

DETERMINATION OF NEEDS STUDY & REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



Downtown Area Laurel Springs, NJ

- Block 26, Lot 4 (p/o);
- Block 27, Lots 1 through 4.01 and 11;
- Block 28, Lots 1 and 12 through 12.03;
- Block 31, Lots 7 through 12;
- Block 35, Lot 1 (p/o);
- Block 36, Lot 1 (p/o);
- Block 37, Lots 1 through 4, 16 and 18;
- Block 41, Lots 12.01 through 15;
- Block 42, Lots 28 through 34.01; and
- Block 43, Lot 6.

Revised report to the Laurel Springs Mayor
and Council as recommended by the Planning
Board on _____, 2005


Edward E Fox III, AICP / NJPP Lic. 510400
Director of Smart Growth
Camden County Improvement Authority

The original of this document was signed and
sealed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 13:41-1.3.b.

DETERMINATION OF NEEDS STUDY & REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

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DETERMINATION OF NEEDS STUDY

I. Redevelopment Opportunities

New Jersey's 1947 New Jersey Constitution allows local redevelopment as an established public purpose. In doing so, it permits public acquisition under eminent domain and conveyance of private property to a public or private redeveloper, as well as tax exemptions and abatements to encourage redevelopment. The Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, or "LRHL", (P.L. 1992, c.79; N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.) gives municipalities the authority to

- Declare "areas in need of redevelopment;"
- Prepare and adopt redevelopment plans; and
- Undertake redevelopment projects.

The act also:

- defines the roles and responsibilities of the municipal governing body, planning board and redevelopment entity in the redevelopment process.
- establishes the procedural steps and criteria for declaring "areas in need of redevelopment;"
- describes the required contents of a redevelopment plan;
- outlines the authority and powers given to municipalities in such designated areas with an adopted redevelopment plan;
- governs activities of redevelopment entities, and public bodies involved in redevelopment activities; and
- defines the content of a redevelopment agreement and procedures for establishing and maintaining a local redevelopment Authority.

The redevelopment process is complex community and politically sensitive process. It requires a commitment to long-term planning and implementation. It also involves varying degrees of real estate market risk. Municipalities enter into the redevelopment process only after due deliberation that:

- A public health, safety or general welfare condition, such as housing or economic development obsolescence or deterioration, is a serious problem and all other efforts to address it have failed;
- Properties have been lying vacant or underutilized for a long period of time;
- Property assemblage is needed to get sites large enough for desired land uses;
- The municipality wants to control what and how properties are built or rebuilt; or
- Tax abatements, long-term tax exemptions or other revitalization financial assistance specifically tied to redevelopment may be necessary to correct problem conditions.

Towns often proceed with the municipal redevelopment process after exhausting their standard economic and community development tools. Once a municipal government adopts a redevelopment plan for the redevelopment area, it is authorized to implement the plan with a variety of special powers specified in the State's redevelopment statutes. These redevelopment area powers may be used to remove a number of obstacles that generally impede private-sector development in the area and to correct the issues cited in the redevelopment determination of needs study. They essentially enable the municipality to act as if it were a private developer, as long as the redevelopment projects are consistent with the redevelopment plan. The following special powers are enabled within designated redevelopment areas:

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Governmental Powers:

- Acquire property through lease or purchase;
- Acquire property options or property rights or furnish property, facilities or services;
- Clear any parcel;
- Construct or reconstruct infrastructure and site improvements;
Contract with public agencies or redevelopers for the planning, re-planning, construction or undertaking of all or any portion of a redevelopment project;
- Exercise all public and essential governmental functions as specified in statute;
- Gain access to buildings or properties to conduct investigations or make surveys, soundings or test borings;
- Arrange and contract with public agencies or redevelopers for the opening, grading, or closing of streets, roads, roadways, alleys or other places;
- Contract for professional services; and
- Do all other things necessary or convenient to carry out redevelopment powers.

Financial Powers:

- Issue bonds;
- Borrow money and receive grants and loans;
- Collect revenues from a redeveloper to defray the redevelopment entity's costs, including the costs of bonds issued by the redevelopment entity;
- Make loans or other financial assistance to redevelopers; and
- Provide capital grants to redevelopers.

Planning Powers:

- Prepare plans for the voluntary repair and rehabilitation of buildings and improvements;
- Prepare plans for the enforcement of regulations relating to use and occupancy of buildings and improvements, and to the compulsory repair, rehabilitation, demolition, or removal of buildings and improvements;
- Request designation of "areas in need of redevelopment" and to make recommendations for the redevelopment of such areas;
- Study the recommendations of the planning board or governing body for the redevelopment of the area; and
- Publish and disseminate information concerning any redevelopment area, plan or project.

Special Redevelopment:

- Lease or convey property or improvements without public bidding in accordance with the redevelopment plan;
- Relocate residents, industry or commerce displaced from a redevelopment area; and
- Acquire by eminent domain any land or building identified for acquisition in the redevelopment plan.

Eminent domain is the authority to acquire private property through condemnation. A redevelopment entity, such as the Borough Mayor and Council, may use the power of eminent domain to acquire ONLY those properties or buildings in a redevelopment area that specifically identified for acquisition or possible acquisition in the adopted redevelopment plan. It is a redevelopment power that:

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1. Normally is used only after due process and good faith efforts by a redeveloper to acquire private property through negotiation have failed,
2. Enables title to transfer to the redevelopment entity quickly, with a determination of the compensation to be paid to the property owner through negotiation or through the legal system at a later date, and
3. Is accompanied by statutory protections afforded to the property owner.

Depending on the scope of the Redevelopment Plan, only a few or some of the properties need to be acquired. Property owners are protected by the rights and procedures set forth in the state's Eminent Domain Act and relevant court cases. The LRHL requires:

1. No compensation offer made to a private property owner by a redevelopment entity can be less than the acquired property's appraised fair market value;
2. A declaration that the fair market value offered to a private property owner must not be less than the value of the property as of the date of the "area in need of redevelopment" designation by the governing body; and
3. The property owner must be given fourteen (14) days from the mailing of the compensation offer to accept or reject the offer.
4. Most properties are acquired through private negotiation between the owner and the designated redeveloper, which may consider the value of alterations and improvements to the property after the area was designated a redevelopment area.

The municipal redevelopment process has the flexibility to accommodate a wide variety of circumstances. A redevelopment area, for example, may be of any size, including a single parcel, as long as it meets the statutory criteria. An "area in need of redevelopment" may include parcels that do not meet the statutory criteria, but are necessary for the effective redevelopment of the area. Redevelopment plans may be relatively basic or very comprehensive, with detailed design guidelines for future development. Many towns adopt basic redevelopment plans to provide design flexibility, but within certain established parameters. Redevelopment plans may be phased over a period of years, depending on the needs and available resources of the community. Most redevelopment plans include an expiration period. A municipality has a range of options when designating a local redevelopment entity to carry out a redevelopment plan. The governing body may designate itself as the redevelopment entity, or appoint a local redevelopment agency or another agency to implement the redevelopment plan.

A redevelopment entity may choose any number of methods to select a redeveloper, including a request for proposals (RFP) or direct negotiations with a specific developer. It may also choose more than one developer for redevelopment projects in the redevelopment area. A range of financing options is available, including local, state and federal funding sources. A variety of other techniques may be used to support and fund redevelopment efforts, including the use of Revenue Allocation Districts (RADs). A municipality may use tax abatements or exemptions to encourage development, or it may decide not to use them, depending on local fiscal considerations. More information about these opportunities will be provided in the redevelopment plan for the study area.

The redevelopment process is not a stigma. Cherry Hill, Collingswood, Cranford, Merchantville, Montclair, Morristown, Princeton, and Voorhees have all used the municipal redevelopment process to improve their communities.

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II. Redevelopment Process

The Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) prescribes the process by which an area may be designated an “area in need of redevelopment” (also known as a “redevelopment area”.) The LRHL only allows municipal governments to designate redevelopment areas: county, state or federal governments cannot create redevelopment areas. The law includes a number of checks and balances to ensure local consensus, public accountability and private property rights.

Redevelopment is a three-step process. The first step is the preparation and approval of a redevelopment “determination of needs study” that designates the area is in need of redevelopment. Currently, the Borough is at this step in the process. The study is a land use planning, physical and economic conditions analyses that must include the following components:

1. a description of the physical conditions within the study area, as well as land uses, building and environmental conditions, and site layout;
2. a review of zoning and master plan designations for the area;
3. an analysis describing how the study area properties meet the statutory criteria; and
4. recommendations as to which properties should be included in the redevelopment area.

The second step is the preparation and approval by Borough ordinance of a “redevelopment plan.” A redevelopment plan is an outline for the planning, development, redevelopment or rehabilitation of properties in the designated redevelopment area. No redevelopment project, long-term tax exemption, or property acquisition (eminent domain) may occur without an adopted redevelopment plan. In short, a redevelopment plan is a specialized master plan element and zoning overlay district geared towards implementation of the redevelopment plan’s identified goals and objectives. The third-step in the redevelopment process is implementation of the public, private and public-private partnership investment strategies outlined in the redevelopment plan.

This three-step process is similar to the one people use when they believe a loved one is in poor health. They first take their loved one to the doctor to diagnose whether there are any medical problems or conditions that need to be remedied. The redevelopment “determination of needs study” is essentially that diagnose of the “health” of the study area. After identifying the patient’s health, the doctor may find the patient healthy or may prescribe remedies or treatments to correct unhealthy conditions. A “redevelopment plan” is that prescription to address the problems cited in the needs study. The first and second steps in the redevelopment process are as sequential, as those used in medical practice. A patient cannot receive a prescription without first seeing the doctor. A doctor cannot prescribe a medical remedy without diagnosing the patient’s health problem. A person should not avoid taking their loved one to the doctor because they are afraid of what the doctor may discover or what she may prescribe. Implementation of the redevelopment plan is critical to resolving local public health, safety or general welfare conditions. Patients usually get better much more quickly when they follow the doctor’s remedy and often get worse when they do not.

The LRHL outlines the following steps and checks and balances in the redevelopment process:

1. The governing body, e.g., Borough Mayor and Council, directs Planning Board to undertake a preliminary study to determine whether an identified area is an “area in need of redevelopment.” The preliminary study is called a redevelopment “determination of needs study.”

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2. The Planning Board, with the help of a licensed professional planner, prepares the study and holds a public hearing on the proposed redevelopment designation, i.e., whether the study area meets at least one of the statutory designation criteria. (For a review of these criteria, see page 10, **IX. Statutory Criteria Review** of this report.)
3. Based on the Planning Board's recommendation, the Borough Mayor and Council may designate all or a portion of the area an "area in need of redevelopment."
4. The Borough Mayor and Council prepares a Redevelopment Plan for the area, or directs the Planning Board to prepare the Redevelopment Plan.
5. The Borough Mayor and Council adopts the Redevelopment Plan.
6. The Borough Mayor and Council, or other public agency or authority, is designated by them as the "redevelopment entity" to oversee implementation of the redevelopment plan; and
7. The Redevelopment Entity selects a redeveloper to undertake the project(s) that implement the redevelopment plan.

