

**TOWNSHIP OF MONROE PLANNING BOARD**

**RESOLUTION**

**AMENDMENT OF LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT OF THE MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, on or about July 28, 2011 the Monroe Township Planning Board adopted the Master Plan prepared by Mark A. Remsa, P.P. for the comprehensive development of the Township of Monroe and in compliance with the requirements of the Municipal Land Use Law NJSA 40:55D-28; and

WHEREAS, at the time of adoption of said Master Plan, it was noted that the Master Plan must be subject to constant review and updating in light of the changing needs, and further that the Planning Board should review each year the concepts and ideals as related to development that have actually occurred during the year; and

WHEREAS, Mark A. Remsa, P.P., L.L.A., Planning Consultant to the Monroe Township Planning Board made a presentation and issued a report that the Monroe Township Master Plan Land Use Element be amended to reflect the changes as indicated in the 2014 Master Plan Amendment Land Use Plan Element dated May 5, 2014 attached hereto and made a part hereof.; and

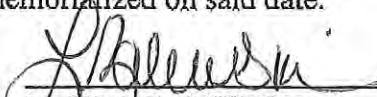
WHEREAS, the Monroe Township Planning Board in consultation with its legal counsel, Board Engineer, and Board Planner, has reviewed the above referenced report and believes that the recommendations contained therein are in the best interest of the Township of Monroe; and

WHEREAS, Public Notice, by publication in the official newspaper of Monroe Township and notice to the County Planning Board has been given pursuant to NJSA 40:55D-13, and in compliance thereof.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Monroe Township Planning Board that, based upon the presentation of Mark A. Remsa, P.P., and 2014 Master Plan Amendment Land Use Plan Element report which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, the Land Use Plan Element of the Monroe Township Master Plan is hereby amended to reflect the changes shown in the 2014 Master Plan Amendment Land Use Plan Element report dated May 5, 2014 attached hereto and made a part hereof; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Monroe Township Master Plan Map be revised to reflect the above referenced amendment.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the Resolution adopted by the Monroe Township Planning board on May 22, 2014, and memorialized on said date.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
LAURA ZALEWSKI, Board Secretary

# 2014 MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT

TOWNSHIP OF MONROE  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

Prepared for:  
Monroe Township Planning Board  
One Municipal Plaza  
Monroe Township, N.J. 08831

Prepared by:  
Mark A. Remsa, P.P., L.L.A.  
10 Dewberry Court  
Mount Laurel, N.J. 08054

Adopted May 22, 2014

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Mark A. Remsa, N.J.P.P. Lic. No 4039

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# **2014 MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT**

## **Township Mayor and Council**

**Richard Pucci, Mayor**  
**Gerald W. Tamburro, Council President**  
**Leslie Koppel, Council Vice-President**  
**Stephen Dalina, Councilman**  
**Michael Leibowitz, Councilman**  
**Elizabeth "Betty" Schneider, Councilwoman**

**Wayne R. Hamilton, Business Administrator**  
**Sharon Doerfler, Township Clerk**

## **Township Planning Board**

**David Rothman, Chairman**  
**Len Levene, Vice Chairman**

**Dr. Lloyd Kalugin**  
**Michael Leibowitz, Councilman**  
**Andy Paluri**  
**Karen Polidoro**  
**Richard Pucci, Mayor**  
**John Riggs, Planning Dir.**  
**Judy Sforza**  
**Ken Chiarella, Alternate 1**  
**Louis Caron, Alternate 2**

**Laura Zalewski, Board Secretary**  
**Mark A. Remsa, P.P., Board Administrator**  
**and Board Planner**  
**Jerome Convery, Esq., Board Attorney**  
**Mark Rasimowicz, P.E., Board Engineer**

# **2014 MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT**

## **Master Plan Steering Committee**

**Carol Damiani, Zoning Board of Adjustment Chairman**

**Michael Leibowitz, Councilman**

**Karen Polidoro, Planning Board and Environmental Commission  
Member**

**David Rothman, Planning Board Chairman**

**Gerald W. Tamburro, Council President**

### **Staff:**

**Jerome Convery, Esq., Planning Board Attorney**

**Mark Rasimowicz, P.E., Planning Board Engineer**

**Mark A. Remsa, Planning Board Administrator  
and Board Planner**

**John Riggs, Planning Director**



## **INTRODUCTION**

In planning for the future of the Township of Monroe, the Planning Board of Monroe Township (Planning Board) continually strives to maintain a balance between residential and non-residential growth and development while addressing current and future needs and statutory mandates to provide for various types of land uses. The Planning Board has identified an opportunity to refine the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan by changing residential land use categories for lands located in the northwestern portion of the municipality. The Planning Board has become aware of the fact that there is a shortage of lands zoned for the development of a certain type of planned retirement community. To address this shortage, the Planning Board has prepared this amendment to the Land Use Plan Element.

