



2013 MASTER PLAN RE-EXAMINATION REPORT

Little Falls Township

Passaic County, New Jersey

Prepared for the Little Falls Township Planning Board



For adoption December 5, 2013



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INTRODUCTION

The Township of Little Falls Comprehensive Master Plan was adopted in 2002, after which the Township conducted a periodic reexamination of its plan in 2008 in accordance with the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, (MLUL), N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89. The Township last adopted its comprehensive Master Plan in 2002. The 2002 Master Plan document and 2008 Reexamination is being re-examined to reflect the changing needs of the Township.

The purpose of these Reexamination requirements are to ensure that the local master plan and development regulations remain viable, current and capable of addressing the development pressures and concerns of the Township.

The municipal master plan is a document that sets forth the policies for land development and redevelopment as envisioned by the municipality and adopted by the Planning Board. As the principal document concerning the use of land, it is intended to guide both the public and private sectors in making decisions involving conservation and development. Through its goals and objectives statement, the Master Plan sets out a vision for the community in the coming years. In accordance with the MLUL, The Reexamination Report shall state:

- A. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last Reexamination Report.
- B. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- C. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.
- D. The specific changes recommended for the Master Plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new Master Plan or regulations should be prepared.
- E. The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," into the land use plan element of the municipal Master Plan, and the recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

It is important to note that this Reexamination Report, by itself, does not require any expenditure of funds on any project or the adoption of any ordinance per se. Rather, it is intended to serve as a guide, not only for future efforts of the Planning Board but also the governing body, which is in a position to implement some of the specific recommendations in the report.

SUMMARY

Little Falls as with many of New Jersey's communities has suffered from flooding problems, especially within the past 5 years as the Peckman and Passaic Rivers flooded. This devastating flooding has tested the resiliency of its citizens and its municipal officials. But if there is one thing that we can take away from the development of this master plan, it is the love the people have for their community, the history that goes along with it and the sense of neighborhood and love of their neighbors. As homes are acquired along the flood prone neighborhoods, this plan envisions the opportunity to offer residents new alternatives for living in Little Falls.

Like many of New Jersey's municipalities Little Falls no longer maintains an industrial hub, in fact many of the light industrial areas have seen requests for use variances, subdivision of properties or have multiple uses in one building. In this report, the Township has taken the preliminary task of implementing, strategic zoning amendments, targeted development and the creation of design standards and ordinances to proactively, instead of reactively, plan for the transformation of its underutilized industrial and commercial areas, while remaining a small-town with a residential community and a strong sense of identity.

Development and redevelopment of existing industrial/commercial areas will allow Little Falls to increase ratables and reduce the residential tax burden, without encroaching into residential neighborhoods or delicate natural resource areas.

Working with the Open Space Trust Fund, Little Falls continues to seek opportunities to preserve open space for active and

passive recreation uses for its citizens. The Township is pursuing opportunities for additional multiuse fields, open space and a swim club. Acquired properties along the river front have sprouted up pocket parks in neighborhoods with the hopes that someday these can be linked into a river walk for all to enjoy.

This Plan represents the collection of data produced from the efforts of diverse groups of individuals within the community, who have produced an extensive amount of valuable research and information. It represents a tool for the people of Little Falls to use to guide the future of their unique community. This Vision Statement is the current embodiment of the community's common idea of the future of Little Falls.

VISION STATEMENT

This Master Plan Reexamination represents a direction and a clear course of action to realize the future vision for Little Falls. The vision involves the community retaining its character as a small town and at the same time continuing to thrive as an active community with diverse housing, ample recreation, a healthy environment, and adequate infrastructure, while maintaining a positive economic climate and guiding any future development in an appropriate way.

Brief History of Little Falls

Little Falls, in Passaic County New Jersey traces its history back to its founding in 1711 when seven Dutch farmers banded together to begin farming in this fertile area of Northern New Jersey, which was then referred to as the Village of Little Falls. One of the old farm houses, the Speer Homestead built in 1680, proudly stands in Little Falls today as one of the oldest homes in New Jersey and a reminder of the towns' agrarian roots. Not much farming remains in Little Falls, however, a famous Dutch tulip farm remained in Town until the early 1950s. Aside from farming, the quarrying of brownstone was one of the earliest industries in Little Falls. Little Falls brownstone was regarded as the finest and was utilized in many local and regional buildings, including New York City's famous Trinity Church. Another lesser known fact is that the New Jersey stone inside the Washington Monument is made of Little Falls brownstone.

Little Falls is probably most famous for being home of The Beattie Carpet Mill, the first carpet Mill in the United States using the "Little" Falls of the Passaic River to power the Mill. Founded by Robert Beattie, a once penniless Irish immigrant, who later became the wealthiest man in Passaic County. Beattie Carpet operated from the mid 1800s up to 1979. Today, most of the Beattie buildings are still standing and have been converted into luxury lofts and condominiums overlooking the Passaic River and the water falls of the Beattie Dam, which is often mistaken for the original Little Falls.

The old Morris Canal started in 1824, once an important artery of trade and transportation between the Delaware and Hudson Rivers, wound its way through the Town and vestiges of it still serve as reminder of the long history of Little Falls. A famous aqueduct carried the Morris Canal over the Passaic River. The two giant cornerstones of the aqueduct now adorn the Township's Memorial Park, land that was originally part of the Morris Canal.

While the villages of Speertown, Great Notch, Brower-town and Singac became an integral part of the Township of Little Falls, West Park (West Paterson now Woodland Park) remained predominantly agrarian although a few wealthy Paterson businessmen and manufacturers had homes there. The section known as Little Falls grew into a thriving professional and commercial center and a New York City commuter population was established by 1905, an outgrowth of the efficiency of rail travel.

The late nineteenth century establishment of public transportation from nearby Paterson, a thriving and rapidly expanding industrial city, gave impetus to the growth of Little Falls as a country haven for city-worn laborers. The hotel business flourished as people were attracted to the 'fresh country air' and the 'lovely banks of the Passaic River.' Artists converged in the area from as far away as New York to paint the local scenery, especially the spectacular, natural falls carved in the brownstone bed of the Passaic River.

As transportation facilities improved, larger crowds descended upon the town from other metropolitan cities beyond Paterson, leading to the ultimate development of the Singac section into what is commonly known as a tourist attraction. Commercial recreational facilities were established that provided marinas for private boats, canoe rentals, dancing pavilions, 'fast-food' eating facilities (i.e., hot dog stands), and amusement parks. By 1916 Grandview Amusement Park was in operation complete with merry-go-round and roller coaster; in the late 1920s an Olympic-sized swimming pool was added. In nearby Wayne (popularly considered at that time to be in Singac), across the Singac bridge, was Wilkie's horse farm complete with race track that added to the popularity of the area. Local residents performed as extras in early silent motion pictures filmed along the Passaic River, the most famous starring Mary Pickford in the "Perils of Pauline" and directed by David Garreth.

Little Falls has seen some famous residents and visitors come and go over the years. Little Falls is the birthplace of Frank Sigler, who was given a Congressional Medal of Honor by President Truman in 1945. Little Falls is also the place that kick started the career of a little known comedian by the name of Jackie Gleason. Gleason began his comedic career during the 1930s in Little Falls telling jokes at Frank Donato's Colonial Inn. Motion picture director, D.W. Griffith selected Little Falls as a favorite spot for filming due to the beauty of the Falls and the majestic landscape. Many silent pictures were filmed in Little Falls, including several starring the country's first celebrity, Mary Pickford.

Little Falls had some Big names and Big accomplishments and unique attributes, but for most residents, the story of Little Falls is the story of its people. Everyday life in this historic town with a charming Main Street, Two Rivers, Three Grammar Schools, Four Fire Houses, many parks, a Carnegie Library, a WPA post office, many historic homes and buildings and home of one of the first regional High Schools in the State, Passaic Valley. Little Falls is also home to one of the last standing road houses in the entire area, The Great Notch Inn.

While Little Falls is now home to a major office complex, a State Highway, the second largest State University, a minor league baseball team and the Yogi Berra Museum, Little Falls has still managed to retain that small town feel.

**History Provided by the Little Falls Historical Society

I. THE MAJOR PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES RELATING TO LAND DEVELOPMENT IN LITTLE FALLS THE TIME OF THE LAST MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT

The December 2008 Reexamination Report relied upon the major goals and objectives detailed in the 2002 Master Plan, while the 2002 Master Plan did not identify revised goals and objectives but instead relied upon the goals established in the 1979 Master Plan.

A. GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The following *Goals and Objectives* were identified in the Township of Little Falls 2008 Master Plan Re-Examination Report:

Goal 1 – To provide the optimum living environment for the residents of Little Falls, utilizes resources wisely, protect the environment and preserve natural features.

Objectives

1. To ensure that new development does not exceed the capacity of public facilities and services.
2. To encourage more intensive development in areas that are adequately served by transportation facilities.
3. To encourage commercial and industrial development in locations adequately served by public infrastructure so as to increase the employment base of Little Falls.
4. To protect steep slopes and wetlands from development.
5. To protect the quality of surface and ground water.
6. To reduce noise pollution.
7. To permit development that is consistent with the ability of the site to support it.

Goal 2 – To achieve a proper balance and appropriate location of land uses.

Objectives

1. To encourage the proper maintenance of developed areas that are functionally sound.
2. To ensure, through the review process, that new development does not have a negative impact on other land uses.
3. To retain open space through land acquisition or other appropriate means.
4. To plan for efficient and proper redevelopment for areas of transition.

Goal 3 – To provide a coordinated transportation system for the movement of people and goods that is safe, efficient, and accessible to all in a manner that preserves the environmental qualities of the Township.

Objectives

1. To cooperate with the State and County in the planning and development of highway and transit improvements.
2. To provide transportation services for those with special needs such as the elderly, people with physical disabilities, underserved and children.
3. To require that all development proposals be designed to include or accommodate necessary transportation improvements.
4. To minimize potential area of conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

Goal 4 – To provide the community services and facilities required by a modern urban community in an efficient manner.

Objectives - Water

1. To provide a sufficient quantity of potable water to meet the current and future demands of the Township.
2. To monitor on an ongoing basis the quantity and quality of the public water supply system.
3. To pursue Federal and State assistance toward the improvement of the Township's water supply system.
4. To coordinate the development of a new water supply system and the protection of water quality on a regional basis.

Objectives – Sanitary Sewer

1. To maintain a sanitary sewage collection and treatment facilities database.
2. To participate in regional waste water management programs.

Objectives – Storm Water Drainage and Flood Control

1. To minimize the disruption of the natural movement of surface waters.
2. To prevent encroachments on drainage ways through the use of easements.
3. To identify flood hazard areas.
4. To limit new development within the floodplain.
5. To prevent excessive piping or channelization of drainage ways.
6. To reduce the volume of storm water runoff through the use of detention facilities.

Objectives – Solid Waste

1. To provide input to the Passaic County Board of Freeholders for the preparation of a District Solid Waste Plan.

Objectives – Power and Transmission Facilities

1. To install new service lines underground where feasible.
2. To locate and design transmission lines in a manner so that the right-of-way can be used as part of a system of biking and walking trails.

Goal 5 – To provide recreational facilities and programs adequate to meet the needs of Little Falls residents of all age groups, interests and abilities, including those with disabilities.

Objectives

1. To provide neighborhood parks and playgrounds in locations convenient to all residents.
2. To develop a system of walking, jogging and bicycle trails, possibly using railroad and utility rights-of-way.
3. To use drainage facilities such as streams, drainage ways and water run-off detention areas as useable or aesthetically pleasing open space.

B. MAJOR PROBLEMS

The major problems relating to development in the Township of Little Falls in the prior Master Plan can be summarized as follows:

1. Residential Developments Granted By Variance.

As with many of the older commuter communities in New Jersey, the availability of developable land has become scarce and developers are forced to look at smaller infill or tear down projects, redevelopment opportunities or to request use variance applications for development. This was an identified issue in the 2008 plan, with the Centex Property, as well as the Ward Trucking site. The concern remains current to this day. Current underutilized industrial properties or vacant office space remains vulnerable to use variance requests.

2. Impact of Mt Laurel Litigation and Loss of Developable COAH Sites.

At the time of the 2008 plan, COAH had revised its regulations and created the 3rd Round Growth Share obligation, where municipalities were given projected affordable housing obligations by COAH; whereby the Township would be required to develop affordable housing only if the projected growth actually occurred in the Township. The regulations required one (1) affordable unit for every five (5) market rate units built and for every sixteen jobs created within the municipality. In 2001 Montclair State University purchased the Quarry site

property (Blk 237 Lot 38), a property identified in the Affordable Housing Plan, for the construction of student housing, thus eliminating a site for construction of affordable housing, forcing Little Falls to identify additional properties to meet the COAH obligation.

3. Maintaining Central Business District Vitality

The Township Central Business District centered at the intersection of Paterson Avenue and Main Street had remained in good condition with levels of vitality according to the 2008 plan. The plan called for further investigation of grant opportunities to study the utilization of the Little Falls Train Station; a parking study; public amenities; infrastructure improvements; pedestrian safety and a visioning session.

4. Lack of Recreational Areas

Within a built out community the opportunity to acquire or preserve open space is usually a priority. With need for active and passive recreational uses for all age groups the existing parks and open spaces were/are being pushed to their limit of use and access. The Wilmore Road property was being considered for recreational use by the County of Passaic.

