

CONNAUGHT HILL

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

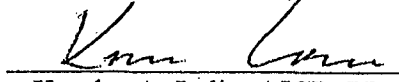
City of Lambertville
County of Hunterdon

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Adopted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A: 12A-1,
the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law

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BACKGROUND

The City of Lambertville Council directed the Planning Board, pursuant to a Resolution adopted on February 20, 2001, to conduct a preliminary investigation regarding the area known as Connaught Hill Commons within the City as to whether such area was in need of redevelopment per criteria established at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq., known as the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law". The Planning Board considered a Preliminary Investigation prepared by Brian M. Slaugh, P.P., AICP of Clarke, Caton and Hintz on May 2, 2001. The identified area consisted of property bounded by Route 179, Grant Avenue, Coryell Street and the City boundary (see Acquisition Map) and encompassed Blocks 1086-1089 and 1092-1094. The Planning Board recommended the City Council officially delineate the aforementioned area as a redevelopment area and a redevelopment plan be prepared. The City Council adopted a Resolution on May 21, 2001 accepting the Planning Board's recommendation in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq., designating the area as being in need of redevelopment and directing the Planning Board to prepare a redevelopment plan.

The preliminary investigation report indicates that Connaught Hill experiences land use patterns, such as diversity of ownership, lack of infrastructure, and interspersed areas of blight, that have prevented an effective mode of acquiring and developing approximately three (3) total acres of vacant land within the existing Commons neighborhood. In addition, the City of Lambertville's 2001 Reexamination of the Master Plan, dated January 10, 2001 has specifically identified the Commons area of Connaught Hill as a prime site for redevelopment opportunities.

For these reasons the City of Lambertville has authorized this Redevelopment Plan for the Commons area of Connaught Hill with the purpose of providing a comprehensive redevelopment effort designed to ensure coordinated and harmonious growth within the designated redevelopment area. The Redevelopment Plan takes into consideration the surrounding neighborhood character, the existing surrounding land uses and the City's land use goals for this area.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL SETTING

The Connaught Hill Redevelopment Area (Area) is located in the northeastern area of Lambertville. The Commons neighborhood of West Amwell Township is located to the east of the Area and is bounded by Route 179 to the north, Grant Avenue to the west and Coryell Road to the south. The land uses immediately surrounding the Area are generally residential and commercial in nature. There is a large area of vacant land to the southeast and southwest of the Area. When her husband was President, Lady Bird Johnson, as a means of promoting the development of housing lower income households, originally designated Connaught Hill for a pilot federal development program.

LAND USE PATTERNS

The total land area of the Area is approximately thirteen (13) acres in size. The predominant land use in the Area is residential, which accounts for approximately 70% of total acreage or nine (9) acres. There is one lot that contains a facility for religious use. The remaining land area, which is approximately three (3) acres, is vacant land. The existing residential lots in the Area range in size from 3,125 square feet to 7,500 square feet. There is no real pattern of architectural character present in the Area. However, there are many examples of good quality construction and a diverse representation of architectural styles in the Area.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN CONSISTENCY

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-7 et seq., the Redevelopment Plan must contain planning methods for the development, redevelopment and/or rehabilitation of the Area indicating the following items:

1. *The relationship of the redevelopment plan to definite local objectives concerning appropriate land uses, density of population, and improved traffic, public transportation, public utilities, recreational facilities, community facilities and other public improvements.*

The Master Plan of a municipality provides the best source for the description of local objectives. The City's planning documents that were perused in order to determine substantial consistency of the redevelopment plan with the local objectives include the Reexamination of the Master Plan dated January 10, 2001, the Land Use Plan Element dated March 1998, the Housing Plan Element dated February 27, 1995, and the Environmental Resource Inventory dated 1991. The objectives that directly relate to the redevelopment area are as follows:

Appropriate Land Uses

- Encourage compatible land uses;
- Protect natural resources such as steep slopes;
- Facilitate new types of housing for seniors;
- Facilitate access to a variety of housing to meet different income, aesthetic and other personal requirements of the City's present and future population
- Encourage community designs goals such as;
 - Provide building products that are compatible with the surrounding character
 - Promote a strong feeling of community
 - Inspire innovative development
 - Provide a diversity of high quality architectural style
 - Continue the virtues of well designed buildings
 - Vary façade and building footprints
 - Encourage detached garages

