

Hopelawn VFW Rehabilitation Plan

Township of Woodbridge



Prepared by:
Township of Woodbridge
Department of Planning & Development

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Hopelawn VFW Rehabilitation Plan

Block 4.08, Lot 9

Township of Woodbridge

Prepared by
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INTRODUCTION

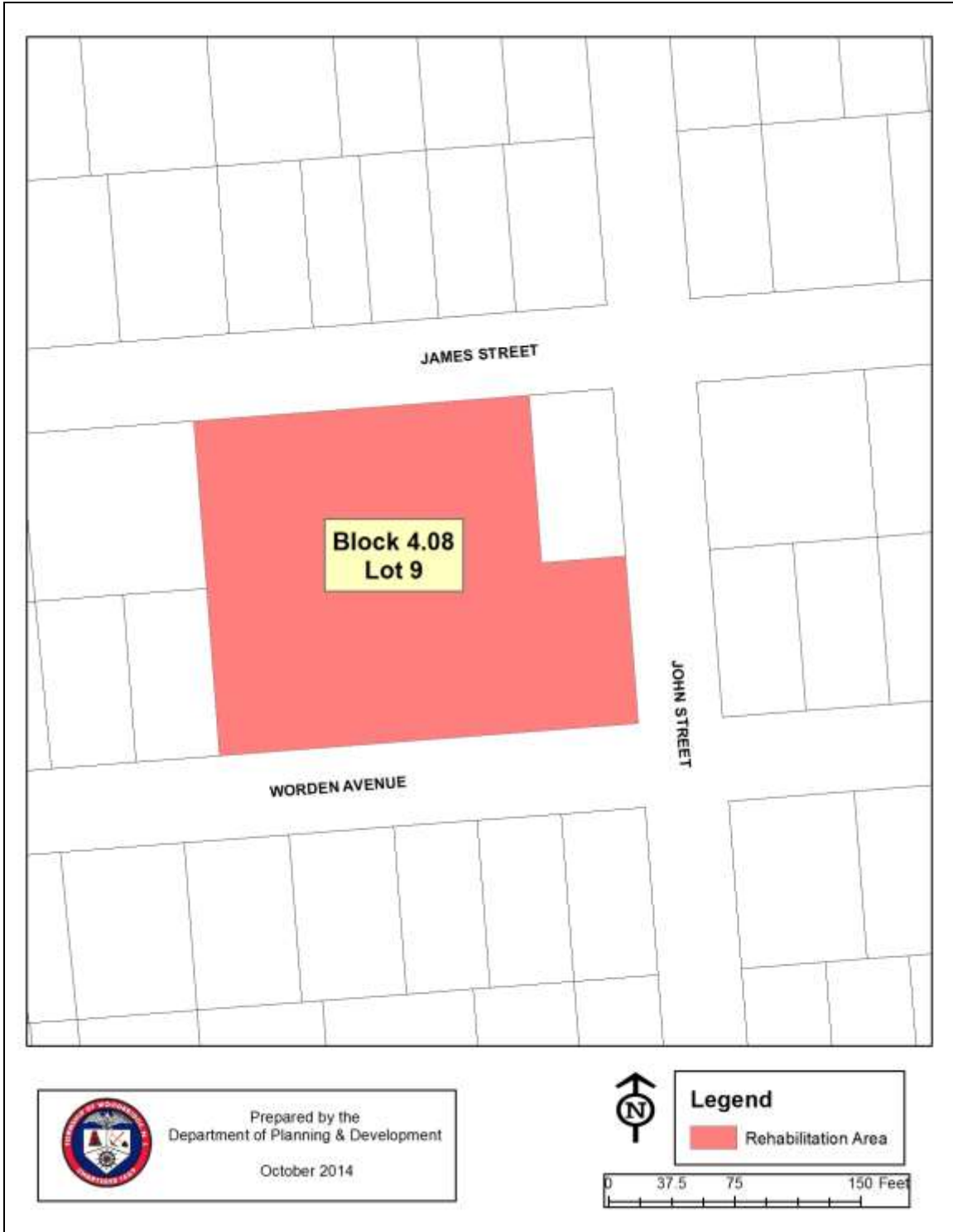
This Hopelawn VFW Rehabilitation Plan presents an opportunity to comprehensively improve the Hopelawn VFW site along James Street, John Street and Worden Avenue in the Hopelawn section of Woodbridge Township into a senior affordable housing site. The purpose of this plan is three-fold: (1) to provide a 100 percent affordable housing option with senior residential rental units , (2) to provide greater residential density in Hopelawn to support Hopelawn businesses, and (3) to apply State and Township planning principles for compact, dense development where appropriate.

