

Taking the Next Step:

Lawrence Township
Municipal Assessment

February 2004



The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association

Since 1949, our member-supported organization has worked on behalf of local residents to protect, preserve and enhance our local environment. We are dedicated to caring for the integrity of the natural ecosystems of the 265-square miles of central New Jersey drained by the Stony Brook and the Millstone River. We focus on environmental education, watershed stewardship and water resource advocacy – helping future generations understand the wonders and workings of the natural world we are preserving on their behalf.

We are headquartered on a 785-acre nature reserve in Pennington that includes a community supported organic farm, nature center, pond, and a 10-mile trail system that leads visitors through our woodlands, wetlands, and fields.

Many activities within our watershed affect the quality of streams, wetlands, ground water and forests. By changing how we carry out these activities, we can improve our environment and our quality of life. So whether at home, work or play, we can all make a difference.

If you have questions about this report or want to learn more about membership support, volunteer opportunities, and new programs please contact us at: (609) 737-3735.



31 Titus Mill Road
Pennington, NJ

www.thewatershed.org

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Executive Summary

Picture it: Autumn, 2024, Lawrence Township, New Jersey. Main Street, Lawrence is bustling with shoppers, students, and families. One family decides to attend the Historic House Tour, while just around the corner students take to apple picking at the local orchard. After window-shopping along Main Street, shoppers hop on their bicycles to travel across town to the redeveloped Route 1. They leave their bikes at one end of the boulevard to walk up and down the tree-lined sidewalks, grabbing lunch and an ice cream on the way. Music can be heard coming from the Park on the other side of the canal, as residents make their way through the neighborhood to locate the festivities. There is a celebration going on to commemorate the 20th anniversary of parks, open space, and woodlands preserved in the Township. Everyone is celebrating the healthy waterways, the clean air, and a sense of community spirit, as local officials have set up booths to continue generating support and ideas for the incoming administration. At the end of the day, some folks take the southbound bus home to their apartments, picking up a quart of milk at the store on the walk home from the bus stop.

Sound like a Utopia? Maybe. But the issues are real and municipalities, in general, have the opportunity to make decisions that will lead to this heightened standard of living. They can enact ordinances and educate the public, but they can't do it alone.

Over the years, the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association (the Association) had received numerous requests from municipalities who needed guidance with various planning or environmental issues. The Association decided that responding to these issues comprehensively would be most effective. Thus, the Association created the Municipal Assessment Project. This project is designed to identify the issues in a municipality that hinder preservation of natural resources or quality of life in and around the community. It takes a strong, committed community to step back and evaluate their goals, policies and strategies and implement policy and regulatory changes to help achieve their ultimate vision. Lawrence Township was ready for this challenge and the Association was, in turn, excited to work with such a dedicated and diverse community.

The process started with a collection of survey responses from municipal officials, staff, and consultants. The Association then reviewed the Township's Master Plan, land use ordinances, policies, and best management practices. These two steps guided the evaluation, which is divided into four major themes: Land Use Planning Techniques, Land Conservation Techniques, Direct Municipal Responsibility for the Environment, and Watershed Stewardship Projects. Using the Master Plan and survey responses as the Township's overall vision, the evaluation of the four themes led to recommendations that will assist the municipality in carrying out their vision through sound planning strategies. These recommendations become the focus of the assessment report and a "step" toward making the connection.

Each chapter, or “step”, in the assessment report lists the Township’s *Goal* according to the Master Plan and survey responses, and the *Current Protection* the Township has on the books. Each step focuses on *Options* for new opportunities, as suggested by the Association. Here the municipality is given a menu of choices for planning and conservation projects to implement now and in the future. In the *Did You Know* section you can read about information such as population change within the Township and what surrounding communities are doing. Finally, *Additional Resources* show where the Township can do further research in that particular area.

The Association would first like to commend Lawrence Township for their ongoing projects and past accomplishments, which include:

- ⌘ Being recognized as a Tree City 8 years ago;
- ⌘ Embarking on a beautification project in the Eggert’s Crossing community that will soon enhance the neighborhood park;
- ⌘ Taking on projects like tree plantings and streambank restorations to get residents involved and aware of their natural surroundings;
- ⌘ Preserving 30% of the land in the Township for parks, recreation, or natural habitat; and
- ⌘ Planning for the Redevelopment of Business Rte. 1 and the adjacent residential areas.

This report is a general guide as to what can be done and what has been done in this community to connect goals with implementation and implementation with vision. The results of this analysis for Lawrence Township are documented in this report, entitled “**Taking the Next Step**”. Outlined below, and in no particular order, are the 13 strategies to achieving Lawrence Township’s goals. (Please refer to the report for more detail).

⌘ **Land Use and Development**

Township Goal: “Retaining and enhancing existing patterns of development rather than encouraging major change in landscape.”

Current Practices: Directing new development and redevelopment to places in relation to transportation and environmental capacities.

Recommendation: Provide ordinances, such as a Mixed-Use Design ordinance, that allows for infill development projects with community design elements and will enhance quality of life.

⌘ **Business Rte. 1 Redevelopment Area**

Township Goal: Designing and building a boulevard that will enhance pedestrian and bicycle travel, as well as provide a treed median for a more inviting streetscape; Providing redevelopment and regional planning strategies, including mixed-use development.

Current Practices: The majority of Business Rte. 1 is located in the Highway Commercial (HC) district, which allows for a variety of commercial uses that differ from those of the Neighborhood Commercial district.

Recommendations: Implement a redevelopment plan that connects and integrates the surrounding residential areas to the highway commercial corridor.