The redevelopment plan is substantially consistent with the aforementioned local objectives. The proposed uses permitted in the redevelopment area are similar to the present uses in the existing neighborhood. Steep slopes will not be affected because the majority of development, redevelopment and rehabilitation will occur within an existing disturbed area that does not contain substantial natural resources. In addition, the types of dwelling units contemplated for the redevelopment area provides a product that would be complementary to the existing neighborhood, facilitate access to a housing style that may be attractive to seniors and varying income types and would further the community design goals.

Population Densities

- The Land Use Plan Element and the Reexamination of the Master Plan recommended that a reduction in the permitted density in the "three hill area" is warranted to alleviate potential congestion issues within the lowlands of the City

The proposed densities that would result in the redevelopment area would be consistent with the intent of the Master Plan objectives. The recommendation to reduce densities within the "three hill areas" focused on the R-3 zoning district, which contained larger pieces of vacant land. The underlying zoning district for the Area is R-1 and was not specifically targeted for a reduction in density. As indicated above the Area is primarily developed and any new development would consist primarily of infill construction and rehabilitation. The existing density permitted by the present zoning ordinance allows 4.2 dwelling units per acre. The

proposed density at build out of the redevelopment area would be 5.6 dwelling units per acre.

Improved Traffic

- Master Plan Findings:
 - Land use density directly affects traffic through transportation demand
 - Public transportation does not exist
 - The hill areas contain steep slopes that require reliance on a vehicle
 - Result of these factors result in an increase in traffic
- The Master Plan documents were concerned primarily with the effects of traffic on Route 29.

The Area has ingress and egress access to Route 179, which is a four-lane highway that currently experiences less traffic than Route 29. The increase in traffic with the development of the Area would not create a substantial impact to the Route 179 corridor. The Area will have little effect on the Route 29 corridor congestion because Route 179 would be the main road of travel to access the central business district of the City. Therefore, it is found that the Area is consistent with these provisions of the Master Plan.

Improved Utilities

- Proposed development should be coordinated with proposed new and/or improved infrastructure improvements to decrease potential flooding of the Lambertville Public School.
- Master Plan finding:
 - Accessibility to public water in the Connaught Hill area is in doubt and may not be feasible

The Area is upstream of Lambertville Public School and therefore any additional development would impact the school area. The City has recently received federal funding towards the improvement and provision of storm water facilities, which will be constructed to help alleviate the flooding situation that occurs down stream of the Area. In addition, any proposed development within the Area would be required to either provide the required storm water facilities or contribute the pro-rata share of the required improvements.

The Area is currently serviced by individual wells as a source of drinking water and the adjacent Commons neighborhood in West Amwell Township does not contain public water or sewer service. The utility service for a higher density development that contains lot sizes of ranging

in size from 3,125 square feet to 7,500 square feet as proposed in the Area should not rely upon individual private wells for drinking water. The Area requires a public water source or an alternate source of potable water rather than relying on individual private wells. The likelihood of alleviating a potential health problem would be better realized if a concerted redevelopment effort was performed as opposed to individual efforts. The Area is substantially consistent with the aforementioned goals and findings of the Master Plan.

Recreation/Community Facilities

- Creation of new public park areas for passive and active recreation
- Provide recreation opportunities for younger people
- Creation of new open space should be designed with specific functions

The development of a park and playground is proposed for the Area and therefore in compliance with the Master Plan objectives.

