



GRAVATT GELLER ■ Consulting Engineers ■ Surveyors ■ Planners

**MASTER PLAN
REEXAMINATION REPORT
CONDUCTED BY THE
LACEY TOWNSHIP
PLANNING BOARD**

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INTRODUCTION

The Municipal Land Use Law, specifically, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89, requires that a municipality undertake a periodic general reexamination of its Master Plan and Development Regulations every six (6) years. Pursuant to that statute, the Lacey Township Planning Board is obligated to prepare and adopt by Resolution this reexamination report and forward the same to the County Planning Board and Municipal Clerk of each adjoining municipality.

The Lacey Township Planning Board, pursuant to its obligations under that statute, began its task of reexamining the Master Plan on April 3, 2003, and continued the reexamination at meetings on May 1, June 5, September 29 and November 17, 2003.

The Reexamination Report is required by law to state the major problems and objectives relating to land development at the time of the adoption of the last Reexamination Report, the extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or increased, the extent to which significant changes in assumptions that were the basis for the Master Plan have occurred and specific changes recommended for the Master Plan and/or Development Regulations.

This report will constitute a second review of the last "complete" Master Plan, dated April 8, 1991, including its goals and objectives, underlying philosophies and the assumptions which, it is believed, were in existence at the time of its adoption. Additionally, the Planning Board's effort consisted of: reexamining the 1996/1997 Reexamination Report, as adopted on January 12, 1998; reexamining and updating the goals and objectives of the Master Plan; reexamining the Addendum to the Lacey Township Master Plan Circulation Element, as adopted on December 14, 1998; and reexamining the Master Plan Update - Revised Land Use Element, as adopted on March 13, 2000.

REVIEW OF THE 1991 LACEY TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN, THE 1996/97 REEXAMINATION REPORT, THE 1998 ADDENDUM TO THE CIRCULATION ELEMENT AND THE 2000 REVISED LAND USE ELEMENT

A. GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The first step in the analysis of the 1991 Master Plan, the 1996/97 Reexamination Report, and previous element updates was a review of the Goals and Objectives of the 1991 Plan and the detailed review and updating of the analysis of those goals and objectives that comprised Pages 2 through 15 of the 1996/97 Reexamination Report. The Board makes the following comments with respect to those goals and objectives:

1. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the previous reports have remained substantially the same. The Board finds that the problems and objectives outlined in those goals and objectives have not significantly changed, either by way of reduction or increase, since the last adoption of the Master Plan or Reexamination Report; nor has there been a significant change in the assumptions, policies or objectives which formed the basis for the 1991 Master Plan and 1996/97 Reexamination Report.
2. However, after review and consideration of the goals and objectives of the 1991 Master Plan and the extensive discussion and analysis of them in the 1996/97 Reexamination Report, the Board felt that certain specific recommendations for the Master Plan itself were in order. Therefore, the Board felt it appropriate to update the Goals and Objectives and adopt the following as part of this Master Plan Reexamination: "GOALS AND OBJECTIVES - 2003 REEXAMINATION", dated June 4, 2003 and revised November 14, 2003. (These goals and objectives are included in this report as Appendix 1.)

B. REEXAMINATION OF THE MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

With respect to the specific elements of the Mater Plan, the Planning Board felt that those objectives and assumptions, for which underlying factual basis had changed, have been sufficiently addressed in the latest revised 2003 Goals and Objectives. With respect to specific suggestions for modifications to the Master Plan, however, the Board makes the following findings concerning the specific elements included within the prior Master Plan and the need for amendment:

1. LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT

a. Changes since last Reexamination:

- Adoption of "Revised Land Use Element" - March 13, 2000.
- Adoption of amended C.A.F.R.A. Regulations - February 2000 (including the establishment of "centers" consistent with the State Development & Redevelopment Plan, which included the "Lacey Coastal Town").
- Adoption of State Development & Redevelopment Plan - 2001.
- Current "re-evaluation" of the State Plan by the New Jersey "Office of Smart Growth" (O.S.G.).
- Plans by O.S.G. for the establishment of a process to be known as "master plan endorsement". (Procedures are only in draft form at this time; specific rules and regulations are not yet adopted.)

b. Current Reexamination:

- In accordance with the "Revised Land Use Element", adopted on March 13, 2000, the following amendments to the Zoning and Land Use Ordinances have occurred:
 - (1) Adoption of zoning for Age-Restricted Multi-Family Residential Development as conditional uses in the C-200 Zone.

