



Township of Montclair

Essex County • New Jersey

December 2002



- feasibility study?

Township of Montclair  
Essex County, New Jersey

December 2002

The original of this report  
was signed and sealed  
in accordance with  
N.J.S.A. 45: 14A-12.

  
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## Introduction

Montclair Township's Master Plan documents set forth a series of planning goals for the Township. Three of the primary objectives of Montclair are broadening the taxable base of the Township, stimulating investment in underutilized commercial properties, and the "continued maintenance of Montclair as a desirable residential community accommodating a wide range of population and income groups."

The Township of Montclair has determined that one of the most effective planning and implementation strategies is the use of the redevelopment powers provided to municipalities in accordance with State Statute. Accordingly, the Governing Body directed the Planning Board to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the Montclair Community Hospital site qualified as an "area in need of redevelopment" pursuant to the Local Redevelopment Housing Law ("LRHL"). The Planning Board commissioned a preliminary investigation study, conducted a public hearing and made a recommendation to the Governing Body that the area was, in fact, in need of redevelopment. Based on the Planning Board's recommendation, the Township Council adopted a resolution on July 9th declaring the Montclair Community Hospital site to be an area in need of redevelopment.



This report is written pursuant to Section 40A:12A-7 of the LRHL which provides that "no redevelopment projects shall be undertaken or carried out except in accordance with a Redevelopment Plan adopted by ordinance of the municipal governing body upon its finding that the specifically delineated project area is located in an area in need of redevelopment or an area in need of rehabilitation or both..." according to criteria set forth in Section 5 or Section 14 of PL 1992, C.79 (C.40A:12A-5 or C.40A:12A-12), as appropriate.

## Statutory Requirements

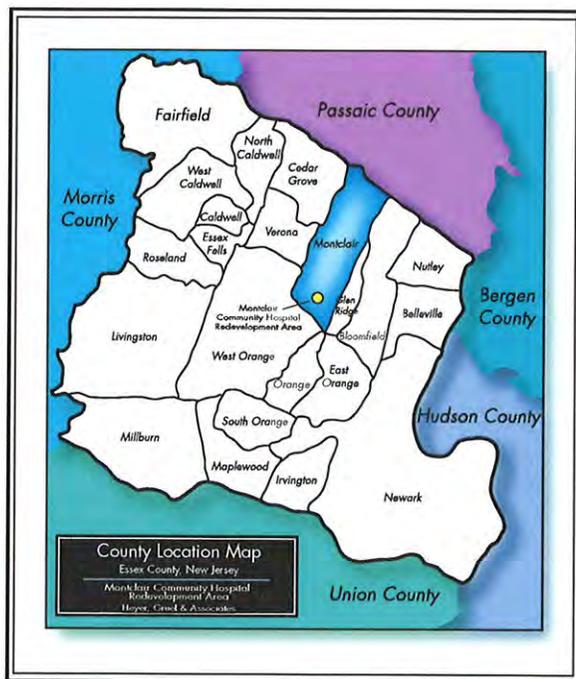
The Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (NJSA40A: 12A: -1 et seq.) is a proven tool for revitalization. According to the statute, a Redevelopment Plan shall indicate an outline for the planning, development, redevelopment or rehabilitation of the Area sufficient to indicate:

1. Its relationship to definitive local objectives as to appropriate land uses, density of population, traffic circulation, public transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities and other public improvements.
2. Proposed land uses and building requirements in the Area.
3. Provide for the temporary and permanent relocation as necessary of residents in the Area, including an estimate of the extent to which decent, safe and sanitary dwelling units will be provided within the local housing market.
4. An identification of any property, which is proposed to be acquired in accordance with the Plan, within the Redevelopment Area.
5. Any significant relationship between the Plan and the Master Plans of contiguous municipalities, the Master Plan of the County in which the Plan is located (Essex County), and the State Development and Redevelopment Plan adopted pursuant to the "State Planning Act" PL 1985. C398 (C52:18A-196-et al.)

