLES TO REFLECT REVALUATION

TAXABLE LAND USE	% OF TAX BASE	% OF LAND AREA	VALUATION
Residential*	84.2%	23.8%	438,166,300
Farm/Home	0.9%	21.3%	4,902,700
Farm/Land	0.1%	4.2%	538,400
Commercial	5.9%	42.8%	30,855,000
Industrial	0.3%	5.8%	1,300,000
Apartment	7.1%	0.2%	36,900,000
Vacant	1.5%	2.0%	7,700,000
Total	100%	100%	\$ 520,362,400

Source: Eastampton Tax Assessor’s Office

There are four areas where the Township is seeking to promote economic growth in order to provide for the economic well-being of the municipality. These areas include the mixed-use Town Center, the Route 206 corridor, the Smithville/Woodlane Road Business Park and the former landfill on Route 38. Since 2003, five significant projects have been approved through most of these areas.

As indicated in the table below, 6.2 percent of the Township’s tax base is composed of commercial or industrial properties while the County average is 16.7 percent. Establishing a diversity of property tax revenue sources is important to the long range economic health of the Township and is a critical aspect of any municipality’s credit rating, which can have an impact on its ability to undertake capital improvements.

TAXABLE LAND USE	% TAX BASE EASTAMPTON	% TAX BASE BURLINGTON
Residential	84.2%	77.2%
Farm/Home	0.9%	1.1%
Farm/Land	0.1%	0.2%
Commercial	5.9%	13.8%
Industrial	0.3%	2.9%
Apartment	7.1%	3.0%
Vacant	1.5%	1.8%

Source: Eastampton Tax Assessor's Office

3.3 Protect environment and clean up pollution. Eastampton has made major strides in achieving the many environmental goals established in the 1998 Plan. As previously discussed, the open space preservation program was the most important environmental priority of the 1998 Plan. Nevertheless, environmental health is an ongoing priority for the Township.

In the 1988 Plan, the most pressing environmental issue in the Township included clean-up of a salvage yard at the intersection of Woodlane and Monmouth Roads and preservation of open space. The salvage yard has been removed and in its place is a new CVS Pharmacy, which opened for business in 2000.

In 2005, the Township adopted a new stormwater management plan in conformance with State DEP requirements. The Township's primary environmental focus will be on implementing the Stormwater Management Plan, and doing its part to promote surface and ground water quality.

3.4 Provide adequate facilities and services. There is an ongoing need in the community to create a unique identity and sense of place that can be encouraged by the proper placement of civic buildings. The Township's preference for locating public facilities within the Town Center will provide an important downtown civic element that is now missing. The goal of utilizing public facilities to revitalize neighborhoods and create mixed use centers is consistent with the 2001 State of New Jersey Development and Redevelopment Plan for Suburban Planning Areas (PA2). There may be opportunities to address this objective through the relocation of the Eastampton Police Department to the area, which is outgrowing its current headquarters on Smithville Road.

Eastampton is in the process of taking a concrete step toward this goal through a \$20 million school consolidation project now under construction. This project will convert the existing Eastampton Middle School into a K-8 facility to be known as the Eastampton Community School. The existing elementary school will be closed and converted for a commercial use yet to be determined.

Some of the “Smart Growth” objectives the Township will achieve through the Eastampton Community School project include (1) the incorporation of a Community Center component into the design of the facility making it a public investment that can be utilized year around, (2) providing easy access for most residential neighborhoods that encourages biking and walking, and (3) employing better community design techniques that enhance the mixed use character of the surrounding neighborhood such as screened parking and more complementary architecture and landscaping.

3.5 Provide adequate housing at reasonable cost. Eastampton has addressed the affordable housing requirement that existed when the 1998 Plan was adopted. This is a new 100-unit low and moderate income rental facility in the redevelopment area, known as the Eastampton Town Center Apartments, was constructed in 2001. Eastampton had an obligation to provide 70 affordable housing units under a Superior Court decision, which has resulted in a sufficient number of credits to meet its Third Round anticipated growth share allocation. In November 7, 2005 the Township Planning Board adopted a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and on November 14, 2005 the Township Council adopted a resolution requesting certification from the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH).

3.6 Encourage redevelopment (town center). Redevelopment of the Township’s central commercial area as a means of promoting economic growth was a key feature of the 1998 Plan. Addressing this objective continues to be a priority for the Township as many opportunities for economic growth remain available.

In 2003, the Township received a Smart Growth Grant from NJDCA to bring greater focus on strategies and techniques that could be used to create a central mixed use area as expressed in both the 1988 and 1998 Plans. The grant funded community workshops that the Township refers to as the “Plan the Land” program, which brought together approximately 200 residents, property owners and elected and appointed officials in the Township to focus on the Town Center concept. The resulting Town Center Design Plan provides for a desired pattern of development that should be reflected in new zoning changes to meet the Township’s goals. The central feature of the Town Center is traditional community green enclosed by mixed-use buildings containing retail, office and residential uses. This is not a new concept for Eastampton because it was initially described in the 1988 Plan (page 84) following the guidance from a another public opinion survey entitled “Won’t You Help Us Plan” and a visual preference survey administered to the Planning Board and Township Council.

