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Piscataway

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A reexamination report:

Piscataway Twp Master Plan &

Development regulations

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A REEXAMINATION REPORT:

**PISCATAWAY TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN AND
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS**

**TOWNSHIP OF PISCATAWAY
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**



INFRASTRUCTURE

Circulation

To properly examine the existing Circulation System of the Township it is necessary to update the Circulation System with regard to new road construction, road improvements, and circulation plan proposal implementations since 1978.

Plate 12 of the Township's current Master Plan details the functions of the streets in the Township as of March, 1978. Streets classified as freeways are those which are used for inter-regional traffic. Major arterial streets augment the freeways and are primarily used for inter-county traffic while secondary arterials are used for inter-municipal traffic. Collector streets are used primarily for carrying intramunicipal or local traffic between the local streets and arterials. Local streets are used primarily to carry local traffic to the collector streets and are usually limited to serving adjacent land areas.

Since the adoption of the 1977 Circulation Plan, no changes have occurred to the road system functions indicated on Plate 12 of the Township's Master Plan. The following section, which details new road construction and Circulation Plan proposal implementations since 1977, provides the appropriate functions of these newly constructed roadways.

System Update, April, 1982

The extension of Hoes Lane from the Behmer Road intersection through the Centennial Avenue intersection (Section III) has recently been completed. This extension corresponds to the Circulation Plan proposal indicated as the "Northern Section" of Hoes Lane. The proposal concerning the "Southern Section" extension (Section IV) to Metlar's Lane and proposed State Route 18 has yet to be constructed. As part of the Township supported "Metlar's/Hoes" Lane alternative for the proposed Route 18 extension through Piscataway to Interstate Route 287, this extension of Hoes Lane would have a positive impact on traffic flow in the Township while minimizing adverse impacts on the environment and existing residential development.

The extension of Centennial Avenue from River Road, through Piscataway to South Plainfield, continues to be of great importance in improving circulation throughout the Township. Moreover, the extension of this major arterial would serve to offset existing traffic problems and would greatly improve circulation throughout the industrially developed central area of the Township. The extension of this roadway from South Randolphville Road to South Washington Avenue is presently under construction and is expected to be completed in the very near future. The right-of-way for the remaining portions of Centennial Avenue, from the existing terminus in the vicinity of New England Avenue East to South Randolphville Road, and from South Washington Avenue to Hadley Road in South Plainfield has yet to be acquired.

With regard to traffic circulation on Hoes Lane and Centennial Avenue, it should be noted that the Planning Board and Township Administration have recently endorsed proposals for improving the safety and traffic capacities of Centennial Avenue from River Road to Possumtown Road, and Hoes Lane, from Knightsbridge Road to Morris Avenue, by reducing median island breaks and constructing jughandles to allow for necessary turning movements.

The Township's Circulation Plan, dated 1977, indicates a major arterial roadway which is proposed to connect River Road with the Southern extension of Hoes Lane. Recently, Rutgers University officials presented plans to the Township Planning Board and Council to construct a hotel conference center to the East of this proposed major arterial. University officials have indicated that as part of this proposal, the University would construct this proposed roadway. The construction of this major arterial would serve to reduce through traffic in the residential area of Hoes Lane, near River Road. Finally, the proposal also includes the vacation of a portion of existing Hoes Lane as indicated on the Circulation Plan, as well as the construction of Cul-De-Sacs at the terminuses of the remaining portions of Hoes Lane.

The construction of collector streets which were proposed in the 1977 Circulation Plan include the following:

Grandview Avenue has been extended to Blackford Avenue in the northeast section of the Township. As proposed in the Plan, this roadway

has a right-of-way of sixty (60) feet. In addition to this new collector, four Cul-De-Sacs extend off this roadway serving as local streets for the surrounding residential dwellings.

Also as proposed in the Circulation Plan, Stanford Road now extends from Circle Drive North to Old New Brunswick Road. This roadway, which also has a right-of-way of sixty (60) feet, provides improved circulation for the various industries located in the Rutgers Industrial Park in addition to providing improved access to Interstate Route 287.

Ethel Road West is another proposed collector roadway which has been constructed since the adoption of the 1977 Circulation Plan. This roadway extends from Suttons Lane to Stelton Road and serves the surrounding developing industrial area. The right-of-way of this roadway is sixty-six (66) feet.

The construction of the Haines Avenue extension (Drake Lane) to Metlar's Lane is expected to be completed in the near future. The right-of-way of this collector street varies from fifty (50) feet at Metlar's Lane to eighty (80) feet at Lake Park Drive. The extension of this collector roadway to Metlar's Lane is necessary to accommodate the increased traffic volumes generated in the area by recent residential development.

Local street construction has continued to occur with residential and industrial development in the Township. The majority of these new local roadways serve residential land uses. Right-of-way widths of these roadways are generally 50-60 feet as recommended in the Township Circulation Plan.