- (2) Adoption of zoning for Age-Restricted Planned Unit Residential Development - the New AR-PURD Zone (current Toll Brothers "Sea Breeze" Project).
 - (3) Adoption of zoning for Independent Living Facilities & Assisted Living Care Facilities (in the AR-PURD Zone)
 - (4) Delineation of the "Forked River Historic District" on the Official Zoning Map.
- There is the need for an Updated Land Use Element; incorporating changes since 2000; Current Land Use Objectives as adopted by the Planning Board; State Plan & C.A.F.R.A. considerations (including obtaining a Master Plan Endorsement from the State once the procedures for same are finally established and released to municipalities); inclusion of a "Redevelopment Zone" for the Municipal Complex and surrounding properties eligible for inclusion; and development of appropriate well head protection ordinances (in cooperation with the Lacey M.U.A.).

2. HOUSING PLAN ELEMENT

- a. Changes since last Reexamination:
 - Adoption of "Housing Element" - May 2000.
 - Adoption of "Fair Share Plan" - May 2000.
 - Application to State for Certification by the N.J. Council on Affordable Housing (C.O.A.H.); still pending since that time.
- b. Current Reexamination:
 - With the current status of the State's certification of the Township's C.O.A.H. Plan still unknown, the need for further master planning of the Housing Element cannot be determined at this time.



3. CIRCULATION PLAN ELEMENT

a. Changes since last Reexamination:

- Adoption of "Circulation Element" (and Addendum, including Map) - December 1998.
- Preparation and development of various Conceptual Plans for "Railroad Avenue" along the former railroad right-of-way.
- Establishment of Rails-for-Trails groups.
- Establishment of an Ocean County Plan for a Rail-Trail in the former railroad right-of-way.
- Conveyance to the County by Lacey Township of an easement, 12 feet in width, along the westerly side of the former railroad right-of-way for use as a rail-trail.
- Lacey Township Planning Board commissioning in late 2003 / early 2004 of a traffic study, analyzing major intersections within the Township and evaluating the need for additional north-south roadways; particularly the use of the former railroad right-of-way and available adjacent lands.
- Decision by the Lacey Township Committee in 2004 to undertake the surveys, designs, studies, permitting and preparation of construction plans and specifications for the construction of a roadway along and within the former railroad right-of-way from Lacey Road to First Street (Musket Drive). (The designs would include provisions for the "rail-trail" bikeway / pedestrian way to be constructed by Ocean County.)

b. Current Reexamination:

- There is the need for an Updated Circulation Element; incorporating changes since 1999, and current Transportation Objectives as adopted by the Planning Board.
- There is the need for the evaluation and improvement of existing signalized intersections along Route 9.

4. UTILITY SERVICE PLAN ELEMENT

a. Changes since last Reexamination: None

b. Current Reexamination:

- Significant expenditures of public funds have resulted in the construction of extensive public water and sewer facilities in the Township. There is the need to obtain maps of current water and sewer facilities from the Lacey M.U.A., and include them in the new Master Plan.

5. COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN ELEMENT

a. Changes since last Reexamination: Yes.

b. Current Reexamination:

- There is the need to update the list and mapping of Community Facilities, including the library, the new schools and additions, and others. In addition, areas designated for future community facilities, if any, should be incorporated.
- The Planning Board recognizes the need for Sidewalk Assessments when the requirement of sidewalks are waived or otherwise not required for new development applications. The assessments would be earmarked for use in constructing public sidewalks and walkways, as depicted on the Circulation Plan and Official Map.

- There is the need for Contributions by Developers of their fair share of required costs of off-tract improvements in all areas permissible by law.
- There is the need for a public boat ramp.

6. RECREATION PLAN ELEMENT

- a. Changes since last Reexamination: Yes.
- b. Current Reexamination:
 - In light of the significant additional construction of recreational facilities since the previous Master Plans, there is the need to update the list and mapping of Recreation Facilities, including bikeways and pedestrian ways.
 - The Planning Board recognizes the need for the establishment of recreation assessment fees for new development.
 - There should be the promotion of the identification and designation of "Forked River Mountain" as a "historic feature" and the creation of a passive park accessible to the public.
 - The "Leone / Clayton" mining site, which five years ago, more or less, had a 20-year window for mining, should be included in the Recreation Plan. Then, when the mining window has expired, the site is to be dedicated to the Township for recreational use, with a planned lake and adjacent lands.

