NJ DOT Comments on Lakewood Master Plan

After reviewing relevant portions of Lakewood’s Master Plan, NJ DOT has not seen anything that stands out as absolutely inconsistent with the PIA; however, we have some comments of concern and questions for clarification, as follows:

First, the draft Circulation Element:

Page 176 – under Passenger Rail Service, a rather significant typo – says “There is currently passenger rail service in Lakewood Township”.  I believe they meant to say “no passenger rail service.”

Page 177 – Freight Rail is listed as part of the Goods Movement inventory, but the draft Element does not discuss goods and services movements by truck and strategies for handling them in different parts of the Township.  For example, how will truck loading and unloading be addressed in the downtown and other commercial areas?  Strategies such as delivery time frames, off-street delivery accommodations, special driveways for trucks and other such approaches can be employed.  Elsewhere in the Master Plan, as I will note below, the Township states its intent to restrict truck traffic from inappropriate streets, presumably residential.  I am attaching a section from the Out and About document which I provided to Colleen previously, and Colleen also has the NCHRP Report 844 – Goods Movement in Smart Growth Environments, both of which could provide Lakewood with guidance in enhancing the section on Goods Movement.  This is not expected to be a heavy lift for them; only a few more paragraphs should suffice once they decide what strategies they might want to explore further.

Page 179 – last bullet on page – sentence reads “promote the widening of U.S. Route 9”, but does go on to acknowledge that NJDOT does not currently have funds to support this effort.  The word “promote” is somewhat troubling for the tone of this paragraph, implying that if only we had the funds, we would go ahead and widen Route 9.  The PIA entry (6.11) does not exactly say this, but rather states that the Circulation Element should “acknowledge that the State does not have the funds to widen Route 9 in the foreseeable future and that Lakewood has investigated alternative north-south roadways to lessen the traffic congestion on Route 9.”  Tell me if you agree whether I am reading too much into this.

Page 180 – next to last bullet – a reminder:  any signal installations on state highways would have to be done working with NJDOT Traffic Engineering, as appropriate for our procedures.

Page 183 – last bullet – a typo – should be “accommodated”.

Other:

Page 8 – under Land Use Strategies, Item #8. – question on separating conflicting land uses – this item makes it sound as if the Township is not embracing mixed use development, although later on in the document it states that certain sections of the Township are planned for mixed use development.  Perhaps this should be clarified up front.