The 1977 Circulation Plan indicates various local roads in the Township which were proposed to be vacated. The following update is provided for those streets which have been vacated since the adoption of the Master Plan:

In the northeast section of the Township, Tenth Street, Eleventh Street, and Twelfth Street were vacated in 1979. In addition, Ninth Street was also vacated, although it was not indicated as such in the Circulation Plan. Presently, this area is now utilized for recreational purposes at the expanding Columbus Park facility.

Also, as proposed in the Circulation Plan, the following streets were vacated in 1981:

Chicago Avenue, Buffalo Avenue, Boston Avenue, Atlanta Avenue, Baltimore Avenue, Wayne Avenue, Howell Avenue, and Sewell Avenue. In addition, New York Avenue was vacated along with these streets. Located in an area zoned "Planned Residential District," these streets were vacated as part of preliminary approval by the Planning Board for a major residential subdivision. Recently, the Planning Board granted final approval to a section of this proposed residential development.

In summary, several streets indicated on the Circulation Plan were vacated before the Circulation Plan was adopted, and are indicated as "To Be Vacated" for purposes of updating the base map. Other streets indicated as such, have yet to be vacated as of the preparation of this report.

As of April 1982, no changes have occurred with regard to road jurisdiction in the Township. In fact, all new road construction since 1977 has been that of roads under local jurisdiction, with various road improvements on the County and State level. It should be noted that River Road continues to serve as temporary State Route 18.

County and State Proposals

In October 1980, the portion of State Route 18 connecting George Street in New Brunswick with River Road in Piscataway (Phase I) was completed and opened for vehicular traffic. Construction of that portion in New Brunswick which would link the existing terminus in the vicinity of Albany Street to George Street is expected to be completed in the near future.

In 1980, the New Jersey Department of Transportation released an interim report regarding the State Route 18 extension through Piscataway Township (Phase II). This study included a preliminary analysis of the feasibility of a series of alternatives for the construction of an extension from the existing terminus at River Road to connect with Interstate Route 287. After careful review and public hearings, the Township of Piscataway has taken the position that the "Metlar's Lane/Hoes" Lane

Alternative is the most practical approach to accommodate the increased traffic which will be generated upon completion of the freeway extension in New Brunswick. The Township is on record as opposing the opening of the soon to be completed portion until funding and construction schedules are available for the necessary local transportation improvements as stipulated in the Route 18 study.

Recently, that portion of Interstate 95 proposed to be constructed within Piscataway Township was de-designated by the New Jersey Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. Presently under consideration is the de-designation of I-95 in Somerset County. Piscataway Township supports the de-designation of that portion of I-95 which would enter Piscataway, since its construction would generate higher traffic volumes on roadways which are already at or near capacity levels.

With regard to the implementation of the proposed improvements to Interstate 287, the New Jersey Department of Transportation has recently submitted a preliminary draft of the "I-287 Traffic Study" for review. This study recommends certain priorities and design guidelines for the various interchanges. The Township Administration has reviewed this report and has recommended that more emphasis be placed upon the necessity for solutions which can be accomplished in the near future. Every effort should be made to construct additional entrance and exiting ramps at the existing interchanges in order to alleviate rush hour traffic congestion forced upon the local roadway system.

With regard to the county proposals stated in the Township Master Plan; to date, the only county proposals implemented since 1978 concerned improvements to Metlar's Lane. One such improvement is the widening and improved alignment of Metlar's Lane near the Sturbridge residential development, including traffic signalization at the South Randolphville intersection. In order to alleviate roadway flooding conditions on Metlar's Lane at Lake Nelson, the county recently completed the reconstruction of the bridge which overpasses the lake. This improvement also resulted in an improved alignment of Metlar's Lane in that area. Other proposed improvements to county roadways as stated in the Master Plan have yet to be implemented.

As previously stated, the extension of Centennial Avenue through the Township to terminus at the Stelton Road/Hadley Road intersection in South Plainfield continues to be proposed. Indicated on the Circulation Plan as a major arterial, a right-of-way of 104 feet is proposed for this roadway. The Township administration maintains the position that this roadway must be completed in order to alleviate existing traffic circulation problems throughout the central portion of the Township. It should be noted that state reports concerning additional entrance/exit ramps to Route 287 and the Route 18 extension through the Metlar's/Hoes Lane corridor indicate the need for the extension of Centennial Avenue in their implementation.

Traffic Volumes

The Township Master Plan, dated March, 1978, includes Traffic Volume data for 1973 in the section addressing existing circulation and transportation in the Township. These figures represent the Average Annual Daily Traffic (A.A.D.T.) as compiled by the New Jersey State Department of Transportation. This data has since been updated and Traffic Volumes for major roadways in the Township for 1980 indicate the following:

Interstate Route 287 continues to carry the highest traffic volumes in the Township. Total traffic on the freeway increased approximately 19 percent from 1973; 1980 A.A.D.T. counts indicate 70,400 vehicles per day south of the River Road interchange and 61,100 vehicles per day at Old New Brunswick Road. 70,300 vehicles per day are indicated between South Randolphville Road and South Washington Avenue; and 69,800 vehicles per day are noted between South Washington Avenue and Stelton Road.

