Report Regarding Planning Activities Since Center Designation

Flemington Borough, Hunterdon County,
New Jersey

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INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the request from the Office of Smart Growth, the following report summarizes the Borough's planning activities and related progress since receiving Center Designation on December 5, 2001. Specifically, the first two sections of the report summarize planning and implementation activities, Section 3 provides a brief descriptions of major development proposals, Section 4 identifies capital improvements, and Section 5 summarizes the status of Flemington Borough's planning documents. A copy of the Center Designation Planning and Implementation Agenda (PIA) and copies of annual reports for the Planning Board (2001 to 2005) and Zoning Board (2001 to 2003; in 2004 the Zoning Board was merged with the Planning Board) are attached as appendices to this report.

1. STATUS OF MUNICIPAL PLANNING ACTIVITIES

The 2001 Center Designation Report reiterated planning goals for the community that were originally outlined in the 1997 Master Plan including the following:

- Integrate the residential and commercial segments of the Borough for the continued success of the community.
- Protect and promote the integrity of the existing residential districts in the Borough so that they remain a nice place to live and raise a family.
- Strengthen and promote the commercial sector of the Borough to serve the residents as well as the outside community.
- Plan for future impacts related to areas of redevelopment within the Borough, including the new County Justice Complex and Walter Foran Boulevard

Since December 2001, Flemington has worked to implement these goals though continued planning and through the active implementation of many of the items described in the 2001 Planning Implementation Agenda (PIA). As a mature, almost fully developed borough this implementation has been achieved primarily through the redevelopment of underutilized parcels consistent with the goals of the master plan and the criteria of a regional center in a PA3 (Fringe) planning area.

Specifically, projects like the redevelopment of the Flemington Electric Supply building at 138 Main Street and the former hardware store at 123 Main Street evidence this progress. The Electric Supply building is a former retail and wholesale supply store with storage garage that is being reconfigured and converted into one retail use and 8 residential apartments. The 123 Main Street (former hardware store) project is located down the street at the corner of Main Street and Mine Street. It was vacant for a number of years, but is now historically renovated for retail usage,

restaurant and residential apartments. An historic train depot, occupied for years as a restaurant, was completely restored in accordance with historic preservation guidelines and the use is now a Unity Bank.

Flemington was the recipient of an $18,500 grant from the NJ Historic Trust to evaluate Fleming Castle (the oldest home in the Borough) which the Borough purchased in June 2005. The Borough also received a Smart Growth Grant for $150,000 with Raritan Township that the Borough has utilized to write historic preservation guidelines.

2. IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

This section summarizes the status of implementation activities as identified in the Center Designation Planning and Implementation Agenda (PIA). The categories below follow the order of categories in the PIA:

1. **Land Use**
   - Borough Council has authorized the planning board to prepare a reexamination report of master plan.
   - Land Use ordinance revision was completed
   - Encouragement of infill development and redevelopment is an ongoing priority in the borough

2. **Housing**
   - Construction of the Allen Street Senior housing development is complete and the units are occupied.
   - A COAH Round 3 fair share plan has been completed

3. **Economic Development**
   - An Economic Development commission was established
   - Promotion of Flemington as a vibrant commercial and cultural center is ongoing
   - The master plan reexamination report that is underway will study any areas that may have redevelopment or infill potential

4. **Transportation**
   - The borough is seeking TEA-21 funding for parking improvements
   - The realignment of Park Avenue is complete
   - HART funding is being pursued to fund new bike racks and sidewalks
   - TEA-21 funding is being pursued for streetscape improvements and sidewalk linkages between downtown and the outlet centers
   - A HART grant has been requested for a bus shelter to be located in the Liberty Village parking lot, so it can serve commuters on the Trans Bridge bus line.
   - Construction is underway of the Route 202/Reaville Avenue traffic and access improvements
   - Work on establishing a para-transit service is ongoing

- Reconfiguration of the Flemington Circle and improvements to Routes 31/202 will be funded by DOT
- Traffic light at Broad and Church Streets was installed
- Church Street was rebuilt from Broad Street to Route 31
- Park Avenue is designed, but waiting for SHPO review

5. **Natural Resources Conservation**
   - The Borough has passed on ordinance requiring developers with insufficient room on their sites to fund the installation of street trees elsewhere in the municipality
   - A wellhead protection ordinance is being considered
   - The Borough adopted a stormwater management ordinance based on standards recommended by NJDEP and the Hunterdon County Planning and Engineering departments.

6. **Recreation**
   - The Borough continues to work with Raritan Township on the joint development of active recreation facilities

7. **Historic Preservation**
   - The Borough continues to pursue the designation of historic and archeological resources
   - The Borough continues to increase public awareness of and support for historic and archeological resources
   - Work on a new historic preservation ordinance and design guidelines is ongoing

8. **Public Facilities**
   - Work on renovation of the municipal building is ongoing. The police department has moved into leased space on Main Street, the rest of the municipal government will eventually move there as well.
   - Expansion of East. Main St. sewerage trunk line was completed in 2003

9. **Intergovernmental Coordination**
   - The borough continues to support expansion of the center boundaries to include a portion of Raritan Township as appropriate
   - The borough continues to participate in Hunterdon county's Smart Growth Planning Project
   - Expansion of County Office facilities is complete
   - Work is ongoing on pursing shared services with Raritan Township (court facilities) as well as with surrounding municipalities

3. MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS SINCE CENTER DESIGNATION (DECEMBER 5, 2001)

Flemington Village Plaza
In 2001, a 152,738 sf. shopping center was approved on a 19.615 acre site along Reaville Avenue, the largest remaining vacant tract in the Borough. The approval included a supermarket, bank, three midsize retailers and a series of smaller stores. Currently the applicant has filed an amended preliminary and final site plan.