If the Borough Mayor and Council designates the study area "an area in need of redevelopment," the next step in the process will be the preparation of a redevelopment plan. The Local Redevelopment and Housing Law states a redevelopment plan must have the following mandatory components:

1. Proposed land uses and building requirements in the redevelopment area;
2. The plan's "relationship to definite local objectives," i.e. the municipal master plan, regarding land uses, population density, traffic and public transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities, and other public improvements;
3. Plan for the temporary and permanent relocation of displaced residents and businesses, including an estimate of available housing;
 - A current estimate of the number of households and businesses legitimately occupying buildings identified for acquisition and clearance;
 - The process by which the Municipality will provide assistance to affected residents and business owners, and
 - The availability of comparable housing or business space in the general area.
4. Identification of any property that may be acquired in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan;
5. The plan's relationship to the master plans of contiguous municipalities, the county master plan, and the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan); and
6. The plan's relationship to the municipality's development regulations, e.g. whether the redevelopment plan supercedes existing zoning or constitutes and overlay zone.

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III. Study Area Boundaries

The Laurel Springs Downtown Study Area contains those properties in Laurel Springs Borough around the intersection of the railroad tracks and Stone Road (Route 699), along East and West Atlantic avenues from Trenton to Lindsay avenues and along Stone Road from roughly Glen Avenue to Broadway. This 16-acre area includes a number of commercial, residential and mixed-use properties within the Business & Industry (B & I) and Residential zoning districts. Laurel Springs's Downtown study area is in the center of the Borough, adjacent to the Stratford Borough boundary. Figure 1 shows the general location of the study area, while Figure 2 indicates some of the major features in the study area. Figure 3 illustrates the boundary between the Business & Industry (B & I) and Residential zoning districts in Laurel Springs.

The Mayor and Council selected for study for the following reasons:

1. The area contained a number of apparently vacant, abandoned and underutilized properties, and
2. The area was included with a similar study of apparently vacant, abandoned and underutilized properties along the White Horse Pike (US 30), which was the subject of previous transportation, economic development and revitalization needs studies that identified various redevelopment-related issues.

The Borough Mayor and Council requested the Planning Board to study this area and then asked the Camden County Improvement Authority to complete a redevelopment determination of needs study and redevelopment plan for it. This document contains the basic information, analyses and recommendations of that study. It may be used, along with a complementary redevelopment plan, to designate the area in need of redevelopment and or rehabilitation and to implement a redevelopment strategy to further the Borough's plans for the Downtown area.

VII. Property Listing and Description

The properties within the redevelopment study area include properties on the following Blocks 26, 27, 28, 31, 37, 41, 42, and 43 in Laurel Springs Borough and portions of Blocks 35 and 36, which are the railroad right-of-way now owned by NJDOT. The following lot-by-lot description indicates property addresses and building types for properties in the study area. See **Figure 3** for a map of land uses, relationship and local zoning. For more information about these properties, see **Section IX** of this report.

East of the Railroad Tracks

BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE
26	4		Trenton & Grand	NJ Water	Utility /Public
27	1	800	E Atlantic Ave		Two Family House
27	2	806	E Atlantic Ave	Bommer Plumber	Commercial
27	3	814	E Atlantic Ave		Single Family Home
27	4.01	820	E Atlantic Ave		Single Family Home
27	11	330	Mt Vernon Ave		Single Family Home
28	1	714	E Atlantic Ave		Vacant
28	12	336	Washington Ave	Bill's Barbershop	Mixed Use
28	12.01	330	Washington Ave	J&R Builders	Commercial
28	12.02	334	Washington Ave	Bill's Barbershop	Mixed Use

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BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE
28	12.03	334	Washington Ave	Bill's Barbershop	Mixed Use
31	7	629	Stone Rd	Masonic Hall	Institutional
31	8	629	Stone Rd	Masonic Hall	Institutional
31	9	629	Stone Rd	Masonic Hall	Institutional
31	10	625	Stone Rd	Apartments	Apartments
31	11	625	Stone Rd	Apartments	Apartments
31	11.01	625	Stone Rd	Apartments	Apartments
31	12	654	E Atlantic Ave	Computer Store	Commercial

West of the Railroad Tracks

BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE
37	1	900	Stone Rd	Tims Repair	Auto-Oriented
37	1.01	908	Stone Rd	Printer	Commercial
37	2	923	W Atlantic Ave		Single Family Home
37	3	929	W Atlantic Ave	Spring Garden	Apartments
37	3.01	929	W Atlantic Ave	Spring Garden	Apartments
37	16	929	W Atlantic Ave	Spring Garden	Apartments
37	18	929	W Atlantic Ave	Spring Garden	Apartments
37	4	934	Stone Rd		Single Family Home
41	12.01	915	Stone Rd	addn to Lot 15	Single Family Home
41	13	905	Stone Rd		Two Family House
41	14	911	Stone Rd	Vacant Store	Mixed Use
41	15	915	Stone Rd		Single Family Home
42	28	801	W Atlantic Ave	Abandoned	Mixed Use
42	29	805	W Atlantic Ave	Abandoned	Mixed Use
42	30	809	W Atlantic Ave	Pizza Parlor	Commercial
42	31	811	W Atlantic Ave	Cleaning Business	Mixed Use
42	32	817	W Atlantic Ave	Bakery	Commercial
42	32.01	817	W Atlantic Ave	Parking	Commercial
42	33		Flag Lot off Stone Rd	Parking	Commercial
42	33.01	819	W Atlantic Ave	Hair Salon	Mixed Use
42	33.02	823	W Atlantic Ave	Florist	Mixed Use
42	33.03	825	W Atlantic Ave	Florist	Mixed Use
42	33.04	827	Stone Rd	Architect Office & Apt	Mixed Use
42	33.05	829	Stone Rd	Parking	Commercial
42	34	833	Stone Rd	Catering Business	Commercial
42	34.02	833	Stone Rd	Catering Business	Commercial
42	34.01	409	Park Ave		Single Family Home
43	6		Tomlinson Ave	Boro Public Works	Utility /Public

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VIII. Master Plan and Land Use Zoning Plan Review

Laurel Springs's 1978 Master Plan outlined several goals and objectives towards preserving the quality of life, including the economic viability of the Borough. Essentially, the master plan seeks to preserve Laurel Spring's existing land use patterns and historic residential character by containing non-residential uses to the old Downtown area at the railroad crossing and to the properties fronting White Horse Pike. The Borough's master plan re-examination reports maintain these goals and objectives.

The Borough's Business & Industry district, which dates back to 1964, allows all those uses generally prohibited in the Residential zone. This includes: apartment houses; offices; stores; display rooms and salesrooms or other structures where goods, articles, appliances or vehicles are sold; bowling alleys; theaters; dance halls; skating rinks; restaurants; banks; and post offices. It does exclude heavy industrial and manufacturing uses. It prohibits one and two-family homes, as well as mixed-uses, e.g. apartments above stores. Laurel Springs uses this same zone for properties fronting on White Horse Pike (US 30), too.

Laurel Spring's Residential district, which also dates to 1964, permits: single-family uses (detached, attached, and semi-attached); public uses, such as churches, schools, hospitals, and libraries; professional offices; customary home occupations; and telephone exchange buildings. **Figure 3** illustrates existing land uses and zoning within the study area.

IX. Statutory Criteria Review Areas in Need of Redevelopment

New Jersey's Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1 et seq.) indicates that a municipal governing body may declare an "Area in Need of Redevelopment" if it determines that the area or the properties within it meet at least one of eight possible statutory criteria. The following are observations and findings of the applicability of each criterion with conditions in the study area.

- a. Buildings have deteriorated or fallen into such a state of disrepair that they constitute a threat to the people who live or work in them;
- b. Vacant commercial or industrial buildings that are abandoned or have become so obsolete that they cannot be reasonably rented or sold;
- c. Publicly-owned property that has remained vacant due to its location, remoteness from other developed areas, lack of access, topography, or soil conditions, or privately-owned property that has remained unimproved and vacant for at least ten years for the same reasons;
- d. Properties have obsolete layout and design, such as the location and relationships of buildings, accessory structures and other site improvements, onsite circulation and parking, land use conflicts and building coverages.
- e. Underutilization or lack of proper utilization of properties due to property ownership, title, property configuration or other factors;

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- f. An area of five or more acres that has been destroyed or where property values have been materially reduced by a fire or sudden natural disaster;
- g. Properties are within an Urban Enterprise Zone (UEZ); and
- h. The designation of the delineated area is consistent with smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to law or regulation.

In addition, the statute states:

A redevelopment area may include lands, buildings, or improvements, which of themselves are not detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in their condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area of which they are a part.

REDEVELOPMENT CRITERION A: Buildings have deteriorated or fallen into such a state of disrepair that they constitute a threat to the people who live or work in them;

BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE
37	1.01	908	Stone Rd	Printer	Commercial
42	28	801	W Atlantic Ave	May be abandoned	Mixed Use
42	29	805	W Atlantic Ave	May be abandoned	Mixed Use

During the course of this investigation in March 2005, three properties were identified as meeting this criterion. The rear portion of the printing shop fronting on East Atlantic Street was deteriorated and looked abandoned. The cornice and top of the wall on the southern side of the building, toward the Stone Road frontage, appeared to be in threat of collapse due to roofing failure. Two other buildings, mixed-use structures with storefronts and rear and above-ground apartments, also had significant roof and siding failures and appeared abandoned, or partly abandoned, for some time.

REDEVELOPMENT CRITERION D: Properties have obsolete layout and design, such as the location and relationships of buildings, accessory structures and other site improvements, onsite circulation and parking, land use conflicts and building coverages.

BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE
28	12	336	Washington Ave	Bill's Barbershop	Mixed Use
28	12.01	330	Washington Ave	J&R Builders	Commercial
28	12.02	334	Washington Ave	Bill's Barbershop	Mixed Use
28	12.03	334	Washington Ave	Bill's Barbershop	Mixed Use
31	7	629	Stone Rd	Masonic Hall	Institutional
31	8	629	Stone Rd	Masonic Hall	Institutional
31	9	629	Stone Rd	Masonic Hall	Institutional
31	10	625	Stone Rd	Apartments	Apartments
31	11	625	Stone Rd	Apartments	Apartments
31	11.01	625	Stone Rd	Apartments	Apartments
31	12	654	E Atlantic Ave	Computer Store	Commercial
37	1	900	Stone Rd	Tim's Repair	Auto-Oriented
37	1.01	908	Stone Rd	Printer	Commercial

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BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE
41	13	905	Stone Rd		Two Family House
41	14	911	Stone Rd	Vacant Store	Mixed Use
42	30	809	W Atlantic Ave	Pizza Parlor	Commercial
42	31	811	W Atlantic Ave	Cleaning Business	Mixed Use
42	32	817	W Atlantic Ave	Bakery	Commercial
42	32.01	817	W Atlantic Ave	Parking	Commercial
42	33		Flag Lot	Parking	Commercial
42	33.01	819	W Atlantic Ave	Hair Salon	Mixed Use
42	33.02	823	W Atlantic Ave	Florist	Mixed Use
42	33.03	825	W Atlantic Ave	Florist	Mixed Use
42	33.04	827	Stone Rd	Architect Office & Apt.	Mixed Use
42	33.05	829	Stone Rd	Parking	Commercial
42	34	833	Stone Rd	Catering Business	Commercial
42	34.02	833	Stone Rd	Catering Business	Commercial

The variety of uses and intensities of development in the Downtown area, in combination with the relatively small lot tenure pattern and lack of any off-street parking and stormwater management, is the underlying cause for much of the obsolescence of uses, structures, and site layouts there.