## **ANALYSIS**

In 2011, the Planning Board adopted a new Land Use Plan Element recommending certain lands be changed from R-3A Residential to PRC-2 Planned Residential Community. The change added about 17 acres to amount of land that could be developed as PRC-2 and was meant to add onto an existing PRC-2 development in the southeastern portion of the municipality along Spotswood-Englishtown Road (CR 613). Other parcels of land in Monroe Township zoned PRC-2 have been developed with planned retirement communities, thus resulting in no additional development potential for this type of retirement community.

In the 2013 Land Use Plan Amendment recommendations were made for changing zoning designations of certain lands from R-30 Residential land use to LI Light Industrial land use. This area was located in the northwestern portion of the municipality next to the municipal boundary shared with South Brunswick Township along portions of Cranbury-South River Road (CR 535), Rhode Hall Road (CR 522) and Docks Corner Road. During the public hearing process, members of the public disagreed with this recommended change from residential land use to nonresidential land use. In response to this public input, the Planning Board decided not to recommend this land use change.

In investigating the issue about the supply of lands zoned PRC-2, the Planning Board has identified undeveloped lands in the northwestern portion of the municipality as having the potential to be changed from R-30 to PRC-2. The lands have a significant amount of landmass, about 172 acres, that could accommodate a PRC-2 development of about 600 dwelling units. The lands, which are mostly agricultural fields with wooded lands, are identified as Block 81, Lots 3, 4, 5.03, 7.01, 7.03, 7.04 and 8 as shown on the Land Use Plan Amendment Map. These lands front along portions of CR 535, CR 522 and Docks Corner Road. To the east, southeast and south of the lands subject to the recommended changes are areas developed with detached single-family dwellings among wooded lands. Northeast of these lands are more agricultural fields and woodlands. To the north are industrial developments in South Brunswick. To the



northwest are agricultural lands. Industrial development exists to the west and southwest in Monroe. With sufficient landscape buffers provided around the perimeter of the lands recommended for PRC-2 land uses, a planned retirement community could be developed to provide a transition from existing industrial uses in the area to existing residential areas. The buffers would also provide screening and privacy to the future residents of the retirement community. Furthermore, the development of a retirement community on the subject lands would be compatible with the surrounding existing residential land uses.

With regard to the lands subject to the recommended land use and zone change, about one-third of the lands were approved for the development 166 detached single-family dwellings under the R-30 zone (development name known as "North Point Estates") several years ago. To date, the approval for these residential dwellings has not progressed beyond the "preliminary" level. This lack of progress presents the opportunity to re-think the development of the subject lands.

Certain benefits will accrue to Monroe Township as a result of developing the subject lands under PRC-2 zoning versus R-30 zoning. The Township Engineer analyzed trip generation under both zoning scenarios (see Appendix for Township Engineer's analysis summary). Under PRC-2 zoning about 600 age-restricted dwelling units could be developed, and these units would have a morning peak traffic generation of 110 trips and an afternoon peak of 172 trips. The 166 detached single-family dwellings would generate 148 morning peak trips and 199 afternoon peak trips. It is apparent that developing the lands under PRC-2 there would have less traffic impact to the local road system.

In planning for the future, the Planning Board is always challenged with implications that land use planning decisions have on municipal and school district budgets. The recommended change from R-30 to PRC-2 will have positive impacts on the budget of the Monroe Township school district. The Township Engineer prepared an analysis of the recommended land use change that would replace the development of 166 detached single-family dwellings with 600 age-restricted dwellings (see Appendix for Township Engineer's analysis summary). His analysis found: the PRC-2 development would generate zero (0) school-age children whereas the R-30 development would generate 119 school-age children; the PRC-2 development would be assessed at \$240 million generating \$3.2 million in school taxes whereas the R-30 development would be assessed at \$99.6 million generating \$1.3 million in school taxes; the PRC-2 development would have no school costs whereas the R-30 development would have \$1.7 million in school costs; and the PRC-2 development would yield a surplus of \$3.2 million to the school district whereas the R-30 development would yield a deficit of \$0.4 million to the school district. In essence, the recommended land use change would yield a fiscal benefit to the school district.