The rehabilitation area consists of one parcel: Block 4.08, Lot 9. The area is nestled in a single-family residential neighborhood in Hopelawn and bounded by James Street to the north, John Street to the southeast, Worden Avenue to the south, and adjacent residential properties to the east and west .

On September 21, 2010, the Municipal Council designated all of Woodbridge Township as an “area in need of Rehabilitation” under the New Jersey Redevelopment and Housing Law (NJSA 40A:12A-1 et seq.). Under the statute, Rehabilitation is defined as “an undertaking, by means of extensive repair, reconstruction or renovation of existing structures with or without the introduction of new construction or the enlargement of existing structures, in any area that has been determined to be in need of rehabilitation or redevelopment, to eliminate substandard structural or housing conditions and arrest the deterioration of that area.” This Rehabilitation Plan constitutes a redevelopment plan by statute and is prepared in accordance with NJSA 40A:12A-7 which states that “no redevelopment projects shall be undertaken or carried out except in accordance with a Redevelopment Plan adopted by ordinance of the municipal governing body.” It should be noted that this plan does not confer the power of eminent domain to the Township for private development nor the ability to provide long term tax abatement.

This rehabilitation plan is in furtherance of the Township’s affordable housing efforts. This area has been identified as “Site #14” in the Township of Woodbridge Master Plan Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan. The Township will use funds from its affordable housing trust fund to acquire the property for development as a 100 percent affordable housing site.

HOPELAWN VFW REHABILITATION AREA MAP



HOPELAWN VFW REHABILITATION AREA AERIAL MAP



DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY AND PLANNING CONTEXT

Area and Location

This Rehabilitation Plan area consists of one parcel: Block 4.08, Lot 9. This parcel has access from James Street, John Street and Worden Avenue. Block 4.09, Lot 9 is approximately 1.03 acres and is currently a Veterans of Foreign Wars Post with a paved parking lot.

The property is within a single-family residential neighborhood. Land uses in this area of Hopelawn are primarily single-family residential dwellings with some multi-family dwellings intermingled. Hopelawn's commercial district is located approximately six blocks from the Rehabilitation Area and the Township-owned Clyde Avenue Park is approximately four blocks away.

HOPELAWN VFW REHABILITATION AREA ZONING MAP



PLAN PRINCIPLES/STRATEGIES

The Township of Woodbridge is in a position to revitalize and rehabilitate the former VFW site. This can be accomplished by rehabilitating this site into a senior housing development. This would provide a housing option which reflects market demand. This plan introduces a completely new housing option in Hopelawn and would revitalize this site.

PLAN GOALS

The overall goal of this Rehabilitation Plan is to comprehensively upgrade the former Hopelawn VFW Site and adjacent parcel into a senior residential development. Specific goals are as follows:

- To rehabilitate the former VFW site and adjacent parcel to provide a new affordable housing option in Hopelawn
- To rehabilitate the former VFW site to provide better living opportunities for senior citizens
- To revitalize the site
- To provide a variety of housing opportunities to all persons wanting to live in the community
- To provide higher density housing in an appropriate place
- To continue the rehabilitation efforts throughout the Township
- To ensure the integrity of the existing adjacent residential area.

RELATIONSHIP OF PLAN TO THE TOWNSHIP LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

This Rehabilitation Plan supersedes the use and bulk provisions of the Township Land Use and Development Regulations (Chapter 150) for the Rehabilitation Area unless specifically referenced. Other Township regulations affecting developments that are in conflict are superseded by this Plan; however, existing engineering standards, performance standards and definitions shall apply.

In connection with site plan or subdivision applications, the Planning Board may grant deviations from the regulations contained within this Rehabilitation Plan where by reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property or by reason of exceptional topographic conditions, pre-existing structures and physical features uniquely affecting a specific piece of property, the strict application of any area, yard, bulk or design objective or regulation adopted pursuant to this Rehabilitation Plan would result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to, or exceptional or undue hardship upon, the developer or redeveloper of such property. The Planning Board may also grant a deviation from the regulations contained within this Plan related to a specific piece of property where the purposes of this Plan would be advanced by such deviation from the strict application of the requirements of this Plan and the benefits of granting the deviation would outweigh any detriments.

The Planning Board may grant exceptions or waivers from design standards from the requirements for site plan or subdivision approval as may be reasonable and within the general purpose and intent of the provisions for site plan review and/or subdivision approval within the Plan, if the literal enforcement of one or more provisions of the Plan is impracticable or would exact undue hardship because of peculiar conditions pertaining to this site. No deviations may be granted under the terms of this section unless such deviations can be granted without resulting in substantial detriment to the public good and will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the Rehabilitation Plan.