Landing Lane traffic has increased from 14,200 vehicles per day in 1973 to 22,700 vehicles per day in 1980. This increase in traffic volume can be attributed to higher traffic congestion in the southern portion of the Township due to the construction of the Route 18 extension into Piscataway at Metlar's Lane.

River Road traffic volumes have remained relatively the same since 1973. High traffic volumes were recorded in the vicinity of Metlar's Lane and Centennial Avenue. Traffic volumes on River Road at the Centennial Avenue intersection increased from 15,600 vehicles per day in 1973 to 23,700 vehicles per day in 1980. Overall, traffic volumes for the entire roadway increased an average of seven percent from 1973.

Metlar's Lane traffic increased from a range of 7,800 and 17,600 vehicles in 1973 to between 10,000 and 18,800 vehicles per day in 1980. As in 1973, the higher traffic volumes were recorded in the vicinity of the River Road intersection. Traffic volumes in the vicinity of South Randolphville Road and Stelton Road increased by 20 percent and 41 percent respectively.

Average daily traffic on Stelton Road increased from a range of 18,100 and 19,500 vehicles to 19,100 and 22,100 vehicles per day between Interstate Route 287 and Edison Township. Traffic volumes on Stelton Road between Washington Avenue and New Brunswick Avenue increased from 19,400 to 23,900 vehicles per day. Between Old New Brunswick Road and Washington Avenue, traffic volumes on Stelton Road increased from 3,500 to 9,200 vehicles per day or 160 percent. Overall, traffic volumes on Stelton Road increased an average of 16 percent since 1973.

Traffic volumes on Washington Avenue have significantly increased since 1973. The A.A.D.T. figures indicate an increase from a range between 10,000 and 14,000 vehicles in 1973 to 14,000 and 19,500 vehicles per day in 1980 or an increase of 40 percent. More specifically, traffic volumes between Summers Avenue and Lakeview Avenue increased from 10,100 to 19,500 vehicles per day or 93 percent.

William Street traffic volumes increased from a range between 4,900 and 9,300 vehicles to 5,200 and 9,700 vehicles per day. The 1980 traffic volumes on William Street, near Prospect Street, was 9,700 vehicles per day as compared with 8,100 vehicles per day in 1973. At the intersection of Mountain Avenue and William Street, traffic volumes increased from 5,100 vehicles to 6,800 vehicles per day. Traffic volumes for the remaining segments of William Street are relatively unchanged.

Other major roadways in the Township which have experienced significant traffic volume increases are: Centennial Avenue (292%), Hoes Lane (+38%), Old New Brunswick Road (+13%), South Randolphville Road (+91%), North Randolphville Road (+12.5%), South Washington Avenue (+41%), and Morris Avenue (+65%).

Traffic volumes are particularly high for those roadways which provide direct access to and from Interstate Route 287. Local roadways serving existing residential areas have generally maintained the same level of traffic volume since 1973.

In conclusion, traffic volumes throughout the Township have continued to increase since the 1973 A.A.D.T. counts recorded in the 1978 Master Plan. This can be attributed to the continued residential and

industrial development in the Township. Furthermore, traffic volumes on Rutgers University roadways have more than doubled since 1973, and consequently have contributed to higher traffic volumes in the southern portion of the Township. Traffic volumes can be expected to increase as more development occurs in the Township; consequently, it is essential that road improvements continue in critical areas to accommodate these increased traffic volumes.

Sewerage System

It is stated in the Master Plan that approximately 15 percent of the Township's households were unserved by a sewerage system in 1978. These households all relied on individual septic systems to dispose of their sanitary waste. Discussions with the Township Engineering Division indicate that this figure has been reduced to a current level of below 5 percent.

Sanitary waste is disposed by the Middlesex County Utilities Authority. As indicated in the Master Plan, the waste is treated at the Sayreville Treatment Plant. This plant has recently been upgraded to provide a secondary level of treatment. In addition, the recently completed trunk line located along Johnson Park in the southern portion of the Township is expected to be operational in the very near future.

Water Supply

Water service continues to be provided by the Elizabethtown Water Company. Since the adoption of the Master Plan, no problems have been encountered in the Township and the current system appears most efficient in meeting the needs of the Township.

All but a few small areas of the Township are currently provided with water service. A major residential subdivision located to the West of Blackford Avenue was recently granted final approval and will be supplied with water service. In addition, all major residential subdivisions and commercial and industrial developments constructed since 1978 have been provided with water service as proposed in the 1978 Master Plan. It should be noted that in those areas of the Township