

Amendment to the Master Plan

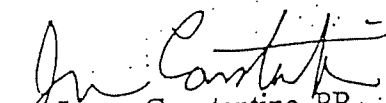
Borough of Metuchen

Middlesex County

New Jersey

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The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, NJSA 40:55 D-28, provides for a municipal planning board to prepare and, after public hearing, to adopt or amend a master plan, or component parts thereof, to guide the use of lands within the municipality in a manner which protects public health and safety and promotes the general welfare. The Metuchen Master Plan was last Re-examined in July 1994.

The northeast corner of the Borough (along Middlesex Avenue) has remained residentially zoned despite the existence of a number of non-residential uses. In 1983, the Master Plan gave consideration to rezoning a portion of the R-1 Residence District located north of Middlesex Avenue for professional office or limited commercial uses. At that time, the Planning Board decided to keep the residential designation. This area is presently developed with non-residential uses, most of which were approved by use variance and are considered non-conforming uses. Existing uses in this area include the Elks property, a real estate office, a drive-in bank and a parking lot for a medical office. (See attached map).

The previous issues and concerns for this area have changed over time. In 1994, the Master Plan Reexamination identified zoning on Middlesex Avenue near the Elks building as an area to be reviewed/updated and incorporated as a future amendment to the Master Plan. This is due to several factors, including the question of the viability of single-family residential use (conforming with R-1 zoning) for properties in the subject area. When the viability of the R-1 zoning is combined with the extent of pre-existing non-conforming uses that exist, the area may be predisposed toward future use variance applications. This could result in development that is viable, but highly intrusive or incompatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood along Homestead Road and Salem Court.

From a broader, regional planning perspective, the subsequent expansion and rise of JFK Hospital as a regional center creates demand for additional professional office space than can be accommodated with nearby medical and related facilities. This northeast area presents a unique "gateway" opportunity to capitalize on the existing uses in this area, realistically address the residential zoning that may no longer be viable, and provide clear policy direction to protect the surrounding residential neighborhood from inappropriate commercial or institutional development by way of use variance applications.

The Master Plan recommends that this area be rezoned to complement the G-1 Gateway Development District on the opposite end of town. Since the Gateway District in the southwest corner of the Borough is automobile and industrially oriented, a slight modification of the G-1 designation for this northeast corner of the Borough is recommended. The designation for this area is proposed to be changed from R-4 Residence District to G-2 Gateway Development District. This G-2 District would allow the following uses:

1. Permitted Principal Uses
 - a) Offices
 - b) Banks and other financial institutions, except drive-in banks
 - c) Funeral homes and mortuaries
 - d) Nursery schools and day care centers
2. Permitted Accessory Uses
 - a) Driveways, parking lots, loading areas and other uses deemed to be permitted accessory uses.
3. Permitted Conditional Uses
 - a) Drive-in banks, pursuant to Section 404.D.10. of this Article.

The Master Plan contains the following goals which will be advanced by this amendment:

- To preserve and enhance the residential character of the Borough.
- Land uses to be encouraged in any development or redevelopment strategy should be appropriate to the area in which they are proposed, should represent an economic benefit to community, and should serve a valid market to ensure the likelihood of their realization.

The G-2 Gateway Development District zoning for the Borough's northeast corner incorporates four parcels, consisting of Tax Map Block 29, 1.01, 1.02, 1.03, 1.05, 1.07 and 1.08 (see attached map). These parcels are predominantly used as commercial activities, as well as the Elks property. Rezoning these parcels allows the commercial uses to come into conformance with the G-2 zoning.

The Master Plan recommends that at the time of any development applications involving the parcels in the G-2 Gateway Development District, that the following issues be specifically addressed:

- Maintaining existing mature trees to the maximum extent possible on the western and rear portions of the Elks parcel in order to act as a natural buffer to the adjacent residential neighborhood along Homestead Road and Salem Court. This may require the Planning Board to work cooperatively with an applicant to ensure flexible siting of buildings and parking toward the east and front sides of the Elks parcel, if it is redeveloped in the future.
- Improving existing surface and storm sewer drainage problems that impact the adjacent residential neighborhood along Homestead Road and Salem Court.
- Reducing existing circulation problems associated with the number, locations and geometrics of driveways along Middlesex Avenue which encourage large trucks passing through the area to pull into the parking areas of the subject parcels in order to accommodate U-turns, rest stops, etc.

The Master Plan further recommends that adjacent and nearby sections along Middlesex Avenue specifically remain residential at this time. Due to the Master Plan's emphasis on preserving the residential character of the Borough, the rezoning of the subject area to the G-2 Gateway Development District should not be viewed as a change in policy or encouragement for the conversion of existing residences or residential properties to business uses along the northeast end of Middlesex Avenue.