7. CONSERVATION PLAN ELEMENT

- a. Changes since last Reexamination: Yes.

b. Current Reexamination:

- There is the need to update the list and mapping of lands that have been acquired and / or otherwise conserved by both the public and private sectors.
- Any natural resources inventory mapping, which has been completed, should be obtained and included in the plan.
- The Conservation Plan element should be amended to be updated in light of the significant efforts which have occurred in the past years, specifically by way of recycling and environmental regulation.
- Comments and input should be obtained from the Lacey Township Environmental Commission.
- The Township should consider the requirement of "tree-save plans" for proposed development in an effort to save significant trees through more creative site design techniques.

8. ECONOMIC PLAN ELEMENT

a. Changes since last Reexamination: Yes.

b. Current Reexamination:

- There is the need for an Updated Economic Plan Element, including reference to the Lacey Business Park and uses therein.
- Comments and input should be obtained from the Lacey Township Economic Development Commission, including suggestions to be incorporated within the part of this report regarding a review of development regulations to encourage appropriate economic development through Zoning Ordinance amendments, including within the Historic Preservation District.

9. HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN ELEMENT

a. Changes since last Reexamination: None; except that there has been additional development within the Historic District.

b. Current Reexamination:

- There is the need to prepare and adopt a Historic Preservation Element that would: identify historic areas containing historic structures; promote the adoption of development regulations that would encourage their preservation; and encourage the use of architectural design consistent with the residential and historical characteristics of Lacey Township.
- Bay Avenue, which was formerly known as "Captain's Road", should be an emphasized element of the Historic District.
- Examples of appropriate design features in the District would include parking areas behind or beside buildings, which would be set back less distance from the street; traditional or colonial type lighting; benches along walkways and sidewalk areas; sidewalks comprised of paver blocks or with paver blocks integrated with other materials; and "banners" identifying the District on light poles.
- Examples of architectural standards for new construction or renovations would include building accents; appropriate siding and shingles; roofing materials; etc.

10. RECYCLING PLAN ELEMENT

a. Changes since last Reexamination: None.

- b. Current Reexamination: A new plan is not required.

11. FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN ELEMENT

- a. Changes since last Reexamination: None.
- b. Current Reexamination:
 - A new plan is not required. (However, the Board recognizes the current Ocean County program, which has more applicability elsewhere in the County.)

12. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN ELEMENT

- a. These provisions were neither present nor addressed at the time of the last Reexamination.
- b. Current Reexamination:
 - In accordance with new rules and regulations adopted by the N.J. Department of Environmental Protection, effective February 2, 2004, a Municipal Stormwater Management Plan is required, and should be included in any Township Master Plan.

As a part of this Master Plan Reexamination Report, the Board has indicated that the following entities and organizations will be consulted during calendar year 2004 for input during the preparation of an amended Lacey Township Master Plan:

- Lacey Township Police Chief; Fire Companies & First Aid Companies.
- Lacey Township Public Works Director.
- Lacey Township Recreation Director
- Lacey Township Board of Education.
- Lacey Township Board of Adjustment.

- Lacey Township Environmental Commission & Ocean County Shade Tree Commission.
- Lacey Municipal Utilities Authority.
- Lacey Historical Society and Ocean County Cultural & Heritage Commission.
- Lacey Township Economic Development Commission.
- Lacey Township Recycling Coordinator.

C. REEXAMINATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

1. Changes since last Reexamination:

- There has been reviews and extensive amendments to the Zoning and Site Plan Ordinances.
- The adoption of the N.J. Residential Site Improvement Standards - "R.S.I.S." (1997 and revised several times thereafter).
- Miscellaneous amendments from time to time, as needed.

2. Current Reexamination:

- A current reexamination of the Development Regulations is required; particularly the Sign Ordinance; Subdivision Ordinance, review and resolution of any inconsistencies with the "N.J. Residential Site Improvement Standards"; Stormwater Management Standards and required Ordinance adoption in accordance with the new rules as of February 2, 2004; others as may be required.
- In lieu of a review of Development Regulations as a part of this report, a thorough examination and any subsequent amendments, as are deemed necessary, are in order.