For example, on the 300 Block of Washington Avenue of Block 28, Bill's Barbershop has no off-street parking and little on-street parking due to the driveway location and fire hydrant. The adjacent contractor's office stores waste and a dumpster within the front yard just off the sidewalk, while the second-floor office is accessed by an uncovered exterior stairway, also in the front yard. This is a substantial land use conflict to adjacent residential uses and school.

The apartment buildings and commercial property (former post office) on the 60 Block of Stone Road of Block 31, there is virtually no distinction between the public street and where tenants, employees and customers park their vehicle. Little provision is made for off-street parking or for stormwater management. The adjacent Masonic lodge has off-street parking in an unimproved gravel lot, which has no stormwater control and broken driveway apron.

On the triangle between Stone Road and West Atlantic Avenue on Block 37, the former gas station, now auto repair use, has an obsolete layout that requires the storage and movement of vehicles having or awaiting service to circulate in the public street. This use, and almost any other, is too intense for this small triangular lot location. The adjacent print shop did not appear to have any approved off-street parking area, but rather a gravel lot. Its waste was stored in the rear in an uncontained area, an attractive nuisance, adjacent to a residential use and apartment complex with many children.

Two uses on the 900 Block of Stone Road east of Park Avenue also have an obsolete layout, with insufficient provision for off-street parking and waste management. These concerns are more critical on the 800 Block of West Atlantic Avenue and Stone Road to the east. The storefronts between Park and Tomlinson avenues were designed for a time when most of the Borough residents walked almost everywhere or commuted to Camden by rail for work and other reasons. Those days are long gone: most Borough households have at least one vehicle and passenger service was discontinued years ago. There are no provisions for customer parking, other than diagonal and parallel on-street parking on West Atlantic Avenue. Thus, the

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structures and their ability to provide ordinary and customary services and features for modern customers, are obsolete. Such a parking arrangement in front of the buildings makes shipping and receiving service deliveries and waste haulage difficult, not to mention the problems for customers who must back out into traffic.

The buildings are older ones, many with narrow frontages in tight conditions and in obsolete condition. The rears of these buildings has a mixture of service / delivery areas, worker parking areas, waste storage areas and household living areas. This pattern of mixed uses and rear necessities making due in obsolete structures in tight, awkward, unsafe or unsanitary arrangements on smaller obsolete lots is a risk to the public health, safety and general welfare of individual properties, adjacent properties, the Downtown district, and the Borough itself.

REDEVELOPMENT CRITERION E: Underutilization or lack of proper utilization of properties due to property ownership, title, property configuration or other factors;

BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE
28	1	714	E Atlantic Ave		Vacant
37	1.01	908	Stone Rd	Printer	Commercial

Despite its location in Downtown Laurel Springs, this vacant, cleared property appears to be vacant because it is held by an absentee owner in California, according to municipal tax records. Absentee ownership, especially at such a far distance, accounts for its underutilization.

The printing business in the triangle between Stone Road and West Atlantic Avenue is a brownfield site with potential site contamination due to its former industrial use. Brownfields are properties that are known to be or are suspected to be environmentally contaminated. Because the liability for brownfield clean-up is a condition of title, many property owners choose to not upgrade, invest in or sell their properties because doing so would make them liable for environmental remediation. Therefore, the brownfield status of current and former commercial and industrial sites makes them eligible under redevelopment criterion E. The adjacent auto repair business, Tim's Repair, is NOT a brownfield site. It has a "No Further Action Letter" from NJDEP indicated it is an environmentally clean property. Thus, it does NOT meet this criterion.

Other Reasons

A redevelopment area may include lands, buildings, or improvements, which of themselves are not detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in their condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area of which they are a part.

BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE
27	1	800	E Atlantic Ave		Two Family House
27	2	806	E Atlantic Ave	Bommer Plumber	Commercial
27	3	814	E Atlantic Ave		Single Family Home
27	4.01	820	E Atlantic Ave		Single Family Home
27	11	330	Mt Vernon Ave		Single Family Home
37	2	923	W Atlantic Ave		Single Family Home
42	34.01	409	Park Ave		Single Family Home
43	6		Tomlinson Ave	Boro Public Works	Utility /Public

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Some of these properties, such as those on the 800 Block of East Atlantic Avenue between Mt Vernon Avenue and the well field, are currently within the Borough's Building and Industry zoning district. Although only one of them is now a commercial use, it is necessary to include them and the adjacent residentially-zoned Lot 11 in order to encourage redevelopment of a mixed-use district consistent with the Borough master plan and smart growth principles. The residential properties on Block 37 and 42 are included for the same reason.

Although it does not meet any of the redevelopment designation criteria, the Borough's public works property on Block 43 is recommended to be included in the redevelopment area because it is adjacent to other eligible properties and because their inclusion would be necessary for future effective redevelopment of those properties or others in the study area. This is due to the property's public ownership and its unique layout, i.e., having a vacant front yard with the former old mansion sitting far back from West Atlantic Avenue.

Excluded Properties

A number of single-family residential and utility uses, as well as one commercial use within the study area were recommended to NOT be included within a redevelopment area. This was because they were identified as either:

- Single-family dwellings or businesses structures and properties in average or good condition that did not appear to meet any redevelopment criteria AND were not in or adjacent to the Borough's Business and Industry zoning district; or
- They were utilities and quasi-public uses in average or good condition that did not appear to meet any redevelopment criteria, and were generally exempt from municipal land use regulation.

BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE
26	4		Trenton & Grand	NJ Water	Utility /Public
35 & 36	1		Atlantic Aves	Railroad	Utility /Public
37	3	929	W Atlantic Ave	Spring Garden	Apartments
37	3.01	929	W Atlantic Ave	Spring Garden	Apartments
37	16	929	W Atlantic Ave	Spring Garden	Apartments
37	18	929	W Atlantic Ave	Spring Garden	Apartments
37	4	934	Stone Rd		Single Family Home
41	12.01	915	Stone Rd	addn to Lot 15	Single Family Home
41	15	915	Stone Rd		Single Family Home

The study area included only a portion of the Spring Garden Apartments. Therefore, there was not enough information to make a final determination about the redevelopment eligibility of these properties. From the March 2005 site visits, there did not appear to be any significant areas of deterioration or underutilization. It may be, however, that these units could meet the obsolescence criteria upon further future analyses, at a later time.

VII. Recommendations

In conclusion, the great majority of parcels within Laurel Springs White Horse Pike (US 30) Study Area meet several of the criteria for designation as an "Area in Need of Redevelopment," as described in **VI. Statutory Criteria Review** of this report. I, therefore, recommend to the

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Planning Board and the Borough Mayor and Council that it so designate the following properties as an "Area in Need of Redevelopment." These areas are illustrated on **Figures 4 and 5.**

BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE	CRITERIA
28	1	714	E Atlantic Ave		Vacant	E
28	12	336	Washington Ave	Bill's Barbershop	Mixed Use	D
28	12.01	330	Washington Ave	J&R Builders	Commercial	D
28	12.02	334	Washington Ave	Bill's Barbershop	Mixed Use	D
28	12.03	334	Washington Ave	Bill's Barbershop	Mixed Use	D
31	7	629	Stone Rd	Masonic Hall	Institutional	D
31	8	629	Stone Rd	Masonic Hall	Institutional	D
31	9	629	Stone Rd	Masonic Hall	Institutional	D
31	10	625	Stone Rd	Apartments	Apartments	D
31	11	625	Stone Rd	Apartments	Apartments	D
31	11.01	625	Stone Rd	Apartments	Apartments	D
31	12	654	E Atlantic Ave	Computer Store	Commercial	D
37	1	900	Stone Rd	Tim's Repair	Auto-Oriented	D
37	1.01	908	Stone Rd	Printer	Commercial	A, D, E
41	13	905	Stone Rd		Two Family House	D
41	14	911	Stone Rd	Vacant Store	Mixed Use	D
42	28	801	W Atlantic Ave	May be abandoned	Mixed Use	A, D
42	29	805	W Atlantic Ave	May be abandoned	Mixed Use	A, D
42	30	809	W Atlantic Ave	Pizza Parlor	Commercial	D
42	31	811	W Atlantic Ave	Cleaning Business	Mixed Use	D
42	32	817	W Atlantic Ave	Bakery	Commercial	D
42	32.01	817	W Atlantic Ave	Parking	Commercial	D
42	33		Flag Lot	Parking	Commercial	D
42	33.01	819	W Atlantic Ave	Hair Salon	Mixed Use	D
42	33.02	823	W Atlantic Ave	Florist	Mixed Use	D
42	33.03	825	W Atlantic Ave	Florist	Mixed Use	D
42	33.04	827	Stone Rd	Architect & Apt	Mixed Use	D
42	33.05	829	Stone Rd	Parking	Commercial	D
42	34	833	Stone Rd	Catering Business	Commercial	D
42	34.02	833	Stone Rd	Catering Business	Commercial	D

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VIII. Next Steps

The Planning Board will consider the document formally at a public hearing, which requires the following notification requirements:

- Notice must be given twice (once a week for two consecutive weeks) in the Borough's official newspaper;
- The last notice must appear not less than 10 days prior to the hearing date;
- Notice of public hearing must be mailed to every property owner within the proposed redevelopment area, and the notice must advise the recipient that their property is included in that proposed designated redevelopment area; and
- The notice must clearly describe the nature of the hearing, date, time, location, and information about where and when the summary report and map may be viewed.

The Planning Board will conduct the public hearing, where the planning consultant and other will present the results of this study. Property owners and others who object to the proposed designation may make statements and present evidence to support their support, objections or both. The Planning Board must consider all evidence objectively and make recommendations to the Borough Mayor and Council based on "substantial evidence" in accordance with the statutory criteria outlined in Section VI of this study. The Planning Board will then forward its recommendation to designate, to designate with conditions, or not to designate the study area a redevelopment area.

Based on the Planning Board's recommendation, the Borough Mayor and Council may designate all or a portion of the study area an "Area in Need of Redevelopment." They must approve this designation in the form of a resolution. They may alter the recommended redevelopment area boundaries or include properties not recommended by the Planning Board, but must state in its resolution the reasons for doing so. Within ten days of adoption of the designation resolution, a notice of the Commissioner's determination that the area has been designated a redevelopment area. The Borough must serve each person who filed a written objection to the designation. No action to acquire property by condemnation may occur for 45 days after the adoption of the designation resolution if written objections were filed at the Planning Board's public hearing. This allows owners or interested parties to file lawsuits to challenge the designation in court.

