

Borough of Rocky Hill

County of Somerset, State of New Jersey



Master Plan Files

**Prepared by
The Borough of Rocky Hill Planning Board**

1. Master Plan adopted on December 11, 2001, as amended below:

Adopted: December 11, 2001 – Master Plan
Amended: October 8, 2002 – Demographic Characteristics
Amended: February 10, 2004 – Open Space & Recreation Plan, Master Plan
Implementation Matrix
Amended: December 14, 2004 – Land Use Plan
Amended: November 15, 2005 – Stormwater Management Plan
Amended: October 10, 2006 – Housing Element and Fair Share Plan
Amended: November 11, 2008 – Housing Element and Fair Share Plan

2. Re-examination Report: Adopted July 8, 2008

3. Master Plan Amendment: Cottage Zoning Overlay

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4. Master Plan Amendment: Historic Preservation Plan

Adopted: September 20, 2018

BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL

SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

MASTER PLAN

Rocky Hill Planning Board

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Prepared by
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Professional Planners

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The original of this Master Plan, on file with the
Borough Clerk has been signed and sealed in accordance with New Jersey Statutes.

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BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL MASTER PLAN

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Introduction

Legal Basis & Contents of the Master Plan

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), the statutory basis for municipal planning in New Jersey, requires that every municipal Zoning Ordinance be based on a Master Plan adopted by the Planning Board. In compliance with the MLUL, this plan provides the rational planning basis for the Borough's zone plan and development regulations. In addition, its overall purpose is to coordinate the land use policies of the Borough and to provide a clear description of the community, its goals, and the policies that have been, or should be adopted to implement those goals.

This document contains all of the elements required by the MLUL for a municipal Master Plan: background studies of the community's physical and demographic characteristics, a statement of objectives, principles, assumptions and policies underlying the Master Plan, a Land Use Plan Element, a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, and a section dealing with the relationship of the Master Plan to plans of other jurisdictions. In addition, the plan incorporates specific elements dealing with historic preservation, circulation, open space and recreation.

Source and reference material for this Master Plan includes previous Master Plan elements described below. Where appropriate, portions of those documents serve as a basis for this Master Plan. While they remain part of the historical record of planning in Rocky Hill, this new Master Plan supersedes all previous Master Plans and recommendations contained in Reexamination Reports, and shall be considered the applicable and current guide for land use and development in the Borough.

History of Master Planning in Rocky Hill

The Municipal Land Use Law (Chapter 291, Laws of 1975) became effective in August 1976. In response to the new legislation, the Borough adopted a Master Plan (Land Use Element and Housing Plan) analyzing existing conditions and establishing a foundation for future growth. It was amended in 1979 to include a Circulation Plan and a Utility Services Plan.

The Master Plan was reexamined by the Planning Board in 1988 and 1996, resulting each time in amendments to various elements of the Plan taking into account the major land use changes and development that had occurred in prior years. In 1998, the Open Space Plan element was amended and a new Housing Element and Fair Share Plan was adopted as part of the Borough's efforts to obtain substantive certification from the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (COAH). The Housing Plan was subsequently amended in response to COAH concerns and requirements.

Master Plan Reexamination

When the MLUL became effective in 1976, it established the requirement that every municipality undertake a reexamination of the municipal Master Plan and development regulations at least every six years in accordance with specific criteria.¹ The five statutory criteria to be reviewed during a reexamination of the Master Plan and development regulations are as follows:

1. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
2. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted 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.²

The above criteria have been fully taken into account and considered in the preparation of this plan and its adoption satisfies the reexamination that is due in 2002. The next required reexamination will be due in 2007.

Major Changes Affecting Planning in Rocky Hill

Rocky Hill is approaching full build-out in the sense that little privately owned vacant land remains available for new development. As a result, this plan is an evolutionary result of previous Borough Master Plans, firmly rooted in and building upon earlier plans. However, this plan also reflects the major changes that have taken place in the last several years and incorporates new policies and recommendations intended to guide development and redevelopment in the future. Following is a summary of the major changes in planning for the Borough that have taken place in recent years.

¹ NJSA 40:55D-89.

² NJSA 40:55D-89 subparagraphs a through e.

- An 85-acre portion of the Schafer tract, representing about 20% of the Borough's land area, was acquired under the Green Acres program for open space and recreation purposes. This has greatly affected the previously projected build-out of the Borough.
- Since little privately owned vacant land remains in the Borough, the primary planning focus in the community is shifting toward infill sites and potential redevelopment. The disposition of remaining vacant parcels is considered.
- The historic village core of the Borough has become increasingly important as a focal point for Borough residents. The long-standing goal of preserving the historic and predominantly residential character of the village core is continued in this plan.
- Traffic has greatly increased on roads leading into Rocky Hill and along Route 518 within the Borough. Traffic calming and pedestrian-oriented improvements are needed to enhance the quality of life in the Borough as a whole and the village core in particular.
- More active state involvement in land use planning went into effect including the adoption of statewide Residential Site Improvement Standards, and the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The Borough recently achieved official planning recognition of the "Village Center" from the State Planning Commission.
- The need to address the Borough's constitutional "fair share" housing obligation became a focus of community planning concern in the late 1990's. This Master Plan incorporates the Borough's state-certified affordable housing plan addressing the community's constitutional fair share housing responsibility. The Borough received substantive certification from the Council on Affordable Housing in 2001 which will remain valid until 2007.
- With advances in technology new uses are being developed throughout the state. With changing demographic conditions, demand has increased for some uses not previously permitted or encouraged by the Borough. Consideration is given in this plan to policies for wireless telecommunications, and the potential for accessory apartments, senior citizens housing, and mixed uses.

Organization of this Master Plan

This Master Plan includes all of the mandatory components of a municipal master plan as required by the Municipal Land Use Law. The *Introduction* and *Master Plan Goals and Objectives* are followed by two sections dealing with the Borough's physical and demographic characteristics.

These background sections are followed by the core elements of the Master Plan which provide the basis for land use and zoning regulation for the Borough.

- Land Use Plan
- Housing Plan

- Historic Preservation Plan
- Circulation Plan
- Open Space & Recreation Plan

Also included in this Master Plan is an element relating the land use policies of other jurisdictions to this Master Plan, including the zone plans of surrounding communities, the Somerset County Master Plan, and the New Jersey State Development & Redevelopment Plan. The final section of the plan contains a matrix displaying the follow-up actions necessary to implement the major recommendations contained in the various elements.

Introduction.doc

Master Plan Goals & Objectives

The Municipal Land Use Law requires that every municipal master plan contain a clear statement of the considerations that form the basis of the master plan: i.e. *a statement of the objectives, principles, assumptions, policies and standards upon which the constituent proposals for the physical, economic and social development of the municipality are based.*¹ This section satisfies this requirement and provides the foundation and framework for the various elements of the Master Plan. The subsequent elements provide the strategies and concepts designed to achieve these goals and objectives and the Borough's zoning and land use regulations are designed to implement the overall plan.

Community Vision

Rocky Hill is a desirable community in which to live or work with distinctive attributes. Life in the community revolves around the village core and Historic District where the development pattern evokes an earlier time in our history. As the Borough is essentially a fully developed community, this Master Plan should primarily focus on strategies that will protect and preserve the established character of the Borough and identify areas that should be improved to meet the future needs of the community as a whole.

Underlying Principles & Assumptions

The following principles and assumptions form the basis for this Master Plan.

- Rocky Hill is essentially a fully developed community with a predominantly single-family residential character oriented around the historic village center.
- The historic village core is of great importance to the character of the community. It serves as the primary focus of cultural life in the Borough with community institutions, pedestrian oriented scale, and traditional but limited commercial development. Surrounding the village center are relatively lower density single-family residential neighborhoods and large tracts of permanently preserved open space.
- The Borough is strategically located near the Route 206 corridor. Regional traffic flow and volume is having an effect on the Borough and its pedestrian oriented scale.
- While little privately owned vacant land remains in the Borough, there are opportunities for the development of underutilized properties situated in established neighborhoods.
- The Borough has met its constitutional affordable housing (*Mount Laurel*) responsibilities in a manner consistent with state regulations and the goals of this Master Plan. Any future state-estimated fair share obligation will need to be reexamined prior to the expiration of the current term of the Borough's affordable housing plan (substantive certification expires in 2007).

Goals & Objectives

¹ NJSA 40:55D-28b(1).

The primary planning goals and objectives listed below have not fundamentally changed from previous Borough Master Plans. This plan seeks to refine these goals to address changed circumstances and the needs of the community.

The 1976 Land Use Plan goals recognized the predominant single-family residential character of the community. The Borough's planning goals have long sought to protect that established residential character while seeking to promote opportunities for a greater variety of housing alternatives. Preserving open space and the natural character of the Borough's less developed areas has also been a long-standing objective. The following major goals and objectives constitute the basis for this Master Plan and are intended to guide the Borough's planning policies, strategies, and standards in future years.

Retain the Traditional Residential Character of Rocky Hill

- The Borough is and should continue to be a predominantly single-family residential community.
- Infill residential development should be undertaken consistent with zoning and the residential densities of surrounding neighborhoods.
- The development of remaining vacant or underdeveloped parcels should be undertaken in a manner that will be compatible with surrounding development.

Preserve and Protect the Historic Character of the Village

- A defining feature of the Borough is its village Historic District and its surrounding undeveloped area. The perpetuation and protection of this character is of utmost importance to the planning goals of the Borough.
- Open space adjacent to or near the village core should be preserved to form a "greenbelt" around the village, thereby retaining its historic development pattern and character.
- Renovation or redevelopment in the Historic District should be undertaken consistent with the pedestrian orientation and scale of the village and the character of its existing building stock.
- Traffic calming road improvements should be undertaken in a manner consistent with the historic character of the village.

Provide Areas for Nonresidential Development and Redevelopment

- Commercial uses should be limited to the business districts.
- New or redeveloped commercial uses in existing commercial zones and bordering or near residential neighborhoods should be developed in a manner that protects adjacent properties from the potential negative impacts associated with nonresidential land uses.

Expand Opportunities for the Open Space and Recreation Needs of the Community

- Additional active and passive recreation should be provided in strategic locations to meet local needs.
- Open space should be preserved in order to promote a system of "greenways" along the river and to connect larger open space and recreation areas.
- Pedestrian linkage between the village and open space or recreation areas should be encouraged.

Encourage Beneficial Intergovernmental Relationships

- Establishing and enhancing relationships with the two adjoining municipalities could benefit each community, help in meeting overall community planning goals, and aid in the resolution of land use issues of joint concern.
- Consideration should be given to continued participation in the state planning process. Seeking cooperation from the State Planning Commission may provide increased priority for funding projects such as traffic calming plans and other transportation improvements and open space preservation.

Goals.doc

Physical Characteristics & Existing Development

Regional Setting

Rocky Hill comprises approximately 410 acres of land or about 2/3 of a square mile. The Borough is situated in the southernmost portion of Somerset County in central New Jersey about mid-way between New Brunswick and Trenton. Montgomery Township surrounds the Borough to the north, west and south, while Franklin Township abuts the Borough to the east, across the Millstone River.

The region surrounding the Borough, comprised of communities within Somerset, Mercer and Middlesex Counties, is largely suburban in character, having grown rapidly with numerous residential and office developments during the 1980's and 1990's. Growth in the region can be largely attributed to its strategic location mid-way between New York and Philadelphia and the presence of the east-west Route 1 corridor located south of the Borough and the north-south Route 206 corridor, located about 1000 feet west of the Rocky Hill/Montgomery border. Despite the fast rate of growth in the surrounding region, the Borough has retained its traditional small-town and historic character and continues to be a highly desirable community. However, traffic congestion resulting from regional growth is posing a serious challenge to the community as it struggles to preserve its character.

Physical Characteristics

The Borough is well defined by its natural features, the Millstone River and Van Horn Brook, which form its boundaries with Franklin Township to the east and to the south with Montgomery Township. In years past, rivers and streams were often viewed as obstacles while today they are viewed as important natural resources and often serve as prime recreational areas.

Surface Waters & Flood Hazard Areas

Millstone River, Van Horn Brook, and the pond south of Crescent Avenue are the primary water-related resources in the Borough. The Borough's tax maps identify areas of flood hazard along the waterways. The flood plain¹ of the Millstone River extends for a distance of about 150+/- feet from the river while the flood plain of Van Horn Brook appears to be somewhat wider, extending in many areas a distance of 200+/- feet from the brook. Although not located in the Borough, it is noteworthy that the Delaware & Raritan Canal parallels the Millstone River in Franklin Township. This is significant because of the importance of the canal system as a *greenway*.

There are no significant areas of wetlands in Rocky Hill. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has mapped wetland areas for all New Jersey communities. Low-lying areas along the Millstone River and Van Horn Brook appear to be designated

¹ *Flood Hazard Areas* mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and shown on the Borough's tax maps prepared by Van Cleef Engineering.

wetlands according to the DEP mapping. These areas are probably located in the flood hazard area of each waterway.

Topography

The topography of the Borough is fairly level except near the Millstone River and Van Horn Brook where steep slopes are prominent as they descend toward the waterways. The elevation of most of the interior areas of the Borough range from 100 feet to 140 feet above sea level and the elevation changes in this area are gradual. Closer to the river, the elevation drops in a short distance to between 80 and 90 feet and within 200 feet of the river the elevation ranges from 40 to 60 feet above sea level (40 feet and less along the river edge). Much of this area is in the flood plain.

Along Van Horn Brook, the topography is also significantly lower than the interior portions of the Borough, ranging from 60 to 90 feet above sea level. This topographic elevation is not as low in this area as it is along the Millstone River, although the slope does descend steeply behind the homes along Princeton Avenue. Digitized topographic mapping is available for the entire Borough and is maintained on file with the Borough Engineer.

Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use map included at the end of this element displays the current distribution of land uses in the Borough and the table below displays the acreage devoted to each major land use category. From a land use standpoint, Rocky Hill is primarily a residential community of predominantly single-family homes with almost 50% (194 acres) of its land mass devoted to residential development. Other than residential uses, the most important aspect of the Borough's land use distribution is the amount of land in public ownership reserved for open space and recreation purposes. The public/quasi-public land use category reflects all of the land dedicated to open space and recreation and includes developed properties such as the Borough Hall, the Library, houses of worship and the cemetery. In total, 142 acres falls into this category (30% of the Borough) with over 122 acres representing open space, recreation and related community sites (see the Open Space & Recreation Plan for an inventory of these sites).

EXISTING LAND USES

Land Use Types	Acres
Residential	194
Commercial	5
Industrial	9
Streets	26 ²
Public/quasi-public (including open space and recreation areas)	142
Vacant or farm-qualified	34
TOTAL	410

Source: Rocky Hill Tax Assessor; 2001 records.

Note: The amount of acreage in each category has been rounded to the nearest whole number.

² Source: 1996 Reexamination Report.

Existing Development Pattern

The distribution of land uses representing the built environment has not changed dramatically in the last 25 years since adoption of the 1976 Master Plan. However, the *development potential* of the remaining vacant land in the Borough has been drastically diminished as a result of the acquisition of the 85-acre Schafer tract for open space/recreation purposes. The Borough's development pattern was characterized in the 1976 Master Plan as being divided into the four distinct areas described below. This description is still valid today although the large vacant area in the southwest is now in public ownership.

1. The large vacant area in the southwest between Princeton Avenue and Washington Street (now a *Green Acres* site).
2. The public open space area in the northeast section of the Borough.
3. The small-lot, higher density development in the village area.
4. The larger-lot, single-family residential development characteristic of the areas outside (especially to the northwest) of the village.

With the acquisition of the vacant land between Princeton Avenue and Washington Street under the state's Green Acres Program, a permanent buffer has been established between the village core and more intense development found along the Route 206 corridor to the southwest. Today, the open space buffers to the north and south of the village together with the established lower density development of outlying residential neighborhoods helps to maintain the integrity of the village core and reinforces the Borough's small-town atmosphere.

Nonresidential Development

A limited amount of land (approximately 14 acres) in the Borough is used for nonresidential purposes. Most business uses are situated in the heart of the village core and an industrial park is located on the southerly side of Crescent Avenue. Outside the heart of the village, lots at each end of Washington Street contain commercial uses: three at the west end (a bank, an insurance agency and a chiropractor's office) and one at the east end (a pottery business). Otherwise, ample business development to serve the community exists in nearby Montgomery Township along the Route 206 corridor, including offices, retail uses, restaurants and other highway-oriented uses.

Borough Reaching Full Development

The Existing Land Use map clearly displays the fact that the Borough is very nearly fully developed. According to the Assessor's records, of the approximately 410 acres that comprise the Borough, only about 34 acres or 8% of the Borough's land mass represents vacant undeveloped land (including farm qualified) not reserved as permanent open space. In addition to this figure, a few developed parcels may have additional development potential. About 30 acres of land that have development potential are represented by two large sites: a 15+/- acre parcel fronting on Princeton Avenue (the remaining portion of the Schafer tract not purchased under the Green Acres Program) and another 15+/- acres comprised of two lots on the south side of Washington Street west of Crescent Avenue. The latter site is partially developed and is also used for agricultural purposes. The future development of these large tracts is discussed in the Land Use Plan.

Community Facilities

Public and quasi-public land uses account for approximately 142 acres of the Borough's land mass. Open space and recreation areas comprise the majority of this acreage (122 acres) and, as mentioned previously, are important to the retention of the Borough's community character.

Houses of worship and other nonprofit uses are included in the quasi-public category for land use purposes and are displayed as such on the Existing Land Use map. Public and quasi-public facilities provide places for social interaction, government services, and education. Following is a listing of the community facilities in the Borough. The Borough's existing open space areas and recreation facilities are described in detail in the Open Space & Recreation Plan.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Facility	Location
Borough Hall	Montgomery Avenue
Fire Dept. (Hook & Ladder Co.)	Washington Street
Library & Community Center	Washington Street
Rescue Squad	Princeton (Skillman) Avenue
Water Tower	Young Drive

Infrastructure: Street System

The Borough's street system has become a defining part of the community's physical character and existing development pattern. Historically, the development of a community's road pattern was largely dictated by its topographic features and environmental resources such as streams, wetlands and rivers. For example, Princeton Avenue crosses Van Horn Brook at its flat upstream area, then parallels the brook as it approaches the village. Montgomery Avenue entering the village from the north generally parallels the Millstone River.

From a land use perspective, development of the historic area representing the village core has centered along Washington Street, which is the principal thoroughfare through the Borough. Washington Street bisects the Borough at its midpoint, running in an east-west direction. The other major thoroughfares, Montgomery Avenue, Princeton Avenue, and Kingston Road (River Road), form a radial pattern leading from the village core outward to neighboring communities.

Roads constructed in modern times represent the development of subdivisions of land adjoining the major thoroughfares. Since little vacant land remains in the Borough, the street system is essentially fully established at this time. The few new streets that are likely to be constructed will be limited to serving specific developments. The Circulation Plan element contains more information relative to the Borough's street system and focuses on the Borough's policies related to traffic calming, pedestrian circulation and linkages between the village core and open space areas.

Infrastructure: Utility Services

The Borough is served by both public water and public sewer services. The water supply is derived from one active well and a 100,000 gallon elevated storage tank, and one stand-by connection with Elizabethtown Water Company serving as a back-up supply. Sewage treatment is provided by the Montgomery Township sewer system.

Water Service

The water system consists of a network of mains, decreasing in size as the distance from the storage tank increases. A ten inch main extends from the tank to Washington Street; Washington Street contains an eight inch main with six inch lines branching out to complete the system. Fire Hydrants exist throughout the system spaced approximately 600 feet apart.

Water consumption on a yearly basis is typically about 85,000 gallons per day. The capacity of the water system is in excess of 300,000 gallons per day. Since the Borough is nearly fully developed, it is anticipated that sufficient water capacity exists for the foreseeable future. A program of ongoing maintenance is carried out under the coordination of the Water Superintendent. The water system meets all current regulatory requirements as to water quality and the integrity of the distribution system.

Sewer Service

The Borough owns and operates a wastewater collection system which discharges into the Montgomery Township Stage II treatment plant located southeast of the Borough along Van Horn Brook in Montgomery Township.

Since 1979 when the first Utility Services Plan was adopted, there have been a number of improvements to the Borough's sewer system, including the reduction of infiltration, but no fundamental changes have occurred since that time. The Borough currently utilizes approximately 70,000 gallons per day in sewer capacity, out of the total 100,000 GPD available from the Montgomery Township facility. There is sufficient capacity in the existing system to accommodate anticipated future development of the remaining vacant tracts under zoning contemplated in this Master Plan. There are no major problems with the system and the Borough relies on the Sewer Superintendent to monitor infiltration and inflow.

Existing&PhysicalChar.doc

Demographic Characteristics

Adopted: October 8, 2002

Demographic characteristics are an important source of information for community planning purposes, providing insight into population growth trends, housing needs, school-age children, and employment. Following is pertinent data from the 2000 Census.

Population

In 2000 the Borough's population was 662 persons according to the US Census of Population. This represented a decrease of 31 persons or 4.5% from the 1990 Census. The Borough's population was relatively stable for the four decades preceding 1960, but during the following decade the population grew by almost 75% to a high of 917 persons. The table below displays these population fluctuations from 1930 to 2000. It illustrates the periods of population growth following World War II and the dramatic development of central New Jersey in the 1960's. It was during this period that the subdivisions in the northern portion of the Borough were developed. The decline of population commencing after 1970 is due to the drop in household size which was true of most of the state and nation as a whole.

POPULATION: 1930-2000

Year	Population	% Change
1930	512	-
1940	404	-21.1%
1950	537	+32.9%
1960	528	-1.7%
1970	917	+73.7%
1980	717	-21.8%
1990	693	-3.3%
2000	662	-4.5%

Source: 1996 Master Plan Reexamination Report and 2000 Census

A breakdown of the Borough's population by age groups is displayed below. The largest percentage is in the 45-54 age group with the next two largest groups being 65+ and 35-44 years of age. These figures reflect an aging population with a significant retirement age population: over 17% compared to slightly over 11% countywide and 13.2% statewide.¹ The median age of the Borough's population is 43.8 years.²

¹ Source: 2000 Census and Somerset County Planning Board.

² Source: 2000 Census.

POPULATION AGE CHARACTERISTICS: 2000

Persons by Age	Number	Percentage
Under 5 years	38	5.7
5-19 years	102	15.4
20-24 years	16	2.4
25-34 years	74	11.2
35-44 years	112	16.9
45-54 years	126	19.0
55-64 years	80	12.0
65+ years	114	17.2

Source: 2000 Census (percentages will not total 100 due to rounding)

Household Size & Types

The household characteristics of the Borough's population are displayed in the following table. Based on a total of 284 occupied housing units,³ the Borough's average household size was 2.33 persons in 2000.⁴

HOUSEHOLD DATA: 2000

<i>Households by Type</i>	Number	Percentage
Family households	190	66.9
Non-family households	94	33.1
<i>Households by Size</i>		
1 person	79	27.8
2 persons	113	39.8
3 persons	34	12.0
4 persons	39	13.7
5 persons	16	5.6
6 persons	2	0.7
7+ persons	1	0.4

Source: 2000 Census

Income

Income data is also available from the US Census based upon 1999 income reporting. According to the 2000 Census, in 1999 the median household income in Rocky Hill was \$79,469. This was about 3% higher than the countywide median household income of \$76,933.⁵ The 2000 Census also reported that in 1999 five families and 18 individuals lived below the poverty level.⁶ The following table displays a breakdown of the Borough's households by income.

³ The 2000 Census indicates that 284 out of 295 housing units were occupied at the time of the Census in April 2000.

⁴ Source: 2000 Census.

⁵ Source: 2000 Census.

⁶ Source: 2000 Census.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME: 2000

Households by Income	Number	Percentage
Under \$10,000	11	3.8
\$10,000-14,999	7	2.4
\$15,000-24,999	8	2.8
\$25,000-34,999	17	5.9
\$35,000-49,999	41	14.2
\$50,000-74,999	51	17.7
\$75,000-99,000	37	12.8
\$100,000-149,000	63	21.9
\$150,000-199,999	21	7.3
\$200,000 or more	32	11.1
Median Household Income: \$79,469		

Source: 2000 Census (percentages will not total 100 due to rounding)

Employment

Covered employment (jobs covered by unemployment insurance) data is available from the NJ Department of Labor. It is an indication of the number of jobs available in the community. However, it is important to note that employer data may be based upon postal addresses and consequently, some employers reporting this data may not be located physically within the Borough.

COVERED EMPLOYMENT* 1987-1999

Selected Years	Number of Jobs
1999	394
1996	367
1993	334
1990	493
1987	421

*Private Sector Jobs Covered by Unemployment Insurance
Sources: 1996 Master Plan Reexamination Report & NJ Dept. of Labor

In the near term, future employment opportunities in the Borough are expected to be limited because this Master Plan does not propose any expansion of the Borough's existing commercial zones. The number of jobs available in connection with existing businesses may increase or decline somewhat due to economic conditions or changes in business operations. In the long term, however, new business development opportunities may become available in connection with the rezoning of the 14+ acre site on the southerly side of Washington Street: the proposed Village Office Zone (see the Land Use Plan Element).

BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

Land Use Plan

Adopted by the Rocky Hill Planning Board:
December 14, 2004

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The original of this revised Land Use Plan element of the Rocky Hill Master Plan, on file with the
Borough Clerk has been signed and sealed in accordance with New Jersey Statutes.

Land Use Plan

Adopted: December 14, 2004

In accordance with the Municipal Land Use Law, a Land Use Plan element is required as a prerequisite for the adoption of municipal zoning and land development regulations. The purpose of the Land Use Plan is to provide the rational planning basis for the regulation of development in the municipality. Specifically, C.40:55D-28 of the MLUL requires that the Land Use Plan element shall:

- Take into account and state its relationship to the objectives, principles, assumptions, policies and standards of the Master Plan, and the other Master Plan elements and natural conditions including, but not limited to topography, soil conditions, water supply, drainage, flood plain areas, marshes and woodlands.
- Describe the existing and proposed location, extent and intensity of development of land to be used in the future for varying types of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, educational and other public and private purposes or combination of purposes, and relate each to the existing or proposed zone plan and any proposed zone plan and zoning ordinance.

Underlying Assumptions

This Land Use Plan is intended to provide the rational, philosophical, and legal foundation for the Borough's Zoning and Development regulations, as required by law. Underlying this plan, and the Borough's development regulations, are the following major assumptions and concerns.

Village Center Development Pattern

The State Planning Commission designated the Borough as part of Planning Area 2 – Suburban Planning Area (see the “Relationship to Other Plans” section of this Master Plan for a discussion of state planning issues). There has been growing public concern throughout the state about suburban sprawl and the loss of traditional development patterns such as villages and the surrounding countryside. Despite substantial suburban growth in the surrounding region, the traditional village land use pattern, surrounded by open areas, is at the core of Rocky Hill's identity. There is growing recognition that these historic land use patterns are a significant cultural resource benefiting Borough residents and the region as a whole. In recognition of this, in 2001, the New Jersey State Planning Commission formally designated the village area of the Borough as a *Village Center* because of its demographic and physical characteristics, historic resources, and sense of place (see Village Center map at the end of this element).

Development of Remaining Vacant Land

In 1996 Somerset County purchased a major portion of the largest remaining undeveloped area in the Borough (the Schafer tract) for open space and recreation purposes. As a result, the Borough is an almost fully developed community with few remaining privately owned vacant or underdeveloped parcels of land. The future build-out of these remaining parcels has become a focus of Borough future land use concern.

Affordable Housing Requirements

Rocky Hill has adopted a realistic program to provide its fair share of affordable housing and as a result received substantive certification from the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (COAH). Substantive Certification will expire on January 3, 2007.

In 2004, COAH re-proposed new rules for municipalities to address their next fair share obligations on the basis of growth that will occur within the municipality in the future.¹ This means that new development within the community in the future will generate a fair share obligation for the Borough. The obligation will be based on formulae for residential and nonresidential development that is estimated to occur and is actually built from 2004 to 2014. Although little vacant land remains available for development, a fair share obligation will be generated as the remaining properties are built-out. The Development Fee Ordinance provides a mechanism for funding to help the Borough deal with the financial aspects of addressing the growth share obligation. The Borough will monitor the final rules when adopted by COAH to assess their impact on the Borough so that a new Housing Element and Fair Share Plan can be prepared and submitted to COAH in advance of the expiration of substantive certification.

Goals & Objectives

The Master Plan's goals and objectives are the foundation and framework for the entire Master Plan and represent the overall community vision for the future. The Land Use Plan is the broadest of all Master Plan elements and its importance is found in the fact that it establishes the basis for land use policies pertaining to future development. The following are the specific land use goals and objectives of this plan.

- Preserve the traditional village land use pattern. Rocky Hill has a traditional land use pattern of a village core surrounded by large open areas. This established and historic pattern should be preserved. New development within the Village Center should be compatible with traditional village land use and architecture. New development outside but adjacent to the Village Center should be compatible with the village scale and designed in a cluster fashion, close to the village, to continue the open space greenbelt around the village.
- A range of housing types should be encouraged. New residential development planned for the remaining large tracts in the Borough should reflect a range of housing types and styles, compatible with the village development pattern. Greater housing choice is needed for older citizens who may seek an alternative to a conventional single-family detached residence with its attendant maintenance responsibilities.
- Protect the established character of residential neighborhoods. A large portion of the Borough contains established residential neighborhoods. The Borough's land use regulations should promote the continuation of the established scale and character of those neighborhoods.
- Continue mixed uses. The Business Zone forms the central core of the village area, which has traditionally included a mix of business and residential uses. This pattern

¹ A municipality will also continue to be responsible to develop a plan to address the local rehabilitation component of its fair share obligation.

should be continued and encouraged. Additional nonresidential development can be accommodated elsewhere within the Village Center on a large tract of land that is impacted by the Airport Hazard Zone. Although residential uses are not permitted in the hazard zone, the nonresidential development in this area should, nonetheless, be of a scale and layout that will be compatible with the residential and pedestrian-friendly character of the village core and the traditional architecture within the Historic Preservation District.

- Preserve historic resources. The Borough contains abundant historic structures, sites, and resources. Land use regulations should be crafted and administered to preserve these resources.
- Continue intergovernmental coordination. The Borough's land use planning policies are consistent with state planning policies and requirements and with those of the two adjacent municipalities. Planning efforts by state and county agencies have placed new emphasis on inter-municipal coordination on projects of regional concern. The Borough's participation in these efforts should be continued.

Importance of the Village Center

The Rocky Hill Village Center is an area of compact and mixed uses centered on Washington Street and encompassing Crescent and Park Avenues and Reeve and Young Roads and parts of Merritt Lane, Montgomery Avenue, Princeton Avenue and Kingston (River) Road (see Village Center map). Although predominantly residential, the Village Center includes a number of commercial and institutional uses that make an important contribution to the traditional sense of a "village."

Historic Preservation District

A major portion of the Village Center is included in the State and National Registers of Historic Places because of its historically significant development pattern and the abundance of historically significant structures, sites, and resources. The preservation of these historic resources is a primary land use planning goal. A review of the Historic Preservation District boundary line in 2003 revealed that in certain areas the boundary did not follow property lines. This could have led to unnecessary complications in planning for future development or in undertaking improvements to existing developed properties. A basic principle of zoning suggests that land use regulatory district boundaries should, wherever possible, follow property lines. For this reason, the Historic Preservation District was amended with boundary line adjustments from Young Drive to Van Horne Brook.

Character of the Village Center

The majority of uses on the western side of the Village Center are residential. A key factor in the Village Center's traditional character, however, is that it also includes significant historic resources and architectural styles and mixed nonresidential development, including all of the Borough's major community facilities and commercial uses. These are located mainly in the central part of the Village Center. This mixed-use area is the focus of the Borough's social, cultural, and economic life and it is the basis of the Borough's unique identity and sense of place. These factors are fully consistent with and, in fact, embody the State Plan's vision of a village. As described in the State Plan, "*villages are compact, primarily residential communities that*

*offer basic consumer services for their residents and nearby residents. Villages are not meant to be Centers providing major regional shopping or employment for their regions. This larger economic function belongs to Towns and Regional Centers.”*²

The “Environs” Outside the Village Center

The State Plan refers to the area outside the boundary of a center as the “environs” which *“encompass a diversity of conditions and throughout New Jersey, it varies in form and function... They may include greenbelts: predominantly open areas that mark the outer edge of Centers.”*³ Greenbelts are probably one of the most effective ways of signaling the presence of a center and are evocative of early American village settings.

According to the State Plan, the *“Environs are the preferred areas for the protection of Large Contiguous Areas, including the preservation of farmland, open space and large forest tracts.”*⁴ When development occurs in the Environs it should be based on design and planning techniques to *“ensure that any new development enhances the character of the area by preserving open space, retaining scenic vistas and maintaining natural systems. [T]echniques may include clustering residential units, retaining natural buffers, and reducing automobile use by providing pedestrian connections and traffic-calming features.”*⁵

The State Plan also promotes the concept of transferring density rights from land in the environs to contiguous or noncontiguous land in centers as a means of preserving open space and agricultural uses in areas outside designated centers, especially in the fringe, rural, and environmentally sensitive planning areas. This concept involves increasing the density on a parcel slated for development to compensate for the preservation of a parcel to be maintained as open space or for its continuation in agricultural use.

Planning and Implementation Agenda

As part of the center designation process in 2001, the Borough prepared a “Planning and Implementation Agenda” outlining the various activities the Borough is undertaking in implementing planning policies related to the Village Center. Activities included planning and support for traffic calming and pedestrian-oriented improvements, planning for access between the village and surrounding neighborhoods and open space areas, goals for open space preservation, investigating the potential for accessory apartments, and establishing appropriate development policies for vacant sites located within the Village Center and the environs outside the center boundary.

With respect to development outside the Village Center, the Planning Board considered the potential for density transfers between noncontiguous parcels. The Board concluded that increasing the density or intensity of development of sites in the Village Center would result in development that would be incompatible with surrounding uses, especially because of the limited size and location of infill sites. Also, since vacant sites within the Village Center are within the

² New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan; Draft Final Plan; October 2000; page 226.

³ Ibid; page 229.

⁴ Ibid; page 230.

⁵ Ibid; p. 231.

Historic Preservation District, substantially increasing the density would conflict with the Borough's primary planning goal of preserving the established scale and character of the District. Since the sites located outside the Village Center are situated adjacent to the center boundary, traditional clustering methods can be utilized to enhance the compatibility of new development with traditional village character and scale, preserving open space in outlying areas where a contiguous greenbelt is possible.

Land Use Policies Related to Future Development

The fundamental goals of this Master Plan and the Land Use Plan element include the protection of the integrity of the Village Center and the Historic District and preservation of established residential neighborhoods. There are many factors that contribute to the character of the village area and surrounding neighborhoods and open spaces. Among the most evident are lot sizes/density, building scale and architectural style, the natural and man-made landscape, and infrastructure improvements such as road layout and design. Policies for future development should relate to these factors in order to promote development that will be compatible with the established character of the village, the Historic District, and the environs. The proximity of Princeton Airport, located to the west of Route 206 in Montgomery Township, also has an impact on development in Rocky Hill, in that it must be taken into account since the state regulates development within the designated Airport Hazard Zone.

This Land Use Plan includes specific policies for future development in the Borough. Of prime importance are the policies and objectives recommended with respect to the potential development of the largest four remaining vacant or underdeveloped tracts of land. With the purchase of the majority of the Schafer tract in 1996 for open space and recreation, the former planned development regulations which applied to the development of that tract became obsolete. They were intended to guide the development of the entire Schafer tract and Schafer Homestead. Instead, this Land Use Plan shifts its focus to the remaining vacant area, the Homestead site and two other developable sites and promotes center-based development and open space goals designed to preserve and enhance the Village Center. The recommended policies described below outline the planning policies for the future development of the four largest remaining tracts and provide the rationale for implementing ordinances.

Site Layout and Architectural Illustrations

The goal of this plan is to ensure that future development will be compatible with the established traditional development pattern and historic architecture of the village. In order to avoid *sprawl*, the development of sites outside the Village Center should generally result in the placement of structures close to the village core while preserving open areas surrounding the village as a continuation of the village greenbelt. New development on sites with historic structures should be undertaken in ways that preserve the historic settings of the existing structures. Sketches of village compatible design layouts are included at the end of this element to illustrate how the goals of this plan influence the future development of each of the four noted sites. They are

intended to be illustrative of how development can be achieved within recommended density limitations, consistent with each site's physical characteristics, and with respect to each site's location within or outside of the designated Village Center. In connection with the largest site (the 15.7-acre Schafer Tract) architectural sketches are also included to illustrate how the buildings in this development could be designed in a manner that addresses the intent and purpose of this plan and the need for diversity in massing and scale in order to create a village-compatible streetscape. The illustrations are not intended to be final products, but are design exercises within the context of the 16 design principles set forth in the section concerning the Schafer Tract below.

Scassera Tract (VO Zone)
(Block 5 Lots 6 & 7)

This site consists of two lots comprising a total of approximately 14.5 acres situated on the southerly side of Washington Street. Lot 6 consists of approximately 11.36 acres and contains a farmhouse and outbuildings with considerable undeveloped acreage and approximately 560 feet of road frontage along Washington Street. The farmhouse is situated near Washington Street, more or less in line with the traditional setback of nearby homes. The outbuildings are also situated on Lot 6 behind the farmhouse. Lot 7 consists of 3.16 acres, and is landlocked and vacant.

Both lots 6 and 7 are located within the Historic Preservation District and the Village Center and are presently used for agricultural purposes (the majority of land is assessed as farmland). The site slopes gently down from Washington Street; the farmhouse/outbuildings and mature vegetation near Washington Street obscure a complete view of the site. Adjoining land uses along Washington Street are single-family residential dwellings on lots of varying sizes (R-2 Zone to the east and R-1 Zone to the west). The Knoll Way townhouse development (located in the R-3 Zone – 2 units per acre) abuts the site's westerly boundary, and the Borough's largest Green Acres site borders the property to the south and east. The Green Acres land in this area provides the distinct boundary for the Village Center in this part of the Borough.

The southerly portion of the undeveloped part of this site is located in the Airport Hazard Zone, which is a restricted area under state regulations. The boundary line of the hazard zone was recently modified by the NJ Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics, shifting it closer to Washington Street due to changes in the runway configuration at Princeton Airport.⁶ Now the majority of the site is located within the Airport Hazard Zone, and it may not be developed with residential dwellings. Any proposed development of this site will have to be based upon a definitive location of the Airport Hazard Zone boundary.

In addition to being impacted by the Airport Hazard Zone, the site had been located in three zoning districts (R-1, R-M and AERO) and also within the Historic Preservation District. When originally established, the R-M Zone required an affordable housing setaside, but it was not needed to fulfill the Borough's fair share obligation approved by COAH in January 2001. This area is now even more impacted by the expanded Airport Hazard Zone. The AERO Zone

⁶ See approved Airport Layout Plan, Figure 8-1 Princeton Airport, sheet 3 of 7, prepared by C&S Engineers, dated October 1996, maintained on file by the Borough Engineer.

(Administrative, Engineering, Research and Office was made obsolete when most of the Schafer Tract adjacent to this land was purchased for open space. The purpose of the AERO zone was to provide for development similar to contiguous areas in Montgomery Township with street access to be derived directly from Route 206. The AERO zone also encompassed the land to the south and west of the tract (now open space), providing for the possibility that a comprehensive development would be undertaken in fulfillment of the objectives of the zone.

In view of all of the above, it was appropriate to rezone the portions of the property contained in the R-M and AERO zones. In their place, a new nonresidential zone - known as the Village Office (VO) District - recognizes the limitations imposed by the Airport Hazard Zone and is consistent with this Master Plan's focus on the preservation and enhancement of the Village Center. Standards for the new zone encourage development design and layout in keeping with the established historic village scale and to protect adjoining residential uses from the negative impacts of traffic and large parking lots. Therefore, the future development of this tract should be guided by the following principles and policies:

- Most of the Washington Street frontage (including the farmhouse and outbuildings) should remain in the R-1 Zone, and, if developed, residences should be consistent with the density and standards of the zone. Preservation of the existing farmhouse should be a goal in any future subdivision of this portion of the property.
- The balance of the tract (including a right-of-way for access to Washington Street) is included within a new nonresidential zone known as the Village Office District. Development concepts could include an office campus, office condominiums or a single user. The design and layout of any office development should be comprehensively planned consistent with the requirements and provisions of the Historic Preservation District and in a manner that will be compatible with the historic village development pattern.
- Village Office District standards should encourage the development of small buildings consistent with the orientation of a traditional village development pattern and village architectural styles, and be based upon 2-story construction, gabled rooflines, and traditional window fenestration. The size of individual buildings should be limited in order to avoid massing that would conflict with the village development pattern. The maximum total floor area ratio of all buildings should not exceed 0.08.
- Access to an office development from Washington Street should be designed so as to minimize adverse impacts from traffic, lighting and signage on adjoining residential uses.
- Appropriate landscaped areas or buffers and significant setbacks should be provided wherever nonresidential uses are in proximity to adjacent residences and to obscure the visibility of parking lots.
- Pedestrian and/or bicycle access to the adjoining Green Acres site should be incorporated into development plans.

