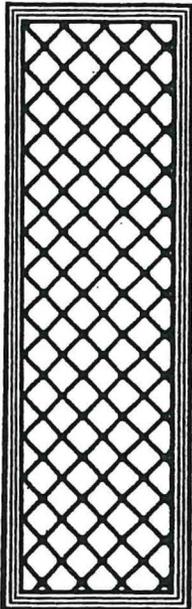


**TOWNSHIP
OF
EAST WINDSOR**

**MERCER COUNTY
NEW JERSEY**

**MASTER PLAN
AND
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS
PERIODIC REEXAMINATION
REPORT**

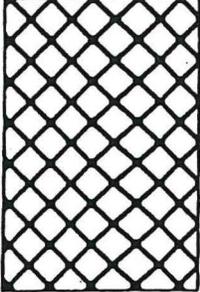
November 15, 2008



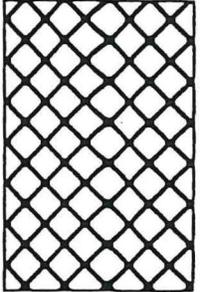
**PREPARED BY: COPPOLA & COPPOLA ASSOCIATES
PRINCETON JUNCTION ~ NEW JERSEY**

TOWNSHIP OF EAST WINDSOR

MERCER COUNTY
NEW JERSEY



MASTER PLAN
AND
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS
PERIODIC REEXAMINATION
REPORT



THE ORIGINAL OF THIS REPORT WAS SIGNED AND SEALED
IN ACCORDANCE WITH N.J.S.A. 45:14A-12

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PRINCETON JUNCTION ~ NEW JERSEY

TOWNSHIP OF EAST WINDSOR

**MASTER PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS
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November 15, 2008

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TOWNSHIP OF EAST WINDSOR MASTER PLAN

MASTER PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS PERIODIC REEXAMINATION REPORT

November 15, 2008

INTRODUCTION

The Township of East Windsor is situated in the southeast corner of Mercer County and contains approximately 15.65 square miles, or 10,016 acres of land. The Millstone River forms the northern boundary line for both East Windsor Township and Mercer County. The Borough of Hightstown is located in its entirety within the north central portion of East Windsor Township at the crossroads of New Jersey State Highway 33, County Route 539 and County Route 571 .

The municipality is traversed from east to west by County Route 571 (Princeton-Hightstown Road and Etra Road) and from north to south by County Route 539 (Old York Road and Main Street). The Route 133 by-pass road recently has been constructed, with its alignment running through the northern part of the Township, and linking the eastern portion of New Jersey State Highway 33 within East Windsor Township with the western section of County Route 571 in the Township.

U.S. Route 130 and New Jersey State Highway 33 enter East Windsor Township from the southwest and split so that U.S. Route 130 heads north and New Jersey State Highway 33 heads northeast through the Township. The New Jersey Turnpike parallels U.S. Route 130 to the east. Interchange 8 of the New Jersey Turnpike is located within East Windsor Township, east of Hightstown Borough, with access onto New Jersey State Highway 33.

In addition to Hightstown Borough being located within the center of the Township, East Windsor Township is bordered on the south and southeast by Millstone Township in Monmouth County, on the southwest by Washington Township, on the west by West Windsor Township, and on the north and northeast by Cranbury Township and Monroe Township, both in Middlesex County.

There are three (3) major nonresidential development areas in the Township, including the Route 571 campus corridor, the Route 130 retail corridor, and the New Jersey Turnpike/Route 33 industrial/retail corridor. All three (3) of these nonresidential areas continue to experience relatively rapid development and redevelopment.

Additionally, East Windsor Township contains a wide variety of housing, from historic Victorian and contemporary executive homes, to townhomes and condominiums. The East Windsor Township municipal officials are appropriately proactive in managing the growth of the Township in order to achieve a balanced development pattern which enhances the quality of life for the residents of the Township.

An integral part of East Windsor Township is the variety of natural features situated amidst the portions of the Township which have developed or are planned by the Township to be developed. The natural features contained within the Township include wetlands, steep topographic slopes, flood plains, an important aquifer recharge area and rivers and streams. Additionally, the Township's geological formations and soil characteristics present important considerations for land development and land preservation.

The most recent comprehensive Master Plan for the Township of East Windsor was adopted by the Planning Board on October 4, 1993. The 1993 Master Plan updated a 1985 Master Plan which, in turn, had updated a 1979 report.

