

AMENDMENT TO THE VOORHEES TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

**TOWNSHIP OF VOORHEES PLANNING BOARD
COUNTY OF CAMDEN
STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

JULY 2010

Revised: October 2010

Adopted by the Township of Voorhees Planning Board
October 21, 2010

Remington & Vernick Engineers, Inc.
232 Kings Highway East
Haddonfield, New Jersey 08033


Craig F. Remington, P.L.S., P.P.
Vice President
License #33LI00187700


George R. Stevenson, Jr., AICP, P.P.
License #33LI00548700

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

1. Introduction and Background

This Master Plan Amendment (*hereinafter* Amendment), authorized pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28, is intended to allow for the introduction of various refinements to the development vision for those lands having an MB - Major Business zoning classification found on each side of the New Jersey State Highway Route No. 73 (*hereinafter* Route 73) corridor generally extending from Kresson Road to the boundary with Berlin Township and is also intended to provide a basis within the Master Plan for amendment to the prevailing MB zoning for the effectuation of the development vision refinements. With respect to the former, the refinements herein recommended, which do not include any change to the classification or boundaries of the MB zone, are advanced to assure future development as may reasonably be expected reflects the emphases for the corridor area articulated in the 2005 Master Plan Reexamination Report for the Township of Voorhees as adopted by the Planning Board on July 13, 2005, and as later supplemented by the Master Plan Amendment, adopted March 14, 2007. These emphases relate to: 1) the capitalizing on the economic and fiscal benefits made available by the presence of the Route 73 resource, 2) the fostering of this segment of the corridor as a point of destination, and 3) the insistence on an intensity of development resulting from the connecting of permitted uses to minimum lot sizes, locations, impact on residential uses, and size.

As mandated under N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28, “the planning board may prepare and, after public hearing, adopt or amend a master plan or component parts thereof, to guide the use of lands within the municipality in a manner which protects public health and safety and promotes the general welfare.” As to the protection of public health and safety, this Amendment, through the emphasis on planned commercial development, promotes development over large tracts of land; efficiencies of design result in fewer points of ingress/egress than would result from a pattern of stand-alone, single parcel/single use development. Fewer points of ingress/egress translate to a reduced likelihood of traffic accidents and thereby promote the public safety. With respect to the promotion of the general welfare, the planned commercial development emphasis fosters the full enjoyment of residential property to the extent that coordinated development of larger tracts enhances the opportunity for flexibility in design; this increased flexibility enables development to better address issues resulting from development to an adjoining neighborhood. The full enjoyment of proximate residential property is also advanced in that the Amendment increases the rear yard setback for newly proposed development within the MB zone and introduces a parking setback from a residential zone or use where heretofore none existed so as to mitigate the possibility of any over-the-property line impacts of such development.

By way of background, the Township Committee authorized the preparation of this Amendment. As a result thereof and as set forth below, the development vision for the area is refined to the extent that: 1) mixed use development is eliminated as a development option, 2) planned commercial development, to mean the development of compatible uses under a unifying plan, is encouraged, 3) revisions are proposed to development standards to promote larger parcel development as well as mitigate impacts of commercial development on proximate residential uses, 4) increased green area along the Route 73 corridor is promoted through the establishment of a required minimum parking setback from the highway, and 5) a permission is created for hotel development in certain areas on each side of the corridor.

The policies and objectives specific to this Amendment are: 1) promotion of single-entity development of compatible uses over large tracts so to encourage flexibility in design and addressing of impacts of development on residential areas, 2) mitigation of over-the-property line impacts of development on nearby residential development so to permit full enjoyment of residential property, 3) enhancement of the aesthetics of the corridor through the provision of additional green space as an attribute of a destination, 4) promotion of the adaptive re-use of property to promote the upgrade of existing sites, and 5) promotion of economic development enhancement through allowance for hotel development over certain large parcels, whether existing or assembled.

The aforementioned policies and objectives are an expression of the commercial land use policy objectives set forth in the 1987 Master Plan, these being: 1) continued expansion of high caliber office and commercial development along Route 73; 2) accommodate the growth of highway business in a controlled manner; 3) protection of existing and proposed residential development from conflicts of highway-oriented land uses; and 4) incorporation and conservation to the degree possible of the natural resources of this area of highway development.

The policies and objectives also are an expression of the 2005 Master Plan Reexamination of capitalizing on the Route 73 resource while at the same time mitigating the effects of development. Policies and objectives having applicability from the 2005 Master Plan Reexamination relating to the now proposed Amendment include: 1) allowance for a mix of retail, and office/light industrial uses in order to achieve economic viability in the Township of Voorhees to be realized in part through provision of increased opportunities for office uses in appropriate areas of the Township and through the encouragement of retail development along certain designated transportation routes; 2) preservation of environmentally sensitive areas in their natural state and protection of natural resources and areas of conservation to be realized in part through the provision of significant natural space within and around existing development to lessen the impact of the build environment; 3) preservation of appropriate open space areas throughout the Township to be realized in part through ensuring that open space planning plays an important role in developing the character, location, magnitude and timing of growth and development in the Township, and 4) providing for the orderly and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the Township, achieved in part through protecting of an existing transportation route from development which exceeds the capacity of the road system.