Developing the lands under the PRC-2 zone would create an attractive age-restricted housing development at one of the gateways to Monroe Township. The land development ordinance requires similar age-restricted developments to have well-landscaped buffers around the perimeters of the developments. Evidence of the positive aesthetic impact of providing such buffers can be observed throughout Monroe Township. Developing the subject lands under the PRC-2 would provide an aesthetic benefit accruing to the public traveling County Routes 522 and 535 that are a major gateway to Monroe Township.

The 2011 Master Plan set forth important goals and objectives for the future growth, development and preservation of Monroe Township. Those goals and objectives hold true for this Land Use Plan Amendment. Given the foregoing analysis and the advancement of master plan goals and objectives of the 2011 Master Plan, the following recommendations are made.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Change the land use category for Block 81, Lots 3, 4, 5.03, 7.01, 7.03, 7.04 and 8 from R-30 Residential to PRC-2 Planned Retirement Community. See Amended Land Use Map for the location of the recommended land use category change.
2. Recommend that the subject lands are developed with landscape buffers in accordance with PRC-2 requirements.
3. Recommend that the development of the subject lands under the PRC-2 zone provide primary access points to CR 522 and Docks Corner Road. During the development application review process, access to CR 535 should be studied carefully due to the heavily travelled nature of the county road. One possibility is limiting access along CR 535 to "right-in and right-out"; another is limiting access all together to CR 535. Furthermore, studies should be conducted by the applicant to determine whether a traffic signal is warranted at the intersection of CR 522 and the access to the PRC-2 development.

### **COMPARISON WITH OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

The Municipal Land Use Law requires municipal master plans to be prepared with consideration of their relationship with the plans of contiguous municipalities, county plans and the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). This section of the Land Use Plan Element Amendment reviews the relationship of Monroe Township's master plan with the plan of South Brunswick Township that is contiguous to lands of the subject land use plan changes that are located the northwestern corner of Monroe Township. The recommendations for the northwestern portion of Monroe do not impact South Brunswick Township. The recommendations of this Land Use Plan Element Amendment are compared with the *Middlesex County Growth Management Strategy Report* and the 2001 SDRP.



*South Brunswick Township, Middlesex County*

The area considered for new PRC-2 land uses are adjacent to lands zoned for light industrial use in South Brunswick. These lands in Monroe consist of about 172 acres of which a portion fronts along CR 535 that is shared with South Brunswick. Since these lands are substantial in size, they can easily accommodate the required landscaped buffers that will screen and protect an age-restricted development from the light industrial lands across the county highway. The recommended PRC-2 lands will provide a transition from the light industrial lands to the existing lower-density residential developments that lie to the east and southeast of the subject lands in Monroe. The recommended land use change will be compatible with the light industrial uses in neighboring South Brunswick.

*Middlesex County*

Middlesex County prepared the *Middlesex County Growth Management Strategy Report* that identified, under its Phase I, the need to provide infrastructure in the form of sanitary sewers and roads to accommodate existing and future development in Monroe Township. The recommendations for the northwestern portion of Monroe Township consider the extension of infrastructure to support the planned age-restricted housing development.

*New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan*

The State Planning Commission adopted the current New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) in 2001. Most of Monroe Township is designated Planning Area 2 Suburban (PA2), which coincides with the areas of the community planned for development that will be served by public sanitary sewers and water lines. Smaller areas in the northern portion of Monroe are designated Planning Area 1 Metropolitan (PA1) that is planned for more intensive, compact development. PA1 coincides Monroe's zoning districts for more compact development (R-7.5 and R-5 Residential and NC Neighborhood Commercial), which are served by sanitary sewers and water lines. The area subject to the recommendations to expand the senior housing zone is located within PA2, which contemplates more intensive development.

The southern-central portion of Monroe is designated Planning Area 4 Rural (PA4), which coincides with the rural residential areas (RR-FLP Rural Residential-Farmland Preservation).

The area along Manalapan Brook is designated Planning Area 5 Environmentally Sensitive, which coincides with the FHC Flood Hazard Conservation district in Monroe.

A new SDRP is long overdue. As of writing this master plan it is uncertain whether the State Planning Commission will adopt a new SDRP soon. Monroe Township must be vigilant in ensuring that any changes to the SDRP advance the Township's master plan.

**APPENDIX**

[THIS WILL CONTAIN TOWNSHIP ENGINEER'S ANALYSIS SUMMARY]



# Monroe Township Master Plan Amendment

Mark J. Rasimowicz, PE, PP, CME  
Planning Board Engineer  
Township of Monroe

May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014

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## Vision Statement

- ◆ The proposed master plan amendment will create a Planned Retirement Community (PRC-2) of 600 units.
- ◆ The property is currently designated as Medium Density Residential and zoned R-30 (residential  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre). The current zoning can yield up to 197 single family homes. A subdivision of 166 single family has preliminary approval.
- ◆ The Master Plan Committee views the proposed amendment as a viable alternative to a large single family subdivision.