Hayden Tract (R-1A Zone)
(Block 1 Lot 3)

This 7.66-acre site is located on the northerly side of Washington Street within the Village Center and the Historic Preservation District. Existing development on the site includes three

single-family detached homes together with accessory structures situated toward the rear of the property. The closest structure is approximately 200 feet from Washington Street with others over 300 feet distant. The southeasterly corner of the site is an open undeveloped field consisting of approximately 2½ acres. The street is lined with mature trees and vegetation. The easterly side of the field is also tree-lined and a single driveway bordering the open field on the west side provides access to the existing dwellings on the property. The field is a visually prominent feature in the village because of its topography and openness. Land uses on both sides (east and west) of the tract and to the north are single-family residential based upon a density generally equaling one unit per acre.⁷

Based on the site's size and the location of the three existing residences, additional development is possible. The location of existing structures coupled with the site's prominence and importance to the Washington Street streetscape and Village Center suggest that future development should be based upon a design and layout that will minimize changes that could negatively impact the historic qualities of the site, the streetscape and scenic qualities of the open field. Accordingly, the site has been rezoned to a new zone designated Planned Residential A (R-1A) and the following policies should guide the future development of this tract:

- Development should be comprehensively planned based on an overall density consistent with R-1 zoning and the requirements and provisions of the Historic Preservation District.
- The existing dwellings should be preserved in their setting. New dwellings should be clustered toward the rear of the site in order to retain the open field near Washington Street.
- The undeveloped area between the street and the main residence and the open field area should be preserved to maintain the integrity of the streetscape.
- Access and circulation to serve new development should be designed to minimize the impact on the streetscape and open field. If possible, the existing driveway should provide access to new development.
- Flexibility should be encouraged in housing types and yard setbacks, including small single-family or attached housing, in order to achieve planning objectives.

Schafer Homestead (R-1B Zone)
(Block 10 Lots 10, 12 & 19.01)

The Schafer Homestead site lies on the westerly side of Princeton Avenue about 100 feet south of Crescent Avenue outside of, but directly adjacent to, the boundary of the Village Center. It consists of three tax lots comprising a total of approximately 3.4 acres. It is adjacent to and north of the larger Schafer Tract described below and is within the Historic Preservation District.

Existing development on the site includes the main residence and numerous outbuildings. They are located in the central and rear portions of the site with the closest structure set back about 200 feet from the street. The site is virtually flat topographically and is dotted with mature trees, and

⁷ The R-1 Zone requires a minimum lot size of one acre.

the expansive front yard creates a scenic vista from Princeton Avenue. Preservation of the Homestead with its farm-like setting and the open area along Princeton Avenue is important to maintaining the distinction between the Village Center and the environs – the countryside surrounding the village. Accordingly, in view of its location adjacent to the Schafer Tract, its limited size and existing development, any redevelopment of the site should be guided by the following policies embodied in the new Planned Residential B (R-1B) zoning district:

- Due to its location outside the Village Center, any additional development should be comprehensively planned consistent with the density of the R-1 Zone and the requirements and provisions of the Historic Preservation District.
- The existing residence should be preserved in its setting and the open area along Princeton Avenue should be protected since it closely relates to the greenbelt surrounding the Village Center and extending along Princeton Avenue.
- Any proposed dwelling(s) should be developed in close proximity to the Village Center boundary in a manner compatible with the traditional scale and architecture of the village. Flexibility should be encouraged in housing types and bulk requirements to achieve planning objectives.
- Circulation and access should be designed with flexibility (including shared driveways in lieu of highly engineered roads) so as to minimize impervious surface coverage and blend easily into the village setting.

Schafer Tract (R-1C Zone)
(Block 10 Lot 19)

This 15.7-acre site is vacant land located on the westerly side of Princeton Avenue. The entire site lies outside of, but adjacent to the Village Center. It is the largest of the vacant parcels available for development in the Borough. It has extensive road frontage (about 1,200 feet) along Princeton Avenue and is located entirely within the Historic Preservation District. Most of the site is in the R-2A Zone (single-family residential development - 2.25 units/acre density). A portion of the Princeton Avenue frontage is located in the R-1A Zone (single-family dwellings permitted – 30,000 square foot minimum lot size).

This site is currently in agricultural use and is assessed as farmland. It is virtually flat topographically; the tree line extends along a portion of the Princeton Avenue frontage in the R-1A zoned portion of the site. This land represents the remaining portion of the property not purchased by Somerset County under the Green Acres program. The site's northerly property line, behind the Crescent Avenue residences, forms the boundary of the Village Center.

As indicated in the Open Space & Recreation Plan, ideally this site should be set aside as permanent open space to continue the greenbelt on the southern side of the Village Center. If permanent open space preservation of the entire parcel is not possible, the form of development should be that of a traditional neighborhood with dwellings clustered closer to the Village Center to preserve a greenbelt of open space along Princeton Avenue. To provide a wider range of housing types to meet the area's changing demographics, the development should be age-restricted. Accordingly, a new zone should be established, to be known as the Age Restricted/Traditional Neighborhood Development (R-1C) District, based upon the following density limitations and planning policies to guide the future development of this property:

- A maximum of 34 age-restricted dwelling units (representing a density of approximately 2.2 units per acre) should be permitted, constructed as two family dwellings.
- Development should be clustered close to the Village Center in a manner compatible with the traditional street grid and architecture of the village. One point of ingress/egress should be provided from Princeton Avenue.
- Shared driveways and rear access lanes should be encouraged to reduce the number of curb cuts and the visibility of garages and driveways.
- The street layout and buildings should be arranged so as to provide a village green with usable space for the residents, which shall be designed and spatially defined by the architectural streetscape.
- The layout of development should result in a reservation of adequate open space along Princeton Avenue to continue the greenbelt around the Village Center.
- Pedestrian and/or bicycle access should be provided to the adjacent park.

As an outgrowth of the planning of this site, the following standards have been developed to guide how the buildings should be designed. When a project is proposed for development, detailed plans should be prepared consistent with the standards outlined below. These standards are intended to encourage variety in architecture and to ensure that the proposed buildings will be compatible with existing structures in the Historic Preservation District. Design elements should include open porches, building offsets and changes in roof forms to be sensitive to massing and scale, as well as appropriate changes in fenestration, variation in color and other exterior elements for diversity in the streetscape.

1. All massing, building and roof forms respect the general scale and proportions of the historic homes of the Borough of Rocky Hill.
2. Buildings shall be composed of a primary form or mass with secondary wings of similar character.
3. Garages and parking are, to the extent practicable, located in the rear of the lot and do not visually overpower the façade of the building.
4. Buildings that are located on street corners or have multiple facades along public areas have the same architectural quality and detail on each of those facades.
5. Materials, textures and colors are generally compatible with the homes in the historic district of the Borough of Rocky Hill.
6. Any change in building material occurs at a logical place, such as a change in building mass, roof or an inside corner.
7. All visible facades have a defined “base” (foundation wall, watertable, etc.) and “cap” (fascia/frieze, cornices, rakes, etc.)
8. The entry to a building is easily identifiable from the street and/or public spaces.
9. Windows are vertically proportioned and appropriate for the style of the architecture.
10. Shutters match the window opening and single shutters are not used on multiple or ganged windows.
11. Cornices utilize properly sized fascia and frieze boards and supporting moldings and shall be properly returned.

12. Columns are properly aligned with the shaft of the column to be in the same plane as the beam or frieze board above.
13. Landscaping plantings and fencing, which are consistent with the existing pattern of the Village Center, compliment the architecture and do not obscure the buildings.
14. Garages, breezeways and secondary wings are sited to create privacy yards and outdoor living spaces.
15. Utility meters, air conditioner condensers, vents, trash and recyclables are located away from the visible portions of the buildings and screened with fencing and/or landscaping.
16. Entrance and porch projections shall relate to the street and be visually compatible with related structures and spaces.

Design Guidelines for the Historic Preservation District

In 1989 the Borough commissioned an architectural consulting firm to develop guidelines⁸ intended to aid the Planning Board, developers, and homeowners in the design and layout of undeveloped sections of the Borough in a manner compatible with the historic character of the village core. The guidelines identified characteristic features that are important to maintaining the interrelationship of the built and natural environment that comprises the village.

The build-out of the four key vacant or underdeveloped sites described above is of great importance to the Borough as each is in a strategic and highly visible location in or near the Village Center and Historic Preservation District. The Schafer Tract is to be guided by the principles developed during the planning of that site. The Design Guidelines developed in 1989 should be updated consistent with this Master Plan's goals and objectives and, where appropriate, should include the design standards and elements enumerated above. The Land Use Ordinance should then be amended to incorporate a comprehensive update of the Historic Preservation Zone's design standards to guide future development within the Historic Preservation District.

Accessory Apartments

An accessory apartment is a small residential unit built within or on the same property as a single-family dwelling. The main dwelling is the principal use of the property, and the accessory apartment is a subordinate use. An accessory apartment may be limited in size as a percentage or fixed square footage so as to ensure its subordination to the principal residence. Typically, communities with an older housing stock of large homes are considered appropriate for encouraging accessory apartments. This is because such dwellings often have the potential for renovation and inclusion of separate living space for family members (such as an "in-law" apartment) or for tenants.

The Borough does have an older housing stock of large homes that might be conducive to the creation of accessory apartments, and there is a growing need to provide accommodations for elderly family members who no longer care to maintain a separate home. However, such uses should be limited so that their compatibility with surrounding uses can be assured and for the protection of the architectural character of the neighborhood. In addition, the adequacy of off-street parking is a concern that must be addressed wherever accessory apartments are permitted.

⁸ Design Guidelines Borough of Rocky Hill, NJ; Short and Ford, Architects, Princeton, NJ; August 1, 1989.

Accordingly, the following policies should be considered in developing an accessory apartment ordinance:

- Accessory apartments should be permitted as a conditional use in any residential zone.
- The apartment should be limited to a one-bedroom unit, and its size should be limited either as a percentage of the main residence and/or on a square footage basis.
- Adequate off-street parking should be provided. Landscaping and buffering should be required to shield additional parking areas if close to adjoining residences.
- The development of accessory apartments should be monitored to determine whether additional limitations or restrictions need to be established to ensure consistency with the Master Plan's overall goals and objectives. A "sunset" provision could be enacted to limit the effective period of the ordinance or the number of apartments on a Borough-wide basis.

Mixed Uses in the Village Center

Fundamental to the character of the Village Center is the fact that it contains a mix of uses including residential, commercial, and institutional and community uses. The Borough's Business, Village Office and Industrial zones provide opportunities for nonresidential uses within the Village Center. The location of the Business Zone in the "heart" of the village is a traditional land use pattern that should be continued. The *combination* of business and residential uses in the Business Zone should be encouraged because traditional villages typically contain buildings with a business on the street level with a residence(s) above.

Land Use Plan Map

The Land Use Plan map included at the end of this element provides a graphic display of the Borough's land use or zoning districts. The zoning district changes discussed above for the four key vacant or underdeveloped tracts (R-1A, R-1B, R-1C and Village Office zones) are included on the map. The remaining zones displayed on the Future Land Use Plan map are described below.

Community Land District

About 30% of the land in the Borough is now in public ownership. This includes land owned by Somerset County for open space and recreation purposes, Borough-owned open space and parks, as well as other publicly owned or community sites such as the Borough Hall, Mary Jacobs Library, the Rocky Hill Community Group, fire company and rescue squad sites, and the cemetery.

This Land Use Plan has established the importance of the village core, and the designated Village Center, to the traditional historic character of the Borough. The public land holdings and other quasi-public sites have been included in this new zone district to reflect their community purpose. The "Community Land" designation, especially for open space areas, contributes to defining the Village Center and raises the awareness of the public that an important resource will be protected or that a community institution is devoted to public use.

Residential Zones

Several zone districts in the Borough provide for residential uses. The R-1 Single-family Residential district covers much of the land outside the Historic Preservation District and Village Center and provides for single-family residential homes on large lots (minimum lot size: one acre) as well as agricultural uses.

The R-2 Village Residential district lies almost wholly within the Historic Preservation District and the Village Center. It provides for single-family residential uses in the older village core at a density of about 3.6 units per acre (12,000 square foot minimum lot size).

The R-3 Residential Cluster district comprises an area at the western edge of the Borough south of Washington Street. It provides for a variety of housing types at densities ranging from 1.5 to 2 units per acre. The Knoll Way townhouse development was constructed in this area.

Nonresidential Zones

Zoning for nonresidential uses in the Borough includes the Business District and the Industrial District. The Business District encompasses two limited areas in the heart of the village core and the eastern end of the Borough. It provides areas for small retail sales and service uses, essentially recognizing established uses. Lot size requirements represent traditional village core small lot development (10,000 square foot minimum lot size). Single-family residences are permitted on lots consistent with R-2 standards. The Business zone is consistent with a traditional village development pattern.

The Industrial District provides for the existing industrial development located in the Village Center on the southerly side of Crescent Avenue. There is no vacant land remaining in the district.

Historic Preservation District

The Historic Preservation District governs development within the designated overlay area covering most of the village area along Washington Street, extending up Montgomery Avenue to the northerly side of the Borough Hall lot and encompassing all of the land to the east and south to the Millstone River and Van Horn Brook near Hickory Court. Undeveloped land adjacent to the village (the Schafer Tract discussed above) and the Schafer Homestead are included in the district. The district regulates new construction and renovations to existing structures utilizing a permit process (preservation permit administered by the Planning Board) with criteria designed to achieve visual and architectural compatibility with the established historic character of the district.

Attachments

Development Illustrations:

8 Site Layouts

5 Architectural Sketches

Map: Village Center

Map: Land Use Plan

Village Office (VO) Zone: Illustrative Layout

(Layout #1 of 1)

2 Single Family Lots (1 @ 45,000sf – 1 @ 60,000 sf)

Preserve existing house and majority of barns on one lot

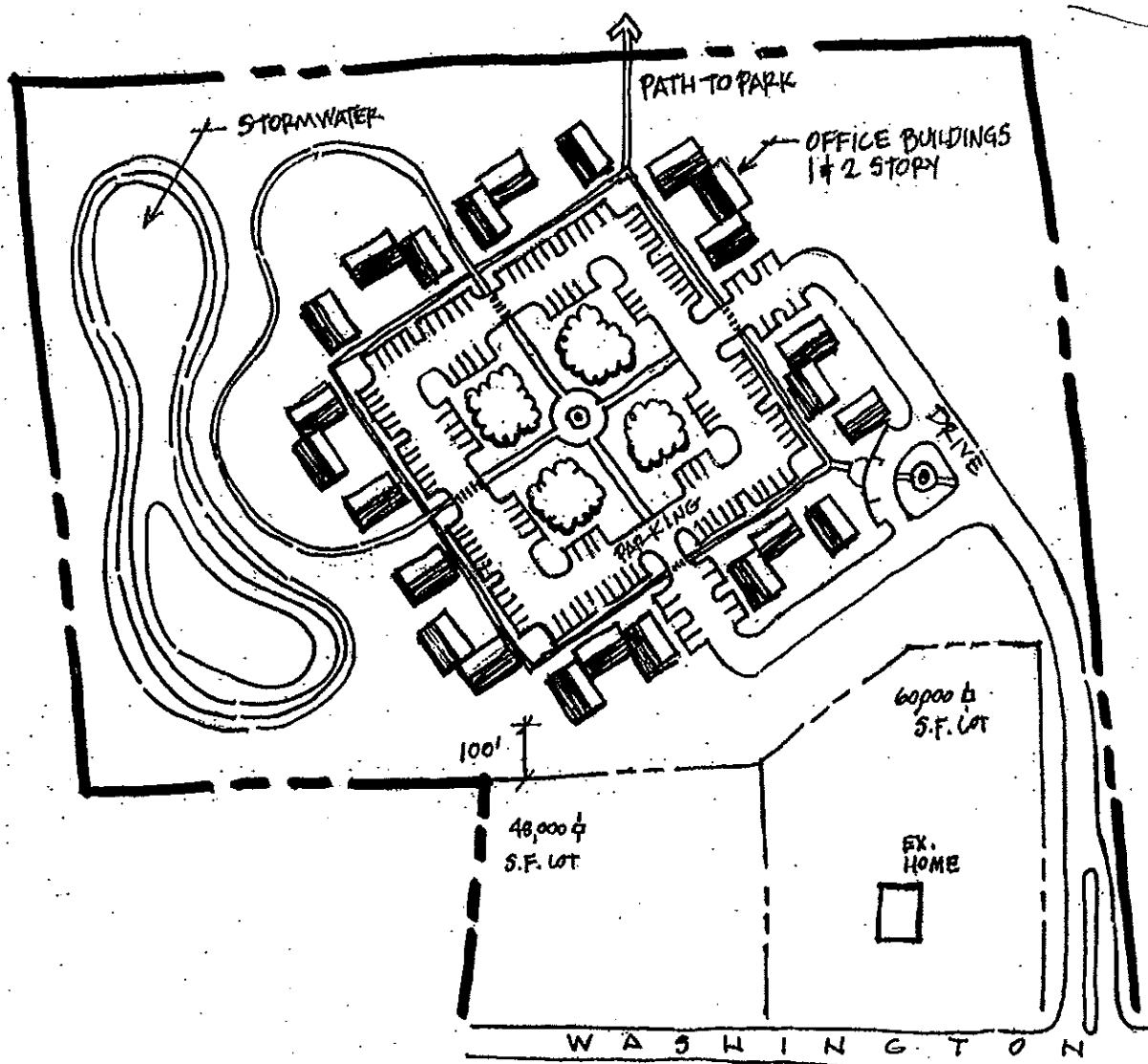
12 Acre office campus

41,800 sf office space +/-

140 parking stalls @ 1 / 300 sf

24 buildings - 13 two story, 11 one story

Town Green central common open space w/ walkways and furnishings



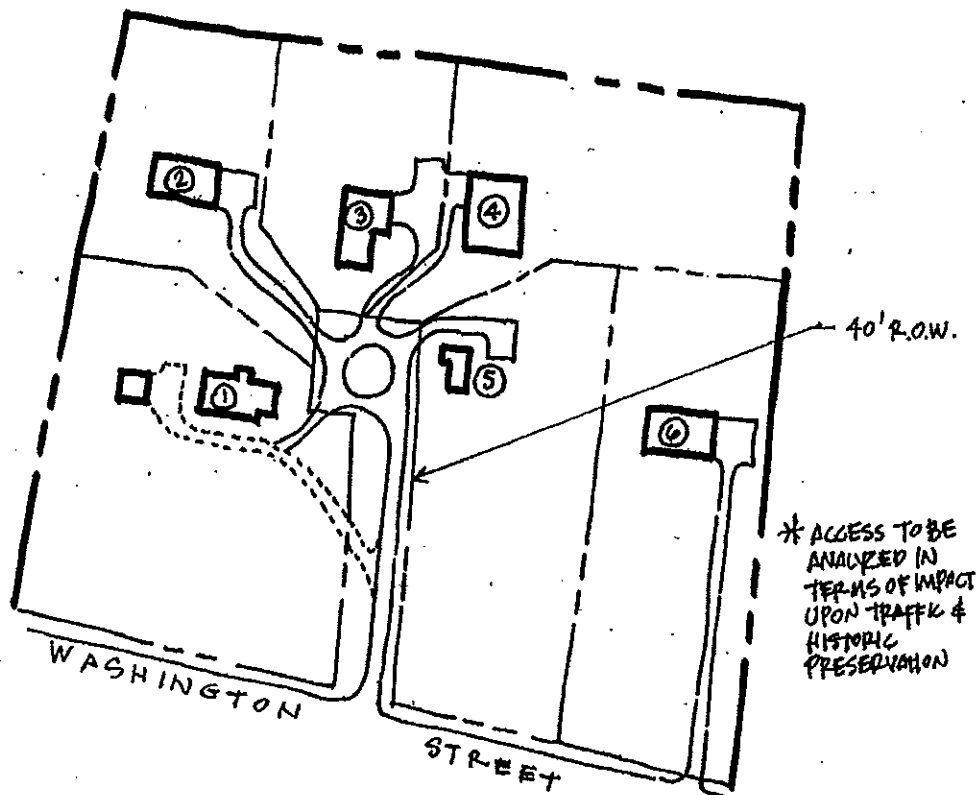
R-1A Zone: Illustrative Layout #1

(Layout #1 of 3)

6 Single Family Lots @ 30,000 to 80,000 sf +/-

Preserve existing structures

Shared access utilizing existing drive



R-1A Zone: Illustrative Layout #2

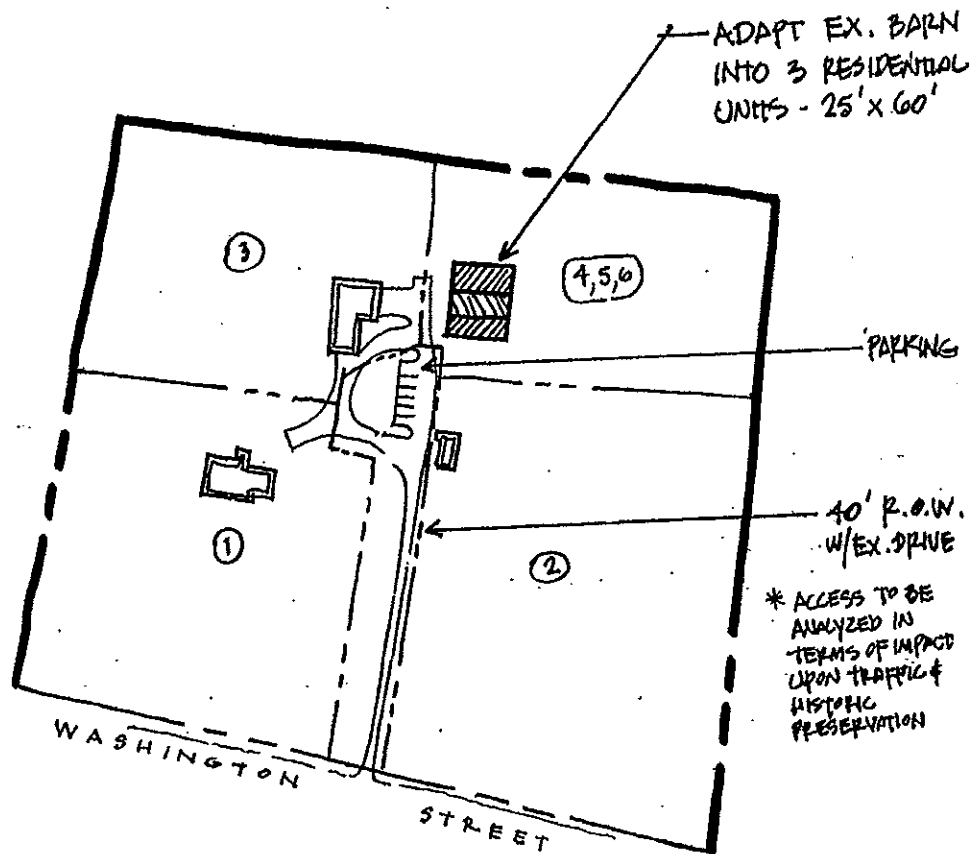
(Layout #2 of 3)

3 Single Family Lots – preserving existing structures

Adapt existing barn into 3 residential attached residential

Shared access utilizing existing drive

Preserve existing structures



R-1A Zone: Illustrative Layout #3

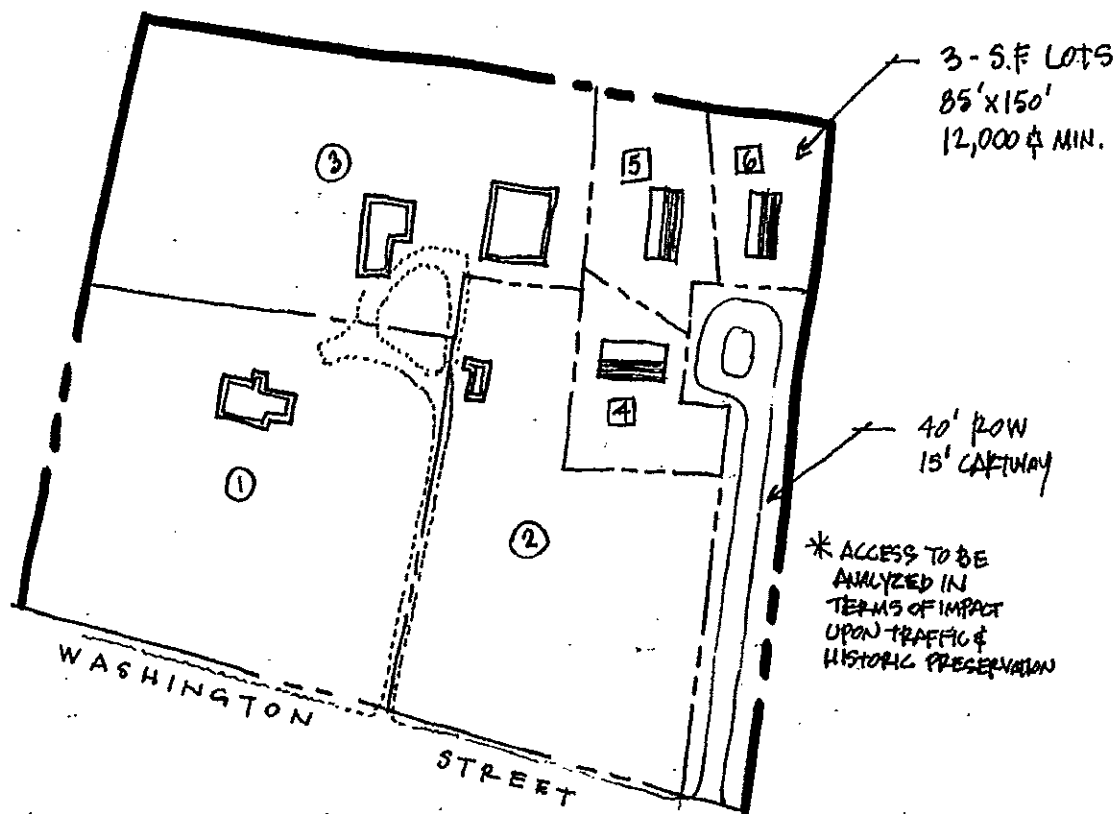
(Layout #3 of 3)

3 Single Family Lots – preserving existing structures

3 Single Family Lots (12,000 sf)

Shared access utilizing existing drive

New access road to be placed close to property line to preserve views of existing homestead / farm



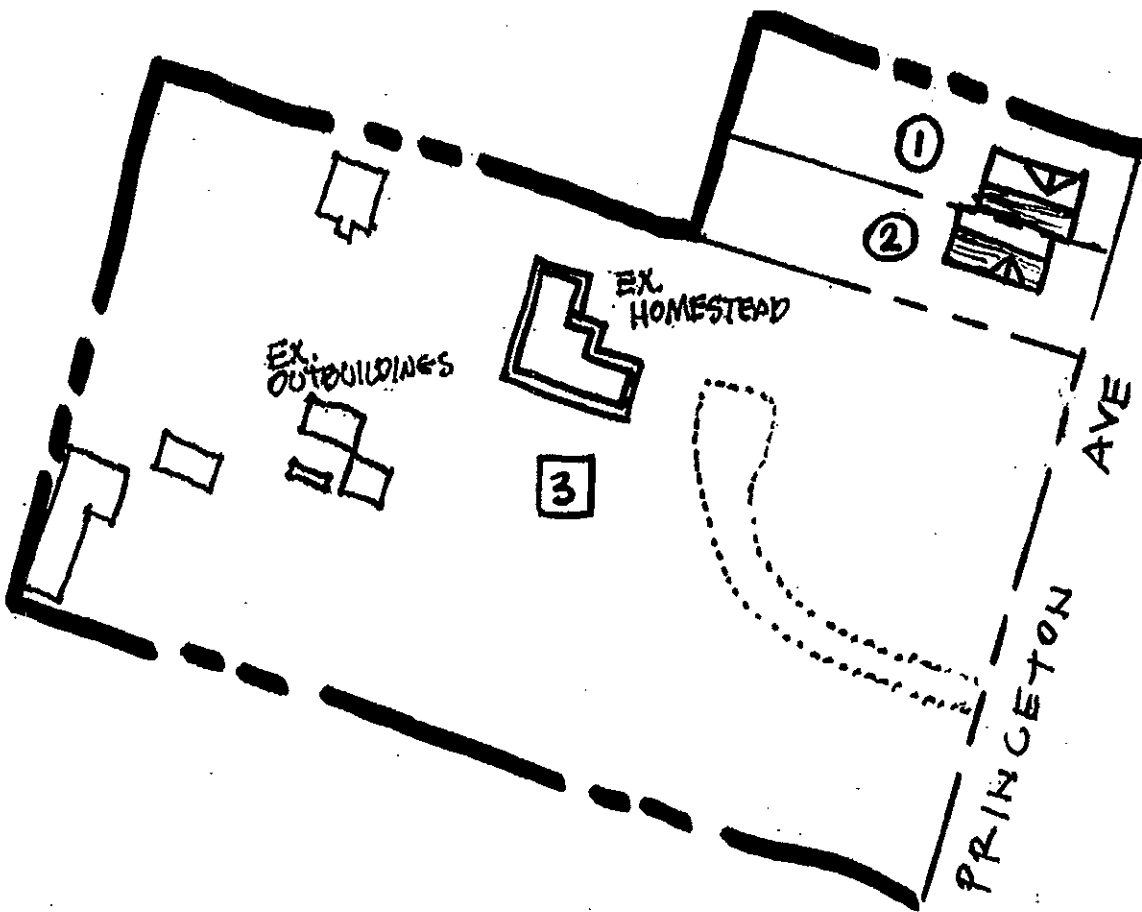
R-1B Zone: Illustrative Layout #1

(Layout #1 of 3)

1 Single Family Lot – preserving existing homestead – 2.9 ac

2 Duplex Lots

All historic out buildings to be preserved to the extent practical



R-1B Zone: Illustrative Layout #2

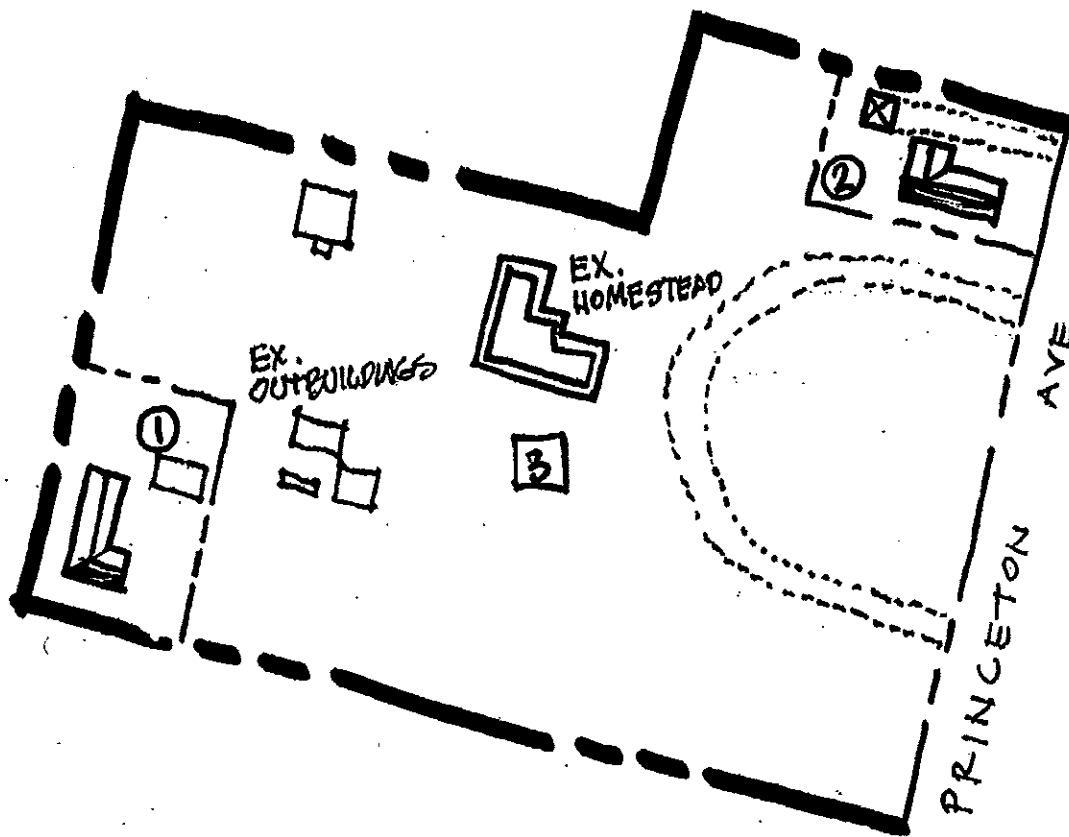
(Layout #2 of 3)

1 Single Family Lot – preserving existing homestead – 2.9 ac

2 Single Family Lots (7,000 to 8,000 sf) one lot in front and one lot in back

All historic out buildings to be preserved to the extent practical

Access and/or ROW for rear lot to be determined w/ subdivision approval



R-1B Zone: Illustrative Layout #3

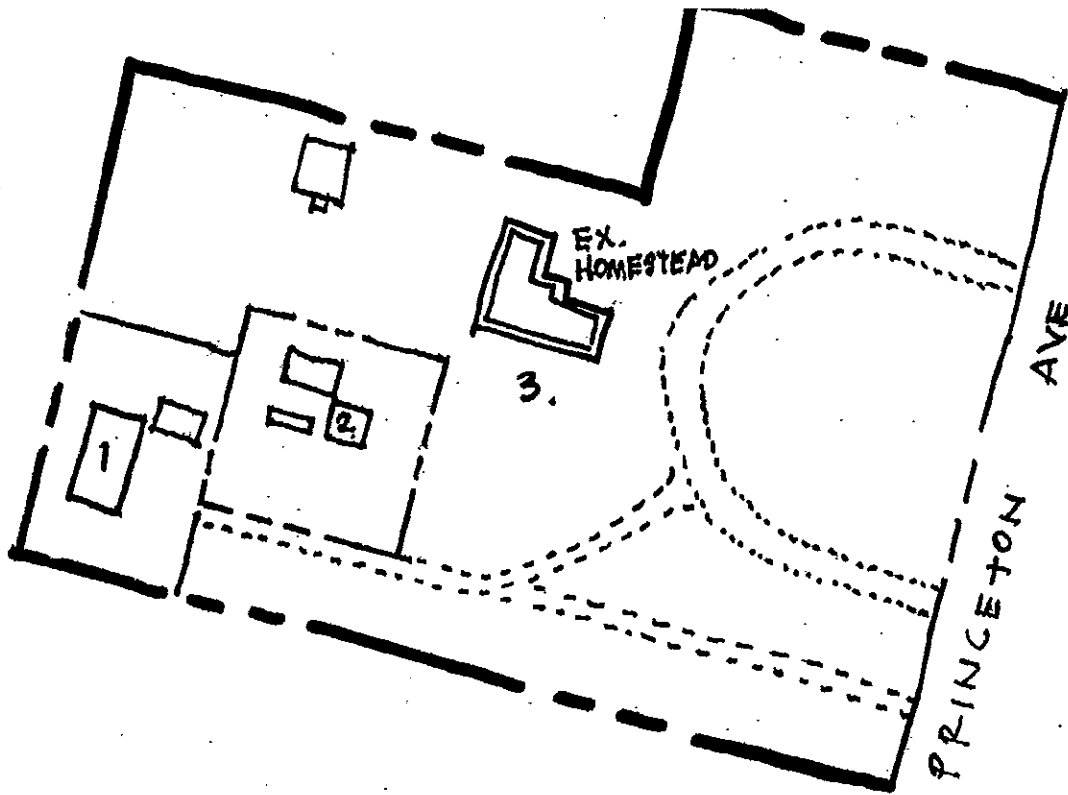
(Layout #3 of 3)

1 Single Family Lot – preserving existing homestead – 2.9 ac

2 Single Family Lots (7,000 to 8,000 sf)

All historic out buildings to be preserved to the extent practical

Access and/or ROW for rear lots to be determined w/ subdivision approval



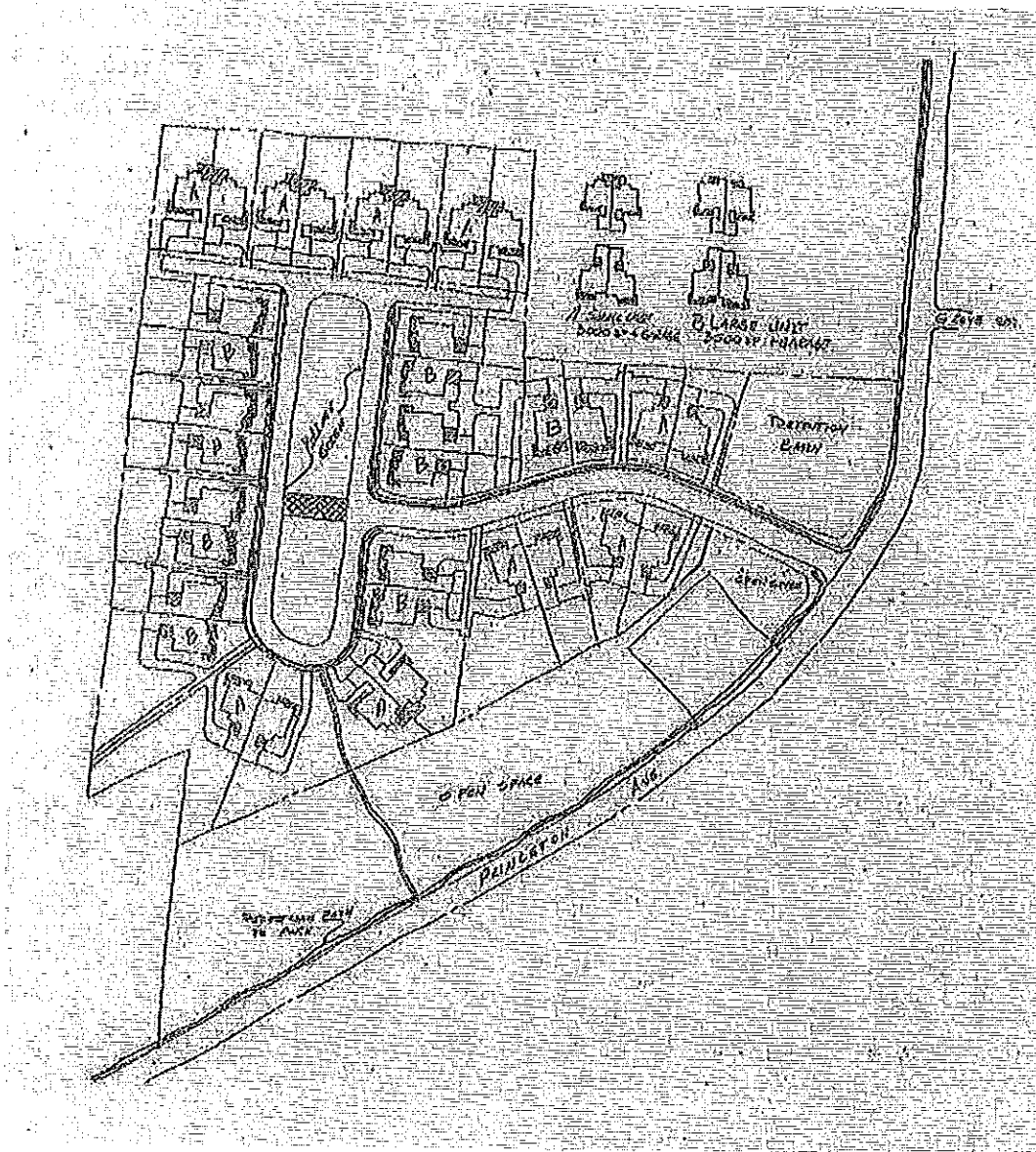
R-1C Zone: Illustrative Layout

(Layout #1 of 1)