No deviations may be granted which will result in permitting a use that is not a permitted use within this Plan. Any deviation from standards of this Plan that results in a “d” variance pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70d shall be addressed as an amendment to the Plan rather than via variance relief through the Township’s Zoning Board of Adjustment. An application requesting a deviation from the requirements of this Rehabilitation Plan shall provide public notice of such a application in accordance with the public notice requirement set forth in N.J.S.A. 40:55D-12a.&b. All development must be approved by the Planning Board and shall be submitted through the normal site plan and subdivision procedures as identified by N.J.S.A. 40:55D, et seq.

Final adoption of this Rehabilitation Plan by the Municipal Council shall be considered an amendment to the Township of Woodbridge Land Use and Development Regulations Ordinance and Zoning Map. Unless otherwise defined in the Plan, terms used in this Plan shall have the same meaning as defined in the Township’s Land Use and Development Regulations Ordinance.

SITE STANDARDS

A review of the existing conditions in the Rehabilitation Site, together with an assessment of the current zoning, reveals that creation of a rehabilitation zone could be fruitful in facilitating and expediting reconstruction of the site.

Purpose: To provide an age-restricted housing complex and protect the character of the adjoining residential areas.

Permitted Uses: Age-Restricted Apartment Buildings

Permitted Accessory Uses: Uses which are customarily incidental to the principal use such as sheds, storage buildings, signage, and parking.

Prohibited Uses: All uses unable to be classified as those specifically permitted.

Bulk Standards:

Principal Buildings: Age-Restricted Apartment Buildings

- Minimum lot size: 40,000 square feet;
- Minimum lot width: 150 feet;
- Minimum lot depth: 150 feet;
- Minimum front setback: 10 feet;
- Minimum each side setback: 5 feet;
- Minimum both side setbacks: 14 feet;
- Minimum rear setback: 10 feet;
- Maximum floor area ratio: 3:1;
- Minimum gross floor area: 600 sf/unit;
- Maximum lot coverage: 60%;
- Maximum impervious coverage: 95%;
- Maximum building height: 40 feet total average, because of the grade variation of the property, a portion of the building may be calculated at not greater than up to two feet higher;
- Parking Spaces: 1 parking space per each unit, including on-site and street parking adjacent to the property only.

Accessory buildings and uses:

Accessory buildings not attached to a principal building shall not exceed 15 feet in height and shall conform to at least the front setback requirement of the principal building. Buildings for

tools and equipment used for the maintenance of the grounds are not to exceed 150 square feet in area.

Lighting:

- Pedestrian-level, bollard lighting, ground-mounted lighting, or other low, glare-controlled fixtures mounted on building or landscape walls shall be used to light pedestrian walkways.
- Accent lighting on buildings is encouraged.
- Lighting shall be shielded to prevent glare on adjacent properties.
- Exterior light fixtures shall be compatible and relate to the architectural character of the buildings on a site. Site lighting shall be provided at the minimum level to accommodate safe pedestrian and vehicular movements without causing any off-site glare.

Buffering and Landscaping:

- All setback areas fronting public roadways should be defined by a combination of low walls, decorative fencing and/or landscaping. The landscape area within should contain a variety of flowering trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, and bulbs to complement the architecture and provide seasonal interest.
- Landscape areas may also contain decorative lighting and signage, which should be designed to complement the overall buffer design.
- Landscape design should be integrated into overall site design and plans should include a watering and maintenance schedule for each area.
- All adjacent residential properties shall be buffered by a 6' board-on-board fence and 6'-8' Evergreen Trees at planting.
- All trees to be removed shall be done in accordance with the Township Tree Ordinance.

Green Buildings:

- All buildings are encouraged to be LEED-qualified buildings, and/or employ energy saving construction and utility techniques.
- Proposed energy saving techniques shall be provided as part of architectural plans and renderings.

Outside Storage:

- Loading and delivery areas shall be separated from residential parking areas.
- Loading areas, and outside storage shall be located at the side or rear of buildings and shall be properly screened from residential uses.

PLAN RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

Relationship to the Township Master Plan

The Township of Woodbridge's last comprehensive Master Plan was prepared in 2009. Relevant goals and objectives from the Master Plan include:

Land Use Plan Element:

- To preserve the existing character consistent with current development patterns through:
 - Zoning standards that correspond to existing development patterns
- To permit residential uses at appropriate densities in locations accessible to major roadways, commercial services, public facilities and traditional downtowns.
- To provide sufficient residential opportunities, in locations with access to facilities and services, to help the Township's senior residents age in place.

This Rehabilitation Plan advances the goals and objectives of the Township Master Plan.

Master Plans of Adjacent Municipalities

City of Perth Amboy

The Plan Area is located in the middle of the Hopelawn section of the Township and is not immediately adjacent to the border of neighboring municipalities, and is thus not anticipated to have an adverse impact on development within the surrounding municipalities.

