

430-432 New Brunswick Avenue Redevelopment Plan

Township of Woodbridge
Middlesex County, New Jersey



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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	1
STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS	1
PLANNING CONTEXT	2
MASTER PLANNING AND ZONING DESIGNATION HISTORY.....	5
PLAN GOALS.....	5
COMMUNITY HEALTH	5
COMMUNITY RESILIENCY.....	6
AFFORDABLE HOUSING.....	6
RELATIONSHIP OF PLAN TO THE TOWNSHIP LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (APPLICATION & PROCESS)	8
REDEVELOPMENT AREA ZONING STANDARDS.....	10
PLAN RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANS.....	14
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN.....	17

<i>Figure 1: Redevelopment Area Parcel Map.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Figure 2: Redevelopment Area Aerial Map.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Figure 3: Existing Zoning.....</i>	<i>7</i>

INTRODUCTION

The 430-432 New Brunswick Avenue Redevelopment Area consists of one parcel. The site sits in the heart of the New Brunswick Avenue commercial district the Fords section of the Township. This Redevelopment Plan represents an opportunity to improve and better utilize the property. This plan will foster the transformation of this property into a productive mixed-use property. This Redevelopment Area should be a highly desirable location to live, work and visit.

The redevelopment of this property presents unique challenges. The property is in the New Brunswick Avenue Commercial Rehabilitation Zone (NBA-C) In response to the physical and economic conditions along New Brunswick Avenue the Township Council requested that the Planning Board evaluate certain properties as an “area in need of redevelopment” on April 19, 2022. The Council concluded that the Area did meet the criteria to be designated as “area in need of redevelopment” on August 23, 2022.

It has been almost 20 years since New Brunswick Avenue has seen the opening of a new restaurant location, despite the most recent years of development and redevelopment on the street and the flourishing of this downtown location. In order to attract new restaurants and retail to this area, the Township is promoting shared parking, use of on-street parking, and valet site parking in order to attract new restaurant uses and retail locations to the New Brunswick Avenue Area/District.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

According to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A: 12A-1, et. seq.) the Redevelopment Plan shall include an outline for the planning, development, redevelopment or rehabilitation of the project area sufficient to indicate:

- Its relationship to definitive local objectives as to appropriate land uses, density of population and improved traffic and public transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities and other public improvements;
- Proposed land uses and building requirements in the project area;

- Adequate provision for the temporary and permanent relocation as necessary of residents in the project area, including an estimate of the extent to which decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling units, affordable to displaced residents will be available in the existing local housing market;
- An identification of any property within the Redevelopment Area proposed to be acquired in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan;
- Any significant relationship of the Redevelopment Plan to:
 - A) The Master Plans of contiguous municipalities;
 - B) The Master Plan of the County in which the municipality is located; and;
 - C) The State Development and Redevelopment Plans adopted pursuant to the “State Planning Act.”

PLANNING CONTEXT

The Township of Woodbridge is 24.2 square miles in size and located in northeastern Middlesex County. The Township of Woodbridge is bordered by Clark Township, the City of Rahway, the City of Linden, and Union County to the north; the Borough of Carteret, the Arthur Kill and the City of Perth Amboy to the east; the Raritan River to the south; and Edison Township to the west.

The Woodbridge proper section of the Fords section of the Township is generally bound by the Garden State Parkway to the east, Edison Township to the south and west, and Route 1 to the north.

This area is comprised of two parcels: Block 18.01, Lot 25.01 and Block 18.01, Lot 26.011. The area is approximately 0.35 acres and contains a ground-floor commercial structure with a residential unit above on Lot 26.011 and a restaurant with a residential unit above on Lot 25.01.

Figure 1: Redevelopment Area Parcel Map



Figure 2: Redevelopment Area Aerial Map



MASTER PLANNING AND ZONING DESIGNATION HISTORY

The Township Master Plan recognizes that the current land use for this as commercial. The redevelopment area is in the NBA-C Rehabilitation Zone. Prior to being zoned rehabilitation, the area was in the B-2 Central Business Zone.