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REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

I. Goals and Objectives

Opportunities exist to work with the Downtown's existing properties, merchants, residents and property owners to revitalize what many can remember as a vibrant, mixed-use community center. Existing zoning, land tenure patterns, traffic circulation patterns, and parking areas, however, are sometimes at cross-purposes in the redevelopment area. The problems are larger than any one individual property owner or group can fix on their own. These problems cannot be resolved by the private sector without public intervention. A multi-faceted redevelopment plan, which uses strategic measures to address identified community objectives is needed.

The basic goal of this Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan is to recreate a small town, mixed-use crossroads district that revitalizes the Borough's core historic downtown pedestrian-scale character. The redevelopment plan is composed of a series of elements and other provisions designed to implement this goal. Each of the elements contains individual objectives to be accomplished by a series of implementation recommendations.

Land Use Element Objective:

- Provide opportunities for private-sector commercial and mixed-use redevelopment of properties within the redevelopment area.

Parking and Circulation Element Objectives:

- Improve local and regional traffic circulation, pedestrian circulation, signage in redevelopment area.
- Improve on- and off-street parking for commercial customers, business owners and tenants in the redevelopment area.

Infrastructure and Utility Element Objectives:

- Continuation of programmed sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water system infrastructure within the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Area.
- Incorporate infrastructure improvements, including upgrade of stormwater management systems, during redevelopment.

Brownfields Element Objective:

- Remediate any unacceptable environmental contamination through the redevelopment process.

Recreational Element Objective:

- Continuation of the East Atlantic Avenue Bike Trail, as proposed in the 2004 Camden County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Plan within the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Area.

II. Land Use Element

Laurel Spring's existing Business and Industry district permits almost any commercial use except heavy industrial and manufacturing uses. It prohibits one and two-family homes, as well as mixed-uses, e.g. apartments above stores. By permitting any number of uses in its downtown, the ordinance indirectly but effectively kills local, pedestrian-scale retail and personal service uses. The ordinance must be rewritten to permit only retail and personal service uses on the ground floor of properties fronting on Stone Road and East and West Atlantic avenues. It

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should prohibit uses that are not pedestrian friendly or geared to profession, medical or other office uses with low customer daily, weekend or evening turnover. Such office uses should occur above permitted stores and shops, as should residential uses, which would increase vitality and character to the district. Restaurants and eateries should be encouraged with some conditions, too. Industrial and auto-related uses should be discouraged and relocated. (See **Fig. 5. Land Use Plan**)

The ordinance should provide bulk standards to encourage traditional neighborhood design, while respecting the integrity of the adjacent residential district, Exemptions should be made for requiring existing businesses to provide off-street parking, but new uses should try to accommodate modern customer needs. Because some uses, such as restaurants, attract dinner customers after normal business hours, exceptions should be considered for these uses, as well. However, in return for such exceptions and exemptions, local business and property owners must work with the Borough to provide new off-street municipal parking facilities wherever possible. (See Circulation Element, below.)

Pre-existing, non-conforming land uses and structures

Continuation of uses not identified as permitted principal, accessory or conditional uses and the structures occupied by those uses, shall be allowed in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq.) and other pertinent laws. Voluntary and forcible removal of those uses and structures, however, may be occur under the provisions of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.), Eminent Domain Act (N.J.S.A. 20:3-1 et seq.), New Jersey Relocation Assistance Law (N.J.S.A. 52:31B-1 et seq.), New Jersey Relocation Assistance Act (N.J.S.A. 20:4-1 et seq.), etc.

Expansion of pre-existing, non-conforming uses, and the structures occupied by those uses is discouraged, as they are inconsistent with and detrimental to the land use policies in the adopted Borough master plan and this redevelopment plan. However, due to the anticipated long-term completion of this Redevelopment Plan, the lawful use, improvement, sale and disposal of such properties shall not be prohibited.

Development Standards

Implementation of the redevelopment plan will require amendments to the existing zoning districts standards by eliminating the existing Business & Industry District from the Downtown area and replacing it with a new zoning district, the "Downtown Business District", as illustrated on Figure. 5. Land Use Plan. The remainder of the area not within the proposed Downtown Business District shall become the Laurel Springs Residential zoning district.

"Downtown Business District" Zoning District:

A. Purpose: The Downtown Business District is the heart of Laurel Springs. This district is intended to maintain and encourage the health and vitality of the retail base of that area. Above the ground floor, all uses other than offices, professional offices, medical professional offices, and dwelling units are prohibited. Residential uses in the Downtown Business District increase safety and security, and do not impose a substantial daytime parking demand. Further intrusion of professional and office uses on the ground floor of buildings in the historic "strip" fronting Stone Road and West Atlantic Avenue from Park Avenue to Tomlinson Avenue in the Downtown Business District is forbidden. This is because such uses are permitted in the Borough's Residential zoning district and because the Borough seeks to protect the retail base and to prevent increasing demand for parking in the

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Downtown Business District. Protecting the health and vitality of the retail base in the Downtown Business District is an important planning goal of the Borough of Laurel Springs.

B. Permitted principal uses:

- (1) Retail and personal services uses on ground floor only.

RETAIL USE — A place of business engaged in selling tangible goods or merchandise to the general public for personal or household consumption and rendering services incidental to the sale of such goods or merchandise. Real estate agencies and travel agencies are retail uses.

PERSONAL SERVICE USE — The office or place of business of a member of one of the following legal occupations, maintained for the conduct of that occupation: cleaner, tailor, barber, beautician, manicurist, milliner, cobbler and similar occupations. Body-piercing, tattoo and massage parlors shall not be considered personal healthcare-related services and are hereby prohibited.

- (2) Residential uses within the same building as a permitted commercial use. Such residential use must be located on the second or third floor of the commercial building located on Stone Road, East Atlantic Avenue or West Atlantic Avenue.
- (3) Office, professional office and medical professional office uses, except on the ground floor of buildings in the historic "strip" fronting Stone Road and West Atlantic Avenue from Park Avenue to Tomlinson Avenue
- (4) Publicly owned park, playground or recreational area.
- (5) Municipal building or use, including public off-street parking.

C. Permitted accessory uses:

- (1) Accessory structures and uses, including home occupation use and home office use, which are customarily incidental to a permitted use, but not including professional offices or business offices.

D. Conditional uses:

- (1) Restaurants.

- (a) Plans shall include a scale diagram of the entire interior of the restaurant, showing the location of all receiving, storage, food preparation, cooking, serving, seating and waiting areas, waste removal and garbage storage areas, and the intended location of tables, counters and their respective seats or chairs.
- (b) Storage of waste materials and garbage shall be in an enclosed container, such container shall be stored inside the main building or in a separately enclosed structure that will completely confine odors.
- (c) Restaurant uses (including all cooking and food preparation) shall be confined to the ground floor of any structure, except that storage may be in the basement.
- (d) A system to vent cooking exhausts and odors shall be provided so that the exhaust and odor shall not offend or disturb nearby commercial or residential uses or intrude on any street, sidewalk or walkway. This shall include the requirement of filters or other technologically adequate means of eliminating oils, grease and odors from the exhaust. Such vents shall be interior and exit through the roof.

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E. Prohibited uses:

Prohibited uses shall be those commercial, industrial, residential and institutional primary and accessory uses not permitted or conditionally permitted above.

F. Area and yard requirements:

- (1) Lot size:
 - (a) Minimum area in square feet: 5,000.
 - (b) Minimum width: none.
 - (c) Minimum depth: none.

- (2) Yard requirements for principal structures:
 - (a) Minimum front yard: none.
 - (b) Maximum front yard: 10 feet.
 - (c) Minimum one side yard: 10 feet to an adjoining property in the Residential zoning district, otherwise none.
 - (d) Minimum both side yards: none.
 - (e) Minimum rear yard: none.
 - (f) Minimum building frontage: For properties with frontage on Stone Road, East Atlantic Avenue or West Atlantic Avenue, at least 65% of a building's frontage must be built within 0 and 10 feet of the right-of-way.

- (3) Yard requirements for accessory structures:
 - (a) Minimum front yard: none.
 - (b) Minimum side yard: 5 feet to an adjoining property in the Residential zoning district, otherwise none.
 - (c) Minimum rear yard: 5 feet to an adjoining property in the Residential zoning district, otherwise none.

- (4) Lot coverage:
 - (a) Maximum building coverage: 75%.
 - (b) Maximum impervious coverage: 100%.

- (5) Height requirements (principal structure):
 - (a) Maximum number of stories: 3.
 - (b) Maximum height: 40 feet.

- (6) Height requirements (accessory structure):
 - (a) Maximum height: 18 feet.

- (7) Floor area ratio:
 - (a) Maximum floor area ratio: 3.0.

Pre-existing
non conforming
structure.

G. Off-Street Parking requirements:

- (1) Off-street parking shall not be permitted within the front yard or front yard setback of lots that have frontage on Stone Road, East Atlantic Avenue or West Atlantic Avenue.

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- (2) For nonresidential uses, off-street parking shall be provided as set forth below. For uses not listed, the Planning Board shall evaluate the applicant's parking plan in relation to requirements for similar uses.

Use	Parking Requirement
Retail personal services uses	
(a) Convenience	1 space per 150 square feet of GFA
(b) Other	1 space per 200 square feet of GFA
Offices, not medical or dental	
(a) Where customer or client visits are generally not expected	1 space per 400 square feet of GFA
(b) Other non-medical/dental	1 space per 200 square feet of GFA
Medical and dental offices	4 spaces for each doctor, plus 1 space per 100 square feet of GFA
Restaurants	None required.
Residential Uses	See NJ Residential Site Improvement Standards

- (3). Uses which have frontage on Stone Road, East Atlantic Avenue or West Atlantic Avenue shall not be required to provide on-site parking, provided that there is no increase in the gross floor area of the building. Lots with frontage on Stone Road, East Atlantic Avenue or West Atlantic Avenue which have existing parking or loading areas shall not be permitted to reduce the supply of such parking or loading, and the supply may be increased but there shall be no new direct access drives to the parking or loading areas from Stone Road, East Atlantic Avenue or West Atlantic Avenue. If a new building is constructed or an existing building expanded along Stone Road, East Atlantic Avenue or West Atlantic Avenue, off-site parking shall be required or existing on-site parking shall be expanded to accommodate the added floor area. Any off-site parking shall have appropriate control to assure its continued availability for parking.

Redevelopment Objectives

- Provide opportunities for private-sector commercial and mixed-use redevelopment of properties within the redevelopment area.

Implementation Recommendations

1. Amend the Laurel Springs Zoning Map to be consistent with the redevelopment plan's Land Use Plan.
2. Amend the Laurel Springs Development Regulations Ordinance to be consistent with the redevelopment plan's Land Use Plan.
3. Encourage, on a case-by-case basis, the rehabilitation of private properties, including repair, improvement and new construction or expansion of existing buildings, for uses consistent with the Land Use Plan.

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4. Implement a strong code enforcement program within the redevelopment area. Apply redevelopment area governmental, financial, planning and special redevelopment powers if necessary.

