

REEXAMINATION REPORT OF THE MASTER PLAN
TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED
OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY



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Original Signed and Sealed in Accordance with Law
Adopted October 4, 2016

by the

Township of Plumsted Land Use Board

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INTRODUCTION

According to the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), “the governing body shall, at least every ten years, provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the planning board, which shall prepare and adopt by resolution a report on the findings of such reexamination, a copy of which report and resolution shall be sent to the county planning board and the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality.” (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89)

A Master Plan Reexamination Report is a periodic review of the municipal planning documents and the changing circumstances related to planning and development. The Plumsted Township Land Use Board adopted a comprehensive Master Plan in 1995 and Reexamination reports in 1999, 2003 and 2006.

The 2016 Reexamination Report is intended to be a comprehensive review of all of the master plan elements and land development regulations. There have been significant changes that impact land use planning in Plumsted; the adoption of the revised Ocean County Wastewater Management Plan sewer service area map in March 2013 and its subsequent amendment in 2015, the change to the state planning areas of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, the turn-over of the administration of affordable housing rules from COAH to the courts and more locally, the designation of a redeveloper for the PRRC portion of the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan.

The MLUL requires that the reexamination report address five specific areas. These requirements are set forth below and are followed by the appropriate response statements.

I. The first provision of N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 of the Municipal Land Use Law(MLUL) states that the Reexamination Report shall include:

“The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of adoption of the last reexamination report.”

The 2006 Master Plan Reexamination report was the result of a comprehensive and thorough review of the Township’s planning and zoning documents during 2005 and early 2006. The reexamination process included numerous public hearings prior to the adoption of the report. The adopted report included a series of zoning and planning recommendations, proposed changes to the Township’s Land Development Ordinance and Redevelopment Plan. Some of the problems facing the Township that were identified at the time of the last reexamination continue to be concerns, generally stemming from increased development pressures which threaten the rural character and agricultural industry in the Township.

As provided in the 2006 Reexamination Report the major problems and objectives are:

1. Preserving agriculture as an industry;
2. Preserving the rural character of the Township while promoting balanced economic growth;
3. Providing parking in downtown New Egypt;
4. Improving circulation in both the northeastern portion of the Township and in New Egypt;

5. Addressing lack of public sewer facilities in New Egypt;
6. Ensuring for adequate community facilities, specifically the need for additional educational facilities;
7. Anticipated need for additional passive recreation facilities.

The following section addresses the extent to which these conditions have been resolved.

II. The second provision of 40:55D-89 of the MLUL requires that the Reexamination Report address:

“The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.”

Most of the problems and objectives listed in the 2006 Master Plan Reexamination report are still valid and continue to affect planning and zoning decisions in the Township. However, there have been significant advances made to resolve or improve many of the previously identified problems.

1. Preserving Agriculture as an Industry: The Township continues to encourage farm owners to participate in the State’s Farmland Preservation Program. Since its inception in 1991, more than 45 Plumsted farms and have been preserved through this program. Two of the most recent participants are the Krowicki Peach Farm and Market in 2011 and the Grant Farm in 2012, which represents the single largest acquired by the program. While the Township is overall supportive of this program and the benefit it provides to the local agricultural industry, it also recognizes the economic impact this program has on the ratable base of the township.
2. Public Sewer Facilities in New Egypt: The Township Committee has been engaged over the past few years negotiating a redevelopment agreement and has designated Lennar as the Redeveloper for the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan’s PRRC tract. The recent General Development Plan approval of “Greenbriar at Crosswicks Creek” will permit the construction of a wastewater treatment plant to serve the PRRC as well as Downtown New Egypt. Permitting of the plant is currently underway and construction is expected to begin in 2017.
3. Provision of parking facilities in New Egypt: The Township has been successful acquiring land and constructing three parking lots to serve the New Egypt business district. One such lot, between Main and Front Streets, includes a public seating area with a flag pole and decorative clock.
4. Improving traffic circulation: The Township has also been successful in obtaining the cooperation of Ocean County in constructing roadway and drainage improvements at critical intersections. These include the full signalization at Hawkin Road and C.R. 537, the completion of the full intersection improvements at C.R. 539 and C.R. 528 and at C.R.

539 and C.R. 537, realignment of Hopkins Road at C.R. 539. The Township was able to improve Ivins Road to Hawkin Road with grants from the NJ DOT.

