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Bedminster Master Plan

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MASTER PLAN

BEDMINSTER TOWNSHIP NEW JERSEY

MARCH 1965

P-1124
Section
11/2/71

I. PREAMBLE

A Master Plan is a general guide for the orderly growth, development, and preservation of a community. It is a background understanding between the citizens and their government as to what the community should be. Unlike such documents as the Official Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Sub-division Regulations, it is not a precise, rigid, detailed document with the effect of law. It does, however, constitute the overall pattern within which these more specific measures should fit.

Once the Master Plan is adopted by the Planning Board, actions necessitating the expenditure of public funds for projects related to the Master Plan are referred to the Board of review and recommendation prior to proceeding. In this way, through the years, the community may proceed with major projects on a predetermined course, and in an economical manner.

Objectives established by the Township Committee, the Advisory Committee, and the Planning Board are made a part of the Plan, as is the attached map. Though they are not parts of the Plan, reference is made to the minutes of the detailed studies and discussions of the Planning Board between 22 April 1963 and 22 March, 1965 and to the various memoranda of the Consultant, which are listed in the appendix.

II. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

(See Plan of Future Land Use)

Objective: To preserve the Township's present rural residential character and thereby protect its chief asset: its reputation as a highly desirable place in which to live.

1. The pattern of the residential areas of Bedminster is already

to the character of access to all other property in the Township, and therefore hostile to the preservation of property values. Provision of roadside facilities, catering to transient traffic, such as is currently found on Routes US 1, 22, and 17, has been considered and is specifically excluded from this Plan.

c) The limited Central Business District in Bedminster Village must be attractive in both senses of the word: first, it must be beautiful, since customers are conscious of appearance and now able to reach and compare facilities elsewhere, and secondly, it must have drawing power generated by the quality and effectiveness of the merchandising.

This will involve certain detailed actions and measures beyond the general scope of this guide Plan:

1. Rigid control of offensive signs and lights, and exclusion of all advertising signs and billboards.

2. Shielding and landscaping of all objectionable sights, such as lots for the parking, display, or storage of automobiles and commercial vehicles, whether as an adjunct to other business or for repair or sale.

3. Exclusion of the open outside display of all merchandise, excepting only gasoline pumps and cans of lubricating oil.

4. Review and approval of the plans of all structures other than single-family houses by the Planning Board before a building permit is issued to provide for quality of design consistent with the character and best interests of the Township.

IV. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES

Objective: To foster the future economic health of the community, and the convenience of nearby employment for local residents, by providing for clean, quiet research, develop-

highway construction, present and proposed.

With respect to through traffic, few communities are more fortunate than Bedminster in its location in the regional highway pattern. Interstate 78 on the south will lead to Manhattan in 37 miles or about 40 minutes, and to all western points, and Interstate 287 in the southeast corner will give ready access to northeastern points and to southeastern points. State Route 206, planned to be dualized, will provide access to northern and southern areas of the State.

However, on the west, Bedminster is vulnerable to invasion of unwanted outside traffic trying to get to these two arteries (I-287 and 206). Fortunately, there will be an interchange at I-78 and Rattlesnake Bridge Road, near the western boundary of the Township. It is important that the Rattlesnake Bridge-Black River Road be improved as an effective and attractive major artery, comparable to 206, to act as an intercepting traffic shelter to prevent invasion of the Township by unwanted through cars from the west.

However, as the land use both of Bedminster and townships to the west matures, increases of local area traffic (as distinguished from Township) will be inevitable. This will focus on Peapack-Gladstone, and make the Pottersville Road carry heavier loads, and on Bedminster Village, which will necessitate protection of the Lammington Road for use as a major artery.

As for the handling of internal traffic, it is in the best interests of the Township to concentrate it on a few roads, and to make them easy and attractive to traffic. Only in this way can other minor residential streets be protected from traffic, which necessarily will have to disperse if all streets were

boundary and flows from the midpoint of the southern boundary in a northeasterly direction between Pluckemin and Bedminster Village. The southeasterly boundary of the Township is Chambers Brook.

