

Redevelopment Plan Bay Street Station Site Phase 1



Township of Montclair

Prepared by
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REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR BAY STREET STATION SITE
PHASE I: FIRE HEADQUARTERS AND SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

This Redevelopment Plan (the Plan) sets forth the development scheme for two sections of land bounded by Bloomfield Avenue, Pine Street and Glenridge Avenue, known as Lots 5, 6, 7 and 8 in Block 4201 on the Township Tax Maps (see attached tax map excerpt). The Plan is being adopted in phases; Phase I includes the development of a subsidized senior citizen housing building and a municipal fire headquarters. Additional phases of the Plan will be adopted as more details of each of the remaining development components are determined.

In considering development of the subject property which totals approximately 9 acres, the Township Council explored the development process available to municipalities under the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (P.L. 1992, C. 79). The newly-codified laws offer municipalities certain powers to convey land and enter into partnerships with for-profit developers. In March 1999, the Township Council directed the Planning Board to prepare a Preliminary Investigation Report and Map to determine whether the subject properties were eligible for designation as "areas in need of redevelopment". The subject property met several of the eligibility criteria under the state statutes, and the Planning Board's Report recommended designation. On June 1, 1999, the Township Council designated the subject properties and

directed the Planning Board to prepare a Redevelopment Plan. As part of the Plan, the Planning Board commissioned The Mylan Architectural Group to prepare a master site plan depicting a layout of the proposed uses, a copy of which is attached and made a part of this Plan.

BACKGROUND

The subject property is the final piece of a larger urban renewal project that was begun over 20 years ago. Historically, the land was occupied by a variety of residential and commercial properties, railroad tracks, a freight depot and a coal and wood depository. In the 1970s and 80s, the Montclair Redevelopment Agency acquired parcels, cleared land and vacated streets to undertake an adaptive reuse of the historic Lackawanna Train Station for commercial use and to develop market rate and affordable housing. The Pathmark Shopping Center and the adjacent Montclair Mews, a residential condominium housing component, were completed in the 1990s.

The subject properties covered in this Plan, to the east of the relocated Pine Street, were never developed due to the uncertainty of the alignment of the Montclair Connection, a 1,200 foot rail link across Glenridge Avenue joining the Boonton Line with the Montclair Branch. Much of the land remained in New Jersey Transit ownership, and certain municipally-owned land was to be conveyed to NJT as part of an agreement in the 1970s, thereby preventing development for many years. Only temporary use of the site could be made.

Currently occupying the site is a parking lot for rail commuters, a temporary police substation trailer and the Day Nurseries, Inc. modular building.

With the settlement of the Montclair Connection litigation in 1998 and the final determination of the rail alignment through the center of Sherman and Grant Streets, the Township now has the opportunity to develop the site in a comprehensive manner. Although New Jersey Transit will retain ownership of a large portion of the site, it will lease a section west of the rail line to the Township at no cost. The Township will convey a section of municipally-owned land, known as Tax Lot 8 in Block 4201, to a senior housing developer.

In 1997, the Township commissioned Schoor DePalma, Planning consultants, to prepare a Strategic Development Plan for the neighborhood including the subject site. Schoor DePalma worked with a citizen group to formulate a vision for the neighborhood and propose certain uses to be built upon the vacant land. Included in the proposed uses were a public safety center, senior housing, day care center, retail, office, community center and commuter parking deck.

RELATIONSHIP TO LOCAL OBJECTIVES AS TO APPROPRIATE LAND USES, DENSITY OF POPULATION, AND IMPROVED TRAFFIC AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, PUBLIC UTILITIES, RECREATIONAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND OTHER PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS.