5. Adequate community and educational facilities: The Township has constructed a new primary school on Evergreen Road and has made a substantial improvement to the Municipal Building by adding a Senior Citizen Meeting and Activity Room with kitchen area and rest room in the building’s basement. The Township is continuing to provide adequate community and educational facilities for its residents.

6. Passive recreation facilities: Through a partnership with Ocean County the Township has been able to create a passive recreational facility, Pinehurst Preservation Area, at C.R. 539 and Colliers Mill Road. Additional areas have been created including a bird and wildlife watching area with nature education in Paradise Park, rehabilitation of the gazebo and pedestrian bridge across the lake on Lakeview and the building of Volunteer Park on Evergreen Road, which includes a canoe/kayak launch to Crosswicks Creek, among other projects. There is also an ongoing project to connect to the Union Transportation Trail in Upper Freehold, Monmouth County.

The Township still faces significant challenges to balance opportunities for economic growth with strategies that protect the Township’s rural character and agricultural resources.

III. The third provision of 40:55D-89 of the MLUL requires that a Reexamination Report address:

“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.”

Demographic Changes

The tables below display the changes in the Township’s population and households since the last reexamination report was adopted.

**Table 1: Population and Age Characteristics
Plumsted Township, Ocean County, NJ**

Population and Age Characteristics	1990	2000	% change	2010	% change
Total population	6,005	7,275	21%	8,421	16%
Male	3,007	3,620	20%	4,210	16%
Female	2,998	3,655	22%	4,211	15%

Population and Age Characteristics	1990	2000	% change	2010	% change
Under 5 years	453	501	11%	427	-15%
5 to 9 years	456	641	41%	624	-3%
10 to 14 years	434	610	41%	709	16%
15 to 19 years	439	489	11%	634	30%
20 to 24 years	414	344	-17%	429	25%
25 to 34 years	1,114	904	-19%	742	-18%
35 to 44 years	1,004	1,567	56%	1,294	-17%
45 to 54 years	674	1,010	50%	1,652	64%
55 to 59 years	252	349	38%	518	48%
60 to 64 years	184	239	30%	431	80%
65 to 74 years	387	380	-2%	569	50%
75 to 84 years	161	192	19%	292	52%
85 years and over	33	49	48%	100	104%
Median age (years)	32	36		40.9	

Source: US Census Bureau

The increase in population growth slowed between 2000 and 2010 (16%) compared to the rate between 1990 and 2000 (20%). There have been decreases in the Under 5 and Age 5-9 cohorts, however, the Median Age has increased and there have been significant increases in the Age 45-54 (64%) and Age 60-64 (80%) cohorts. There has also been a dramatic increase in the Age 85+ (104%) cohort.

**Table 2: Household Characteristics
Plumsted Township, Ocean County, NJ**

Household Characteristics	1990	2000	% change	2010	% change
Total housing units	2,200	2,628	19%	3,214	22%
Occupied housing units	2,089	2,510	20%	3,085	23%
Vacant housing units	111	118	6%	129	9%
Occupied housing units	2,089	2,510	20%	3,085	23%
Owner-occupied	1,692	2,133	26%	2,561	20%
Renter-occupied	397	377	-5%	524	39%
Total households	2,089	2,510	20%	2,936	17%
Family households	1,649	2,002	21%	2,310	15%
With own children under 18 years	824	1,032	25%	1,098	6%
Husband-wife family	1,395	1,682	21%	1,888	12%
With own children under 18 years	699	858	23%	885	3%
Nonfamily households	440	508	15%	626	23%
Householder living alone	345	400	16%	493	23%
Households w/individuals 65 years+	436	465	7%	697	50%
Average household size	2.87	2.9	1%	2.87	-1%

Source: US Census Bureau

These household demographics represent an increase in renter-occupied households and non-family households, or households made up of one individual or a group of unrelated individuals.

There has also been a significant increase in households with individuals 65 and older. These demographic changes may be further intensified with the development of Greenbriar at Crosswicks Creek, an age-restricted development that recently received General Development Plan Approval from the Land Use Board. This development is expected to contain 454 dwelling units for residents age 55 and older. These factors combined with the changes in population demographics signals that the Township's population is aging in place.