PLAN GOALS

The overall goal of this Redevelopment Plan is to address the existing conditions that have negatively impacted the Area and comprehensively upgrade the area for redevelopment. The Township aims to reach the following goals:

- To promote the effective use of all the Redevelopment Area properties and to increase property tax base;
- To provide desirable commercial properties and destinations in the Fords downtown;
- To improve the physical appearance of the Area;
- To create compact residential development
- To provide a healthy environment for all whom live and visit this property and the Town;
- To improve the quality of life and health of people who live in the vicinity the subject property by redeveloping the property;
- To attract new restaurant and retail investment and buildings the Hopelawn-Fords New Brunswick Avenue.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

Redevelopment of any site within the Township which is either outdated and/or not fully productive promotes community health. New construction promotes a reduction in the nuisance (and overall anxiety of residents and flood inundation dealing with a nuisance) of properties.

This Plan specifically promotes community health by permitting a compact mixed use development. The location of this redevelopment area offers opportunities for residents to walk or bike to nearby businesses, encouraging an active lifestyle.

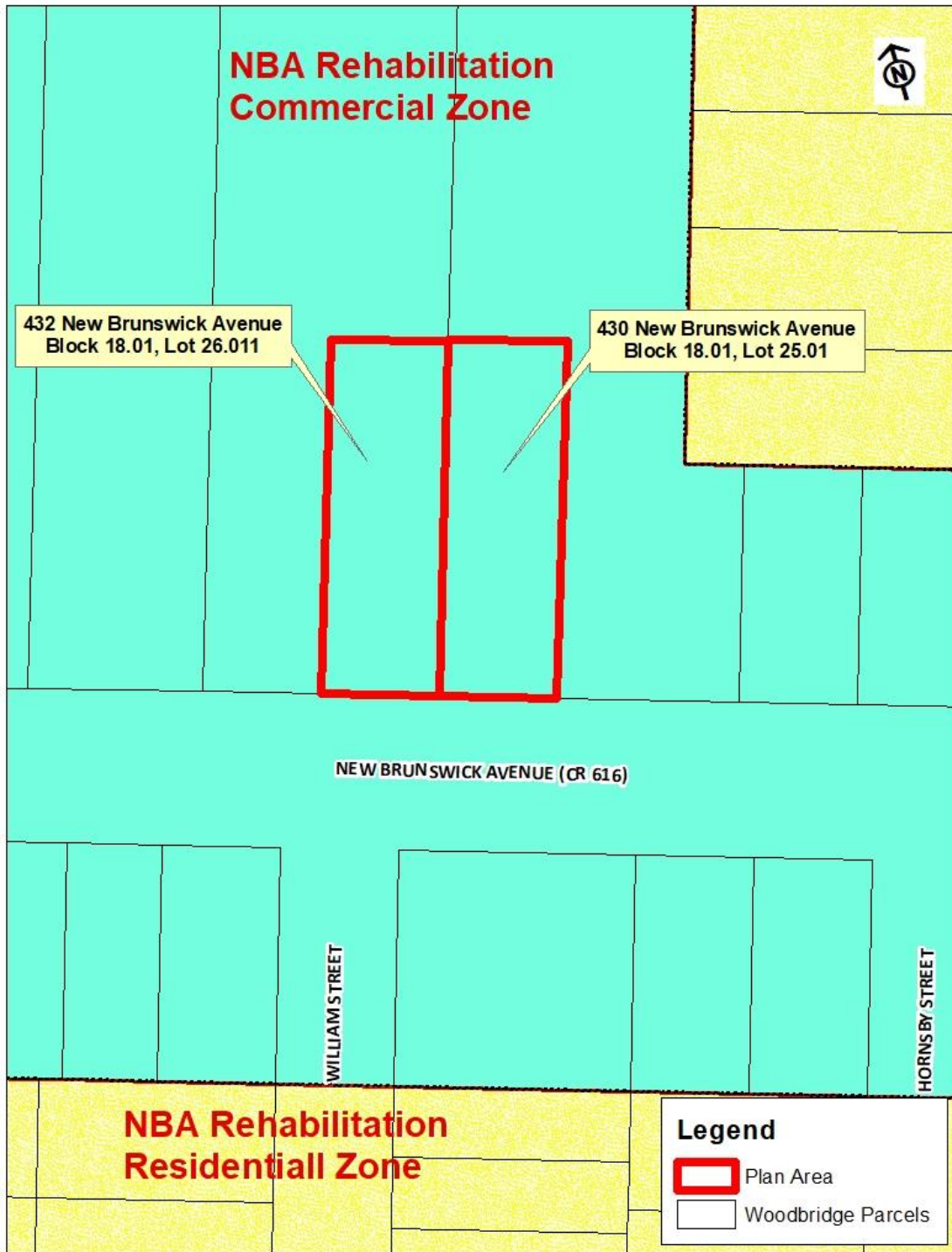
COMMUNITY RESILIENCY

This Plan promotes resiliency to climate change by permitting redevelopment in an area of minimal flood hazard. Furthermore, this development shall comply with all municipal and state stormwater regulations, including any requirements for green infrastructure. Additionally, this redevelopment area is located near NJ Transit bus stops along New Brunswick Avenue, which encourages the use the public transportation and if utilized, will reduce automobile emissions.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Any construction of new housing units presents an opportunity to contribute to the Township's affordable housing stock and must be provided in accordance with the relevant case law, statutes and regulations in effect at the time of an approval for development of the property.

Figure 3: Existing Zoning



RELATIONSHIP OF PLAN TO THE TOWNSHIP LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (APPLICATION & PROCESS)