With respect to the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP), the area is almost entirely situated within the PA2 Planning Area which, by definition, is an area targeted for growth. The now proposed Amendment is in concert with intent of the Planning Area as relates to the reversing of the trend toward further sprawl. Further, given there is no change to the classification of the area, there is likewise no change to the relationship to the master plans of adjoining municipalities or county plan.

2. Refinements to the Development Vision

A. Permitted Uses

- 1) Mixed Use Development. Mixed Use development which generally refers to development having ground level commercial uses with upper story residential is eliminated as a development pattern given residential development is not anticipated other than for assisted living facilities and given this pattern of development is more typical of compact, higher density, pedestrian friendly areas.
- 2) Planned Commercial Development. Planned commercial development is specifically encouraged so to allow for the comprehensive development of compatible uses under a unifying plan, the promotion of flexibility in design, and as a measure to counter uncoordinated stand-alone, single parcel, single use development.
- 3) Hotels. Hotels are a type of development typically found along arterial roadways such as Route 73. Presently, this type of development is limited by ordinance to those lands on the west side of the corridor situated to the north of northerly most intersection of Dutchtown Road¹ allowing for hotel development away from a residential population center within Voorhees Township. Hotel development is now also proposed on the east side of the Route 73 corridor north of the RR Rural Residential, Residential Office Zone found over Block 229.01, Lots 19 and 20 given: 1) this area is also away from a residential population center within Voorhees Township; 2) the presence of large parcels presenting opportunity for development/redevelopment activity, and 3) the opportunity to afford lodging to business visitors to the area as the area becomes increasingly a point of destination through business development, or lodging to out-of-area visitors availing themselves of the medical campus now under construction, and 4) the opportunity to reduce vehicular trip generation by providing an alternative to retail development.
- 4) Adult Day Care. Adult day care is added as a permitted principal use given the perceived need for such use and similarity to day care nurseries which are anticipated.

¹ Neither the 1987 Comprehensive Master Plan, nor subsequent Updates/Amendments (1995; 1998; 2007) or the 2005 Master Plan Reexamination Report contain a recommendation limiting hotel development to only one side of the Route 73 corridor.

B. Bulk Standards

- 1) Health and Fitness Centers. The minimum lot area for Health and Fitness Centers is reduced to 3 acres from 5 acres as the existing standard appears to be too great a requirement and given the presence of an existing health and fitness center on a parcel having an area of 3 acres.
- 2) Automobile Sales. The minimum lot area for automobile sales is increased to 5 acres from 3 acres given the intensity of the nature of the use and potential for negative over-the-property line impacts.
- 3) Street Frontage. The minimum street frontage is increased to 200 feet for all uses as a measure to encourage larger parcel development.
- 4) Rear Yard Setback. As a measure to mitigate the potential for negative over-the-property line impacts resulting from commercial development abutting residential use, the rear yard setback is increased to 75 feet for all uses now required to have a minimum rear yard setback of 50 feet as in virtually every circumstance parcels within the MB Zone abut residential uses or zoning.
- 5) Front Yard Setback. A uniform minimum front yard setback of fifty (50) feet is established, other than for office buildings, and planned development or hotel development occurring on parcels of ten (10) acres or more. This requirement will either preclude parking forward of the building line or, in the alternative, necessitate a greater front yard setback.
- 6) Building Height. The maximum building height is increased to 40 feet other than for office buildings and hotels on parcels of 10 acres or more, which shall be permitted a maximum height of 60 feet, to allow at least 4-story development which may have 20 foot high first floors.
- 7) Parking Setbacks. The following parking setbacks are established given the absence of existing requirements; the requiring of a setback from Route 73 enhances the aesthetics of the corridor as an additional green area is added to the green area within the Route 73 right-of-way; the requiring of a setback from a residential zone or use will mitigate potential negative impacts arising from parking area development on adjoining residential uses.
 - a) Setback from Route 73: 50 feet
 - b) Setback from residential zone or use: 50 feet
 - c) Setback from other than above/side lot line: 20 feet