In addition to the preservation of assets of verdure and wildlife, and the prevention of flooding, is the bare element of public safety in flood plains. No building or alteration of land should be allowed in a flood plain, which might aggravate the potential flood menace or stream flow problems above or below the site.

The most accurate way of mapping flood plains is to establish the stream gradient by readings at gauging stations at flood peaks and plotting according to survey contours at the various elevations. The next most accurate method is to examine the soil characteristics for evidence of chronic flooding and to map accordingly with some adjustment for contours. The former method is neither needed nor feasible in Bedminster since the area is not sufficiently built-up to merit the necessary installations and since some years might elapse before the event of a severe flood would produce the necessary data. The second method has been followed, but can be modified when additional evidence is available.

The creation of ponds and lakes should be encouraged to prevent erosion.

The steepest slopes have been designated for permanent open space and should be left wild to prevent erosion.

The Township otherwise should be alert to enforce contour plowing of tilled land, reforestation where feasible, and the prohibition of top soil removal.

VII. RECREATION

Objective: To forecast the need for public park and recreation-

and picnicking and even fishing. Particularly for these latter sports, as well as skating, the flood plain of the North Branch of the Raritan River, and other similar areas, should be contemplated.

4. Other Private recreation. In all privately planned subdivisions, the Planning Board should be alert to encourage the creation of neighborhood reservations of permanent open space adjacent to residential development. This might include facilities for private golf and tennis clubs, bridle paths, possibly facilities for drag hunts, and the creation of ponds and lakes along water courses, subject to proper regulation.

VIII. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Objective: To anticipate the need for school plant expansion and to suggest the most appropriate location for such expansion.

The future population of Bedminster is estimated at 18,000 persons and a school population, kindergarten through high school, of 3,600. This is based on the present zoning pattern of five-acre lots for single family residence for most of the area of the Township, and one acre for Bedminster Village and two acres for Pluckemin. Any change downward in the zoning would raise the school population, and 3,600 is therefore the minimum for which sites must be reserved.

Four elementary schools are recommended, on minimum sites of 1.5 acres. With added recreation facilities, which should be protected for the future, sites of 25 acres should be sought. Three independent sites are shown on the Plan, and one, the present location, should be combined with high school, civic center and park uses.

A high school location must be reserved. Whether or not the future brings a regional high school

site, to pinpoint properties which may require redevelopment, and to suggest the means and character of such redevelopment.

The Township should take all legal measures available to prevent deterioration of structures and land uses, to provide for the removal of any structure so deteriorated that it is a menace to the public welfare, and to prevent present or future misuse of vacant land.

XI. APPENDIX

Consultant's Reports

Improvement of I-78 and 287 Interchange (22 April 1963)
General Considerations in Planning of Bedminster (24 June 1963) (24 January 1964)
Planning for Open Space (26 August 1963) 20 Feb. 1964.)
Preliminary Notes on Zoning (10 February 1964)
Status of Highway and Road Plans (10 February 1964)
Population Forecasts and Water Needs (10 February 1964)
Regional Considerations — Impacts of Highways (24 February 1964)
Housing Code for Existing Structures (6 March 1964)
Major Thorofare Plan (30 March 1964)
Preliminary Notes on Future Land Use (30 March 1964)
Suggested Changes to Subdivision Regulations (1 May 1964)
Major Thorofares (25 May 1964)
Special Land Use Problems, Southeast Corner of Township (13 July 1964)
School Sites and Community Facilities (13 July 1964)
"Cluster Development" (Community Unit Plan," "Density Zoning") (17 August 1964)
Municipal Administration and Service (7 October 1964)
Aerial Photographs by Consultant (various dates)
Minutes of Subcommittees and

ed. This can be accomplished by (a) continuation of strict zoning; (b) the containing of commercial and other non-residential areas with natural boundaries susceptible to adequate and effective buffer screening; (c) channelling of traffic to necessary and inevitable major routes, and its discouragement on minor roads in residential areas; and (d) use of appropriate measures to establish and preserve additional public open spaces.