With the opening of the Montclair Connection in June 2001 providing availability of Midtown-direct service, it is anticipated that transit ridership will increase and greater demand will be placed on the Bay Street Station than in the past. The next Phases of the Plan will more directly address public

transportation, recreation, and community facilities objectives. Phase I of the Redevelopment Plan addresses two critical community-wide issues: affordable housing and public safety. The 1997 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan highlighted the need for more affordable housing for senior citizens. Although Montclair has two existing federally-funded senior complexes, both have lengthy waiting lists. Affordable housing is repeatedly ranked high among the needs of the elderly. The Housing Element recommended that additional senior citizen housing be built in the Township and identified the subject site as a possible location. A number of developers expressed an interest in constructing senior housing on the site, and after an extensive interview process in early 1999, the United Methodist Homes Corporation was selected as the developer. Co-sponsoring with the Homes are St. Mark's United Methodist Church and First United Methodist Church, both of Montclair. The Homes will construct a 4 story, 48 unit subsidized senior citizen apartment building for people 62 years of age or over who are of very low income (at or below 50% of the Essex County median income adjusted for family size)

The southeastern Pine Street/Glenridge Avenue corner selected for senior housing represents an infill development in a densely developed mixed use neighborhood providing convenient access to transportation, shopping, banks, houses of worship, post office, library, medical and professional offices. It straddles an established residential area—the Pine Street Historic District—and the Montclair Town Center. The Bay Street Station, which will provide midtown-direct train service to Manhattan, is within walking distance, and various NJ

Transit bus routes stop within one block of the site. There will be free hourly transportation on a municipally-operated bus to residents of the facility Monday through Friday.

Parking needs for a senior housing building are less than a non-age-restricted multi-family building, only 1 space per 2 units, thereby generating fewer automobile trips. Architecturally, it will be in keeping with the scale and massing of surrounding residential buildings and will represent appropriate infill development in an already developed neighborhood.

A new municipal fire headquarters will be located at the intersection of Pine Street and Bloomfield Avenue. This facility has been identified in the Township's capital plan for approximately the last 10 years. The existing fire headquarters facility at 647 Bloomfield Avenue, built in 1904, is inadequate to serve the expanding needs of the municipal fire department. Limitations at this site as well as at other firehouses include the lack of proper structural support for fire trucks, lack of training facilities and office space, and difficult apparatus accessibility and maneuvering space.

Several factors were considered in selecting a new fire headquarters site—frontage on a main street where the traffic signalization could be controlled as needed, enough land to provide 5 bays and a training facility for education, and access to streets free of railroad grade crossings. Since Bloomfield Avenue is a major traffic artery, this location also provides us with easy access to Glen Ridge Borough to which we currently provide fire services. Parking for both fire personnel and visitors will be provided on site. The construction of the new fire

headquarters will result in the closing of the Walnut Street Station and the sale of the Portland Place Auxiliary Firehouse currently used for storage. The existing fire headquarters space will be used for Township purposes or as possible rental space.

PROPOSED LAND USES AND BUILDING REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with the Local Housing and Redevelopment Law, this Plan supercedes the current UR Urban Renewal Zone designation currently in place for the four subject tax parcels. It also amends the Montclair Zone Map (see attached ordinance amendment) by indicating on the map the "redevelopment area" to which this Plan applies. This Plan establishes the following zoning requirements for the uses proposed for Phase I.

Senior Citizen Housing	
Maximum Height:	45 feet
Minimum Front Yard Setback:	
Pine Street:	0 feet
Glenridge Avenue:	5 feet
Minimum Rear Yard Setback:	85 feet
Minimum Side Yard Setback:	10 feet
Off-street Parking:	½ space per apartment
Fire Headquarters	
Maximum Height:	52 feet

Minimum Front Yard Setback:

Pine Street: 14 feet

Bloomfield Avenue: 20 feet

Minimum Side Yard Setback: 5 feet (measured to NJT lease line)

PROVISION FOR RELOCATION OF EXISTING USES

There are no structures or uses occupying the section of land in the location of the new fire headquarters. The police substation trailer currently occupying a portion of Lot 8 will be removed.

IDENTIFICATION OF LAND TO BE ACQUIRED

No land will be acquired by the municipality to effectuate the Plan. Lot 6 will be retained by New Jersey Transit and a portion will be leased for no cost to the municipality for development. Lot 8, already under municipal ownership, is to be conveyed to the United Methodist Homes Corporation for development of senior housing.

SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP TO TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

As previously state, the Township's 1997 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan specifically recommended that additional senior citizen housing be constructed in the Township due to the critical need for affordable housing. It suggested the site at the intersection of Glenridge Avenue and Pine Street as a possible location.

As far back as 1978, the Township's Master Plan highlighted the need for improved facilities for public safety. It noted the inadequate size of the current public safety building at 647 Bloomfield Avenue and its lack of on-site parking. It stated that there were advantages of consolidated some of the outdated firehouses. Interestingly, the Plan suggested the construction of a new municipal complex in or adjacent to the central business district.

SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP TO STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Montclair is categorized as a Metropolitan Planning Area with the following policy objectives found in the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, Reexamination Report and Preliminary Plan, June 1997:

Redevelopment: Encourage redevelopment at intensities sufficient to support transit, a broad range of uses and efficient use of infrastructure. Promote design that enhances public safety, encourages pedestrian activity and reduces dependency on the automobile.

Housing: Provide a full range of housing choices through redevelopment, new construction, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse of non-residential buildings, and the introduction of new housing into appropriate non-residential settings.

Transportation: Maintain and enhance a transportation system that capitalizes on the high-density settlement patterns of this Planning Area by encouraging the use of public transit systems, walking, and alternative modes of transportation to reduce auto dependency, link centers, cores and nodes, and create opportunities for transit oriented redevelopment.

Public Facilities and Services: Complete, repair or replace existing infrastructure systems to eliminate deficiencies and provide capacity for sustainable development and redevelopment in the region. Encourage the concentration of public facilities and services in centers, cores and nodes

The planned affordable senior housing and fire headquarters are consistent with the above-stated policies of the State Redevelopment Plan.

DESIGN STANDARDS

The following guidelines should be followed in developing the Phase I components of the Plan:

1. Incorporate natural features (Toney's Brook) into the site design while insuring safety through fencing or other barrier forms.
2. Provide adequate lighting for vehicular and pedestrian safety. Pole lights should be kept below 16 feet in height and should be directed downward so as to not impact off-site uses.
3. Construct trash enclosures/recycling areas on a hard surface (pavement or concrete) and enclose with fencing of durable material having a gate for easy access by users.
4. Provide attractive fencing of durable construction which conforms to the fence standards of the Montclair Zoning Ordinance as to height and placement.
5. Locate ground-mounted air conditioning units in accordance with the accessory structure setbacks in the Montclair Zoning Ordinance. Roof-mounted air conditioning units must be shielded from view with a parapet wall or similar type of shield.
6. Provide landscaping around parking areas in conformance with the standards in the Montclair Site Plan Ordinance.

7. Provide outdoor benches for pedestrian seating.
8. Provide a drop-off/pick-up area at the entrance to the senior citizen building.
9. Ensure that the architecture compliments that of the surrounding buildings.

The following intersection improvements are planned for the redevelopment area and will be installed by New Jersey Transit:

1. Bloomfield Avenue and Pine Street: Widened and signalized intersection controlled by the fire headquarters.
2. Glenridge Avenue and Pine Street: Signalized intersection.
3. Grade crossing at Glenridge Avenue.

#4

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 244, SECTION 224-4 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MONTCLAIR, NEW JERSEY ADOPTED APRIL 15, 1980.

January 18, 2000

The Council for the Township of Montclair, in the County of Essex does ordain; Section 1. That pursuant to Chapter 22, Section 224-4 of the Code of the Township of Montclair, New Jersey, the Zoning Map is hereby amended in accordance with the attached map which is incorporated herewith and made a part hereof.



RECORD OF COUNCIL VOTE

COUNCILORS	YES	NO	ABS	N.V.	AB	COUNCILORS	YES	NO	ABS	N.V.	AB
Mayor Farlie						Schnarr					
de Koninck						Smith					
Jenkins						Zief					
Russo											

X - Indicate Vote ABS - Abstain N.V. - Not Voting AB - Absent

I HEREBY CERTIFY the foregoing to be a true copy of an resolution adopted by the Council of the Township of Montclair, in the County of Essex, at its meeting held on _____

Linda S. Wanat
Municipal Clerk of the Township of Montclair, N.J.