## Site and Area Description

The Montclair Community Hospital Redevelopment Area is located in the southern portion of Montclair Township at the southwest corner of Harrison Avenue and Llewellyn Road, to the west of Nishuane Park (See Figure 1.) The Redevelopment Area contains approximately 3.2 acres and is irregular in shape, with 552 feet of frontage on Harrison Avenue and 86 feet of frontage on Llewellyn Road. Access to the site is via a two-way driveway located in the middle of the Harrison Avenue frontage. The Area consists of one property, Block 2001, Lot 1 on the Montclair Township Tax Maps (See Figure 2).

The Redevelopment Area currently contains the aging Montclair Community Hospital structure, portions of which were constructed in 1928, 1953 and 1961. The hospital operated under capacity for several years and ceased operations permanently in May of 1999. Vacant since its closure, the hospital is obsolete, poorly maintained, and has become a detriment to the neighborhood. Surrounding the Redevelopment Area is an established single-family neighborhood; it is vital that any development which occurs in the Redevelopment Area be sensitive to the context of the Area.



The vacant Montclair Community Hospital structure.

## Plan Principles

The Redevelopment Plan seeks to build upon the existing strengths and character of the Township of Montclair. The Redevelopment Area is intended to become part of the fabric of the Township which will capitalize on the assets of the surrounding area. The following principles guide the Plan.

### Reuse

The Montclair Community Hospital building has been incongruous with its environs since its inception. The height, size, and massing of the building are inconsistent with the character of the surrounding residential neighborhood, a situation which is exacerbated by inadequate buffers between the building and the single-family residences abutting the property. In addition, the hospital, while in operation, represented a non-conforming land use that was substantially more intensive than the low to moderate density residential development pattern in the surrounding area. It is the goal of this Plan to redevelop the site with a development of appropriate scale, massing, intensity, and use.

### Context and Location

One of the most important aspects of the Area is its location within Montclair. Located in the R-1 Residential District, the Redevelopment Area is surrounded by handsome single family homes. Rather than regard the context as an obstacle, the framers of this Plan have chosen to view the site surroundings as an asset to build upon. It is essential that any potential redeveloper respect the established neighborhood, and make every effort to submit a proposal that will complement the surroundings.

### Economics

Two of the goals of the Township, as stated in the 1992 and 1999 Master Plans, are to "stimulate investment in underutilized and undervalued commercial proper-



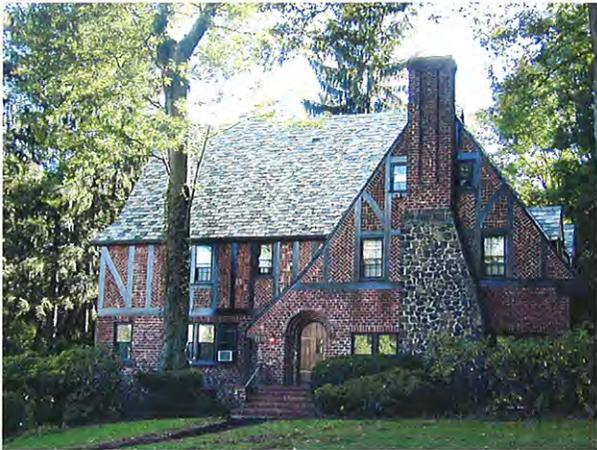
Figure 1

Source: Keystone Aerial Surveys, Inc. 1995



Figure 2

ties," and to broaden the taxable base of the Township. By redeveloping an obsolete and underused site with new housing, this Plan seeks to create a positive fiscal impact on the community.



Abutting property on Llewellyn Road. This Tudor-style home features gabled roofs, an articulated facade, prominent doorway and windows, and a variety of materials.

### Goals and Objectives

The goal of the Redevelopment Plan is to redevelop a site containing an older, obsolete building and to establish an area which permits medium density housing, thereby diversifying the selection of housing types currently available in Montclair and broadening the tax base of the Township.