The Redevelopment Area shall be redeveloped in accordance with the standards detailed in this Redevelopment Plan. This Plan supersedes the use and bulk provisions of the Township Land Use and Development Ordinance (Chapter 150) for the Redevelopment 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 Redevelopment 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 Redevelopment 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 Redevelopment Plan related to a specific piece of property where the purposes of this Redevelopment 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 of 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 Redevelopment Plan.

No deviations may be granted which will result in permitting a use that is not a permitted use within this Redevelopment Plan. Any deviations 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 Redevelopment Plan shall provide public notice of such 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 as N.J.S.A. 40:55D, et seq.

Final adoption of this Redevelopment Plan by the Township Council shall be considered an amendment to the Township of Woodbridge Land Use and Development 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 Ordinance.

REDEVELOPMENT AREA ZONING STANDARDS

The following standards contain information pertaining to the purpose of the zone; the permitted and accessory uses; bulk standards; and other district-specific standards. The evaluation of any proposal submitted under the Redevelopment Plan shall be based upon sections of this Redevelopment Plan entitled Relationship of Plan to the Township Land Development Regulations including District and Design Standards.

The purpose of this Redevelopment Zone is to provide mixed-use development of residential and commercial in the Hopelawn-Fords New Brunswick Avenue District Area.

Permitted Uses:

A building may be erected, altered or used and a lot or premises may be occupied and used for any of the following purposes:

- Retail
- Restaurants (non drive-thru) or taverns
- Multi-family residential on upper-floors only, including Apartments
- Offices (including general, medical and dental)
- Banks

Bulk Standards:

- Minimum lot size: 15,000 square feet
- Minimum lot width: 100 feet
- Minimum lot depth: 150 feet
- Minimum front setback: 0 feet
- Minimum side setback: 0 feet
- Minimum rear setback: 5 feet
- Maximum building coverage (including principal and accessory buildings): 80%
- Maximum building height: 3 stories or 35 feet

Accessory buildings and structures:

- Accessory buildings, infrastructure and uses, shall meet the setback requirements of a principal building and shall not exceed 15 feet in height or
- 150 square feet.

