

## **RESOLUTION REGARDING SUSTAINABLE LAND USE PLEDGE**

September 6, 2016

WHEREAS, land use is an essential component of overall sustainability for a municipality; and

WHEREAS, poor land use decisions can lead to and increase societal ills such as decreased mobility, high housing costs, increased greenhouse gas emissions, loss of open space, and the degradation of natural resources; and

WHEREAS, well-planned and well-reasoned land use decisions can create transportation choices, provide for a range of housing options, create walkable communities, preserve open space, and allow for continued use of vital natural resources; and

WHEREAS, given New Jersey's strong tradition of home rule and local authority over planning and zoning, achieving a statewide sustainable land use pattern will require municipalities to take the lead; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Township of Montclair, in the County of Essex, that the Township Council resolves to take the following steps with regard to Township zoning ordinances and land use regulations with the intent of making Montclair a truly sustainable community, and to request that the Planning Board include these principles in the next master plan revision and to update the Township zoning ordinances accordingly:

- I. Facilities Siting We pledge, to the extent feasible and legally permissible, to take into consideration factors such as access to transit, walkability and bikeability, and proximity to other uses when siting new or relocated municipal facilities. The actions of a municipality when locating its own facilities can set a positive precedent and encourage other public and private sector entities to take into account sustainable land use considerations when locating their own facilities.
- II. Housing Variety We pledge, through the use of our zoning and revenue generation powers, to foster a diverse mix of housing types to meet the needs of people from all ages and walks of life. A variety of housing options from single family homes to one-bedroom apartments, including housing affordable to people with low, moderate, and middle incomes is vital to allow residents to live and work in a municipality through various stages of their lives.
- III. Natural Resource Preservation We pledge to preserve open space and create recreational opportunities within our municipality, to the extent feasible. As the most densely populated state in the nation, open space in New Jersey is at a premium. Preserving what is left of our open space for its ecological and recreational value is critical for a sustainable future. Further, if feasible, we pledge to complete a Natural

- Resources Inventory to identify and assess the extent of the Township's natural resources, and to link natural resource management and protection to carrying capacity analysis and land use planning and zoning
- IV. Transportation Choices We pledge to create transportation choices within our municipality by considering all modes of transportation including walking, biking, transit, and automobiles when planning transportation projects. Given that emissions from transportation mainly passenger cars make up the largest share of the state's carbon footprint, creating transportation alternatives at the local level is critical to reducing the state's overall carbon footprint.
- V. Mix of Uses We pledge to use our zoning power to allow for a mix of uses in areas that make the most sense for our municipality and the region. Development is not needed in every municipality But where development makes sense, land use patterns that segregate uses such as commercial and residential create an environment where the only feasible mode of transportation is the automobile. Allowing for a mix of compatible land uses residential units above retail stores, for example, can help reduce the necessity of driving by allowing people to walk to various destinations.
- VI. Green Design To the extent feasible and legally permissible, we pledge to incorporate the principles of green design and renewable energy generation when updating our site plan and subdivision requirements. Green design strategies not only improve the environmental performance of buildings but lessen the impact of those buildings on the surrounding environment. Such strategies include energy efficiency, water conservation, indoor environmental quality, use of recycled or renewable materials, construction waste reduction, reduced auto use, tree preservation, native planting, and avoidance of environmentally sensitive features.
- VII. Regional Cooperation We pledge to reach out to neighboring municipalities concerning land use regulations, and to take into consideration their concerns when considering regional level zoning ordinances and regulations. Local land use regulations can often have regional impacts, even though they are determined exclusively by one municipality. For example, a large mall built in one municipality can affect traffic and retail opportunities in neighboring towns.
- VIII. Parking Regulations We pledge to review and reevaluate our parking regulations and requirements, with the goal of reducing, to the extent feasible and legally permissible, the amount of required parking spaces for development projects in the Township, and promoting shared parking. In areas where walking, biking, and transit are possible, stringent parking requirements can hinder the goal of creating vibrant centers that have a critical mass or people to support local arts, shopping, and other services. Flexible parking requirements decrease the amount of land dedicated to parking lots, storm water runoff, land clearing, and heat island effects, while promoting transportation alternatives to individual automobile use. We also pledge to evaluate

areas to install safe and secure bicycle parking and to evaluate parking revenues including areas where fees for parking may or should be implemented.