Because of its character and location, Montclair continues to be a highly desirable place to live; the Township is, however, fully developed, leaving little room for new housing to be constructed. This Plan seeks to create additional housing which will provide the benefits of broadening the tax-base of the Township and stimulating economic investment. The type of housing suggested in this Plan is intended to be geared toward "empty-nesters", couples with grown children seeking to live in an established and economically stable neighborhood; of particular interest are such couples who currently reside in Montclair and would like to remain in the Township. A development geared toward such occupants would be unlikely to generate a significant amount of schoolchildren, an issue in a school district that is already overburdened.

*how ensure this?*

### Relationship of Plan to Township Land Development Regulations

The Area shall be redeveloped in accordance with the standards detailed in this Redevelopment Plan. In order to implement the Redevelopment Plan consistently with the goals and objectives of this Plan, the Plan supersedes the use, bulk, and design standard provisions of the Township Land Development Regulations unless specifically referenced. Other standards and submission requirements relating to all zones in the Township not specifically enumerated within as detailed in the Township Land Development Ordinance shall apply.

Any deviation from standards of this Plan that results in a 'd' variance pursuant to N.J.S.A 40:55D-70d shall be addressed as an amendment to the Plan rather than via variance relief through the Township Zoning Board of Adjustment. 'C' variance relief pursuant to N.J.S.A 40:55D-70c and design waivers may be addressed by the Planning Board through the development application process. All developments must be approved by the Planning Board and shall be submitted through the normal site plan and subdivision procedures as identified by N.J.S.A 40:55D, et seq.

#### Principal Permitted Uses:

*SP*

Single-family attached townhouses. Townhouse is defined by the Montclair Township Zoning Ordinance.

#### Accessory Uses and Structures:

Uses and structures incidental and accessory to principal uses such as signage and off-street parking.



Red-brick Colonial style home on Llewellyn Road, featuring a side-gabled roof and articulated door and windows.

$3.2 \times 6 = 19.2$  units

**Bulk Standards**

- Maximum residential density: 6 dwelling units per acre
- Maximum building coverage: 30%
- Maximum lot coverage (all impervious surfaces): 55%
- Maximum building height: 40 feet. Height is defined by the Township of Montclair Zoning Ordinance.



Existing buffer between hospital and adjacent residence to the southeast

- Minimum front-yard setback for area north of the existing driveway: 15 feet. The maximum front-yard setback in this area shall be 20 feet. (See Figure 3.)
- Minimum front-yard setback for the remainder of the site: 50 feet. (See Figure 3.)
- Minimum side-yard setback for area north of the existing driveway: 15 feet.
- A 30 foot wide buffer shall be provided along the interior perimeter of the site, with the exception of the portion of the property that borders Lot 29 in Block 2001, which shall be a minimum of 5 feet wide.
- There shall be a loop driveway system that services units in the core area of the site. The loop road shall not exceed 22 feet in width.

Handwritten notes: "15", "15' shown on plan", and "identify on plan" with arrows pointing to the setback and driveway areas.

- There shall be a 12 foot wide one-way alley which extends from Llewellyn Road to the interior loop road; the alley shall serve the townhomes with Harrison Avenue frontage.
- Units with Harrison Avenue frontage shall be attached in groups of no more than 3.
- Unit driveway widths shall be between 20 and 22 feet.
- No driveway or parking area shall be closer than 5 feet to the property line.
- The existing driveway cut on Harrison Avenue shall be preserved and utilized. It shall be treated as a landscaped boulevard with single ingress and egress lanes which are not to exceed 12 feet in width. No additional curb cuts shall be permitted along Harrison Avenue.
- There shall be a landscaped center island which shall include a maximum of 12 visitor parking spaces; maximum 4 spaces per grouping.
- Private 2-car garages shall be required for each residential unit.
- Off-street parking: In accordance with the Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS); however, the Board may grant waivers, exceptions and agreements to exceed, where deemed appropriate.