The Smart Growth Grant: Town Center Design Plan set the boundaries of the Town Center on Woodlane Road between Ashurst Lane and Smithville Road, which also marks the Township’s PA2 boundary, as indicated in the 2003 Preliminary State Plan Map. In addition, the Town Center goal supports the centers concept contained within the 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

Establishing an identifiable, cohesive, mixed use and attractive Town Center remains an outstanding item from both the 1988 and 1998 Plans. The Township is optimistic that the professional and community guidance derived from the Smart Growth Grant: Town Center Design Plan will allow for its implementation.

4.0 The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in state, county and municipal policies and objectives.

4.1 Density and distribution of population and land uses. Overall, the density and distribution of population has not changed significantly from the 1998 Plan and 2001 Revisions. The only notable growth occurred in the VCD zone with the construction of a 100 unit affordable housing development completed in 2001, which represents a 5 percent increase in the number of households.

In 2004, a small mixed use infill project was constructed on a vacant lot in the VCD zone. It provided for three (3) townhomes and a mixed-use building with two (2) apartments above 2,300 square feet of ground floor retail space. The density of the development exceeded historic densities in the area but was permitted on the basis of opportunities for shared parking in nearby facilities.

Population and Housing Unit Trends					
Population			Housing Units		
1990*	2000*	2004**	1990*	2000*	2004***
4,962	6,202	6,745	1,770	2,312	2,485

* US Bureau of the Census, Census 2000

** Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

*** 2000 Housing Units plus 2001-2004 Units from DVRPC

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission projects a build out of 436 more residential units. The Township disagrees with this projection on the basis of the 2003 Smart Growth Grant Town Center Design Plan study and its open space acquisition and farmland preservation program. As reported in the 2005 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, Eastampton anticipates approximately 176 additional households by 2013 with a potential build of 250 total new residential units, which would yield 500 more residents for a build out population of 7,245 residents.

4.2 Housing. The 2003 Smart Growth Grant studies identified a need to create housing options for residents of all age groups, which the Town Center Design Plan

provided with a Traditional Neighborhood Design setting. There were no other changes in the underlying assumptions regarding housing issues.

General conditions. In general, Eastampton Township’ stock is in very good condition. Approximately 86 percent of the housing stock was constructed since 1960 and over 67 percent was constructed since 1970. According to the 2000 Census, approximately 70 percent of housing units are owner occupied.

Neighborhood	Units
Lakeview	140
Vistas	328
Carriage Park	266
Eastampton Farms	410
Gordon Heights	22
Mews	88
Eastampton Gardens	240
Sherwood Village	304
Monmth/Woodlne/Junp/Carol	126
Woodlane Condos	16
Eastampton Town Center	100
Hampton Manor Apt.	20
Hampton Crt. Apts	8
Route 206 Residential	14
Mobil/Manufactured	100
Powell Road East/Smithville	30
Powell Road (West)	19
Monmouth/Smithville	30
All of Railroad Ave.	50
Rancocas Creek Area	70
Jennifer Court/Meadow Lane	30

Affordable Housing. The Township adopted the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan in November 2005 and petitioned COAH for certification. COAH’s May 10, 2006 Report of the initial analysis of information submitted indicates the Township has 51 credits for the period of 1987-1999 and a potential 21 surplus units for the growth share obligation. A response was submitted to COAH’s letter and the Township is awaiting COAH’s review of the additional information.

4.3 Circulation. The 2003 Smart Growth Grant Town Center Design Plan identified Woodlane Road, between the Smithville Road and Ashurst Lane, as Eastampton’s primary “Main Street.” Although “Main Street” circulation plan is not specifically addressed in previous Master Plans, the Township will work with Burlington County to identify appropriate planning and design parameters for this section of Woodlane Road. The 2004 Smart Growth Grant Town Center Design Plan also calls for establishing a local parallel road to Woodlane and envisions various pedestrian circulation improvements, streetscaping, on-street parking and traffic calming devices in specified locations.

One of the primary goals for Woodlane Road at the start of the reexamination process was the installation of a traffic light at the intersection of Woodlane Road and Student Drive, which is the principal access point to the consolidated K-8 Eastampton Community School. This goal was achieved in the fall of 2006. Additional safety measures for Woodlane Road are encouraged to accommodate non-motorized transportation.

In 2003, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) published a Transportation and Circulation Study for the Route 206 Farmbelt Corridor. There are a number of new circulation considerations to emerge from this document that focused on safety concerns at particular points along County and State roads within the Township. The issues of greatest concern include the intersection of Smithville and Powell Roads, which was made a 4-way stop in 2006, the Route 206 and Powell Road intersection, and the Route 206 and Woodlane Road intersection. The Township will continue to work with State and County agencies to improve these intersections.