2. Artificial but effective boundaries have been established by I-78 and I-287. Sanitary problems have arisen in present compactly built areas. Land use patterns must be adjusted accordingly.

III. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Objective: To stabilize the activity of local business but at the same time to contain it substantially within its present boundaries; to provide for adequate and safe vehicular access, adequate parking, and adequate unloading and loading facilities and adequate pedestrian amenities; and otherwise to encourage the development within the district of functional and aesthetic qualities in harmony with the character of the Township.

Various principles concerning a central business district are recognized:

a) Even a limited Central Business District should be an area both of service and pride to the local community. If it does not serve its local citizens well, they are driven elsewhere for the necessities of life. This exaggerates traffic problems and brings progressive deterioration.

b) Strip commercial development along major highways is declared to be hazardous to traffic, damaging

organizations in the future.

Earlier concepts of centers of employment embraced noise and objectionable characteristics such as smoke, dust, glare, and ugliness. This no longer need be true. The combination of better architectural and landscape design, effective screening, rigid control of nuisance factors (particularly the suppression of noise, odor, signs, and lights), and proper channelling of traffic on suitable major arteries has revised the attitudes of communities concerning light research and development enterprises.

In Bedminster, there are few suitable areas for research and development facilities, and full advantage should be taken of them (with appropriate safeguards to surrounding properties) to decrease future municipal costs, to broaden the non-residential tax base of the Township, and to provide some source of local employment. These include (a) the more or less flat area lying between the North Branch of the Raritan River and I-287, and (b) the limited area of the Township lying south of I-78 and east of I-287.

Great care must be used in zoning all these areas to assure adequate protection of surrounding residential areas.

All other potential areas are either now committed to residential use by existing building or should be kept so to guarantee minimum traffic generation and approaches to other land in the Township consistent with its best use and value.

V. TRAFFIC CONTROL AND MAJOR THOROUGHFARES (See Map of Major Thoroughfares and Future Land Use)

Objective: To discourage through traffic, to facilitate intra-Township local traffic, and to coordinate the Township's street pattern with surrounding

To achieve this objective, major roads roughly a mile apart in both directions are essential. Existing country roads already follow this principle closely. With the addition of only a few new alignments, a satisfactory permanent pattern can easily be achieved.

The present road network is satisfactory for the small number of driveways to large land holdings. Its capacity and free flow would be severely damaged, and it would not serve any property satisfactorily if a multiplicity of driveways or other abutting vehicular use were allowed in the future. As in other areas, the speed limit would have to be reduced from 50 mph to 25. In addition to the increase in danger, this would make all other properties twice as remote in time and depreciate their value. Accordingly, measures should be taken to encourage future development in accordance with the following principles, among others, at the time property is subdivided:

a) Only a limited number of access points should be allowed to each property;

b) Reverse frontage of individual lots and no new driveway to an individual lot should open onto a major road;

c) Minor roads must have dead end intersections with major roads so that continuous traffic from one minor to another is prevented.

VI. CONSERVATION

Objective: To preserve the physical assets of the Township and thereby foster the preservation of its character and desirability for sparse residential use. This entails protection of its streams and the prevention of erosion of its open rolling countryside and steeper slopes.

The west and southwest boundary of the Township in the Lamington River, The North Branch of the Raritan River forms part of the

al facilities (land and buildings) and to suggest appropriate locations for any such needed facilities.

As prosperity, leisure time, and medical and mental health science increases, a balance between work and play becomes a matter of necessity rather than a cause for feeling a personal guilt.

In the physical planning of the Township this must be considered at at least three approximate age levels: pre-school, elementary school, and high school and adult combined.