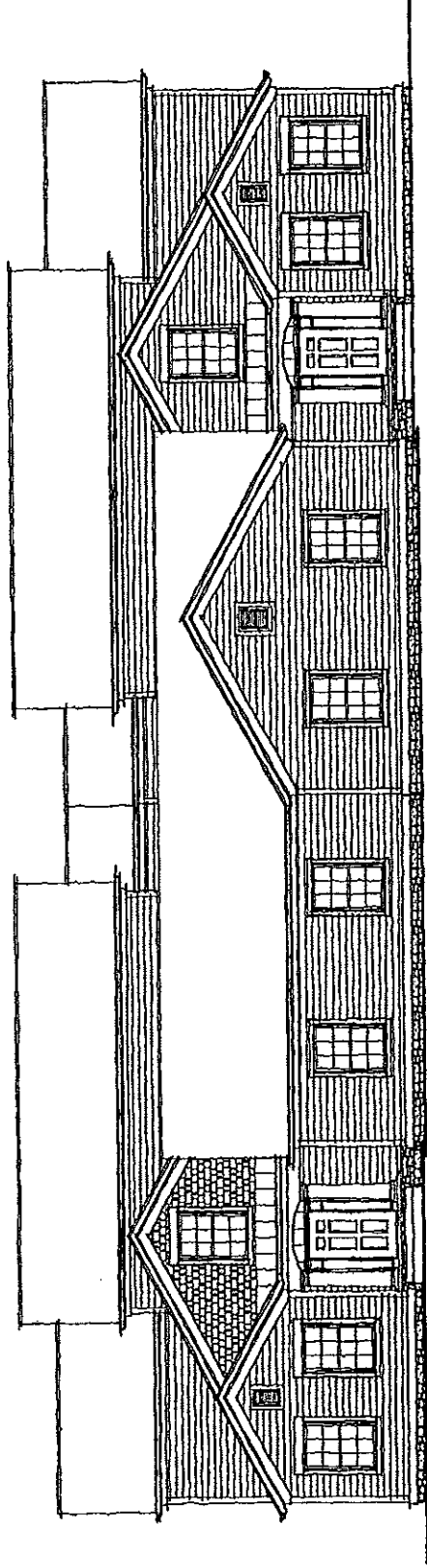
17 Two-family buildings

34 Dwellings

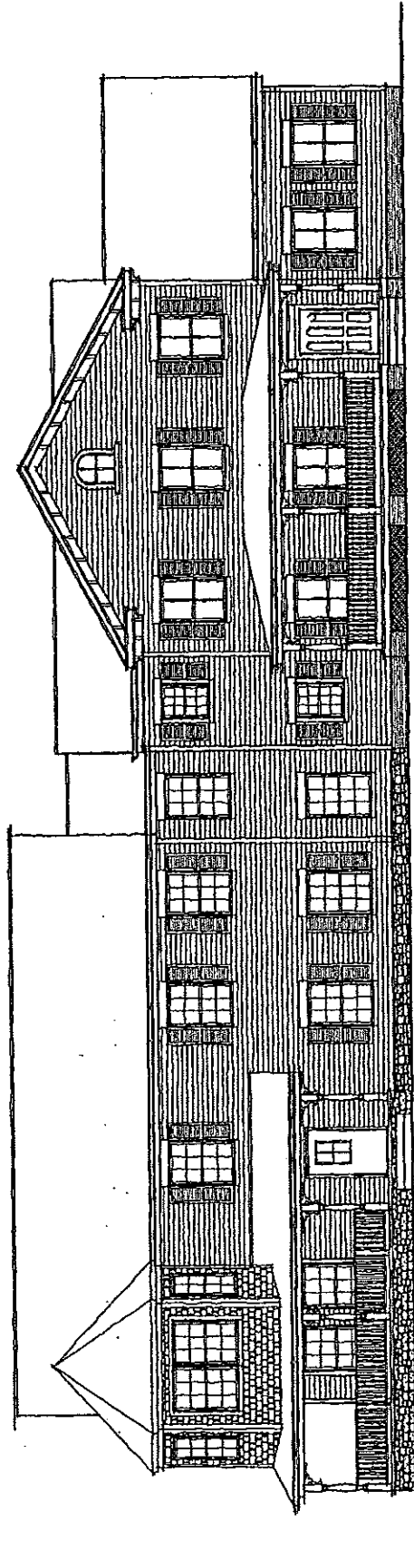
Village Green and open space greenbelt



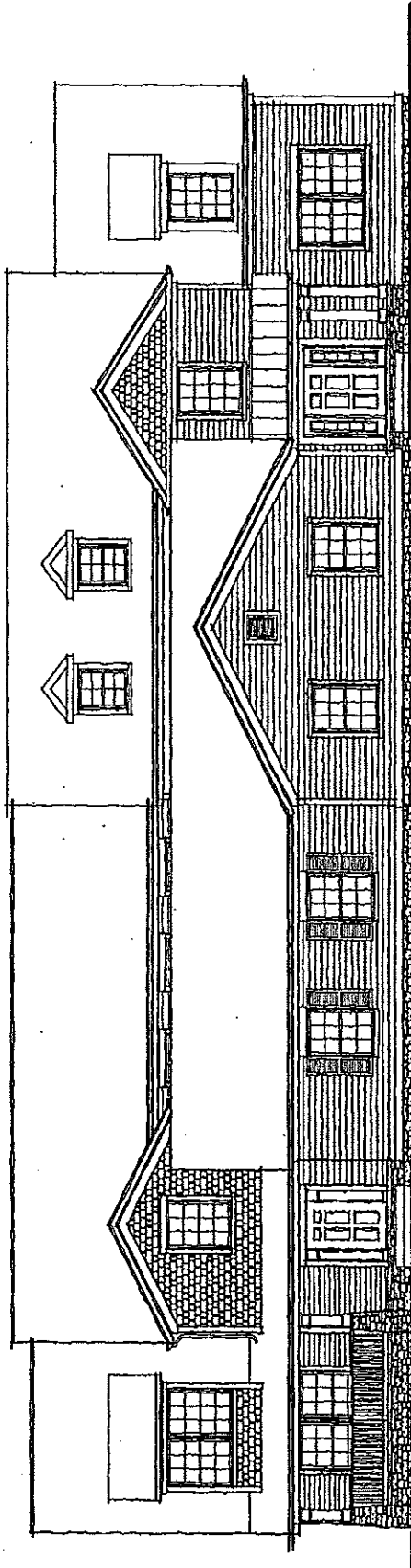
R-1C Zone: Illustrative Architectural Elevations



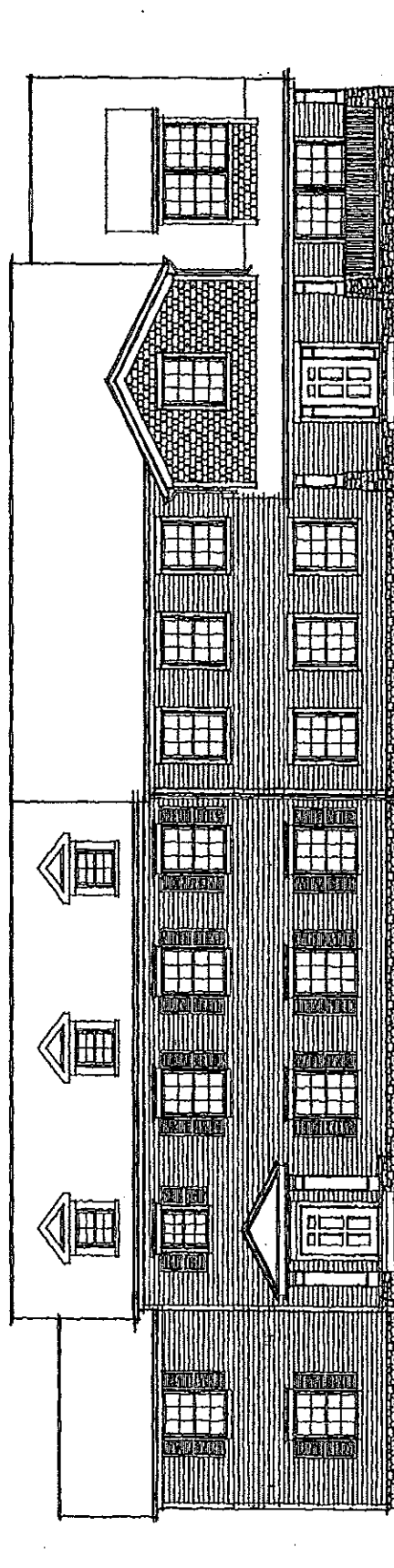
FRONT ELEVATION W/ GARAGE FRONT



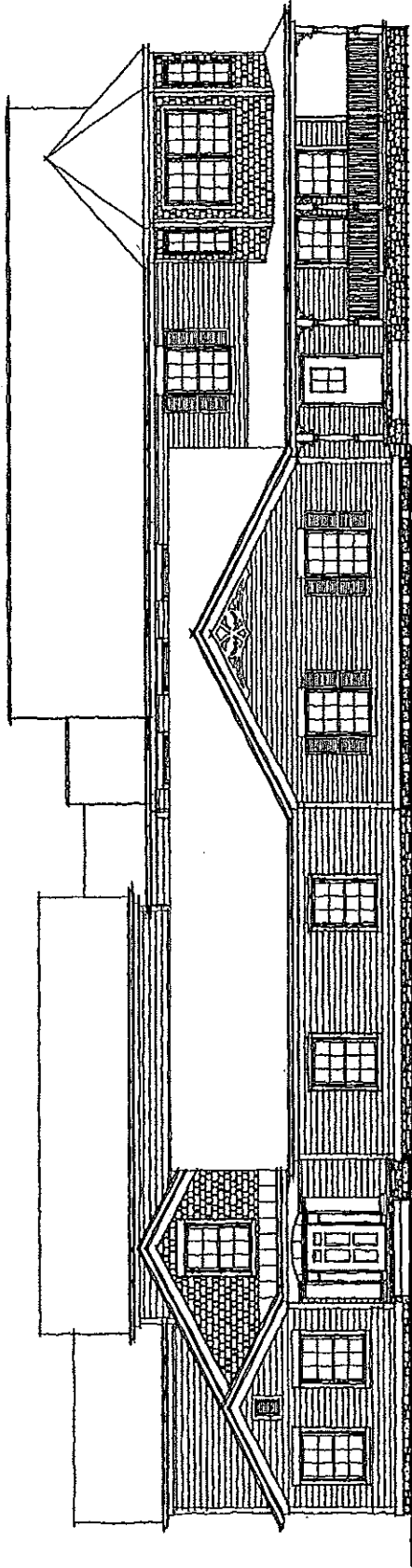
FRONT ELEVATION W/ GARAGE REAR



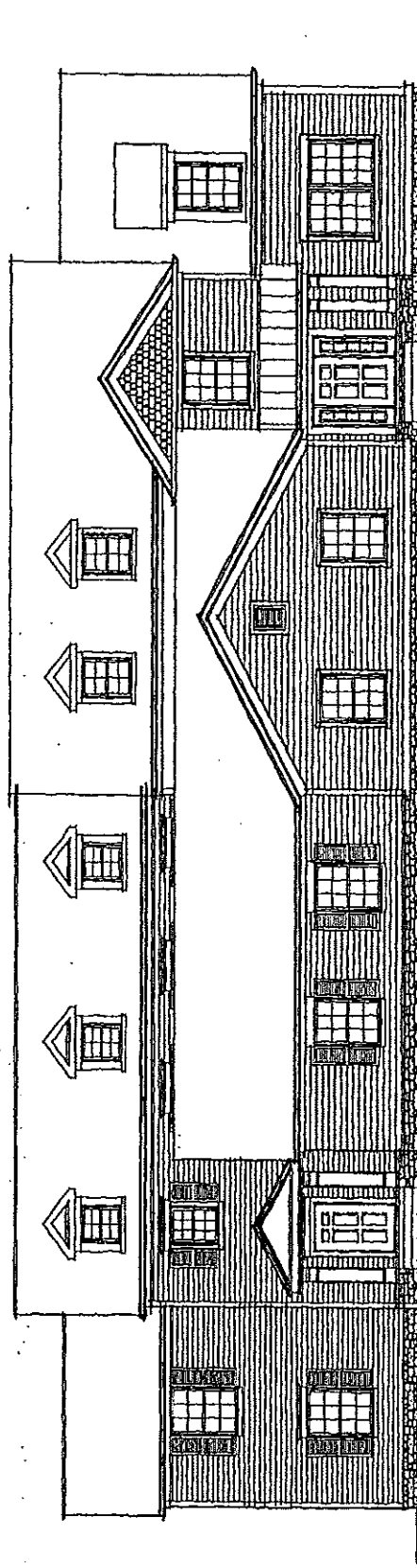
FRONT ELEVATION W/ GARAGE FRONT



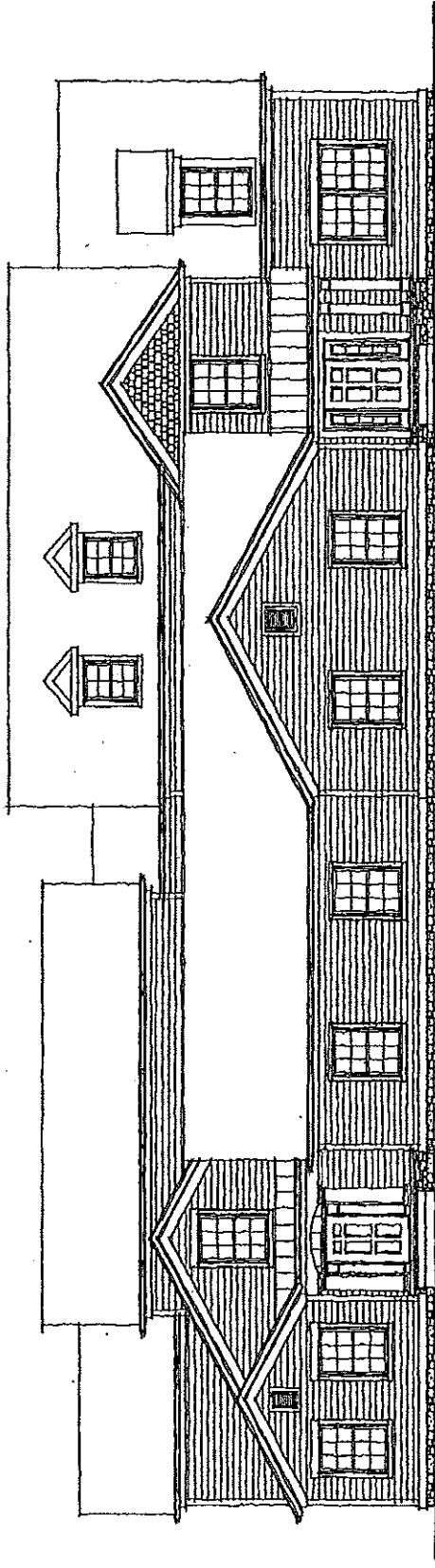
FRONT ELEVATION W/ GARAGE REAR



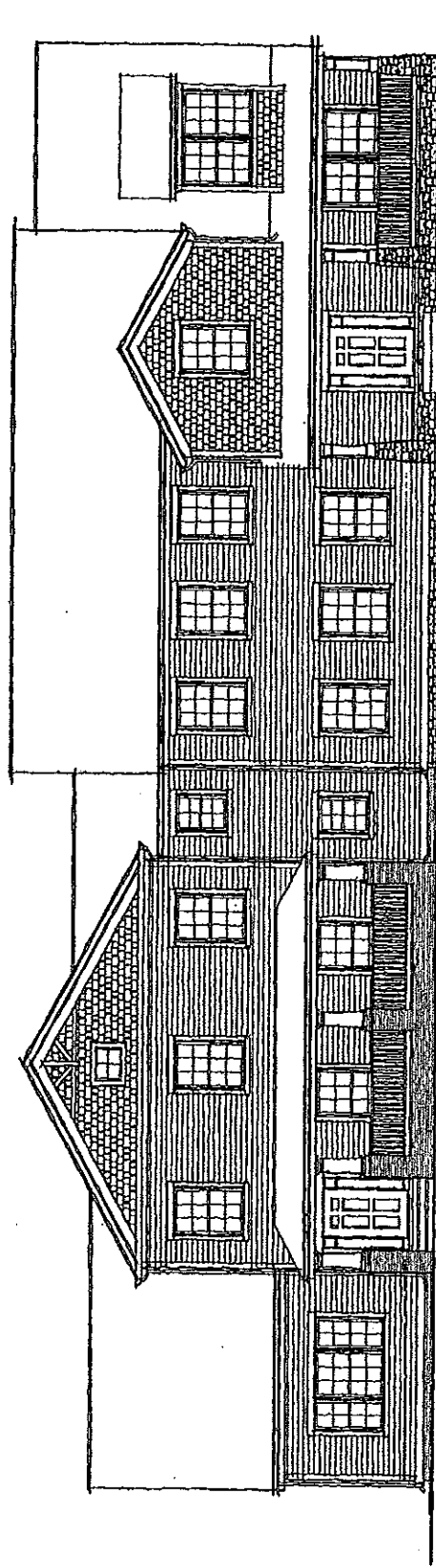
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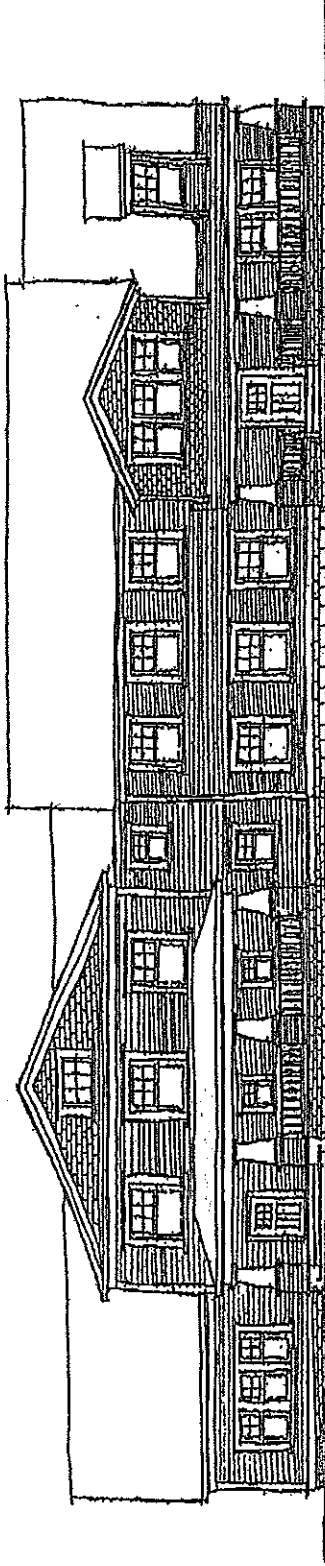
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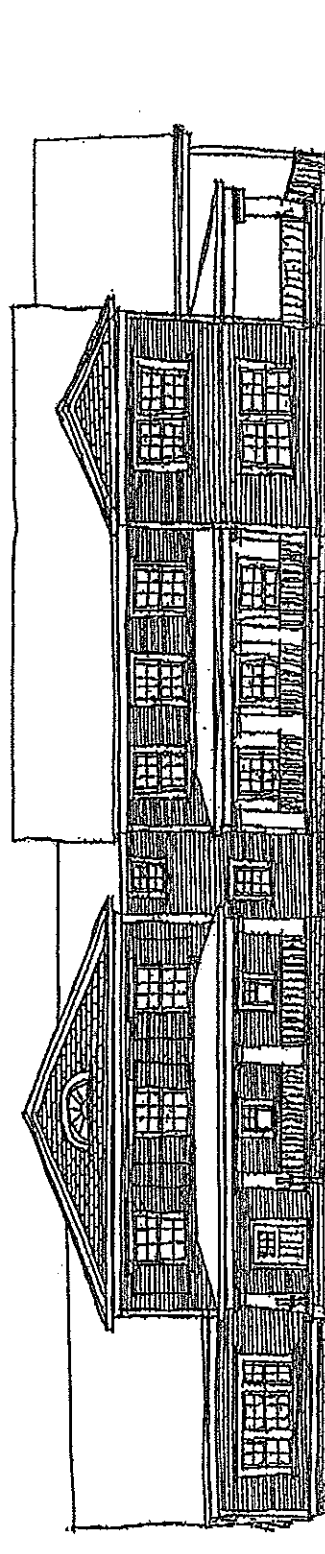
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VILLAGE CENTER



VILLAGE CENTER

(Approved By The New Jersey State Planning
Commission: May 16, 2001)



BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL Somerset County, NJ













November 2001

Scale: 1" = 800'

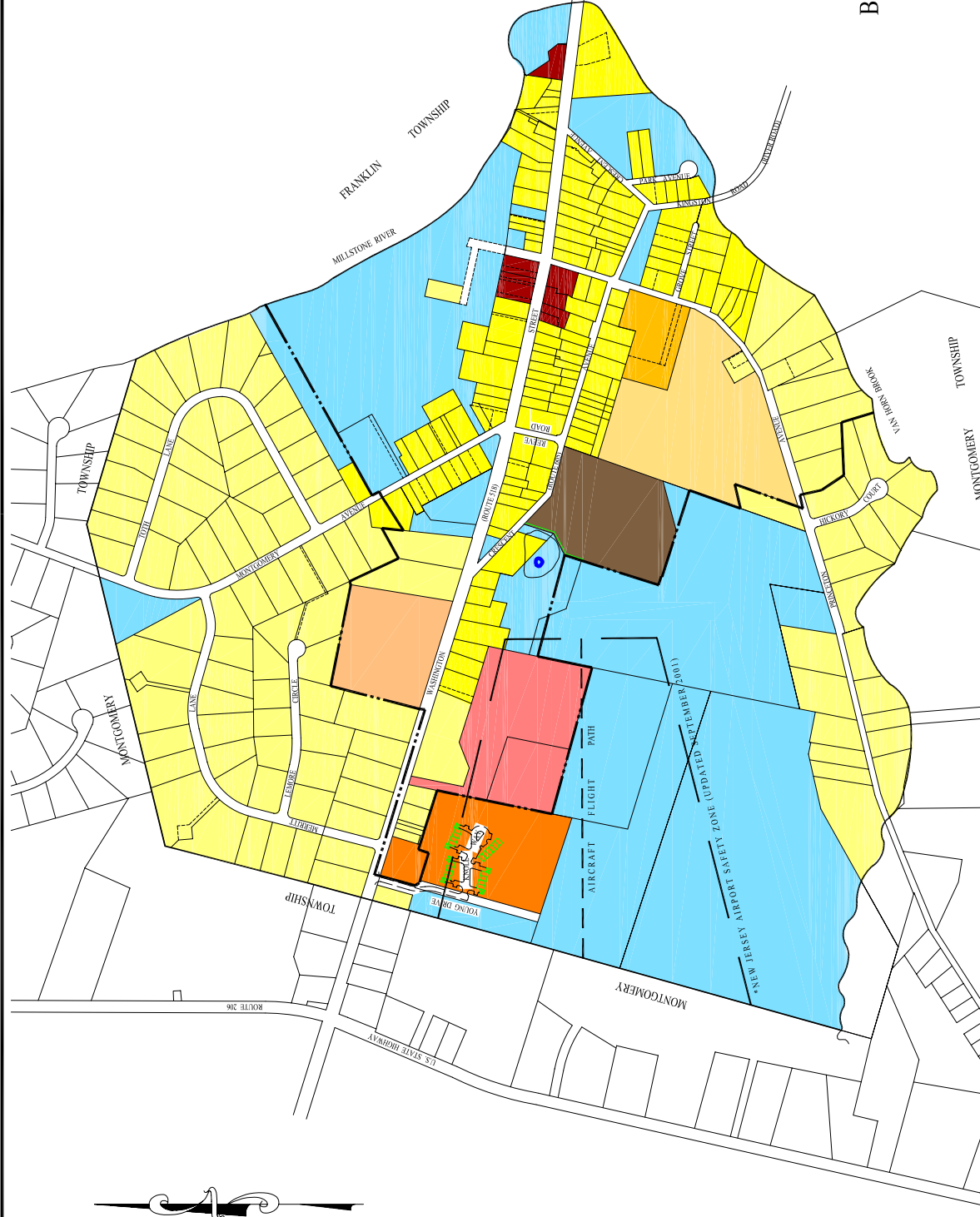
Base Map and Graphics Prepared by Van Cleaf Engineering Associates
Data Provided by Kimball & Kimball, Professional Planners

JOB #: 3584

LAND USE PLAN

	R-1	SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
	R-2	VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL
	R-3	RESIDENTIAL CLUSTER
	R-4A	PLANNED RESIDENTIAL "A"
	R-4B	PLANNED RESIDENTIAL "B"
	R-4C	AGE RESTRICTED TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT
	VO	VILLAGE OFFICE
	B	BUSINESS
	I	INDUSTRIAL
	CL	COMMUNITY LAND
		AIRPORT SAFETY ZONE
		HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT

* DELINEATION OF NEW JERSEY AIRPORT SAFETY ZONE IS APPROXIMATE, SUBJECT TO A DETAILED SURVEY.



BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL Somerset County, NJ

November 2001
Revised : January 2004
Revised : December 2004
Scale: 1" = 900'

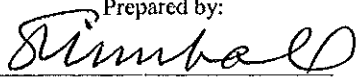
Base Map and Graphics Prepared by Van Cleef Engineering Associates
Data Provided by Kimball & Kimball, Professional Planners

BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL

SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

MASTER PLAN Housing Element & Fair Share Plan

Adopted by the Rocky Hill Planning Board
November 11, 2008

Prepared by:

Susan C. Kimball, PP (LI # 2280)
KIMBALL & KIMBALL
Professional Planners

A signed and sealed copy of this Master Plan amendment is on file with the Planning Board Secretary and Borough Clerk.

Housing Element & Fair Share Plan

Adopted: November 11, 2008

Introduction

This plan is comprised of two parts consistent with revised regulations of the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) and the New Jersey Fair Housing Act. Part 1 is the *Housing Element*, which contains information on the Borough's housing stock, demographics, employment characteristics and a determination of the Borough's fair share obligation. Part 2 is the *Fair Share Plan*, which describes how the Borough of Rocky Hill will provide a realistic opportunity for the rehabilitation and construction of affordable housing consistent with COAH rules.

Background

COAH establishes municipal fair share obligations on a periodic basis. In 1986 COAH determined that the Borough had no fair share obligation for the "first round" ending in 1993. In 1993 COAH determined that the Borough's "second round" fair share obligation, for the period ending in 1999, was comprised of 25 new units and 2 units of rehabilitation. The Planning Board adopted a plan addressing the 27-unit obligation, which COAH certified in 2001, and all components of the plan have been implemented.

In 2006, in response to COAH's original third round rules adopted in 2004, the Borough submitted a new Housing Element & Fair Share Plan addressing its third round fair housing obligation. COAH's regulations were challenged by developers and subsequently invalidated by the Appellate Court in 2007. In response to the Court Decision, COAH has adopted new regulations requiring the submission of this revised third round plan addressing the Borough's affordable housing obligation.

Goals & Objectives of this Plan

The goal of this plan is to comply with the constitutional fair housing mandate within the practical limitations of the available land capacity of the Borough and in a manner consistent with the Borough's Master Plan. The following objectives are intended to fulfill this important goal:

1. Maintain COAH credit for the units implemented as part of the Borough's prior round certified affordable housing plan (2 group homes) and cooperate with a sponsor of Special Needs Housing to provide the opportunity for additional housing in the Borough for persons with special needs.
2. Provide opportunities for new affordable housing to be constructed in the Borough as part of an accessory apartment program.
3. Provide funding for residential rehabilitation in the Borough.
4. Comply with applicable fair housing regulations enabling COAH to grant substantive certification to the Borough's fair share plan.

Executive Summary of the Housing

Obligation and the Fair Share Plan

COAH's third round rules are intended to address the need for affordable housing from 1987 through 2018. Three components comprise the fair share obligation according to COAH rules. The ***rehabilitation share*** represents COAH's determination, based on the 2000 Census, of the number of substandard dwellings within the community occupied by low or moderate income households that are in need of rehabilitation. The new construction component or ***growth share obligation*** represents the municipality's share of the region's need for new housing for low and moderate income households for the period 1999-2018. In addition, every municipality's ***prior round fair share obligation*** (the new construction portion of the cumulative first and second round obligations) is a continuing obligation and any units not completed must be addressed.

Rehabilitation Share

COAH has determined that at the time the 2000 Census was taken, four dwelling units in the Borough occupied by low or moderate income households, were deficient and in need of rehabilitation. Under COAH rules, the Borough may address the 4-unit rehabilitation share with credits for units completed since the Census, and either a rehabilitation program or new construction. Three dwellings in the Borough were rehabilitated since the 2000 Census and meet COAH crediting criteria, thus leaving one unit in need of rehabilitation.

Growth Share Obligation

COAH calculates the new construction component of the fair share obligation based on its projection of total growth that it anticipates will take place from 2004 through 2018. Known as the "growth share" portion of the obligation, the affordable housing requirement is calculated on the basis of one affordable unit among five new COAH-projected dwellings and one affordable unit for every 16 COAH-projected new jobs (created hypothetically), as measured by new or expanded nonresidential development from January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2018. COAH's growth projections require that the Borough develop a plan to create a realistic opportunity for the construction of 11 new affordable units.

Prior Round Obligation

Rocky Hill's prior round obligation was 27 units: two units of rehabilitation and 25 units of new construction. The Borough satisfied that obligation based on the housing plan that was certified by COAH on January 3, 2001. The Borough has complied with the obligation and fully implemented the plan as summarized in the table below.

CERTIFIED PRIOR ROUND FAIR SHARE PLAN

Plan Component	Credits or Units
Rehabilitation Program	2
Regional Contribution Agreement: \$180,000 transferred to the City of New Brunswick in 2001	9
Credit for 4 bedroom group home (EDEN Acres) established in 1996	4
6 bedroom Group Home (ARC of Somerset) completed in 2002	6
Rental Bonus	6
TOTAL	27

Summary of Third Round Fair Share Plan

Since the prior round obligation has been satisfied and no units remain to be addressed, the Borough's third round fair share plan, as summarized below, addresses the rehabilitation share (4 units) and the growth share obligation (11 units) for a total obligation of 15 units.

1. *Rehabilitation (4 units):* The Borough has submitted documentation to COAH demonstrating that 3 dwelling units rehabilitated after April 2000 meet COAH's third round crediting criteria. The Borough will provide funding for the rehabilitation of 1 additional unit to complete the rehabilitation obligation.
2. *New Construction (11 units):* The Borough will enact an ordinance subsidizing the development of 10 affordable accessory apartments. In addition, the Borough is cooperating with a provider of special needs housing to promote the construction of a 1-bedroom addition to an existing group home located on Princeton Avenue (EDEN Acres). Since each bedroom in group homes count as one unit of credit, this plan will satisfy the full 11-unit new construction obligation. If construction of an addition to EDEN's existing home should not prove feasible, the Borough will cooperate with EDEN to promote the establishment of another home in the Borough for persons with special needs.

PART 1 **THE HOUSING ELEMENT**

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) was amended in 1985 to require a Housing Element as a mandatory part of the municipal Master Plan. Under the law, every Housing Element must contain the following information.

1. An inventory and analysis of the municipality's housing stock, demographic characteristics, and existing and future employment characteristics;
2. A projection of future housing construction;
3. A determination of the municipality's present and prospective fair share of low and moderate income housing and its capacity to accommodate low and moderate income housing; and

4. A consideration of land that is most appropriate for the construction of low and moderate income housing including land owned by developers who have expressed a commitment to provide affordable housing.

COAH's revised third round rules contain the following additional requirements that must be addressed in the Housing Element.

1. COAH's household projection for the Borough in accordance with Appendix F(2) of COAH's revised rules.
2. The employment projection for the Borough in accordance with Appendix F(2) of COAH's revised rules.
3. The Borough's prior round obligation from Appendix C of COAH's revised rules.
4. The Borough's rehabilitation share from Appendix E of COAH's revised rules.
5. The projected growth share obligation in accordance with the formulae and procedures contained in COAH's revised rules.

Inventory of Housing Stock

Comprised of about 410 total acres, the Borough of Rocky Hill is a small, primarily residential community, which since 1970, has experienced significant declines in population. Most of the Borough's central core is listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places and is a designated Historic District. The Borough's housing stock is comprised primarily of owner-occupied single-family detached dwellings that are typically large and well-kempt. There is little privately owned vacant land; future growth is largely limited to the build-out of one remaining vacant site and a few under-developed parcels of land.

Age of Housing

The Borough of Rocky Hill constitutes an early development in Somerset County. According to the 2000 Census, out of a total of 295 dwelling units, over one-third of its homes were constructed prior to 1940, as displayed in the following table.

AGE OF HOUSING

Source: 2000 Census

Year Structure Built	Number	Percentage
1999 – March 2000	-	-
1995 - 1998	8	2.7
1990 - 1994	8	2.7
1980 – 1989	34	11.4
1970 – 1979	13	4.3
1960 – 1969	96	32.1
1940 – 1959	28	9.4
Prior to 1940	112	37.5

NOTES:

1. The total above reflects 299 units due to sampling methods and calculations contained in the 2000 Census Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics.
2. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Condition of Housing

The Borough's housing stock is generally in good condition. The Census contains data that gives an indication of the incidence of substandard conditions within a community by counting the number of units reporting a lack of plumbing, heating or complete kitchen facilities. According to the 2000 Census, there were three units in the Borough that lacked complete kitchen and plumbing facilities. COAH has determined that four units in the Borough were deficient and occupied by low or moderate income households.

Housing Values

The Census also provides information about housing values. The median value of owner-occupied housing in the Borough was \$271,400 in 2000. The median monthly rent was reported to be \$914. The following tables display the estimated values for owner-occupied housing and monthly rental costs for rented units.

HOUSING VALUES

Source: 2000 Census

Value of Owner-Occupied Housing	Number	Percentage
< \$50,000	0	-
\$50,000 - 99,000	5	2.2
\$100,000 - 149,000	12	5.4
\$150,000 - 199,000	36	16.1
\$200,000 - 299,000	90	40.4
\$300,000 - 499,999	74	33.2
\$500,000 - 999,999	6	2.7
\$1,000,000 or more	0	-
Median Value	\$271,400	

NOTE: 223 units reported.

MONTHLY RENTAL COSTS

Source: 2000 Census

Gross Monthly Rent	Number	Percentage
< \$500	0	-
\$500 - 749	12	21.4
\$750 - 999	28	50.0
\$1,000 - 1,499	5	8.9
\$1,500 or more	4	7.1
No cash rent	7	12.5
Median Rent	\$914	

NOTES:

1. 56 units reported
2. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Occupancy Characteristics

The overwhelming majority of dwellings in the Borough are owner-occupied. The breakdown between owner-occupied and rental units is displayed in the following table.

OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS

Source: 2000 Census

<i>Housing Occupancy</i>		
Owner-occupied units	229	80.6
Renter-occupied units	55	19.4
Vacant units	11	-

Housing Types

As shown in the tables below, the majority of dwellings in the Borough are single-family detached units and the median size is 7.1 rooms, representing a fairly large home size.

HOUSING TYPES

Source: 2000 Census

Housing Type ¹	Number	Percentage
1 unit - detached dwelling	218	72.9
1 unit - attached dwelling	40	13.4
2 units	17	5.7
3 or 4 units	8	2.7
5 - 9 units	14	4.7
10 - 19 units	2	0.7
20 or more units	0	-
Mobile homes	0	-

NOTES:

1. The total of units by Housing Type above reflects 299 units due to sampling methods and calculations contained in the 2000 Census Profile of Selected Housing Characteristics.
2. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

SIZE OF DWELLINGS

Source: 2000 Census

Number of Rooms	Number	Percent
1 room	3	1.0
2 rooms	11	3.7
3 rooms	13	4.3
4 rooms	15	5.0
5 rooms	32	10.7
6 rooms	53	17.7
7 rooms	38	12.7
8 rooms	66	22.1
9 rooms	68	22.7
Median rooms per dwelling	7.1	

NOTE: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

¹ Year-round dwellings.

Number of Affordable Units

Two group homes in the Borough are reserved for occupancy by low income households. One is located on Princeton Avenue and houses four individuals. The other is located on Young Drive and houses six individuals. Both homes are licensed by the State of New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities, and all bedrooms are occupied by low income individuals.

Substandard Housing Capable of Being Rehabilitated

As indicated previously, most of the housing in the Borough is in good condition. In 2000, several units were reported to be deficient and, according to COAH, four were occupied by low or moderate income households and in need of rehabilitation. Since the Census was taken, seven homes have been rehabilitated with funding provided by Somerset County. Three of those units meet COAH criteria for credit in the third round.

Demographic Characteristics

The Master Plan contains a separate section entitled “Demographic Characteristics” which was updated in 2002 based on the 2000 Census. Since the Municipal Land Use Law and COAH require demographic information to be contained in a housing element as a basis for developing a fair share plan, some of the Borough’s demographic material is repeated below.

Population Trends

In 2000 the Borough’s population was 662 persons according to the US Census. This represented a *decrease of 31 persons or 4.5%* from the 1990 Census. The Borough’s population was relatively stable for the four decades preceding 1960, but during the following decade the population grew by almost 75%, to a high of 917 persons. Since then, the Borough has experienced a declining population. The table below displays population from 1930 to 2000. It illustrates the periods of population decline during the Great Depression, growth following World War II and the development of central New Jersey in the 1960’s, and the decline of population since 1970.

POPULATION: 1930-2000

Source: 1996 Master Plan Reexamination Report and 2000 Census

Year	Population	% Change
1930	512	-
1940	404	-21.1%
1950	537	+32.9%
1960	528	-1.7%
1970	917	+73.7%
1980	717	-21.8%
1990	693	-3.3%
2000	662	-4.5%

Household Size and Type

The household characteristics of the Borough's population are displayed in the following table. Based on a total of 284 occupied housing units,² the Borough's average household size was 2.33 persons in 2000.³

HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND TYPE

Source: 2000 Census

Households by Size	Number	Percentage
1 person	79	27.8
2 persons	113	39.8
3 persons	34	12.0
4 persons	39	13.7
5 persons	16	5.6
6 persons	2	0.7
7+ persons	1	0.4
Average household size	2.33	
Households by Type	Number	Percentage
Family households	190	66.9
Non-family households	94	33.1

NOTE: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Age Characteristics

A breakdown of the Borough's population by age groups is displayed below. The largest percentage is in the 45-54 age group with the next two largest groups being 65+ and 35-44 years of age. These figures reflect an aging population with a significant group of residents of retirement age: over 17% compared to slightly over 11% countywide and 13.2% statewide.⁴ The median age of the Borough's population is 43.8 years.⁵

POPULATION AGE CHARACTERISTICS

Source: 2000 Census

Persons by Age	Number	Percentage
Under 5 years	38	5.7
5-19 years	102	15.4
20-24 years	16	2.4
25-34 years	74	11.2
35-44 years	112	16.9
45-54 years	126	19.0
55-64 years	80	12.0
65+ years	114	17.2

NOTE: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

² The 2000 Census indicates that 284 out of 295 housing units were occupied at the time of the Census in April 2000.

³ Source: 2000 Census.

⁴ Source: 2000 Census and Somerset County Planning Board.

⁵ Source: 2000 Census.

Income Level

According to the 2000 Census, in 1999 the median household income in Rocky Hill was \$79,469. This was about 3% higher than the countywide median household income of \$76,933.⁶ The 2000 Census also reported that in 1999 five families and 18 individuals lived below the poverty level.⁷ The following table displays a breakdown of the Borough's households by income.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Source: 2000 Census

Households by Income	Number	Percentage
Under \$10,000	11	3.8
\$10,000-14,999	7	2.4
\$15,000-24,999	8	2.8
\$25,000-34,999	17	5.9
\$35,000-49,999	41	14.2
\$50,000-74,999	51	17.7
\$75,000-99,000	37	12.8
\$100,000-149,000	63	21.9
\$150,000-199,999	21	7.3
\$200,000 or more	32	11.1
Median Household Income: \$79,469		

NOTE: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Employment Status of Borough Residents

The 2000 Census reported that there were 376 Rocky Hill residents employed (16 years and older). The following table displays the occupation categories reported by residents.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF RESIDENTS

Source: 2000 Census

Occupation	Number
Management, professional and related occupations	230
Service occupations	30
Sales and office occupations	70
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	-
Construction, extraction and maintenance occupations	25
Production, transportation, and material moving	21

⁶ Source: 2000 Census.

⁷ Source: 2000 Census.

Employment Characteristics (Job Availability) in Rocky Hill

Data concerning employment in each municipality in New Jersey is available from the New Jersey Department of Labor (DOL). The data provide an indication of the number and types of jobs available in the community.

Employment by Industry Sectors

The most recent breakdown of private sector jobs for municipalities available at the DOL website dates to 2003 and is shown in the table below. DOL's website notes that where there were very few units (establishments) or the number of jobs was low, the data may be suppressed.

EMPLOYMENT IN ROCKY HILL BY INDUSTRY SECTOR: 2003

Source: NJ Department of Labor

Private Sector Classification	Average Number of Jobs in Private Sector
Construction	-
Manufacturing	69
Wholesale trade	23
Retail trade	-
Information	-
Finance and insurance	-
Professional and technical services	62
Administrative and waste services	17
Health care and social assistance	28
Accommodation and food services	33
Other services except public administration	19
Unclassified entities	-
Sum total of jobs by sector reported above	251
Private sector total reported by DOL	327

NOTE: The total number of jobs reported exceeds the sum of reported jobs in each category by 76 jobs.

Number of Persons Employed and Employment Trends

Employment trends in the Borough have generally been very stable. This is largely due to the fact that the Borough's business districts are nearly fully developed. DOL has published the number of jobs that were available in Rocky Hill in each of the last three years as shown in the table below.

According to DOL, an average of 394 jobs were available in Rocky Hill during 2006, an increase of 58 jobs compared to 2005.⁸ DOL reports that there were, on average, 320 private sector and 74 government (local, state and federal) jobs in 2006. However, 70 of the government jobs were attributed to local government employment in 2006 as compared to just

⁸ Source: NJDOL website of available municipal data as of 8/5/08. The DOL data is based on "covered employment" (i.e. employment covered by workman's compensation).

10 to 12 jobs in the two preceding years. DOL also indicates that 2 units (government entities) reported the data, as compared to one unit in previous years. In September 2008 the Borough advised the Department of Labor that the 2006 local government employment data must be incorrect given the small scope of Rocky Hill's municipal government and its low level of employment, as indicated in 2004 and 2005. There is no school and there are no county offices located within the Borough that would explain the increase of jobs in the "local government" category in 2006. In letters to the Borough and to COAH dated September 29, 2008 the Department of Labor and Workforce Development advised that a coding error led to this mistake and that the data should be corrected in COAH's files.