## Goal and Objective

- ◆ Compare the R-30 vs. PRC-2 build out.
- ◆ Compare traffic implications.
- ◆ Compare property tax implications.

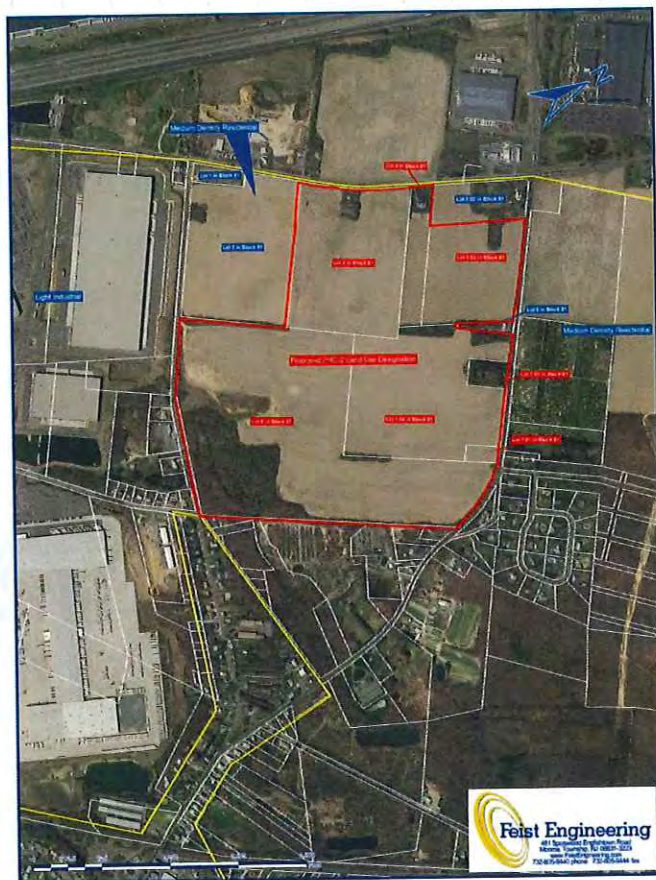
## Today's Situation

- ◆ The properties in question are located in the northwestern quadrant of Monroe Township. Roughly bounded by Cranbury South River Road (CR535) to the west, Docks Corner Road to the south and Rhode Hall Road (CR522) to the north. The properties total 172 acres in area, predominantly produce farms.
- ◆ The land has a general development plan approval for 166 single family homes. This subdivision is known as North Point Estates.



## Today's Situation (cont.)

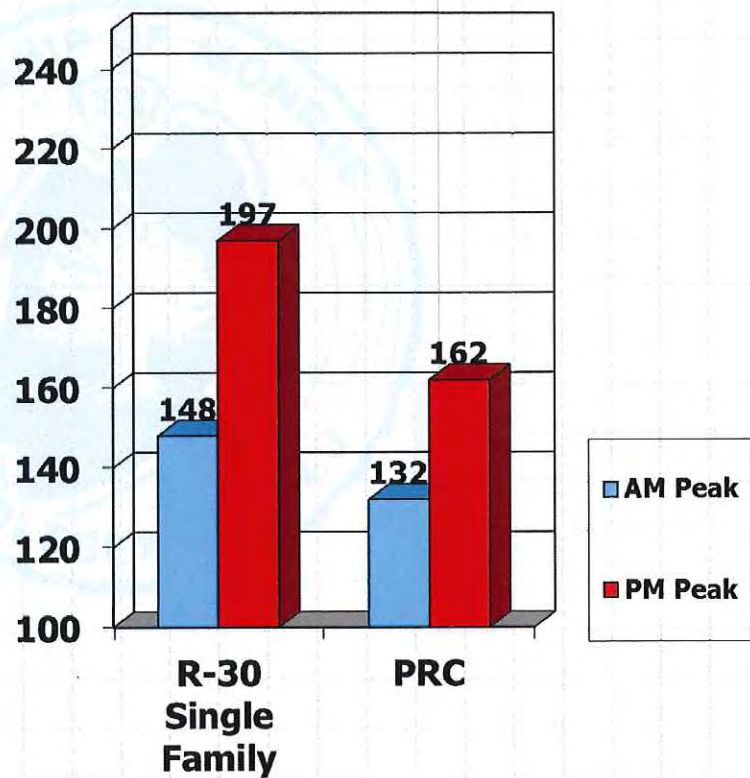
- ◆ Aerial Imagery of Subject Properties.
- ◆ NJDEP GIS 2012



May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## Traffic Generation

- ◆ Trip generation is from the “Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2012”.
- ◆ Data Field verified by trip counts conducted by FEI staff.