1. Pre-school recreation in the form of "tot-lots" or scattered kindergarten sites, can be left in private hands for the next few years, until expanded population justifies public concern. Private neighborhood associations should be encouraged.

2. Junior recreation (elementary school age) has much in common with education, and either combined or adjacent sites should be reserved as shown on the Map. This comprises three sites of at least 25 acres each in addition to the major site at Bedminster Village. Ultimately these should be developed for all popular group sports such as softball, soccer, junior football, tennis, and handball, in addition to usual playground equipment.

3. Senior recreation. On the proposed site in Bedminster Village, all Junior facilities must be developed in conjunction with the existing elementary school facilities, plus high school and non-school adult facilities. This will involve full-sized baseball diamonds, at least one full-sized soccer field, a football field and room for bleachers or a small stadium, extensive tennis facilities, provision for the possibility of other minor sports such as archery and skeet, and swimming and skating.

In addition to these active sports, provision should be made for more passive sports, such as walking

is only open to present conjecture. However, a site of about 50 acres should be reserved.

It is recognized that some time will elapse before a viable elementary school can be constructed on a site away from Bedminster Village, and that an addition to the present plant will first be necessary. However, when these facilities approach over-crowding, either a new school should be built elsewhere or emergency temporary facilities should be provided. Present permanent facilities should not be expanded beyond 500 pupils.

IX. COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

Objective: To forecast the long-range need for expanded and additional community buildings to study the feasibility of grouping such buildings, and, in any event, to suggest appropriate locations for such facilities.

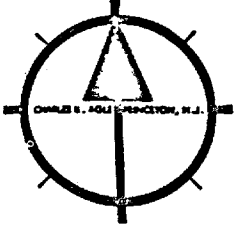
Menger Township facilities now existing are on sites not susceptible to expansion. All future facilities other than schools and fire houses should be concentrated as a Civic Center on the site in or adjacent to Bedminster Village, between Route 202 and the North Branch of the Raritan River. This includes a building for municipal administration, including court and police, a public works garage, a fire house, the library, a building for privately sponsored quasi-public facilities, and a community building for recreation. The lowest downstream part of the site is also appropriate for a small sewage treatment plant.

While separate studies have been made to explore the capacity of the proposed site for the various facilities and for parking, such diagrams are for test purposes only, and are specifically not a part of this Master Plan.