Since there was an error in the reporting for government employment, it is more appropriate to compare private sector employment available in the Borough. The table below confirms a stable level of private sector employment from 2004-2006 (italicized figures). Prior to that, DOL reported a total of 327 jobs in 2003 (see table on previous page) and COAH reported a total of 335 jobs in 2002.⁹

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Source: NJ Department of Labor

Covered employment	2006	2005	2004
Total Average Covered Employment	394	336	343
<i>Total Average Private Sector Employment</i>	<i>320</i>	<i>320</i>	<i>329</i>
Federal Gov't Employment	3	3	3
State Gov't Employment	1	1	1
Local Gov't Employment	70	12	10
Private Sector units reporting	60	61	62
Government Sector units reporting:			
Federal	1	1	1
State	1	1	1
Local	2	1	1

NOTE: Covered employment refers to jobs covered by NJ unemployment compensation.

Another indication of employment trends, which is utilized by COAH to determine housing needs, is the amount of new or expanded construction of nonresidential uses. Over the last ten years there has been negligible nonresidential development in the Borough. Department of Community Affairs' new construction reports available on the department's website indicate that in the last ten years there has been a total of about 1,100 square feet of nonresidential space, most of which was categorized as storage, constructed in the Borough.¹⁰

Employment Outlook

From a land use planning perspective, future employment growth in the Borough is expected to continue to be stable because the Borough is a nearly fully developed community. The number of jobs available in connection with existing businesses may fluctuate slightly due to economic conditions or changes in business operations. COAH should adjust its projection of employment growth through 2018 based on corrected 2006 employment data as

⁹ NJAC 5:97 Appendix F(2).

¹⁰ DCA also reported the construction of a new group home as nonresidential (dormitory category) space. It is not included in the reference above since it is actually a residential use.

recommended by the Department of Labor. If correction of the data results in a lower projected fair share obligation, the Borough should amend this plan to address the revised obligation.

On a much longer time horizon, there is only one area where new business development is possible, which is an under-developed property located on the south side of Washington Street that is zoned in part for nonresidential development. Most of the property lies within the airport hazard zone of nearby Princeton Airport. The property has been in agricultural use for decades and the Borough does not anticipate development of this parcel during the third round housing cycle.

Determination of Present and Prospective Need for Affordable Housing and Capacity to Accommodate Growth

COAH has determined the *present need* or *rehabilitation share* for all communities and developed projections of housing construction and employment growth by which a municipality may calculate its *prospective need* or *growth share*. The Borough's Fair Share Plan will address the rehabilitation share determined by COAH and the growth share obligation derived by applying COAH's formulae to the agency's projections.

Present Need (Rehabilitation Share)

According to Appendix B of the revised third round rules, based on the 2000 Census, COAH determined that the Borough's *present need* for affordable housing, i.e. its *rehabilitation share* (units within the Borough that are occupied by lower income households and in need of rehabilitation) is 4 units. This may be offset by housing rehabilitated after April 2000, which meets COAH criteria.

Prospective Need (Growth Share)

Appendix F of the revised third round rules contains projections of household and employment growth upon which the Borough's *prospective need* or *growth share* obligation is based. COAH forecasts that between 2004 and 2018 25 new housing units will be constructed and 97 new jobs will be created. Based on COAH rules, this translates into a growth share obligation of 11 new units as follows:

$$\begin{array}{rcl} 25 \text{ dwellings divided by } 5 & = & 5 \text{ affordable units} \\ 97 \text{ new jobs divided by } 16 & = & \underline{6} \text{ affordable units} \\ \text{Growth share obligation} & = & 11 \text{ new units} \end{array}$$

The Borough's Capacity to Accommodate Residential and Nonresidential Growth

The Municipal Land Use Law requires that the Housing Element address whether the community has the capacity to accommodate its present and prospective housing needs, including its fair share of low and moderate income housing. Present need, which COAH refers to as the rehabilitation share, refers to existing housing that is deficient and occupied by low or moderate income households. There is no physical constraint on the Borough in addressing this portion of the obligation.

With respect to prospective need, or the growth share portion of the obligation, the Borough intends to establish a 10-unit accessory apartment program and cooperate with a group home provider to provide one additional bedroom in an existing group home to fulfill the 11-unit obligation. The Borough has an existing housing stock that is conducive to the production of accessory apartments and is willing to subsidize their creation, as described in greater detail in Part 2, the Fair Share Plan.

COAH also requires an assessment of the Borough's capacity to accommodate growth consistent with COAH's projections. Such an assessment should be made in recognition that there is very little privately owned vacant or underutilized land available for development in the Borough. The following responds to COAH's checklist of the factors that comprise this analysis.

1. Existing and Planned Infrastructure: Public water and sewer systems are available throughout the Borough of Rocky Hill and there is adequate capacity to serve the small amount of development permitted under current zoning and for the accessory apartments intended to address the Borough's growth share obligation.
2. Anticipated Demand for Uses Permitted by Zoning: Since the Borough is nearly fully developed, current zoning of vacant or underutilized land provides for limited growth, consistent with the Borough's Land Use Plan. No new zoning is anticipated with the exception of an amendment to the Land Use Ordinance to permit affordable accessory apartments on properties with existing homes.
 - Residential: The largest parcel of privately owned vacant land in the Borough (Schafer/Pulte site) is zoned for a 34-unit age-restricted residential development. When the property was zoned for this use the prospective developer indicated a strong demand for this type of housing. Although Rocky Hill is a very small community with a population in 2000 of 662 persons, an analysis of the Borough's demographic characteristics shows that the largest age group in 2000 was 45-54 years of age (126 persons) and that a total of 194 additional persons, 29% of the population, were over 55 years of age.
 - Nonresidential: COAH's projection of 97 new jobs by 2018 was based at least in part upon erroneous DOL data, which, as indicated previously, showed an increase in total covered employment between 2005 and 2006. The Borough does not anticipate actual growth in employment to be substantial in the Borough during the third round. Past trends in employment confirm that there have been minor fluctuations in the number of private sector jobs available in the Borough. Similarly, very little nonresidential development has taken place over the past decade. The largest underutilized parcel of land that is zoned for nonresidential uses is largely located within the airport hazard zone of Princeton Airport and is currently in agricultural use. The Borough does not anticipate development of this parcel within the third round.
 - Anticipated Land Use Patterns: The Borough's current zoning is consistent with the Land Use Plan element of the Master Plan. The only zoning anticipated to affect future growth is an ordinance permitting the construction of ten affordable accessory apartments to address the Borough's growth share requirement. Since the number of

apartments is limited by COAH regulations to ten units, there should not be a substantial change in the Borough's land use pattern.

3. Municipal Economic Development Policies: The Borough is a nearly fully developed community with a relatively small commercial/employment base. The Borough does not anticipate any substantial changes to its commercial base in the near term. Zoning is in place to permit additional commercial development in the Village Office Zone, but the Borough is not aware of any proposal to develop this area.
4. Constraints on Development: The principal constraints on growth in the Borough are the lack of developable land and the recent downturn in the state and national economy. The Borough is not aware of any significant or unusual constraints on development as a result of land use compatibility, land ownership patterns, or environmental conditions. The proximity of Princeton Airport (located in adjacent Montgomery Township) creates a regulated airport hazard zone affecting one parcel of land, which precludes residential development on that portion of the property.
5. Existing or Planned Measures to Address Constraints: Based on the above, the Borough of Rocky Hill does not plan any special measures to address growth constraints. Proposed zoning for accessory apartments and existing zoning for development of the few remaining privately owned parcels is compatible with surrounding land uses and consistent with the Borough's Master Plan.

Consideration of Lands Appropriate for the Construction of Affordable Housing

The Municipal Land Use Law requires that the Borough take under consideration the commitments of developers who have expressed an interest in constructing affordable housing in the Borough. There are two parcels in the Borough that have any significant development potential. One has already been approved for development (Schafer/Pulte site) and the other is precluded from residential development by its designation within the airport hazard zone of Princeton Airport. Since the Borough is nearly fully developed, there are no realistic opportunities to rezone sites for inclusionary development to produce affordable housing.

As discussed in the Fair Share Plan below, accessory apartments are the most appropriate means by which to promote new affordable housing construction in the Borough. Given the older and generous size of homes in the Borough, the potential to create apartments is realistic and, with a municipal subsidy, feasible for interested homeowners. Implementing an accessory apartment program is fully consistent with the Land Use Plan element of the Borough's Master Plan.

In addition to promoting affordable housing by enacting an accessory apartment program, the Borough will provide funding for the rehabilitation of deficient housing in accordance with COAH rules.

Planning Area Designation

The Borough is designated within Planning Area 2 by the State Planning Commission. In addition, the State Planning Commission approved a Village Center designation largely

consistent with the Borough's historic central core in 2001. Continued center designation is available to communities participating in the State Planning Commission's *plan endorsement* process. The Borough is not currently seeking plan endorsement from the State Planning Commission.

PART 2 **THE FAIR SHARE PLAN**

A Fair Share Plan describes the completed or proposed mechanisms and funding sources that will be utilized to address the rehabilitation share, prior round obligation and growth share obligation. The plan outlines the credits addressing any portion of the fair share obligation, the mechanisms intended to address the prior round and growth share obligations, and includes an implementation schedule for the submission of documentation to COAH and the time frame for providing affordable housing. The governing body is responsible for enacting ordinances and, if necessary, providing funding to implement the plan.

Determining the Total 1987-2018 Fair Share Housing Obligation

According to COAH rules, the Borough's third round affordable housing obligation covers the entire period from 1987 through 2018 and is the sum of three components:

1. Rehabilitation share;
2. Prior round obligation; and
3. Growth share.

These three components comprising the Borough's obligation are displayed in the table below. The prior round obligation at this point represents only the new construction portion of the cumulative first and second round obligations (25 units) which has been fully satisfied.

TOTAL FAIR SHARE OBLIGATION: 1987-2018

Component	Units
Rehabilitation Share (Third Round)	4
Prior Round Obligation (Prior Round New Construction)	25
Growth Share (See calculations below)	11
Total 1987-2018 Fair Share Obligation	40

Determining the Growth Share Obligation

The growth share obligation is calculated by applying growth share ratios to COAH's projection of household and employment growth commencing January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2018. The following table displays the growth share calculations based on COAH's revised rules.

COAH'S THIRD ROUND GROWTH PROJECTIONS: 2004-2018

Source: NJAC 5:97 Appendix F

Type of Growth	Units	Type of Growth	Jobs
----------------	-------	----------------	------

Household growth	25	Employment growth	97
Divide by 5	25/5	Divide by 16	97/16
Projected Residential Obligation	5	Projected Nonresidential Obligation	6
Total Projected Growth Share Obligation: 11			

Summary of the Plan for Total 1987-2018 Fair Share Obligation

The total fair share obligation may be offset by credits for rehabilitation completed after April 2000 and affordable units completed (including bonus credits) as part of the prior round certified plan. The following table displays the three components of the total obligation, offset by credits and the plan to address the growth share obligation.

SUMMARY OF PLAN TO ADDRESS THE TOTAL 1987-2018 FAIR SHARE OBLIGATION

Housing Component	Units/Credits
Rehabilitation Share (Third Round)	4
Rehabilitation Credits (Post April 2000 Rehabilitation)	3
Remaining Rehabilitation Share	1
Prior Round Obligation (Prior Round New Construction)	25
Prior Round Credits (Sub. Cert. granted 1/3/01)	
--RCA funds transferred in 2001	9
--Credit for Existing Group Home (EDEN)	4
--Credit for Completed Group Home (ARC)	6
--Rental Bonus	6
Remaining Prior Round Obligation	0
Third Round Projected Growth Share	11
Credits and Adjustments to Growth Share	0
Proposed Units Addressing Growth Share	
--Accessory Apartment Program	10
--Additional bedroom @ EDEN Group Home	1
Remaining Obligation or Surplus	0

NOTE: If the construction of an additional bedroom at the existing EDEN group home is not feasible, EDEN may establish another group home within the Borough for persons with special needs.

Fair Share Plan Parameters

According to COAH rules, family housing must comprise at least 50%, and rental units must comprise at least 25%, of the growth share obligation. In addition, at least 50% of the rental requirement must be addressed with housing for families. Housing for senior citizens is limited to 25% of the growth share obligation. At least 50% of the units addressed in a Fair Share Plan must be available to low income households, and under recently enacted legislation, at least 13% of the growth share obligation must be available to households with incomes less than 30% of median income. The following table displays these parameters based on the Borough's 11-unit projected growth share obligation.

FAIR SHARE PLAN PARAMETERS

Parameter (COAH requirements and limitations)	Units
Projected Growth Share (GS) Obligation	11
Family housing requirement (at least 50% of GS)	6
Rental requirement (at least 25% of GS)	3
-- Family rental requirement (at least 50% of rental reqt.): 2	
Low income housing (at least 50% of GS)	6
--Very low income housing (at least 13% of GS): 2	
Maximum units that may be age-restricted (25%)	2

Summary of Built and Proposed Affordable Housing

Units Addressing the Rehabilitation Share

Since April 2000, three dwelling units (displayed in the table below) satisfying COAH's third round crediting criteria have been rehabilitated with funding provided by Somerset County. Information on these units was submitted to COAH on August 12, 2008. The Borough will continue to participate in the Somerset County rehabilitation program, but will also make municipal funds available for one unit of rehabilitation consistent with COAH's requirements that rehabilitation programs provide assistance for the rehabilitation of deficient units, whether owner occupied or renter occupied.

REHABILITATION SINCE APRIL 2000
MEETING THIRD ROUND CREDITING CRITERIA¹¹

Block/Lot	Location	Start Date	Completion Date	Amount Expended	Length of Afford. Controls	Property Status
10/16	45 Crescent	5/1/2000	11/1/2000	\$9,000	6 yrs. (Mortgage: Book 3397 Page 547)	No transfer of ownership; same owner.
4/12	1 Montgomery	5/1/2000	11/1/2000	\$9,000	6 yrs. (Mortgage: Book 3397 Page 543)	Transfer of ownership on July 14, 2007.
2/2	17 Montgomery	12/2/2006	8/30/2007	\$19,920	10 yrs. (Mortgage: Book 5964 Page 2819)	No transfer of ownership; same owner.

¹¹ COAH rules require that prior to 12/20/04 at least \$8,000/unit must have been expended on residential rehabilitation and each unit must have been governed by a 6-year lien. Subsequent to 12/20/04, rehabilitated units must be subject to a 10-year lien.

Units Addressing the Prior Round

As displayed in the table below, the Borough has fully satisfied its prior round obligation with a regional contribution agreement, two group homes and rental bonus credits. One group home was an existing facility established in 1996 and the other was constructed in 2002. All of the bedrooms in the group homes are occupied by low income individuals and none is age-restricted. All components of the Borough's prior round plan have been completed and reported to COAH on the required monitoring forms.

PROGRAMS, PROJECTS AND/OR UNITS ADDRESSING THE PRIOR ROUND OBLIGATION

Project/Program Name	Mechanism or Bonus Type	Proposed or Completed Units or Bedrooms	Units/Bedrooms Addressing Obligation	Units/Bedrooms Addressing Rental Obligation	Units/Bedrooms Subject to Age-restricted Cap
RCA with New Brunswick	RCA	Funds transferred 2001	9	0	0
EDEN Acres	Supportive & Special Needs Housing	Completed 1996	4	4	0
ARC of Somerset	Supportive & Special Needs Housing	Completed 2002	6	6	0
Rental Bonus	Rental Bonus	Certified Plan 2001	6	n/a	n/a
			25	10	0

Units Proposed to Address the Third Round Fair Share Obligation

The Borough will address the remaining rehabilitation share (1 unit) and the third round growth share obligation of 11 units with the following compliance mechanisms:

1. Rehabilitation Program (1 unit): Since three units rehabilitated since April 2000 should qualify for COAH credit, the Borough will make municipal funds available for one unit of rehabilitation. The rehabilitation process will be administered by the consultant retained by the Borough to administer accessory apartment program.
2. Group Home (1 bedroom): The Borough is cooperating with the owner of an existing group home (EDEN Acres) to promote the construction of an addition to its home on Princeton Avenue for occupancy by at least one individual with special needs. Should the construction of an addition not prove feasible, EDEN has expressed an interest in establishing another group home in the Borough for persons with special needs.
3. Accessory Apartments: The Borough will enact an ordinance to subsidize and permit the construction of 10 accessory apartments.¹² The Borough will retain an experienced consultant to conduct the program, which will be funded by Borough utilizing development fee revenue and municipal appropriations covering any shortfall in fees.

¹² An accessory apartment is defined by COAH as a *self-contained residential dwelling unit with a kitchen, sanitary facilities, sleeping quarters and a private entrance, which is created within an existing home, or through conversion of an existing accessory structure on the same site, or by an addition to an existing home or accessory building, or by the construction of a new accessory structure on the same site.* N.J.A.C. 5:97-1.4.

None of the units proposed to address the Borough's growth share requirement will be age-restricted and all units are rental dwellings, thus satisfying the rental requirement. An addition to EDEN's existing group home on Princeton Avenue will satisfy one of the two required very low income units (housing affordable to persons earning less than 30% of median). The other very low income unit will be addressed as part of the accessory apartment program.

**PROGRAMS, PROJECTS AND/OR UNITS
ADDRESSING THE THIRD ROUND OBLIGATION**

Project/Program Name	Mechanism or Bonus Type	Proposed or Completed Units/Bedrooms	Units/Bedrooms Addressing Obligation	Units/Bedrooms Addressing Rental Obligation	Units/Bedrooms Subject to Age-restricted Cap
Rehabilitation Program	Rehabilitation	Proposed	1	n/a	0
EDEN Acres addition (or new group home)	Supportive & Special Needs Housing	Proposed	1	1	0
Accessory Apartments Program	Accessory Apartments	Proposed	10	10	0

**Accessory Apartments Program:
Compliance with COAH Requirements**

COAH's requirements and limitations applicable to the implementation of an accessory apartment program (NJAC 5:97-6.8) are addressed below. A draft accessory apartments ordinance and resolution to fund the program will be submitted with the Borough's petition for substantive certification.

1. **Number of Units:** The Borough's plan involves the production of ten apartments, which is consistent with the COAH limitation for this type of program. All units will be available for family occupancy.
2. **Municipal Subsidy and Source of Funding:** The Borough will provide a subsidy to homeowners wishing to create an accessory apartment (\$20,000 for moderate income units and \$25,000 for low income units) plus sufficient funding (approximately \$5,000 per unit) for a qualified administrator to operate the program. The subsidy may be utilized by homeowners for the construction of an apartment or as a rental subsidy. Development fees provide a source of funding for the program, with a municipal guarantee to appropriate or bond for any shortfall. The projected cost of the program is approximately \$275,000.
3. **Infrastructure Capacity:** The entire Borough is served by public sewer and water supply systems. According to the Borough Engineer, there is sufficient water and sewer capacity to accommodate 10 accessory apartments and there is no requirement to construct a separate utility service line as long as the property is already served and the physical location of the apartment itself does not require a separate connection.
4. **Affordability Controls:** The accessory apartment ordinance will require homeowners to comply with affirmative marketing and affordability control requirements for a period of ten years.

5. Unit Size/bedroom distribution: Accessory apartments will not be limited in size and the number of bedrooms per unit will not be limited by ordinance.
6. Low/Moderate Income Split: Since the proposed additional bedroom in the group home addresses one of the six required low income units, the breakdown of low/moderate income accessory apartments will be 50% (5 units) for low income households (including 1 “very low income” unit) and 50% (5 units) for moderate income households.
7. Affordability Range (rental rates): The maximum rent permitted for 5 moderate income units shall be that which is affordable to households earning no more than 60% of median income. The maximum rent for 4 low income units shall that which is affordable to households earning no more than 44% of median. The maximum rent for 1 very low income unit shall be affordable to a household earning no more than 30% of median income, thus satisfying the very low income affordability requirement.¹³
8. Conducive Housing Stock: The Borough enjoys a housing stock of well-kempt older and large historic homes. Over one-third of the housing units in the Borough were constructed prior to 1940. Relatively low housing densities and development patterns suggest that the housing stock is conducive to the creation of accessory apartments. Many homes have detached garages that could be modified or expanded. Older large homes may accommodate modest interior alterations or the conversion of outbuildings to create apartments. Homes on larger lots outside the village center may easily accommodate alterations or additions. The Borough’s population base, especially older residents, could benefit socially and financially by participating in the program. Apartments will be permitted in any residential zoning district.
9. Program Administrator: In 2007, the Borough Council solicited proposals from qualified housing consultants to administer the accessory apartment program proposed as part of the original third round plan. Prior to the grant of substantive certification the Borough will obtain updated proposals and select an experienced consultant to administer program, including the preparation of an operating manual and affirmative marketing plan for COAH approval. The administrator will undertake all of the functions of the Borough’s “administrative agent” to operate the program, including application processing from homeowners, rent calculations, affirmative marketing and tenant qualification and certification. The administrator will report to the Borough’s Municipal Housing Liaison, in accordance with COAH rules.

¹³ The proposed additional group home bedroom qualifies as the second required unit affordable to a very low income household.

Fair Share Plan Costs and Funding Mechanisms

The table below displays the estimated costs to implement this fair share plan and existing/projected development fee revenue. At present, there is little development fee revenue from which to draw to pay for the cost to implement this plan, so the Borough Council will adopt a resolution guaranteeing full program funding from municipal resources. When sufficient development fees are realized, the Borough will reimburse itself for funds expended to implement this plan.

1. Rehabilitation: The Borough will guarantee municipal funding in the amount of \$10,000 for the rehabilitation of one deficient dwelling unit (owner-occupied or renter occupied) that is occupied by an income-eligible household. The cost to administer the rehabilitation is estimated to be \$2,000.
2. Accessory Apartments: The Borough will guarantee municipal funding for the 10-unit accessory apartment program, estimated to cost \$275,000 over the period of substantive certification.

Projected Development Fee Revenue

In 1998 the Borough enacted a development fee ordinance as part of its prior round fair share plan. In July 2006 the Borough amended the ordinance to require higher fees in accordance with COAH's 2004 rules: 1% for residential and 2% for nonresidential development. Since there has been so little development in the Borough, just \$4,712 has been collected (as of 10/1/08). The Borough plans to enact an ordinance to increase the fees, consistent with COAH's revised third round rules, and the 2008 amendments to the Fair Housing Act, to 1.5% (residential) and 2.5% (nonresidential) including land value associated with new construction.

The build-out of the approved Schafer/Pulte development is subject to the payment of a 1% development fee for each dwelling in the proposed 34-unit development. If the average equalized assessed value of the dwellings is \$500,000/unit, the Borough could expect development fee revenue of approximately \$170,000 (34 units x \$5,000/unit).

FAIR SHARE PLAN COSTS AND FUNDING MECHANISMS

Compliance Mechanism	Estimated Cost	Funding Mechanism	Amount
1 unit of rehabilitation (hard costs)	\$10,000	Dev. Fees held in Trust Fund as of 10/1/08	
Estimated administrative cost	\$2,000		\$4,712
5 low income accessory apartments (including 1 very low income unit)			
@ \$25,000 each	\$125,000	Projected Dev. Fees:	\$2,940
Administration @ \$5,000 each	\$25,000	Donato	\$170,000
		Schafer/Pulte	
5 moderate income accessory apartments @ \$20,000 each	\$100,000	TOTAL EST. DEV. FEES	\$177,652 ¹⁴
Administration @ \$5,000 each	\$25,000		
TOTAL EST. PLAN COST	\$287,000	Borough Council resolution guarantees funding of costs to implement Fair Share Plan	

NOTE: The projected development fees are estimated; actual fees will be calculated by the Tax Assessor based on a final determination of equalized assessed value. The above does not include interest earned on the trust fund.

Implementation Schedule

COAH requires that the Fair Share Plan include an implementation schedule with a detailed timetable that demonstrates the reasonable likelihood that the affordable housing included in the plan will be rehabilitated or constructed during the period of substantive certification. The Implementation Schedule displayed on the following page demonstrates that the fair share obligation will be addressed from 2009 through 2018.

Actual Growth: 2004-2008

The NJ Department of Community Affairs' website and the Borough's Construction Official (a DCA employee) provided the data reflected below concerning development in the Borough from January 1, 2004 through August 12, 2008. The data confirm that new development in the Borough of Rocky Hill has been negligible over the past four-plus years.

- 2004: No COs were issued for either new residential or nonresidential development.
- 2005: No COs were issued for new residential development. DCA indicates that COs were issued for 600 square feet of nonresidential development categorized by DCA under signs, fences, utilities or miscellaneous uses. The Construction Official indicates that no COs were issued for nonresidential uses that would contribute to the Borough's growth share obligation in 2005.¹⁵
- 2006: One CO was issued for a new single family dwelling. No COs were issued for nonresidential development.
- 2007: No COs were issued for either new residential or nonresidential development.
- 2008: No COs were issued for either new residential or nonresidential development as of August 12, 2008.

¹⁴ COAH rules require that at least 30% of development fee revenue be used for affordability assistance programs such as rent subsidies.

¹⁵ The Construction Official issued 3 building permits in 2005: one for a walk-in freezer; one for an open gazebo at the Municipal Building; and one for a platform for an irrigation system at the Somerset County Park. None of these uses required a CO according to the Construction Official.

Implementation of the Fair Share Plan

The Borough will engage an experienced consultant to administer the rehabilitation of 1 unit and the accessory apartment program during the period of substantive certification. The rehabilitation of one unit in the Borough could take place at any time during the period of substantive certification; it is displayed during 2011 for tracking purposes.

The only significant development anticipated to generate an *actual growth share obligation* during this period is the build-out of the Schafer/Pulte property. Although site plan approval has been granted, the project is being litigated by a group of residents. In addition, the slowing economy has also dampened residential construction throughout the state, as evidenced by the Legislature's enactment of the 2008 Permit Extension Act (C.40:55D-136.1 et seq.). Therefore, the Borough does not anticipate the issuance of COs for this development for several years.

On the basis of all of the above, the Borough should implement this plan in accordance with the schedule below, recognizing that COAH will monitor development activities every two years, and may require adjustments to the plan if the *actual fair share obligation* generated by growth is not adequately addressed within the period of substantive certification.

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Time Frame	Growth (Completed and Projected)	Actual and Projected Growth Share	Fair Share Plan Activities	Anticipated Completion of Affordable Units
2004				
2005				
2006	1 market rate res. unit			
2007				
2008			Borough petitions COAH for sub. cert. and adopts resolution committing to fund Rehabilitation and Accessory Apt. Program.	
2009	1 market rate res. unit (Donato)		Borough selects administrator for Accessory Apt. Program and enacts ordinance. COAH grants substantive certification.	
2010			<u>Group Home:</u> EDEN develops plans for construction of addition or seeks property to establish new home. <u>Accessory Apartments:</u> Administrator commences marketing and processing of applications from homeowners. Borough makes funding available for each accessory apartment.	
2011			<u>Group Home:</u> EDEN seeks financing for addition to group home or seeks property to establish new home. <u>Accessory Apartments:</u> Administrator continues to market program and process applications from homeowners. Borough continues to make funding available for accessory apartments. COAH Monitoring: COAH conducts first biennial review of Fair Share Plan.	2 accessory apartments 1 unit of rehabilitation
2012	34 market rate res. units (Schafer/Pulte)	9 (market rate units are divided by 4 to calculate growth share)	<u>Group Home:</u> EDEN constructs addition or establishes new group home. <u>Accessory Apartments:</u> Administrator continues to market program and process applications from homeowners. Borough continues to make funding available for accessory apartments.	1 bedroom (min.) @ group home 2 accessory apartments
2013			<u>Accessory Apartments:</u> Administrator continues to market program and process applications from homeowners. Borough continues to make funding available for accessory apartments. COAH Monitoring: COAH conducts second biennial review of Fair Share Plan.	
2014			<u>Accessory Apartments:</u> Administrator continues to market program and process applications from homeowners. Borough continues to make funding available for accessory apartments.	2 accessory apartments
2015			<u>Accessory Apartments:</u> Administrator continues to market program and process applications from homeowners. Borough continues to make funding available for accessory apartments. COAH Monitoring: COAH conducts third biennial review of Fair Share Plan.	
2016			<u>Accessory Apartments:</u> Administrator continues to market program and process applications from homeowners. Borough continues to make funding available for accessory apartments.	2 accessory apartments
2017			<u>Accessory Apartments:</u> Administrator continues to market program and process applications from homeowners. Borough continues to make funding available for accessory apartments. COAH Monitoring: COAH conducts fourth biennial review of Fair Share Plan.	
2018			<u>Accessory Apartments:</u> Administrator continues to market program and process applications from homeowners. Borough continues to make funding available for accessory apartments.	2 accessory apartments
TOTAL		9 units	TOTAL	11 new units 1 rehabilitated unit

Rocky Hill 3rd Round Housing Element Adopted 11-11-08.doc

Historic Preservation Plan

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) has among its purposes “to promote the conservation of historic sites and districts.”¹ The Master Plan is a tool for accomplishing this purpose by:

1. Indicating the location and significance of historic site and historic districts;
2. Identifying the standards used to assess worthiness for historic site and district identification; and
3. Analyzing the impact of each component and element of the Master Plan on the preservation of historic sites and districts.²

Historic Preservation Assumptions & Goals

The following are the major assumptions and goals that underlie this plan.

- Historic resources. Rocky Hill contains numerous historic resources in the form of structures, sites and roads; many contain substantial historic significance. Together, they form the Borough’s unique character and sense of place. These resources have been documented in the State and National Registers of Historic Places and should be preserved.
- Historic significance of the village core. The overarching historic significance of the Rocky Hill Historic District is the combination of individual historic resources into a surviving example of an early New Jersey crossroads village. This historically significant character should be preserved.
- Importance of public roads to historic significance. The public roadways are important contributing elements to the historic significance of the Rocky Hill Historic District. The historic character of the public roadways should be preserved.
- Importance of surrounding open space to the historic significance of the Rocky Hill Historic District. Traditional early American rural villages were small “centers” of development surrounded by open areas and farmland. Without the surrounding undeveloped areas, the sense of a village would be greatly diminished. This traditional relationship, and the linkage between village and open space in Rocky Hill, should be preserved.

Community Development History

The village of Rocky Hill has its origins in the first years of the 18th century when its abundant water power attracted settler John Harrison, Jr. to establish a mill site on the east side of the Millstone River in what is now Franklin Township. Despite this early industrial development, much of the area remained agricultural until well into the 19th century. The road through Rocky Hill, however, crossing the Millstone first on the milldam at Harrison's mill, and after 1819 on a bridge at the site of the present bridge on Route 518, was a busy one, one of the major routes from New Brunswick to Trenton.

¹ NJSA 40:55D-2J

² NJSA 40:55D-28b(10)

By the early 19th century the town had developed to serve the industries and travelers. In 1834 it contained a grist and saw mill, a woolen mill, two stores, two taverns and 12 to 15 dwellings. The completion of the Delaware & Raritan Canal increased Rocky Hill's potential as an industrial and shipping site. The concomitant division of the Van Horne estate, which encompassed the entire present village of Rocky Hill, also led to the town's development in the 19th century.

By 1835 the Rocky Hill Inn had been completed at the intersection of Washington Street and Princeton Avenue. By 1873 the shape of the center of town and many of its major buildings were well established. Aside from the Inn, the buildings included stores, a schoolhouse and three churches, all still standing today, although in some cases converted to other uses. Between 1850 and 1910 the center of town was almost entirely filled in as the population rose from about 100 to over 500. Because it was so fully developed by that period, "downtown" Rocky Hill has retained the character of a 19th century rural village. Official recognition of the Borough as a local "center" came with the granting of the Borough's charter in 1890.

Official Recognition of Historic Sites & Districts

Until 1978 most preservation efforts in Rocky Hill were private. Homeowners preserved their houses, and others converted former institutional buildings, such as the old school, to residential use. Some institutions, notably the Dutch Reformed and Catholic churches, also treated their buildings with sensitivity. In 1964 the Rocky Hill Community Group preserved and restored the house that has become their headquarters at 62 Washington Street.

In 1978, the Rocky Hill Community Group, aware of potential threats to the historic integrity of the core of the village, conducted a survey of Rocky Hill properties that led to the delineation of boundaries for a historic district. The Rocky Hill Historic District was placed on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places in 1982. The boundaries of the registered district cross the Millstone River into Franklin Township to incorporate the site of the Delaware & Raritan Canal Basin. In 1983 the Borough of Rocky Hill enacted a local Historic Preservation Ordinance. The ordinance established the local Historic Preservation District.

Historic District Boundaries & Standards for Assessing Historic Worthiness

The MLUL requires the Historic Plan element to identify the location and significance of historic districts and the standards used to assess their worthiness for historic district identification. The boundaries of the Rocky Hill Historic District include all of the State and National Register district lying within the borders of the Borough (see the Historic Preservation District map at the end of this element). It is comprised of the small downtown business area, the older residential section of the Borough, and vacant land contiguous to that residential area.

The district is established as an "overlay" in the Zoning Ordinance with regulations applicable to the exterior appearance of buildings and other structures and features on properties situated

within the district. The criteria for nominating Rocky Hill to both the New Jersey and National Registers and delineating the local district were those developed by the National Park Service as follows:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; or*
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or*
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or*
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information in prehistory or history.*

The Rocky Hill Historic District was found to meet Criteria A, C, and D. Its existing architectural remains as well as the sites of former mills meet Criterion A in reflecting the emergence of a small self-contained industrial and commercial center in the 18th and 19th centuries. It meets Criterion C as a collection of well-preserved examples of 19th century architecture. While only a few buildings are outstanding, taken as a whole the historic district includes most of the styles typical of the period, albeit in vernacular versions, set off as a distinctive entity by surrounding open space. Finally, it qualified under Criterion D because mill sites along River Road and north of Washington Street along the Millstone River are likely to yield information about 18th and 19th century industry.

Land Use Policies Related to Historic Preservation

The MLUL requires the Historic Plan element to analyze the impact of each component of the Master Plan on the preservation of historic sites and districts. Most aspects of this Master Plan have either a positive or neutral impact on historic preservation goals. The Land Use Plan element and the zoning regulations designed to implement it can have important impacts on preservation goals.

In Rocky Hill, the Borough's zoning regulations have been carefully crafted to complement and strengthen the existing character of the Historic District and the village core. The Business District recognizes and preserves the existing traditional village business area and incorporates use and bulk regulations consistent with the character of the business area. The R-2 (Village Residential) District reflects the established residential character of the village core. Of significant importance is the fact that the Historic Preservation District Ordinance provides for the review of facades and other architectural elements to help ensure the compatibility of new construction/renovation with the character of the existing structures in the Historic District. In addition, the ordinance provides subdivision standards that promote future development of vacant or underdeveloped tracts compatible with the character of the historical features by

providing suitable distances from them and, where appropriate, an historic envelope for them.

Zoning districts outside the village core were originally designed to provide suitable transitions between the Historic District and existing and potential single-family and multifamily developments with a character more typical of modern suburban development. These transitional areas were intended to be established through the use and bulk regulations, and by architectural, planning and scale guidelines.

The Land Use Plan for the Borough is now a center-based plan that emphasizes the planning objectives designed to enhance and protect the village core and historic area. It proposes that all land in public ownership be rezoned to a new district to be known as the Public Land District. This designation will be important in delineating major open space areas intended to protect the integrity of the Village Center and Historic District. The Land Use Plan (and Open Space Plan) also calls for the acquisition of additional open space that would extend the greenbelt around the village. The plan outlines the strategic development objectives that should apply to the development of key vacant or underdeveloped parcels of land located in the Historic Preservation District, both in and out of the designated Village Center. Goals for development of these parcels emphasize the use of flexible development standards to enable the preservation of existing and historic structures in their settings.

Circulation Policies Related to Historic Preservation

Circulation Plan policies can also have important implications on historic preservation in the Borough. The public roads that pass through the historic district are themselves historic resources that contribute substantially to the historic significance of the district. The Circulation Plan notes that the configuration of Rocky Hill's streets has remained essentially unchanged since at least the third quarter of the 19th century. The town's development has responded to those streets, with almost all its historic buildings aligned to face them. Sidewalks accommodate pedestrians in the core of the village and elsewhere in the Borough, although there are a number of streets with gaps or with sidewalks only on one side. Pedestrian accessibility is an important aspect of the character of the village. Linkage with surrounding residential neighborhoods as well as nearby businesses, especially those in the Route 206/518 area, promotes the traditional character of the historic district and the village as a whole.

The design standards used to improve public roads in the historic district are key considerations to the preservation of the historic significance of the district. Pavement width, curbing, signage, pedestrian accommodation, and design speed should all be in keeping with the historic character of the roads and of the pedestrian orientation of the district.

Although Washington Street has become a major arterial roadway, and is sometimes required to accommodate relatively high volumes of traffic, Princeton, Crescent and Montgomery Avenues are subject to increasing traffic loads because of development in adjacent communities. Nevertheless, the street pattern with its pedestrian orientation remains an important defining element of Rocky Hill's historic character and steps should be taken to ensure that increasing traffic demand does not lead to improvements that conflict with the need to preserve the

pedestrian scale of the Borough.

Open Space Policies Related to Historic Preservation

Open space planning policies are also very important to Rocky Hill's historic preservation goals. In many other historic villages across the nation, their surrounding open areas have been developed over the years. The result is loss of a sense of "village" to be replaced by suburban sprawl. The remaining open areas associated with the Rocky Hill Historic District are important to the historic character and significance of the district. The Open Space & Recreation Plan element proposes the preservation of key remaining undeveloped land associated with the Rocky Hill Historic District.

Housing Policies Related to Historic Preservation

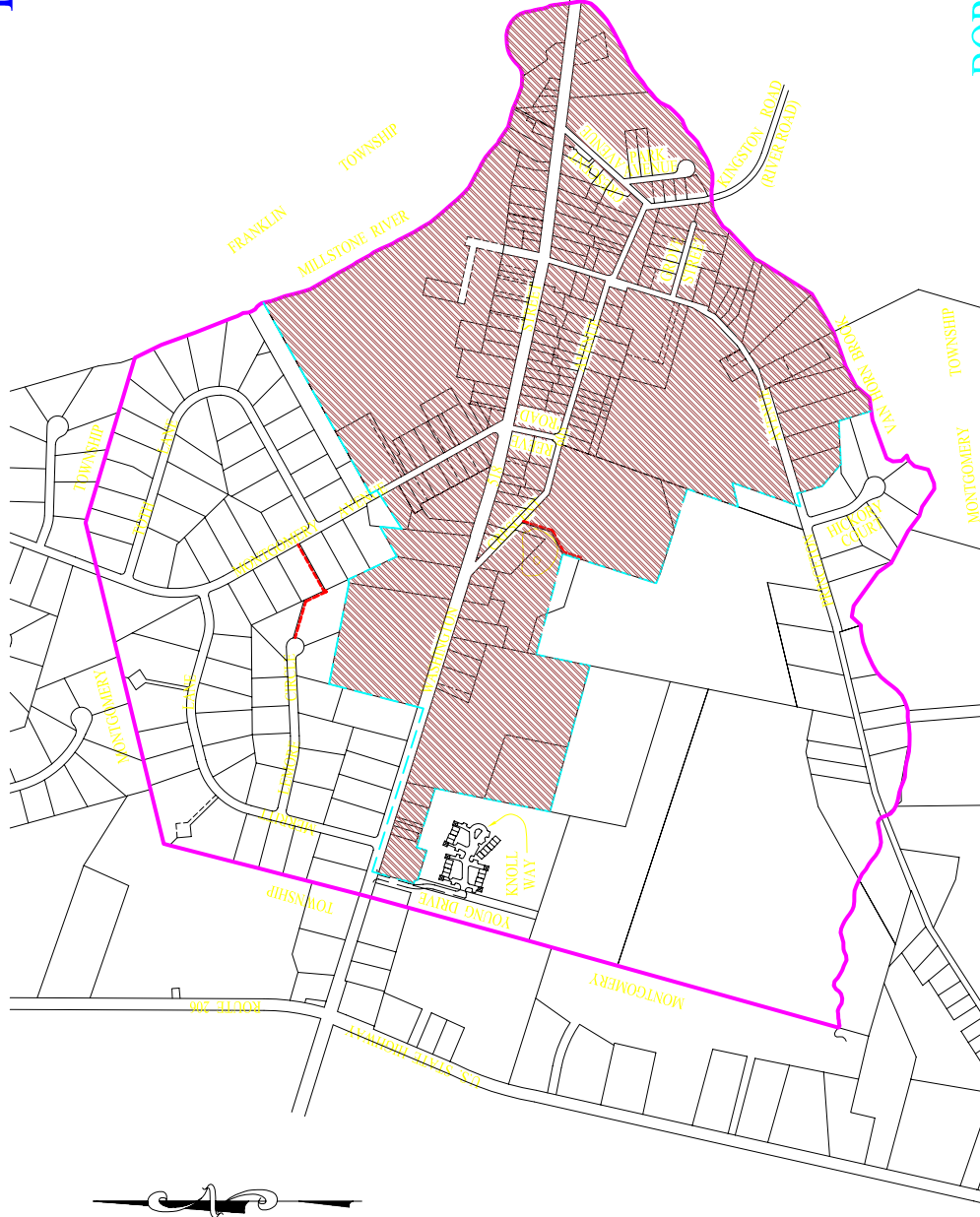
Housing policies can also impact historic preservation goals. In Rocky Hill's case, there are few suitable areas remaining for additional conventional housing development. Nevertheless, all New Jersey municipalities have a constitutional obligation to provide for their fair share of affordable housing. The Housing Plan element has been designed to fulfill the Borough's obligation in a manner that is consistent with historic preservation goals and in accordance with New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing regulations.