5. NJDOT Plans for Route 46

The New Jersey Department of Transportation completed intersection and paving improvements to Route 46. However the next phase of improvements centered on the Route 46 and Route 3 merge could have affected many Township businesses. In addition, there was an increase on local roads, when substantial traffic occurs on Rte 46, thereby impacting the Township's Central Business District (CBD) access, congestion and parking availability.

II. EXTENT TO WHICH PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES HAVE BEEN REDUCED OR HAVE INCREASED SUBSEQUENT TO THE LAST RE-EXAMINATION

1. Residential Developments Granted by Variance

At the time of the last reexamination analysis and the 2002 master plan, residential development via use variance was a concern. Redevelopment of older industrial properties were however seen as an opportunity to provide for the development of onsite affordable housing.

There were two major industrial property use variances approved during this time: the Centex Property, located at 139 Center Avenue was approved for a 60-unit town house development, and the Ward Trucking Site, located at 35 Clove Road, an 18-acre site, was approved for 298 units. At the time of this report neither site has been developed per its approved variance. However, the Ward Trucking site has been acquired by Montclair University for development as maintenance facility or college office space, both of which are not under the jurisdiction of the Township, nor does the University pay taxes to the Township. In addition the Ward Trucking site, which had proposed 60 units of affordable housing, must now be eliminated from the COAH plan, leaving the township with a 60 unit shortfall in its affordable housing obligation.

Due to the lack of developable land, use variance applications will be the new norm. During the period of 2008 until the time of this documents adoption in late 2013, there were forty-seven (47) site plan applications of which twenty-five (25) involved a request for a use variance. That represents nearly 50% of all applications for site plan approval. Table 1 below identifies all applications that appeared before the Planning Board from 2008 till November 2013.

**Township of Little Falls
Passaic County, NJ
Municipal Land Use Board
Approvals Summary**

		Applicant Name	Type	Variances		Site Plan
				Use	Area	
1	2008	Brookside at the Notch Anthony Campagna	Residential Development- Condo Apartment			X
2	2008	Metra Industries	Conversion of Structure to Office Building		X	X
3	2008	Michael Zailo Subdivison	Minor Subdivision		X	X
4	2008	Pribit Auto Body	Site Plan (Impound Area); Variances	X		X
5	2008	Unity Development Corp	Single Family with Variances		X	X
6	2008	Kramer Properties	Site Plan with Variances		X	X
7	2008	Jennifer Sandri-Alfieri	Use Variance for Stabling of Horses	X		
8	2008	Friedbauer & Davidson	Sign Variance		X	X
9	2008	McDonald's Corporation	Use Interpretation/Variance - Bulk & Area Variance	X	X	X
10	2008	Trabona Entenmanns	Site Plan Amendment			X
11	2008	Vanderwende	Office Building Site Plan			X
12	2008	Dubrovich Rising Stars Fencing Academy	Site Plan Amendment	X		X
13	2009	St. George Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church	Minor Subdivision & Site Plan Amendment with Area Variance		X	X
14	2009	CBS Outdoor, Inc.	Bilboard Advertising	X		X
15	2009	Tri County Lexus-Bob Ciasulli	Site Plan with Variances - Vehicle Storage Lot		X	X
16	2009	Rivero	Building Expansion with Area Variances		X	
17	2009	Rosenberg	Building Expansion with Area Variances		X	
18	2009	Northbrook Developers	Dwelling Replacement with Area Variances		X	
19	2009	Zaneski	Single Family Residence		X	

		Applicant Name	Type	Variances		Site Plan
				Use	Area	
20	2009	Dr. Kyle Eopechino	Wellness Center, Yoga Studio & Apartment	X	X	X
21	2009	Doloszycki	Accessory Swimming Pool Variance		X	
22	2009	Residential Building Lackawanna Avenue	Residential Building Site Plan		X	X
23	2009	Rice	Building Expansion with Area Variances		X	
24	2009	Schneider	Building Expansion with Area Variances		X	
25	2009	Soldoveri	Site Plan and Major Subdivision; Office and Veternarian Use			X
26	2009	Estate of Edythe Mirabelli	Minor Subdivision with Use & Area Varances	X	X	
27	2010	All Purpose Enterprise	Single Family with Variances		X	X
28	2010	Ward Trucking	Campus Living Property	X		
29	2010	Stempler	Building Expansion with Area Variances		X	
30	2010	Quick Chek	Use Variance and Site Plan	X		X
31	2010	Dr. Ulanet	Sign Variance		X	
32	2010	Schumacher	Townhouse Site Plan			X
33	2010	Trabona Montessori Childcare Center	Site Plan			X
34	2010	Bask2 Inc	Site Plan with Variances	X	X	X
35	2010	Nath	Building Expansion with Area Variances		X	X
36	2010	Walgreens Pharmacy	Site Plan with Variances	X	X	X
37	2010	Piazza Farnese	Retail & Restaurant - Site Plan with Area Variance		X	X
38	2010	PMJ Homes, LLC	Single Family with Variances		X	X
39	2011	418-420 Main Street	Office/Residential Building	X	X	X
40	2011	Friedbauer & Davidson	Site Plan with Variances		X	X
41	2011	Damiano	Site Plan with Variances	X		X

		Applicant Name	Type	Variances		Site Plan
				Use	Area	
42	2011	Larkin	Building Expansion with Area Variances		X	X
43	2011	Porter	Single Family Additions with Variances		X	X
44	2011	Allvision - Lower Notch & Rt 46	Billboard Advertising	X		X
45	2011	Allvision - McBride & Rt 46	Billboard Advertising	X		X
46	2011	Fergesen	Single Family with Variances		X	X
47	2012	Falls Automotive Specialties	Mixed Use Automotic Repair Garage	X	X	X
48	2012	Shah	Garage Addition to Single Family Home with Variance		X	
49	2012	Newgig Networks	Microwave Structures	X		X
50	2012	Dahlquist	Addition to Single Family Home with Variances		X	
51	2012	Snapology Child Learning Center	Site Plan Amendment/Use Variance	X		X
52	2012	47 & 51 Main Street	Damiano Office Building Addition		X	X
53	2013	Printflex Printing	Billboard Advertising Sign; Site Plan with Use and Area Variances	X	X	X
54	2013	Jaloudi	Site Plan Amendment with Variances; Mobile Food Vending Addition	X	X	X
55	2013	Simone Residence	Single Family with Variances		X	X
56	2013	Little Falls Free Public Library	Sign Variance	X	X	
57	2013	Krietzman Residence	Single Family with Variances		X	X
58	2013	Baskinger	Building Expansion with Area Variances		X	X
59	2013	Angels Care MT	Site Plan Amendment / Use Variance	X		X
60	2013	PSE&G	Great Notch Substation Site Plan with Variances	X	X	X
61	2013	Toyota Universe	Site Plan Amendment with Variances	X		X
62	2013	Manisha Patel	Use Variances and Site Plan	X		X
				25	42	47

2. COAH Obligation

The Little Falls Township Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan is dated November 25, 2008, as prepared by Kauker & Kauker, LLC. Subsequent to its adoption, the Township implemented its Fair Share Plan and entertained various proposals for inclusionary development upon the sites listed in the plan, as discussed below.

However, several significant events that profoundly affect affordable housing regulations occurred during the time period from November 25, 2008 through September 26, 2013. The most significant development that impacted COAH's affordable housing regulations occurred on October 8, 2010, when the New Jersey Appellate Division decision (In re The Matter of The Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96 and 5:97 by the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing), invalidated the growth share methodology of COAH's Third Round regulations, effectively causing an update of the Township's Plan to be put on hold until new regulations are adopted.

The New Jersey Supreme Court issued a recent decision on September 26, 2013 where the higher Court agreed with the Appellate Division and found the growth share portion of COAH's Third Round Substantive Rules to be invalid. The Supreme Court has now required COAH to draft new regulations within five months of the decision, or by, February 26, 2014.

The preparation of an updated Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan remains on hold pending adoption of new affordable housing regulations. In the interim, the Township intends to continue to implement the prior round portion of its Fair Share Plan as well as facilitate the implementation of the remaining third round projects in the Fair Share Plan. Included below, is a list of the projects within the Township's Fair Share Plan that continue to move forward:

Woods Road Site (Block 237, Lot 44): The Fair Share Plan envisioned that this would contain 24 market rate units of which 4 or 5 shall be affordable, or a Payment in Lieu (PIL) of construction may be issued in order to help fund the construction of affordable housing units on an alternative site. The property owner intends to provide a PIL to fund the construction of affordable housing units off-site.

AHO Zone Properties: Other than the Schumacher Site, the current zoning map designates several properties zoned as Affordable Housing Overlay Zones (AHO) with the capacity to contain a total of 7 affordable housing units

Centex Site (Block 96, Lots 8, 9 & 20): This site is proposed to contain 10 affordable housing units within the 2008 Fair Share Plan or, alternatively, the affordable units may be subject to a Payment in Lieu of development to the

Affordable Housing Trust Fund to fund the construction of affordable housing units on an alternative site.

Lackawanna Avenue Site (Block 185, Lot 5): The litigation concerning this site resulted in a finding that the zoning for this property be modified to identify a specific number of affordable housing units be required on-site. The Township is currently working with interested parties to identify an appropriate number of market rate and affordable housing units for this site. The total density that were envisioned to be constructed on this property within the 2008 Fair Share Plan is recommended at 18 units per acre.

Rehabilitation Plan: The Township is in the process of implementing its Rehabilitation Program, which will rehabilitate the entire 15-unit obligation mandated by COAH as the Rehabilitation Share for Little Falls.

NewBridge Services Group Home: This 3 bedroom group home was not included within the 2008 Fair Share Plan; however, this facility was identified subsequent to the adoption of the 2008 Plan via a survey of group homes that exist within the Township. This facility is anticipated to be eligible for affordable housing credit as part of a future update of the Fair Share Plan.

3. **Redevelopment Opportunities**

The 2008 plan noted that an analysis of future redevelopment opportunities should be determined in order to create a working relationship with possible developers. In 2010 the Little Falls Redevelopment and Parking Committee began preliminary discussions about opportunities for re-zoning, redevelopment and zoning ordinance changes throughout the Township, many of which have been updated in the recommendations section of this report. Vacancies of industrial properties or industrial properties no longer considered suitable zoning for the area continue to be the primary area suitable for redevelopment through zoning or redevelopment plans. There have been no redevelopment plans adopted since the 2008 reexamination report.

4. **Main Street Corridor**

The 2008 plan identified the need to conduct a visioning session to establish the future direction and needs of the Central Business District (CBD). The study completed in August 2009 was developed to try and provide a framework for the coordination of planning initiatives, to coordinate the Towns' planning efforts with local, regional and state agencies and to provide and discuss recommendations for enhancing exiting conditions and creating new conditions. The report and subsequent presentation discussed the need for updated zoning, a parking study, wayfinding signage and a pedestrian friendly sense of place. While some minor streetscape improvements such as new

pedestrian crosswalks have been installed, the bigger picture has remained the same.

5. Montclair State University

Since the 2008 master plan re-examination plan the biggest event relating to Montclair State University (MSU) and Little Falls was the purchase of the 15-acre Ward Trucking property that is in the Township of Little Falls. Initially this was to remove more than \$294,000 in property tax revenue for the Township, however after negotiations the township would collect taxes from the property for the next 5 1/2 years. The township and the university have come to an agreement whereby MSU will pay Little Falls taxes at a gradually reducing rate during those years.

According to the university, they will be using the land to provide students, faculty and staff with parking and as a vehicle maintenance facility and they would not use the land for residential purposes. The university may redevelop buildings still on the site into offices and for educational uses as part of long-term plans.

6. Former Township Hall/ Police Department

With the development of the new municipal building, located at 225 Main Street, all municipal services moved into the new building in June 2103 except the police department, which had its new headquarters completed in November 2013. There has been no formal action taken by the municipality on the old town hall and police department building located at 35 Stevens Ave. Discussions have ranged from adaptive reuse to new construction.

7. Open Space Opportunities

Open space is a rare commodity in a built out community, however it is an important one in Little Falls, which was made apparent in a Nov. 8 2011 referendum approved by its residents that allows for the collection of 1 cent per \$100 of assessed property value from homeowners to be used for open space purchases. This gives Little Falls a funding source for future property acquisition and protection.

In addition to the Open Space Trust Fund the Township and NJDOT Municipal Aid Grants, with the help of a \$70,000 Passaic County open space grant and the Little Falls Alliance for a Better Community (ABC), significant improvements were made to the Morris Canal area behind shops on Main Street. The improvements included new macadam, playground equipment and tables with game boards. In addition open space dollars allowed the town to improve the recreation complex and increase bikeway mileage.

Using Passaic County Open Space Trust Fund grants, the Township completed filed improvements at the Paterson Avenue Recreation Complex, resurfaced the tennis courts at the Complex, and created a park for all children, including those with special needs at Wilmore Road Park. As of this report, the Township was also in the process of implementing a grant to enhance the fields at Amity Park and Inwood Field.