- d) In the case of an adaptive re-use, to mean the development of a new use for an older building which may include an expansion of up to 25% of the existing floor area, existing parking setbacks may continue to be utilized, without need for zoning relief, provided the existing setbacks are at least 75% or greater of the setback required of new construction. Where a reduced setback is provided, the buffer design is to be enhanced by the incorporation of an opaque fence or wall.
 - e) Where parking facilities serving nonresidential uses abut, the parking setback may be reduced to 15 feet. To encourage the sharing of parking facilities, this nonresidential parking setback may be further reduced to 10 feet where the parking facilities are inter-connected and appropriate cross access easements are recorded.
- 8) Adaptive Re-Use Setbacks. In the case of an adaptive re-use, existing building setbacks may continue to be utilized, without need for zoning relief, provided the existing setbacks are at least 75% or greater of the setback required of new construction.
- 9) Bulk Standards for Planned Commercial Development. Standards for proposed Planned Commercial Development are respectively established for parcels having a minimum lot area of 5 acres/10 or more acres:
- a) Minimum frontage: 200 feet/300 feet
 - b) Minimum front yard: 50 feet/75 feet
 - c) Minimum side yard: 50 feet/50 feet
 - d) Minimum rear yard: 75 feet/100 feet
 - e) Minimum distance between buildings: 20 feet/30 feet
 - f) Maximum height: 40 feet/40 feet; except 60 feet for office buildings

- g) Impervious coverage: 65% with sewer service; further providing, that at least 75% of the open area of the tract shall be contiguous and that no more than 50% of that area shall be DEP designated wetlands.
- h) Minimum area per use or lot: 1.25 acres except that the area may be reduced to 1.0 acres provided an average 1.25 acres per use or lot is maintained over the entirety of the tract.

- 10) Hotels. Hotels of a minimum of 3-story construction and no more than 5-story construction are permitted as a conditional use with the following conditions: 1) situation on the west side of Route 73, north of the northerly most intersection of Dutchtown Road with Route 73; on the east side of the corridor, situation to the north of the RR Rural Residential, Residential Office Zone found over Block 229.01, Lots 19 and 20, 2) a minimum lot area of 10 contiguous acres, which may be assembled, 3) a minimum principal structure(s) setback of 500 feet from a residential zone within Voorhees Township, and 4) construction of at least 3 and no more than 5 stories.

Where proposed as part of a planned commercial development, the inclusion of hotels is limited to said type development provided occurring on a parcel having at least an area of 10 acres. Respective standards for said development are as below:

- a) Minimum frontage: 300 feet
- b) Minimum front yard: 75 feet
- c) Minimum side yard: 75 feet
- d) Minimum rear yard: 100 feet
- e) Minimum height: 45 feet
- f) Maximum height: 60 feet

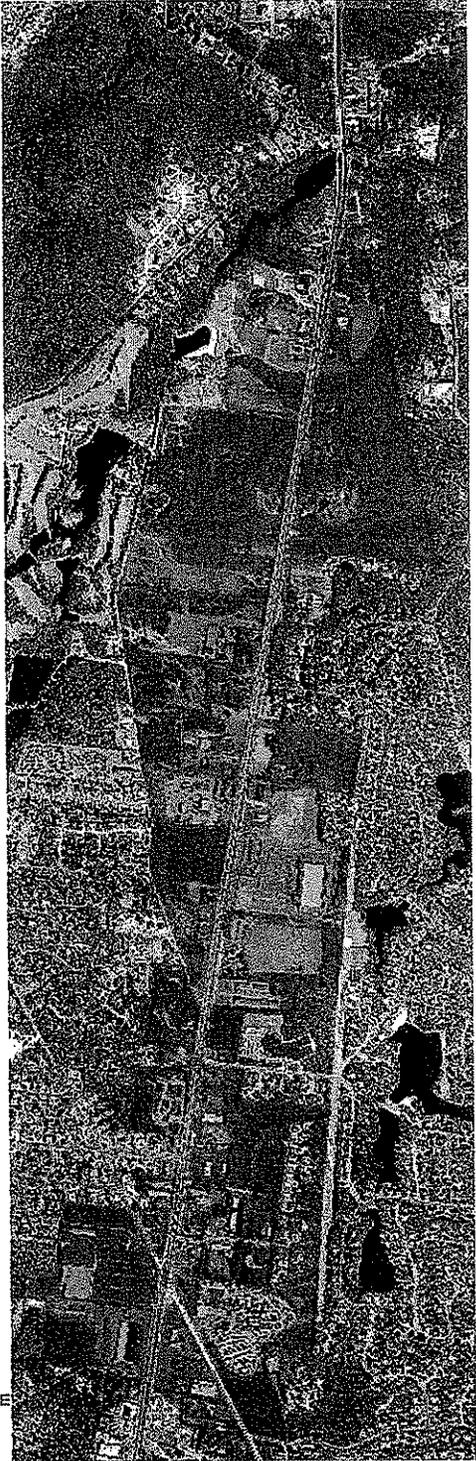
As defined herein, a hotel is an establishment having at a minimum three (3) stories and three (3) habitable floors, having on each, rooms for the lodging for the public accessed from a common lobby. Said establishment may offer a range of services on-site which may include such ancillary amenities as restaurants, meeting rooms, laundry and dry cleaning, as well as recreation facilities; these amenities may or may not be owned and/or operated by a separate entity.

Figure 1: Major Business Zone

MB - Major Business Zone

Voorhees Township
Camden County, New Jersey
March 15th, 2010

 MB Major Business Zone



**REMINGTON
& VERNICK
ENGINEERS
AND ARCHITECTS**