The centerpiece of the Plan is a Regional Contribution Agreement to rehabilitate affordable housing in New Brunswick. This avoids the need to zone the last remaining privately owned vacant land for high-density housing. Another element of the Plan called for the rehabilitation of substandard affordable units in the Borough. This too benefited preservation goals. The final element of the plan calls for the construction of a group home for developmentally disabled residents. The Housing Plan calls for the home to be constructed on Borough land located outside the boundaries of the Historic District.

Historic.doc

HISTORIC PRESERVATION DISTRICT

HISORIC PRESERVATION
DISTRICT



BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL Somerset County, NJ

November 2001
Revised : September 2003
Scale: 1" = 800'

Base Map and Graphics Prepared by Van Cleef Engineering Associates
Data Provided by Kimball & Kimball, Professional Planners

Circulation Plan

The Municipal Land Use Law has among its purposes “to encourage the location and design of transportation routes which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging (the) location of such facilities and routes which result in congestion or blight.” It also provides for a circulation plan element as a basic part of the municipal Master Plan:

A circulation plan showing the location and types of facilities for all modes of transportation required for the efficient movement of people and goods into, about, and through the municipality, taking into account the functional highway classification system of the Federal Highway Administration and the types, locations, conditions and availability of existing and proposed transportation facilities, including air, water, road and rail.

Rocky Hill is a small and essentially fully developed community, both in terms of population and geography. Public transportation, including bus, rail, and air transportation, does not exist within the borders of Rocky Hill. However, bus service is available from the Princeton North Shopping Center in adjacent Montgomery Township. New Jersey Transit provides service from Montgomery Township southward with a variety of stops in the Princeton region and Route 1 corridor where connections may be made to other locations. Additional regional services, if practical, should be encouraged.

Transportation planning in Rocky Hill is principally concerned with improvements to existing roads and sidewalks, and encouraging linkage between the village core, surrounding residential neighborhoods, and open space/recreation areas. Circulation planning issues as they relate to the increase of traffic and traffic speed on Washington Street (County Route 518) are particularly important because they impact the Borough’s fundamental planning goals. In particular, the historic character of Washington Street, which passes through the center of the Borough and the Historic District, has an important impact on the character of the Borough and the Historic District.

Circulation Planning Assumptions & Goals

Following are the major assumptions and goals that underlie this plan.

- Established circulation pattern. The Borough is essentially fully developed and has an established circulation system. The configuration of Borough’s streets has remained essentially unchanged since at least the middle of the 19th century. This established system should be respected and improved consistent with the Borough’s established character.
- Regional context. Traffic on streets in Rocky Hill is directly affected by the rapid development occurring outside its borders. Active cooperation and coordination with surrounding communities, particularly Somerset County, should be a major part of the Borough’s circulation planning strategy.

- Washington Street (County Route 518). Washington Street is a historic roadway that passes through the center of the Borough and the Village Historic District. Increased traffic and vehicular speed on this roadway is having a detrimental effect on the Borough's historic character and quality of life. Washington Street should be designed to slow traffic and to be compatible with the character and pedestrian orientation of the Historic District and the village core.
- Sidewalks. The pedestrian orientation of the Borough should be maintained and enhanced through appropriate sidewalk and other pedestrian friendly improvements. In particular, sidewalk maintenance and improvements are needed to enhance pedestrian safety throughout the Borough.
- Linkage between the village core and surrounding open space. Pedestrian and bicycle access to adjacent public open space areas is inadequate. Sidewalk/bikeway improvements linking the village to adjacent public open space and recreation areas should be a municipal priority.

Coordination with Adjacent Communities & Somerset County

Rocky Hill, as a small municipality surrounded by much larger municipalities, is directly affected by circulation planning decisions and actions over which it has little or no control. The Borough should nonetheless carefully monitor regional circulation proposals, and seek to have a voice in any decisions that significantly affect the community. This is especially important with respect to proposed improvements in close proximity to Rocky Hill, such as those in Montgomery Township. Improvements to the regional circulation system hold the potential for relieving at least some of the congestion created by the use of local Borough streets - particularly Washington Street - for through traffic.

Road Network

Road Classifications

The MLUL requires that the Circulation Plan take into account the functional highway classification system of the Federal Highway Administration. That system classifies streets in accordance with the functional type of traffic carried by the street. Streets within the Borough come under the jurisdiction of either the county or municipal government. Which level of government has responsibility for a road is also determined by the type of traffic function that the road performs.

Washington Street (County Route 518) is classified as a minor arterial road by Somerset County because the majority of its traffic has origins and destinations outside of the Borough. Minor arterial roads distribute traffic to the collector road system and they typically link identified centers with one another. Crescent Avenue which connects with Kingston (County Route 605) is classified as a minor collector road because of its lower traffic volume. Collector and local streets are usually a municipal responsibility because the bulk of their traffic has either a local origin or destination. Princeton Avenue and Montgomery Street are classified as collector streets because they serve primarily local needs but also collect traffic from local streets. All other streets within the Borough are classified as local streets because they primarily serve to provide

access for the properties that front upon them.

Road Improvements

Except for the traffic calming improvements discussed below, the road system in Rocky Hill is fully developed and adequately maintained. No other major improvements are anticipated or proposed.

Scenic Byways

Local and regional interest groups have proposed including a portion of Rocky Hill's street system within the state's system of *scenic byways*. The designation would include all of Montgomery Avenue from the Montgomery Township border to Washington Street and part of Washington Street from Montgomery Avenue to the Franklin Township line. These streets are proposed to be part of a larger scenic byway loop extending into Montgomery Township (River Road) and Franklin Township (Canal Road). A non-looped portion of this scenic byway is also proposed to extend from Canal Road to the new section of Route 603 through the Kingston Quarry to Laurel Avenue in Kingston.

The benefit of such a designation is an emphasis on preserving the established scenic characteristics of the designated roadways by the various levels of government involved with their improvement and maintenance. Such an emphasis is very much at the heart of the Borough's overall planning goals. The detriment is a potential modest increase in future traffic on Borough roads. Increased traffic on Washington Street is one of the Borough's most difficult planning problems.

On balance, the Borough should support the scenic byways designation if the loop is extended to include River Road on the west side of the Millstone River. Such an extension of the loop would help to minimize traffic increases on Washington Street.

Washington Street

The historic village center is the focal point of Rocky Hill as a community, the center of community life and its sense of place. The village is oriented around Washington Street (County Route 518), the Borough's "Main Street." Increased traffic volumes and vehicular speed on Washington Street in recent years has been detrimental to that character and is the Borough's primary circulation planning concern. Improvement policies for Washington Street, however, are under the jurisdiction of Somerset County. The County's goals in the past emphasized the needs of regional through-traffic, especially increased traffic capacity and speed. In recent years, Somerset County's plans have recognized the importance of balancing those interests with local planning goals.

Traffic Calming Improvements

In recognition of local planning goals, Somerset County conducted a Traffic Calming Study¹ in 1999 that analyzed the effect of increasing traffic volumes and speeds upon the pedestrian character of local centers including Rocky Hill village. The Study found that the pavement was

¹ Somerset County Traffic Calming Study, prepared by Frederic R. Harris, Inc., 1999.

excessively wide in the village essentially encouraging inappropriate traffic speeds through the village core. It also concluded that there is inadequate “signage and special streetscape treatment announcing entry into this activity center.” The Traffic Calming Study recommended the following traffic calming measures for Washington Street at major intersections with intersecting streets.

- Realign the intersection with Crescent Avenue (west); create a neckdown/gateway.
- Realign the intersection with Montgomery Avenue; install bulb-outs and crosswalks.
- Install a neckdown between Montgomery Avenue and Princeton Avenue; add more trees; delineate on-street parking spaces.
- Install textured pavement at the intersection with Princeton Avenue; create bulb-outs on the west side.
- Realign the intersection with Crescent Avenue (east); prohibit northbound left turns.

Somerset County has developed plans to implement these recommendations and the Borough should work closely with the County on their implementation which is expected to take place during 2001-2002.

Street Lighting, Landscaping and Furniture

One of the overall purposes of planning in Rocky Hill is to promote and protect the historic village center’s pedestrian scale and orientation as a place that is friendly, comfortable, and attractive to residents and visitors. While street trees are part of the plan for traffic calming improvements at the intersection of Montgomery Avenue and Washington Street, more could be done to improve the pedestrian friendly atmosphere of the village area. The village’s designation as a *center* by the State Planning Commission should facilitate priority for funding to enhance the physical infrastructure of the village center. The Borough should pursue funding opportunities to provide the following improvements:

- Additional street trees where needed.
- Street lighting that is consistent with the historic character of the village.
- Traditional “street furniture” consistent with the historic character of the village that contributes to a sense of pedestrian orientation and comfort.
- Gateway signage and other physical improvements and/or landscaping denoting entry to the village core.

Vehicular, Pedestrian & Bicycle Access

An important planning goal for the Borough is the promotion of appropriate access to open space and recreation sites. This includes provision for pedestrian access, bicyclists and motor vehicles. In particular, the Borough places a high priority on pedestrian linkage between the village core and surrounding open space/recreation sites as well as to nearby commercial areas in Montgomery Township.

Access to Green Acres Recreation Area

One of the near-term major planning proposals affecting the Borough is a proposal to install recreation improvements within the Green Acres site that was once part of the Schafer tract. It is

important that adequate access be provided to this recreation area and that the access be developed consistent with the Borough's overall planning goals. The Circulation Plan map included at the end of this element shows recommended access points for vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle access to the tract in accordance with the following recommendations:

- Vehicular/pedestrian/bicycle access from Route 206 through the Princeton North Shopping center.
- Vehicular/pedestrian/bicycle access from Princeton Avenue west of Hickory Court.
- Pedestrian/bicycle access from the end of Young Drive.
- Pedestrian/bicycle access via existing easements from Crescent Avenue.

Together these access points distribute traffic and access in an appropriate and balanced way. Of particular importance is the pedestrian access from village core which is important to the Borough's planning goals in connection with village center designation. This can be accommodated in the short term by use of the existing easements from Crescent Avenue. In addition, when the largest remaining vacant parcel on the south side of Washington Street (the Scassera site) is developed in the future, the site layout should include provisions for pedestrian/bicycle access the Green Acres site (see the Land Use Plan element).

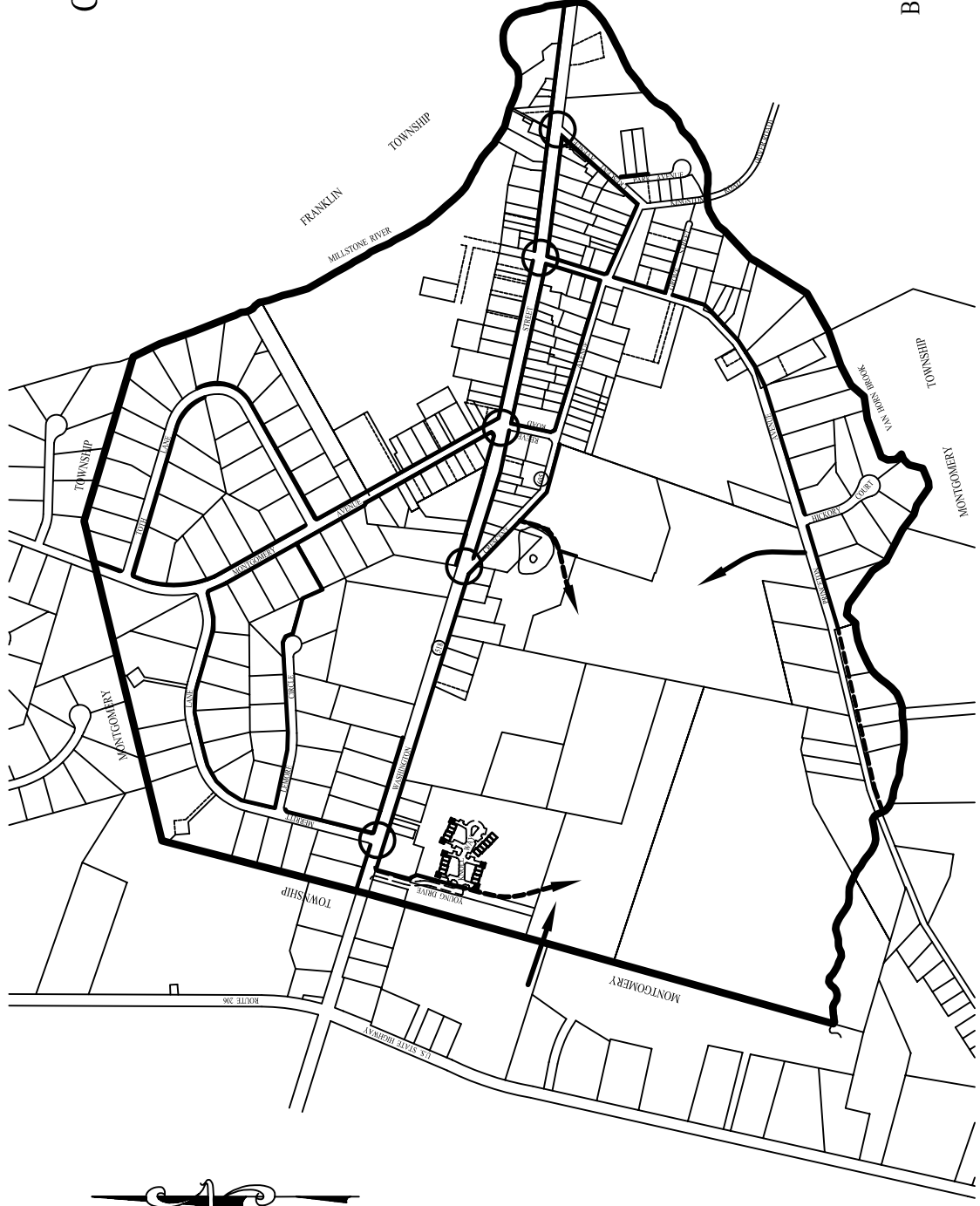
Sidewalks

The Borough has a system of sidewalks that is generally appropriate to accommodate pedestrian needs in areas of higher density of development. Improvements are needed, however, to enhance pedestrian access toward the Route 206/518 commercial area in Montgomery Township, and to provide access to open space/recreation areas as indicated above. The Circulation Plan map at the end of this element displays the location of sidewalks throughout the Borough. Future sidewalk construction should include an extension of the Princeton Avenue sidewalk from its present terminus to the Montgomery Township municipal boundary. Such an extension would enhance pedestrian access to the Green Acres recreation area from the south.

Improvements to the sidewalk system in the form of crosswalks are included as part of Somerset County's plans for traffic calming measures for Washington Street. These are important improvements that will greatly enhance the pedestrian orientation of the village core, thereby preserving the strong sense of community that has been and should continue to be a defining characteristic of Rocky Hill.

CIRCULATION PLAN

- 618 SOMERSET COUNTY ROAD
- SIDEWALK
- - - PROPOSED SIDEWALK
- ↑ PROPOSED VEHICULAR ACCESS TO GREEN ACRES SITE
- ↑ PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE ACCESS TO GREEN ACRES SITE
- AREA PROPOSED FOR TRAFFIC CALMING IMPROVEMENTS



BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL
Somerset County, NJ

November 2001
Scale: 1" = 600'

Base Map and Graphics Prepared by Van Cleef Engineering Associates
Data Provided by Kimball & Kimball, Professional Planners

Open Space & Recreation Plan

Amended: February 10, 2004

The Borough of Rocky Hill is fortunate to have reserved a large amount of public and quasi-public open space, due primarily to significant land acquisition under the state's Green Acres program. This element of the Master Plan deals with the lands that are or should be permanently dedicated to open space or parks, and community sites which contain cultural or other facilities related to open space, parkland or recreation needs.

Goals & Objectives

Following are the major open space and recreation goals and objectives for the Borough.

- To improve and maintain the Borough's existing facilities for active recreation.
- To provide for the recreation needs of Borough residents.
- To provide for the environmental health of the Borough's land and the community as a whole.
- To promote a *greenway* along the Millstone River, providing passive recreation opportunities and to complement the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park in adjacent Franklin Township.
- To promote the continuation of a *greenbelt* around the village core in order to preserve its historic character and scale.
- To promote public access to Borough parks and open space areas, linking them with the village core and residential neighborhoods wherever practical.

Inventory of Open Space, Parks & Recreation Areas

Existing and proposed parks, open space areas, and related community sites are described below and shown on the Open Space map at the end of this element. Active recreational facilities in the Borough include tennis and basketball courts and a soccer field, all located behind Borough Hall, and two playgrounds (located at Borough Hall and Panicaro Park). In total, 122 acres of land or almost 30% of the Borough's land mass is designated as open space or parkland. An additional six acres represent sites related to open space or recreational facilities. The table at the end of this section provides details about the size and location of each site.

Green Acres Sites

In total, approximately 116 acres of land have been purchased for open space and recreation purposes through the state's Green Acres Program. Site #1 on the Open Space map is an approximately 26-acre site located between the Millstone River and Montgomery Avenue adjacent to the Municipal Building. A significant part of this site is located in the flood plain of the Millstone River. Panicaro Park (site #2) is a 5.2 acre parcel located south of Washington Street and along Van Horn Brook. This site is also partially within the flood plain and contains recreation facilities.

Site # 3 is an 85+/- acre site which represents a major portion of the former Schafer tract located in the southwestern quadrant of the Borough. This area is generally bounded by Washington Street, Crescent Avenue, Princeton Avenue and the western boundary of the Borough with Montgomery Township. Much of this land is open field and lies within the airport hazard zone of Princeton Airport. Pursuant to an agreement with Somerset County, Rocky Hill and Montgomery Township, Somerset County took title to the property in combination with adjoining land in Montgomery Township. The portion of the site located in Rocky Hill is leased to the Borough.

Other Borough Parks & Open Space

There are four Borough-owned sites designated as open space and shown on the Open Space map.

- Crescent Park (site #4) is a 0.15 acre site located at the intersection of Washington Street and Crescent Avenue.
- Site #5 is comprised of approximately 2.4 acres and is located adjacent to the Green Acres parcel between the Millstone River and Montgomery Avenue. This parcel has no direct street frontage, although it is adjacent to the Borough Hall, which has access to Montgomery Avenue. The lot contains no improvements and is partially in the flood plain of the Millstone River.
- Site #6 is a 0.2-acre parcel of land located at the northwest corner of Washington Street and Montgomery Avenue. The site is vacant and is designated as Borough open space.
- Site #7 consists of a 2.02-acre parcel on the northern side of Washington Street at the eastern edge of the Borough along the Millstone River. It is entirely within the 100-year flood hazard area.

Public/Quasi-Public Community Sites

Several sites in Rocky Hill provide for community facilities related. Those related to open space or community activities include Fireman's Field (site #8) on Crescent Avenue, the Borough Hall site on Montgomery Avenue (site #9) which contains active recreational facilities, the cemetery (site #10) on Montgomery Avenue and the Library and Community Center (site #11) on Washington Street.

Fireman's Field is an undeveloped site used for community activities. In the future, the Rocky Hill Hook and Ladder Company plans to utilize this 1.14-acre parcel for fire company expansion, as the existing facility is inadequate for housing fire-fighting equipment. Currently, as open space, this site has substantial visual significance in the Historic District. Therefore, this site is designated in this plan as open space until such time as it is needed for the expansion of fire company facilities. The following table summarizes the inventory of open space and related community sites in the Borough.

INVENTORY OF OPEN SPACE, PARKS,

RECREATION AND RELATED COMMUNITY SITES

Site #	Name or Use	Size (approx. acres)	Street or Location
1	Green Acres Open Space	26.0	Montgomery Avenue
2	Green Acres-Panicao Park	5.2	Washington, Crescent, Park
3	Green Acres Open Space	85.0	Princeton Avenue
4	Crescent Park	0.15	Washington, Crescent
5	Borough Open Space	2.40	Millstone River
6	Borough Open Space	0.20	Washington, Montgomery
7	Borough Open Space	2.02	Washington Street
8	Fireman's Field	1.14	Crescent, Princeton, Kingston
Total Open Space/Parks		122.11 acres	
9	Borough Hall	1.84	Montgomery Avenue
10	Cemetery	2.19	Montgomery Avenue
11	Library & Community Center	2.02	Washington Street
Total Related Community Sites:		6.05 acres	

Future Parks & Recreation Planning

Planning to meet active and passive recreation needs in a community is an important element of any Master Plan. Following are the current plans for future recreational improvements that will benefit Rocky Hill residents.

Recreation Development (Rocky Hill)

In connection with the original purchase of the Schafer tract under the Green Acres Program, a 30-acre portion of the site (along the border with Montgomery Township) was set aside for the development of recreational facilities. Montgomery Township and Rocky Hill are developing a joint recreation plan for the site. A variety of improvements are possible including ball fields and multi-purpose trails. Arrangements for public access to this area will be important and considerations should include pedestrian and bicycle access from the village core. If possible, motor vehicle access should be arranged from both Route 206 and Princeton Avenue.

Ingersoll-Rand Tract (Montgomery Township)

At about the same time the Schafer tract was acquired, Somerset County entered into another agreement with Montgomery Township to acquire the Ingersoll-Rand property located just north of Rocky Hill. The site, comprised of approximately 150 acres is under the management of Montgomery Township, but in view of its proximity to the Borough, will be of benefit to Rocky Hill residents. It surrounds a setaside of 40 acres of land that is slated for development as a retirement community. Due to a lack of funding, the development of active recreational facilities on this site will require long range planning and implementation. However, it is possible that multi-purpose trails could be established in the near term. The area managed by Montgomery Township adjoins other preserved parcels of land along the Millstone River owned by the State of New Jersey and Delaware & Raritan Greenway, Inc.

Somerset County - Long Range Planning

The Somerset County Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan (1994, updated in 2000) projects the possibility in the long term, of a 125 to 550-acre "South Franklin Park" (also referred to as the "South County Initiative") located in southern Franklin Township. The park would be located along Canal Road between Old Georgetown and Copper Mine Roads. While not immediately adjacent to Rocky Hill, this location would be fairly accessible to Borough residents. Also in the long term, the Somerset County plan recommends that the state consider the acquisition of the Trap Rock Quarry in neighboring Franklin Township when its resources are exhausted. The plan indicates its potential as a reservoir and State Park. Either or both concepts would be of great benefit to Rocky Hill residents.

Future Open Space Acquisition

The high cost of purchasing land from willing sellers can be a major deterrent to open space preservation. Although funding is available from the state and county (see "Funding Sources" section below), competition for grants can be significant as nearly every community is desirous of acquiring land for open space and recreation purposes. Where outright acquisition is not possible or practical, a feasible alternative for open space preservation is the establishment of conservation easements. This allows the landowner to maintain ownership of the property while preserving a portion of the parcel for conservation purposes.

A conservation easement can be granted by, or purchased from landowner for all or a portion of a piece of property. Most easements are vested in favor of a governmental entity such as the Borough Council, or a nonprofit agency. Conservation easements typically restrict a portion of the property from development, disturbance, excavations or dumping activities. The area designated by the easement is usually left in its natural state, although certain maintenance activities are often permitted to be undertaken either by the holder of the easement or the property owner. Following are specific areas in the Borough that should be considered for open space acquisition or, where appropriate a conservation easement.

The Pond

Area "A" depicted on the Open Space map contains a pond and is located on the south side of Crescent Avenue about 200 feet east of the intersection with Washington Avenue. The pond is visible from Crescent Avenue through a thin screen of foliage and is an area of considerable charm and natural beauty within an otherwise largely developed portion of the Borough. In addition, it has been used by community residents in winter as a skating pond. A portion of the pond lies within the Green Acres tract. However, there remains a portion on privately owned land closer to Crescent Avenue. An exact determination should be made of the amount of land needed to complete the acquisition of this site so that it may be preserved. The pond's viability depends not only upon preservation of the water body, but upon proper maintenance of appropriate drainage patterns in the area. This should be ensured through the site plan/subdivision review process.

Remaining Schafer Tract

Area "B" on the Open Space map is a 15.74-acre parcel that represents the remainder of the Schafer tract not originally purchased in 1996. This vacant parcel is located just south of the village area and has extensive frontage along Princeton Avenue. Its acquisition as permanent

open space is an important goal in terms of protecting the character of the village core in that it is a direct extension of the *greenbelt* along the boundary of the village.

Millstone River Greenway

This Open Space & Recreation Plan promotes the continuation and enhancement of *greenways* along waterways and *greenbelts* around the village center. According to the Somerset County Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan “greenways are an essential feature of the future open space network envisioned for Somerset County. The creation of a system of primary and secondary greenways throughout Somerset County ... is a major policy initiative of the (county) Master Plan.” Somerset County encourages municipal action in acquiring greenways with resources generated by the County Trust Fund.

The Millstone River is viewed as a particularly important greenway. Large portions of the river’s “frontage” are already preserved as open space/recreation sites in Rocky Hill and Montgomery Township. Moreover, since the Delaware-Raritan Canal State Park parallels the Millstone River in Franklin Township, greenways along the river in Rocky Hill are a great complement to the Canal Park. This area is an important recreational resource for residents of the Borough and the region.

Area "C" on the Open Space map depicts a continuation of open space along the Millstone River on the northern side of Washington Street. This area represents the rear portion of several parcels that front on Washington Street. They are developed with residential uses and in one case, a business use, and all of the area depicted on the map lies within the flood hazard area. If preservation in this area is possible, a continuous greenway would extend along the Millstone River from the Franklin Township border to beyond the Borough Hall property. Consideration should be given to preservation via either direct acquisition or the establishment of conservation easements.

Linkage/Access Between Open Space Areas and the Village

An important objective of this plan is to promote the linkage of open space areas, both in terms of linkage for greenways and to form a greenbelt around the village core. In relation to this, the plan also seeks to promote appropriate access to open space areas and more particularly, to promote access from the village core to open space areas (see the Circulation Plan element). In particular, pedestrian and bicycle access should be promoted because of the pedestrian scale of the village core. Furthermore, with proposed pedestrian-related circulation improvements, there will be increased opportunities for pedestrian access throughout the village area. Linkage to open space or recreation areas from the village core will better integrate these resources into the life of the community.

Opportunities to improve access and pedestrian linkage between the major open space areas and the village core may already exist where open space parcels adjoin roadways or are linked to roads via easements controlled by the Borough. These areas should be investigated to determine whether improvements for public access are feasible and appropriate. Where new development is possible in areas adjoining open space sites, access via pedestrian pathways and/or bicycle paths should be arranged as part of any site plan or subdivision.

Funding Sources for Open Space Preservation

Funds for open space acquisition may be generated at the local level through bonding, general appropriations or a dedicated portion of local property taxes. For many years New Jersey voters have approved bond issues at the statewide level to fund open space acquisition through the Green Acres program administered by NJDEP. This statewide program requires a 50% local funding match and continues to be a source of funds for municipalities and counties seeking to preserve open space. Recently, however, voters across the state (both at the county and local level) have decided to set aside a portion of property tax revenues in special trust funds in an effort to bolster the financial support open space preservation.

Somerset County Funding for Open Space Preservation

In 1989 voters approved a referendum to create a county-wide Open Space Trust Fund with dedicated Somerset County tax revenues based upon \$0.015 per \$100 of assessed property valuation. In 1997 the tax was increased to \$0.03 per \$100. The funds are set aside for four programs administered by various Somerset County agencies as follows:

- Somerset County Open Space Acquisition Program – administered by the Somerset County Parks Commission and funds the direct acquisition of land for open space/parks and recreation under Somerset County ownership.
- Somerset County Agricultural Preservation Program – administered by the Somerset County Agricultural Development Board to acquire development rights for farmland preservation.
- Open Space Partnership Program – administered by the Somerset County Planning Board and designed as a program open to municipalities for grants (no matching funds required) for local open space acquisition. Sites may be purchased in fee or easements may be acquired. Sites with structures may also be purchased if the structures will be dedicated to recreation purposes. Sites with structures in flood hazard areas may also qualify for funding using federal flood management funding sources (see below).
- Historic Preservation Program – administered by the Somerset County Planning Board to preserve historic sites.

Garden State Preservation Fund

Also in 1998, in a statewide referendum, New Jersey voters approved a stable source of funding for open space preservation throughout the state. The program dedicates \$98 million annually for ten years from sales tax revenue to the *Garden State Preservation Fund*. The goal of the program is to permanently preserve approximately 1,000,000 acres from development.

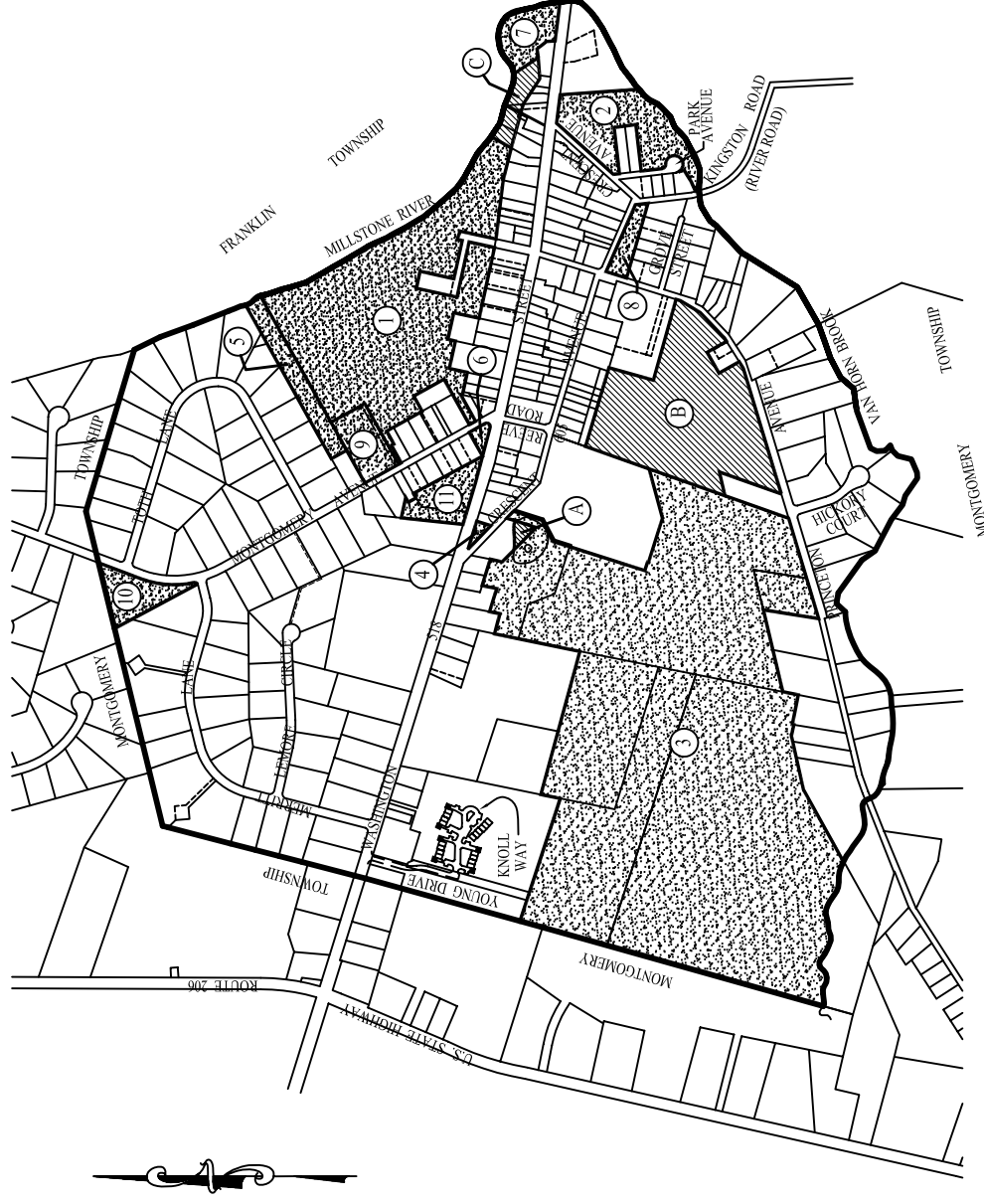
Other Funding Sources

Funding may also be available under other programs such as federal flood management planning programs administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This program may be helpful in funding open space acquisition in stream corridor areas. In view of the variety of funding sources available for open space preservation, it is highly desirable to use municipal funds to leverage funding from the county, state and federal government. In addition, where

appropriate, joint applications with neighboring communities should be encouraged to support regional planning efforts toward open space preservation.

Open Space.doc

OPEN SPACE



DESIGNATED OPEN SPACE, RECREATION
AREAS AND RELATED COMMUNITY SITES

- 1 GREEN ACRES SITE
- 2 GREEN ACRES SITE - PANICARO PARK
- 3 GREEN ACRES SITE
- 4 CRESCENT PARK
- 5 BOROUGH OPEN SPACE
- 6 BOROUGH OPEN SPACE
- 7 BOROUGH OPEN SPACE
- 8 FIREMAN'S FIELD
- 9 BOROUGH HALL
- 10 CEMETERY
- 11 LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTER

PROPOSED OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION

- A THE POND
- B SCHAFER TRACT
- C MILLSTONE RIVER GREENWAY

BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL Somerset County, NJ

November 2001
Revised February 2004
Scale: 1" = 800'
Base Map and Graphics Prepared by Van Cleef Engineering Associates
Data Provided by Kimball & Kimball, Professional Planners

Borough of Rocky Hill
Somerset County

Master Plan Amendment

Stormwater Management Plan Element

Public Hearing:
November 15, 2005
Adopted: December 13, 2005

Prepared by:
Van Cleef Engineering Associates
339 Amwell Road
P.O. Box 5877
Hillsborough, NJ 08844

Stormwater Management Plan

Adopted: November 15, 2005

This Municipal Stormwater Management Plan (MSWMP) documents the strategy for Rocky Hill Borough to address stormwater related impacts. The creation of this plan is required by N.J.A.C. 7:14A-25 Municipal Stormwater Regulations. This plan contains all of the required elements described in N.J.A.C. 7:8 Stormwater Management Rules. The plan addresses groundwater recharge, stormwater quantity, and storm-water quality impacts by incorporating stormwater design and performance standards for new major development, defined as projects that disturb one or more acre of land. These standards are intended to minimize the adverse impact of stormwater runoff on water quality and water quantity and the loss of groundwater recharge that provides baseflow in receiving water bodies.

This plan also addresses the review and update of existing ordinances, the Borough Master Plan, and other planning documents, to allow for project designs that include low impact development techniques. In addition, the plan includes a mitigation strategy for when a variance or exemption of the design and performance standards is sought.

Stormwater Management Plan Goals

The goals of this plan are to:

- Reduce flood damage, including damage to life and property;
- Minimize, to the extent practical, any increase in stormwater runoff from any new development;
- Reduce soil erosion from any development or construction project;
- Assure the adequacy of existing and proposed culverts and bridges, and other in-stream structures;
- Maintain groundwater recharge
- Prevent, to the greatest extent feasible, an increase in nonpoint pollution;
- Maintain the integrity of stream channels for their biological functions, as well as for drainage;
- Minimize pollutants in stormwater from new and existing development to restore, enhance, and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the state, to protect public health, to safeguard fish and aquatic life and scenic and ecological values and to enhance the domestic, municipal, recreational, industrial, and other uses of water; and
- Protect public safety through the proper design and operation of stormwater basins.

To achieve these goals, this plan outlines specific stormwater design and performance standards for new development. Preventive and corrective maintenance strategies are addressed by reference to ensure long-term effectiveness of stormwater management facilities. The plan also outlines safety standards for stormwater infrastructure to be implemented to protect public safety.

Impact of Development on Stormwater

Land development can dramatically alter the hydrologic cycle (see Figure 1) of a site and, ultimately, an entire watershed. Prior to development, native vegetation can either directly intercept precipitation or draw that portion that has infiltrated into the ground and return it to the atmosphere through evapotranspiration. Development can remove this beneficial vegetation and replace it with lawn or impervious cover, reducing the site's evapotranspiration and infiltration rates.

Clearing and grading a site can remove depressions that store rainfall. Construction activities may also compact the soil and diminish its infiltration ability, resulting in increased volumes and rates of stormwater runoff from the site. Impervious areas that are connected to each other through gutters, channels, and storm sewers can transport runoff more quickly than natural areas. This shortening of the transport or travel time quickens the rainfall-runoff response of the drainage area, causing flow in downstream waterways to peak faster and higher than natural conditions. These increases can create new and aggravate existing downstream flooding and erosion problems and increase the quantity of sediment in the channel.

Filtration of runoff and removal of pollutants by surface and channel vegetation is eliminated by storm sewers that discharge runoff directly into a stream. Increases in impervious area can also decrease opportunities for infiltration which, in turn, reduces stream base flow and ground-water recharge. Reduced base flows and increased peak flows produce greater fluctuations between normal and storm flow rates, which can increase channel erosion. Reduced base flows can also negatively impact the hydrology of adjacent wetlands and the health of biological communities that depend on base flows. Finally, erosion and sedimentation can destroy habitat from which some species cannot adapt.

In addition to increases in runoff peaks, volumes, and loss of groundwater recharge, land development often results in the accumulation of pollutants on the land surface that runoff can mobilize and transport to streams. New impervious surfaces and cleared areas created by development can accumulate a variety of pollutants from the atmosphere, fertilizers, animal wastes, and leakage and wear from vehicles. Pollutants can include metals, suspended solids, hydrocarbons, pathogens, and nutrients.

In addition to increased pollutant loading, land development can adversely affect water quality and stream biota in more subtle ways. For example, stormwater falling on impervious surfaces or stored in detention or retention basins can become heated and raise the temperature of the downstream waterway, adversely affecting cold water fish species such as trout. Development can remove trees along stream banks that normally provide shading, stabilization, and leaf litter that falls into streams and becomes food for the aquatic community.

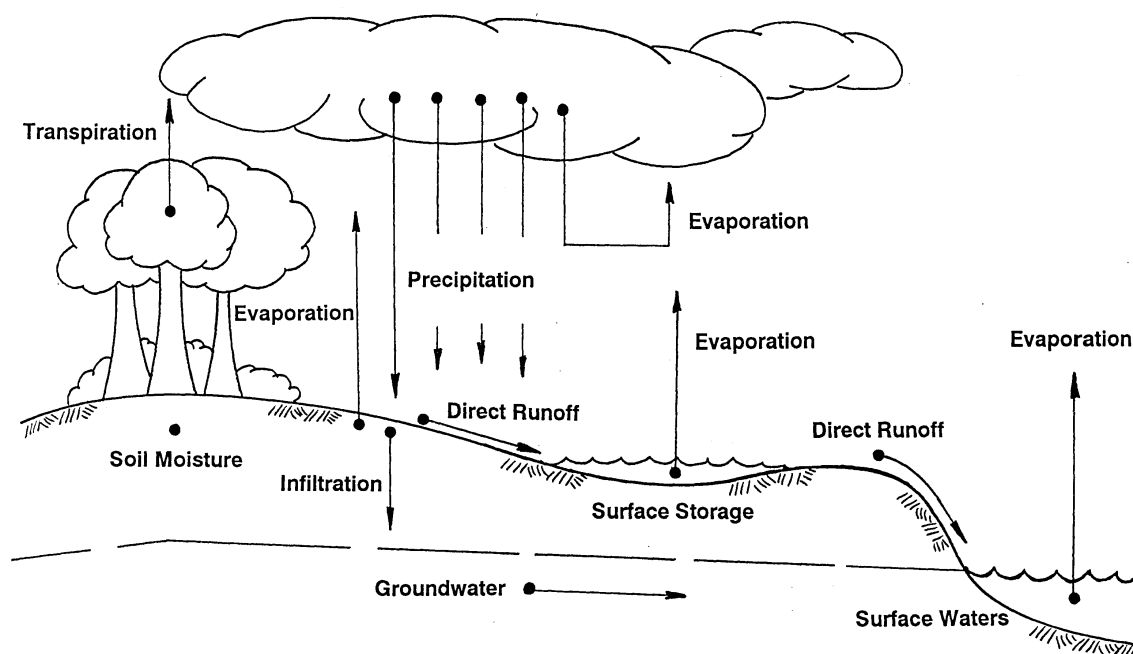


Figure 1 – Hydrologic Cycle

Water Quality

The Borough encompasses only 0.64 square miles in the southern part of Somerset County, New Jersey. The Borough's land use is mostly residential with some commercial development along Washington Street (County Route 518). There is a large area of un-developed land located on the southwest side of the Borough which is preserved as open space and recreation.

According to the 2000 census, the Borough has 662 residents. The population declined approximately 4 percent since the 1990 census. This population decrease is significant compared to the overall state and county increases of approximately 9 and 24 percent respectively over the same period.

Stream and rivers within the Borough are shown in Figure 2 and the topography of the Borough is shown in Figure 3. The Borough is situated along the west side of the Millstone River in the Raritan River Basin. It is bordered on its southern side by Van Horne Brook, a tributary to the Mill-stone River. It is located in Watershed Management Area (WMA) 10. The Borough contains portions of two Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) areas (mostly 02030105110030 and a small piece of 02030105110050). These HUC14 areas are shown in Figure 4.