Subsequent to the adoption of the Master Plan on October 4, 1993, East Windsor Township has periodically reexamined and updated the Master Plan. Most recently, the East Windsor Township Planning Board adopted the following modifications and additions to the East Windsor Township Master Plan:

- "Supplemental Modification No. 1", an amendment to the "Traffic Circulation Plan Element", which was adopted on March 16, 1998;
- "Supplemental Modification No. 2", an amendment to the "Land Use Plan Element", which was adopted on May 18, 1998;
- "Supplemental Modification No. 3", an amendment to the "Land Use Plan Element", which was adopted on August 16, 1999;
- "Master Plan And Development Regulations Periodic Reexamination Report", which was adopted on December 16, 2002;
- "Natural Resources Inventory, which was adopted on December 16, 2002;
- "Supplemental Modification No. 4", an amendment to the "Land Use Plan Element", which was adopted on July 21, 2003;
- "Supplemental Modification No. 5", an amendment to the "Land Use Plan Element", which was adopted on June 7, 2004;
- "Housing Plan Element & Fair Share Plan", which was adopted on December 19, 2005; and
- "Traffic Circulation Plan", which was adopted on September 25, 2006.

MUNICIPAL LAND USE LAW REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 of the Municipal Land Use Law, this "Master Plan And Development Regulations Periodic Reexamination Report" includes an addressment of the following five (5) items:

- "a. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
- b. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have been increased subsequent to such date.
- c. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for 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, dispositions and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.
- d. The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.
- e. The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L.1992, c. 79 (C.40A:12A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality."

As required by the Municipal Land Use Law, the East Windsor Township Planning Board authorized the preparation of this "Master Plan And Development Regulations Periodic Reexamination Report" in order to continue the efforts of the Township to both protect its environmental resources and to promote sound land development.

EAST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP'S EXISTING "ZONE PLAN"

The existing "Zoning Map" of the Township of East Windsor, dated April 5, 2000, appears on the following page of this reexamination report for informational purposes, and to aide the reader of this document in order to more easily understand the textual discussions.

MAJOR PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Municipal Land Use Law, enacted by the State Legislature on January 14, 1976, empowers municipal governments with the right to control the physical development of the lands within their bounds. N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2 of the Municipal Land Use Law, as amended, lists fifteen (15) general purposes regarding the local planning process which are as follows:

- a. To encourage municipal action to guide the appropriate use or development of lands in this State, in a manner which will promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare;
- b. To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and manmade disasters;
- c. To provide adequate light, air and open space;
- d. To ensure that the development of individual municipalities does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, the county and the State as a whole;
- e. To promote the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment;
- f. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies;
- g. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial and industrial uses and open space, both public and private, according to their respective environmental requirements in order to meet the needs of all New Jersey citizens;
- h. To encourage the location and design of transportation routes which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging location of such facilities and routes which result in congestion or blight;
- i. To promote desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangements;
- j. To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources in the State and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land;

- k. To encourage planned unit developments which incorporate the best features of design and relate the type, design and layout of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development of the particular site;
- l. To encourage senior citizen community housing construction;
- m. To encourage the coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view of lessening the cost of such development and to the more efficient use of land;
- n. To promote utilization of renewable energy sources; and
- o. To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to compliment municipal recycling programs."

Consistent with these general purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law, which the Township of East Windsor embraces, the Township has extrapolated certain specific overall objectives and goals for its future land use development in order to prevent future problems and to create a desirable living and working environment.

The following "Goals and Objectives" initially appeared in East Windsor Township's 1979 Master Plan, were updated in the 1985 Master Plan, and appeared again in the 1993 Master Plan and the 2002 Master Plan And Development Regulations Periodic Reexamination Report:

A. General Goals

- 1. To recognize the land as a prime community resource that is both finite and irreplaceable, to provide steps to protect the land from poor development practices, conserve appropriate quantities as permanent open space and actively seek practical methods for preserving farmland.
- 2. To establish the township as a socially balanced and viable community by offering a full variety of housing types and a full range of job opportunities.
- 3. To recognize Hightstown as an integral part of the East Windsor community although politically independent.
- 4. To unify the township through coordinated open space, facilities and service needs by channeling new growth to infill areas containing infrastructure capacity, so that it functions physically, socially and economically as homogeneous community rather than as a random assemblage of large-scale developments.