In one of the biggest open space preservation efforts in Passaic County, the Passaic County Freeholders purchased the Peckman Preserve site, formerly known as the Alfieri property, for \$5.7 million in 2005. This was after township officials and flood control advocates opposed Edison-based developer Michael Alfieri's proposal to build 20 single family homes there. In late 2011 it was decided after public input that the Peckman Preserve located between Wilmore Road and Cedar Grove Road will become a sanctuary protecting wetlands and wildlife and serve as an educational resource for children.

The Township has authorized the development of a Recreation and Open Space Element of the master plan for adoption in 2013, focusing on identifying open space opportunities, identifying community needs and inventorying existing conditions.

8. Green Technology and Sustainability

Aside from spearheading the Transit Village initiative to support mass transit and the reduction of dependency on automobiles and the adoption of the stormwater management plan , Chapter 218, Little Falls has not undertaken any other specific sustainability actions.

9. Local Road Safety

The Township and the County of Passaic have dedicated significant resources to improving intersection safety on the problem intersections identified in the 2008 plan by replacing sidewalks and curbs, adding handicap access ramps, adjusting signals and adding new crosswalks. The follow is a list of the intersections and improvements that have been completed.

- a. Browertown Road and Main Street
 - Addition of handicap ramps
- b. Main Street and Union Blvd
 - Signal timing adjustment for crossing, replaced curbs and sidewalks
- c. Main Street and Stevens Avenue
 - New crosswalks, depressed curbs, and sidewalk replacement

- d. Wilmore Road and Lindsley Road
 - No improvements
- e. Cedar Grove Road and Lindsley
 - No improvements
- f. Rte 23 and Main Street
 - Replacement of sidewalks, new curbs, NW corner turning lane widened, traffic signal pole relocated
- g. Montclair Avenue and Main Street
 - Sidewalk and curb replacement
 - Bus stop still inhibits vision on left turn signal

In addition a list of roadway improvement projects involving maintenance, improvements and resurfacing are identified in the table below under the Grants and Funding Opportunities section.

10. Grant and Funding Opportunities

Grants and funding for municipalities are an important aspect of any municipal budget that in many cases help maintain infrastructure such as road resurfacing, upgrading of sewer and water and in the case of Little Falls, helps in the mitigation of flood damaged properties. Below is a listing of all the grant related projects funded since the 2008 reexamination plan.

Roadways and Parks

Township of Little Falls, Passaic County, NJ Grants Summary				
		Project Name	Project Description	Grant Source
1	2010 (completed)	Morris Canal Bikeway Phases III & IV	Reinitialize previously approved grant; Construct new Bikeway	NJDOT Local Aid
2	2008	Walnut Street	Roadway Improvements	NJDOT Local Aid
3	2010	Brookhill & Viewmont Terrace	Roadway Improvements	NJDOT Local Aid
4	2010	Kingwood Drive	Roadway Improvements	NJDOT Local Aid
5	2011	Stanley Street	Roadway Improvements	NJDOT Local Aid
6	2012	Ridge Avenue	Roadway Improvements	NJDOT Local Aid
7	2013	Third Avenue	Roadway Improvements	NJDOT Local Aid
8	2013	Amity Park Improvements	Municipal Park Improvements	Passaic County Open Space
9	2013	Inwood Park Improvements	Municipal Park Improvements	Passaic County Open Space
10	2013	Wilmore Park Improvements	Municipal Park Improvements	Passaic County Open Space
11	2010	Crosswalks Improvements	Roadway Improvements	Private Benefactor
12	2011	Library Roof	Roof Reconstruction	Passaic County CDBG
13	2011	Duva Field Tennis Courts	Municipal Park Improvements	Passaic County Open Space
14	2009	Depressed Curb Handicap Ramp Improvements	Roadway Improvements	Passaic County CDBG

Township of Little Falls, Passaic County, NJ Grants Summary				
15	2008	Amity Street Main to Town Park	Roadway Improvements	
16	2008	Hughes Place/Veranda Ave/Park Ln	Roadway Improvements	
17	2010	Tolstoi/Riker	Roadway Improvements	
18	2010	Stanley and Veranda Avenue	Roadway Improvements	
19	2010	Riverview Circle	Roadway Improvements	
20	2008	Muller	Roadway Improvements	
21	2008	First street	Roadway Improvements	
22	2008	Francis	Roadway Improvements	
24	2008	Island Avenue	Roadway Improvements	
25	2008	Highland Ave	Roadway Improvements	
26	2009	Turnberry	Roadway Improvements - Resurfacing	
27	2009	Canterbury	Roadway Improvements - Resurfacing	
28	2009	Maple Street	Roadway Improvements - Resurfacing	
29	2009	Veranda	Roadway Improvements - Resurfacing	
30	2009	4th Avenue	Roadway Improvements - Resurfacing	
31	2009	Francis Street	Roadway Improvements - Resurfacing	
32	2009	Woods Road	Roadway Improvements - Resurfacing	
33	2009	Rustic Ridge Road	Roadway Improvements - Resurfacing	

Flood Mitigation Grants and Funding

At the time of this report there were 78 properties scheduled to be mitigated through elevation or acquisition through one of several approved grant awards: Repetitive Flood Claim (RFC); Severe Repetitive Loss FY10 (Round 1); Severe Repetitive Loss FY11 (Round 2); and the post-Irene Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). The details are as follows.

The SRL FY 10 (Round 1): FEMA awarded the Township \$5.9 million in December 2010 for its FY10 SRL grant (Round 1). In that program, 34 properties are scheduled to be mitigated through acquisition or elevation.

SRL FY 11 (Round 2) In December 2011, the Township received \$5.6 from FEMA to mitigate 32 properties in accordance with our SRL FY 11 (Round 2) application. In this round, the Township has applied for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) money made available for flood mitigation, which is being funneled through the Passaic County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The funds from HUD will be used along with the \$487,500 awarded in October of 2012 for property acquisitions as awarded by the NJDEP. In this round,

25 property owners interested in acquisition. The grant was written to allow for 4 acquisitions on properties contiguous to those owned by the Township for open space which are located on the river. Those 4 properties are the top priority because they already have funding in place.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program: These funds are also unique in that they were specific to damage caused from Hurricane Irene. There are 11 properties in this scheduled for acquisition. Appraisals are underway and will be followed by the Duplication of Benefits (DOB) process.

11. NJDOT Plans for Route 46

The Rte 46 project approved in 2011 has been moving ahead as planned. The work has included the reconstruction of Route 3/46 from Valley Road westerly to Notch Road to improve operations and safety. The work will add acceleration and deceleration speed change lanes, realigning the road so the eastbound movement on Rte 46 will exist on the right via new overpass and the main Rte 3 eastbound movement will continue as the thru movement with 3 lanes of no merging traffic. The work will also include improving local roadway networks, the new Clove Road overpass and three new rotaries on Valley, Clove and Notch Road.

III. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

The third provision of 40:55D-89 of the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires that a Re-Examination Report address:

“The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in state, county and municipal policies and objectives.”

CHANGES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Current, Historic and Projected Population Growth

The 2010 population of Little Falls Township was 14,432 which was an increase of 3,577 people from the 2000 population. The population trends experienced in Little Falls Township, Passaic County and the State of New Jersey from 1930 through 2010 are shown below. Little Falls has experienced steady growth since 1930, with a noticeable decrease of 872 people from 1970-2000, however the pace of growth substantially increased in the last decade by 32 percent. This appears to be due in fact to the census counting Montclair State University students in the total population for Little Falls. Passaic County and the State of New Jersey have both seen steady growth since the 1930's, with large population swells occurring during the sixties and seventies.

Population Trends, 1930 to 2010									
Year	Little Falls			Passaic County			New Jersey		
	Population	Change		Population	Change		Population	Change	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
1930	5,161	-	-	302,129			4,041,334	-	
1940	5,368	207	4.0	309,353	7,224		4,160,165	118,831	2.9%
1950	6,405	1,037	19.3	337,093	27,740		4,835,329	675,164	16.2%
1960	9,730	3,325	51.9	406,618	69,525		6,066,782	1,231,453	25.5%
1970	11,727	1,997	20.5	460,782	54,164		7,171,112	1,104,330	19.2%
1980	11,496	-231	-1.9	447,585	-13,197		7,365,011	463,899	6.5%
1990	11,294	-202	-1.7	453,060	5,475		7,730,188	365,177	5.0%
2000	10,855	-439	-3.9	489,049	35,989		8,414,350	684,162	8.9%
2010	14,432	3,577	32.9	501,226	12,177		8,791,894	377,544	4.5%

Source: US Census 2010

Population and household Composition

Census data indicates several noteworthy shifts in the age composition of Little Falls. Analysis of age group characteristics provides insight in the actual changes in population. The age composition of Little Falls has shifted since 2000, with the largest increases in the Township occurring in the 15-24 cohorts (Montclair State University Students), while the 25-34 and 35 to 44 age cohorts saw decreases in population. These comparisons are helpful in determining impacts these changes may have on housing needs, as well as community facilities and services for the municipality. The median age of Little Falls residents in 2010 was 32.1 years.

Population by Age 2000 and 2010, Little Falls						
Population	2000		2010		Change 2000 to 2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5	556	5.1	519	3.6	-37	-7%
5 to 14	1072	9.9	1113	7.7	41	4%
15 to 24	1060	9.8	4600	31.9	3540	334%
25 to 34	1684	15.5	1411	9.8	-273	-16%
35 to 44	1837	16.9	1615	11.2	-222	-12%
45 to 54	1556	14.3	1755	12.2	199	13%
55 to 64	1152	10.6	1541	10.7	389	34%
65 & older	1938	17.9	1878	13.0	-60	-3%
Total	10,855	100%	14,432	100%	3577	33%

Little Falls Township 2000/2010				
Population, Household, and Income/Employment Characteristics				
	2000		2010	
	number	percent	number	percent
Population	10,855	-	14,432	-
Race				
White	10,001	92.1	12,510	86.7
Black or African American	71	0.7	593	4.1
Asian	456	4.2	658	4.6
Hispanic or Latino	579	5.3	1,428	9.9
Households				
Total Households	4,687		4,740	
Married couple households	2,303	49.1	2,173	45.8
Female Households	439	9.4	482	10.2
Single Person Household	1,816	38.7	1,913	40.4
Income/Employment				
Median Household Income	58,857	-	78,318	-
Per Capita Income	33,242	-	34,505	-
Population in Poverty	493	4.6	865	6.0

Married couples made up 77.8% of households in 2010, while single female householders made up 6.1%. Approximately 12% of households consisted of persons living alone.

2010 Per Capita and Household Income Little Falls Township, Passaic County and New Jersey		
	2010 Per Capita	2010 Median Household
Little Falls	\$34,505	\$78,318
Passaic County	\$26,615	\$56,299
New Jersey	\$35,678	\$71,180

The median household income for 2010 in Little Falls was \$78,318, almost \$22,000 more than the County and \$7,138 above the State's median household income. Of the 14,432 persons in Little Falls in 2010, 4.6% of the population lived in poverty. According to the New Jersey Department of Labor Workforce and Development, the unemployment rate in Little Falls was 10.4% in 2012.

Housing Characteristics

As shown in the table below, the total number of housing units in Little Falls increased from 4,797 units in 2000 to 4,925 units in 2010, an increase of 128 units or about 2.7% - while the rate of population growth, was 32.9, which was a tremendous increase in population. In 2010, the vast majority of units (97.7%) were occupied, with (69.4%) being owner-occupied. While the number of owner-occupied units increased slightly between 2000 and 2010, the percentage of owner occupied units in the Township decreased. The number of renter-occupied units increased from 386 units in 2000 (3.4% of occupied units) to 594 units (4.6% of occupied units) in 2010.

Housing Characteristics Little Falls Township				
	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	4,797		4,925	
Occupied Housing Units	4,687	97.7	4,740	96.2
Owner Occupied	3,251	69.4	3,279	69.1
Renter Occupied	1,436	30.6	1,467	30.9
Vacant	110	2.3	185	3.8
Avg. Household Size- Owner	2.5		2.51	
Avg. Household Size- Renter	1.9		2.03	

Source: US Census

Revised Goals and Objectives

In consideration of the foregoing findings and observations, the Township's Master Plan goals and objectives should be revised to bring them into alignment with current issues facing the Township. As such proposed modifications and additions to the goals and objectives are provided in Section IV – Recommendation Section of this report.

CHANGES AT THE COUNTY LEVEL

Passaic County Multi Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan

On October 30, 2000, the US President signed into law the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The Act establishes a requirement that in order to remain eligible for federal disaster assistance and grant funds, local and state governments must develop and adopt a hazard mitigation plan. The mitigation plan includes a detailed characterization of natural hazards in Passaic County; a risk assessment that describes potential losses to physical assets, people, and operations and a set of goals and objections that will guide the County mitigation activities and a plan for implementing and monitoring it. The Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders approved the Hazard Mitigation Plan on August 12, 2010, which was subsequently approved by FEMA Region II on July 30, 2010.

Moving Passaic County: Transportation Element of the Passaic County Master Plan – Adopted October 2012

Moving Passaic County outlines the policies, priorities, and projects developed as part of the Transportation Element Update of the Passaic County Master Plan. The Transportation Element addresses all aspects of the transportation system including pedestrians, bicyclists, motor vehicles, public transportation, waterway accessibility, air travel access and freight movement. The plan outlines a vision for a more cohesive transportation system that maximizes investment, promotes efficiency and provides more choice. Recommendations reflect priorities of local, state and regional stakeholders along with strategies that support economic development, environmental sustainability and mobility needs throughout the County.