2. *The redevelopment plan should indicate the proposed land uses and building requirements and identify its relationship to the pertinent municipal development regulations.*

The current underlying zoning district for the Area is the R-1 zoning district. The permitted uses within this zoning district include the following:

- a. Single family detached dwellings on a minimum 7,500 square foot lot
- b. Emergency services facilities
- c. Public, parochial and private schools for academic instruction
- d. Parks and recreation
- e. Conservation
- f. Municipal use
- g. Cemetery

The Redevelopment Plan creates an overlay redevelopment district the benefits of which are available to redevelopers designated in accordance with this Redevelopment Plan. The overlay redevelopment district is in furtherance of a comprehensive redevelopment scheme sought to be implemented by this Redevelopment Plan, and it permits designated redevelopers to develop within a portion of the Area at a higher density with smaller lot sizes while requiring a building product that preserves and enhances the existing neighborhood character. Where a discrepancy occurs between the redevelopment district regulations and the Zoning Ordinance, the redevelopment district regulations shall be followed. This overlay redevelopment district shall be referred to as Residential Option 3 Overlay Redevelopment District and the provisions thereof are as follows:

Residential Option 3 Overlay Redevelopment District. Within those lands marked as Residential Option 3 Overlay Redevelopment District on the Amended Zoning Map, which is hereby amended to reflect same, an application for development may be submitted to the Planning Board that conforms with the below regulations as well as all other applicable regulations of the City's Zoning Ordinance. The intent of the overlay redevelopment district is to enable effective development of vacant sites and rehabilitation of existing dwellings.

1. Additional permitted uses. In addition to the uses otherwise permitted in the R-1 District, the following additional uses shall be permitted:
 - a. Attached single-family dwellings provided the total number of units does not exceed a maximum of fifty (50) percent of all housing types in the redevelopment district.
2. Restriction on conditional uses. No development utilizing the provisions of the Residential Option 3 Overlay Redevelopment District shall include any conditional use permitted in Section 403.4 of the City's zoning ordinance.
3. General Regulations. The following general regulations shall apply to any Residential Option 3 Overlay Redevelopment District development:
 - a. All development shall be serviced by public sewer and public water or other acceptable alternate source of a potable water supply. Individual private wells are not permitted as an acceptable source of potable water.
 - b. Each development application within the redevelopment district shall not designate more than fifty (50) percent of the total proposed dwelling units as attached single family dwellings.

4. Area, Yard, Height and Coverage Requirements. The following regulations shall apply to each lot in the Residential Option 3 Overlay Redevelopment District:

Standard	Single Family Detached Dwelling	Single Family Semi-Detached Dwelling
Minimum Lot Size	6,250 s.f.	3,125 s.f.
Minimum Lot Frontage	50 ft.	25 ft.
Minimum Lot Width	50 ft.	25 ft.
Maximum Building Coverage	55%	65%
Maximum Lot Coverage	75%	85%
Principal Building Minimum Yard Depths and Height Limitations		
Front Yard	10 ft. or prevailing	10 ft. or prevailing
Side Yard	5 ft.	0 ft., common wall; 5 ft. otherwise
Rear Yard	15 ft.	15 ft.
Maximum Height	35 ft. or 2 ½ stories, whichever is less	35 ft. or 2 ½ stories, whichever is less
Accessory Building Minimum Yard Depths and Height Limitations		
Front Yard	Prohibited	Prohibited
Side Yard	1 ft.*	1 ft.*
Rear Yard	3 ft.	3 ft.
Maximum Height	14 ft.	14 ft.

NOTES:

* No side yard setback requirement if a shared garage is proposed

** See attached exhibits for sample lot layouts

5. Additional Requirements. The following additional requirements shall apply to Residential Option 3 Overlay Redevelopment District developments:
- Rehabilitation and additions to existing residential structures including but not limited to those listed on the Acquisition Map must adhere to the setback and lot coverage requirements outlined above. Rehabilitation work shall not destroy the distinctive character of the property nor alter any historic or architectural features. Contemporary designs for new construction in the neighborhood and additions to existing buildings shall not be discouraged if the design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the building or the surrounding neighborhood.