4.4 Conservation of natural resource. The most significant assumption underlying the Township's past priorities that remains unresolved is the level of open space grant funding that was anticipated through the NJDEP Green Acres Program. The Township has established a local open space tax, which was approved at .23 cents and now sits at .085 cents, to compensate for the shortcoming in State grants. The tax rate was adjusted in 2006 to .085 cents to reflect updated land valuations, but the fiscal impact on the property owner is largely unchanged. At the time that the Open Space Element was adopted, the NJDEP Green Acres Bureau had promoted a grant program called the Planning Incentive Grant (P.I.G.). Under the P.I.G., a community with an agency approved Open Space Plan and a dedicated tax qualified for matching grants that would provide 50 percent of the acquisition cost. The State has made regular payments toward that funding level, but not at the rate initially anticipated resulting in a comparatively high open space tax, which can hinder the Township's ability to undertake other improvements.

4.5 Energy conservation and recycling. There have been no significant changes in the underlying assumptions of the 1998 Plan in these areas.

4.6 Changes in municipal policies and objectives.

Policies derived from 2004 Smart Growth Grant Studies (Plan the Land Workshops).

A strong Town Center, as expressed in the 2004 Smart Growth Grant Town Center Design Plan, was one of the most important features identified by the residents to enhance the quality of life in the Township, as initially discussed in the 1988 Plan and community survey entitled "Won't You Help Us Plan."

The 2003 Smart Growth Grant Town Center Design Plan built upon the 1988 Plan because it included a community wide Visual Preference Survey, which provided the design guidance that was not available in the 1998 Plan. The resulting Town Center

Design Plan essentially blended the 1988 and 1998 Plans. It called for the creation of a Town Center partially in developed areas and partially on undeveloped land.

The 2003 Smart Growth Grant Town Center Design Plan proposes to utilize approximately 35 acres of undeveloped land adjacent to the developed commercial area for a mixed use green. This 35 acre parcel was acquired by the Township in 2003 as part of a broader land purchase from a single owner, a majority of which was intended for open space preservation through the assistance of NJDEP Green Acres Bureau and the Burlington County Open Space Program. The 35 acres parcel, Block 600 Lot 2.07 and the 4.4 acre parcel, and Block 600 Lot 2.8 were purchased through a separate non-open space bond. However, there is a residual restriction in the title associated with the original 203.195 acre acquisition, of which 163.20 acres has been added to the Township's Open Space Inventory and enrolled in the NJDEP Green Acres open space preservation program. As discussed in section 3.4 entitled, "Provide adequate facilities and services," there is a need for a new police headquarters in the Township and Block 600 Lot 2.8 would be a suitable location for such a facility.

School Consolidation. The development of a consolidated K-8 school will free up the existing elementary school for a commercial purpose. Although the 1998 Plan established a need for economic growth, the availability of the elementary school property for an economic development purpose was not one of the underlying assumptions guiding the Plan. The Township has changed the zoning in this area in support of this goal.

4.7 Changes in County and State policies and objectives.

Route 206 Corridor – Eastampton Township is participating in a regional study with thirteen (13) other municipalities that make up the Route 206 Corridor in Burlington County in order to better coordinate growth in the region. The study is funded through a NJDCA Smart Growth Grant obtained through the Burlington County Office of Economic Development and Regional Planning.

Consistent with the Township's longstanding goal of strengthening its economic base, Eastampton has joined with the neighboring community of Pemberton Township to seek the State Planning Commission's endorsement of a commercial node at the Route 206 and Woodlane Road intersection under the Cross-Acceptance process. This proposal, which emerged from the Route 206 Corridor Study process, is listed as a negotiation item by the Burlington County Office of Economic Development and Regional Planning.

Although Route 206 is designated as Rural Planning Area, the Route 206/Woodlane Road node concept is consistent with the 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan in that it "promote(s) economic activities within centers that complement and support the agriculture and provide economic diversity and non agricultural opportunity." The Township believes that a commercial center organized around the preserved agricultural lands adjoining the Route 206 Corridor advance this State goal while contributing to a balance of land uses in Eastampton.

Statewide Policy Regarding Centers - The Preliminary State Plan map identifies the area contained within the 2003 Smart Growth Grant Town Center Design Plan as Suburban Planning Area (PA2). The Township's policy of making this the Town Center is consistent with State policy. For example, some of the SDRP's objectives for PA2 areas includes:

“Guiding development into compact centers, including retrofitting or restructuring single-use developments to accommodate mixed uses, expanded services, and cultural amenities.”

“Providing a variety of housing choices within mixed use Centers or retrofitted commercial developments.”

“Timing and sequencing the development of adequate public facilities and services to support the development of centers.”

5.0 The specific changes recommended for the master plan and development regulations or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.