Morris Canal Feasibility Study – June 2011

The key objective of this study was to investigate whether a pedestrian-friendly pathway that follows the original Morris Canal and its Pompton Feeder, through Passaic County, is feasible from a physical land use perspective. To complete this goal, the study evaluates land use along the original Morris Canal right-of-way in terms of environmental, historical, and geographic conditions. The final goal of this investigation is to identify and document a proposed Morris Canal Greenway route that is safe, contiguous and offers both Passaic County residents and visitors to the County a pedestrian and bicycle facility spanning the full length of the original Morris Canal in Passaic County.

Passaic County Future: Sustainability Element of the Passaic County Master Plan – Adopted April 2013

In 2006, the Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders established the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Energy Issues to "review areas where the County can realize both economic savings and environmental benefits." In the six years since, the committee has evolved to focus on energy and sustainability issues, while maintaining its core mission of evaluating fiscal and environmental benefits for Passaic County. The Energy & Sustainability Committee as well as Passaic County staff and officials recognize the need for a systematic approach to realize the most gains from their sustainability efforts, and a strategic approach toward future actions. Passaic County Future fills that need, outlining a comprehensive action plan with distinct goals and strategies to achieve a sustainable future for Passaic County. This plan represents a commitment to improving public health and the quality of life for all residents, visitors and businesses in our community.

Heritage Tourism Plan – Draft Oct 2013

An outgrowth of the Transportation Element, the Heritage Tourism Plan will become the first Heritage Tourism Element of the Master Plan. The Transportation Element recognizes 26 byways that form a continuous network extending throughout the County. These designated corridors were selected because of their intrinsic historic significance, scenic qualities and their importance in providing connections to Passaic County's historic sites and open space that can or have the potential to become visitor destinations. The Heritage Tourism Plan addresses both transportation and tourism related issues, which together form a foundation for the development of a Passaic County Heritage Tourism Program. Heritage tourism goes beyond mere visitation of historic sites. The stories driving Passaic County's development have regional and even national significance. The potential for a heritage tourism program is strong, yet the physical remnants and landscapes from the past are under constant threat of decay and elimination. This Plan is intended to provide guidance to the stewards of the County's heritage to advance the preservation, improvement, and promotion of its historic and scenic assets, which are at the heart of a heritage tourism program.

Open Space Plan – Originally Adopted 2000, Draft Update October 2013

The Comprehensive Plan Element of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan presents recommendations for the improvement of the Passaic County Park System, and a vision for its future. It includes detailed information on the county-owned park, recreation, and open spaces, presents the technical findings of the consultant team responsible for preparation of the plan, and is based on the knowledge gained through extensive input from municipal officials and the public from all areas of the county. The comprehensive plan provides the foundation for the management, maintenance, improvement, and expansion strategies described in the Passaic County Park System Strategic Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Element includes the recommended content of the Green Acres Program of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for open space and recreation plans.

CHANGES AT THE STATE LEVEL

“Sarlo” Bill: Age Restricted Housing

This state legislation bill sponsored by Sen. Paul Sarlo (D-Bergen) permits developers to convert age restricted units to non age restricted units subject to the following conditions:

1. Preliminary or final approval for construction of the development was granted prior to July 2, 2009.
2. The developer of the age-restricted development is not holding a deposit for, or has not conveyed, any dwelling unit within the development;
3. The developer of the age-restricted development agrees that 20 percent of the units in the development will be provided as affordable housing units in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Council on Affordable Housing pursuant to the “Fair Housing Act”.

Time of Decision

A May 2010 amendment to the Municipal Land Use Law permits developers as of May 2011 to file land development applications and, with limited exception, get the benefit of the zoning ordinances in effect at the time of filing. In effect, this amendment addresses the practice of some municipalities in amending the zoning after an applicant has filed an application, particularly on controversial applications. This law protects developers from municipal zone changes.

Wind, Solar, Photovoltaic Energy facilities

On January 16, 2010, in an attempt to promote renewable energy, the New Jersey Legislature adopted bill S1202/A3062 that added the definition of an “inherently beneficial use” to the Municipal Land Use Law and expand the inherently beneficial use status to include wind, solar and photovoltaic facilities. An inherently beneficial use is defined as one that is “universally considered of value to the community” and by its very nature “fundamentally serves the public good and promotes the general welfare”. The bill defines “wind, solar, or photovoltaic energy or facility or structure” as a facility or structure whose purpose is to supply electric energy generated from wind, solar or photovoltaic technologies, regardless of whether it is a principal use, part of a principal use, or accessory use or structure.

In addition, on April 22, 2010 new legislation, S-921, declared solar panels are now exempt from zoning limitations on impervious cover – a planning term for hard surfaces such as buildings and driveways, that prevent water from absorbing into the ground.

The Municipal Land Use Law was also amended in 2011 to permit as of right renewable energy facilities when the property is located in an industrial zone and at least 20 acres is in common ownership.

Little Falls does not currently have standards for alternative energy generating facilities.

Permit Extension Act

In response to the economic recession, the State Legislature passed the Permit Extension Act in 2008. The Act tolled the expiration of all development approvals that were granted during the extension period. The Act was modified in January 2010 and extended some permits until June 30, 2013. The law was most recently modified on September 21, 2012 to further extend certain approved permits and to revive a smaller number of certain expired permits through at least December 31, 2014 and up to June 30, 2015, depending on the original expiration date of the permit. Certain permits are specifically excluded in the law. The law revives and extends State, county and local government approvals in any "extension area" defined in the law. Approvals in any "environmentally sensitive area" (ESA) defined in the law are not extended.

Affordable Housing/COAH

After the Appellate Division invalidated the third round growth share regulations in 2007, COAH proposed a "revised" set of third round regulations. Numerous appeals followed and in October 2010, the Appellate Division struck down portions of the regulations, invalidated the growth share methodology and directed COAH to develop new regulations. The NJ Supreme Court granted all petitions for certification in October 2010 and is set to hear the appeals. In addition, in June 2011, the Governor issued a Reorganization Plan which eliminated the 12 member COAH effective August 29, 2011. The Plan consolidated and transferred all duties of COAH to the NJDCA Commissioner. The state Supreme Court ruled in July 2013 that the governor lacked the authority to abolish the Council on Affordable Housing and does not have the authority to dismantle an independent agency created by the Legislature.

In the summer of 2013 a state appeals court ruled that the administration could take unspent housing money, gathered through municipal affordable housing trust funds but it also established a strict due process that COAH must follow and gave towns the opportunity to appeal any seizure directly to the COAH board as well as the appellate court.

The New Jersey Supreme Court issued a recent decision on September 26, 2013 where the higher Court agreed with the Appellate Division and found the growth share portion of COAH's Third Round Substantive Rules to be invalid. The Supreme Court has now required COAH to draft new regulations within five months of the decision, or by, February 26, 2014.

Master Plan Sustainability Element

In August 2008, the Municipal Land Use Law (NJSA 40:55D-28, regarding the preparation, contents and modification of a master plan) was amended to include a new optional master plan element, a "Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element." This element is intended to encourage and promote the efficient use of natural resources and the installation and usage of renewable energy systems; consider the impact of buildings on the local, regional and global environment; allow ecosystems to function naturally; conserve and reuse water; treat storm water onsite and; optimize climatic conditions through site orientation and design.

Local Housing and Redevelopment Law

On September 6, 2013, P.L. 2013, Chapter 159 was signed into law and significantly changed the way that municipalities designate areas in need of redevelopment pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq. Chapter 159 moves a municipality's decision to reserve the power of eminent domain to the very beginning of the redevelopment process; now, when asking the local planning board to investigate whether an area should be designated as in need of redevelopment, the municipality must indicate whether it is seeking to designate a "Non-Condemnation Redevelopment Area" or a "Condemnation Redevelopment Area". The criteria for each type of area are the same; the only difference is the power to use eminent domain. Under the legislation, areas in need of redevelopment in which the municipality is authorized to use eminent domain are called "Condemnation Redevelopment Areas." Areas in need of redevelopment in which the municipality may not use eminent domain are called "Non-Condemnation Redevelopment Areas."

Chapter 159 also revised the "e" criterion for designating an area in need of redevelopment, and expanded the criteria for designating an area in need of rehabilitation.

State Strategic Plan

In 1986 New Jersey adopted the State Planning Act — an effort to coordinate land-use planning among state agencies and different levels of government. The act mandated the creation of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (the "State Plan"), as well as the formation of the State Planning Commission and its staff, which is now called the Office of Planning Advocacy in the Department of State.

The draft Final State Strategic Plan: New Jersey's State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the draft Infrastructure Needs Assessment was released for public comments and hearings in November 2011. The Plan is "to focus the State's

policies and investments on vibrant regions by fostering targeted job growth, supporting effective regional planning and preserving the State's critical resources". A total of six public hearings were scheduled throughout the State. Since the initial public meetings and the addition of several more, the State Planning Commission has not acted on the adoption of the plan.

Wastewater Management Plans in N.J.A.C. 7:15

In July 2008, NJDEP readopted the Water Quality Management Planning rules updating its 1990 regulations with the rule that NJDEP required municipalities or regional authorities to submit wastewater management plans (WMPs) that reflected how a municipality planned to meet the wastewater needs of its zoned property over a 20-year period. A substantial number of the 191 municipal or regional authorities in New Jersey originally responsible for WMPs did not submit the plans or the required updates. To improve compliance, reduce the number of WMPs and stress a more regional perspective, NJDEP transferred the responsibility for wastewater planning to New Jersey's 21 counties.

According to the NJDEP website, four counties have refused wastewater management planning responsibility: Bergen, Passaic, Union, and Warren counties. In this case a county refusal of wastewater management planning responsibility, a municipality may apply for a voluntary assignment. If a county or municipality fails to submit an updated WMP as required by the rule, the Department has the authority to withdraw all future sewer service areas identified in the area wide Water Quality Management Plan where sewer service has not yet been provided, until a new WMP is submitted and adopted.

The Water Quality Management Planning rules guide wastewater management alternatives based on the environmental protection objectives of the Department including the protection of threatened and endangered wildlife species habitat, Natural Heritage Priority Sites, Category One waters, and wetlands, and requires that wastewater management alternatives identified for build-out condition are consistent with water quality and quantity constraints. The rules also improve consistency between wastewater management decisions and the Coastal Zone Management Program, Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan, and the Highlands Regional Master Plan. The intended purpose of the WMPs is to project future development, estimate the wastewater management needs associated with that development, and specify the preferred wastewater treatment alternative for all areas of the State. These plans also provide the vehicle to ensure that sewer service is not extended into environmentally sensitive areas. WMPs also identify public water supply service areas of water purveyors and identify the water supply needs associated with proposed development.

IV. SPECIFIC CHANGES RECOMMENDED FOR THE MASTER PLAN OR DEVELOPMENT REGULATION

“The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development ordinance, if any, including underlying objectives, policies, and standards, or whether a new plan or regulation(s) should be prepared.”

The following comprehensive goals and objectives are recommended to replace the existing goals and objectives identified in the 2002 master plan and the 2008 reexamination report. Each goal is meant to represent a broad, succinct direction for the objectives and recommendations, and to guide the fulfillment of the community's vision for the Township. In addition the objectives for each element in the 2008 plan have been incorporated and in some cases replaced by the new objectives listed below. ** indicate goals or objectives taken from the 2008 reexamination plan.

UPDATED COMPREHENSIVE GOALS

1. Encourage the promotion of practical and appropriate development controls in order to promote and be consistent with the goals of the MLUL (N.J.A.C. 40:55D-2), which advocates the protection of the general health, safety and general welfare of the residents;
2. Continue to be a stable and diverse suburban community through the provision of a balanced land use pattern;
3. To encourage the site specific appropriate production of a range of housing types and densities to meet the housing needs of the residents of Little Falls. **
4. Protect the quality of surface and ground water **
5. Encourage the development of both active and passive recreation opportunities for all age groups, interest and abilities in the community, while maintaining sensitivity to environmental and cultural resources;
6. Maintain and enhance a thriving local economy that encourages the provision of more cost effective public services, such as shared municipal services, in order to improve the quality of life;
7. Encourage the establishment of policies, codes and standards that promotes the use of sustainable development;
8. Upgrade, preserve and increase the economic and aesthetic vitality of the existing commercial areas (Rte 46, Signac and Main Street), while being sensitive to adjacent and existing uses;
9. To provide a coordinated transportation system for the movement of people and goods that is safe, efficient and accessible to all.

10. Balance redevelopment initiatives in a manner that considers the fiscal impacts to the Township while not adversely impacting traffic, population, safety and environment, character and privacy of existing residential area or placing increased demands on municipal services.
11. Provide community services and facilities required by a modern community in an efficient manner. **
12. Improve capabilities, coordination and opportunities at the municipal level and county levels to plan and implement hazard mitigation projects, programs and activities to protect the residents of the Township of Little Falls.
13. Develop a comprehensive strategy for balance development in the Township for affordable housing.
14. To encourage active participation in the planning process by Little Falls citizens.
15. Develop an implementation plan to support the suggested revisions to the current zoning ordinances, and to proceed with additional studies to support the recommendations of the Master Plan.

