

**CITY OF SALEM
PLANNING BOARD
MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT**

November 15, 2012

Adopted:

Prepared by:

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CITY OF SALEM, 2012

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The purpose of this report is to re-examine the municipal plans and regulations of the City of Salem. The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55d - 89, specifies in part:

“The governing body shall, at least every 10 years, provide for a general re-examination of its master plan and development regulations by the planning board which shall prepare and adopt by resolution a report on the findings of such re-examination, a copy of which report and resolution shall be sent to the county planning. A notice that the report and resolution have been prepared shall be sent to the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality, who may, on behalf of the governing body of the municipality, request a copy of the report and resolution. A re-examination shall be completed at least every 10 years from the previous re-examination.”

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) specifies the contents of a reexamination of the Master Plan. There are five specific areas to be reported...

- 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 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 disposition, 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.

The reexamination report is adopted by the Planning Board after a public hearing.

The re-examination process provides an important opportunity for the Planning Board to determine the relevancy of existing plan and regulatory documents and to evaluate the appropriateness of current planning objectives. The conclusions and

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recommendations resulting from this re-examination process shall form the basis for any significant changes to the City's master plan and zoning regulations. Included in this review and analysis, and incorporated herein by reference are the following documents:

1. Salem Comprehensive Plan - 1974
2. Salem City Master Plan - 1978
3. Port District Redevelopment Plan - 1981
4. Master Plan Re-examination Report - 1982
5. New Market Redevelopment Plan - 1984
6. Housing Plan Element - 1987
7. Master Plan re-examination Report - 1989
8. Historic Preservation Element - 1991
9. Land Development Ordinances, ch. 130 - 1994
10. Master Plan Reexamination Report – 1996
11. Strategic Plan for Economic and Community Revitalization - 1997
12. Carpenter Street Redevelopment Plan – 2000
13. Master Plan Housing Element – 2001
14. Main Street Redevelopment Plan – 2002
15. Housing Element Amendment – 2002
16. Main Street Revitalization Master Plan – 2004
17. Eastward Redevelopment Area – 2004
18. Open Space Recreation Plan - 2009

This report will focus on the major changes relating to land development and overall general characteristics of the City that have occurred since the last re-examination of the plans and regulations was performed in 2002. An important footnote to the process is that the municipal regulations were codified and adopted in 1994, and this report will reflect changes made to Chapter 130 of the Code of the City of Salem at that time. This report will not constitute an update of the Master Plan but will present a factual presentation of conditions within the City in the form of an update of the Master Plan of 1974.

PLANNING OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

A determination of the appropriate planning objectives and development policies is an integral and necessary component of a continuing planning process which should be exercised by the Planning board. These objectives and policies are critical because they form the basis for the various master plan elements. The conscientious formulation of these goals and policies will help assure the achievement of the desired planning objectives.

The 1974 Comprehensive Plan identified the City's basic planning objectives in general terms which included preservation of amenity values, correction of existing deficiencies, and recognition of those changes which may affect development. The 1974 Plan provided framework for all future land use and planning decisions, and established

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Planning Objectives and Development Policies for the City. The plan provided a summary of current (1974) conditions and an inventory of the community population, housing, services and transportation. It provided an overview of the City capital budget and an employment analysis. It reviewed future land use projections. A brief summary of the objectives and policies follows:

1. Encourage types of development and use which, while consistent with other policies and goals, will increase the financial capability of the City to provide required community services and facilities;
2. Preserve and strengthen the four basic roles of Salem: a residential community, a County seat, a regional commercial center, and a source of industrial employment;
3. Prevent the spread of haphazard and incompatible mixtures of residential, commercial and industrial development;
4. Provide for adequate and diversified housing supply in attractive healthful and safe environments;
5. Continue the City's program to eliminate substandard housing;
6. Maintain an active and viable central business district;
7. Encourage the location of additional industries in appropriate area, and the continued expansion of existing industries;
8. Provide for adequate community facilities, including programs to meet social, cultural and recreational needs;
9. Provide for safe and convenient circulation within the City and to points beyond;
10. Protect to the maximum extent possible and promote the best use of the remaining open spaces in the City.

Since the original planning document was created, the City has undergone many significant changes that the authors of the plan could not have foreseen. A dramatic decline in population and industrial activity have changed the community of Salem. New activities have emerged to shape the future of the City. Two elements were added to the Master Plan to guide the City policies on Housing and Historic Preservation. Despite all the changes of the past thirty eight years, the originally stated goals and objectives enumerated in the 1974 Master Plan are still relevant to guide the future development of the City of Salem.

The Reexamination Report

a. & b. Major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report, and the extent to which such problems and objective have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date:

1. A plan for the central business district should be pursued.
MAIN STREET REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ADOPTED; SALEM MAIN STREET FUNCTIONING.