APPENDIX 1

“GOALS AND OBJECTIVES - 2003 REEXAMINATION”



GRAVATT GELLER ■ Consulting Engineers ■ Surveyors ■ Planners

June 4, 2003

Revised November 14, 2003

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 2003 Reexamination

The Planning Board reviewed the Master Plan Goals and Objectives on May 1 and June 5, 2003.

It was found that, in general, the major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality had remained substantially the same since the last reexamination in 1996/97; nor had there been a significant change in the assumptions, policies or objectives which formed the basis of the Master Plan.

Nonetheless, after detailed and specific review and consideration of the Goals and Objectives of the 1996/97 Reexamination Report, the following Goals and Objectives are proposed. (Bold type indicates additional or revised goals and objectives; italic type indicates commentary regarding the Board's discussion.)

GOALS

1. Maintain the existing quality of life of Lacey Township residents.
2. Encourage development regulations which would actively improve the quality of life of Lacey Township residents.
3. Provide contiguous land areas and compatibility among uses so as to protect sensitive natural areas, resources, and wildlife for future generations.
4. Adopt development regulations consistent with sound environmental policy and existing environmental regulations.
5. Encourage residential development at appropriate densities while providing for aesthetic and economic diversities.
6. Encourage the continued maintenance of all navigable waterways.
7. Encourage the resolution of traffic congestion in Lacey Township, particularly that on Route 9.

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LAND USE OBJECTIVES

- A. Establish a coordinated and comprehensive approach to development
1. Maintain consistency of documents (master plan, zoning ordinance, capital improvement plan) so as to eliminate redundancy, confusion, and its consequent needless expenditure of funds.
 2. Review local administrative procedures and land development regulations to ensure that development opportunities are not hampered by unnecessary and costly regulatory delays.
 3. Manage development to preserve and enhance the character of the community.
 4. Maintain appropriate professional capability to formulate and implement development activities.
 5. Designate appropriate growth management districts for future guidance to developers.
- B. Promote a diverse and efficient land development pattern
1. Prepare detailed community design plans and standards.
 2. Provide for mixed-use patterns of development where the land is of such size and configuration as to permit energy efficient alternatives without impacting the existing development pattern of Lacey.
 3. Manage development **to the maximum extent practical** so that traffic will not exceed the capacity of the existing road network.
 4. Ensure a reasonable balance among all land uses.
 5. Provide areas adjacent to existing commercial centers and major traffic arteries which can act as transition areas for light and noise separation isolating residential properties from intense commercial by providing interim non-competing professional or neighborhood office uses, **or multi-family residential uses.**
 6. Encourage the use of architectural design consistent with the residential and historical characteristics of Lacey Township.
 7. Adopt a Historic Preservation Element that would identify historic areas containing historic structures, promote the adoption of development regulations that would encourage their preservation, and encourage the use of architectural design consistent with the residential and historical characteristics of Lacey Township.
- C. Recognize and implement appropriate statutory regulations and authorities of other reviewing agencies
1. Identify, protect and preserve natural resources.
 2. Ensure environmentally sensitive areas are given high priority for public acquisition.

3. Prevent the degradation of, and maintain and enhance the capability of water resources.
 4. Ensure that development will have safe and adequate wastewater treatment facilities.
 5. Ensure that development will have safe and adequate potable water sources. **Work and cooperate with the Lacey Municipal Utilities Authority in the development of appropriate well head protection ordinances.**
 6. Maintain consistency with adjacent municipalities and appropriate governmental programs, rules and regulations.
- D. Establish and promote an active open space system for the enjoyment of Lacey residents
1. Prioritize the acquisition and development of existing open space for active or passive public recreational use.
 2. Encourage the development of sufficient recreational facilities that can benefit all age groups within all areas of the Township in future years.
 3. Promote zoning to encourage private recreation and cultural facilities which promote cultural enrichment such as concerts and the arts. *The Board commented regarding the advent of the "Lacey Community Players".*
 4. **Promote the adoption of an ordinance that would enable the imposition of a recreation assessment fee for new development.**
 5. **Promote the identification and designation of "Forked River Mountain" as a "historic feature" and the creation of a passive park, accessible to the public. (The Board noted that the site is likely to be acquired by the New Jersey Division of Fish and Game.)**