UPDATED COMPREHENSIVE OBJECTIVES

Land Use

1. Maintain, preserve and enhance the existing established residential character of Little Falls neighborhoods.
2. Coordinate land use and transportation planning to determine the feasibility of designating areas of the township as a Transit Village.
3. Provide Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) redevelopment plan or TOD zoning ordinances including: transit-supportive site design guidelines; transit-supportive architectural design guidelines; transit-supportive parking regulation to support the NJDOT Transit Village Program Standards.
4. Expand opportunities for mixed use development in the business corridors and potential Transit Village area designation, including both the office and retail sectors and to encourage residential uses of many varieties including a mix of types that produce few schoolchildren, resulting in a positive fiscal impact on the Township.
5. Create attractive gateways at entrances to identify the Township through upgraded land uses, streetscape improvements and signage.
6. Add design guidelines and requirements to the land use regulations to maintain consistency in the scale and character of residential and retail

development, and to make the built environment as attractive as possible, encouraging a sense of place.

7. Retain open space through land acquisition or other appropriate means. **
8. Comprehensively revise and update the Township's zoning regulations, not only to make them consistent with the Master Plan, but also to rid of any loopholes, ambiguities and unnecessary regulations.
9. Plan for efficient and proper redevelopment for areas of transition. **
10. To investigate ways in which the Township's capital facilities and operations can be built, maintained and operated in a way that saves energy, reduces costs and carbon emissions, reduces dependency on fossil fuels, and incorporates greener building/design technologies.
11. Support increased integration of municipal/county hazard mitigation planning and floodplain management with effective municipal zoning regulation, subdivision regulation and comprehensive planning.
12. Maintain and enhance local regulatory standards including full and effective building code enforcement, floodplain management, and other vulnerability reducing regulations.
13. Continue implementing programs and pursuing grants and funding program to acquire/mitigate properties in flood prone areas.
14. Limit development in flood plains according to new FEMA regulations and flood elevations.
15. Encourage the adaptive re-use of buildings that add to the historical character of the Township.

Housing

1. To require through regulation that existing housing be properly maintained and to encourage the rehabilitation of any housing that fails to meet current industry standards. **
2. Seek and maintain Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) approval of the Township's housing plan to retain control of the methods by which affordable housing will be provided in the Township.
3. Although there is limited available land capacity where higher density inclusionary housing could be encouraged in the Township, appropriate residential development should be inclusionary and provide for its share of affordable housing.

4. Promote and protect existing residential character and form in established neighborhoods.
5. The Township shall continue to encourage senior citizen age restricted housing to offer our older residents a place to live near home when they no longer need a full size house with all of its attendant maintenance responsibilities.

Circulation

1. Create pedestrian and bike connections within the Township between and among residential neighborhoods, community resources, commercial areas and transit facilities.
2. Provide wayfinding signage on major roads and at gateway locations to facilitate circulation and identify the route to key activity centers and destinations in the Township.
3. Take necessary measures to mitigate the effects of increased regional traffic through the township.
4. Employ traffic calming measures where appropriate.
5. Continue to provide transportation services for those with special needs, such as the elderly, handicapped, underserved and young. **
6. Require that all development proposals be designated to include or accommodate necessary transportation improvements. **
7. Minimize potential areas of conflict between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. **
8. Ensure adequate parking facilities for both residential and commercial uses.
9. Coordinate with the County to prepare and adopt a municipal complete streets program and ordinance, which will help in the approval process of New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) municipal aid applications.
10. Work with Montclair University to establish bus stop(s) in the Downtown and Signac areas on the existing bus route to the Willowbrook Mall.

Utilities

1. Encourage/require all new developments to locate utilities underground, in accordance with the RSIS standards and good practice.

2. Reduce artificially induced flood damage to public health, life and property.
3. Provide sufficient quality and quantity of the public water supply system on a local and regional basis ** (combination of several objectives).
4. Promote capital budgeting for ongoing maintenance/replacement of facilities/utilities in a manner that will maintain them in good condition and minimizes public expenditures through federal and state assistance.
5. Continue to participate in regional waste water management programs.
**
6. Prevent the encroachment on drainage ways through the use of easements. **
7. Coordinate with local, county and state environmental efforts to concentrate on regional watershed based planning, with focus on non point source pollution and flood controls;

Community Facilities

1. Preserve the high level of public services and encourage the maintenance and creation of new public facilities in order to accommodate population changes, economic growth and the changing needs of residents
2. Maintain appropriate emergency services for Township residents.
3. Review Township facilities for compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and make improvements where necessary.
4. Plan community facilities to accommodate anticipated future population growth.
5. Provide and educate residents about disaster location centers

Recreation and Open Space

The Open Space and Recreation Element have been prepared under a separate document, therefore all goals, objectives and recommendations should be reviewed in that document.

Economic Development

1. Seek stable, high-quality ratables that also reflect favorably upon the image and identity of the Township

2. Avoid any additional strip retail/commercial development along the commercial districts, except Route 46.
3. Transform Little Falls downtown into a pedestrian-friendly, attractive "main street" environment with diverse high-quality retail stores at the ground level, particularly along the streetfront, that is accessible to residents by car, on foot or by bicycle.
4. Provide both convenience and specialty goods and services of interest to the community, and encourage uses which promote weeknight and weekend use, such as outdoor restaurants, coffee shops and other entertainment-related uses, and by bringing a residential presence back to the downtown on upper-level floors.
5. Develop parking strategies for both long and short-term parking needs within and proximate to the Township's downtown.
6. Create symbiotic relationship between Little Falls and Montclair University.
7. Promote more efficient use of existing and proposed parking infrastructure.
8. Facilitate the redevelopment or upgrade of existing non-residential properties where appropriate.

MASTER PLAN RE-EXAMINATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are brought together in one place and are organized in three sections in this chapter:

- **Key Master Plan Recommendations.** These are general recommendations for improving the Township's quality of life, the retail and office sectors, the provision of public services and facilities and the preservation of the Township's character.
- **Specific Parcels and Properties.** During the course of preparing this Master Plan, recommendations were identified which affected specific parcels and properties in the Township.
- **Zoning Recommendations.** The master plan reexamination process, including the stakeholder and public vision meetings have identified the need to revise and update portions of the Townships zoning ordinance and map. Recommendations include making changes to both specific zones as well as to specific principal and accessory uses in the Township.

A. General Recommendations

1. Economic Development: Downtown Main Street

The Little Falls Downtown is identified by most as the area from Center Street to Maple and the immediately surrounding areas.

This reexamination report suggests enhancing the Little Falls "Main Street" downtown into a pedestrian-friendly "main street" environment. Little Falls downtown has lagged behind other sectors of the community in terms of the quality and variety of goods and services offered to the public and with respect to its identity and image in the region. Little Fall's downtown has to compete with the Route 46 commercial corridor and established downtowns such as Montclair and Glen Ridge, thus the downtown needs to establish a sense of place for itself, to create a reason for people to shop and spend time there and to encourage a variety of retail/commercial uses. Through zoning changes in particular, the downtown should support a mixed use, pedestrian-oriented "main street" environment based on the following recommendations:

- Continuous pedestrian-friendly, ground floor retail uses should be provided, preferably at the front property line, to continue more of a small downtown "main street" environment. Uses which produce gaps in the retail frontage — such as gas stations, drive-through banks and parking lots at the front property line—should be prohibited in the downtown.

- Joint access and parking serving multiple properties should be encouraged, to reduce gaps in the street frontage, to provide opportunities for shared parking, and to reduce curb cuts and facilitate pedestrian safety.
- Design guidelines should be adopted to enhance the visual character of the downtown, and to insure a high level of quality in building design and in the streetscape.
- Reducing the parking requirements for downtown uses in recognition of factors which reduce need—shared parking opportunities, on-street parking, commuter lots and the presence of the rail station—should be explored, as a way to encourage mixed use and reduce obstacles to obtaining approvals.
- Better sign regulations, and consistent street/alley lighting should also be explored. The Township should also work with those property owners that have expressed an interest in redevelopment, to encourage mixed use and the presence of residential uses above the ground floor, as a way to make such redevelopment possible.
- Investigate the potential of establishing a Business Improvement District (BID). The powers, bylaws and funding sources of the BID could be drafted in a way that limits the authority initially in order to accomplish certain goals, while recognizing that the bylaws can be expanded as the BID gains momentum.
- Capitalize on the presence of Montclair State University and its 14,000 students by pursuing linkages such as the need for student activities and services, student and professor housing, easy transportation access (shuttles) to and from the college.

2. Economic Development: Signac and Rte 46

Retail areas outside of the downtown, particularly along the Route 23 and Route 46 corridors are different than the Main Street Downtown Area. These areas are located in a more auto dominated area of town. The Route 46 corridor is dominated by larger scale Big Box retail shopping centers while The Signac commercial area along Rte 23 is a mix of smaller strip mall centers, converted single family home offices, single family homes, industrial and office space. The Rte 23 corridor and the Signac area known as the Four Corners, is a gateway to Little Falls that lacks cohesion on the facades, building typology, signage, access, streetscape and parking. What little streetscape amenities there are along the corridor is limited to certain sections. This commercial node suffers from a lack of identity. The following recommendations are suggested for the Rte 23 Corridor.

- Work with the State and County in preparing a unifying streetscape plan including: pedestrian scale street lighting, consistent sidewalk patterns, bus shelters, landscaping and hardscaping, including a major street tree planting program where possible based on ROW widths. Trees are needed to break up the bleak sight lines. Require any new development to put utilities underground.

- Consider changing the zoning or creating a new zone to allow for mixed use retail/office, to eliminate automobile sales as a permitted use, to change the bulk standards such as allowing 0 foot front yard setbacks to bring buildings to the street instead of pushing them back towards the residential uses. (as long as proper sidewalk width is maintained to encourage at least 2 people walking side by side).
- Create design guidelines that are different than those suggested for the Main Street Area to draw from the history of the Signac Area.
- Enforce new signage ordinances when properties change uses or ownership, so that facades and signs are brought up to current standards.
- Develop a gateway with appropriate signage, landscaping and street amenities to create a sense of arrival to the Four Corners. Create a true Four Corners through desirable architectural, hardscape or landscape features.

3. Transit Village Designation

In December of 2012 the Township of Little Falls took the initial steps towards developing a Transit Village Program by meeting with the Development Opportunities Interagency Team (DOIT), which was comprised of professionals from the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), Main Street New Jersey, the Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA) and the Passaic County Planning Department. This meeting was to determine the goals and direction of Little Falls Transit Village Initiative and to gain an understanding of what needed to be done in order to qualify for the designation.

The Transit Village Initiative is a multi-agency partnership coordinated by New Jersey Department of Transportation(NJDOT),which helps municipalities better utilize their transit assets and redevelop near transit hubs (rail or bus) with new housing, retail and commercial space, while minimizing traffic and improving pedestrian and bicycle access. This concept is known as Transit Oriented Development (TOD). In order to qualify for the program, the municipality must adopt land use regulations that advance transit oriented development and demonstrate its commitment to redeveloping the ½ mile around the transit facility into a compact, mixed use neighborhood with a strong residential component. Designation as a Transit Village enables municipalities to qualify for priority funding and technical assistance from some state agencies, as well as NJDOT grants.

Transit oriented development is compact, mixed use development within an easy walk of a transit station. Its pedestrian-oriented design encourages residents and workers to drive their cars less and ride mass transit more. These transit villages are usually moderate to high density compatible with the existing scale of development, and can be new construction or redevelopment. Mixed uses include residences, commercial space, and office space, or a combination of these. TOD is development designed to create connections between communities and transit in a way that encourages transit use, walking, and bicycling instead of creating

dependence on the automobile. A well designed TOD will display the following characteristics:

- **Employment Opportunities.** Maintain and enhance the concentration of jobs, in both the public and private sectors that provides the foundation of a sustainable Downtown.
- **Housing Choices.** Provide a range of housing types and price levels that offer a full range of choices, including home ownership, and bring people of diverse ages, ethnicities, household sizes and incomes into daily interaction.
- **Transportation Choices.** Enable people to move around easily on foot, by bicycle, transit, and auto. Accommodate cars but fewer than in the suburbs and allow people to live easily without one.

- **Shops and Services.** Provide shops and services for everyday needs, including groceries, day care, cafes and restaurants, banks and drug stores, within an easy walk from home.



Source: urbandesignia.com

- **Safe, Shared Streets.** Design streets not just for vehicles, but as usable outdoor space for walking, bicycling and visual enjoyment.
- **Gathering Places.** Provide places for people to socialize, including parks, sidewalks, courtyards and plazas that are combined with shops and services. Program places for events and gatherings.