- b. Façade articulation and materials: All visibly exposed sides of a building shall have an articulated base course and cornice. A cornice, which terminates or caps the top of a building wall shall project horizontally from the vertical building wall plane and should be ornamented with moldings, brackets and other details. The middle section of a building shall be horizontally divided at the floor, lintel or sill levels with belt or stringcourses. The predominant building material for exterior cladding shall be compatible with historically appropriate materials found in the City of Lambertville. Historically appropriate materials may include painted wood siding or masonry. Generally, artificial stone, artificial brick veneer, or asbestos and asphalt shingles are inappropriate. Artificial siding may be used only if the siding is well designed and is four inches in width.
- c. Trim: All buildings shall incorporate ornamental details such as cornices, brackets, pilasters, railings, corner boards, finials, bargeboards, and window and door casings. Trimming materials may include wood, cast iron, terra cotta, stone, tile or brick.
- d. Windows: The number, size and location are a major element of style and give character to the building. All windows shall be proportioned vertically (2:1) to square (1:1) on the surface. Windows shall be double hung insulated wooden sash and frames. Modern window features such as plastic and metal awnings should not be used. Storm windows should have wooden or painted metal frames.
- e. Stoops, Porches and Stairs: All residential development shall incorporate stoops, porches, and stairs along all frontages.
- f. Garages and Parking: Alleys shall be encouraged where possible, off-street parking shall be accessible via an alley. If an alley is not provided, new garages should be detached from the house and located to the rear of the property and at least 10 feet behind the front façade of the house. Garage construction should be compatible in scale and material with the principal house. Off-street spaces should be as inconspicuous as possible and screened from the street by landscaping.
- g. Site Orientation: The primary façade of all buildings shall contain the primary entrance and shall face the street. The principal orientation shall be parallel to the street onto which they front.

- h. Building Mass: Wherever possible; residential buildings shall be elevated, a minimum of 18" above grade level and shall incorporate either raised concrete pads or a raised wood joist floor with a perimeter masonry foundation. The exterior of two-family dwellings shall be designed to appear as a single building. Each entrance shall have a separately designed entrance/porch/exterior stair.
- i. Roof design and material: All roofs shall be pitched. Functional and decorative features of the roof including eaves, cornices, chimneys, dormers, cupolas, gutters and flashing are encouraged. All features shall be compatible with the building's colors, style and materials.
- j. Walls, fences and hedges: Walls and fences shall be architecturally compatible with the style, materials and colors of the principal building on the same lot.
- k. Additional requirements and performance standards according to Article V of the City's Zoning Ordinance shall be followed when not in conflict with the provisions of the redevelopment district regulations.

- 3. *The redevelopment plan shall provide adequate provisions for 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 to them in the existing local housing market.*

The relocation of residents necessitated by public acquisition of private property shall comply with all applicable laws, to the maximum extent feasible.

4. *The redevelopment plan shall identify any property, which is proposed to be acquired.*

The following parcels have been identified on the Acquisition Map as properties to be acquired:

- * Block 1086
Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- * Block 1087
Lots 1, 7.01, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15
- * Block 1088
Lots 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21
- * Block 1089
Lots 10, 10.01, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18
- * Block 1092
Lots 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13
- * Block 1093
Lots 2.01, 3, 4
- * Block 1094
Lots 1, 2, 2.01, 3

The following properties are identified as "2 years to rehabilitate or be acquired" on the Acquisition Map: This category will allow owners of these properties two (2) years from the date of adoption of this Plan to bring these properties up to code. If, within the time frame, the properties are not brought up to code, and so certified by the City's code officials, then these properties will become eligible for acquisition by the City.

- * Block 1087, Lot 16
- * Block 1093, Lot 1 and 2

The redevelopment entity shall sell, lease or otherwise convey to a designated redeveloper(s) for redevelopment, subject to the restrictions, controls and requirements of this Redevelopment Plan, all or any part(s) or portion(s) of land within the Redevelopment Area which becomes available for disposal as a result of public action under this Redevelopment Plan.

5. *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 Plan adopted pursuant to the "State Planning Act," P.L. 1985, c.398 (C.52:18A-196 et. al.).*

The Commons area of Connaught Hill extends into neighboring West Amwell Township. The general land use within this area in West Amwell Township is single-family detached dwelling units on approximately 9,375 square foot lots serviced by private well and septic systems. As indicated above, higher density development adjacent to the existing Commons neighborhood in West Amwell Township has a potential to create health issues. This Redevelopment Plan requires public sewer and public water or other acceptable potable water source, except for individual private wells, to service any new development. This requirement will help to alleviate the existing condition of having septic systems located on smaller lot sizes where private individual wells may become contaminated. It is recommended that the City continue to pursue a regional partnership with West Amwell Township and help to provide sewer service to the adjacent residential dwelling units within the Commons neighborhood to preserve water quality within this neighborhood. This Redevelopment Area is in agreement with the adjacent land use classifications provided for in the West Amwell Master Plan.