Liberty Village
In 2002, construction of a 24,000 sf. retail building and related site improvements were approved as an expansion to the existing Liberty Village shopping center. This work was completed in 2003.

Pennrose Senior Housing
Development of an age restricted housing project was approved at the corner of Church and Broad Streets, on lands formerly used as the county public works maintenance garage.

Allen Street Senior Housing
At this site, an age restricted housing project was approved to replace an existing residential unit. The project is now under construction.

123 Main Street
Redevelopment of a former hardware store into a mixed-use structure containing retail space on the first floor and apartments on the second and third floors. The site is located at the corner of Mine and Main Streets, in the Downtown Business District (DBI.) In 2005, redevelopment of an outbuilding on the site from retail to an apartment unit was also approved. The project has been completed and is in the process of leasing to tenants.

70 Church Street ("Spice Factory")
This project entailed the redevelopment of an existing 3-story retail/office building and power building on a 3.88 acre site fronting on Church Street. Under the proposal, the existing 3,743 sf. power building would be converted to retail use and a new 5,000 s.f. retail building. The project was approved in 2005 and is now under construction.

Flemington Electric Supply
This property is situated at 138 Main Street, Block 29, Lot 6. The applicant, Flemington Electric Supply, is proposing to remove several buildings along William Street, and add new apartments to that structure. The project is currently being reviewed by the Planning Board.

Unity Bank
An historic train depot, occupied for years as a restaurant, was completely restored in accordance with historic preservation guidelines and the use is now a Unity Bank.

Hanini Enterprise LLC
Under this project, 15,945 sf. of retail space was approved on a parcel adjacent to Liberty Village.

4. STATUS OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS SINCE CENTER DESIGNATION

Park Avenue: 1st and 2nd stages were sewer replacement , road reconstruction and sidewalk replacement. 3rd stage is realignment of sewers and culvert.

Mine Street: sidewalk replacement, reconstruction of road

Allen Street: "Safe Route to School", new sidewalk constructed

Church Street: Sidewalk replacement, traffic light, reconstruction of road

Bonnell Street: Sidewalk replacement, new water lines, reconstruction of road

Brown Street: Sidewalk replacement, new water lines, reconstruction of road

Broad Street: Sidewalk replacement, new water lines, reconstruction of road, new traffic light

West Road: Overlay of road

Walnut Brook: Sidewalk replacement, Overlay

Various Shade Trees: Installation of street trees throughout the borough ($60,000)

Purchase of Fleming Castle: Borough purchased oldest home in the borough (Bonell St.) with an $18,500 NJ Historic Trust Grant

Approved Rehabilitation of 100 Main Street: Plans currently underway

Boro Hall Renovation: Capital ordinance is done and the project will soon go out to bid.

5. STATUS OF PLANNING DOCUMENTS, AS RELATED TO CENTER DESIGNATION

Since Center Designation was received in December 2000 the Borough has created one (1) planning documents and has implemented one (1) rezoning:

Third Round Housing Element Fair Share Plan-2005

In November 2005 the Borough completed a third round COAH housing element and Fair Share Plan. COAH's Third Round methodology includes a rehabilitation obligation, a remaining obligation from COAH's two prior rounds (known as the prior round obligation) and the growth share obligation. Flemington's Third Round Obligation can be summarized as follows:

- Rehabilitation Obligation 11
- Prior Round Recalculated 45
  - RDP (4)
  - Unmet Need (41)
- Growth Share 25

The Borough proposes to meet its obligation through a variety of strategies and initiatives. The rehabilitation program, to be administered by HCHC, will satisfy the Borough's eleven (11) unit rehabilitation program. The Borough will satisfy its four (4) unit prior round RDP with five (5) affordable units at the Allen Street Inclusionary Development. Additionally, the Borough's unmet need will be satisfied with forty-one (41) units at the Church Street Complex, the accessory apartment program and the development fee ordinance. The twenty-five (25) unit third round growth share obligation will be satisfied with one (1) surplus credit from the Allen Street Inclusionary Development, ten (10) excess units at the Church Street Complex, six (6) units at the Anderson House alternative living facility, six (6) bedrooms at the Easter Seals alternative living facility, ten (10) affordable units at the Flemington Cut Glass Site, one (1) unit at the Chandler Group site, one (1) unit a the Flemington Electric site, a municipally sponsored rental program, and a municipal buy-down program.

Master Plan Ammendment-2003

In July 2003 the Borough amended the Land Use Element of it's Master Plan to rezone an area at the corner of Walter Foran Boulevard and Main Street. With the realignment of Main Street and Walter Foran Boulevard, this intersection became more heavily utilized. The current Townhouse (TH) zone was inappropriate because it did not recognize the increased traffic by the site. Accordingly, the Land Use Plan was amended to change the zoning to PO Professional Office.