Expansion of Sewer Service Area

Since the last master plan reexamination report was adopted in 2006 the Ocean County Water Quality Management Plan has been amended and the Ocean County Wastewater Management Plan has been revised to expand the Township's sewer service area. The amendment, adopted by the NJDEP on December 30, 2015, includes a planned 0.6 Million Gallons per Day (MGD) treatment plant for the New Egypt Town Center in order to support center-based development and to reverse the economic decline of the downtown area, as well as to address ongoing public health and welfare issues. The sewer service area for the new treatment plant would remain consistent with the Future Wastewater Service Area (FWSA) map for Ocean County which was adopted by the Department on February, 7, 2013.

Public Water Availability

The availability of public water continues to be a significant problem for the Township. The 2006 Reexamination Report illustrated the extent of this concern. As a result areas of the town identified in the Conservation Element as critical groundwater recharge areas, potential greenways and preservation areas, and those outside of the designated town center were changed to RA-5, to reduce the demand for potable water by future development. These changes were recommended in the 2006 Reexamination Report.

Additionally the New Jersey American Water has undertaken drilling a third public water supply well, with permitting assistance by the Township's Municipal Utility Authority. This well is not online as of this writing, however will provide additional capacity. The location of a potential fourth water supply well is being investigated as well as the redevelopment of older wells.

Plan Endorsement

Although the Township did not file a petition with the New Jersey State Planning Commission for Plan Endorsement, it did perform a Self-Assessment, which was submitted to the Office of Smart Growth on February 28, 2008 and participated in the cross-acceptance process with Ocean County. The Office of Smart Growth issued an Opportunities and Constraints Analysis in April 2008.

Planning Area changes noted in the Municipal Self-Assessment were changed through Cross-acceptance, as part of the July 2006 Environmental Update. This included 317.5 acres of Rural Planning Area 4 changing to Parks and Natural Planning Area and 61.01 acres of Fringe Planning Area 3 changing to Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area 5. Additionally, a Planned Agricultural Industry Node was recommended to be designated and had been proposed for inclusion into the 2008 State Plan via Cross-acceptance.

These revisions were to receive State Planning Commission approval upon the release of the draft Final State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) in July of 2008. The current status of the SDRP is uncertain at this time.

Affordable Housing Regulations/COAH

The New Jersey Supreme Court ruled on March 10, 2015 that there no longer exists a legitimate basis to block access to the courts due to COAH's failure to adopt new rules, which was the original intent of the COAH process. Under the New Jersey Supreme Court's March 10 ruling, municipalities are afforded an opportunity to file declaratory judgment actions in order to validate their affordable housing plans as compliant with constitutional affordable housing obligations. The Township, due to its lack of public sewer facilities is afforded a durational adjustment to defer its compliance with meeting its affordable housing obligations until that infrastructure becomes available.

IV. The fourth provision of 40:55D-89 of the MLUL requires that the Reexamination report address:

“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.”

The Planning Board does not recommend the preparation of a comprehensive Master Plan at this time. This re-examination report constitutes an amendment to the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan.

In 2015, the Board had directed its Master Plan Subcommittee to review and evaluate expansion of certain commercial zones as a means to encourage economic growth within the Township. In October 2015 the Subcommittee developed recommendations to expand commercial development zones within the New Egypt Redevelopment Area and along C.R. 539. Maps of each area considered are attached:

- **Highway Commercial Zoning:**
A new highway commercial zone that would permit a range of highway commercial uses as well as light industry, agricultural equipment sales, service and assembly uses, including new bulk and yard requirements that suits such uses is recommended to be applied to properties currently located within the C-2 Zone at the intersection of E. Millstream Road and Route 539 and the properties currently located within the C-3 Zone at Hill Lane and Route 539 as well as the properties fronting on the east side of Route 539 between these two zones. Appendix 'A' contains a map of this area. This highway frontage area is more suited and could be more productive by being re-zoned into a highway commercial area.
- **Expansion of C-4 Zone:**
There are two specific areas where this change is desired, both depicted on the map in Appendix 'B'; the first is a portion of Block 10 at the intersection of Church Street and Magnolia Avenue, consisting of six lots that make up a donut hole in the current Redevelopment Area. The second is much larger and begins at the current termination of the C-4 zone at the intersection of Fort Ave, N. Main St. and Lakewood Rd. and extends eastward to the corner of Moorehouse Rd. These two areas are more suited and could be more productive by being re-zoned as C-4 Commercial. A provision to allow existing residential uses to continue as permitted with their current R-10 zone bulk standards is also recommended to be developed.