The redevelopment plan is substantially consistent with the Hunterdon County Master Plan and the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). The Hunterdon County Growth Management Plan promotes sensitive expansion of existing villages and hamlets. Although the county does not have a specific policy relating to urban infill or redevelopment, the City of Lambertville remains consistent with promoting sensitive expansion of the existing center by concentrating growth in existing neighborhoods rather than destroying natural resources or agricultural land to accommodate growth.

Lambertville was identified as an existing town in the SDRP. The SDRP defines a town as a Center that has an urban density usually over 1,000 persons per square mile and contains interrelated mixed uses with neighborhoods providing a mix of residential housing types. The SDRP promotes new growth to occur in existing centers where there is sufficient infrastructure capacity. In addition, the SDRP specifically promotes urban revitalization in distressed communities. The goal of this policy is to provide public investments and commitments in order to leverage private capital in the formation of housing and comprehensive public services to enhance the social opportunities of the community. The

redevelopment plan will help the City to continue the realization of these goals by meeting the State's goals and objectives for development and redevelopment.

SUMMARY

As evidenced above, this Redevelopment Plan for the Commons neighborhood of Connaught Hill within the City of Lambertville is substantially consistent with the City Master Plan, the West Amwell Master Plan, the Hunterdon County Master Plan and the State Development and Redevelopment Plan pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A: 12A-7 et seq.

PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

Designation of Redeveloper

In order for a party to request the redevelopment entity to acquire property in the Area for redevelopment and/or to utilize the development standards in the Residential Option 3 Overlay Redevelopment District, such party must be designated by the redevelopment entity to carry out such redevelopment.

Potential redevelopers will be required to submit to the redevelopment entity for review and approval prior to the designation of a redeveloper(s) and prior to the redevelopment entity's exercise of its powers of property acquisition and conveyance the following:

- documentation evidencing financial responsibility and capability with respect to development proposed,
- estimated total development cost,
- estimated time schedule for start and completion of development,
- conceptual site plans, subdivision plans, preliminary plans, outline specification and elevations, sufficient in scope to demonstrate the design, architectural concepts, bedroom distribution and size of dwelling units, parking, landscaping, active and/or passive recreation space.

In the event that the redevelopment entity determines to designate a redeveloper to carry out redevelopment in accordance with this Redevelopment Plan, the redeveloper and/or the redevelopment entity shall enter into an agreement addressing all pertinent issues related to the implementation of the plan presented, including, but not limited to those provisions required under the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law.

Prior to the commencement of construction of any improvements in the Area by a designated redeveloper, final plans and specifications must be submitted to the redevelopment entity by the redeveloper for approval to insure conformance with the approved preliminary submission.

The redevelopment entity shall make a good faith effort to solicit redevelopment proposals from owners of property within the Area. This obligation shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, notifying such property owners of the adoption of the Redevelopment Plan and summarizing the goals of the Redevelopment Plan and how such property owners may participate in its implementation.

Planning Board Review of Redevelopment Proposals

Site plan and/or subdivision review, if required, shall be conducted by the City of Lambertville Planning Board pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq. Site plan applications may be submitted in sequenced phases unless otherwise provided for in a redeveloper agreement.

Deviation Requests

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 or 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 the Redevelopment Plan, would result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to, or exceptional and undue hardship upon, the developer of such property. The Planning Board may also grant such relief in an application relating to a specific piece of property where the purposes of this Redevelopment Plan would be advanced by a deviation from the strict requirements of this Plan and the benefits of the deviation would outweigh any detriments. No relief may be granted under the terms of this section unless such deviation or relief can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the Redevelopment Plan.