5.1 Master Plan Update. Based on the analysis of changes documented in this report that have occurred in Eastampton over the past six years, a number of updates are recommended including a new zoning map (proposed new zoning map attached) along the following master plan changes:

Update master plan elements:

- Goals & Objectives Element
- Land Use Element

Establish new master plan elements:

- Community Design Standards - To reflect Smart Growth Grant community visioning results.

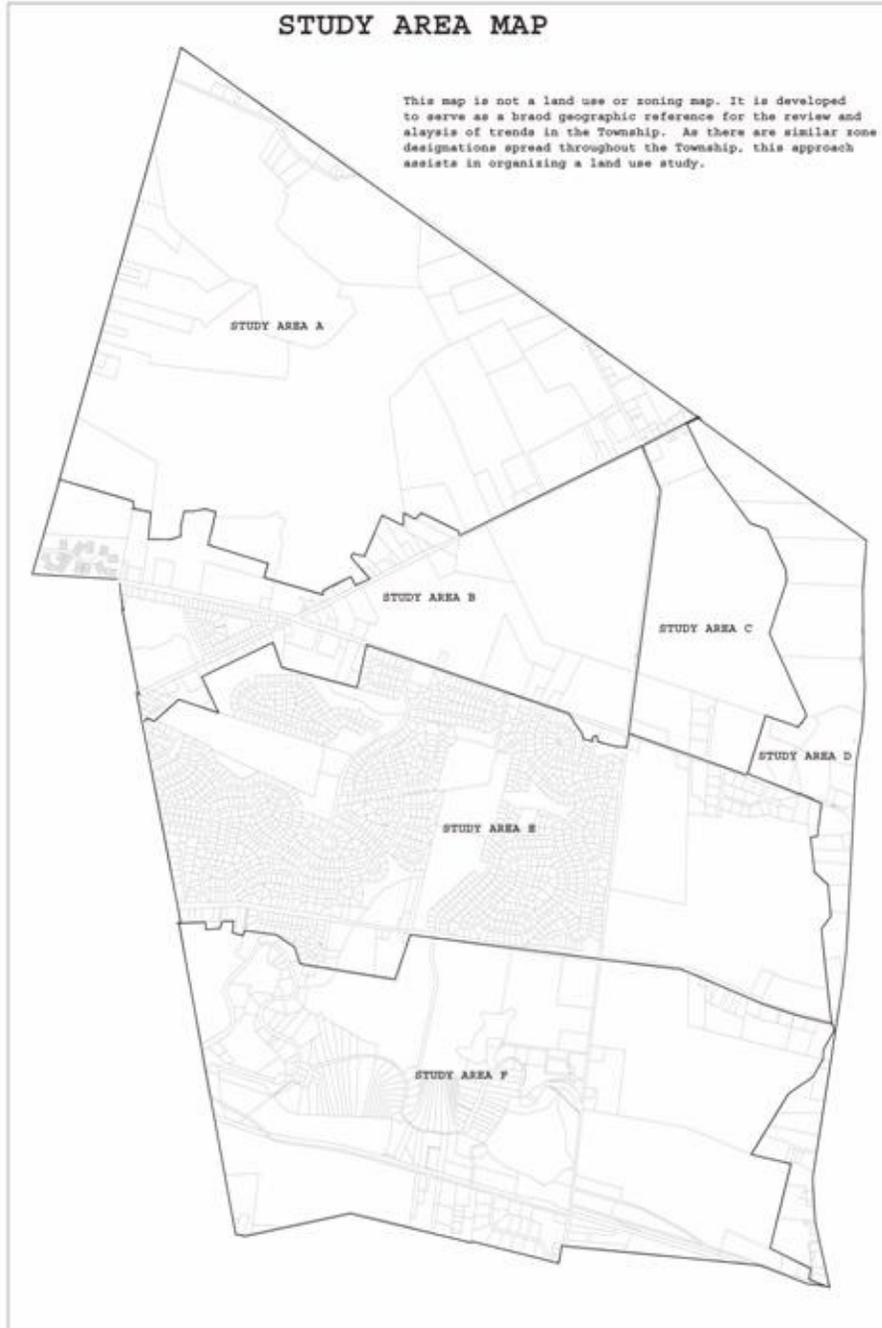
Master plan elements that are current:

- Housing Element & Fair Share Plan
- Recycling Plan Element
- Stormwater Management Plan

Elements and studies to be considered in the future:

- Circulation Element
- Open Space and Recreation Element
- Economic Development Element

4.2 Development Regulations. The Master Plan Subcommittee of the Land Use Planning Board recommends various changes the Township's development and zoning regulations. The recommendations are organized around six study areas as depicted on the Study Area Map below.