## Property Tax Analysis

Project	Average Assessed Value	Total Assessment	School Tax Revenue \$1.3434 per \$100 of Assessed Value*	School Children	School Costs \$14,500 per student*	Surplus (Deficit)
166 Single Family Homes	\$600,000	\$99,600,000	\$1,338,026	119	\$1,725,500	(\$387,474)
600 Unit PRC	\$400,000	\$240,000,000	\$3,224,160	0	\$0	\$3,224,160

\* - Monroe Township Board of Education Budget Data

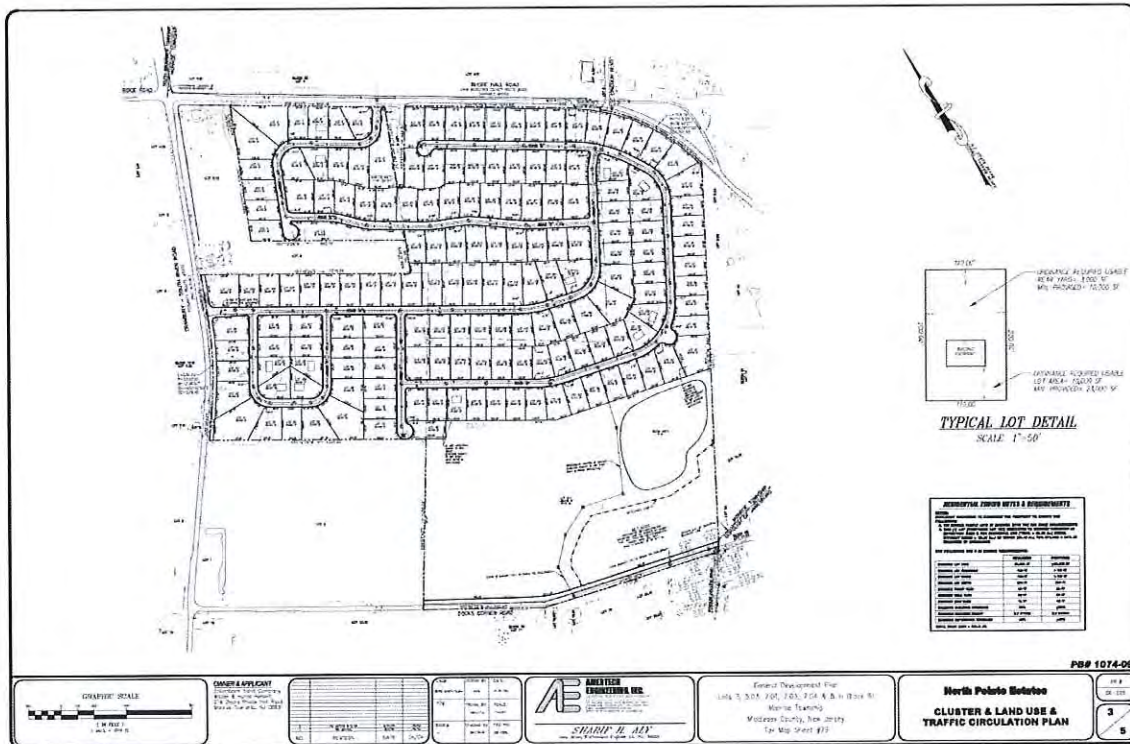


## Available Options (cont.)

### ◆ Do Nothing Alternative

- The Planning Board has the option of doing nothing. That is, to leave the property as it is designated, Medium Density Residential. This action will result in the build out of North Point Estates (166 single family units).
- This alternative will generate a Property Tax deficit of \$387,474 dollars annually.

# Available Options (cont.) – R-30 Build-out



May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014

## Available Options (cont.)

- ◆ Amend Master Plan from Medium Density Residential to PRC-2.
  - This option will result in the construction of a 600 unit PRC.
  - This alternative will generate a Property Tax surplus of \$3.2 million dollars annually.
  - Traffic generation will be less than the “do nothing” alternative.

## Available Options (cont.) – PRC Conceptual Drawing



May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014



## Recommendation

- ◆ It is the recommendation of the Master Plan Committee that the proposed Master Plan Amendment be considered as a viable alternative to a 166 single family home build-out. Further, the Master Plan Committee finds that this amendment is beneficial to Monroe Township from both a traffic generation and property tax standpoint.