Through the operations of Salem Main Street the number of businesses located in the central business district has increased within the past two years. Real estate sales and business openings have occurred in numbers not seen in the past decade, and especially since the last reexamination report was adopted.

2. The City should continue and strengthen its efforts in historic preservation both as a way of maintaining its heritage and as a development of a tourist sector to the economy.
CREATED HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION; INVESTIGATING OAK STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

The City Council implemented a recommendation in the Historic Element of the Master Plan to create an Historic Preservation Commission that has powers consistent with the Municipal Land Use Law. The Commission has been active to study areas of the City to be included in the zoning ordinance as additions to the Historic District.

3. The City should continue to develop programs for enhanced recreation and cultural activities.

This is not a land use problem per se, but is a responsibility of the City that has ongoing implementation implications. The Greater Salem Community Center continues to provide for some of the recreation and cultural needs.

4. The City must continue to promote rehabilitation and development of adequate housing. The focus must be on providing opportunities for home ownership as a means of strengthening the neighborhoods.
CARPENTER STREET REDEVELOPMENT PLAN IMPLEMENTED

Through the activities of the City Council and Pennrose Properties (Salem

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Historic Homes, LLC) the rehabilitation of a seriously blighted neighborhood is be addressed. Already, Pennrose has secured approvals for phases I & II to rehabilitate and market rental homes.

The challenge of providing home ownership opportunities on a larger scale within the City still needs to be addressed. A five year home rehabilitation grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs is currently being administered by the City. A redevelopment plan for specific neighborhood rehabilitation needs to be implemented.

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 disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, County and municipal policies and objectives.

Analysis of Salem City Population

	2000	2010	Trend
Total Population	5,857	5146	-12.1%
Housing			
Total Units	2,863	2138	-25.3%
Owner Occupied	977	818	-16.3%
Rented	1,406	1320	-6.2%
Vacant	480	575	20.0%
Percent Owner Occupied	34.1%	38.3%	4.2%
Percent Rented	49.1%	61.7%	12.6%
Percent Vacant	16.8%	21.2%	4.4%
Population Characteristics			
Average Household Size	2.43 person	2.40 person	Decrease
Median Family Income	\$29,699	\$38,286	Increase
Median Household Income	\$25,846	\$25,682	Decrease
Persons below Poverty Level	1,531	1462	Increase

Source: 2010 US Census

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The trends in the City population are evident from the table of population statistics. The population has declined since 2000. All major housing indicators have declined except the number of vacant housing units which increased dramatically. Population characteristics have shown positive tendencies with decreases in household size and a decrease in the persons below the poverty level. Both measures of income have improved during the last decade.

Overall however, there have not been any significant changes in land uses, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, and collection and disposal of recyclable materials to report.

Regarding State policies and objectives, the City received a designation as a Regional Center by the State Planning Commission. Additionally the Master Plan Housing Element was Certified by the Council on Affordable Housing. When the State planning Commission readopted the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, the City's designation remained unchanged. No significant changes in the County Master Plan have been adopted since the last reexamination report. Municipal Policies and Objectives remain unchanged.

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.

1. The City should continue to develop programs for recreation and cultural activities.
2. To discuss the expansion of the boundaries of the Historic District overlay to be consistent with any state and federal Historic zones.
3. The Business License rules should be incorporated into the zoning ordinance and receives an annual review to fine tune implementation and zoning enforcement.
4. Waterfront Development planning along all waterfront areas of the City.
5. The Planning Board should prepare and adopt a Conservation Plan Element to the Master Plan. (NJSA 40:55D-28b.(8))
6. The Planning Board should prepare and adopt an Economic Plan Element for the Master Plan. (NJSA 40:55D-28b.(9))
7. The City should strengthen the Housing Code and landlord/rental property registration ordinances.
8. A review of the M-1 and M-2 zoning designations should be performed as well as permitted uses in these zones.
9. The location and permitted uses in the R-1 and R-2 zones should be studied and revised as needed to preserve and protect existing neighborhood character and to promote more home ownership.
10. A Redevelopment Plan focusing on housing and home ownership in the R-2 zone bounded by Walnut Street and E. Broadway should be adopted.

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11. The application fee schedule should be reviewed and revised.
12. A review of the sign ordinance should be performed and any changes should be adopted.
13. Condominium and Townhouse development bulk standards should be incorporated into the zoning ordinance.
14. The City should continue to develop programs for enhanced recreation and cultural activities.

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.

Since the 1995 reexamination report was prepared, the City has adopted two (2) redevelopment plans pursuant to NJS 40A:12A-1. These plans are known as the Carpenter Street Redevelopment Plan, and the Main Street Redevelopment Plan. Both Plans rely on the existing zoning standards for new development within their designated areas. Therefore it does not appear the any changes to the existing development regulations are needed to effectuate the redevelopment Plans.