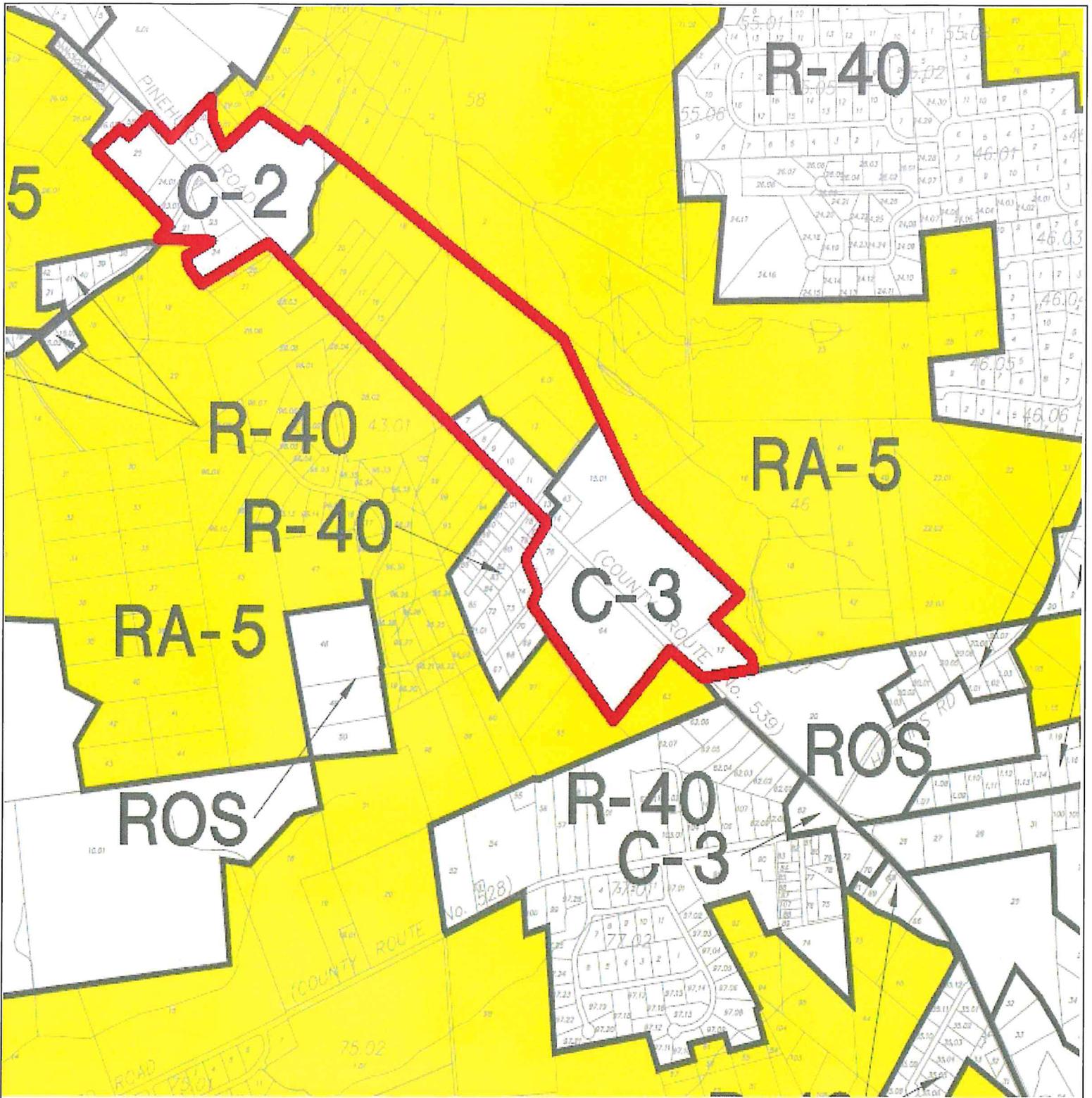
At this time the Land Use Board recommends that a Land Use Plan amendment to the Master Plan be adopted which affirms the findings of the Master Plan Subcommittee.

- V. The final provision of 40:55D-89 of the MLUL requires that the Reexamination report address:

“The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of the redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law,’ P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C. 40A: 12A-1 et al. into the land use element of the municipal master plan, and recommend changes, if any in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.”

Since its initial adoption in March 2004, the New Egypt Redevelopment Plan has been amended three times; July 2005, July 2014 and September 2015. The July 2014 amendment was made in response to the Redevelopment Agreement terms which were then being negotiated. The September 2015 amendment clarified design standards within the Downtown New Egypt Redevelopment Zone.