- R-L Residential Low Density
- R-M Residential Moderate Density
- R-H Residential high Density
- TCD Town Center District (see detailed map)
- R-1B Residential Inclusionary
- RU-L Rural Residential Low Density
- PO Planned Office
- BP Business Park
- CH Commercial Highway
- CNS Conservation
- CLR Cultural Recreational
- ACR Agricultural/Commercial/Recreation



Study Area A
(Current Zoning District: R1-B, RA, C2)

Description:

This area incorporates the northern section of the community. It is the most rural portion of Eastampton and is characterized by farmland, equestrian facilities, a wetlands mitigation site and two clusters of detached single-family residential neighborhoods, one is along Oxmead Road and another slightly larger neighborhood along Smithville and Monmouth Roads. The study area contains approximately 650 acres of land, half of which falls within the “wetlands mitigation area.” Area A is not served by a public water or sewer system. It contains two municipal streets (a portion of Oxmead Road and Smithville Road). There is also a small industrial/warehouse establishment, a restaurant and farmland around the intersection of Monmouth and Smithville Roads.

Recommendations:

1. Protect Agricultural Character - Single family dwellings are permitted in the RA zone and the minimum lot area is 15 acres. However, the trend has been to subdivide land into non-farm related single family dwellings. In order to maintain and promote a viable agricultural sector, it is recommended that continued subdivision of land for residential purposes, particularly when not associated with a parent agricultural use, be discouraged and minimum lot sizes should be maintained at 15 acres.
2. Promote Agricultural Opportunities - Other uses that are recommended for the RA zone include allowing for bed and breakfast facilities, commercial equestrian and ranch facilities, wineries, cooperative wholesale agricultural or organic agricultural product distribution facilities, and farmstands.
3. Enhance Wetlands Mitigation Site - The lower portion of Planning Area A is zoned R-1B. This designation was created when there was some uncertainty as to the method the Township would utilize to meet its affordable housing obligation that has since been resolved. It is recommended that the R1-B designation be removed from that portion of land dedicated for wetlands mitigation purposes and be designated a new “conservation” designation following the deed restrictions placed on this property by NJDEP.

Study Area B
(Current Zoning District: R-M, R-H, R1-B, VCD, BP/ACR)

Description:

This area offers a variety of retail, commercial, residential, civic, recreational and institutional uses. The largest establishments in the area include Gregory's Center, CVS Pharmacy, GSELL Moving and Storage, and three apartment complexes.

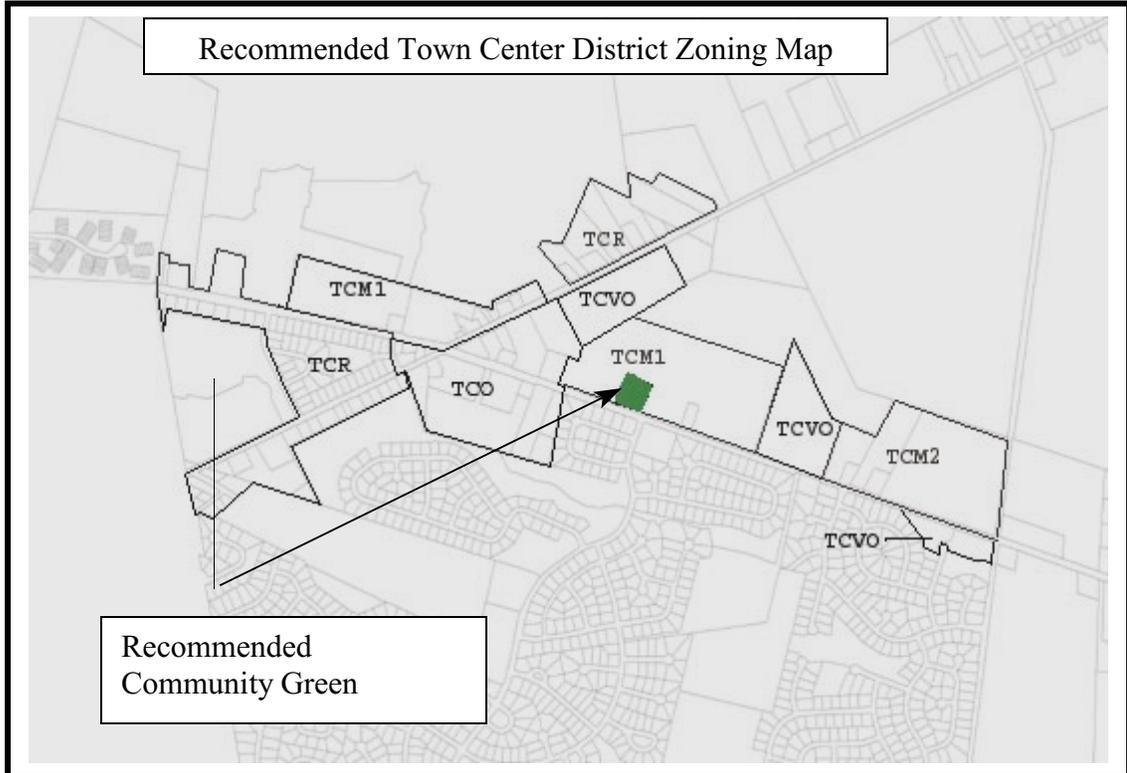
Since the 1998 Plan, there have been a number of positive investments including the construction of an award winning 100-unit affordable housing development completed in 2001. In 2005, a small mixed-use infill project on a vacant parcel, approximately 1/3 acre, was completed. A proposal for a mixed use development on a 20-acre site at the Woodlane and Smithville Road intersection has been approved and was designed to conform with the 2003 Smart Growth Grant Town Center Design plan for the area. Some sections of the study area, such as the Gregory's Center, represent opportunities for in-fill development. Other sections, such as the location of the Country Farms convenience store and the Block 600 area in general may provide opportunities for more comprehensive redevelopment.

