

NJDOT Guidance

7/14/11

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Township of Bridgewater, while maintaining its diverse mature suburban character, has progressed continually toward a community vision of mixed use, walkable development linked to distinctive, well-established neighborhoods, with opportunities for redevelopment, infill and reuse. The Township has shown willingness to work with its partner municipalities in the Regional Center, Somerville and Raritan, to promote smart growth patterns most conducive to efficiencies in the transportation system, and therefore, appears generally consistent with the goals and policies of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). The Township has stated its intent to embrace the concept of shared parking and to include "Complete Streets" in roadway design.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

The 2010 Amendment to the Circulation Element of the Master Plan and Reexamination Report addresses all relevant modes of transportation and describes the relationship of the existing and planned land uses to the transportation network, so as to increase opportunities for biking, walking and transit. Inasmuch as the Circulation Element shows substantial consistency with the transportation goals of the SDRP, the municipality should consider the following points:

The plans emphasize the need to control and limit regional traffic on local streets. While this concern is understood, particularly regarding truck traffic in residential neighborhoods, the municipality should explore creative ways to increase connectivity within the Township and to points elsewhere in the Regional Center using the local road network where it makes sense and without compromising the efficiency of the entire system.

The amended Circulation Element addresses the State Highway Access Management Code, but does not detail how the Code specifically relates to the zoning along Routes 22, 28, 202 and 206. A further update of this Element should include a demonstration of compliance with Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) provision that zoning along the state highways conform to the State Highway Access Management Code, with the intent to insert language into the zoning ordinance such compliance. This item could be incorporated into the Planning and Implementation Agreement (PIA).

The Township may request technical assistance from the Department in determining whether any non-conforming lots currently exist, and how to assure that anticipated zoning changes will reflect conformance with the Access Code.

The amended Element discusses goods movement and encourages the use of rail freight as well as freight movement by truck. Conrail freight service is available on the same line that provides passenger service on the NJ TRANSIT Raritan Valley Line. The municipality should consider retention of industrial uses along freight-served rail lines whenever possible.

STATE AGENCY ASSISTANCE AND BENEFITS

The Borough can continue to submit applications on a competitive basis under Local Aid programs for which the Borough is eligible. Benefits depend upon funding availability and are subject to program guidelines.