TOWNSHIP OF EDYBORO

BORO LINE

29

G-2 Gateway
Development District

ELKS LODGE #114

AVENUE

METUCHEN MAJOR
APTS 100 UNITS
(CALC L 51)

36

MIDDLESEX

6

HOMESTEAD ROAD
SALEM
GOLIET

READING R.R. CO.

PORT

READING

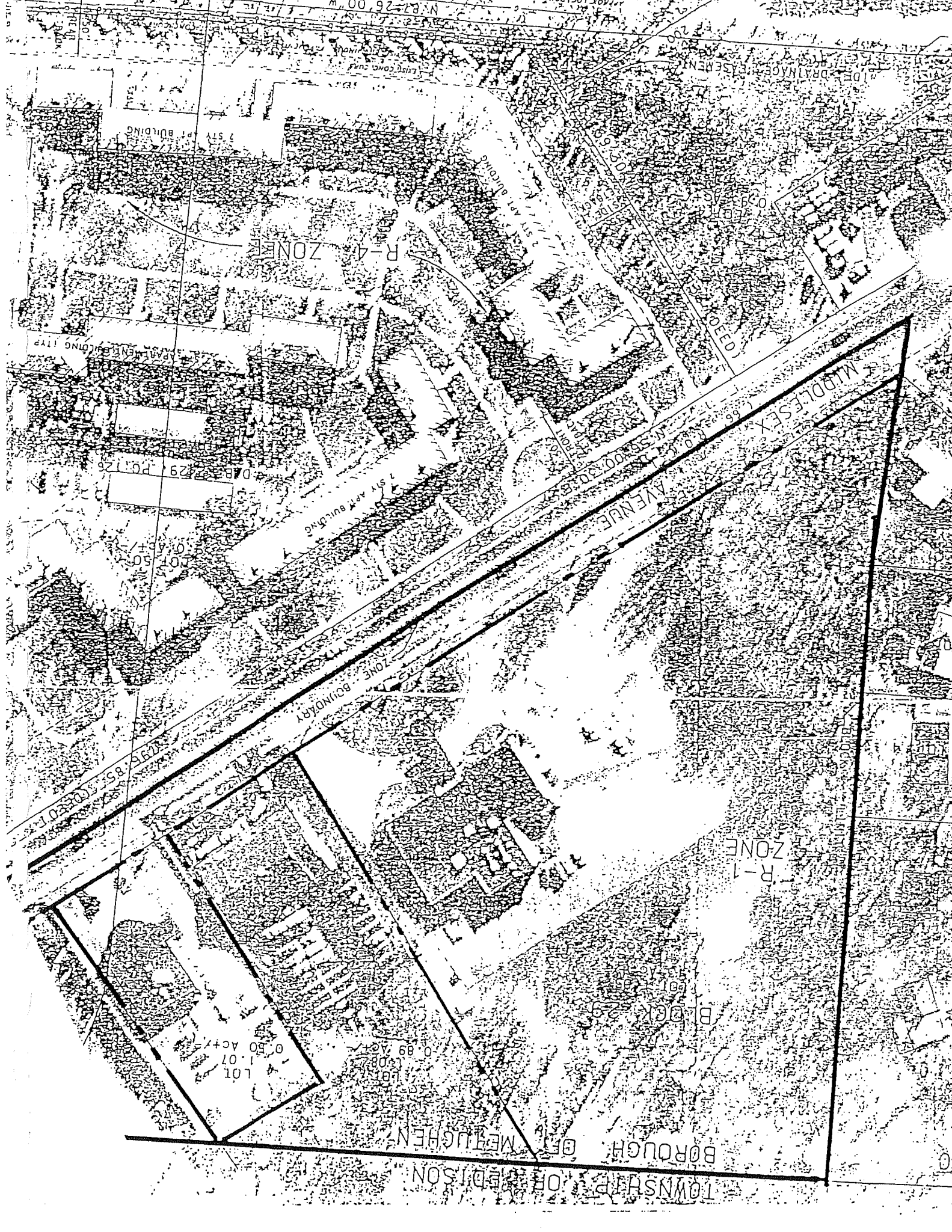
RAILROAD

MAIN LINE

SEE SHEET 40

39

PSE



TOWNSHIP OF EDISON

BOROUGH OF WELLS

R-1 ZONE

ZONE BOUNDARY

BLOCK 29

LOT 1.07
0.50 AC

0.89 AC

D.A.B. 2729 P.C. 126

LOT 50
0.43 AC

7 STY. APT. BUILDING

7 STY. APT. BUILDING

N. 87-26 00 W.

IDE DRAINAGE EASEMENT

EDISON

AVENUE

MIDDLESEX

0.91 AC

0.91 AC

0.91 AC

0.91 AC

0.91 AC

0.91 AC

0.91 AC

0.91 AC

0.91 AC

0.91 AC

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