In addition to the rivers and streams that run through and along the Borough's border, there are a number of wetland areas. These wetland areas provide flood storage, Nonpoint pollutant removal and habitat for flora and fauna. Major wetland areas in the Borough are shown in Figure 5.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has established an Ambient Biomonitoring Network (AMNET) to document the health of the state's waterways. There are over 800 AMNET sites throughout New Jersey. The location of AMNET monitoring sites near the Borough is shown in Figure 6. These sites are sampled for benthic macroinvertebrates by NJDEP on a five-year cycle. Streams are classified as non-impaired, moderately impaired, or severely impaired based on the AMNET data. The data is used to generate a New Jersey Impairment Score (NJIS), which is based on a number of biometrics related to benthic macroinvertebrate community dynamics. Based on the AMNET biological monitoring data downstream of the Borough on the Millstone River, the Millstone River is considered moderately impaired.

A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is the amount of a pollutant that can be accepted by a waterbody without causing an exceedance of water quality standards or interfering with the ability to use a waterbody for one or more of its designated uses. The allowable load is allocated to the various sources of the pollutant, such as stormwater and wastewater discharges, which require an NJPDES permit to discharge, and nonpoint source, which includes stormwater runoff from agricultural areas and residential areas, along with a margin of safety. Provisions may also be made for future sources in the form of reserve capacity. An implementation plan is developed to identify how the various sources will be reduced to the designated allocations. Implementation strategies may include improved treatment plants, adoption of ordinances, reforestation of stream corridors, retrofitting stormwater systems, and other BMPs.

The New Jersey Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report (305(b) and 303(d)) (Integrated List) is required by the federal Clean Water Act to be prepared biennially and is a valuable source of water quality information. This combined report presents the extent to which New Jersey waters are attaining water quality standards, and identifies waters that are impaired. Sublist 5 of the Integrated List constitutes the list of waters impaired or threatened by pollutants, for which one or more TMDLs are needed. The Millstone River is listed in the proposed Sublist 5 (March 1, 2004). The Millstone River at Kinston is non-attaining for phosphorous, fecal coliform, pH, temperature, arsenic and mercury (01401440, 10-MIL-2).

Flooding

Within the Borough, flooding occasionally occurs on the Millstone River and on the Van Horne Brook. Flooding on the Millstone River affects properties on the east side of the Borough, while flooding on the Van Horne Brook affects properties along its length. Figure 7 shows the approximate 100-year flood plain for these waterways.

In conjunction with the USGS, Somerset County operates a flood information system for its 21 municipalities. The Somerset County Flood Information System (SCFIS) includes a network of stream and precipitation gages throughout the County. Information from these gages is automatically transmitted to a central location via telephone, radio and satellite. The information is then processed and appropriate actions are taken. These actions include notifying municipal police, fire and emergency management personnel with flood potential and water level information.

A stream gage is located along the Millstone River to the north of the Borough near the Griggstown Causeway and a precipitation gage is located in the Princeton Development Center to the west of the Borough. These gages are part of the SCFIS network and are shown on Figure 6. Real time information from specific gage locations is available on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) website.

Groundwater Recharge

The Borough has a small amount of developable land. Existing land uses are shown on the Existing Land Use Map contained in the Physical Characteristics Section of this Master Plan. The Existing Zoning is shown on the Borough Zoning Map dated May 1, 1993, revised December 2004. A current aerial photo with parcel lot lines overlain on it is shown in Figure 8. The Borough is within the State Plan Designation PA2 Suburban Planning Area and the Borough core has been designated a Village Center. As a result, the infiltration requirements for groundwater recharge requirements are applicable to the Borough. Groundwater recharge rates for native soils in this area are generally between 9 and 11 inches annually. The average annual groundwater recharge rates are shown graphically in Figure 9.

According to the NJDEP, “A Well Head Protection Area (WHPA) in New Jersey is a map area calculated around a Public Community Water Supply (PCWS) well in New Jersey that delineates the horizontal extent of ground water captured by a well pumping at a specific rate over a two-, five-, and twelve-year period of time for unconfined wells. . . . The confined wells have a fifty foot radius delineated around each well serving as the well head protection area to be controlled by the water purveyor in accordance with Safe Drinking Water Regulations (see NJAC 7:10-11.7(b)1).”

WHPA delineations are conducted in response to the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1986 and 1996 as part of the Source Water Area Protection Program (SWAP). The delineations are the first step in defining the sources of water to a public supply well. Within these areas, potential contamination will be assessed and appropriate monitoring will be undertaken as subsequent phases of the NJDEP SWAP. As shown in Figure 10, a large portion of the Borough is in a well head protection area. This area is located in the northwest portion of the Borough.

Design and Performance Standards

The Borough will adopt the design and performance standards for stormwater management measures as presented in N.J.A.C. 7:8-5 to minimize the adverse impact of stormwater runoff on water quality and water quantity and loss of groundwater recharge in receiving water bodies. The design and performance standards include the language for maintenance of stormwater management measures consistent with the stormwater management rules at N.J.A.C. 7:8-5-8 Maintenance Requirements, and language for safety standards consistent with N.J.A.C. 7:8-6 Safety Standards for Stormwater Management Basins. The ordinances will be submitted to the County for review and approval within 24 months of the effective date of the Stormwater Management Rules. Maintenance agreements for stormwater management measures will include an enforcement clause stating that if the responsible party does not perform required maintenance, then the Borough may perform such maintenance and bill the responsible party.

Nonstructural Stormwater Management Strategies

The Borough has reviewed the master plan and ordinances, and has determined that some portions of the Borough's Land Use and Zoning Ordinances need to be modified to incorporate nonstructural stormwater management strategies. Once the ordinance texts are completed, they will be submitted to the county review agency for review and approval within 24 months of the effective date of the Stormwater Management Rules. A copy will be sent to the Department of Environmental Protection at the time of submission.

Land Use/Build-Out Analysis

Since the Rocky Hill Borough has a combined total of less than one square mile of vacant lands, the Borough is not required to do a build-out analysis. The entire borough is less than one square mile.

Mitigation Plans

New Jersey's stormwater management regulations allow a municipality to grant a variance or exemption from the stormwater management measure design and performance standards if the municipality has a Mitigation Plan in its Municipal Stormwater Management Plan. The purpose of the Mitigation Plan is to enable approval of an otherwise acceptable development that cannot achieve the stormwater management design and performance standards. By allowing the developer to provide equivalent

stormwater mitigation in the same drainage area for the same standard (i.e., groundwater recharge, water quality or water quantity) a variance can then be granted. Due to the size of the Borough and the limited amount of land for future development, no mitigation plan is being proposed at the present time. The Borough may elect to review the inclusion of such a plan in a future plan update.

Plan Consistency

The Borough is not within a Regional Stormwater Management Planning Area (RSWMP) and no Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) have been developed for waters within the Borough; therefore this plan does not need to be consistent with any RSWMPs nor any TMDLs. If any RSWMPs or TMDLs are developed in the future, this Municipal Stormwater Management Plan will be updated to be consistent.

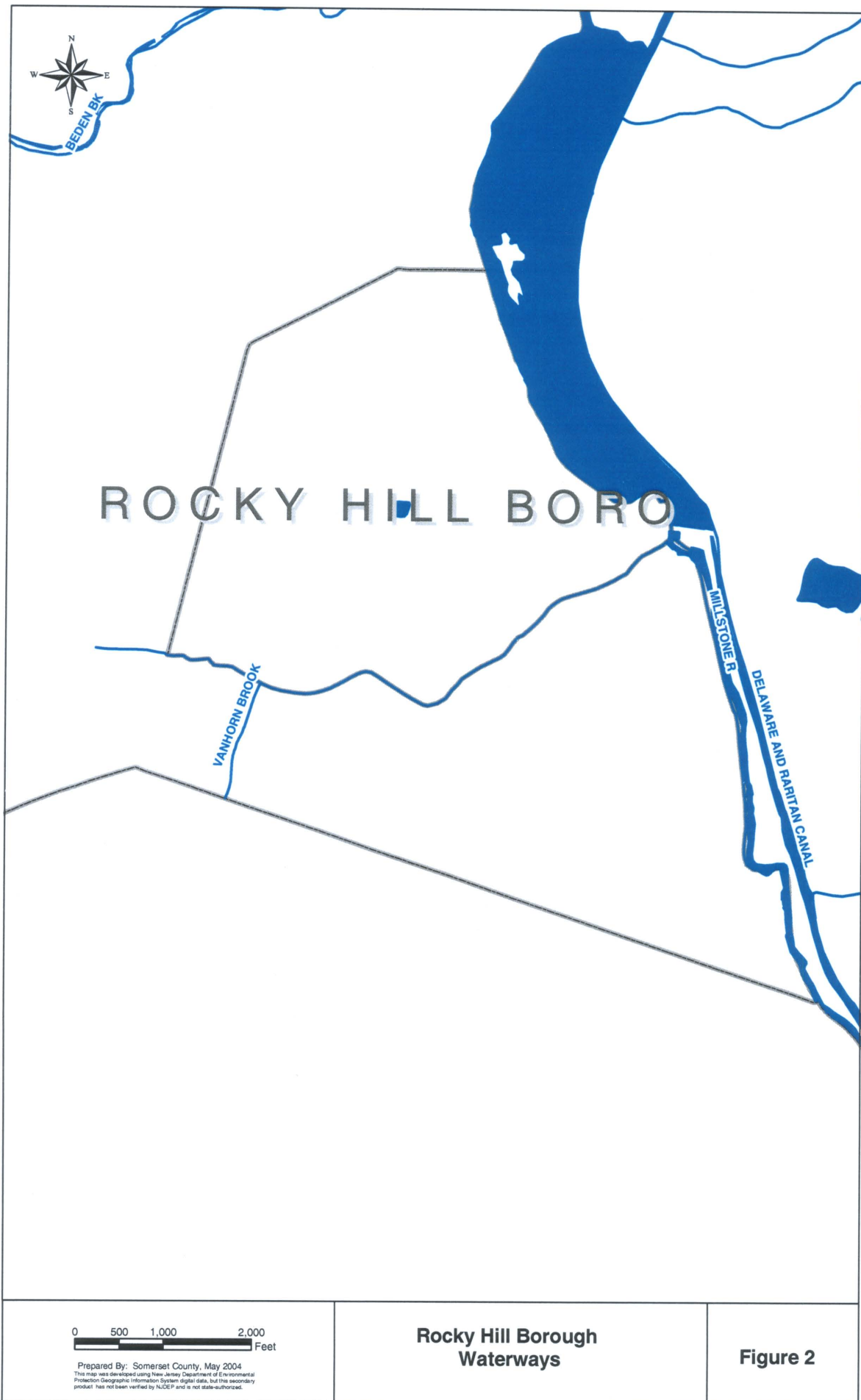
The Borough is within the Raritan Basin and much information on the basin and about its characteristics has been developed as part of the Raritan Plan. Additional information concerning this plan can be found at Raritan Basin website. The Borough supports the goals and objectives of the Raritan Plan.

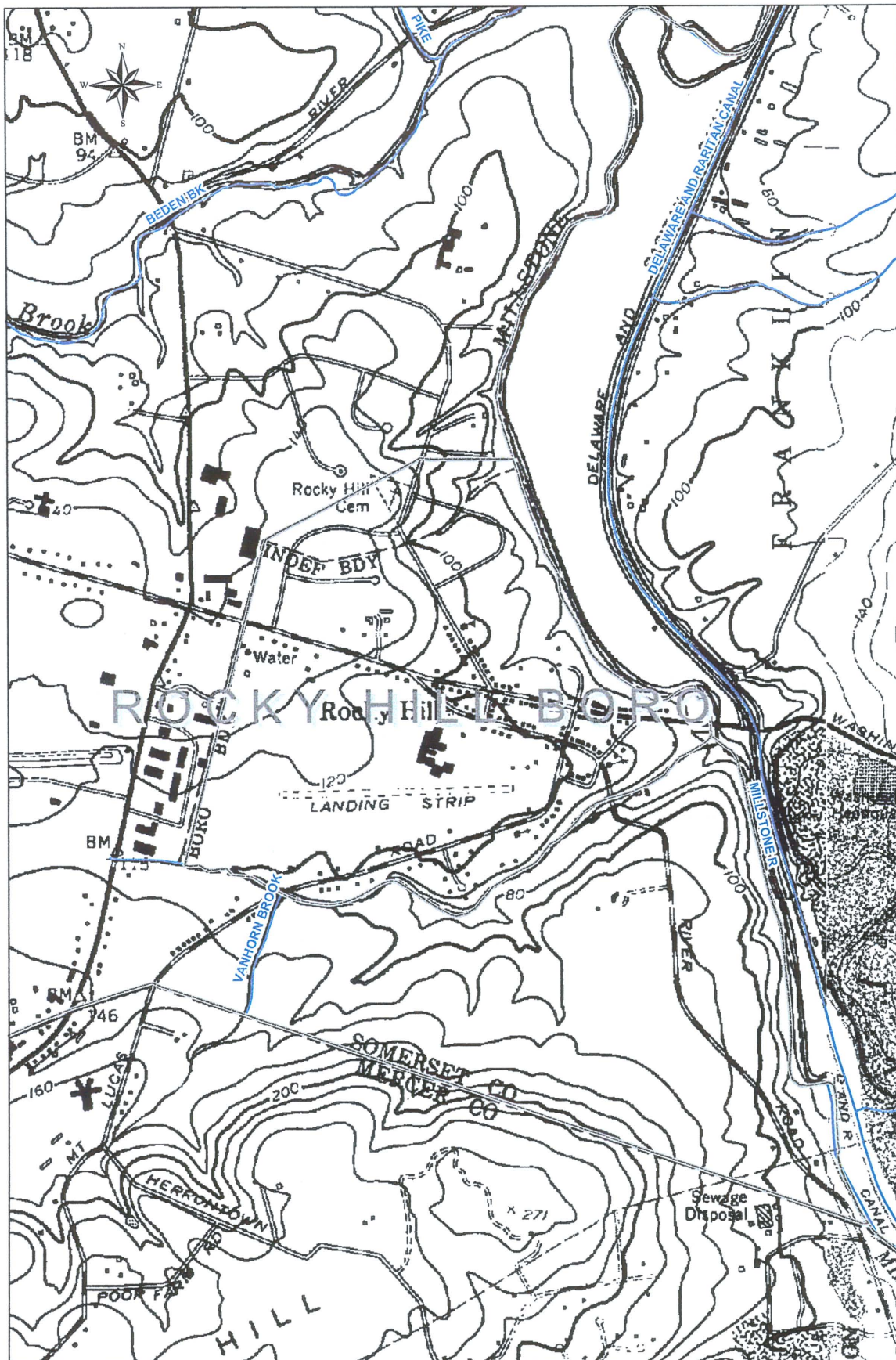
The Municipal Stormwater Management Plan is consistent with the Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS) at N.J.A.C. 5:21. The Borough will utilize the most current update of the RSIS in the stormwater review of residential areas and this plan will be updated as needed to ensure consistency with any future updates of the RSIS.

The Borough's Land Development Ordinance requires all new development and redevelopment plans to comply with New Jersey's Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Standards. During construction, Borough inspectors will observe on-site soil erosion and sediment control measures and report any inconsistencies to the local Soil Conservation District.

Attachments: Figures 2 - 10

Stormwater Plan.doc



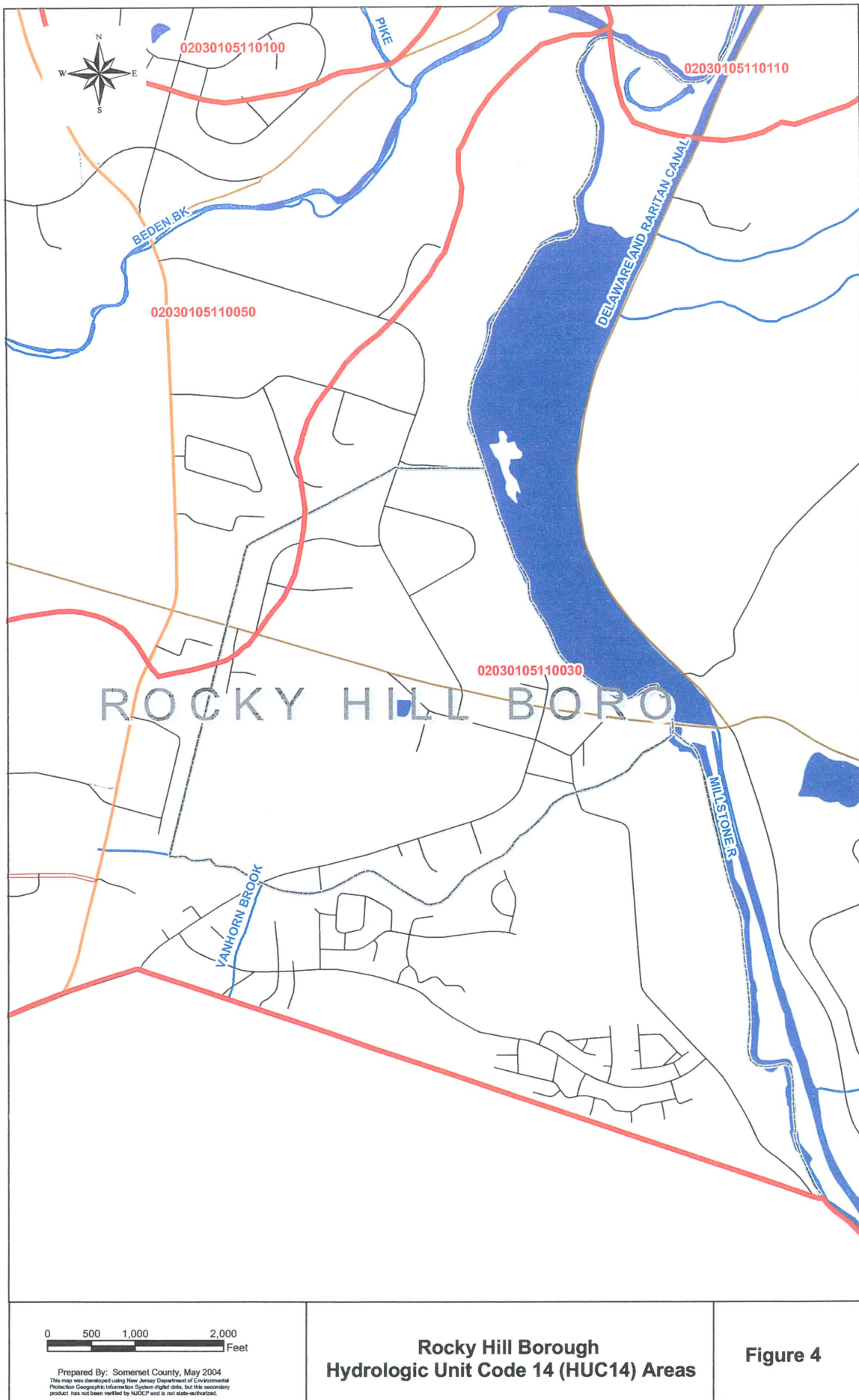


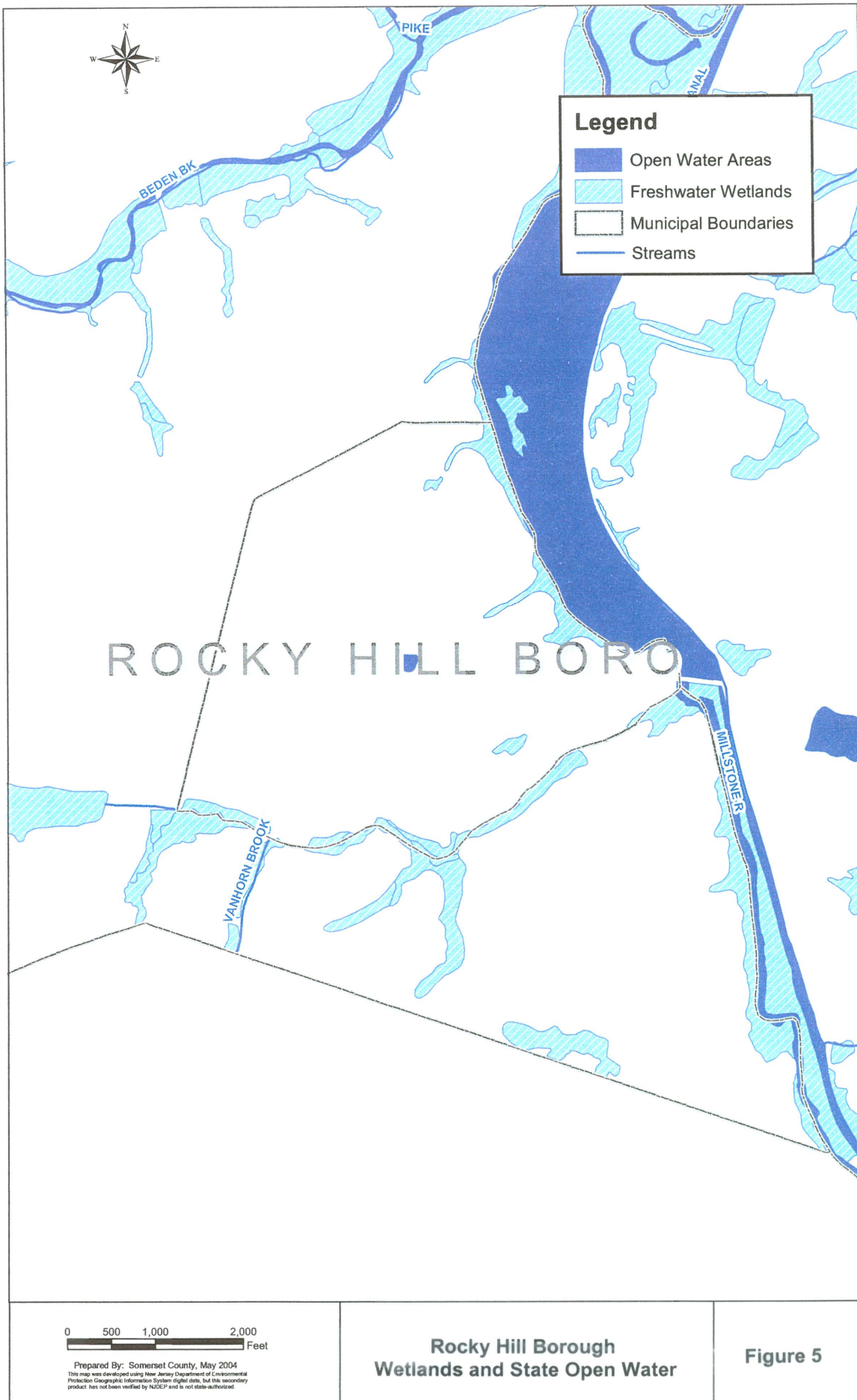
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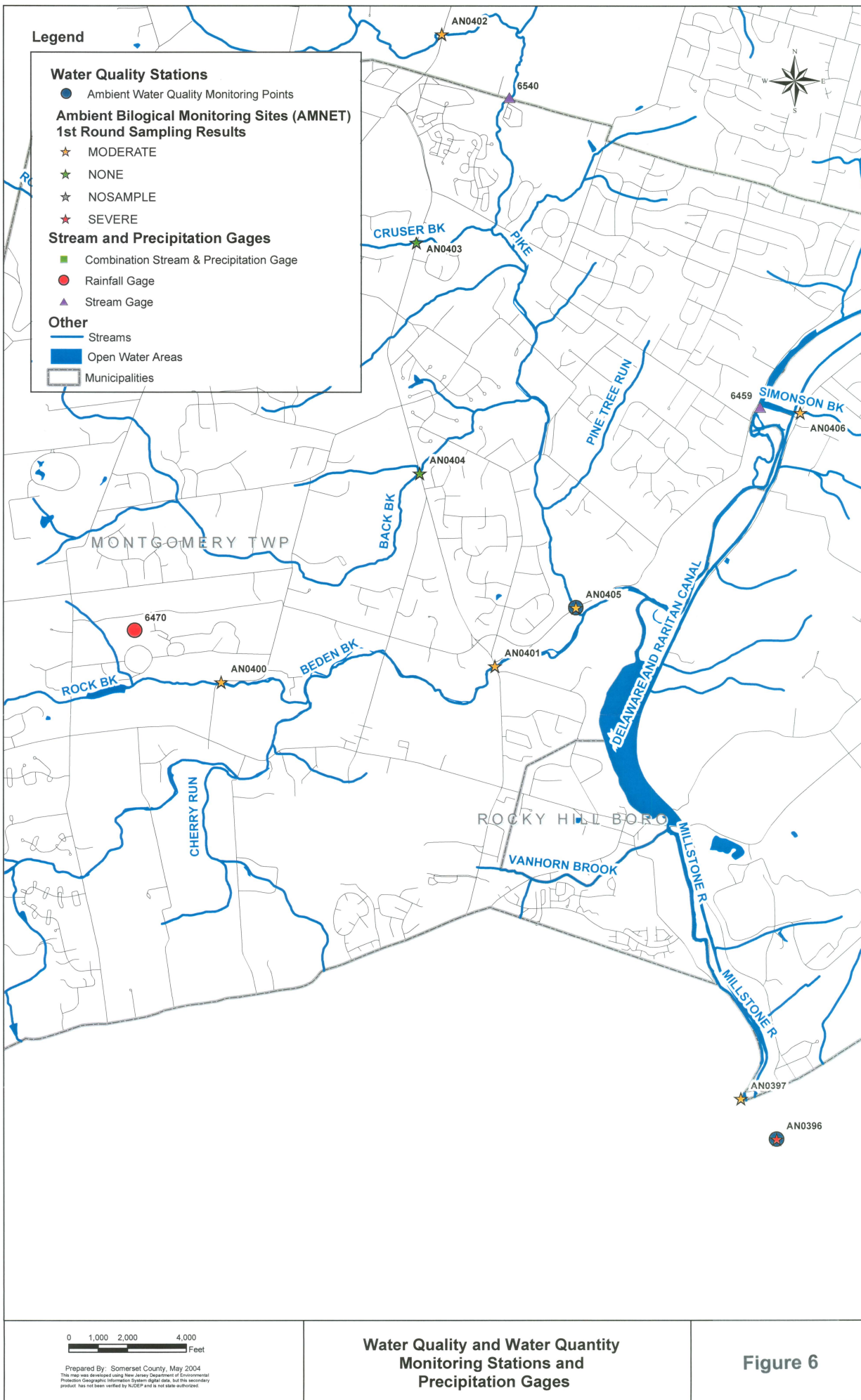
Prepared By: Somerset County, May 2004
This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental
Protection Geographic Information System digital data, and the secondary
product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.

Rocky Hill Borough
USGS Quadrangle Map

Figure 3







**Water Quality and Water Quantity
Monitoring Stations and
Precipitation Gages**

Figure 6



0 500 1,000 2,000
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Prepared By: Somerset County, May 2004
This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental
Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but the secondary
product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.

**Rocky Hill Borough
100-Year Frequency Flood Plain**

Figure 7

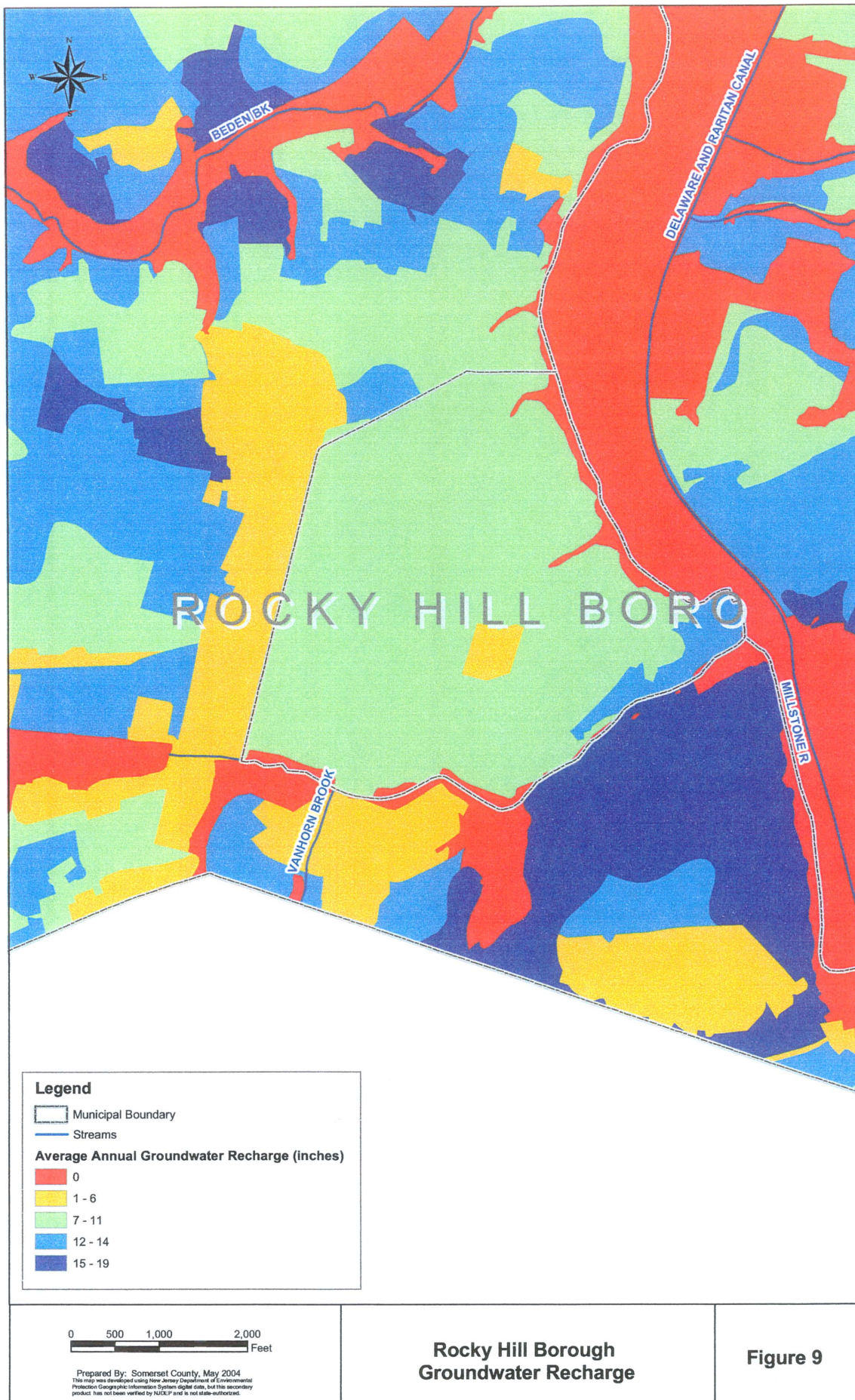


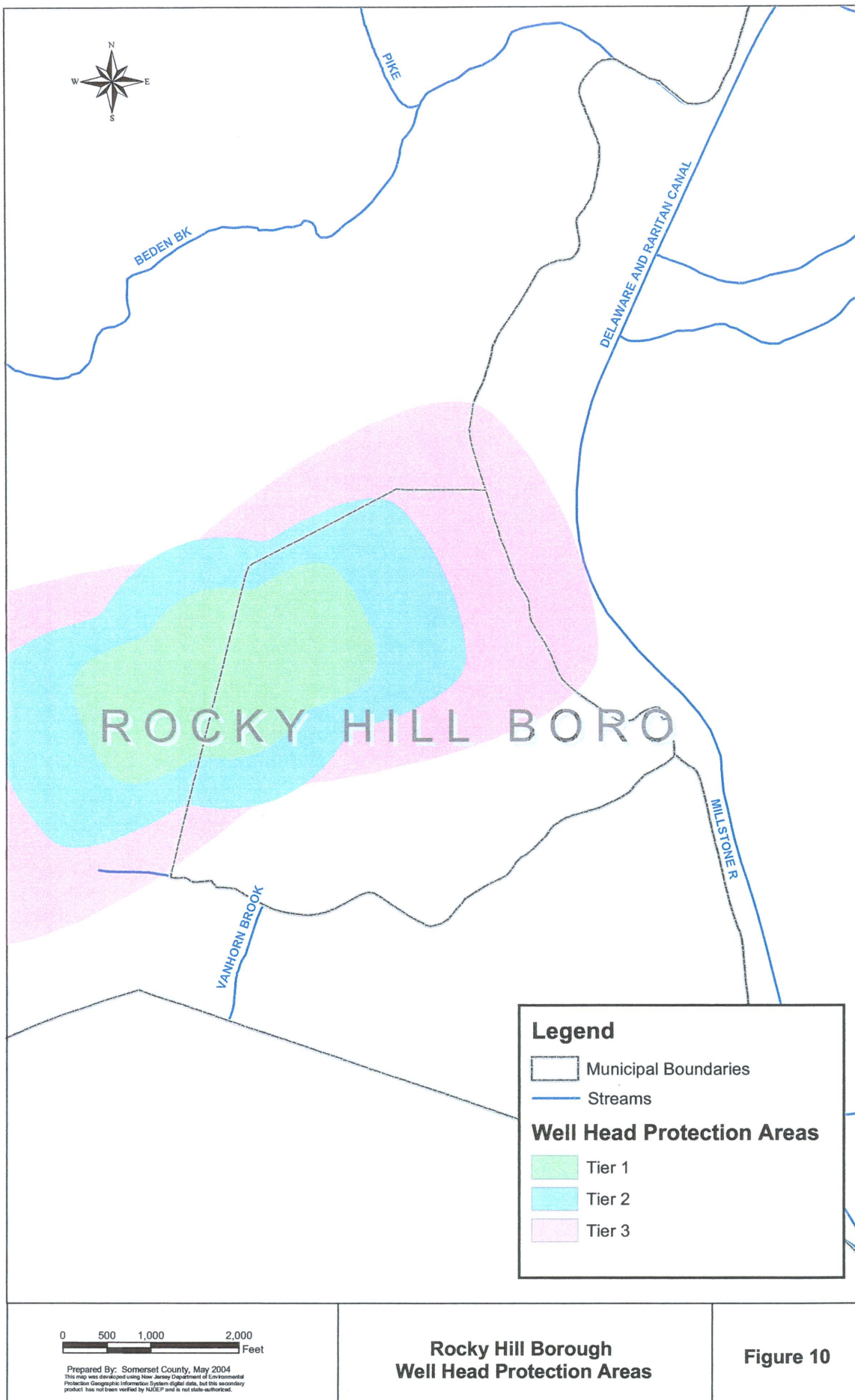
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Prepared By: Somerset County, May 2004
This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental
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product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state authorized.

**Rocky Hill Borough
Aerial Photo with Parcels**

Figure 8





Relationship to Other Plans

The Municipal Land Use Law requires municipal Master Plans to include an examination of the relationship of the municipal Master Plan with those of other political jurisdictions that may be affected by or affect the plan. The purpose is to encourage planning consistency among various governmental jurisdictions. This section evaluates the relationship of this plan to the plans of the State, Somerset County and adjacent municipalities. As documented below, in most cases there is fundamental consistency between this Master Plan and those plans. Also as required by law, included are specific policy statements regarding the relationship of this Master Plan to those of other jurisdictions.

Overview & Background

Following are the major factors affecting the Borough's relationship to adjacent communities, Somerset County, and the State.

- One neighboring community, Montgomery Township, surrounds the Borough on three sides. While Rocky Hill is a small, primarily residential, and nearly fully developed community, Montgomery is a much larger developing municipality with substantial areas of commercial development. The Route 206 commercial area adjacent to Rocky Hill is of particular importance and could have future potential impact on the Borough.
- The only other municipality contiguous to Rocky Hill is Franklin Township situated to the east of the Borough. Franklin Township is geographically separated from the Borough by the Millstone River and the D&R Canal State Park. The protection of the Millstone River and adjoining flood prone lands represents a concern shared by both Rocky Hill and Franklin Township.
- Somerset County has been active in its planning, particularly in the areas of intergovernmental cooperation, open space and traffic circulation. These are also subjects of particular concern to the Borough.
- In 2001, the State Development and Redevelopment Plan was re-adopted in accordance with state law after a number of years of negotiation among various levels of government (state, county and local), interested citizens, and special interest groups. The plan designates Rocky Hill as in *Planning Area 2 - Suburban*.
- In 2001, at the request of the Borough, the State Planning Commission designated the Borough's village core area as a Village Center. This designation has important symbolic, legal, and financial implications of potential future benefit to the Borough.
- The State Planning Commission has endeavored to promote center-based planning for growth areas. The Borough has supported this concept.

Relationship of this Plan to Contiguous Municipalities

Only two municipalities border Rocky Hill: Montgomery and Franklin Townships. Montgomery is the most significant because it nearly surrounds the Borough and because the Route 206 commercial corridor is adjacent or close to residential and historic areas in the Borough. Route 206 intersects Route 518 which becomes the Borough's "main street" - Washington Street - leading directly to the village core. Both Rocky Hill and Franklin Township have shared concerns about preserving the environmental quality and historic character of the Millstone River corridor. Large areas adjacent to the River in both communities have been preserved as parkland.

Regional Planning Policy Statements

General Statement. To the extent possible, there should be consistency regarding land development policies along both sides of municipal boundary lines. Whenever there is a major development application proposed along the municipal boundary line, there should be mutual cooperation between the neighboring communities to mitigate any significant impacts wherever possible. In addition, it is in the best interest of all municipalities in the region to cooperate, where possible, on a wide range of municipal services.

Land Use Planning. In making planning and zoning decisions in the areas adjacent to adjoining municipalities, the Borough has taken into consideration the existing land use patterns, planning and zoning in those municipalities. The Borough should actively interact with other municipalities to promote the same compatibility in their planning. This policy should be pursued by all municipalities in the area in order to promote the general public welfare. Consistency of land use planning between municipalities is of mutual benefit and should be an important factor in making planning decisions. The planning proposals contained in this Master Plan do not have a significant impact on adjacent communities.

Regional Cooperation. Issues of concern among municipalities can often be addressed cooperatively, on a regional basis, and in particular instances in cooperation with county or state government agencies. In particular, traffic congestion and circulation problems often require an inter-municipal or regional solutions. In addition, the provision of municipal services can sometimes be provided most effectively and economically in cooperation with other municipalities, especially for a small community such as Rocky Hill. Examples of current inter-governmental cooperation and/or services involving the Borough include:

- Education (local Board of Education - sending district to Montgomery Township)
- Fire Department (local department with mutual aid including Franklin, Montgomery and Princeton)
- Health Service (interlocal agreement with South Brunswick Township)
- Library (Somerset County Library services)
- Police (State Police coverage and response)
- Public Works (interlocal agreement with Somerset County)
- Recreation (interlocal agreement with Montgomery Township)
- Sanitary sewer service (Montgomery Township treatment plant)
- Welfare (Somerset county welfare services)

Montgomery Township

Montgomery Township is geographically and demographically a much larger municipality that almost surrounds the Borough. The border with Montgomery forms Rocky Hill's northern, western and southern municipal boundary. Montgomery Township's overall land use planning goals¹ are substantially consistent with the Borough's. In addition, the existing land use patterns along both sides of the Borough's northern border are substantially compatible. The development pattern in this area is of established residential neighborhoods of medium to low density single-family homes. Future land use planning and zoning for this area in both municipalities reflects the established development pattern and in Montgomery, the preservation of open space areas (formerly part of the Ingersoll-Rand tract) that will surround a proposed continuing care retirement development.

Land use patterns along Rocky Hill's southern border with Montgomery are substantially different on each side of the border. In Montgomery, there is a mix of multifamily residential developments, single-family homes, and large tracts of vacant land. In Rocky Hill, the land use pattern is largely single-family residential with large areas of preserved open space. Although both areas are developed with residential uses the development patterns and densities are substantially different. Rocky Hill's land use objective in this area is to protect and promote the established single-family residential development pattern and to preserve the large areas of open space adjacent to the Village Center. Montgomery's plan for this area promotes large developments of attached housing on large tracts. Montgomery's 1998 Master Plan Reexamination Report² has, however, designated two of the largest remaining vacant tracts for acquisition under the Green Acres Program. These sites are along River Road near Rocky Hill. Open space preservation in this area is consistent with the Borough's planning for open space and it should be actively supported by both communities.

The existing land use patterns and planning on the two sides of the Borough's western border are substantially different. In Rocky Hill, moving from north to south, it is single-family residential (R-1 zoning) in the northwest. The land use pattern in the area just south of Washington Street is of low to medium-density townhouses (R-3 zoning). Finally, the Borough's southwestern border contains preserved open space. This area is proposed to be rezoned to a new "Public Land" zone in the Land Use Plan. The adjacent area in Montgomery is the Route 206 corridor with an established pattern of primarily highway commercial development. Montgomery's planning and zoning for the entire area along the western border of the Borough is "Highway Commercial" promoting the established development pattern.

There are two major concerns in the contrasting municipal plans on the Borough's western border. The first is the contrasting intensities of permitted development. The potential for future large-scale, high-intensity development in Montgomery, and the resulting traffic impacts associated with high density/intensity development, contrasts sharply with the relatively small-scale and low-intensity development that Rocky Hill wishes to preserve in the adjacent area within the Borough. The Borough should work with Montgomery to mitigate these contrasting

¹ Township of Montgomery Master Plan and Development Regulations Periodic Reexamination Report, prepared by Coppola & Coppola Associates, 1998, page 15.

² Montgomery Township 1998 Reexamination Report, prepared by Coppola & Coppola Associates, 1998.

intensities by assuring that adequate buffers and appropriate circulation patterns are provided in connection with future high-intensity development in Montgomery.

A more fundamental concern results from the contrasting municipal visions for the two adjacent areas. The Borough's vision is of a *center-based* land use pattern consistent with the State Plan that is mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, and small-scale following historic patterns.