The Benefits of TOD

TOD success, of course, also depends on the benefits it brings to a particular community. Each community has different goals and objectives for transportation and land use planning. Whether promoting reinvestment in older towns or reducing traffic congestion in growing suburbs, TOD in general can provide the following benefits:

- Accommodates growth while preserving open space;
- Accommodates growth while reducing traffic congestion;
- Enhances accessibility to non-drivers (elderly, disabled, youth, low income residents);
- Improves the local economy;

- Improves air quality;
- Reduces infrastructure costs associated with sprawl;
- Increases tax ratables for the municipality;
- Increases the real estate value of the surrounding community;
- Encourages socialization and community interaction;

It is recommended that Little Falls pursue the Transit Village Designation by preparing a Transit Village Study and Plan to identify the appropriate areas within the ½-1 mile to be designated as the Transit Village zone. The details of the Transit Village will be developed further during the preparation of the enabling ordinance. In addition it is recommended that the Township pursue as part of the Transit Village Study all the requirements as set forth in the NJDOT Transit Village Criteria and Scoring Guide. It is also recommended that the Township continue to pursue with NJDOT, the extension of the Transit Village radius to include more of the downtown as well as portions of the Signac Business District.

4. Signac Neighborhood

The Signac neighborhoods along the Passaic River have been devastated by flooding for years, and its residents along the Passaic River neighborhood have been faced with rebuilding time after time. Not until recent years has the Township begun working with Federal and State authorities as well as its residents to offer people opportunities to be acquired or to raise their homes above the new base flood elevations set by FEMA in 2013 after superstorm Sandy. The removal of homes within the flood prone area has created open space pocket parks throughout the area, giving residents impromptu views of the river once again. The Township should continue pursuing available funding for property acquisitions and over the long term encourage the viability of developing a riverwalk along the Passaic River.

With hundreds of homes located below the base flood elevation and many homeowners looking to sell their properties to escape the flooding, Little Falls should look to develop responsible residential development elsewhere to make up for the elimination of these units and give its residents alternate housing options.

5. Traffic, Circulation and Safety

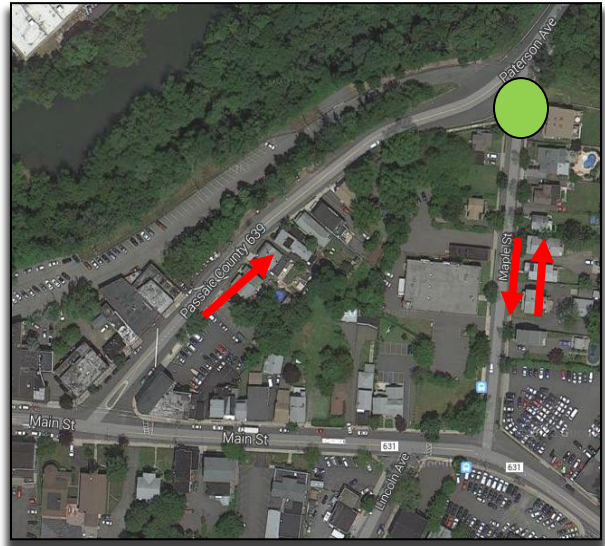
With most built out communities there is the need to address the conflicts that generally occur between the different forms and timing of transportation options, such as driving, walking, biking and mass transit. In order to do so, criteria and design standards must be established to ensure the integration of all these transportation modes, to reduce the amount of conflict. The following are suggested:



Source: njbikeped.org- Bike lanes

- Create a Township Parking Committee that would be specifically charged with addressing the issues and formulating a plan to address the Township's current and future parking needs.
- Encourage the creation of a public safety task force in partnership with the Little Falls Township Police Department, the Board of Education and other key stakeholders, to develop recommendations for improving overall circulation as well as pedestrian and traffic safety.
- Encourage parents to partner with schools to develop walk-to-school programs that encourage children walk to school using safe routes and support neighborhood children walking together, to reduce dependency on vehicular drop offs and to encourage walkability of the community.
- Continue to enhance all major crosswalks to encourage safety at these crossings.
- Support the goal of becoming a sustainable community, where residents can walk safely or bicycle to shopping centers, recreation areas and schools. Access to public transit and a network of pedestrian walkways and bicycle trails should be established.
- Engage in a discussion with Montclair University to determine the feasibility of establishing shuttle stops in Little Falls to access Main Street and the Signac area for students. These may be during special events or established at peak times during the week. However, this will only become a reality if the students are given a reason to go to Little Falls for shopping and entertainment.
- Loading and unloading should be accomplished on private property not Public Right Aways (ROW).
- Little Falls should establish a relationship with Community Cars by Meadow Link which is New Jersey's largest carpool, vanpool and shuttle services or similar service group, for businesses, colleges, universities and municipalities. They offer programs, like car and bike-sharing, and provide transportation for older adults, people with special needs and lower income clients. <http://www.ezride.org>

- In conjunction with the recommendations made for the Main Street Downtown Area, the feasibility of making Paterson Avenue a one way street and developing a roundabout at the intersection of Maple and Paterson should be explored in order to reduce conflicts in turning onto Main Street. This would also allow Paterson Avenue from Main St. to Maple St. to be narrowed allowing for wider sidewalks and easier pedestrian walk ability. Paterson could possibly be shutdown from time to time creating an area available for Main Street Events such as Farmers Markets, Fairs, outdoor shopping etc.



Maple and Patterson reconfiguration

Local Road Safety

Identified dangerous intersections should be further investigated with the implementation of safety improvements that reduce pedestrian/vehicle conflicts and vehicle/vehicle accidents, since most are County Roads. Little Falls should meet with the County of Passaic to discuss any improvements that are necessary on County roadways. The following is a list of intersections to be investigated.

- Francisco Avenue and Ridge Road – improve sight lines
- 1st Ave and Main Street- sight line issues, difficult turns
- Cedar Grove & Main – no left turn
- Highland and Glen Rock – improve sight lines
- Wilmore and Lindsley
- Cedar Grove and Lindsley
- Browertown and Main Street

6. Gateways

Enhance the Township's gateways at municipal borders and the entrances to the downtown business district with appropriate signage, landscaping and street amenities to create a sense of arrival.



B. Specific Parcels and Properties

Most of the Master Plan recommendations are at a policy level rather than site-specific. However, during the course of the Master Plan preparation process, several recommendations affecting either specific lots or existing property assemblages were identified. These recommendations are as follows:

1. Rose Street Tract

The Rose Street Tract, identified as Blk193 Lot 7 and Blk 194 Lots 5 & 5.01 is a 12.56 acre vacant wooded parcel owned by the Township of Little Falls, located along the Peckman River between the High School ballfields and the Department of Public Works facility along Peckman Road and Sindle Avenue. The only means of access to the site is through Rose Street, a paper street that runs



parallel to the ShopRite located on Browertown Road. In 2013 the site was delineated for wetlands and state open waters by Amy S. Greene Environmental Consultants and was subsequently submitted to NJDEP for a Letter of Interpretation (LOI) and a Flood Hazard Area Verification. An LOI does not grant approval to conduct any regulated activities, the sole function of a LOI is to provide or confirm information about the presence or absence, boundaries, and/or resource value classification of freshwater wetlands, transition areas, and/or State open waters. The majority of the site appears to be located within the flood hazard area, where development is severely restricted and not encouraged.

Once the LOI verification is established the Township should investigate the possibility of developing the site as passive and active open space with possible access through the high school property or an arrangement with Shoprite. All of which would require an amendment to the B-3 Zoning District. All zones within the Township should including the B-3, should be amended to allow municipal active and passive open space.

2. Little Falls Laundry Site

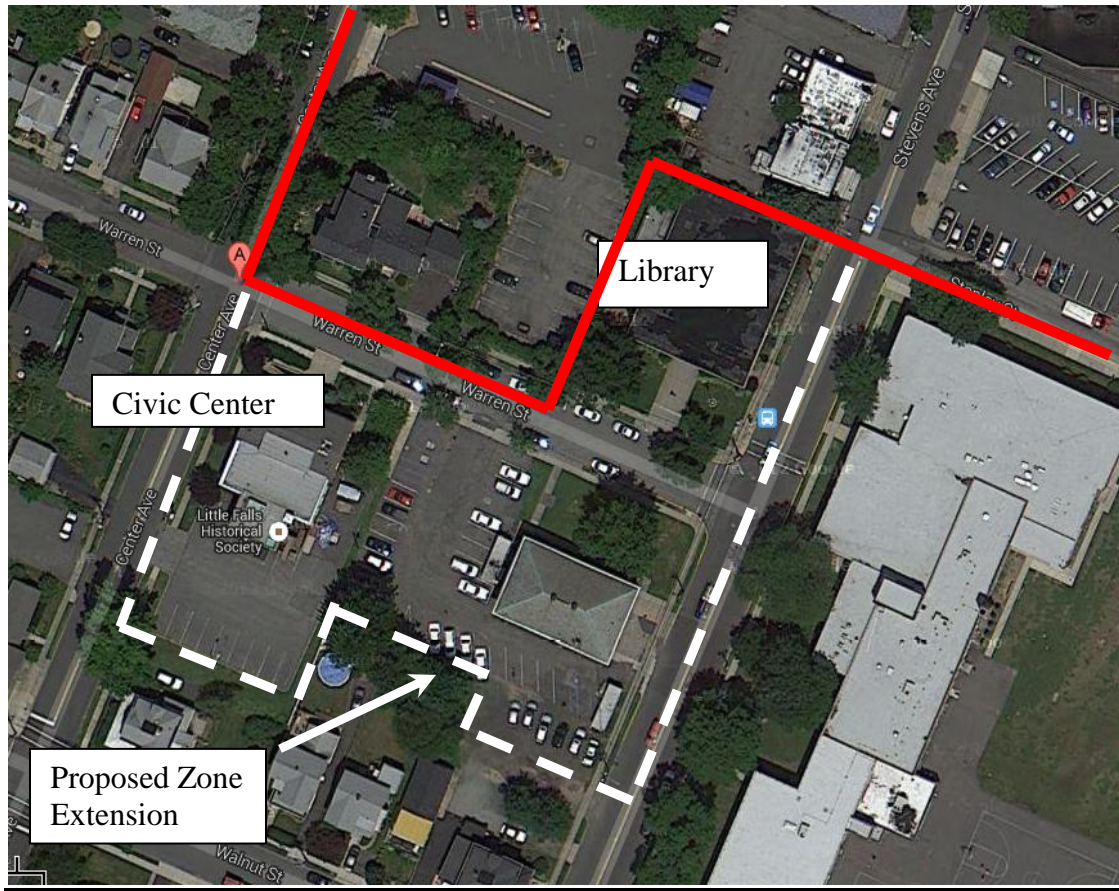
This nearly 8 acre site located on East Main Street is the original home of the Little Falls Laundry Company established in 1912. This site is located adjacent to the County's Peckman Preserve Park. While some of the buildings on this site have fallen into disrepair, the site offers one of the greatest development opportunities in the Township, for conversion into a great mixed use development. This master plan reexamination recommends the creation of a "smart-growth" village like an adaptive re-use zone in the form of an overlay zone or planned commercial development that could include residential loft style housing, restaurants, offices, retail or specialty uses such as a brewery. During the public visioning presentation given by the County of Passaic, the vision of a mixed use type development scored high on the approval scale.

A planned commercial development means an area of a minimum contiguous or noncontiguous size as specified by ordinance to be developed according to a plan as a single entity containing one or more structures with appurtenant common areas to accommodate commercial or office uses or both and any residential and other uses incidental to the predominant use as may be permitted by ordinance.

Another possibility is to investigate declaring the area in need of rehabilitation, or redevelopment plan for this large parcel. This redevelopment plan would not allow any eminent domain under the new Local Housing and Redevelopment Law criteria option. However creating a redevelopment plan would provide flexibility in bonding, funding and zoning parameters.

3. Old Police Station/ Warren Street/Library Corridor

With the development of the new municipal complex and the relocation of the Township's Police Department to that facility, the old Police Station will be in need of a new use. The station, located on the corner of Warren and Stevens Avenue, which was initially built as a carriage house in 1914, presents an opportunity on several levels for the area. This master plan reexamination recommends the extension of the B-1 Zone (or suggested CBD Zone) to include the Police Station and Civic Center (Blk 98, Lots 1, 2, 3, 10) as well as the library (Blk 97, Lots 6, 7 & 8). Doing so allows for the possibility of partially shutting down Warren Street, between Stevens and Center to allow for the development of additional parking and creating the possible reconfiguration of the area to provide additional parking that would serve the library, the civic center and the future use of the Police Station building or site. Developing Warren as a one way street with diagonal parking is another way to increase parking for the downtown, the library and the future use of this area.



C. Zoning Recommendations

1. Updating and Supplementing the Zoning Ordinance

It has been many years since the zoning ordinance of Little Falls Township was comprehensively evaluated and reviewed to reflect changes in State and case law, to regulate new uses, designs and forms of land use, and to supplement the current ordinance with missing definitions, regulations and standards that are helpful in implementing and designing well engineered and designed site plans and subdivisions.

2. B-1 Zoning District

- Create a new Zone called the CBD-Central Business District which would be formed from part of the existing Downtown B-1 Zone. The new zone would encompass all the parcels in the existing downtown B-1 Zone from Van Ness Avenue to Center Avenue and include an extension of the limits up Stevens Avenue to include the old Police Station and Little Falls Civic Center.

The creation of the new CBD Zone would allow the development of new bulk standards, parking standards, permitted uses, such as mixed use, 3-story heights and establishing additional



criteria and bulk standards that are more appropriate to a thriving downtown setting. The remainder of the old B-1 Zone should remain the same as shown above, except eliminating automobile sales and drive through banks as conditional uses.