The most notable vacant lands include approximately 15 acres in Block 900.01 adjacent to the CVS Pharmacy, approximately 1 acre associated with the GSELL Moving and Storage facility fronting onto Woodlane Road, and approximately 7 acres associated with the Gregory's Department Store. The largest vacant lot is a Block 600 Lot 2.07, which is a 35 acre parcel owned by the Township that fronts onto Woodlane Road near the Knightsbridge Road intersection. The Township also owns Block 600 Lot 2.08, which is approximately 5 acres. The area is serviced by public water and sewer and the major streets include Monmouth and Woodlane Roads. Municipal roads include Lakeview Terrace, Juniper Street and Oak Street.

Recommendations:

1. Town Center Designations - Based on the analysis provided in Sections 3.2; 3.4, 3.6; 4.2; 4.6; and 4.7, it is recommended the area generally between the Woodlane and Smithville Road intersection and Ashurst Lane be designated the Town Center District. The TCD would allow for commercial, retail, professional office and limited residential uses to achieve the desired community design goals. Overlay zones should be provided to encourage the desired mix of uses and densities. As previously mentioned, the Township is seeking to create a balance of land uses. Thus, although a Town Center needs to be populated through convenient housing options, a emphasis should be placed on options that are not currently available and contribute toward a balance within the housing stock. For example, Eastampton's stock of units available for rent exceeds the County average by a 2 to 1 margin. Therefore, opportunities for ownership are encouraged over more rental housing. A preliminary Town Center District zoning map is provided below.

2. Mixed-Use Township Green - Section 3.4 discussed the need and most suitable location for internalized open space such as greens, commons and plazas that would be surrounded by pedestrian scale mixed-use structures as illustrated in the Town Center Design plan. Block 600 Lot 2.07 is the only area within the broader Town Center area that could adequately meet this need. However, Section 4.6 explains the restriction that currently exists on the land. It is recommended that the Township revisit this restriction so that the Town Center Design Plan, developed through a broad citizen participation process, can be implemented. The Town Center Design plan takes on a “transect” based approach to establishing a town center, which is similar to a telescoping effect with respect to allowable densities and uses. Block 600 Lot 2.07 is a critical component of the plan as it is the center where uses converge to create a traditional and lively green. The single family dwellings lining the south side of Woodlane Road falls into the R-M, and R-H zone. It is recommended that these single family dwellings be united into a new common zone.



- TCR*** - Town Center Single Family Residential
TCO - Town Center Commercial/Office
TCVO - Town Center Civic/Professional Office
TCM 1 - Town Center Mixed Use (One dwelling unit per 800 square feet of commercial space, 20 percent age restricted).
TCM 2 - Town Center Mixed Use (One dwelling unit per 140 square feet of commercial space, 12 percent age restricted).

Study Area C
(Current Zoning District: R-A, BP/LD)

Description:

This area contains the Eastampton Elementary School, which is a 35,000 sq. ft. building on approximately 10.8 acres. The school property surrounds a 1.27 acre parcel that contains a residential dwelling at the corner of Smithville and Monmouth Roads and approximately five small residential lots, all of which are zone Rural Agricultural (R-A). As noted in Section 3.4, the Eastampton Elementary School will be closing to consolidate with the Middle School. The bulk of the Study Area C is zoned BP/LP. The southern portion of the area is bounded by Woodlane Road and includes the Old World Bakery and the Eastampton Industrial Park on Compass Lane. No new development has taken place in the Study since the 1998 Plan, but a 30,000 square foot office/warehouse development on Compass Lane has been approved.

Recommendations:

1. Replace R-A Zoning: The removal of the R-A designation from area of the school and establishment of a unified commercial zone along Smithville Road is supported by this reexamination report.
2. Create Planned Office Zone: A new planned office zone is recommended that would be 500 feet in depth from the centerline of Smithville Road and Woodlane Road onto Block 700 and 800. The scale of the commercial buildings and intensity of development in this transition area should complement the rural and residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods. No retail or strip mall uses are envisioned for this area.
3. Remove LD Designation: It is recommended that the balance of the study area, currently zoned BP/LD, utilize the BP designation and related standards and that the LD designation be removed.
4. Sewers - The study area is identified as being in the Mt. Holly Sewer Authorities sewer service area. The Township is encouraged to work with the Sewer Authority and investors to extend sewer lines to this area.