III. Circulation Element

Improving the image vehicular and pedestrian safety and accessibility of the Downtown redevelopment area is critical to successful implementation of this redevelopment plan. As important is finding ways to provide safe and adequate off-street parking in the Downtown area for customers and workers of existing and new business, and downtown residents. The following circulation-oriented implementation recommendations, when completed in concert with the Land Use element and other elements of this plan, will move the Borough to fulfilling these objectives. (See **Fig. 6. Circulation Plan.**)

Redevelopment Objectives

- Improve local and regional traffic circulation, pedestrian circulation, signage in redevelopment area.
- Improve on- and off-street parking for commercial customers, business owners and tenants in the redevelopment area.

Implementation Recommendations

- o Work with NJDOT, Conrail, DVRPC and Camden County to develop an intersection improvement plan for Stone Road, East Atlantic Avenue, West Atlantic Avenue, and Washington Avenue. Such improvements may include:
 - Installation of new railroad grade crossing pavement,
 - Installation of a traffic signal or group of traffic signals,
 - Redesign of the West Atlantic Avenue municipal parking area north of Stone Road, e.g., make the existing two-way intersection as one-way in with lane chokers, speed humps and pedestrian improvements, create a new two-way, two-lane drive between the printing and auto repair businesses, consider vacation of portions of the street to expand existing lots, and
 - Designation of Washington Avenue as a one-way street eastbound from East Atlantic Avenue to Grand Avenue;
- o Work with NJDOT, Conrail, DVRPC and Camden County to improve on-street parking and pedestrian crossings on Stone Road, East Atlantic Avenue and West Atlantic Avenue, as well as traffic calming measures on Stone Road between Park Avenue and the railroad and West Atlantic Avenue from Tomlinson Avenue to Stone Road.
- o Work with local property owners on Block 42 to create an off-street municipal parking lot for workers, customers and tenants, while incorporating existing businesses' needs for rear storage, service deliveries, waste management, etc.
- o Design and build an off-street municipal parking lot at the corner of Tomlinson and West Atlantic avenues on the Borough public works property.
- o Design and implement a plan for revising business and directional signage for the Downtown redevelopment area.
- o Coordinate infrastructure improvement design, financing and installation with that of the proposed traffic circulation improvements, parking structure and other redevelopment projects.
- o Coordinate stormwater management improvements with redevelopment program.

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IV. Infrastructure and Utility Element

Existing water, sewer and roadway facilities serving the Downtown Redevelopment Area may require upgrading to meet present and future needs. The Borough of Laurel Springs Department of Public Works should continue their long-range improvement program to upgrade the sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water systems in the Redevelopment Area for service to existing and new business and to enhance the business attractiveness of the area. Redevelopment projects will be required to participate in on-site and off-tract infrastructure improvements for the Redevelopment Area, in proportion to the size of their projects.

Redevelopment Objectives

- Continuation of programmed sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water system infrastructure within the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Area.
- Incorporate infrastructure improvements, including upgrade of stormwater management systems, during redevelopment.

Implementation Recommendations

- Coordinate infrastructure improvement design, financing and installation with that of the proposed traffic circulation improvements and other redevelopment projects.
- Place above-ground utility lines below ground or behind storefronts in rear alleys in the redevelopment area.
- Coordinate stormwater management improvements with redevelopment program.

V. Brownfields Element

The Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Area has some special environmental issues due to its location along a railroad corridor with a number of current and former commercial and industrial properties. Brownfields are properties that are known to be or are suspected to be environmentally contaminated. Concern about unknown contamination and potential responsibility for clean-up and remediation has softened private-sector interest in older communities, such as Laurel Springs Borough. State and Federal environmental laws regulate the transfer of environmentally contaminated properties and require responsible parties to remediate current and historic contamination.

The NJDEP has not documented any Known Contaminated Sites (KCSs) in the redevelopment area. Former industrial properties or chemical processes, such as those that may have been used at the property now used as the printing business in the triangle between Stone Road and West Atlantic Avenue, are also of environmental concern. The adjacent auto repair business, Tim's Repair, is NOT a brownfield site. It has a "No Further Action Letter" from NJDEP indicated it is an environmentally clean property. Other older properties in the study area also may be brownfields due to the presence of potential health hazards, such as asbestos, lead paint, or underground storage tanks.

The Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan encourages the clean-up and re-use of brownfields properties as part of future redevelopment activities. Because New Jersey's brownfields clean-up requirements have "use-based" standards, remediation of properties that will be kept in non-residential use, such as those proposed in the Land Use Element, will be less severe than those required for housing. NJDEP also permits brownfield structures that are to be rehabilitated for new uses to limit workers' and residents' exposure to contamination through engineering and/or institutional controls, such as encapsulation or restricting access, as an

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alternative to full contamination removal. Residential uses also may be permitted in former industrial area, after appropriate necessary remediation is undertaken. All future redevelopment projects should require restrictive covenants in their property deeds to notify future owners of the site's potential contamination, remediation and usage limitations. NJDEP may require this full disclosure in real estate title documents, too.

New Jersey's Spill Compensation and Control Act (N.J.S.A. 58:10-23.11) exempts local governments and agencies that acquire brownfields through foreclosure, condemnation or similar means from liability for past contamination. Thus, the Redevelopment Entity may acquire, hold and work to remediate and redevelop brownfields property without threat of litigation as a responsible party. (Lending institutions financing industrial redevelopment projects are also not liable for past contamination.)

Redevelopment Objectives

- Remediate any unacceptable environmental contamination through the redevelopment process.

Implementation Recommendations

- Undertake a NJDEP-acceptable Preliminary Assessments/Site Investigation (PA/SI) analysis for Redevelopment Area properties to identify and evaluate potential brownfield contamination issues.
- If PA/Sis warrant further action, initiate involvement in NJDEP's Voluntary Cleanup Program. This program uses non-binding NJDEP Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) between NJDEP, local public agencies and redevelopers to conduct cleanups by establishing project scopes of work and flexible schedules for remedial activities. (Note: The Voluntary Cleanup Program is not available for properties subject to the New Jersey Industrial Site Recovery Act and underground storage tank regulations or the Federal Superfund program.)
- When the Redevelopment Plan is implemented and as properties are acquired by the Redevelopment Entity, it should continue to explore possible NJDEP Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund grants.
- The Borough and Redevelopment Entity should also explore the feasibility of designating "Environmental Opportunity Zones" (per N.J.A.C. 54:4-3.150 et seq.) for contaminated sites and creating tax-increment financing plans to pay for remediation over a 10-year period.
- Additional financial incentives may be available from State and Federal brownfields legislation. For example, the NJDEP Brownfields Redevelopment Agreement may allow reimbursement of up to 75% of approved remediation costs financed by State taxes generated by the redevelopment of individual properties.

VI. Recreation Element

The 2004 Camden County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Plan indicated the potential for created a trail for a nine mile stretch of road from Oaklyn to Clementon. (pp. 62) The purpose of this regional trail is to provide a safe recreational corridor in the White Horse Pike towns for

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young people, adults and seniors to bicycle, run, walk and exercise. The trail, which would be on county land between East Atlantic Avenue and the railroad tracks, would be managed by Camden County and be a great asset to the Borough's downtown revitalization efforts.

Redevelopment Objective:

- Continuation of the East Atlantic Avenue Bike Trail, as proposed in the 2004 Camden County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Plan, within the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Area.

Implementation Recommendation

- Work with Camden County Parks and Public Works departments to implement the trail system through the redevelopment area.

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VII. Statutory Requirements

1. Relationship to Definite Local Objectives:

The purpose of the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan is to address the economic development and other community development issues raised in Laurel Springs master plan and subsequent re-examination reports.

The Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan identifies that uses within the redevelopment area shall be redeveloped consistent with a number of existing and new land use zones. Local vehicular circulation and recreation issues are discussed in the Redevelopment Plan, as well. Landscaping, buffering, stormwater management, waste management and other site improvement issues shall be addressed through the development review and approval process for individual redevelopment projects, in accordance with the Borough's land development and zoning ordinances and standard smart growth principles.

2. Proposed Land Uses and Building Requirements:

The Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan includes a discussion of these requirements. These standards shall be used for the implementation of this Redevelopment Plan, and should be incorporated into the current Borough Master Plan, land development and zoning ordinances through their respective statutory amendment processes. Developments, including those requiring site plans and subdivisions, within the Redevelopment Area shall be governed by the respective Laurel Springs Borough codes regarding such development. The land uses identified within this Redevelopment Plan shall be used as the Redevelopment Area's land use plan, until the local ordinances are amended to correlate with the Redevelopment Plan.

The Redevelopment Entity, in consultation with the Borough's Planning Board, shall promulgate building, streetscape and landscape detailed design and improvement standards for development and redevelopment in this Redevelopment Area, which shall be adopted as an amendment to this Redevelopment Plan by the Borough Mayor and Council through ordinance. These regulations may vary from existing ones, based upon the unique nature of the parcels and the Redevelopment Plan, while being consistent with the objectives of appropriate local, state and federal regulations.

3. Identification of Properties to be Acquired:

The Redevelopment Entity shall work with property owners to address issues of abandonment deterioration, and underutilization and to effectuate the goal and objectives of the redevelopment plan. However, if voluntary cooperation is unproductive, the Redevelopment Entity may need to exercise its statutory powers and acquire property to implement the redevelopment plan.

Implementation of this Laurel Springs Downtown redevelopment plan shall require the acquisition of at least one property. This property is the vacant and underutilized property at the corner of Mt Vernon and East Atlantic avenues. The abandoned character of the lot in the center of the Downtown business district is a blighting feature detrimental to the future revitalization of this area. Due to the nature of its title, history of underutilization and minimal issues of displacement, acquisition of this property is recommended to advance the purposes of the redevelopment plan. Similarly, acquisition of the alley and flag lot of Block 42 is recommended as a first step towards construction of a municipal, off-street parking lot in the rear of the commercial storefronts in the heart of the Downtown.

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Acquisition of the three buildings that have been identified as "deteriorated or fallen into such a state of disrepair that they constitute a threat to the people who live or work in them" MAY also be required, if those issues cannot be addressed by the present owner.

The provision of adequate off-street parking for the businesses on Block 42 will require the acquisition of the rear and often vacant portions of those properties, with the understanding that the businesses would reserve their ability to have safe and acceptable loading and storage areas and parking for tenants and workers. Provisions also will need to be made for existing garages and storage areas in the rear portions of these lots.

During the course of the redevelopment program, the Redevelopment Entity also may find the need to acquire additional properties to implement the plan, if circumstances allow or change. In that case, the Borough may need to amend this plan, as provided by statute.