5. To encourage the township's development as a sub-center of commercial trade serving local needs and areawide needs as well.
6. To encourage the improvement and expansion of job opportunities for local and areawide residents.
7. To encourage that type of development which does not produce an intolerable tax burden on itself and other members of the community.
8. To subject all development to rigorous quality standards regardless of types or location.
9. To recognize water supply and wastewater disposal as limited resources that must not be overburdened.

B. Residential Goals and Objectives

Provide a wide range of housing types to meet varied income and age levels as well as to protect and preserve established residential areas.

1. Utilize, where appropriate, clustering techniques which consider social and environmental factors in meeting future housing needs.
2. Provide for a balance among residential, industrial and commercial land uses.
3. Encourage an adequate balance in terms of ownership and rental housing units.
4. Maximize advantages afforded by existing or potential public transit routes in serving the more intense housing densities.
5. Maintain and conserve older residential neighborhoods through the provision of adequate community services and facilities as required.

C. Local Economy Goals and Objectives

Encourage development and improvement of industrial and commercial land uses which will expand local job opportunities and produce a stable and balanced economic base.

1. Promote concentrated rather than scattered commercial and industrial development at strategic locations serviced by major highways and utility infrastructure.
2. Promote adequacy, variety and convenience of shopping for local residents.

3. Promote continuation of farming as part of an agriculture-related economic base.

D. Community Facilities/Utilities/Recreation/Conservation Goals and Objectives

Protect environmentally sensitive areas and ensure compatible balance between environmental and economic concerns as well as providing for adequate recreation and public facilities to accommodate existing and future residents of East Windsor.

1. Ensure location of new public facilities such as schools and park areas so they are coordinated with existing needs and future development.
2. Encourage development of a township wide open space network which connects local parks and portions of environmentally sensitive areas with walkways or bicycle paths within easy access to local residents, or through the preservation of open space providing habitat for wildlife without pedestrian or bicycle access.
3. Continue adequate fire and police service with appropriate facilities, personnel, and equipment distributed according to need and in a cost effective manner.
4. Preserve, to the extent practical and feasible, environmentally sensitive areas, major vistas and other aesthetic attributes of the township and ensure adherence to strict performance standards for those developments which incorporate such areas.
5. Ensure that future low intensity development in areas not served by public utilities is adequately controlled through sound septic management techniques to assure maintenance of a high level of surface and ground water quality.

E. Circulation Goals and Objectives

Provide for an effective circulation system for the movement of people and goods with maximum convenience and minimum adverse effect on land traversed.

1. Encourage completion of coordinated regional highways and the development of a public transit network that will best service township needs and its immediate environs.
2. Continue the development of a system of roadways to expedite regional, subregional and local traffic with minimum interference between such traffic movements.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES HAVE BEEN REDUCED OR HAVE INCREASED

The Township of East Windsor has striven to achieve the overall goals and objectives stated in its Master Plan in order to create a desirable living and working environment, to protect its environmental resources and to promote sound land development. At this time, the currently adopted goals and objectives continue to reflect the general preferences of the Township to manage its growth.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

Since the last reexamination of the East Windsor Township Master Plan and the subsequent modifications and additions to the Master Plan adopted during the last approximately six (6) years, there are no significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives of the Township's Zone Plan.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDED MASTER PLAN CHANGES TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY AMENDMENTS TO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Potential changes to the zoning ordinance provisions concern the "PUD-5" and "PUD-6" zoning districts along Route 33 within the "Twin Rivers" planned development. The changes would not alter the current zoning district boundary lines, but would include changes to the permitted uses within the zones. More specifically, it is suggested that consideration be given to expanding the permitted uses within the existing "PUD-5" and "PUD-6" zoning districts to include retail uses, banks and financial uses, restaurants (not including drive-in & fast food operations) and day care, child care centers or nursery schools. Currently, retail uses and day care, child care centers or nursery schools are not permitted in either zoning district and banks and financial uses and restaurants are permitted only in the "PUD-6" zoning district.

Clearly, any change to the permitted land uses within the subject zoning districts is a Township policy decision, and the Council might decide that the suggested changes should be adopted, that no changes should be adopted or that alternative changes should be considered.

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE INCORPORATION OF REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

Since East Windsor Township has not adopted any redevelopment plans pursuant to the "local redevelopment and housing law", PL. 1992, c.79 (c.40a:12a-1 et al), and since there are no current plans to do so, no changes are recommended to the Land Use Plan Element of the Township Master Plan or to the local land use development regulations to effectuate any redevelopment plans.