Additional Standards:

**Off-street parking is required subject to the following conditions:*

- Restaurant or taverns: 1 parking space for each 100 square feet
- Retail stores: 1 parking space for each 200 square feet
- Minimum number of parking spaces for apartments shall comply with Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS) requirements
- General Offices: 1 parking space for each 300 square feet
- Offices: (medical and dental) 1 parking space for each 100 square feet
- Banks: 1 parking space for each 200 square feet
- Mixed uses requirement shall be the sum of the requirements of the component uses computed separately
- Each automobile parking space shall not be less than nine feet wide or less than 18 feet deep, exclusive of passageways. In addition, there shall be provided adequate interior driveways to connect each parking space with a public right-of-way. In the case of a parallel parking space, each space shall not be less than 10 feet wide or less than 22 feet long. Aisle space shall not be less than 24 feet wide for two-way ninety-degree parking; not less than 16 feet for one-way sixty-degree parking; and not less than 13 feet for forty-five degree one-way parking
- Tandem parking is permitted for up to 10% of the required parking on site, where valet parking is provided
- Shared parking for multiple uses both on and off site is permitted with review and approval of the Municipal Agency for a technical variance which may be required, and in deminimus amount of street parking may be considered as part of the required parking with review and approval of the Municipal Agency reviewing a technical parking variance.

Buffering and Landscaping:

- Landscaped area required: In calculating the landscaped areas, the areas of plazas, open pedestrian areas, sitting areas, green roofs, pools and fountains shall be included.
- All setback areas fronting public roadways shall be defined by a combination of decorative fencing and/or landscaping. The landscaped area within should contain a variety of flowering trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals and bulbs to complement the architecture and provide seasonal interest.
- Landscape design should be integrated into overall site design and plans should include a watering and maintenance schedule for each area.
- Any dumpster shall be screened from public view with fencing and landscaping.
- All trees to be removed shall be done in accordance with the Township Tree Ordinance.

Sustainability:

- All development is encouraged to incorporate green building practices.
- Solar Panels are permitted on buildings.
- “Make-Ready” electric vehicle parking spaces and installed electric vehicle supply equipment shall be installed according to state legislation.
- Bike share programs, and car share programs are all encouraged.

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.
- Parking lot lights shall not exceed 12 feet in height

Site Signage:

- Façade signs permitted. All exterior signs identifying or advertising the names or uses of the tenants or occupants of the planned commercial shall be affixed to the buildings and shall occupy no more than 10% of the aggregate of the total exterior wall areas of such buildings.
- Way finding signage to direct visitors toward parking areas, building identification, and building entrances is permitted as appropriate.

PLAN RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANS

RELATIONSHIP TO THE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

The Township of Woodbridge's last comprehensive Master Plan was prepared in February 2009 and reexamined in 2016. The Master Plan recommended this area be devoted to rehabilitation.

The Master Plan adopted the following goals that are relevant to this Plan:

- To permit residential uses at appropriate densities in locations accessible to major roadways, commercial services, public facilities and traditional downtown areas;
- To provide sufficient residential opportunities, in locations with access to facilities and services, to help the Township's senior residents age in place;
- To preserve the existing character consistent with current development patterns through:
 - Zoning standards that correspond to existing development patterns
- To strengthen downtown commercial shopping areas through:
 - Expanded retail offerings;
 - Improved facades and streetscapes;
 - Adequate parking;
 - Improved pedestrian and bike connections with adjacent neighborhoods;
- To expand retail and service activities in appropriate locations to meet the future shopping needs of Township residents;

MASTER PLANS OF ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES

The Redevelopment Area is located in the Woodbridge proper section of the Township. The closest adjacent municipality to the area is the City of Perth Amboy to the east. The redevelopment plan is not anticipated to have an adverse impact on Perth Amboy.