Montgomery's plan promotes a vehicle-oriented, relatively large-scale commercial development pattern, a vision that can have a significant negative impact on the Borough. Wherever possible, the Borough should work with Montgomery to mitigate potential impacts. In particular, the Office of State Planning has recommended, and the Borough supports, a transition to center-based planning in Montgomery Township. Designating the Route 206/518 area a "center" and establishing center-based policies (pedestrian-friendly, mass transit, mixed use) could be mutually beneficial to the residents of each community.

Franklin Township

Franklin Township is located to the east of the Borough. The municipal border is formed by the Millstone River and Washington Street (Route 518) connects the two communities. The Delaware & Raritan (D&R) Canal State Park parallels the River in Franklin Township, providing a substantial open space buffer between the two communities. Trap Rock Quarry is situated on the southerly side of Route 518 (Georgetown & Franklin Tpk. Road) in Franklin, just east of the Canal Park. The Township's overall land use planning goals³ are substantially consistent with the Borough's.

The existing land use patterns along both sides of the Borough's border with Franklin are substantially compatible. In Rocky Hill, the predominant pattern is of established residential neighborhoods of medium to low density single-family homes and preserved open space. Future land use planning and zoning for this area in both municipalities reflects the established development pattern. In particular, Franklin Township's planning policies emphasize the need to protect the D&R Canal and State Park. The "Canal Preservation" designation in the township's Land Use Plan is intended to protect environmentally sensitive features in this area with use and development standards that provide for very low intensity-low density development (six acre minimum lot size). The D&R Canal State Park also complements the open space areas along the Millstone River in Rocky Hill. Franklin Township's emphasis on protecting this area is beneficial to the overall goals of this Master Plan and Rocky Hill's efforts to promote/protect the traditional and historic character of the Village Center.

Somerset County Master Plan

Rocky Hill is located near the southern edge of Somerset County. The County has played an important role in the Borough by supporting the community's planning goals. County Route 518 (Washington Street) is the Borough's "Main Street." Somerset County's support and cooperation on traffic calming improvements along Washington Street is an important part of the

³ 1999 Master Plan Franklin Township, prepared by Heyer Gruel & Associates, 1999, page III-1.

Borough's Village Center plans. In addition, Somerset County supported the Borough's efforts to have the village core area designated a Village Center in the State Plan. Somerset County has also been active in the preservation of open space. The Schafer Tract was purchased by the County for open space in direct support of Borough overall planning goals.

Somerset County Goals & Objectives

Somerset County's overall planning goals are contained in the Somerset County Master Plan.⁴ Where applicable they are consistent with Rocky Hill's overall planning goals. The following four goals from the Somerset County Master Plan are of particular relevance to Rocky Hill.

- *To continue planning for large blocks of contiguous open space to provide for multiple public purposes such as active and passive recreation space, water supply, storm water control, wildlife habitats, visual breaks between areas of development, sites for major county and state facilities, and areas to separate agriculture from nonagricultural uses.*
- *To discourage sprawl development patterns, and to that end, discourage the extension of water, sewer and highway systems into areas considered inappropriate for development. Public and quasi-public investments should be directed to upgrading and providing additional capacities; replacing deteriorated sections and, in the case of water and sewer systems, minimizing leaks, expanding treatment capacities and improving the quality of potable water and the quality of effluent before it is discharged into the ground or the rivers and streams.*
- *To encourage private and governmental programs directed at reducing the volume of traffic required to travel the public roads, such as van pooling, ridesharing and public transportation.*
- *To protect and enhance significant historic, cultural and archeological site and structures.*

Somerset County Land Use Plan

The Somerset County Master Plan dates back to 1987 and contains general land use management goals and guidelines addressing land development issues in the County.⁵ The plan classifies Rocky Hill as a "Community Settlement" located within a "Growth Management Area." The County's goals and policies for such designations are consistent with this Master Plan.

Somerset County Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan

Somerset County's planning for open space is contained in two companion documents dating from 1994⁶ and 2000.⁷ Both documents emphasize the need for more open space and recreational resources in the Rocky Hill region (southern part of Somerset County). In addition, they emphasize the goal of linking open space (greenways) and intergovernmental cooperation in open space planning. These and other Somerset County goals and policies for open space planning are consistent with this Master Plan.

⁴ Somerset County Master Plan, 1987, pp. 54-55.

⁵ Ibid. p. 56.

⁶ Somerset County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, June 1994.

⁷ Somerset County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Update, December 2000.

Somerset County's open space initiatives are particularly supportive of the Borough's overall planning goals. A major portion of the Schafer Tract located outside the Village Center has been acquired by Somerset County; a portion of the site is slated to be used for active recreation. This open space forms a major part of the greenbelt around the Rocky Hill Village Center and as such is an important contribution to the preservation of the traditional and historic character of the Borough. Somerset County recommends additional open space acquisition along the Millstone River, particularly in flood prone areas. The Borough supports this initiative, as it is wholly consistent with the Borough's open space planning goals and objectives.

Somerset County Circulation Plan

Somerset County's planning policies concerning county roads and bridges are of particular importance to the Borough. Crescent Avenue and River Road (County Route 605) and Washington Street (County Route 518) are central features of the Borough that form its underlying structure and directly influence its character. Their prominence in the Borough's landscape means that their design characteristics (pavement and shoulder width, alignments, etc.) directly affect the Borough's overall planning goals. Route 518 is classified as a minor arterial road and Route 605 is classified as a minor collector road. The County Roadway Functional Classification System and associated roadway standards are listed below.

Routes 518 (Washington Street) and 605 (Crescent Avenue/River Road) are also historic resources and prominent features of the historic landscape contributing to the significance of the Borough's Historic Preservation District. As a result, improvements to these roadways in accordance with the above design standards could have a significant negative impact on the integrity of the District. The County Plan recognizes this as an important planning issue and has developed policies in recognition of important local planning goals:

In the case of designated scenic corridors and roadways, roadway standards set forth by the Somerset County Scenic Corridor and Roadway Program will be applicable regardless of the functional classification of the roadway. For scenic roadways the standard roadway width is 34 feet, except in compact historic districts of less than one mile in length, in which case the standard is 30 feet. Scenic corridor roadway widths will be evaluated on an individual basis.⁸

Policy Statement

Somerset County has fostered a cooperative working relationship with the Borough, especially with regard to road improvement and traffic calming projects. This cooperative relationship has helped to promote consistency between municipal and county planning. This is of mutual benefit and should be continued.

SOMERSET COUNTY FUNCTIONAL ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM⁹

ROAD TYPE	ROADWAY FUNCTION	R.O.W. WIDTH	CART-WAY	# OF LANES
Major	Serves the primary function of facilitating inter-county or regional			

⁸ Ibid. p. 43.

⁹ Somerset County Master Plan Circulation Update, 1994, Page 42.

Arterial	through movements, accommodating relatively high traffic volumes with maximum travel mobility and minimum interference. County Roads serving this function are multi-lane, with and without a median, and is capable of providing direct access to adjacent land uses, although such access will be incidental to the primary purpose of providing through movement.	80 ft.	58 ft.	4
Minor Arterial	Serves to interconnect and augment the major arterial road system and distribute traffic to the collector road system. Minor arterials have the primary function of facilitating intra-County through movements, although at lower levels of travel mobility than major arterials, linking identified centers with one another as well as major commercial and employment concentrations. County roads serving this function typically vary in terms of the number of travel lanes, with most having two lanes with some four-lane segments in the vicinity of major intersections. Minor arterials provide full access to adjacent land uses.	66 ft.	46 ft.	2-4
Major Collector	Serves to collect traffic from the local street system and channel it to the arterial road system. Conversely, collectors also serve to distribute traffic from arterials to local streets. Major collectors typically penetrate developed residential areas and provide full access to adjacent land uses at lower levels of mobility than minor arterials. Major collectors typically have two travel lanes.	60 ft.	40 ft.	2
Minor Collector	Serves the same function as major collectors, but typically have lower traffic volumes because the areas they serve are less developed. This category also includes county roads that do not serve a collector function per se, but that have the characteristics of local roads that serve primarily to provide access to adjacent land uses.	50 ft.	30-36 ft.	2

State Development & Redevelopment Plan

State government has played an increasingly prominent role in planning in New Jersey in recent years. It ultimately controls the legal framework for planning through the Municipal Land Use Law and through the increasing amount of legislation and regulations that directly or indirectly affect municipal land use planning. The State Planning Act was enacted in 1985 as companion legislation to the Fair Housing Act. It established a new state agency, the State Planning Commission (SPC), to prepare a new state master plan and coordinate planning among the various levels of government and between state agencies by means of an agreed-upon set of growth policies and plans.

The first State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP or “State Plan”) was adopted in June 1992 after a lengthy *cross acceptance* process, the process by which all levels of government and the public provided input into the plan. The State Plan was reexamined in 1997 and, after another period of cross acceptance and public comment, a revised plan was adopted March 1, 2001.

State Planning Goals

State planning goals include the revitalization of the state’s cities and towns, conservation of natural resources, environmental protection, the promotion of beneficial economic growth, development and redevelopment based upon adequate public facilities at a reasonable cost, the promotion of affordable housing, and the preservation of open space and historic, cultural, and

scenic resources. The fundamental planning principles that are key to implementing the plan are the following:

- Future growth should be consistent with the individual policies contained in the plan for five delineated Planning Areas (see below).
- Future growth should be *center-based* with mixed uses, discouraging a continuation of a pattern of suburban sprawl.
- To the extent possible, all levels of government and agencies should work toward common policies and plans.

State-Designated Planning Areas

The State Plan established the five Planning Areas listed below. They represent large areas that share common characteristics or conditions such as population density, infrastructure systems, and/or natural systems. Although the individual characteristics of each community may differ, a common set of planning objectives is intended to guide development or redevelopment in each Planning Area. Rocky Hill is located entirely within the Suburban Planning Area (PA-2).

- Planning Area 1 – Metropolitan Planning Area
- Planning Area 2 – Suburban Planning Area
- Planning Area 3 – Fringe Planning Area
- Planning Area 4 – Rural Planning Area (PA-4B – Rural/Environmentally Sensitive)
- Planning Area 5 - Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA-5B – Environmentally Sensitive/Barrier Island)

Planning Objectives for Planning Area 2

Following is a summary of the SDRP policy objectives for Planning Area 2 that are in close association with the Borough:

1. To limit new development at higher densities and intensities to centers (i.e. centers approved by the State Planning Commission).
2. To promote development that is consistent with the policies in the State Plan for planning areas, in this case Planning Area 2 (PA-2). PA-2 area planning policies are intended to:
 - a. Provide areas for much of the State's future development.
 - b. Guide development into more compact forms: centers with mixed uses.
 - c. Preserve the environs of centers (i.e. surrounding areas) as parkland.
 - d. Promote pedestrian-friendly and mass transit-oriented development.
 - e. To promote major development that is center-based through funding incentives for infrastructure and to discourage non-center-based major development through regulatory limitations (such as permits to install or extend public sewers).
 - f. To encourage intergovernmental and regional cooperation.

Policy Statement

The Borough's planning goals and objectives are consistent with the State Plan's policies and planning objectives. In particular, this Master Plan seeks to preserve and strengthen the Village Center. Cooperation in planning between local and state government is in the best interest of all New Jersey citizens. Rocky Hill should continue to work with the State Planning Commission to

implement its plan for the Village Center and of special importance: planning objectives for the *environs*, compatible with center-based planning policies.

OtherPlans.doc

Master Plan Implementation Matrix

Adopted: February 10, 2004

The following matrix displays the major recommendations recommended in this Master Plan and other land use-related issues requiring follow-up by Borough officials. In each case the primary actions required for implementation are listed.

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTIONS REQUIRED
ZONING	
Delete R-M and AERO zoning districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinance drafting. • Ordinance adoption including public hearing and referral to Planning Board.
Establish Community Land (CL) zone for all community owned land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinance drafting. • Ordinance adoption including public hearing and referral to Planning Board.
Hayden site: establish new residential zone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinance drafting. • Ordinance adoption including public hearing and referral to Planning Board.
Scassera site rezoning: establish Village Office District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinance drafting. • Ordinance adoption including public hearing and referral to Planning Board.
Schafer site rezoning: establish new residential zone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinance drafting. • Ordinance adoption including public hearing and referral to Planning Board.
Schafer Homestead rezoning: establish new residential zone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinance drafting. • Ordinance adoption including public hearing and referral to Planning Board.
VILLAGE CENTER	
Implement traffic calming improvements.	Somerset County implementing program.
Enhance pedestrian orientation of and linkage to the Village Center.	Seek cooperation from Somerset County and funding for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional street trees • street lighting • street “furniture” • gateway signage • extended sidewalk @ Princeton Avenue

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION	
Open space acquisition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remaining Schafer tract • Millstone River Greenway • The Pond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request amendment of Somerset County Open Space Plan to include acquisition of remainder of Schafer Tract. • Seek funding for Schafer Tract purchase. • Initiate discussions with property owners of land adjacent to Millstone River for future expansion of greenway via easement or purchase. • Initiate discussion with property owner re: future acquisition of “The Pond.”
Recreation site planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active recreation improvements • Access to Green Acres recreation area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue working with Montgomery Township officials on active recreation plan for Green Acres (Schafer Tract) site. • Plan for and implement circulation plan for access to Green Acres site: pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular.
HOUSING	
Affordable housing obligation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor third round of municipal fair share regulations. • Develop plan for meeting additional housing need based on new COAH rules.
Zoning for accessory apartments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinance drafting. • Ordinance adoption including public hearing and referral to Planning Board.
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION	
Regional cooperation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support center designation of Rt. 206/518 area in Montgomery Township. • Work with Somerset County to implement improvements in Village Center and implementation of open space objectives.

REPORT on the REEXAMINATION
of the BOROUGH of ROCKY HILL
MASTER PLAN AND
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL
PLANNING BOARD

Adopted by Resolution
July 8, 2008

Prepared for the Borough of Rocky Hill Planning Board by:

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INTRODUCTION

The Municipal Land Use Law requires the Planning Board to undertake a periodic reexamination of the Borough's master plan and development regulations at least once every six years. The Borough of Rocky Hill completed its last reexamination in 2001 with the adoption of a new comprehensively revised Master Plan; this is the first reexamination since its adoption.

A reexamination report is an assessment of local land use policies and may contain recommendations for master plan or land use ordinance amendments to address new areas of concern. It is not by itself an amendment of the master plan or development regulations.

The statute requires the reexamination to address the following criteria (NJSA 40:55D-89):

- 1. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.*
- 2. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.*
- 3. 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.*
- 4. 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.*
- 5. The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted 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.*

BACKGROUND

The Rocky Hill Planning Board has been diligent in its efforts to keep the Borough's land use planning up to date. A number of amendments to the Master Plan and development regulations have been adopted since 2001. All of these amendments represent evolutionary changes in the Borough's land use policies.

PART 1: THE MAJOR PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES RELATING TO LAND DEVELOPMENT IN THE MUNICIPALITY AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF THE NEW BOROUGH MASTER PLAN IN 2001.

The 2001 Borough Master Plan addressed the following as the major problems and objectives in Rocky Hill relating to land development at that time.

- a) **Center-based planning for the remaining large vacant tracts.** On May 16, 2001 the Borough received *center* designation from the New Jersey State Planning Commission for Rocky Hill Village. The new Master Plan endorsed *center-based* planning as recommended by the NJ State Planning Commission and the Somerset County Planning Board. It recognized that a center-based plan was consistent with the Borough's historic development pattern. It recommended re-zoning of the last remaining large vacant tracts to ensure consistency with the goals of the new Master Plan, particularly in regards to the preservation of the Borough's historic center-based development pattern.
- b) **Affordable housing.** Just prior to the adoption of the new Master Plan in 2001, the Borough received *substantive certification* of its fair share plan from the Council on Affordable Housing under COAH's "second round" rules.
- c) **Preservation of the historic character of the historic district.** The new Master Plan identified the increasing importance of the preservation of the historic character of the Borough's Historic District as a primary land use planning objective.
- d) **Increased traffic through the Borough.** The new Master Plan identified the increase in traffic through the Borough and its negative impact on the Village Center's historic character as a major planning problem needing to be addressed. It recommended traffic calming improvements for Route 518.
- e) **Development of a large Somerset County park (VanHorne Park) in the Borough.** The new Master Plan recognized the importance of a planned new County park on an 85-acre portion of the Schafer Tract in the Borough. The park would represent about 20% of the Borough's land area. It recommended continued active cooperation with Somerset County in the development of the new park.
- f) **Need for new land uses.** The new Master Plan recognized the need for new land uses not previously permitted or encouraged in the Borough in regard to the following issues:
- **Changes in technology.** Changes in wireless telecommunications technology were identified as triggering the need to reconsider the Borough's land use policies affecting such technology.
 - **Demographic changes.** Changes in demographic characteristics in the general population were identified as triggering the need to consider zoning for senior citizen (age-restricted) housing.
 - **Mixed uses and accessory apartments.** Mixed uses in the Village core, retail on the first floor and residences above, were identified as the Village's traditional land use pattern. The Master Plan recommended that such mixed uses should be encouraged in the Village core consistent with this historic pattern and its designation as a *center* in the State Plan.

- g) **Establish a Community Land Zone.** The Master Plan recommended that a new Community Land (CL) Zone be established for all community-owned and quasi-public land.
- h) **Enhance pedestrian linkages to the Village Center.** The Master Plan recommended that the pedestrian orientation of the Village Center should be enhanced through improved pedestrian linkages to it from the surrounding area.

PART 2: THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUCH PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES (IN PART 1) HAVE BEEN REDUCED OR HAVE INCREASED SUBSEQUENT TO SUCH DATE.

Following is a discussion of how each of the major problems or objectives, identified in Part 1 above, have been reduced or increased since that time.

- a) **Center-based planning for the remaining large vacant tracts.** The zoning for the four large remaining vacant tracts identified in the Master Plan was amended to be more consistent with *center-based* planning recommended by the NJ State Planning Commission and the Somerset County Planning Board. As a result, future development of these tracts is expected to be complimentary to the Borough's historic development pattern.
- b) **Affordable housing.** The Borough satisfied its second round affordable housing obligation with: 1) a Regional Contribution Agreement with the City of New Brunswick, 2) credit for two group homes, and 3) a rehabilitation program. In 2004, COAH adopted new "third round" rules, and in 2006 the Borough developed a new Housing Element and Fair Share Plan based on those rules. While this was ongoing, COAH's adopted rules were legally challenged by housing developers who succeeded in overturning the rules, which are now in the process of being revised. Although the revised rules adopted in May 2008 (along with new proposed revisions) have changed in many substantive ways, they do not have a dramatic impact on the Borough's affordable housing obligation because the Borough is almost entirely developed. The revised rules may also be challenged and as a result many municipalities face uncertainties about how to respond to the affordable housing obligation established by COAH. A new fair share plan modified to comply with the new requirements is required by December 31, 2008.
- c) **Preservation of the historic character of the historic district.** The rezoning of the remaining large vacant tracts that has occurred since 2001 is expected to contribute to the preservation of the character of the Borough's historic district. Although not all of the tracts are in the Historic District, their future development is now expected to better preserve the Borough's overall historic center-based development pattern. This will help preserve the District's historic context by preserving the distinction between the Village and its environs.
- d) **Increased traffic through the Borough.** The Borough, with the assistance of the County, has completed "traffic calming" improvements in the Village Center. These improvements have helped to slow traffic speeds through the Borough, thereby addressing one of the most harmful aspects of increased traffic.

- e) **Development of a large Somerset County park in the Borough.** The new County park (VanHorne Park) encompassing an 85-acre portion of the original 100+ acre Schafer Tract has been completed. The preservation of this large area as recreation and open space reinforces the Borough's historic center-based development pattern which is an important goal of the Master Plan.
- f) **Need for new land uses.** Progress was made regarding the need to address new land uses not previously permitted or encouraged in the Borough.
 - **Changes in technology.** Wireless telecommunication antennas were permitted to be constructed on the Borough's water tower through variances approved by the Planning Board. This has satisfactorily addressed the need for improved coverage in the Borough and surrounding area.
 - **Demographic changes.** The Borough's zoning was amended to zone for age-restricted housing on the remaining 15-acre portion of the Schafer Tract addressing the Borough's desire to consider zoning for senior citizen (age-restricted) housing.
 - **Mixed uses and accessory apartments.** The new Housing Element and Fair Share Plan adopted in 2006 recommended accessory apartments as part of the Borough's COAH compliance plan. A new plan required by COAH in response to amended third round rules should continue this recommendation.
- g) **Establish Community Land Zone.** The Master Plan recommendation that a new Community Land (CL) Zone be established for all community-owned and quasi-public land was accomplished.
- h) **Enhance pedestrian linkages to Village Center.** As part of the Planning Board's approval of the Pulte (Schafer Tract) development, major extensions and linkages of sidewalks and bike paths were planned as part of the development. When completed such improvements will substantially address this Master Plan recommendation.

PART 3: 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.

This section of the Reexamination Report examines whether there have been changes in local conditions or government policies that were not previously contemplated that should have an effect on the Master Plan or development regulations. Following is a discussion of significant changes that have occurred since 2001 in assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis of Rocky Hill's Master Plan or development regulations.

- a) **Schafer tract development approval.** The rezoning recommended in the Master Plan and implemented by the Borough Council for the Schafer Tract was challenged by the land owner. The Borough reached a settlement that provided for amendments to the zoning that continued to address the Borough's primary planning goals, particularly regarding the preservation of the Master Plan's center-based land use pattern and provision of age-restricted housing. Development approvals were granted pursuant to the new zoning, but the approval is being appealed by objectors. The outcome of the appeal will dictate whether any additional Master Plan or development regulations amendments will be required regarding the zoning for the tract.
- b) **Council on Affordable Housing "third round" rules.** COAH's revised third round rules may also be challenged. The Borough will need to adopt an amended plan consistent with COAH's revised rules by December 31, 2008.
- c) **Borough's Village center designation has expired.** The Borough received notice that the Borough's *center* designation expired and will not be reinstituted unless the Borough applies for and receives *plan endorsement* from the State Planning Commission. It is certain that such an application would be expensive for a small community like Rocky Hill, but the practical benefits for the Borough of *center* designation and *plan endorsement* are uncertain.
- d) **Stormwater Management.** The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection requires municipalities to review their stormwater management plans and regulations in light of current State stormwater requirements. The Borough's stormwater management plan and regulations need no updating.

Other than in these specific areas, and as a general proposition, the Borough of Rocky Hill Master Plan remains sufficiently up-to-date and continues to serve as a solid basis for the Borough's development regulations, particularly in regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, and conservation of natural resources. In addition, its basis of assumptions, policies and objectives remains valid.

PART 4: 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.

Following are the only recommendations for changes to the Borough's Master Plan and development regulations foreseen at this time. They are intended to address the concerns outlined in Parts 1 thru 3.

- a) **COAH's third round rules.** The Borough's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan should be revised and re-submitted to COAH to continue the Borough's legal protections under the Fair Housing Act.
- b) **Accessory apartments.** The Borough should implement zoning for accessory apartments in the context of COAH's final adoption of its third round rules.

- c) **Master Plan Implementation Matrix.** Many of the initiatives recommended in the Implementation Matrix, adopted as part of the Master Plan, has been fulfilled. The following remain to be addressed:
- Open space acquisitions for the Millstone River Greenway and the portion of The Pond not encompassed by VanHorne Park.
 - Improved access to the Green Acres recreation area.
 - Village Center enhancements including: street trees, street lighting, street furniture, gateway signage and extended sidewalk at Princeton Avenue.
- d) **No other major changes needed.** Except as described above, no major or fundamental changes to the Borough of Rocky Hill Master Plan or development regulations are needed at this time. Additional amendments or additions to the Rocky Hill Master Plan and development regulations may be needed from time to time in the future. However, they are expected to be consistent with the fundamental assumptions, policies and objectives of the Master Plan.

PART 5: THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LAND USE BOARD CONCERNING THE INCORPORATION OF REDEVELOPMENT PLANS ADOPTED 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.

There are no designated redevelopment areas in the Borough of Rocky Hill adopted pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law.

Borough of Rocky Hill
County of Somerset, State of New Jersey



2018 MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

Cottage Zoning Overlay

Adopted: June 21, 2018

Prepared by
The Borough of Rocky Hill Planning Board

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MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT COTTAGE ZONING OVERLAY

Background

The Borough of Rocky Hill has a long history of planning for and implementing affordable housing plans in accordance with prevailing State regulations. In 1986 the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) determined that the Borough had no fair share housing obligation for the “first round” ending in 1993. In 1993 COAH determined that the Borough’s “second round” obligation, for the period ending in 1999, was comprised of 25 new units and 2 units of rehabilitation. The Planning Board adopted a plan addressing the 27-unit obligation, which COAH certified in 2001, and all components of the plan were implemented. The State’s “third round” process for affordable housing currently extends from 1999 to 2025. Affordable Housing continues to be an unsettled issue, involving ongoing litigation through the courts.

Rocky Hill’s affordable housing efforts during the third round can be summarized as follows. The Borough submitted a Housing Element & Fair Share Plan addressing its fair share housing obligation in 2006 after COAH’s original third round rules were adopted in 2004. Those regulations were challenged by developers and subsequently invalidated by the Appellate Court in 2007. In response to the Court’s decision, COAH adopted new regulations which then required the Borough to submit a revised third round housing plan to address the Borough’s new affordable housing obligation. That revised third round fair share housing plan was certified by COAH on May 14, 2009. The Borough was one of only a few towns to receive third round certification.

But litigation over the State’s new regulations continued and led to a ruling by the New Jersey Supreme Court that said the methodology used by COAH to calculate growth share projections for round three was invalid. Ultimately the Supreme Court determined that the process that COAH employed to administer affordable housing had become ineffective and that the Council, itself, was nonfunctioning so the Court transferred the entire process from COAH to the fifteen New Jersey Superior Court vicinages. At that point, planning and implementing affordable housing ceased to be an Executive Branch administrative process and became a Judicial mediation process, returning affordable housing issues to the courts as it had been before the creation of COAH in 1985.

Attempting to avoid duplicative efforts and expenses, many municipalities, including Rocky Hill, collaborated to hire experts and develop appropriate affordable housing obligation numbers. This was supposed to lead to individual municipal housing plans that could be certified by the courts. Despite its best intentions, this collaborative effort dragged on for years at great expense to the towns. And yet, Rocky Hill persevered.

The Borough developed another revised affordable housing plan. This time the Borough’s plan included an affordable housing overlay on the only remaining developable site suitable for housing. The plan was never formally adopted by the Planning Board because the larger municipal coalition action became protracted and the whole process began to evolve into one that was more inclined toward individual municipal settlements. So Rocky Hill again tried to do the

‘right thing.’ The Borough endeavored to settle with the Fair Share Housing Center (FSHC), the principal party of interest in this matter.

During this phase, Rocky Hill refined its plan yet again and ultimately outlined an affordable housing strategy that the Planning Board and Governing Body believed would generate the largest development the Borough could sustain. This plan came to be known for its cottage zoning component. The initial concept was refined in consultation with the FSHC. The Planning Board maintains that this latest plan still offers the best and most realistic opportunity for new affordable housing in Rocky Hill. The Borough’s affordable housing plan is comprehensive and has several parts.

First, Rocky Hill has already enacted a Borough-wide ordinance requiring an affordable housing component when new residential development with five or more units is proposed. The Borough passed the ordinance voluntarily and absent any formal settlement agreement.

Second, the Borough will update its local affordable housing regulations and development fee ordinances. Third, the purpose of this specific Master Plan Amendment is to establish a planning policy for the proposed Cottage Zoning Overlay. In addition to the above, the Governing Body and Planning Board are actively pursuing other initiatives to develop an even more comprehensive affordable housing plan for the Borough.

Cottage Zoning Overlay

It’s important to explain why cottage zoning is proposed as an overlay zone and not as an inclusionary zoning district. The parcel over which the overlay zone will be implemented received a conditional approval in 2006 for thirty-four (34) age-restricted attached dwelling units. More recently, in 2018 during discussions with the property owner regarding options for providing affordable housing, the Borough and the property owner were unable to reach an understanding. The Borough has now decided to proceed on its own to implement a reasonable affordable housing strategy.

Because of the Borough’s litigation history regarding this property, the Borough prefers to leave the existing zoning in place, preserving the property owner’s current rights. Accordingly, the cottage overlay zone will have no effect on the property owner’s rights. The proposed cottage zoning will only be implemented if the property is not developed in accordance with its prior 2006 approval. The Borough will not change the current zoning or in any other way adversely impact the property owner’s interests by employing an overlay zone.

The purpose of the cottage zoning overlay zone is to promote small, high-quality, single-family, detached homes for typically smaller households. This development will support a mix of income levels and will include an affordable housing component. Housing units will have less overall bulk and will be of a smaller architectural scale than standard single-family detached homes. This is consistent with the historic character of Rocky Hill, as well the existing Historic Preservation overlay zone that encompasses this property.

The compact nature of this type of development will protect environmentally sensitive lands such as wetlands and threatened and endangered species habitat. Blasting of restrictive geology will not be permitted, since such activity within a developed community like Rocky Hill would likely damage existing homes, buildings and the Borough's aging infrastructure systems. Further, this cottage overlay zone and the enacting ordinance, will ensure protection of the wetlands and address other environmental concerns regarding construction on this property.

The ordinance will include site design standards intended to create small, compact clusters of cottages, each oriented around a functional common open space designed to foster a sense of community and enhanced security. Cottage clusters will be pedestrian-oriented, with vehicular use throughout the development assuming a lower priority. Each cottage cluster will include opportunities to promote socializing while minimizing the visibility of streets and parking.

Detailed architectural design standards will insure cottage style housing with the size, proportionality and character of craftsman-style homes built in the early 20th century. Small homes, tightly clustered, will create greater opportunities for areas of open space and overall site buffering. Each cottage unit will include some private open space adjoining public open space, thereby fostering a sense of ownership while enhancing diversity in the landscape.

A few specific design criteria will be critical to the future success of this overlay zone:

- maximum number of cottage units will be sixty (60)
- at least twelve (12) units must be affordable to income qualified households
- cottages will range in size from 800 to 1,200 square feet each
- basements and individual garages will not be permitted
- cottages will be arranged in tightly knit clusters of four to twelve units each
- development will be governed by a homeowners' or condominium association
- provisions will be made for creating a few rental units within the development

In a nearly fully developed town like Rocky Hill, cottage housing development represents an efficient use of land that will add a safe, tightly knit, multi-generational and mixed income neighborhood to the community.

With a cottage zoning overlay, the Planning Board believes the Borough will create a realistic opportunity to add a significant number of affordable housing units to the local housing stock. It will complement the existing character of the town and introduce a much needed new housing product to the area without jeopardizing the rights of the local property owner who owns the site of the overlay zone.

Since this is only one part of a developing affordable housing plan, it should be noted that, insofar as it is relevant to other portions of the Master Plan, this Amendment supersedes or augments other Master Plan sections and development policies. The Planning Board will continue to work to update its Master Plan to ensure that all sections reflect recent developments in the Borough as well as new initiatives and policies. Through all its efforts, it is the Planning

Board's objective to comply with the purposes and intents of the Fair Housing Act and provide as much new affordable housing development as the Borough can reasonably sustain.

Borough of Rocky Hill
County of Somerset, State of New Jersey



2018 MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT

Historic Preservation Plan

Adopted: September 20, 2018

Prepared by
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Historic Preservation Plan

I. Introduction

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) has among its purposes:

N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2 (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;”

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28 (10)*, the historic preservation plan element of the Master Plan shall address the following:

“(a) indicating the location and significance of historic sites and historic districts;

(b) identifying the standards used to assess worthiness for historic site or district identification; and

(c) analyzing the impact of each component and element of the master plan on the preservation of historic sites and districts;”

II. Background

The village of Rocky Hill, the forerunner of today’s Borough, was part of the lands belonging to the Unami, or “people down the river,” a tribe of the Lenni-Lenape. The name “Rocky Hill” derived from its location on a stone ledge on the banks of the Millstone River: the stone ledge is more properly known today as a Jurassic formation of diabase bedrock. The history of Rocky Hill from the early eighteenth century is documented in a number of books and journals so only a brief overview will be presented in this document.

The village of Rocky Hill has its origins in the first years of the 18th century when its abundant water power attracted settler John Harrison, Jr. to establish a mill site on the east side of the Millstone River in what is now Franklin Township. Despite this early industrial development, much of the area remained agricultural until well into the 19th century. The road through Rocky Hill (the Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike) was a busy one, one of the major routes from New Brunswick to Trenton. It crossed the Millstone River, first on the milldam at Harrison's mill, and then after 1819 on a bridge at the site of the present bridge on CR 518.

By the early 19th century the town had developed to serve the industries and travelers along the road. In 1834, it contained a grist and saw mill, a woolen mill, two stores, two taverns and 12 to 15 dwellings. The completion of the Delaware & Raritan Canal increased Rocky Hill's potential as an industrial and shipping site. The concomitant division of the Van Horne estate, which encompassed the entire present village of Rocky Hill, also led to the town's development in the 19th century.

By 1835, the Rocky Hill Inn had been completed at the intersection of Washington Street and Princeton Avenue. By 1873, the shape of the center of town and many of its major buildings were well established. Aside from the Rocky Hill Inn, the buildings included stores, a schoolhouse and three churches, all still standing today, although in some cases converted to other uses. Between 1850 and 1910, the center of town almost entirely filled in as the population rose from about 100 to over 500. Because it was so fully developed by that period, "downtown" Rocky Hill has retained the character of a 19th century rural village. Official recognition of the Borough as a local "center" came with the granting of the Borough's charter in 1890.

The Millstone River, the neighboring Delaware and Raritan Canal, and the Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike (CR 518) were pivotal factors in the eighteenth and nineteenth century in establishing a commercial and residential community in Rocky Hill, as well as making it a transportation nexus. These same factors continue into the twenty-first century and account for a number of challenges to preserving the historic district.

The floodplains of the Millstone River and Van Horne Brook, as well as some agricultural and deciduous wooded wetlands, present flooding problems to existing historic property owners. In addition, the development of the Borough's few remaining undeveloped lots in the Historic District is subject not only to Borough oversight but also to the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection regulations regarding wetlands and endangered species. Further, the Historic District has a section that falls within the Airport Safety Zone for the Princeton Airport and is subject to the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) regulation.

In November 2014, nearly two-thirds of the votes cast in that State-wide election approved a constitutional amendment dedicating 6% of the Corporation Business Tax revenue from 2016 to 2045 for open space, farmland, and historic preservation. The implementing legislation, *Preserve New Jersey Act* (N.J.S.A. 13:8C-43, *et seq.*) signed on June 30, 2016, mirrored current land use planning concerns that preservation must be partnered with active stewardship. The 2017 Green Acres Program listing of grants included stewardship projects for the first time.

Somerset County is presently updating the 2008 Farmland Preservation Plan and the 2001 Open Space and Recreation Plan components of the County Master Plan. In addition, Somerset County is creating the first County specific Historic Preservation Plan in the country. These three standalone reports will be published as one document with the goal of maximizing the synergy of these related land use elements. In addition to providing land use, funding, and partnership strategies for preservation in Somerset County, this Plan will also identify linkages between the three programs related to duality of uses, economic development, natural resource conservation, and tourism.

The New Jersey constitutional amendment mentioned above, the implementing State legislation, and Somerset County's planning initiative to treat open space, farmland and historic properties in an integrated manner with stewardship of preserved areas as both an objective and a basis for funding are clearly changes in State and County policy. These recent developments encouraged the Rocky Hill Planning Board to amend the Historic Preservation element of the Master Plan to

address these new integrated policies by developing a more comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan that reflects the Historic District's proximity to major State and County historic/open space resources such as the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, the Millstone River Watershed, the Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike, and the Millstone Valley Scenic Byway.

Further, existing traffic, as well as anticipated higher levels of traffic due to a new shopping center in Montgomery, have required the Planning Board to formulate preservation-sensitive recommendations to help mitigate the adverse impact of traffic on the Historic District and the safety of its residents. This is especially significant in light of national, State and Somerset County initiatives for safe pedestrian and biking mobility alternatives.

III. Location and Significance of Historic Sites and Historic Districts

A. Rocky Hill Historic District

Until 1978 most preservation efforts in Rocky Hill were private. Homeowners preserved their houses, and others converted former institutional buildings, such as the old school, to residential use. Some institutions, notably the Dutch Reformed and Catholic churches, also treated their buildings with sensitivity. In 1964 the Rocky Hill Community Group preserved and restored the house that has become its headquarters at 62 Washington Street.

In 1978, the Rocky Hill Community Group, aware of potential threats to the historic integrity of the core of the village, conducted a survey of Rocky Hill properties that led to the delineation of boundaries for a historic district. The boundaries of this district cross the Millstone River into Franklin Township to incorporate the site of the Delaware & Raritan Canal Basin. The State Register of Historic Places designation was granted on January 14, 1982 and a National Register of Historic Places designation was granted on July 8, 1982. In 1983 the Borough of Rocky Hill enacted a local Historic Preservation Ordinance that created an Historic overlay zone that defined and protected the Historic District properties in the Borough of Rocky Hill. **(See Exhibit 1)**

Although there are a number of historic sites and historic districts in Somerset County, what makes Rocky Hill special is lost on the 10,000 plus vehicles that pass through on a daily basis, and even some property owners that find the preservation ordinance troublesome. However, it is often said, to see oneself, one needs a mirror; the following comments about Rocky Hill from materials on the **Millstone Valley Scenic Byway** hopefully will be illuminating:

“A mile north of Rockingham, at the intersection with Washington Street, is the reconstructed foundation of the Rocky Hill bridge tender's house and a parking area providing access to the canal and the northern end of the Rocky Hill Branch Loop Trail.

“Nascent Rocky Hill village began about 1712 as Europeans began slowly settling along the Millstone River, which powered their early mills. But it took the coming of the D&R canal and later the railroad to spur the village's strongest growth. But as a decline in Rocky Hill's industrial base took place around the turn of the century, its growth came nearly to a halt. For that reason, the village appears today much as it did a century ago.

“Although only scant remains exist, the area where Washington Street crosses the Millstone River into Rocky Hill was once filled with industrial works including various mills, an engine house, railroad station, lumber yard, and a sash and blind factory. Today the only obvious remnant of the once sprawling mill complex is the pottery shop of John Shedd Designs, which offers magnificent ceramics and custom jewelry.”

Source: *All Along the Byway* by Robert Koppenhaver
<http://www.njskylands.com/tour-millstone-scenic-byway>

“Today Rocky Hill is a charming example of a 19th-century village, where visitors can see many architectural styles, including Federal, Greek Revival, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Carpenter Gothic, Italianate, and Bungalow. Travelers in 1748 called it Rockhill, because it was covered with rocks so big it took three men to roll them!

Source: *Millstone Valley Scenic Byway* brochure
www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/scenic/pdf/millstonerivervalley.pdf

The Historic Preservation District of Rocky Hill extends almost the entire length of Washington Street. Washington Street is also known as the Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike (CR 518) whose authorization as a turnpike occurred on February 16, 1816, making even our main thoroughfare an historic road. The Historic Preservation District also encompasses all of Crescent Avenue, Reeve Road, Kingston Road and Skillman Avenue as well as portions of Princeton Avenue and Montgomery Avenue. Although not in the overlay Historic Preservation District, the Rocky Hill Cemetery was incorporated in 1858 and is the final resting place for veterans from the Civil War onward, as well as famous local historic persons such as Thomas J. Skillman, a Borough benefactor.

Whether by happenstance or design (through the historic preservation ordinance), a good portion the housing stock (even those whose “bones” are covered by “modern” siding materials) in the historic preservation district date to the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. These historic homes as a group and the “village” parts of the Borough were granted both National and State historic designations in 1982. In 2022, the fortieth anniversary of the designations will occur: January 14, 2022 for the State designation and July 8, 2022 for the federal designation. Through the years, the Rocky Hill Historic Preservation District has been the site of various events with walking tours of the district. Architecture tourism has become very popular in recent years as a local economic asset. The Borough should consider a town-wide celebration of the 40th anniversary of its national historic designation.

There are some properties in the historic district that need tending. Although there are no known sources for owner-occupied housing assistance, there is a federal rebate for income producing properties. There is a 20% federal tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic properties that will be used for a business or other income-producing purpose, where a "substantial" amount is spent on rehabilitating the historic building's appearance. Rehabilitation work has to meet the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation](#), as determined by the National Park Service. A local

economic development committee could be instrumental in helping to capitalize on such programs if the Borough Council would establish such a committee.

See: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/before-you-apply.htm>

A number of the commercial buildings in Rocky Hill are historic properties. The multifamily at 7 Princeton Avenue was the first Borough hall, Voorhees Hall, when Rocky Hill separated from Montgomery Township in 1890. The commercial building at 125-127 Washington Street was the Lewis General Store. The multifamily at 182 Washington Street was the Williamson & Griggs General Store. The commercial building at 53 Crescent Avenue was Smalley's Garage and the Borough's first auto dealership selling Star and Durant cars. All of these buildings are noteworthy and deserving of attention.