X. REDEVELOPMENT

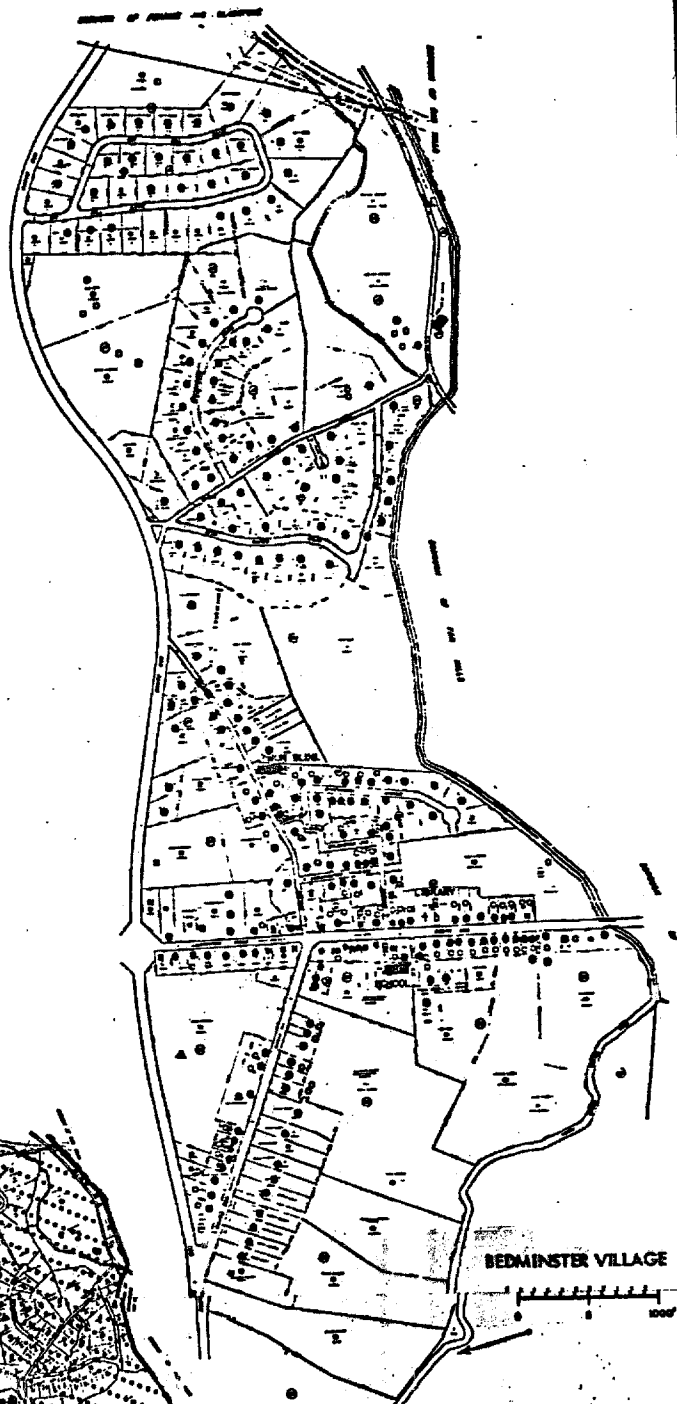
Objective: To predict the need for the redevelopment of individual buildings and groups of buildings as they become ob-

Minutes of Planning Board



The preparation of this map was financially aided through a grant from the Urban Renewal Administration of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, under the Urban Planning Assistance Program authorized by Section 201 of the Housing Act of 1954, as amended. The reproduction has been prepared by East-West and by its cooperation of the State of New Jersey as part of the Standard State and Regional Program.

CHESTER TOWNSHIP MORRIS COUNTY



- EXISTING - LAND USE**
- RESIDENCE
 - BUSINESS
 - ▲ INDUSTRY, OFFICE, RESEAR
 - ACCESSORY BUILDING



Portion of this map was previously filed through to the State of New Jersey Department of Transportation as a Planning Agency under the Uniform Planning Act, Chapter 262 of the Statutes of 1968, and the Department of Transportation as a part of the Department of Transportation's Statewide Planning Program.

CHESTER TOWNSHIP MORRIS COUNTY

UNION GROVE
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BEDMINSTER VILLAGE
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

EXISTING LAND USE
● RESIDENCE
● BUSINESS
▲ INDUSTRY, OFFICE, RESEARCH
○ ACCESSORY BUILDING

MAJOR THOROFARE PLAN
90 FOOT RIGHTS OF WAY WITH 20 FOOT SETBACK
WIDENING OF EXISTING ALIGNMENT
NEW ALIGNMENTS
90 FOOT RIGHTS OF WAY ALL OTHERS
WIDENING OF EXISTING ALIGNMENT
NEW ALIGNMENTS

FUTURE LAND USE
RESIDENTIAL:
FIVE ACRES MINIMUM LOT
TWO ACRES
ONE ACRE
COMMERCIAL:
RESEARCH TYPE I
(MINIMUM LOT - 25 ACRES)
OPEN SPACE AND FLOOD PLANS
COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN
SCHOOL SITES, FIRE HOUSES,
AND CIVIC CENTER

MASTER PLAN
BEDMINSTER TOWNSHIP NEW JERSEY
MARCH 1985
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF THE MASTER PLAN ADOPTED BY THE PLANNING BOARD OF BEDMINSTER TOWNSHIP ON JULY 28, 1985
MARK V. ROBINSON, SECRETARY