STATE AND COUNTY PLANS

Consistency with Middlesex County Master Plan

The Redevelopment Plan is generally consistent with the elements of the Middlesex County Master Plan, a document that addresses sprawl and sustainability in the region. This Redevelopment Plan adheres directly to the goals, values and objectives of the Middlesex County Master Plan which aims to:

- Make fuller use of existing transportation lines and facilities. The County Plan anticipated that public transportation would achieve greater significance as a necessary alternative to the private automobile, with its attendant problems of pollution, energy availability, and congestion;
- Find a more feasible alternative to the present situation of “strip” commercial development found on major roads, and single-family homes on unnecessarily large lots;
- “Cluster” future growth around definable town centers and transportation facilities to include commercial and office employment as well as residential, with land use intensity decreasing as distance from the town center increases.

New Jersey State Development & Redevelopment Plan (2001)

This Redevelopment Plan is consistent 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;
- Provide adequate public facilities and services at a reasonable cost;
- Preserve and enhance areas with historic, cultural, scenic, open space,

and recreational value;

- 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, “Environs,” areas to be protected from future growth. The Township of Woodbridge falls in 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.

This Plan will serve to meet each of these goals for the designated area.

The New Jersey Department of State has been preparing a new State Strategic Plan since 2012. The proposed plan has not been adopted by the State Planning Commission.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

REDEVELOPMENT ENTITY

The Woodbridge Township Redevelopment Agency will serve as the Redevelopment Entity.

PHASING:

- Projects may be developed in phases;
- The phasing may include phased start and completion dates among the various land use components, as well as internal phasing schedules within sections, subject to specific provisions in the redevelopment agreement.

APPOINTMENT OF A DESIGNATED REDEVELOPER

The Redevelopment Entity may select one or more redevelopers to participate in the implementation of the Redevelopment Plan.

As part of the process to be designated a redeveloper, the Redevelopment Entity will negotiate a formal Redevelopment Agreement.

Designation of a Redeveloper(s) by the Redevelopment Entity shall be subject to the execution of an appropriate Redevelopment Agreement.

CONDITIONS IN REDEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT(S)

Each Redevelopment Agreement will be contingent upon the following conditions, restrictions, and/or requirements.

1. Each Redevelopment Agreement will incorporate the pertinent aspects of the selected redeveloper's proposal and will address financial considerations, planning, phasing, development and such other issues as deemed appropriate and/or as required according to state law in order to implement the Redevelopment Plan.
2. A designated redeveloper will be obligated to complete on-site improvements as approved, together with any specified off-site improvements, as may be

required in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan and the Redevelopment Agreement.

3. No designated redeveloper will be permitted to dispose of property until the issuance of the Certificate of Completion, unless the prior written consent of the Redevelopment Agency has been obtained, subject to the terms and conditions of the Redevelopment Agreement.
4. The Redeveloper(s) shall pay to the Redevelopment Entity an application fee for consideration of redeveloper as a designated redeveloper and will fund an escrow for the Agency's costs in implementing redevelopment.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

No application for development or redevelopment in the area may be filed with the Planning Board until such time as the applicant has applied for and received a designation as redeveloper from the Redevelopment Entity and has executed a Redevelopment Agreement with the Redevelopment Entity providing for the proposed application. In addition to any requirements of the Agency, major preliminary and/or Final Site Plans and/or subdivisions, with details sufficient to comply with the Municipal Land Use Law and Local Ordinance, shall be submitted for Planning Board review and approval for each development parcel, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq.

The Planning Board shall require the developer to provide a bond or bonds in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Land Use Law.

DURATION OF REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

During the time that the Redevelopment Plan is in effect, any party acting as a redeveloper, (as defined in the LRHL) must obtain the approval of the Redevelopment Entity. The Redevelopment Plan will remain in effect for 30 years.

AMENDING THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

This Redevelopment Plan may be amended from time to time in compliance with the requirements of law, provided that with respect to any land in the project area previously disposed of by the Redevelopment Entity for use in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan, the Entity will notice the owner of such land whose interests may be materially affected by such amendment.