B. Delaware and Raritan (D&R) Canal State Park

As mentioned above, the Rocky Hill State and National Historic District designations boundaries cross the Millstone River into Franklin Township to incorporate the site of the Delaware & Raritan Canal Basin. Rocky Hill-based businesses in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were operating on both sides of the Millstone River and on the canal on a regional, rather than municipal basis. Even today, the D&R Canal towpath is considered by Rocky Hill residents to be an integral part of our historic site and open space resources.

C. Millstone Valley Scenic Byway (MVSB)

Rocky Hill' historic preservation district is one of eleven distinct historic villages that are located directly along the **Millstone Valley Scenic Byway (MVSB)** route. The 27.5-mile loop **Millstone Valley Scenic Byway** passes through the Borough of Rocky Hill incorporating Montgomery Avenue, portions of Washington Street (CR 518), Reeve Road, portions of Crescent Avenue (CR 605), and Kingston Road. (See Exhibit 2)

The NJDOT has installed a number of colorful **Millstone Valley Scenic Byway** street signs in Rocky Hill. In October of 2009 the Millstone Valley Scenic Byway was designated a "National Scenic Highway" by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). New Jersey is part of the National Scenic Byway program which was established in 1991 through the Intermodal Transportation Efficiency Act and recognizes transportation corridors with regionally outstanding significance and scenic, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, and natural qualities.

The goals of the Scenic Byway program are to improve the quality of the byways, provide quality locations for recreational endeavors, expand public awareness of the corridors and foster state and local partnerships with the federal government. The importance of the **Millstone Valley Scenic Byway** as a regional resource encompassing natural, historic and cultural assets was noted in Somerset County's 2011 Circulation Plan. These efforts are intended to help manage growth and protect the Byway's assets and resources while "spurring tourism, recreation and economic benefits for the area."

D. Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike and the Millstone River Bridge

The Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike (CR 518), known as Washington Street within Rocky Hill, not only is a high-traffic road that effectively bifurcates the northern and southern parts of the Borough, but also is an historic highway. Between 1801 and 1828 more than 50 turnpike charters were granted by the New Jersey Legislature, of which about 30 were built. In all, about 500 miles of roadway were constructed. One of the turnpikes chartered and built was the Georgetown & Franklin Turnpike.

The first bridge over the Millstone River was built in 1819 and has been rebuilt over the years. The bridge is mentioned as an historic resource for Rocky Hill not only as a surrogate for the importance of the Millstone River and the D&R Canal to the founding and development of Rocky Hill, but also as the site of a 1793 reenactment of science experiment that was the topic of an October 17, 2008 article in *National Geographic* that mentioned the bridge and Rocky Hill.

In early November 1783, George Washington and Thomas Paine took some soldiers in a boat on the Millstone River to determine whether there was “swamp gas” in the river by touching torches to the river. This experiment was reenacted on its 225th anniversary, November 5, 2008, on the Millstone River. Onlookers on the bridge saw a glow under the water. According to the *National Geographic* article, the gas was methane produced by the microbes in the mud. **(See Exhibit 3)**

IV. Standards used to Assess Worthiness for Historic Site or District Identification

The historic district is established as an “overlay” in the Zoning Ordinance with regulations applicable to the exterior appearance of buildings and other structures and features on properties situated within the district. The criteria for nominating Rocky Hill to both the New Jersey and National Registers and delineating the local district were those developed by the National Park Service as follows:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; or*
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or*
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or*
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information in prehistory or history.*

The Rocky Hill Historic District was found to meet Criteria A, C, and D. Its existing architectural remains as well as the sites of former mills meet Criterion A in reflecting the emergence of a small self-contained industrial and commercial center in the 18th and 19th centuries. It meets Criterion C as a collection of well-preserved examples of 19th century architecture. While only a few

buildings are outstanding, taken as a whole the historic district includes most of the styles typical of the period, albeit in vernacular versions, set off as a distinctive entity by surrounding open space. Finally, it qualified under Criterion D because mill sites along River Road and north of Washington Street along the Millstone River are likely to yield information about 18th and 19th century industry.

V. Impact of Each Element of the Master Plan on the Preservation of Historic Sites and Districts

A. Land Use Policies Related to Historic Preservation

The MLUL requires the Historic Plan element to analyze the impact of each component of the Master Plan on the preservation of historic sites and districts. Most aspects of this Master Plan have either a positive or neutral impact on historic preservation goals. The Land Use Plan element and the zoning regulations designed to implement it can have important impacts on preservation goals.

In Rocky Hill, the Borough's zoning regulations have been carefully crafted to complement and strengthen the existing character of the Historic District and the village core. The Business District recognizes and preserves the existing traditional village business area and incorporates use and bulk regulations consistent with the character of the business area. The R-2 (Village Residential) District reflects the established residential character of the village core. Of significant importance is the fact that the Historic Preservation District Ordinance provides for the review of facades and other architectural elements to help ensure the compatibility of new construction/renovation with the character of the existing structures in the Historic District. In addition, the ordinance provides subdivision standards that promote future development of vacant or underdeveloped tracts compatible with the character of the historical features by providing suitable distances from them and, where appropriate, an historic envelope for them.

Zoning districts outside the village core were originally designed to provide suitable transitions between the Historic District and existing and potential single-family and multifamily developments with a character more typical of modern suburban development. These transitional areas were intended to be established through the use and bulk regulations, and by architectural, planning and scale guidelines.

The Land Use Plan for the Borough zoned all land in public ownership as Community Land. This designation is important in delineating major open space areas intended to protect the integrity of the Village Center and Historic District. The Land Use Plan (and Open Space Plan) also calls for the acquisition of additional open space that would extend the historic greenbelt around the village. This objective is also central to the role of the new Cottage Zoning ordinance. It promotes higher density residential development than anywhere elsewhere in the Borough but it also requires a very compact site plan configuration. This unique site design allows for the preservation of more open space than a typical residential development with the same number of units would have. Consequently, both the environmentally sensitive terrain and the area's greenbelt characteristics are preserved.

The Borough's overall Land Use Plan promotes strategic development objectives that protect the Historic Preservation District and preserve the historic land use pattern of Rocky Hill's designated Village Center. These goals emphasize the use of flexible development standards to enable the preservation of existing and historic structures in their settings, while promoting new development that is compatible and consistent with the historic character of the Town.

B. Housing Policies Related to Historic Preservation

Housing policies can also impact historic preservation goals. In Rocky Hill's case, there are few suitable areas remaining for additional conventional housing development. Nevertheless, all New Jersey municipalities have a constitutional obligation to provide for their fair share of affordable housing. The Borough is actively developing and implementing affordable housing initiatives designed to fulfill the Borough's obligation in a manner that is consistent with historic preservation goals and in accordance with New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing regulations.

The centerpiece of the Plan is the proposed Cottage Zoning ordinance. It promotes relatively high density housing in the form of small, Craftsman-style houses, clustered tightly together. This will fulfill a housing need for a growing number of smaller households in the community and also complement the local housing stock that includes many, similarly styled homes. Another element of the Plan called for the rehabilitation of substandard affordable units in the Borough. This too benefited preservation goals. The final element of the plan calls for the construction of a group home for developmentally disabled residents. The Housing Plan calls for the home to be constructed on Borough land located outside the boundaries of the Historic District.

C. Stormwater Management Policies to Historic Preservation

Historically, the borders of geopolitical entities often coincide with waterways. The southern and eastern boundaries of the Borough of Rocky Hill are along the paths of the Millstone River and the Van Horne Brook and their tributaries. As mentioned above, the founding and development of Rocky Hill was predicated on farming and businesses reliant on the Millstone River and the canal. A number of the historic district buildings are in floodplains and are subject natural hazard risks.

The August 2013 **DMA 2000 Somerset County Hazard Mitigation** plan update included in **Section 9.18** a natural hazard risk/vulnerability risk assessment table for the Borough of Rocky Hill. Although the flood, severe winter storm, drought, extreme temperature and wildfire risks were deemed "medium" in hazard rating, the severe storm risk was "high." The 2018 update of the Somerset County Hazard Mitigation report is ongoing as of the date of this report.

Given the number of historic properties in Somerset County that are located in floodplains, at a recent public meeting to gather information for the Somerset County Preservation Plan effort that is being drafted, the Somerset County officials agreed that an analysis of the risks of flood damage to historic properties will be included in the County preservation plan.

The State of New Jersey established a program entitled **Blue Acres** that purchases flood-prone properties (including structures), especially those that have flooded repeatedly. Once acquired by the State, the buildings will be demolished, and the land will be permanently preserved as open

space and serve as natural buffers against future storms and floods. The **Blue Acres** program has prioritized residences over commercial properties for buyback. Although this program is beneficial to the property owners, their municipal governments lose not only a ratable, but, potentially, a local historic resource. If the buildings to be demolished are historic structures, then there is a conflict in public policy between historic preservation and flood remediation. Given that Blue Acres funding comes from the same State preservation bonding source that funds open space and historic preservation, it is a public policy conflict that even the State of New Jersey has yet to resolve. Were Somerset County to develop a public policy to address this conflict in a meaningful fashion, then perhaps the State could adopt the Somerset County policy.

The Borough should encourage the County to suggest to the State that Blue Acres funding could be amended to include monies either for raising historic buildings (NJ shore community model) or relocation of historic structures (Rockingham model). Leading by example, the County could supplement Blue Acres funding by moving the historic structures rather than demolishing them.

A Frank Lloyd Wright residence, known as the Bachman Wilson House, is illustrative of what's possible. It was commissioned in 1954 and built in Millstone. After substantial flooding damage, the owners of the property spent years looking for a buyer to relocate the home. A museum in Arkansas disassembled and moved the house to Bentonville, Arkansas. If architectural tourism is both a Borough and Somerset County goal, policies need to be developed to protect flood-prone historic properties.

D. Open Space Policies Related to Historic Preservation

Open space planning policies are also very important to Rocky Hill's historic preservation goals. In many other historic villages across the nation, surrounding open areas have been developed over the years. The result is loss of a sense of "village" replaced by suburban sprawl. The remaining open areas associated with the Rocky Hill Historic District are important to the historic character and significance of the district. The Open Space & Recreation Plan element proposes the preservation of key remaining undeveloped land associated with the Rocky Hill Historic District and maintaining them as a local asset.

The Somerset County consultants working on the above-mentioned County preservation plan reports noted that "edge properties" are of particular interest to their endeavors. An edge property is one that borders on more than one interest area. An example would be the parcel in the VO zone under review for County acquisition as an addition to Van Horne Park – that property was part of a farm, is nestled in a historic district, and is potentially being added to our open space inventory. In some ways, Rocky Hill having been originally settled as a farming community, having an historic district, and having a third of its land in open space, could be considered a "edge" town. The Borough has an opportunity to capitalize on this. The multifunctional potential of sites within the Borough should be considered when framing and developing local planning policies.

E. Circulation Policies Related to Historic Preservation

Although there are several Rocky Hill historic buildings in floodplains [including two pivotal historic properties nineteenth century mill structures on the Millstone River flanking the eastern

entrance of the Borough], the greatest challenge to the preservation of the entire Historic District and the safety of its residents is the volume of traffic not only on CR 518 and CR 605 (River Road), but also on Borough streets such as Montgomery Avenue and Princeton Avenue that have become *de facto* loop roads for Route 206.

Rocky Hill has become a regional vehicle transportation nexus. The Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike runs through three municipalities in Somerset County: Franklin, Rocky Hill, and Montgomery. Until now the volume of CR 518 traffic in Franklin and Montgomery has been less than in the one section of Rocky Hill from the western terminus of CR 605 to Route 206— the section of CR 518 that is being feed by CR 605, by Princeton Avenue as a southern Route 206 loop/bypass and by Montgomery Avenue as a northern Route 206 loop/bypass.

With the construction of the Montgomery Promenade in Montgomery Township, the volume of traffic on the Montgomery section of CR 518 is expected to increase. The only traffic data the Borough has is a diagram provided as promotional literature for the Montgomery Promenade. The NJDOT volume for CR 518 on the western side of Route 206 (**See Exhibit 5**) is currently under 10,000 vehicles a day; however, the Montgomery Promenade brochure shows a projected 14,000 vehicles per day on CR 518 at that point with a southern bypass road with 10,000 vehicles per day. (**See Exhibit 6**)

Many years ago, the NJDOT proposed an east-west highway somewhat north of Rocky Hill, to be known as S 92, to lessen traffic through densely populated areas such as Rocky Hill. Had it been built, it would have significantly alleviated traffic on CR 518. Although S 92 was not built; the County and State since that time have approved the CR 514 bypass and the Route 206 bypass, those projects are in process of completion.

The volume of traffic on CR 514 is similar to the section of CR 518 that passes through the confines of the Borough of Rocky Hill; the main difference is that the Historic District of Rocky Hill is a densely populated area with nineteenth century houses – some of which on properties so small as to not have off-street parking (**See Exhibits 4 and 5**). Clearly, a regional approach to constructing a highway system is needed – one that avoids densely populated areas such as the historic districts of Rocky Hill and Kingston – as the bypass projects mention above confirm.

In the best of all possible worlds, another Central New Jersey east-west highway such as S 92 will be built so that commuting trucks and other vehicles would not transit daily a densely populated nineteenth century Historic District. However, in this world, the Master Plan needs to address how best to mitigate having a highly trafficked County road as its main street. This Preservation Plan has some infrastructure recommendations that, given Rocky Hill has an historic district, is part of the Millstone Valley Scenic Byway, and abuts the D&R Canal Park, may qualify for State and Somerset County consideration and funding.

1. Completed Circulation Elements to Preserve the Historic District

Circulation Plan policies can also have important implications on historic preservation in the Borough. The public roads that pass through the historic district are themselves historic resources that contribute substantially to the historic significance of the district. The

Circulation Plan notes that the configuration of Rocky Hill's streets has remained essentially unchanged since at least the third quarter of the 19th century. The town's development has responded to those streets, with almost all its historic buildings aligned to face them.

Although Washington Street has become a major arterial roadway and is sometimes required to accommodate relatively high volumes of traffic, Princeton, Crescent and Montgomery Avenues are subject to increasing traffic loads because of development in adjacent communities. Nevertheless, the street pattern with its pedestrian orientation remains an important defining element of Rocky Hill's historic character and steps should be taken to ensure that increasing traffic demand does not lead to “improvements” that conflict with the need to preserve the pedestrian scale of the Borough.

A number of projects undertaken by the Borough have provided an excellent start for making the Historic District and the Borough more pedestrian friendly. A Washington Street sidewalk project was completed adding a new section of sidewalk (and, in parts, decorative retaining walls at high-sloped properties) to the northern side of Washington Street. The funding for this project came primarily from a NJDOT Local Aid grant that was supplemented by a Borough appropriation. Pedestrians can now safely walk from the eastern end of Rocky Hill abutting the Delaware and Raritan Canal Park to a connecting Montgomery Township sidewalk and then on to the Route 206/CR 518 intersection where public transit (bus stop) is available. The southern side of Washington Street has a sidewalk from the Montgomery Township Princeton North Shopping Center to only Panicaro Park.

A 2014-2015 beautification grant project introduced elements such as accented, colored, patterned concrete; improved handicap accessible crosswalks; street furniture; and one flashing light assisted crosswalk. These features were incorporated to accentuate the Borough center and to begin to establish pedestrian priorities in the Borough's business core. Improving the pedestrian experience along the street corridor is the first step in an effort that should ultimately calm vehicular traffic through town and make the Borough center more pedestrian friendly. The funding for this project came primarily from a NJDOT Local Aid grant that was supplemented by a Borough appropriation.

The design standards used to improve public roads in the historic district are key considerations to the preservation of the historic significance of the district. Pavement width, curbing, signage, pedestrian accommodation, and design speed should all be in keeping with the historic character of the roads and of the pedestrian orientation of the district.

The light-assisted crosswalk at the Princeton Avenue/Washington Street intersection soon to be partnered by a light-assisted crosswalk at the Montgomery Avenue/Washington Street intersection form a village center pedestrian safety zone that, with a few more capital improvements, could complete the pedestrian circulation system.

2. D&R Canal Commission and Millstone Valley Scenic Byway (MVSC)

The Planning Board, in developing its circulation recommendations to preserve the Historic District and to protect its residents and visitors, researched the reports of related historical resource organizations with regard to both a regional preservation zone perspective as well as for recommendations specific to Rocky Hill. The D&R Canal Commission Master Plan and the MVSB Corridor Management Plan provided insights and recommendations.

a. Although Franklin Township is our municipal neighbor, the eastern border of the Borough of Rocky Hill is the Millstone River which abuts the D&R Canal State Park, a State-owned park in Franklin Township. The D&R Canal Commission, responsible for the canal park, produced a Master Plan in 1989 with principles, goals, and objectives including the following principle:

“The Canal Park is a connector.

“Nearly every principle and objective held by the Canal Commission for the development of the Canal Park is derived from the Commission's understanding of the peculiar shape of the park. The Canal Park is over sixty miles long, yet in places is less than 100 feet wide. A park with this configuration is usually referred to as a linear park, meaning that it is narrow and long like a line. The Commission believes that the most important quality possessed by a linear park is the role it can perform as a connector. The canal was, of course, originally built to serve as a connector; it connected the two great metropolises that neighbor New Jersey - New York City and Philadelphia. The Canal Park does not connect these cities, but it does connect communities in central New Jersey; it connects different land forms and different kinds of natural areas; it connects historic and recreational sites; and it connects present-day New Jersey with its nineteenth century heritage.”

Source: http://www.dandrcanal.com/pdf/DRCC_MasterPlan_2ndEd_1989.pdf

With a few infrastructure improvements Rocky Hill could build on the above-stated D&R Canal Commission's principle of connecting communities. Throughout the length of the D&R Canal Park, both pedestrians and bicyclists need to leave the towpath to cross roads such as CR 518 that intrude on the towpath. When crossing CR 518, the view from the towpath crossing can be seen in the photograph. (See 6). For those on the towpath and unfamiliar with the area, the Borough of Rocky Hill and the proximity of the Historic District are not clearly apparent, so either stopping by when crossing or coming back later with their vehicles is not likely. Further, this D&R egress point is on the Millstone Valley Scenic Byway whose purpose is to link historic communities in part to encourage architectural tourism, a goal of the ongoing Somerset County Preservation Plan.

In the recommendation section of this report, there are infrastructure improvement concepts that would raise the visual awareness and identity of this Somerset County historic roadway (the Georgetown and Franklin Turnpike), the MVSB, the Millstone River watershed, and the Rocky Hill Historic District as well as providing for safe pedestrian and biking access to the southern section of Rocky Hill and the MVSB CR 605 roadway (River Road).

b. The following specific guidelines outlined in the *Millstone Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan* bear on this Circulation analysis:

- Link existing open space parcels to create a continuous, easily traversed network.
- Create development guidelines and/or regulations that are in line with preservation strategies in the Millstone Valley.
- Implement gateway treatments to enhance the visual appeal of the community.

The Corridor Management Plan highlighted the intersection treatment at Washington Street and Montgomery Avenue as a good practice for other Byway communities to use as a model for roadway character enhancement, although that characterization is now questionable. The history of the intersection is this: It was redesigned as a result of the 1999 Somerset County traffic calming study. Rocky Hill's 2001 Master Plan Circulation Plan element recommended Rocky Hill's endorsing the MVSB assuming that there would be "a potential modest increase in future traffic." However, while the Circulation Plan was done in 2001, the corridor management plan was not issued until August 2008.

Given the additional housing and commercial developments that sprung up in surrounding communities since those reports were issued, rush hour traffic congestion at that intersection has become much worse and now backs traffic up to the Borough Hall. Perhaps another analysis of that particular intersection in light of current and anticipated traffic patterns is in order. State and County agencies interested in the design and the funding for infrastructure improvements for scenic byways may be able to provide some assistance since Rocky Hill is part of the MVSB.

The report also issued several specific locations in Rocky Hill where improvements would enhance the character of the Byway. The Planning Board believes these improvements would advance local planning objectives also.

Location	Suggested Treatment
Washington St. between Montgomery Ave. and the eastern intersection with Crescent Ave.	Village Preservation
Montgomery Ave. between Toth Ln. (south) and Toth Ln. (north)	Visual Enhancements
Southeast gateway on River Rd. approaching Rocky Hill from the south	Roadway Character Enhancements
East gateway on County Rd. 518/Intersection with Canal Rd.	Roadway Character Enhancements

MVSB recommended implementing gateway treatments to enhance the visual appeal of the community. The Borough should pursue an eastern gateway enhancement to increase the visibility of the eastern entrance to the Borough, as recommended in the MVSB corridor report and seek support for the idea from Somerset County. The Borough owns

Washington Street frontage property on both sides of CR 518. Although these properties are in flood plains, some environmentally sensitive gateway treatment is possible, starting with a much larger Welcome to Rocky Hill signage element.

3. Recommendations for Circulation Elements to Preserve the Historic District

(1) Somerset County Millstone River Bridge: Decorative Guardrails and Southern Side Pedestrian Sidewalk

As discussed above, the Millstone River was pivotal to the founding and development of a number of Somerset County historic communities like Rocky Hill. The Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike, despite the traffic challenges to Rocky Hill, is an historic roadway that starts at the Middlesex-Somerset county border, crosses an exceptionally narrow D&R Canal State Park, and ends at the Somerset-Mercer county border. As seen in **Figure 7**, the view from the State park to the Millstone River bridge hardly raises the visibility or identity of Somerset County, the historic Millstone River area, the MVSb, or the Rocky Hill Historic District.

The Somerset County bridge has a sidewalk (actually just a poured concrete slab – See **Exhibits 8 and 9**) abutting the Rocky Hill sidewalk only on the northern side of Washington Street; the southern side of the bridge has only a guardrail and no sidewalk. On the Franklin Township/D&R Canal side of the County bridge, there is a sidewalk in disrepair that connects from the D&R Canal Park parking lot to the Somerset County bridge: it is unclear if that section of the sidewalk was placed there by the County, the D&R Canal Commission or Franklin Township. Further, most vehicle drivers entering Rocky Hill through the CR 518/CR 603 intersection are likely unaware that they are passing through a State park or going over two bridges and entering a town center.

As discussed above, CR 518 essentially bifurcates the Borough of Rocky Hill since there is no primary traffic intervention such as a traffic light to stop traffic to allow safe pedestrian or cycling crossings. The D&R Canal is a popular pedestrian and cycling asset for Rocky Hill and is safely accessible to the northern half of the Borough; however, as will be explained in Recommendation (2) below, the access is more problematic to the southern section of the borough.

Accordingly, the Planning Board should encourage the County to replace the utilitarian guardrails on the Millstone River bridge with aesthetic ones that raise the visibility and importance of the Millstone River Watershed and provide a significant gateway element to Rocky Hill that will have the effect of making traffic more aware that it is entering a densely populated area. This recommendation is for a replacement of the guardrails, not the bridge itself. Because speed limits east of the Borough are greater than 35 MPH -- without a significant gateway element, motorists have no warning that they are leaving sparsely populated areas and entering an historic village center until they are well within the Borough limits. Further, the addition of a pedestrian sidewalk on the southern side of the bridge, in combination with Recommendation (2) below, would assist in national, state and County initiatives for increasing safe pedestrian and cycling alternatives.

At a County Preservation Plan meeting, it was noted that the County has a number of bridges which could be used in the County's eco-tourism initiative to give an identity to Somerset County in its efforts to highlight historic sites. A complaint expressed at the hearing was that tourists go from Princeton to Morris County on Revolutionary War site pilgrimages, traveling through Somerset County, but not stopping at the Somerset County locations because they are not as well known. The Somerset County bridge is on the **Millstone Valley Scenic Byway** and hence subject to scenic byway specific criterion for roadway and bridge construction.

The exhibits attached to this report include examples of enhanced bridge guardrails that could create an effective gateway. The first two sample alternatives presented in **Exhibit 10** were selected as homage to Rocky Hill's terracotta works. Further, a combination of decorative concrete and metal railings would provide better visual access to the Millstone River with vertical elements, rather than the present horizontal elements that obscure the watershed areas. The third photograph in **Exhibit 10** is the Talmage Avenue Bridge in Bound Brook that had a bridge railing replacement in 2007: the railing replacement added faux gaslights that could be a design element appropriate for Rocky Hill whose historic housing stock is dated from the middle of the nineteenth century through the early twentieth century.

(2) Construct a Sidepath connecting the CR 605 (River Road) Borough entrance to the D&R Canal entrance on the southern side of CR 518

The Borough of Rocky Hill has undertaken a number of projects over the years to make the village pedestrian friendly. However, there remains one significant gap in the sidewalk/path network. **(See blue line on Exhibit 11)** The earlier referenced 2014-2015 Washington Street Beautification Project contained funds to upgrade the intersections to handicapped accessible (HA) standards. The existing crosswalk from the northern side of Washington Street to the southern side (at Crescent Avenue—eastern end) that went from sidewalk to sidewalk was “decommissioned” for lack of sufficient space to upgrade to HA standards on the northern side and a new HA upgraded crosswalk was placed on the Washington/Crescent corner of Panicaro Park.

The L-shaped piece of concrete with red stability inserts is orphaned on a corner where neither the eastern side of Crescent Avenue nor the southern side of Washington has a sidewalk. The County snow plows usually use the area for snow piling because it cannot see any sidewalks. The lack of continuity through this intersection means that cycling from Van Horne Park to the D&R Canal is cumbersome and dangerous. The existing sidewalk on the western side of Crescent Avenue that is presently used by pedestrians and cyclists has limited visibility to motorists since that side of the road has parking spaces. As mentioned above, parking is at a premium in the Historic District section of the Borough

since a number of homes do not have off-street parking – an artifact of nineteenth century small houses and small lots.

Diverting bicyclists to a more visible sidepath along Panicaro Park on the eastern side of Crescent Avenue, through the existing HA crosswalk, and down the southern side of Washington Street to the D&R canal entrance would be a public safety improvement. However, as is recommended above, the Somerset County Millstone River Bridge would need to include a sidewalk on the southern side of CR 518 as well as continue the sidepath through Franklin Township to the D&R towpath entrance. Possible sources for grant funding are Somerset County, Green Acres (Panicaro Park was originally funded by Green Acres), NJDOT Scenic Byway funding, the NJDOT Bikeway Grant Program, or the Transportation Alternatives Set-Asides program that provides federal funds for community based "non-traditional" surface transportation projects designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the nation's intermodal system.

Such a sidepath would benefit the Historic District, the Millstone Valley Scenic Byway, the D&R Canal State park as well as the Somerset County goal of safe passage for pedestrians and bicyclists to open space.

(3) Borough Gateways

The Borough should pursue an eastern gateway enhancement to increase the visibility of the eastern entrance to the Borough, as recommended in the **MVSB** corridor report. The Borough owns Washington Street frontage property on both sides of CR 518. Although these properties are in flood plains, some environmentally sensitive gateway treatment is possible, starting with a much larger Welcome to Rocky Hill signage and some acknowledgment of the Historic District. A western gateway treatment is more difficult to imagine given that the western boundary is just a position on CR 518 that does not fall on a cross street nor another visible barrier. The **MVSB** corridor report also recommended a southeast gateway on the Borough CR 605 (River Road) entrance: since Panicaro Park extends to the River Road/Kingston entrance, a treatment similar to the eastern gateway enhancement should be placed there.

(4) Traffic Study for Princeton Avenue and Montgomery Avenue

As mentioned above, Montgomery Avenue and Princeton Avenue, two Borough roads, have become *de facto* loop/bypass roads for commuting traffic to avoid the CR 518/206 intersection. Traffic at rush hours backs up many car lengths. Montgomery Avenue is the posted roadway on the MVSB maps for entering Rocky Hill from the north.

The Millstone Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Study offered suggestions for highway safety along the Byway:

- Improve the efficiency of Route 206 to relieve pressure on River Road. This would presumably relieve pressure on other roads through Rocky Hill, as well.
- Keep roadway widths narrow to limit speed along the Byway. Similar recommendations are outlined for intersections.

- Impose traffic size and/or weight limits, specifically on River Rd and Canal Rd. While a size/weight restriction may not be feasible for CR 518 (Washington St.), this type of limitation would certainly enhance the character of the Borough.

The **MVSB** recommendations, for the most part, are not within the purview of the Borough to implement. The Planning Board's concerns are that the increased traffic on CR 518 due to the Montgomery Promenade in the neighboring municipality will translate into even more traffic on Borough roads that were neither designed for the volume, nor can fiscally be maintained by the Borough to accommodate such volumes.

The Planning Board should encourage NJDOT and/or Somerset County to undertake a traffic analyses of the two Borough roads and intersections with County roads to determine alternatives to lessen the adverse consequences of regional traffic volumes on public safety and the Historic District

VI. Historic Preservation Plan Goal and Objectives

The Borough of Rocky Hill is not only a traffic nexus, but also a preservation nexus. Access to the D&R Canal Park is an asset; but being in the D&R Canal Commission's governed areas is an additional jurisdictional restriction to development. The Millstone Valley Scenic Byway runs through Rocky Hill and brings tourists and increased traffic; being a part of **MVSB** also adds another layer of infrastructure review and standards.

Having both national and State historic preservation status for the Rocky Hill village center is an honor that other municipalities in Somerset County are actively seeking. However, keeping those designations is a responsibility that the Borough in general and the Rocky Hill Planning Board in particular takes seriously but strives continually to enforce thoughtfully as the protected housing stock in the village ages and historic preservation becomes even more costly to homeowners.

Rocky Hill is fortunate to have and to be part of a network of preserved spaces and properties: these assets must be a part of any future development discussion.

The 2001 Master Plan, as amended over the years, has faithfully tried to adhere to the goal to Preserve and Protect the Historic Character of the Village by setting the following objectives:

Objective 1: A defining feature of the Borough is its village Historic District and its surrounding undeveloped area. The perpetuation and protection of this character is of utmost importance to the planning goals of the Borough.

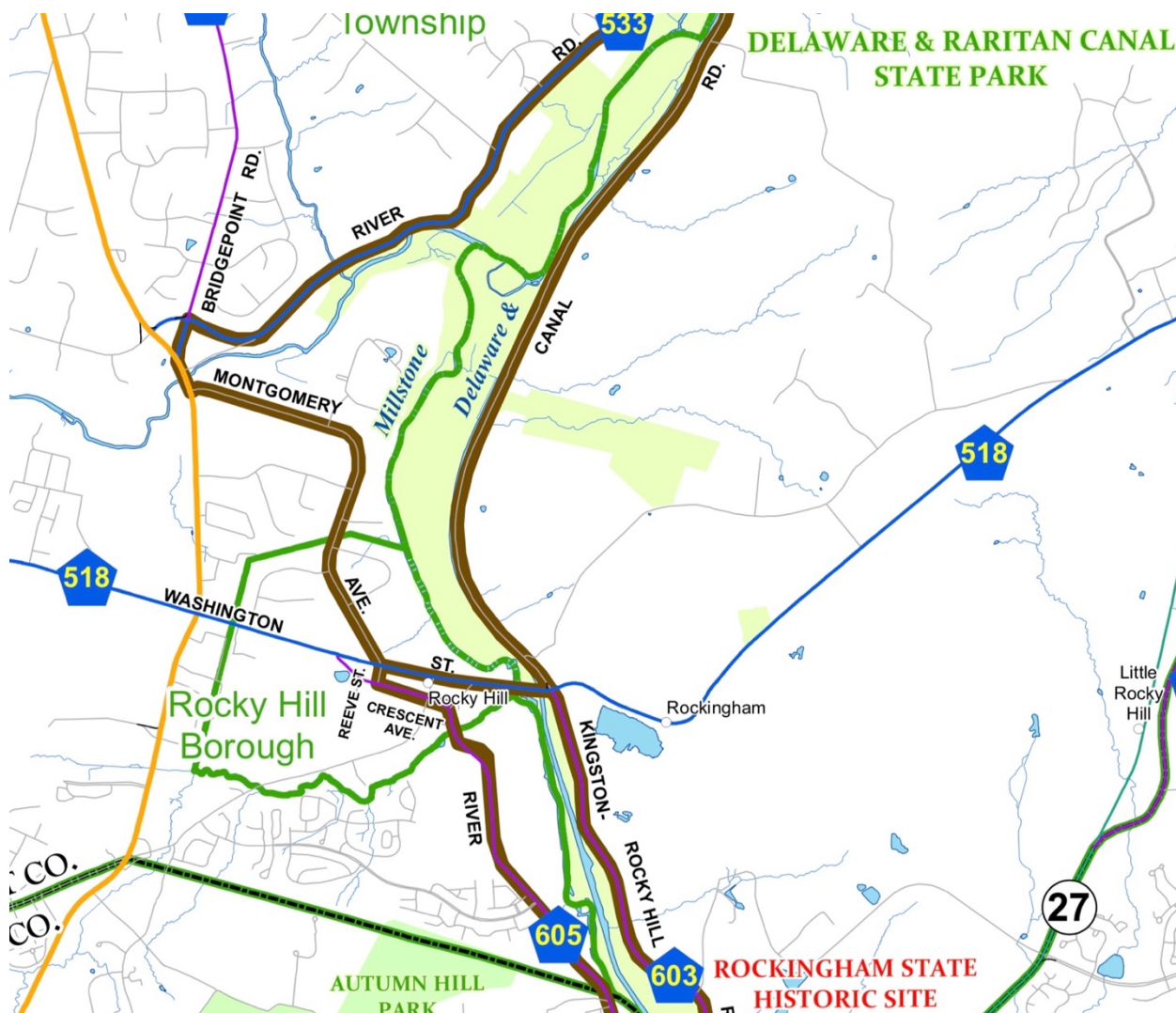
Objective 2: Open space adjacent to or near the village core should be preserved to form a "greenbelt" around the village, thereby retaining its historic development pattern and character.

Objective 3: Renovation or redevelopment in the Historic District should be undertaken consistent with the pedestrian orientation and scale of the village and the character of its existing building stock.

Objective 4: Traffic calming road improvements should be undertaken in a manner consistent with the historic character of the village.

Despite flooding and traffic challenges, the Planning Board is committed to keeping our piece of New Jersey history a thriving community.

Exhibit 2
Millstone Valley Scenic Byway
Rocky Hill Detail



Note: This image was extracted from the Millstone Valley Scenic Byway official brochure. See www.state.nj.us/transportation/community/scenic/pdf/millstonerivervalley.pdf

Exhibit 3

**225th anniversary of George Washington & Thomas Paine
Swamp Gas Experiment
November 5, 2008
View from the Millstone River Bridge
Rocky Hill, New Jersey**

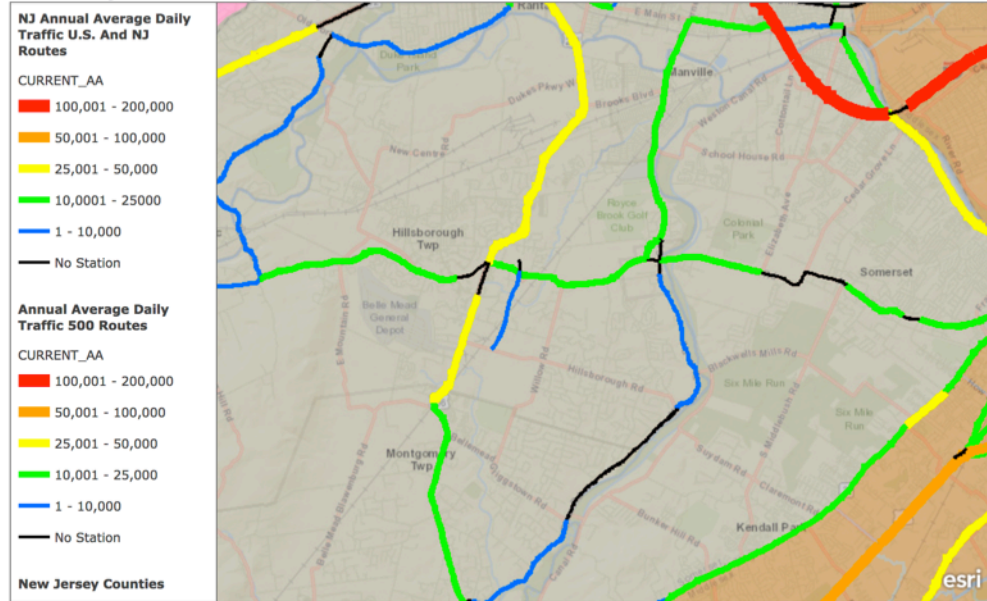


See below for a description of the event:

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/phenomena/2008/10/17/science-and-politics-the-tale-of-george-washingtons-swamp-gas/>

Exhibit 4 Traffic Volume CR 514

New Jersey Annual Average Daily Traffic



New Jersey Annual Average Daily Traffic

New Jersey Office of Information Technology (NJGIT), Office of Geographic Information Systems | Somerset County, NJ, State of New Jersey, Esri, HERE, Garmin, NGA, USGS, NPS

Printed on January 9, 2018

Exhibit 5 Traffic Volume CR 518

New Jersey Annual Average Daily Traffic



New Jersey Annual Average Daily Traffic

New Jersey Office of Information Technology (NJGIT), Office of Geographic Information Systems | Mercer County, NJ, Somerset County, NJ, State of New Jersey, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, NGA, USGS

Printed on January 9, 2018

Note: The dark line going north on Route 206 from CR 518 intersection is misleading. The NJDOT system does not have a monitoring station at that point.

Exhibit 6 Montgomery Promenade



Since there is not a downtown in Montgomery Township, there is a pent up demand for a Town Center. Therefore Madison Marquette has created a desination that not only has convenient, everyday shopping but also a place where people want to stay for hours on end. The project is anchored by a 60,000 sf Frank's Theater with 11 screens, 16 lanes of bowling and a 5,000 sf sports bar. The rest of the center is designed with a main street type theme including res-taurants, high end shopping and a 1 acre green space for outside entertainment. The total has 300,000+ sf with everything from coffee to day care to specialty boutiques to some of New Jersey's top restaurants.

The center is complimented with a contemporary designed bypass road and roundabout including 33 single family lots for those who choose to live near the action but also choose to live far enough away to enjoy everything Montgomery has to offer. Architecture and Landscaping will rival anything found in the state but keep with the very desireable Montgomery feel.

- 10,000 VPD through new bypass road
- 21,000 VPD through Route 206
- 14,000 VPD through Route 518

300,000⁺
SQUARE FEET

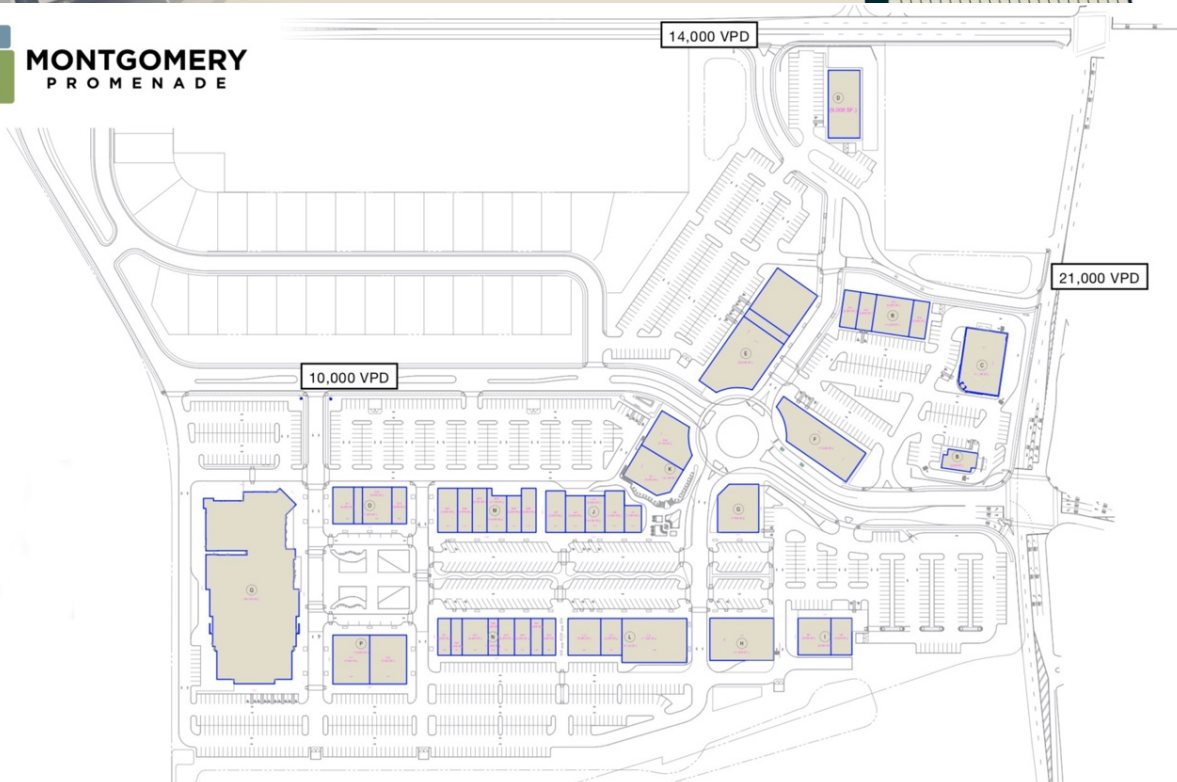


Exhibit 7
View of Rocky Hill from D&R Park
Looking West on Georgetown-Franklin Turnpike (CR 518)



Exhibit 8
Somerset County Bridge over Millstone River (South Side)



Exhibit 9
Somerset County Bridge over Millstone River (North Side)



Exhibit 10
Alternative Guardrail Concepts



Exhibit 11 Borough of Rocky Hill Sidewalk System