ACQUISITION LEGEND

- A - Shall be acquired
- B - May be acquired
- C - Portions of the rears of these lots shall be acquired in order to construct a municipal off-street parking lot

BLOCK	LOT	NO.	STREET	BUSINESS NAME	USE	ACQUISITION
28	1	714	E Atlantic Ave		Vacant	A
37	1.01	908	Stone Rd	Printer	Commercial	B
42	28	801	W Atlantic Ave	May be abandoned	Mixed Use	B
42	29	805	W Atlantic Ave	abandoned	Mixed Use	B
42	30	809	W Atlantic Ave	Pizza Parlor	Commercial	C
42	31	811	W Atlantic Ave	Cleaning Business	Mixed Use	C
42	32	817	W Atlantic Ave	Bakery	Commercial	C
42	32.01	817	W Atlantic Ave	Parking	Commercial	C
42	33		Flag Lot	Parking	Commercial	A
42	33.01	819	W Atlantic Ave	Hair Salon	Mixed Use	C
42	33.02	823	W Atlantic Ave	Florist	Mixed Use	C
42	33.03	825	W Atlantic Ave	Florist	Mixed Use	C
42	33.04	827	Stone Rd	Architect & Apt	Mixed Use	C
42	33.05	829	Stone Rd	Parking	Commercial	C
42	34	833	Stone Rd	Catering Business	Commercial	C
42	34.02	833	Stone Rd	Catering Business	Commercial	C

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4. Relocation Provisions

The Redevelopment Entity will provide displaced households and businesses with the opportunity of relocation within the Borough limits to the fullest extent of the New Jersey Relocation Assistance Law (N.J.S.A. 52:31B-1 et seq.) and the New Jersey Relocation Assistance Act (N.J.S.A. 20:4-1 et seq.). The Redevelopment Entity will interview households and businesses to determine their relocation needs and preferences, and make reasonable efforts to find available comparable housing or business space in the general area.

5. Relationship to the Municipal Land Use Law:

The Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan conforms to the general intent and scope of the Municipal Land Use Law. Redevelopment projects requiring site plan and subdivision approval by the Laurel Springs Borough Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment will be submitted to the Planning Board for review and approval, in accordance with the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1 et seq.). Those requiring County Planning Board approval will be submitted for their review and approval also.

The land use and development standards provided in the Redevelopment Plan are designed to be primarily consistent with those in the current Borough ordinances, however, they have been modified to allow sufficient flexibility for successful redevelopment within the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Area and to permit the development of parking structures. In cases where there is a difference between the standards in the Land Development Ordinance and those in the Redevelopment Plan, the uses and standards specified in the Redevelopment Plan shall supercede those in the ordinance. Uses identified as restricted and prohibited in the Borough of Laurel Springs and its applicable zoning districts also shall also restricted and prohibited in the Redevelopment Area, as well. In essence and fact, the uses and standards provided in this Redevelopment Plan shall be considered an overlay zone for the redevelopment area.

Expansion of pre-existing, non-conforming uses, and the structures in which they are located, such as single family residential uses, is discouraged, as they are inconsistent with and detrimental to the land use policies in the adopted Borough master plan and this Redevelopment Plan.

6. Laurel Springs Borough Master Plan:

The Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan has been developed from and is consistent with the Laurel Springs Borough Master Plan, as updated and amended. It has been designed to implement its recommendations by updating the provisions of the Downtown commercial area to make them more economically viable and consistent with smart growth principles.

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VIII. Conformance with Other Plans

The Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the Intent and Policy Objectives of the Metropolitan Area (PA1) in the 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP), as well as the SDRP's goals and statewide policies on urban revitalization, economic development, etc. It is also consistent with the April 2004 Preliminary State Plan.

The Laurel Springs Downtown redevelopment plan is also generally consistent with the 1971 Camden County Future Land Use Plan, which indicates medium density residential uses for this area. Essentially, the redevelopment area is a downtown neighborhood district, which districts are not indicated in the County's 1971 general land use plan. The 1971 plan will be superceded by the White Horse Pike Regional Strategic Revitalization Plan, which ten municipalities between Barrington and Clementon currently are developing. This redevelopment plan is also consistent with the 2004 Camden County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Plan.

The Laurel Springs Downtown redevelopment plan is consistent with the goals and objectives of the draft 2005 White Horse Pike Corridor Regional Plan. When completed, this regional plan will be circulated among the participating ten municipalities between Barrington and Laurel Springs and the county for their mutual endorsement and then forward to the State Planning Commission for their endorsement.

IX. Redevelopment Entity and Redeveloper(s)

The Governing Body of the Borough of Laurel Springs shall designate a Redevelopment Entity to implement this Laurel Springs Downtown redevelopment plan and undertake the redevelopment projects in the area designated by this plan as the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Area.

When necessary for the implementation of this plan, the designated Redevelopment Entity shall enter into a contract(s) with a Redeveloper(s) for any construction or other improvements forming part of this Redevelopment Plan.

The Redeveloper shall agree to retain interest in the project until the completion of construction, development and/or improvements of the specific project. The Redeveloper shall agree not to lease, sell or transfer interest or any part thereof without written prior approval of the Redevelopment Entity.

X. General Provisions

The following general provisions shall apply to this Redevelopment Plan:

1. Land use provisions and building requirements for the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Area are deemed necessary as minimum requirements in the interest of public health, safety and general welfare. They are intended to provide a frame of reference for physical development of the designated Redevelopment Area and as context for development in neighboring area. Developers and designated redevelopers (hereinafter Redevelopers) may be given flexibility in project planning and design, so long as building and other improvements reflect quality, permanence and physical integration through design elements and quality construction. The Borough of Laurel Springs cannot anticipate every possible design or land use solution for the variety of issues involved in this Redevelopment Plan. Redevelopment proposals will be evaluated

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as to how they appropriately achieve the redevelopment goal and objectives of this plan, as outlined in this document

2. The Redevelopment Entity and the Borough of Laurel Springs Planning Board, and its respective advisory committees, specifically reserve the right to review and approve a Redeveloper's plans, pro forma / marketing analyses, construction documents and specifications, and other development application submission materials that it may deem necessary to determine a project's conformance to the Redevelopment Plan. Such a review also shall be based on submissions to both agencies of a site context plan locating the proposed project in the Redevelopment Area; a site plan; and building elevation. All design changes must be approved by both agencies, or their designees, prior to their execution.
3. As part of the final site plan approval process, the Planning Board may require a redeveloper to furnish performance guarantees pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-53. Such performance guarantees shall be approved by the Borough Engineer and Borough Attorney. The amount of such performance guarantees shall be determined by the Borough Engineer and shall be sufficient to assure completion of improvements within two years of final site plan approval.
4. Interim uses, such as surface parking lots, may be established, subject to finding by the Planning Board that such uses will not have an adverse effect upon existing or contemplated development during the interim use. The Planning Board will determine a time during which the interim use will be permitted. No interim use approval shall be granted for more than two years; extensions may be granted at the Planning Board's discretion for a maximum of two additional two-year periods.
5. Subdivision of lots and tax parcels within the Redevelopment Area shall be in accordance with the requirements of this plan and the Borough's Subdivision Ordinance. Subdivisions or combinations of parcels that conflict with the proposed rights-of-way in the Redevelopment Plan's circulation element shall not be approved.
6. Redevelopers shall comply with the requirements of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.).
7. No building shall be constructed over a right-of-way or utility easement in the Redevelopment Area without prior written approval of the Redevelopment Entity and the Borough's Public Works and Code Enforcement offices.
8. Utility easements, when necessary, shall be provided by Redevelopers and approved by the Laurel Springs's Public Works and Code Enforcement offices. Such easements shall be provided within seven working days after completion of project construction.
9. Any plans or plats approved by the Borough of Laurel Springs, or its agencies and subsidiaries, prior to the adoption of this Redevelopment Plan shall not be subject to the requirements of this plan.
10. The Redevelopment Entity will agree to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title VII as amended in March 1972, and with all the affirmative

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action requirements of the State of New Jersey, including those required by P.L. 1975 and other regulations issued by the State of New Jersey and the Borough of Laurel Springs.

XI. Public Improvements

Existing water, sewer and roadway facilities serving the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Area may require upgrading to meet present and future needs. The Borough should continue its long-range improvement program to upgrade the sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water systems in the Redevelopment Area for service to existing and future development. Changes to Stone Road and East Atlantic Avenue, both County roads, will require coordination with and approval by the County. Improvement of the West Atlantic Avenue on and off-street parking areas will require coordination with NJDOT and Conrail, as much of this is technically within their right-of-way. Coordination with these agencies, as well as the County, is necessary for improvement of the railroad crossing and signalization of the intersection of Stone Road, East Atlantic Avenue and the railroad. Dedication and improvement of the East Atlantic Avenue bikeway will require coordination with the County, NJDOT and Conrail.

Creation of an off-street parking lot behind the businesses between Park and Tomlinson avenues will require extensive coordination with existing property owners and neighbors. Redevelopers will be required to participate in on-site and off-tract infrastructure improvements for the Redevelopment Area, in proportion to the size of their projects.

XII. Types of Proposed Redevelopment Actions

Upon adoption of the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan, the Redevelopment Entity may proceed with the clearance, re-planning, development and redevelopment of the areas delineated in the plan. In order to undertake and effectuate the purposes of the Municipal Redevelopment and Housing Law and the Borough Master Plan, the Redevelopment Entity may:

1. Undertake redevelopment projects, and for this purpose, issue bonds in accordance with provisions of Section 29 of P.L. 1992, C.29;
2. Acquire privately held parcels and property that area vacant or under-utilized, scattered or under varied ownership, and assemble them into parcels of sufficient size to support redevelopment;
3. Form public-private partnerships for development of the Redevelopment Area;
4. Provide for public improvements necessary to support redevelopment;
5. Select Redevelopers to implement all or part of the projects for this Redevelopment Area, in accordance with this Redevelopment Plan and all applicable local, state and federal requirements;
6. Enter upon any buildings or property in the Redevelopment Area to conduct investigations or make surveys, soundings or test borings necessary to carry out the purposes of this plan;

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7. Acquire by condemnation any land or building which is necessary for a redevelopment project, pursuant to the provisions of the Eminent Domain Act of 1971 (N.J.S.A. 20-3-1 et seq.);
8. Clear any owned or acquired area, and install, construct or reconstruct streets, facilities, utilities and site improvements essential to the preparation of sites for use in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan;
9. Prepare, or arrange by contract, for the provision of professional services and the preparation of plans by registered architects and landscape architects, licensed professional engineers or planners, or other consultants, to carry out redevelopment projects;
10. Arrange, or contract with public agencies or Redevelopers, for re-planning, construction or undertaking of any project or redevelopment work, or any part thereof;
11. Negotiate and collect revenue from a Redeveloper to defray the costs of the Redevelopment Entity, including where applicable the costs incurred with bonds, notes or other obligations issued by the Redevelopment Entity, and to secure payment of such revenue as part of any such arrangement or contract;
12. Provide for extension of credit or making of loans to Redevelopers to finance any project or redevelopment work, or upon finding that the project or redevelopment work would not be undertaken but for the provision of financial assistance, provide as part of an arrangement or contract for capital grants to Redevelopers;
13. Arrange or contract with public agencies or Redevelopers, for the opening, grading or closing of streets, roads, roadways, alleys or other such place, or for the furnishing of facilities or for the acquisition by such agency of property options or property rights, or for furnishing of property or services in connection with this Redevelopment Plan;
14. Lease or convey property or improvements to any other party, without public bidding, and at such prices and upon such terms as it deems reasonable, provided that the lease of conveyance is made in conjunction with this Redevelopment Plan, notwithstanding the provisions of any law, rule or regulation to the contrary;
15. Arrange or contract with a public agency for relocation of residents or commerce displaced from or within the Redevelopment Area, pursuant to the Relocation Assistance Laws of 1967 (N.J.S.A. 52:31B-1 et seq.) and the Relocation Assistance Law of 1971 (N.J.S.A. 20:4-1 et seq.);
16. Make, consistent with this Redevelopment Plan, plans for carrying out a program of voluntary repair and rehabilitation of buildings and improvements; and plans for the enforcement of laws, codes and regulations relating to the use and occupancy of buildings and improvements, and the compulsory repair, rehabilitation, demolition or removal of buildings and improvements;
17. Publish and disseminate information concerning the Redevelopment Plan or any area or project noted within;

DETERMINATION OF NEEDS STUDY & REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

18. Improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation in the Redevelopment Area through roadway design and redesign, improved signal timing, signage and paving;
19. Improve the infrastructure and streetscape within the Redevelopment Area and on adjacent streets as redevelopment takes place;
20. Improve the condition of public park, trails and other spaces recreational purposes;
21. Demolish acquired vacant residential and non-residential structures that cannot be cost-effectively rehabilitated;
22. Rehabilitate vacant housing for residential use or other purposes; and
23. Develop and adopt design guidelines and a design review process that will govern all new development within the Redevelopment Area.