Study Area D
(Current Zoning District: C-3, BP/LD)

Description:

This Area contains the land bordered by Route 206 and Powell Run. The area contains a mix of uses including single family detached residential homes, manufactured and mobile homes areas, agriculture, an assortment of retail, commercial, and warehouse uses, and a public safety facility.

This area is zoned BP/LD and C-3. This area is included in the Route 206 Corridor Study. No significant zoning changes area recommend in terms of permitted uses. However, the bulk requirements should be changed to provide consistency with recent approvals in the area, specifically the Aquatic Gardens and Alcoa applications.

Although the 206 Corridor Study is not complete, the recent proposals (Aquatic Gardens and Alcoa) referenced guidance provided by a 2003 visioning study, entitled “Strategic Planning Through Public Participation” prepared for the County by A. Nelessen Associates. The above referenced projects have utilized the corridor design guidance contained in said reports.

Recommendations:

1. Remove LD Designation: It is recommended that the portion of the study area that is currently zoned BP/LD utilize the BP designation and related standards and that the LD designation be removed.
2. Create Commercial Highway Node: The areas at the intersection of Woodlane Road and Route 206, and the frontage of Route 206 south of the intersection should be developed as a unified commercial node that reflect the desired design patterns identified in the Route 206 corridor study.
3. Remove Railroad Ave. from C-3 Zone: There is a residential neighborhood at the end of East Railroad. These properties should be included in a new zone designation for residential neighborhoods south of Powell Road.
4. Sewers - The study area is identified as being in the Mt. Holly Sewer Authorities sewer service area. The Township is encouraged to work with the Sewer Authority and investors to extend sewer lines to this area.

Study Area E
(Current Zoning District: R-M, R-A)

Description:

This Area contains the majority of Eastampton's single family detached residential dwellings. It is in the central portion of the Township bordering Mt. Holly Township to the west and Smithville Road to the east. The area encompasses approximately 600 acres and 1,169 homes. The area was developed over a period of approximately 40 years through a series of residential subdivisions. The neighborhoods are commonly referred to as Lakeview, Vistas, Carriage Park, and Eastampton Farms. Two smaller developments were constructed in the late 1990's, which are served by single access cul-de-sac roads. These include Jennifer Court and Meadow Lane, the latter can only be accessed through Mount Holly Township.

Other features in this study area include the Township's administrative offices, known as the Manor House, the Township Middle School, which is in the process of being converted into a K-8 school, and the Eastampton Township Rescue Squad. A number of parks, recreational facilities, and conservation areas are also present. This includes an equestrian facility, heavy equipment rental company.

The area is served by water and sewer and majority of the Township's roads are located in this area.

Recommendations:

1. Low Density Residential Zone: The residential neighborhood on the eastern portion of Powell Road is currently zoned RA, which requires a 15 acre minimum lot size. As there is little opportunity to link most of these parcels to agricultural uses, it is recommended that this residential zone be given the new designation of Rural Low Density (RU-L).

No other changes are recommended.

Study Area F
(Current Zoning District: R-L, R-L/H, R-A/H, BP)

Description:

This Area contains most of the Township's farmland that has been preserved under the farmland preservation program. The farmland contains two parcels, now being farmed, for a future residential dwelling and a farm related market. The area contains approximately 22 private dwellings and a collection of rental units associated with Smithville Park.

Other facilities include the Eastampton Police Department, Court and Public Works Department at the site of a former schoolhouse. Nearby is the Eastampton Fire/Rescue Company.

The most significant environmental feature in the area is the Rancocas Creek, which runs parallel to the Township's southern border. A cultural asset in the area is the Smithville United Methodist Church.

Railroad Avenue passes through this area. At the eastern end, there is mobile/manufactured housing facility containing approximately 100 units, and approximately 39 other single family residential dwelling along Railroad Ave. At the western end, the area is defined by the Rancocas Creek Neighborhood in Lake Dr., Rabbit Run, Pennisula Road., Paducha Road., and East and West Mill Creek Roads. This neighborhood contains approximately 70 dwelling units. The emerging trend is either abandonment, acquisition by the County, or significant renovation. An unused railroad bed has been converted into a biking trail that ties the area together. There is a kennel in the area. Mobile Homes are seeing attached construction.

Recommendations:

1. Modify Historic Designation: Architectural design standards consistent with Smithville Park are recommended and should be adopted for all new structures and significant modifications to existing structures fronting on Smithville Road between the Township's southerly border with Southampton and Lumberton Township and Powell Road to the north. It is also recommended that the purpose of the Historic Review Committee be amended to provide for a review process.
2. There are no privately owned buildings in the area that are of significant historic value. It is recommended that this designation be removed for the zoning code.
3. New Residential Standards: It is recommended that new Rural Low Density standards be established that protect against flooding and enhance water quality in the Rancocas Creek. A stream corridor or buffer of fifty feet from the floodplain is recommended.