CAPITAL FACILITIES PLANNING OBJECTIVES

- A. Prioritize capital facilities and service that are compatible with development
1. Request the referral by the Township Committee of individual capital improvement projects to the Planning Board for review and determination of consistency with the Master Plan.
 2. Review existing regulations, policies, and programs to maximize infrastructure maintenance and improvement efforts; including specific plans for pedestrian walkways, **and bikeways.**
 3. **Promote the adoption of an ordinance that would establish an assessment fund and require the payment of a sidewalk assessment fee by the applicant or developer whenever the installation of sidewalks are waived for any development.**
 4. Plan for and provide locations for future emergency service facilities necessary to service future development as projected by the land use plan.
- B. Support appropriate infrastructure development
1. Provide support for off-tract capital facilities with the private sector paying its fair share.
 2. Maximize the maintenance and improvement of infrastructure necessary to support growth.
 3. **Adopt additional zoning and land use regulations to require contributions of developers for their fair share of required costs of off-tract improvements in all areas permissible by law. Regarding this and other similar objectives, the Board authorized the Board Attorney, Engineer / Planner, and Director of Community Development to meet and discuss proposals for the Board's consideration.**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

- A. Establish a coordinated and comprehensive approach to economic development
1. Maintain the Economic Development Commission, which has been in existence for some time now and has been active in the community.
 2. Involve and include the Chamber of Commerce in consideration of development regulations **that involve and affect the business community of the Township.** (*Such as had been done with the Sign Ordinance.*)
- B. Encourage economic development that is appropriate and compatible.
1. Encourage mixed-use patterns of development at appropriate locations and densities.
 2. Expand the economic base of Lacey Township introducing ratables while maintaining economically and environmentally compatible growth.
 3. Encourage energy efficiency and resource recycling programs.

HOUSING OBJECTIVES

Establish a coordinated and comprehensive approach to concentrate housing development and expand the range of choices with respect to income groups

1. Encourage housing densities based on the carrying capacities of existing infrastructure and natural resources.
2. Encourage a wide range of housing choices at reasonable cost, **including owner-occupied two-family housing.**
3. Streamline the permitting process by the continual review and updating of development and construction codes
4. Support the expansion of housing at a reasonable cost at appropriate sites.
5. Establish and maintain a vigorous code enforcement program.
6. Plan for improved housing design.
7. Cooperate in meeting housing need allocations.
8. Devise strategies in coordinating housing with community services, economic development, and employment opportunities as well as education and public safety efforts.
9. Minimize displacement effects.
10. Establish a relationship between development and housing needs likely to be generated.
11. Develop a plan for the Township of Lacey to meet its adjusted Mount Laurel fair share obligation in providing appropriate areas for low and moderate income housing. *(A COAH Plan has been on file with the N.J. Department of Consumer Affairs since 2000, awaiting certification by the State.)*

TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES

Establish adequate levels of transportation facilities and services to meet current and projected needs

1. Ensure that future planning activities and initiatives provide for existing and anticipated land uses, traffic demands, and regional concerns.
2. Ensure areas are sufficiently linked with major highway and public transportation corridors.
3. Develop by-pass road areas and encourage development to dedicate and construct the roadways wherever possible.
4. Ensure public transportation services are expanded.
5. Devise parking management strategies, as follows:
 - a. Limitation of commercial vehicles in Residential Zones;
 - b. Encourage shared parking facilities in Commercial Zones with cross-access agreements;
 - c. Consider public parking facilities in Historic Preservation areas.
 - d. Address parking needs for public recreational areas.
6. Provide highway access control to facilitate mobility and promote orderly development.
7. Discourage, wherever possible, the construction of cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets where street continuations and links are desirable or required for traffic circulation.
8. Commission a traffic study to analyze the major intersections of the Township and evaluate the need for additional north-south roadways; particularly the use of the former railroad right-of-way and available adjacent lands.
9. Encourage the New Jersey Department of Transportation to evaluate and improve the signalized intersections along Route 9, including the addition of turning lanes and the installation of multi-phased traffic signals.

Revised November 14, 2003:

Comments: The Board notes the pending or perfected dedication of an easement, 12 feet in width, along the westerly side of the former railroad right-of-way to Ocean County for the purpose of developing a County-wide "rail-trail", and finds that action to be consistent with the Circulation Element of the Lacey Township Master Plan in that it continues to allow the consideration of the former railroad right-of-way and available adjacent lands for use as a by-pass road, coupled with a walkway / bikeway, which, through appropriate planning and construction techniques, would not unreasonably interfere with the existing land uses adjacent to the right-of-way in both Residential and Commercial Zones.

June 4, 2003
Revised November 14, 2003

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