XIII. Time Limits

Redevelopers of specific projects within the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Area shall begin the development of land and construction of improvements within a reasonable period of time to be determined in a contract between the Redevelopment Entity and its designated Redevelopers (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-8(f)).

The provisions and regulations specified in this plan shall continue in effect for a period of twenty-five (25) years from the date of adoption of this plan by the governing body of the Borough of Laurel Springs, or until the issuance of a Certificate of Completeness from the Redevelopment Entity.

XIV. Procedures for Amendments

The Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan may be amended from time to time upon compliance with the appropriate sections of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A-7).

XV. Supercedence, Repeal and Severability

All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with the Laurel Springs Downtown Redevelopment Plan are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency only.

If any standards, control, objectives, land uses, permitted uses, and other restrictions and requirements called for in this Redevelopment Plan differ in content from provisions set forth in the Borough of Laurel Springs zoning and land development ordinances or other land development regulations, the provisions in this Redevelopment Plan, unless otherwise specified, shall prevail.

If any provision or regulation of this Redevelopment Plan shall be judged invalid by court or competent jurisdiction, such order or judgment shall not affect or invalidate the remainder of the Redevelopment Plan and the governing body's redevelopment ordinance, which are hereby declared severable and shall remain in full force and effect.

REDEVELOPMENT STUDY AREAS LAUREL SPRINGS, CAMDEN COUNTY, NJ



Figure 1. Location Map

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT STUDY AREA LAUREL SPRINGS, CAMDEN COUNTY, NJ

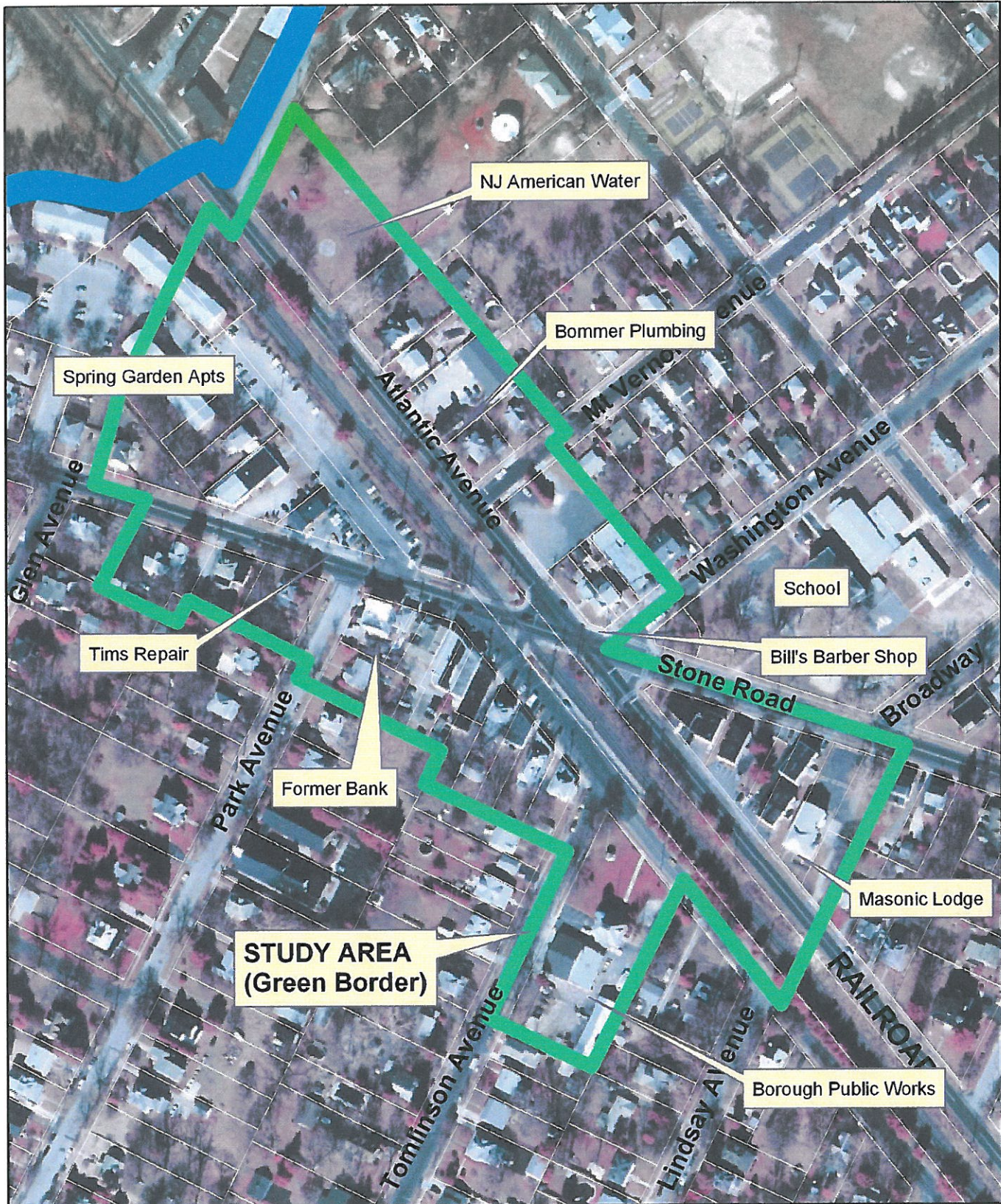


Figure 2. Study Area & Major Features

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT STUDY AREA LAUREL SPRINGS, CAMDEN COUNTY, NJ

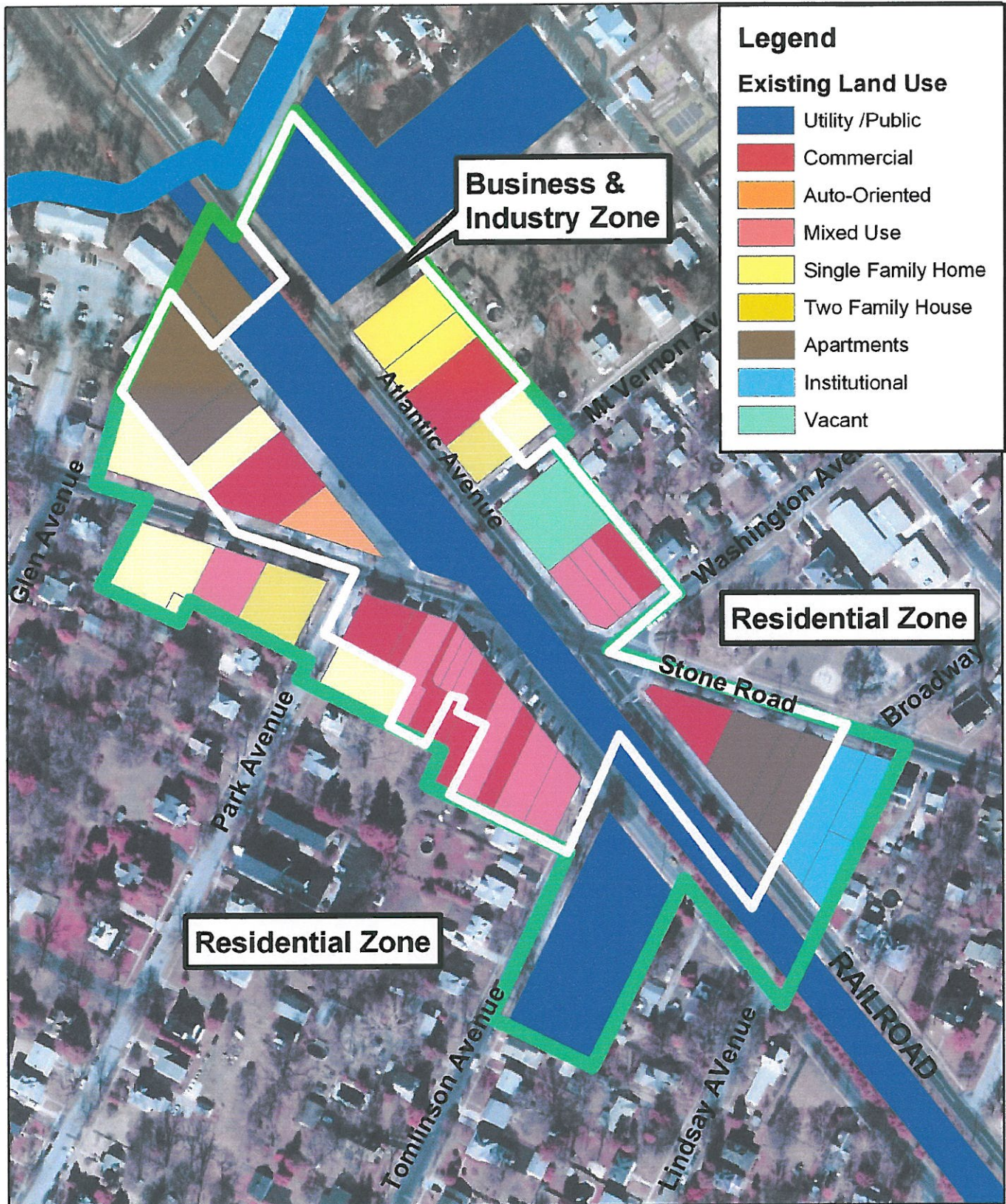


Figure 3. Existing Land Use & Zoning Plan

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT STUDY AREA LAUREL SPRINGS, CAMDEN COUNTY, NJ

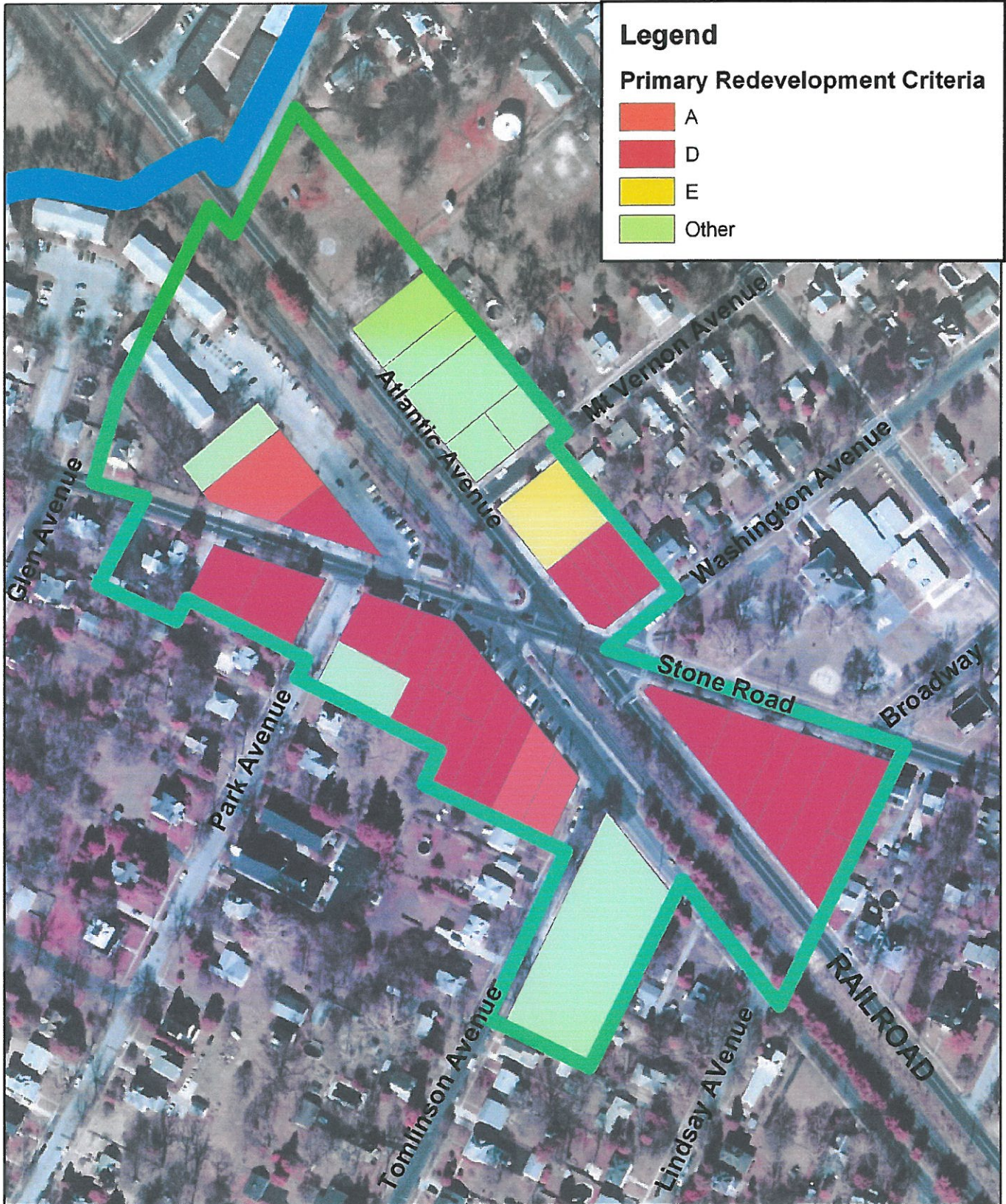


Figure 4. Redevelopment Criteria

**DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT STUDY AREA
LAUREL SPRINGS, CAMDEN COUNTY, NJ**

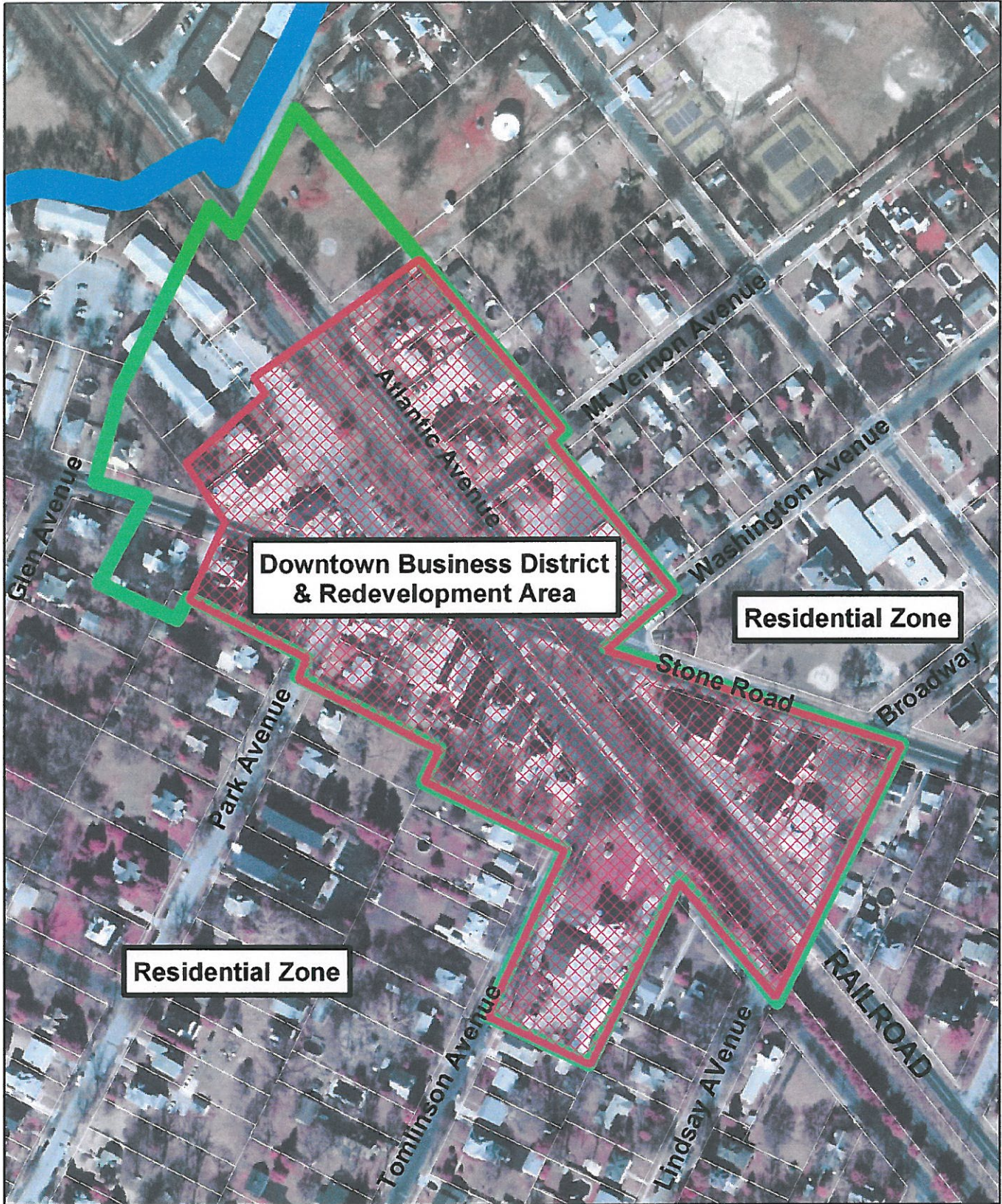


Figure 5. Land Use Plan

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT STUDY AREA LAUREL SPRINGS, CAMDEN COUNTY, NJ

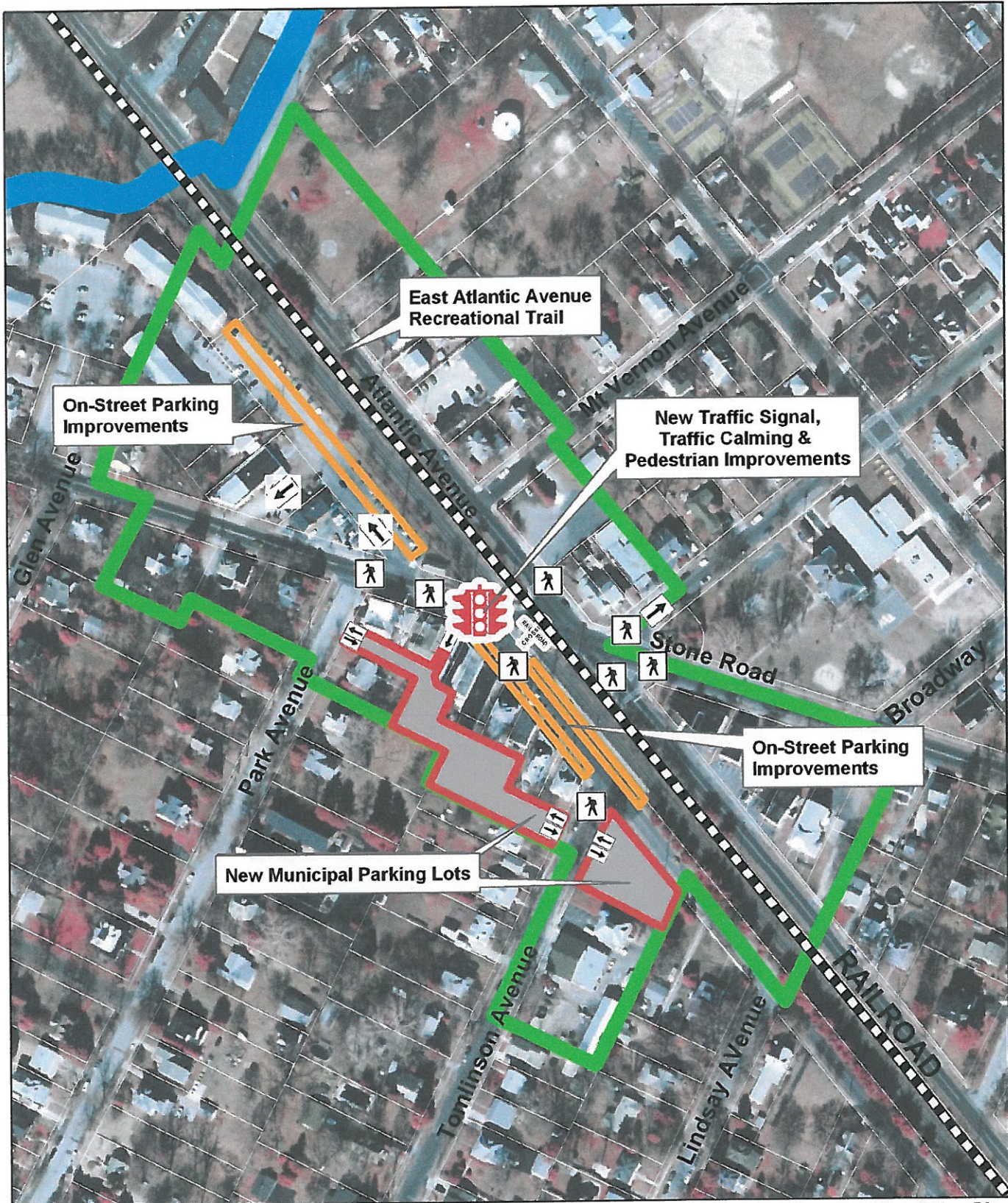


Figure 6. Parking and Circulation Plan