

Amendment to the Land Use Element of the Master Plan

Richwood Area

Township of Harrison



Remington & Vernick Engineers, Inc.
232 Kings Highway East
Haddonfield, New Jersey 08033

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Craig F. Remington, L.S., P.P., Vice
President

John J. Cantwell, P.E., P.P.
License# 5199

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INTRODUCTION

The Township of Harrison Planning Board held a public hearing on November 15, 2007 to obtain public input on the following amendment to the Land Use Element of the Township of Harrison Master Plan. The Planning Board adopted this amendment at the close of the public hearing (hereafter “Amendment”).

RECOMMENDED ZONING ORDINANCE AND MAP AMENDMENT

A. Expansion of Rowan University Facilities

Over the next several years, Rowan University is expected to develop lands at the northeast and southeast corners of the interchange of Routes 55 and 322. Part of this proposed development lies in the northeastern corner of Harrison Township. The area at the northeast corner of these roads is planned as a 200-acre research park, which is to be known as the South Jersey Technology Park at Rowan University. This park will include office and laboratory space and conference and training facilities, and its entrance will be less than a half-mile from the interchange of Route 322 and Route 55. The area at the southeastern corner of these arteries will be the location of a Major League Soccer stadium, student housing and retail uses. The University anticipates these developments will be major economic centers. As a result, the University’s expansion will have profound planning impacts on the community.

B. Route 322 Widening

Route 322 is used as a major transportation artery, and experiences significant traffic congestion near its intersection with Route 55. Such problems are compounded during the summer by travelers to the New Jersey shore. The anticipated university development will place an additional burden on this portion of Route 322. To mitigate these current and anticipated conditions, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) has proposed that Route 322 be expanded to four or five lanes from a point approximately 1,000 feet west of its intersection with Barnsboro-Richwood Road (Route 609) to a point approximately 1,000 feet east of its intersection with Lambs Road. To make this project feasible, the lands adjacent to Route 322 where the expansion is planned will need to be acquired to accommodate the construction. Furthermore, lands adjacent to the new artery will need to be redesigned and redeveloped with uses that will be compatible with the proposed roadway.

C. Recent and Proposed Development and Promotion of a Village Center

In recent years, residential development has been proposed near the Route 322/55 interchange, and there are a number of residential developments existing in the vicinity of this interchange. Future development in this area will need to be compatible with these residential uses as well as the development Rowan University is planning. To accommodate and support these projects and

promote beneficial development, Harrison Township is considering a Planned Village Overlay District that will encourage mixed-use, planned development in this area.

D. Master Plan Objectives and Zoning Ordinance

The 1999 Update of the Statement of Goals and Objectives of the Harrison Township Master Plan stated that “the commercial and community needs of each village center and its surrounding residential areas shall be provided in a village center. Commercial enterprises outside village centers should be located in the immediate vicinity of the limited access highway interchanges as part of planned commercial developments and discouraged elsewhere in order to avoid the typical sprawl found in most suburban communities.” To achieve this goal, the Master Plan included the following in its list of objectives:

- Provide for a range of commercial activities with the needed space and parking within the village centers to serve the needs of a growing community
- Assure convenience by providing commercial areas of adequate size in relation to the population and their needs
- Promote the development of attractive and safe neighborhood commercial centers which complement adjacent residential areas through the use of landscaping and buffers

In accordance with these goals and objectives, the Township has sought to promote commercial development in its northeastern corner, and has promoted such construction by adopting the following zones for this area: C-55 Flexible Planned Industrial-Commercial (on the east side of Route 55), C-56 Flexible Planned Industrial-Commercial (on the northwestern corner of the interchange), and C-6 Flexible Planned Commercial (at the southwestern corner of the interchange, and adjacent to the north side of Route 322 between Route 609 and Lambs Road), PO – Professional Office (on the southwestern side of Route 322 between Route 609 and Lambs Road), and C-1 Village Center (on the corners west of the Route 609/322 intersection).

E. Recommendation

To promote and support the proposed, planned, mixed-use development described above, and promote planning that is consistent with the Master Plan goals of concentrating in village centers commercial uses that support surrounding residences, this Plan Amendment recommends that a portion of the land adjacent to or in the vicinity of the length of Route 322 proposed for widening be rezoned in the following way:

<u>Block</u>	<u>Lots</u>	<u>Existing Zone</u>	<u>Recommended Zone</u>
20	7	INS (Institutional District)	C-1 (Village Center District)
21	1, 2, 3, 4, 4.01, 4.02, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.01, 12, 13, 14, 15	R-1 (Residence-Agricultural District)	C-1 (Village Center District)

<u>Block</u>	<u>Lots</u>	<u>Existing Zone</u>	<u>Recommended Zone</u>
22	1, 1.01, 1.02, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 11.01, 11.02, 13.01, 16	PO (Professional Office District)	C-1 (Village Center District)
25	10.01, 10.02, 19.01, 19.02, 19.03	R-2 (Residence District)	C-1 (Village Center District)
25	Part of 10 on Rt. 322, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21	C-6 (Flexible Planned Commercial District)	C-1 (Village Center District)
29	6, 6.01, 6.02, 7, 16, 17	R-1 (Residence-Agricultural District)	C-1 (Village Center District)
31	11.06	R-1 (Residence-Agricultural District)	C-1 (Village Center District)

The above rezoning will eliminate the PO Professional Office zone adjacent to Route 322. There is a desire to provide for professional offices in proximity to the proposed adult community in the adjacent AC Adult Community Development zone. This Plan Amendment recommends that those parcels zoned as R-2 in this corner of the Township south of Route 322 be rezoned as PO Professional Office. The specific recommended changes are:

<u>Block</u>	<u>Lots</u>	<u>Existing Zone</u>	<u>Recommended Zone</u>
3	1.01, 8, 9	R-2 (Residence District)	PO (Professional Office District)
22	12.02, 12.03, 12.04	R-2 (Residence District)	PO (Professional Office District)