**Design Standards**

**Architectural Standards**

**General**

- The architectural style of homes in the immediate vicinity of the Redevelopment Area is eclectic, ranging from Colonial to Tudor to French Chateau. While there is no dominant theme, homes in the area do share certain design details, such as steeply pitched roofs, articulated door and window treatments, and the use of dormers. Common materials used in the existing homes include brick, stone, and wood.
  - New buildings shall relate to existing buildings and other structures in the vicinity that have a visual relationship to the proposed site. Continuity can be achieved through consideration of the elements mentioned above (facade articulation, the use of related materials, maintaining roof pitch.) Building massing and architectural details shall be designed to be compatible with the character of the surrounding area.
- Any new development shall attempt to achieve appropriate scale in relation to neighboring structures. Balance shall be achieved so that the new development will not overwhelm or be dwarfed by neighboring buildings.



Figure 3

- Multiple buildings on a single property shall be designed so as to be architecturally compatible with one another, utilizing common color schemes and materials.
- Any developer submission shall be subject to the design review process.

#### *Facades*

- Building facades shall be consistent with the size, scale and setbacks of adjacent buildings and those where there is a visual relationship.
- The appearance of the side and rear elevations of buildings is important. Therefore, guidelines for the fronts of buildings shall also apply to the rear and sides where visible.
- Buildings shall be designed so as to prevent exterior elevations from containing large expanses of blank or featureless walls.

#### *Roofs*

- The type, shape, pitch, texture and color of a roof shall be architecturally compatible with the building style, material, colors and details.
- Minimum roof pitch: 7:12

#### *Signage*

- Signage shall be restricted to one monument sign which shall be a maximum of 12 square feet.
- Sign may not be internally illuminated and must be constructed of stone, brick, or wood materials.
- Ornamental downlighting and ground-mounted lighting shall be permitted.

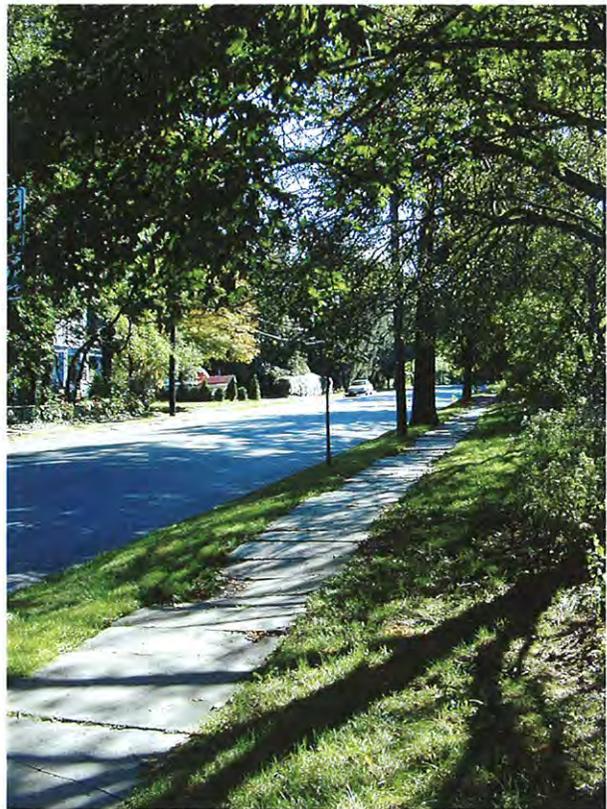
#### *Lighting*

- Lighting along lot frontage shall be decorative lighting consisting of "Montclair Style" street lighting or a similar style currently provided in the downtown.
- Lighting on the interior of the site shall be compatible with the architecture of buildings and shall compliment building features.

