

Housing Plan Element & Fair Share Plan

Borough of Metuchen
Middlesex County, New Jersey

Prepared for:
Metuchen Borough Council
Metuchen Planning Board

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In response to increased pressure to develop infill housing, often as a result of subdivision applications, the following shall act as an amendment to the Housing Plan Element adopted in April 1998.

The Housing Goals and Objectives are hereby amended to include the following (new text in **bold**):

1. To protect the character and quality of existing neighborhoods.
2. To preserve and improve the existing housing stock.
3. To direct the development of new housing in centralized locations convenient to shopping, the railroad station, and employment opportunities in and near the downtown area, consistent with Metuchen's "town center" designation in the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan.
4. To limit housing in areas of the Borough that are better suited for other land uses.
5. To foster the development of selected housing for the elderly.
6. **To ensure new infill housing, particularly where variances are requested, does not detrimentally impact the established character of a neighborhood as defined by the existing pattern of lot sizes and dimensions, and housing types.**
7. **To discourage the demolition of structurally sound dwellings in order to create one or more new lots by subdivision.**
8. **To limit applications classified as minor subdivisions to the creation of not more than one additional lot.**

Metuchen's housing policies respond to several key issues:

1. The Borough's "Town Center" designation by the New Jersey State Planning Commission which promotes development in the center of the community where infrastructure, including transit, is readily available and any new housing will help support downtown businesses and employment opportunities with a minimum burden on existing municipal services.
2. Changes in market demand which have established a strong downtown housing market which attracts smaller households, typically without children, who are attracted to the convenience of easily available mass transit and downtown services.
3. **Increased concern over preserving the character and quality of each established neighborhood. Metuchen's special community character is based on a diverse mix of housing types, lot sizes, house and lot characteristics, and neighborhood patterns. Within some neighborhoods, a key element contributing to this character is a neighborhood pattern composed of a variety of lot sizes, house and lot characteristics, and housing types. In other neighborhoods, this character is derived from a pattern of consistent lot sizes, house and lot characteristics, and housing types.**
4. The need for selective, additional senior housing to serve Metuchen's growing elderly population.
5. Paralleling national trends, a local demographic shift toward smaller household size due to an aging population, later age of marriage, low birth rates and other factors.
6. Environmental constraints on the Gulton, Oakite and Hampton tracts that limit the ability for future residential development on these sites, as recognized by COAH in its 1992 substantive certification of the Borough's Fair Share Plan and its 1993 amendment to substantive certification.
7. A desire to continue seeking available federal, state and county funds to encourage private reinvestment in home improvements and rehabilitation in established neighborhoods.