4. Farmers Market Standards. As part of the farmland preservation program, portions of preserved farmland have been set aside for future agricultural related commercial enterprises such as a farm market, tours, special holiday activities such as Halloween related activities. It is recommended that development standards for these activities be developed.

5. Landfill Redevelopment: It is recommended that the Township consider investigating redevelopment possibility for the former landfill in coordination with Mt. Holly and Lumberton Townships. Redevelopment along Route 38 should also look to any design guidance that is or may be available as a result of regional or corridor studies.

5.3 Public Facilities. The following section is a review and recommendation for the development of public facilities in the Township.

General Design Considerations - Civic buildings should demonstrate high quality architectural design reflecting the classical order that is traditionally used for civic structures and contribute to the positive image of the municipality.

Administrative Offices - It is anticipated that the Manor House, which serves as the Township's administrative headquarters, is capable of housing municipal operations for the next 10 to 20 years. See Police Facilities for suggested site of future expansion.

Parks and Recreation - In the next few years, America's largest population cohort, referred to as the baby boomer generation, will begin to turn age sixty-five. Currently, 12 percent of the population is 65 and over. By 2050, this figure will double and likely create new a demand for alternative recreation infrastructure and services. The Township will need to upgrade its facilities to address these needs, along with placing a strong emphasis on developing pedestrian infrastructure that allows non-vehicular access to points of recreational, social and cultural interest. It is anticipated that new facilities in the form of internalized open spaces will be in greater demand and respond to demographic changes. This refers to greens, commons and plazas that are in close physical proximity to a broad range of services.

The Township's existing parks have received numerous investments since the 1998 Plan. Continued planning for improvements is recommended. Investments that would strengthen existing programming are particularly encouraged. For example, a suitable structure for meetings, shelter, storage and food concessions at Buttonwood Park would strengthen popular programs such as the Summer Park Program, the Concert Series and Eastampton Fun Day.

Police Facilities – Police facilities will need to be addressed within the five years. The Police Department is currently in a former school house on Smithville Road, which was constructed in the early 1900's. The layout of the lot and other environmental constraints preclude to possibility of expanding the structure. However, police department activities would need to be buffered from major residential neighborhoods. Block 600 Lot 2.08 (4.4 Acres) is identified as a potentially suitable location for a future police department and should be further studied. It is recommended that the future police department be constructed in a manner that would allow for a future expansion to include a consolidated municipal building or allow the Department of Public Works or both.

Public Works – The Public Works Department, located on the same lot as the Police Department, is rapidly outgrowing its facility. Once a new Police Facility is constructed, the Public Works department will have significantly more space on the lot. DPW office space can be relocated to the building now housing the Police Department, freeing up additional space with the garage. In order to extend the usefulness and functionality of the Manor House, the current police department building can be used for community group meeting space, a central records and equipment storage facility.

Schools - In keeping with the guidance of the 1998 Plan, Eastampton residents approved a \$20 million proposal to consolidate the Eastampton Elementary School with the Eastampton Middle School, which is in close proximity to the majority of residential neighborhoods in the community. The Middle School will be expanded to house the Township's K-8 population at its centrally located facility. The school will also contain facilities to allow it to function as a community center during non-school hours and is accessible to pedestrians from surrounding neighborhoods.

Streets and Roads – Since the 1998 Plan, the Township has initiated an annual road improvement program. As many municipal roads are beginning to show signs of aging, it is anticipated that the need to invest the road facilities will continue. Unique challenges associated with a road improvement program that the Township will need to plan for is the growing cost of asphalt and its diminished strength. Asphalt is a by product of the oil refining process, which has improved over the years resulting in a tighter supply and less strength. These changes will require the Township to invest more heavily in protective maintenance in order to avoid the cost of extensive reconstruction.

Fire and Rescue - It is recommended that the Township's volunteer fire and rescue companies continue to evaluate the feasibility of consolidating facilities and services in a central facility utilizing the existing EMS on Woodlane Road building as a central base of operations.

The design of the future fire department should take into consideration of the residential nature of adjoining properties and provide for suitable transitions. The building should also be sensitive to the fact that it will serve as a gateway into the town center. Fire facility planners are directed to reference the Township's design standards for civic architecture, and gateway areas.

6.0 Recommendations of the land use planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law” into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

The community design objectives provide in the Town Center Design Plan have been incorporated into the municipal code (Article X and XI Section 88-54 through 55). The Redevelopment Plan is included the Township’s zoning code (Article XXII Section 103-85) and references these standards. However, the Redevelopment Plan’s regulations focus on the properties designated T-3. As it appears that that the T-3 is will be redeveloped based on submitted development applications, it is recommended that Township refine the development regulations in the Redevelopment Plan to provide for an appropriate transition between the transect areas.

This Reexamination report endorses the general community design standards that are now part of the development standards and recommends that the design standards be included in the Municipal Master Plan.