#### *Landscaping*

- The 30' buffer area shall contain a continuous decorative fence that will screen the Area from all surrounding properties. Fencing shall be six feet (6') high, of a natural color, and shall be constructed of a solid quality wooden material.
- Chain-link fencing shall be prohibited
- The buffer area shall contain a mixture of deciduous and evergreen trees sufficient to screen the Area from abutting properties.
- The 5' buffer between the site and Lot 29 in Block 2001 shall contain decorative fencing and/or low shrubs. Material and height of fencing should

- match the fencing located in other buffer areas.
- Single-stem trees shall have a minimum caliper of 3 inches.
- Multi-stem trees shall be a minimum of 12 feet in height.
- The interior landscaped island shall be designed as usable public open space. This area shall constitute a park-like setting, containing trees, shrubs, raised planters, and areas for sitting. Landscaping shall contain a mixture of trees, shrubs, bulbs, perennials and ornamental grasses so as to provide visual stimulation and year-round interest.
- Existing street trees along the Harrison Avenue frontage of the site shall be preserved unless the Township Arborist advises otherwise due to the health of the trees. Additional street trees shall be provided so as to maintain the established pattern and rhythm of street trees in the immediate area.
- The boulevard entrance on Harrison Avenue shall contain groundcover and/or perennials, and a minimum of three (3) flowering trees.
- An effort should be made to preserve the trees south of the existing driveway along the front property line.
- All new street trees shall be chosen in consultation with the Township Arborist.
- Front-yard setback areas for units fronting on Harrison Avenue shall be enclosed with a combination



*Bluestone sidewalk along Harrison Avenue.*

of low garden walls, ornamental fencing, and/or other landscaping. Garden walls and fencing may range in height between a two-foot (2') minimum and three-foot (3') maximum. Setback areas are encouraged to be landscaped with an appropriate selection of flowering trees, shrubs, perennials and bulbs to create a 'garden space.' Internal open space areas adjacent to driveways shall be landscaped in a similar fashion.

- Trees and landscaping shall be provided in accordance with Township standards.

#### **Sidewalks**

- Internal pedestrian circulation shall be separated from automobile circulation through the use of sidewalks and crosswalks.
- All internal sidewalks shall be bluestone or shall be constructed of dyed concrete scored in a block pattern to give the appearance of bluestone.
- All sidewalks in the public right-of-way shall be bluestone.

#### **Other**

- Efforts should be made to incorporate stormwater management area features into the overall landscape design. Shape and design of the stormwater management area shall be subject to development review.
- All benches, trash receptacles and other street furniture shall be compatible with the architecture of the buildings and shall compliment building features.
- Outside storage of materials and personal belongings of residents shall be strictly regulated. Adequate accessory storage space shall be provided for each dwelling unit.
- All storage of refuse and recyclable materials shall be maintained within the confines of an enclosed building or structure and shall be reasonably accessible for vehicular collection on the site and/or shall be appropriately screened and landscaped where outdoor storage is necessary.

#### **Proposed Concept Plan**

The Concept Plan detailed in this Plan (figure 3) proposes a residential development consisting of 19 attached townhouses. The Concept Plan shall not be binding on either the Township or the Planning Board. The purpose of the Concept Plan is to provide a vision and direction for any proposals submitted. All submissions shall be consistent with the design standards and the building and parking requirements of the Concept Plan.



*Nishuane Park, a neighborhood amenity cadicorner to the Redevelopment*

#### **Property to be Acquired**

The Redevelopment Plan may require the acquisition of the Montclair Community Hospital site through the use of eminent domain in accordance with the LRHL and eminent domain law. Private acquisition of this property by the redeveloper shall be pursued prior to any action by the Township.

#### **Relocation**

The Plan does not require the relocation of any businesses or residents. Because Montclair Community Hospital is not currently operating, there is no need for any relocation.

#### **Plan Relationship to Definitive Local Objectives**

##### **Montclair Township**

The Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the goals of the Township as stated in the 1992 and 1999 Master Plan Reexamination Reports, specifically as it relates to the continued maintenance of Montclair as a desirable residential community, broadening the taxable base of the Township, and stimulating investment in underutilized commercial properties.