- 3. The Mill:** The zoning for the approximately 14 acres that comprise the Mill condo complex is currently Light Industrial Conditional Use. The zoning map should be changed to reflect the residential use of the property. While multi-family use is

permitted in this zone as a conditional use, there is little risk that this property will be converted to industrial use.

- 4. Ralph Brass/Phoenix Down Site:** This 8 acre site located directly across the street from The Mill and within walking distance to the Little Falls Train Station is ideal for multi-family residential development with the possibility of a small amount of retail. Currently the zoning is Light Industrial, which is consistent with the existing use, however there have been vacancies in the near past. This parcel should be considered for a re-zoning to permit transit oriented development that would be integrated into any future Transit Village Program.
- 5. Paterson Avenue Light Industrial Zone:** The western side of Paterson Avenue (across from the Fields and Jackson Park neighborhood). Much of the newer development in this area consists of office use, which is a higher and better use for the area. Revise the name of the Light Industrial Zone to Business Innovation Zone so as to market the area for a broader range of permitted and conditional uses. The new zone name would help to promote uses such as research and development, healthcare, corporate and professional offices, service based businesses, information technology, including data storage, light manufacturing, wireless technology, logistics, and businesses that have a direct positive impact on increasing energy and material efficiency. Amend the zoning ordinance accordingly. Businesses should be allowed to include a retail component as part of the principle structure for goods manufactured or sold on site. In addition it small neighborhood scale restaurant pad sites should be reviewed as a conditional use.
- 6. Bradford Avenue Light Industrial Zone:** There is a 6 acre site located at the end of Bradford Avenue that runs along the rail line. A good portion of this site is designated as freshwater wetlands; however, it is improved with a one-story industrial building. This is the only industrial building in this neighborhood and is inconsistent with the area. This area should be considered for senior housing zoning designation or SF residential zoning, which is more consistent with the area.
- 7. Tulip Gardens, Tulip Meadows, Canterbury/Turnberry Road:** It appears from the zoning map that the zoning for these newer developments remains light industrial and businesses. The Township should re-zone these properties to a multifamily designation to properly reflect the residential use.

8. Singac Industrial Zone: This includes the area from South Grey Rock Avenue west to Arlington and Rte 23 and includes Rainbow Caterers, Little Falls Animal Hospital, vacant land, Rossi Paint, automotive uses, Tuscano Contracting, the Martoranno Complex and the back lot of the new Kitchen and Bath Center.

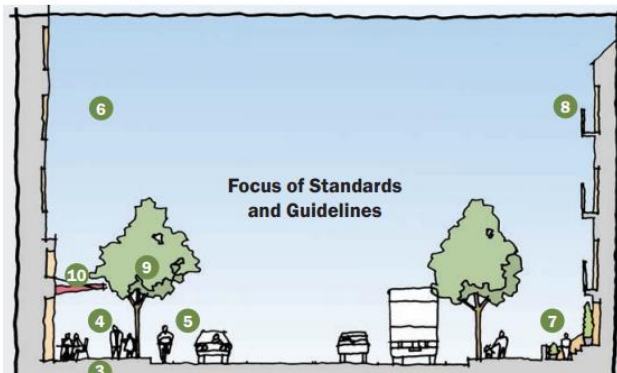
As identified below, the Township should consider including the kitchen and bath center parking lot (Blk 58 Lots 12, 12.01& 25 in the adjacent B-1 Zone as the parking lot supports the commercial use along Rte 23. The existing LI Zone along Fairfield Avenue should be maintained. Blk 59 Lot 1&2 should be included in the new LI zoning designation to be determined.

The remainder of the LI Zone along Main Street should be re-zoned to permit redevelopment in the form of either a mixed use concept with service retail and offices on the first floor with residential uses above. First floor uses should try and be identified as those that are different from the surrounding business zones. Potential townhouse development fronting along Main Street should also be explored, with flood zones and densities being key considerations for development.



9. Ordinance Development

- a. **Sign ordinance.** Revise the sign ordinance to update permitted types, location, sizes and lighting specifications that will create a cohesive design to unify zoning districts.
- b. **Wayfinding Program.** Develop a wayfinding signage program, which would include developing a branding or marketing logo, as well as providing information kiosks at key locations in the Township, to promote Township activities, functions, businesses and identify parking facilities.
- c. **Shared Parking.** Develop a shared parking ordinance, whereby adjacent property owners share their parking lots and reduce the number of parking spaces that each would require on their individual properties. The idea being that if adjacent land uses have different peak hours of parking demand, then they can share some of the same parking spaces.
- d. **Design Guidelines.** Established design guidelines for the two commercial downtown business zones (Main Street and Signac District) that promote good civic design, physical continuity and high visual quality of site and building design that provide design direction to property owners, developers, designers, and decision makers.



Source: urbandesignla.com

DESIGN GUIDELINE ELEMENTS
3 Sidewalks and Setbacks
4 Ground Floor Treatment
5 Parking and Access
6 Massing and Street Wall
7 On-Site Open Space
8 Architectural Detail
9 Streetscape Improvements
10 Signage

- e. **Public/Private Swim Clubs.** It is recommended that public swimming pools or club pools intended for open use of the public or to club members should be permitted as a conditional use in all zones in the Township. Specific standards should be established such as buffers, parking, distance to structures, percentage of area for pool, parking and minimum lot size.
- f. **Community Impact Statement.** Require a community impact statement as a checklist item to be prepared for any major site plan or subdivision in order to evaluate the financial impact on the Township.
- g. **Billboard Ordinance.** Update billboard ordinance to limit location of billboards to appropriate area and to establish the distance between billboards to 3,000 feet.

- h. Solar/wind ordinances.** With State and Federal legislation promoting sustainable energy the Township should consider establishing ordinances to appropriately control and regulate on-site renewable energy infrastructure for both residential and commercial properties so as to avoid or minimize potential adverse impact.
- i. Transit-Oriented Development.** Adopt a transit-oriented development (TOD) redevelopment plan or TOD zoning ordinance
- j. Complete streets ordinance.** Complete Streets is a transportation policy and design approach that requires streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained for safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation. Complete Streets considers safe travel by those walking, bicycling, driving automobiles, riding public transportation, or delivering goods. Complete Streets can include improved safety, health, economic, and environmental outcomes.
- k. Property Maintenance.** The Township should designate appropriate zoning/standards and enforcement to address neighborhood appearance that might impact property values.

10. Municipal Master Plan Elements

- a.** Prepare an Historic Preservation Element of the Master Plan.
- b.** Prepare a Sustainability Element of the Master Plan.
- c.** Consider the establishment of an Architectural Review Board.

V. **RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE INCORPORATION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT PLANS INTO THE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE MASTER PLAN**

The final provision of 40:55D of the MLUL requires that the Re-Examination Report address:

“The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of the redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, P.L.1992, c. 79 (C.40A: 12A et al.) into the land use element of the municipal master plan, and recommend changes, if any in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.”

Currently Little Falls Township does not maintain any redevelopment areas. However the Township is encouraged to evaluate the possibility of the establishment of redevelopment areas in appropriate locations within the Township.

Appendix A: Little Falls Public Questionnaire & Results Summary

COMMUNITY INPUT

Public participation is an essential part of the master planning process. Although only one public hearing is required, Little Falls understands that community input is critical in its planning efforts and can provide local knowledge and insight when establishing goals, objectives and strategies. Two community visioning meetings held by The County of Passaic Planning Office were conducted at the outset of this planning process, one for the Main Street Downtown and one for the Signac District. In addition a community questionnaire was made available to the entire resident for input on 19 questions about different aspects of the township. A summary of the results have been provided under each question in the questionnaire following this section. A copy of the County's results have also been included.

The comments received by the residents during the community meeting were considered and incorporated into this plan. Furthermore, during the final stages of this master plan process, the Plan was presented to the Land Use Board at an open public meeting. Comments received from that meeting were also considered and incorporated into this Plan.

Township of Little Falls

Questionnaire Summary

1. What activities or amenities would you like to have that you don't have now?

- **Town Pool**
- **Better mix of retail**
- Activities for adults & teens
- Civic center open daily
- **Great Notch rail**
- More library parking
- **Bike/walking paths**
- Jitney
- Recreation facilities
- Bulk Trash day
- **Dog Park**
- Municipal internet list serve
- Parking for Wilmore Road Park
- **Better Pedestrian crossings**
- Film Showings/Health Fair
- **Year round activities**

2. How does Little Falls, NJ compare to other area communities overall?

- **General feeling of love of the sense of community and neighborhood.**
- **Poor image because of flooding**
- Downtown lacking in draw from internal and external clientele.
- Quaint downtown but needs revitalization.
- Lacks aesthetics (streetscape elements)
- **Needs diversity of retail commercial uses.**
- **Great location next to transportation, commercial corridors and NYC**
- Overlooked

3. From a residential and retail standpoint, how does Little Falls compare to other area communities?

- **Improve Schools**
- **Downtown revitalization needed**
- New Buildings needed
- New signage needed/controlled
- Willowbrook retail killer
- **Poor Parking, more need if downtown to expand and flourish**
- **Better retail variety**
- Competition from mall and surrounding town hurt downtown

4. What is a major concern facing the Township of Little Falls and why?

- **Flooding**
- Aging Infrastructure
- **Taxes**
- Traffic Thoroughfare (3)
- Wayfinding signage
- **Perception caused by flooding(property values**
- Downtown image
- **Ratables**
- Lack of cultural attractions
- Losing ratables to MSU
- **Vision for town**

Township of Little Falls

Questionnaire Summary

5. Can you get where you need to go? Walking? Driving? Riding Transit?

- Easy to get around town
- Sidewalks not safe to walk
- Public transit is huge advantage
- Transit schedule poor

6. What facilities, roads, infrastructure or methods of transportation is needed to better serve you?

- Sidewalks need to be maintained
- Need additional crosswalks
- More train service
- Bus Shelters
- More pedestrian path bike/linkages
- Direct Train to NYC
- Senior Jitney
- Great Notch (3)
- Walking bridge over creek from canal path

7. What's the best thing about your neighborhood?

- The residents/neighbors
- Location to roads, NYC
- Safe
- Trees
- Quietness

8. What services or amenities are needed to better serve you?

- Snowplowing
- Better lighting on Main Street
- Re-open Great Notch Station
- Better schools
- Jitney Service
- Concerts in the park
- Charter Schools
- Sidewalk repair
- Sanitary Sewers
- Highlight Passaic River access
- Parking for Library
- Bulk Trash day
- Traffic control

Township of Little Falls

Questionnaire Summary

9. What are the biggest environmental issues facing the area?

- **Flooding**
- **Traffic pollution**
- Clean water
- Keeping town clean
- Telecom facilities
- Tree clearing

10. Do you feel that the Township of Little Falls maintains an adequate amount of recreational facilities and open space? If not, what facilities or spaces do you feel are most in need of upgrade or expansion?

- **Adequate**
- **Outdoor facility/activities for adults**
- Bought out land – good use for public
- **Expand rec center**
- More senior recreation
- More fields
- **Pool**
- **Repair existing fields**
- **Linkages (bike/walk)**
- Teen activities
- Facilities too small
- Website for sports field schedules
- Willmore Woods
- Riverwalk

11. What do you think the role of Little Fall's Downtown will be in the future?

- **Revitalization**
- MSU housing
- Create welcoming feeling
- **Connect with students**
- MSU shuttle for students
- Building up Patterson Avenue
- **Streetscape improvements**
- More vibrant and young
- More apartments
- **Ratables**

12. How does the Downtown impact the surrounding neighborhoods? How do the neighborhoods impact the Downtown?

- The consensus is that there is no impact on the neighborhoods. It promotes walkability.
- Unkempt buildings present poor image of town and non-commercial areas.
- Need adequate lighting to encourage walkability form neighborhoods at night.
- Sufficient buffer to residential to allow for development

Township of Little Falls

Questionnaire Summary

13. Where do you shop in Little Falls? How frequently do you patronize the Downtown?

- Most respondent utilize the downtown but say they would use it more with a variety of uses.
- Restaurants
- Banks
- Post Office
- Cleaners
- **Shoprite**
- **Quick Check**
- Walgreens

14. What is the most important issue facing the Downtown today and in the future with regards to vision, design, development, safety, housing, code enforcement or public investment?

- **Aesthetics (Buildings & Streets)**
- **Diversity of retail**
- Need unique shops
- Revitalize industrial zoned areas
- Sidewalk maintenance and safety
- **New ratables**
- **Parking**
- New mixed use
- code enforcement
- parking meters for new parking area at old police station
- **Signage**

15. What percentage of your overall shopping activity occurs in Little Falls?

1%-25%	(21)
26%-50%	(4)
51%-75%	(3)
76-100%	(1)

16. What strengths or assets exist today that could serve as the foundation for the future of the downtown?

- Existing businesses are foundation for future
- Central Location and accessibility
- More people living downtown to support it.
- **Library**
- Embrace small town feel
- Canal walk
- **Linkage to transit**
- Vacant diner site for development

Township of Little Falls

Questionnaire Summary

17. From which direction do you typically enter Little Falls? In which direction do you typically exit Little Falls?

- Union and Main (6)
- **Great Notch Road (9)**
- Patterson Avenue (5)
- Long Hill Road (2)
- Montclair Road (1)
- **Signac Rte. 23/ Rte. 46 (9)**

18. Would you like to see Little Falls change over the next 10 years? If so, how?

- Improve quality of schools to encourage young families to move to town.
- Continue to buy out properties in the Flood Zone
- Improvement to parking and expansion of downtown
- Resolve flooding issues

**Most respondents love the Town the way it is because of its tree lined streets, quaint neighborhoods, access to shopping and transit. They just want to build upon the existing foundation of what is there.