The area of Perth Amboy nearest to the Rehabilitation Area is predominantly residential in nature. This Rehabilitation Plan is consistent with the goals and objectives of the City of Perth Amboy Master Plan.

Plans of the Region/State

Middlesex County Growth Management Strategy (GMS)

Between 1990 and 1995, Middlesex County prepared a three-phase Growth Management Plan to address infrastructure need, regional design system and growth management strategies. The County was subdivided into four regions. Woodbridge Township is located in the northeast region along with the municipalities of Edison Township, the Borough of Metuchen, the Borough of Carteret, the Township of Perth Amboy and the Borough of Highland Park.

Phase I of this Strategy found that large public & private investments would be required towards maintaining a significant level of service for projected growth in the County. The report estimates that the highest infrastructure costs facing the County are for maintaining and improving existing sewerage systems, parks and roads. The report determined that this investment could be significantly reduced for utility systems (water & sewer) if growth occurred in areas where utilities are already in place.

The next phase in the County's Growth Management Strategy was a Phase II Report which focused on alternative approaches to managing actual growth in Middlesex County. In order to analyze the approaches, five specific case studies were conducted in the report. None of these five areas are located in Woodbridge Township.

The last phase of Middlesex County's Growth Management Strategy was the Phase III Report, which examined four additional case study areas; thereby analyzing nearly all of the potential growth areas in the County. In this Phase, additional techniques by which the County may assist and further coordinate with municipalities in planning and development review were also identified. The Township of Woodbridge was included in three study areas. The Metropark Case Study Area includes portions of Iselin, Menlo Park Terrace, Fords, and Woodbridge Proper. The Raritan Center Case Study Area includes portions of Keasbey and Fords. The Arthur Kill/Raritan Bay Case Study Area includes portions of Keasbey, Fords, Hopelawn, Woodbridge Proper, Sewaren, and Port Reading.

Where relevant, this Rehabilitation Plan is consistent with the recommendations discussed in the Middlesex County Growth Management Strategy.

New Jersey State Development & Redevelopment Plan

This Rehabilitation Plan is consistent with, and would effectuate, the plans and policies of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP), adopted in 2001. The SDRP is a unique document that guides State-level development and redevelopment policy as well as local and regional planning efforts. This Plan is consistent with the following statewide goals in the SDRP:

- Revitalize the State's cities and towns.
- Promote beneficial economic growth, development and renewal for all residents of New Jersey.
- Protect the environment, prevent and clean up pollution.
- Ensure sound and integrated planning and implementation statewide.

The SDRP also includes a State Plan Policy Map, which divides the state into regions, known as Planning Areas, and includes specific goals for each area. The Policy Map also identifies "Centers," locations into which development is to be directed, and "Environs," areas to be protected from future growth. The Township of Woodbridge falls within the 'Metropolitan Planning Area' (PA1). The State Plan recognizes that all communities in this planning area are essentially fully developed; hence much of the change in land uses will occur as redevelopment.

The State Plan's planning objectives for the 'Metropolitan Planning Area' includes:

- Providing for much of the State's future redevelopment.
- Revitalizing cities and towns.
- Redesigning areas of sprawl.
- Protecting the character of existing stable communities.

The Rehabilitation Area, by virtue of its location within a part of New Jersey that has extensive existing infrastructure and a long history of development, is by all measures an appropriate location for growth. The Rehabilitation Plan will facilitate growth in the Plan Area and contribute to the economic revitalization of the State overall. The objectives of the Rehabilitation Plan are consistent with the goals, strategies and policies of the State Plan. The Rehabilitation Plan will address the needs of existing and future residents of Hopelawn, the Township of Woodbridge and adjacent municipalities.

OTHER PROVISIONS

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq., known as The Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, the following statements are made:

- The Rehabilitation Plan herein has delineated a definite relationship to local objectives as to appropriate land uses, density of population, and improved traffic and public transportation, public utilities, recreation and community facilities and other public improvements. The Plan has laid out various programs and strategies needed to be implemented in order to carry out the objectives of this Plan.
- The Rehabilitation Plan lays out the proposed land uses and building requirements for the Rehabilitation Area subject to the new zoning described herein.
- The Rehabilitation Plan is substantially consistent with the Master Plan for the Township of Woodbridge. The Plan also complies with the goals and objectives of the New Jersey State Development and Plan.
- If any section, paragraph, division, subdivision, clause or provision of this Rehabilitation Plan shall be adjudged by the courts to be invalid, such adjudication shall only apply to the section, paragraph, division, subdivision, clause or provision so judged, and the remainder of this Rehabilitation Plan shall be deemed valid and effective.