##### **Adjacent Municipalities**

The Township of Montclair is bordered by Glen Ridge Borough, Clifton City, and the Townships of West Orange, Little Falls, Cedar Grove and Verona. None of these communities directly abut the Redevelopment Area; however, the Master Plans of these municipalities were reviewed and are not inconsistent with the Plan.

## *Essex County*

The Essex County Master Plan was prepared in the early 1980's. Due to significant changes in the County since that time, in terms of land use, socioeconomics and demographics, some aspects of the County Plan may not be specifically related to this Redevelopment Plan. However, the Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the County Plan's general use and policy objectives.

In February 1998, Essex County adopted a Cross Acceptance Report regarding the State Plan. This Plan serves as the most recent County planning document. The Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the following issues of the Cross Acceptance Report, including the improvement of the visual image of the Township, and the support of redevelopment efforts that would redevelop older, obsolete buildings.

### *State Development and Redevelopment Plan*

The State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) designates Montclair as a Regional Center and places Montclair Township in the Metropolitan Planning Area 1 (PA1). According to the SDRP, most of the communities within the PA1 planning area are fully developed or almost fully developed with much of the new growth occurring through redevelopment. The following policy objectives are intended as guidelines for planning within communities located in the Metropolitan Planning Area:

- Land Use: Guide new development and redevelopment to ensure efficient and beneficial utilization of scarce land while capitalizing on the inherent public facility and service efficiencies of the concentrated development patterns.
- Economic Development: Promote economic development by encouraging redevelopment efforts such as infill and land assembly, public/private partnerships, and infrastructure improvements.
- Housing: Preserve the existing housing stock through maintenance and rehabilitation and provide a variety of housing choices through development and redevelopment.
- Economic Development: Promote economic development by encouraging redevelopment efforts such as infill and land assembly, public/private partnerships and infrastructure improvements.
- Transportation: Capitalize on the high-density settlement patterns that encourage the use of public transit systems and alternative modes of transportation to improve travel among major population centers, employment centers and transportation terminals.

- Natural Resource Conservation: Reclaim environmentally damaged sites and mitigate future negative impacts, particularly to waterfronts, scenic vistas, any remaining wildlife habitats and to Critical Environmental/Historic Sites generally. Give special emphasis to addressing air quality concerns; provide open space and recreational amenities.

### *Administrative and Procedural Requirements*

#### *Amending the Redevelopment Plan*

Upon compliance with the requirements of applicable law, the Township Council may amend, revise or modify this Redevelopment Plan, as circumstances may make such changes appropriate.

#### *Duration of Redevelopment Plan*

The Redevelopment Plan, as amended, shall be in full force and effect for a period of thirty (30) years from the date of approval of this Plan by the Township Council.

#### *Conveyance of Land*

The Township Council may sell, lease, or otherwise convey to a redeveloper for redevelopment, subject to the restrictions, controls and requirements of this Redevelopment Plan, all or any portion of the land within the Redevelopment Area which becomes available to disposal by the municipality as a result of public action under this Plan. The Township reserves the right to formulate an agreement under any of the above referenced arrangements and to enforce resale covenants.

#### *Criteria and Procedures for Redeveloper Selection and Implementation of Redevelopment Plan*

The following restrictions and controls on redevelopment are hereby imposed in connection with the selection of a redeveloper and shall apply notwithstanding the provisions of any zoning or building ordinance or other regulations now or hereafter in force.

The redeveloper will be obligated to carry out the specified improvements in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan.

The redeveloper, its successors or assigns shall devote land within the Redevelopment Area to the uses specified in the Redevelopment Plan.

Until the completion of the improvements, the redeveloper will not be permitted to sell, lease, or otherwise transfer or dispose of property within the Redevelopment Area without prior written consent of the Township

Council except that this condition shall not apply to any lender to the redeveloper in connection to the Plan.