19. Rank the following issues in terms of importance (1-10, 1 being most important)

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (2nd) Downtown | (5th) Open Space Preservation |
| (6th) Overdevelopment/Zoning | (8th) Historic Preservation |
| (6th) Environmental Concerns | (9th) Bike/Walking paths |
| (1st) Flood Control | (3rd) Infrastructure |
| (4th) Traffic and Parking | Other _____ |

Township of Little Falls

Questionnaire Summary

If you have any additional comments or suggestions you feel may be relevant to the development of Little Falls Master Plan, please provide them below;

- Business District not as important as flooding
- Define definition of ½ story and building height calculation
- Community Impact Statement ordinance
- Senior Housing
- Too many buses on Main Street
- Outdoor dining ordinance
- PR the “good” about Little Falls, not just about the flooding.

Appendix B: Passaic County Visioning Study & Results

Envisioning Little Falls

Public Visioning Workshop Results Draft Report - August 20, 2013



Envisioning Little Falls

Section I

Downtown Little Falls



LITTLE FALLS VISIONING WORKSHOP

Public Visioning Workshop for Downtown Little Falls

The June 20th workshop looked to create a consensus vision for the development and redevelopment of downtown Little Falls while connecting to the rest of Township, County and region. The strongest concepts promoted development that would increase the Township's appeal to both residents and visitors. The visioning process provided an avenue for many people to participate and collaborate in creating this vision.

Topics that were tested included:

- Train Station Area
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities
- Gateway Areas
- Public Spaces
- Signage
- Buildings
 - Commercial / Retail Buildings
 - Mixed-Use Buildings
 - Adaptive Reuse
 - Residential Buildings

Study Area Map



LITTLE FALLS VISIONING WORKSHOP

Train Station Area (Images 1 - 9)

The Little Falls train station serves as a major transportation hub to the downtown. Participants were asked to rate how appropriate concepts would be for the train station area now and in the future as we anticipate expanded transit service. The respondents voted having a commercial use in the train station building as the strongest concept with an average score of 7.46. Providing electric car charging stations, introducing public art into the parking lot and providing bicycle parking/lockers were also seen as appropriate concepts for the train station area. The image portraying the current condition in the train station area received the only negative score in this topic area.

Highest Rated (#2, #6, #9, #5, #7)



Lowest Rated (#3)



Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities (Images 10 – 17)

Bicycle and pedestrian access in and around the downtown area is important to promoting access and activity in this vital economic corridor. This topic area tested concepts on how bicycle and pedestrian amenities may be provided. The existing section of the Morris Canal Greenway bicycle facility adjacent to Wilmore Park was the most favorable image in this category with an average score of 8.7. The preference for off-road and dedicated bicycle access was reinforced by the scores for on-road bicycle lanes and a “bike box” treatment at key intersections. The most modest style of bus stop (with a shingle roof and one side protected) was the second highest rated image in this category along with a positive response to providing seating areas near bus stops and bike racks throughout the downtown.

Highest Rated (#12, #14, #17, #13)



Lowest Rated (#10, #15, #16, #11)



LITTLE FALLS VISIONING WORKSHOP

Gateway Areas (Images 18 - 33)

Gateway treatments provide an avenue to welcome visitors to downtown Little Falls. The highest rated images in this topic area illustrated a preference for distinct streetscape elements such as pedestrian-scale ornamental lighting, street trees, street furniture, and landscaping. Distinct features such as the existing welcome sign and landscaping in the traffic island at the intersection of Main Street and Paterson Avenue were also well received. Creating a pedestrian-oriented amenity such as the gateway in image #31 was also highly rated and stands in contrast to the existing pedestrian gateway to the parking area entrance shown in image #22

Highest Rated (#28, #27, #23, #31)



Lowest Rated (#22, #25, #26, #24)



Public Spaces (Image 34 – 45)

Creating interesting and engaging public spaces is a vital aspect in any downtown. This includes parks, sidewalk areas and civic spaces. Participants in the workshop saw pocket parks and planter boxes as two very attractive amenities for the downtown. Other highly rated images had many features in common such as street trees, planter boxes, landscaping or other green features. Promoting activity through outdoor dining areas, utilizing the back of buildings to create usable outdoor space, and street fairs were also popular concepts. It seems that the most appropriate use for public spaces in the downtown is to promote higher levels of activity by providing the amenities and draws for those types of activities.

Highest Rated (#38, #39, #45, #42, #41, #34)



Lowest Rated (#37, #35)



LITTLE FALLS VISIONING WORKSHOP

Signage (Image 46 - 55)

Signage can assist residents and visitors in finding parking and major destinations, landmark historic buildings or features, and create a distinct look and feel in downtown Little Falls. Many of the highly rated sign concepts were drawn directly from the existing downtown area. The styles, materials and scale of the signage were all very similar, clearly illustrating a design preference. The examples shown below could be codified along with restrictions on pole-mounted signs, back-lit box signs, and cluttered windows that were ranked as the lowest rated concepts. Other concepts that rated favorably were way-finding signage and historic markers.

Highest Rated (#55, #52, #53, #48)



Lowest Rated (#47, #50, #49)



Buildings - Commercial/Industrial Uses (Image 56 - 66)

Workshop participants were provided the opportunity to rate commercial and/or retail buildings in terms of the style of the building and the application of features such as parking, landscaping and signage in downtown Little Falls. The commercial and office buildings on the eastern portion of the study area provide the most positive concepts that were rated during the public workshop. The images portray buildings that front on the street with well-defined architectural elements and pedestrian-oriented features. Reinforcing this were the negative images of buildings that provide front-yard parking, were auto-oriented in their use and lack façade treatments that define the building.

Highest Rated (#65, #64, #66, #58)



Lowest Rated (#62, #59, #57, #63)



LITTLE FALLS VISIONING WORKSHOP

Buildings - Mixed-Use (Image 67 - 84)

Mixed-use buildings characterize many downtowns including Little Falls. They consist primarily of first-floor retail uses with either residential or office uses on the second floor and above. Participants in the public workshop were asked to rate how appropriate different concepts of mixed-used development would be in downtown Little Falls. Each of the concepts was presented in terms of the building's scale, architectural elements, building materials, and orientation to the street. Images included examples from within the existing downtown. The strongest concepts can be used for recommendations in the Township master plan and/or incorporated into any subsequent zoning amendments.

Highest Rated (#67, #71, #70, #76, #74, #75, #79)



The responses favored two to three-story buildings all built along the street. A number of buildings in the central business district were among the most highly rated images and can provide continuity for any future development. The highest rated images used different types of masonry and/or materials to create visual interest along with distinct architectural elements such as bays, articulating the building facade, or changes in the building height. The lowest rated concepts from the workshop also illustrate a preference away from larger scale mixed-use buildings of four or five-story buildings. Some of the existing structures also did not reflect the architectural styles or elements of the highest rated images. The scale and orientation of the preferred concepts would also promote transit and pedestrian accessibility that support downtown environments or transit-oriented development.

Lowest Rated (#73, #82, #68, #81)



LITTLE FALLS VISIONING WORKSHOP

Buildings - Adaptive Reuse (Image 84 - 91)

Reinventing historic buildings through adaptive reuse can anchor new development by relating to and celebrating historic industries or features such as the Morris Canal Greenway. In general most of the concepts were well received. The highest rated adaptive reuse concept was transforming a mill building to residential space. A simulation that converted the historic Little Falls police station into a coffee shop was the second highest rated image in this category and speaks to how buildings can be repurposed to meet the goals and concepts in other parts of the presentation such as mixed-use development or new commercial uses. The concept of a brewery in image #84 made it into the top five concepts tested in this category.

Highest Rated (#86, #91, #85, #87, #84)



Buildings - Residential Buildings (Image 92 - 100)

The following images portray different scales and styles of residential development that may be possible within or bordering downtown Little Falls. The strongest concept draws from loft style residences at “The Mill” adjacent to the municipal complex. Other popular concepts included townhome developments that front on public/open space rather than parking areas. Using architectural elements such as distinctive building materials and varying the building facades also characterized the highest rated images.

Highest Rated (#93, #92, #94, #98)



Envisioning Little Falls

Section II

Singac District of Little Falls



Public Visioning Workshop for the Singac District of Little Falls

The June 25th workshop looked to create a consensus vision for the development and redevelopment of the Singac District of Little Falls while connecting to the rest of the Township, County and region. The strongest concepts promoted development that would increase the Township's appeal to both residents and visitors. The visioning process provided an avenue for many people to participate and collaborate in creating this vision.

Topics that were tested included:

Gateway Areas

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Parking

Public Spaces

Signage

Buildings

LITTLE FALLS VISIONING WORKSHOP

Study Area Map



Gateway Areas (Images 1 - 14)

Gateway treatments provide an avenue to welcome visitors to the Singac District of Little Falls. The highest rated concepts included streetscape features such as distinctive pedestrian scale lighting, street trees, street furniture, bollards, and distinct paving materials. The images also featured buildings fronting on the sidewalk which define the gateway areas and public spaces. The lowest rated images were characterized by front yard parking, gaps in the building lines and were oriented mostly towards vehicular access.

Highest Rated (#10, #11, #9, #13)



Lowest Rated (#8, #5, #6, #2)



LITTLE FALLS VISIONING WORKSHOP

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities (Images 15 – 24)

The highest rated concept was connecting the Signac District to the riverfront parks currently being developed adjacent to the business district in flood prone areas. Promoting bicycle and mass transit access ranked highly during the workshop. Responses reflected a desire for bus shelters that create a distinct character for the district as opposed to the existing shelters and sidewalk areas that provide very few amenities for pedestrians or streetscape features. Participants also favored the installation of bicycle racks in the Signac District.

Highest Rated (#19, #24, #23, #20)



Lowest Rated (#17, #16, #21)



Parking (Images 25-32)

Access to parking is an important part of any business district. The highest rated parking concepts for the Singac District depicted clearly delineated on-street parking with any surface parking heavily screened from public view. Parking preferences were also reflected in the other categories that illustrated buildings with no setback that frame the pedestrian areas and public spaces within the business district rather than front yard parking areas. This is reinforced by images depicting surface parking lots fronting development along the roadway receiving the lowest scores.

Highest Rated (#30, #31, #32, #27)



Lowest Rated (#26, #28, #29, #25)



LITTLE FALLS VISIONING WORKSHOP

Public Spaces (Image 33 – 41)

Creating interesting and engaging public spaces is a vital aspect in the Singac District of Little Falls. This includes parks, sidewalk areas and civic spaces. Participants in the workshop saw pocket parks and planter boxes as two very attractive amenities. Other highly rated images had many features in common such as street trees, planter boxes, landscaping or other green features. Promoting activity through outdoor dining areas and utilizing street corners to create usable outdoor space also prompted a positive response.

Highest Rated (#38, #37, #41, #40, #35, #36, #33)



Lowest Rated (#34)



Signage (Image 42 – 60)

Signage can assist residents and visitors in finding parking and major destinations, landmark historic buildings or features, and create a distinct look and feel in the Singac District of Little Falls. The highest rated concept illustrated a need for way-finding within the Signac District and to other parts of the Township and County for pedestrians and vehicles. The most favorable concepts draw from within the Township and clearly depict a preference in regards to style and materials for signs, lighting and awnings. The examples shown below could be codified along with restrictions on pole-mounted signs, back-lit box signs, and cluttered windows that were ranked as the lowest rated concepts.

Highest Rated (#54, #59, #55, #56)



Lowest Rated (#51, #46, #43, #48)



LITTLE FALLS VISIONING WORKSHOP

Buildings (Image 61 - 100)

The built environment characterizes any central business district and the Signac District of Little Falls is no exception. Participants in the public workshop were asked to rate building concepts in terms of the building's scale, architectural elements, building materials, and orientation to the street. Images that were tested include examples from within the Singac District, Little Falls Township, and other areas. The strongest concepts can be used for recommendations in the Township master plan and/or incorporated into any subsequent zoning amendments. The highest rated concepts favored one to two-story buildings using high quality building materials such as brick or other types of masonry. A number of images used a

Highest Rated (#70, #80, #89, #61, #69, #86, #98, #87)



change in building height to three-stories at the corner to create visual interest along a continuous building line and/or a defining element at the corner of a block. The use of pitched and/or gabled roofs was common in many of the highest rated images along with distinct architectural elements and signage that did not detract any of these features. The lowest rated concepts were all drawn from within the Signac District. These images portrayed buildings that were either in poor condition, were auto-oriented, lacked any defining architectural elements, and lacked continuity. The concepts also lack any streetscape features such as street trees or signage that complement the buildings as in the highest rated concepts.

Lowest Rated (#84, #77, #64, #85, #76, #81, #83, #71)



Appendix C: Public Notices