There are three sections of the zoning ordinance (15.2-2, 15-4.9 and 15-4.10) that should be updated to reference the current version of the Redevelopment Plan.

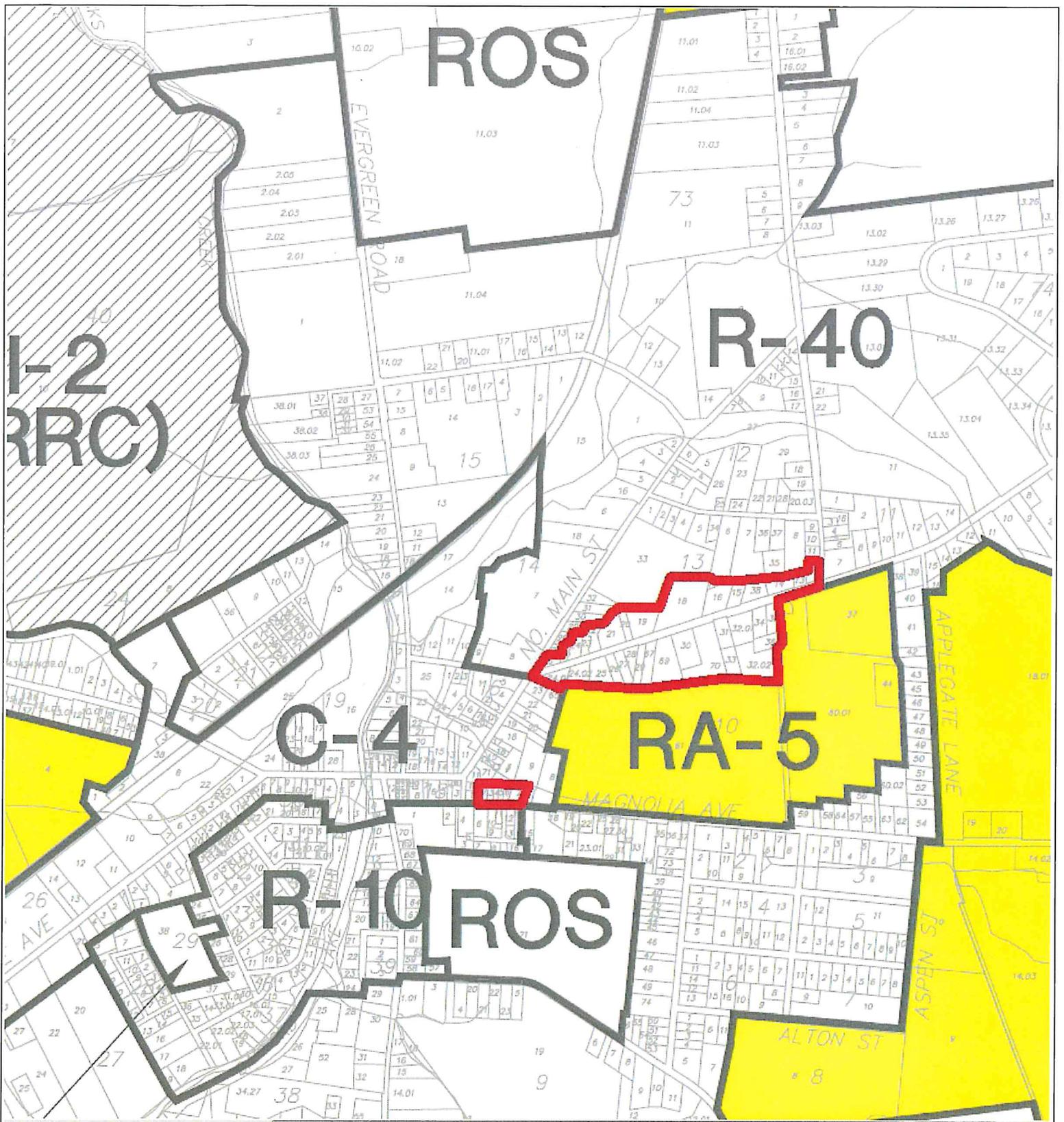


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Appendix A
Proposed Zoning Changes
Master Plan Reexamination Report
Plumsted Township,
Ocean County, New Jersey



KEY: PROPOSED CHANGE



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Appendix B
Proposed Zoning Changes
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KEY: PROPOSED CHANGE