§ **Stormwater Management**

Township Goal: Create a regional stormwater management plan with adjacent municipalities.

Current Practices: The Land Use Ordinance had language that allows for Best Available Technologies (BATs) to “minimize runoff, increase on-site infiltration, simulate natural drainage systems, and minimize off-site discharge of pollutants to ground and surface water...”

Recommendations: Create and adopt a stormwater management plan that includes an ordinance, BMPs, implementation, and enforcement.

§ **Stream Corridor Protection**

Township Goal: “Protect natural features and resources such as... bodies of water worthy of protection for ecological balance and as a counterpoint to the built environment” and “Preserve and enhance stream corridors through Greenways Network using bike and pedestrian paths.”

Current Practices: The Master Plan defines stream corridors as the “watercourse or body, flood plain and flood fringe area, and often include freshwater wetlands and in some cases, associated uplands.”

Recommendations: Create and adopt a comprehensive stream corridor ordinance with language protecting water quality and related ecosystems.

§ **Groundwater Protection**

Township Goal: Lawrence Township’s area in particular relies heavily on groundwater supplies, and the geology of the area makes recharge difficult.

Thus, geological studies in determining the potential for groundwater recharge and therefore, protection of groundwater, must be conducted prior to development.

Current Practices: The Master Plan includes a map of Aquifer Recharge areas that are based on information from the Mercer County Soil Survey.

Recommendations: Adopt additional ordinances and policies to protect groundwater quality.

§ **Woodlands Protection**

Township Goal: Protect individual trees and woodland masses for retaining rural character and for maximizing aquifer recharge. Protect natural features and resources such as woodlands for ecological balance and as a counterpoint to the built environment and protect existing mature trees.

Current Practices: The Land Use Ordinance states its purpose as controlling and regulating excessive removal, cutting, and destruction of trees. It also speaks to preventing conditions that may lead to decreased water quality, air quality, and aquifer recharge. This section has very technical language for tree protection and removal, if necessary.

Recommendations: Create and adopt a Woodlands Protection/Management Plan and Ordinance.

§ **Conservation of Natural Features and Critical Areas**

Township Goals: Protect natural features and resources such as steep slopes, wetlands, and floodplains for ecological balance and as a counterpoint to the built environment. Restrict development in these areas. The conservation element of the Master Plan lists environmentally sensitive areas in the Township.

Current Practices: Although there is no formal Natural Resources Inventory, the Township's Master Plan has excellent documentation of existing critical areas.

Recommendations: Adopt ordinances and land use policies, such as overlay zones and monitoring, to ensure further preservation and protection of wetlands and critical habitats.

§ **Rural Quality**

Township Goals: Retain rural character and historic streetscapes and establish design guidelines for preserving significant views from public rights-of-way by using rural design techniques and standards for low intensity development in identified areas.

Current Practices: Open Space tax—\$345 million bond referendum. Redeveloping commercial core of village with parking, streetscape, signage, lighting, etc to promote historic character.

Recommendations: Adopt individual ordinances, such as conservation easements, that ensure the implementation of rural protection strategies set forth in Master Plan and Conservation Element.

§ **Historic Character**

Township Goals: Retain rural character and historic streetscapes and establish design guidelines for preserving significant views from public rights-of-way by using rural design techniques and standards for low intensity development in identified areas.

Current Practices: The Township has a management plan for historic preservation on file.

Recommendations: Adopt individual ordinances, such as a Historic Overlay Zone, that ensure the implementation of historic preservation strategies set forth in Master Plan and Conservation Element.

§ **Soil Erosion and Sediment Control**

Township Goals: Encourage special precautions be taken to avoid excess removal or destruction of vegetative areas, as well as to control runoff.

Current Practices: The Township's Land Use Ordinance states the purpose of Soil Erosion and Sediment Control as preventing damage to soil and to control runoff, preventing flooding, preserving lands and the existing environment, protecting exposed soils, protecting people and property, and preserving public health, safety and welfare.

Recommendations: Develop construction guidelines that ensure protection of environmental and public health and require these guidelines be consulted with prior to every construction application.

☞ **Traffic and Transportation**

Township Goals: Alleviate truck traffic through the Village. Coordinate with county and state organizations to implement strategies now and into the future. Connect communities across major highways.

Current Practices: The Master Plan's Circulation Element gives a good overview of traffic patterns, problem areas, and solutions. The Growth and Redevelopment Committee looks specifically at these issues and their goals parallel those of the Master Plan for this issue.

Recommendations: Create and adopt an ordinance that requires analysis of traffic generated by new development and solutions that minimize congestion.

☞ **Resident Participation**

Township Goals: Encourage and promote social interaction of groups and individuals to maintain strength of the community.

Current Practices: Township has a well-informed and well-educated public.

Recommendations: Continue to encourage public participation and education through newsletters, workshops, and information sessions with Township officials.

☞ **Education of Township Officials**

Township Goals: More efficient and economical governmental administration.

Current Practices: Officials are encouraged to expand their expertise and knowledge in order to better educate residents.

Recommendations: Encourage training and site walks for committee members prior to application approvals.

As a catalyst to achieve responsible planning and environmental quality, this report serves as an excellent guide and inspiration for projects. Future boards and committees should refer to this document for ideas and guidance and to make connections with other communities and local organizations. The next step in the assessment process is for Lawrence Township to choose and prioritize a few of the recommendations made in the report. There are a variety of recommendations, which the Association is funded to help implement.

In performing the municipal balancing act, officials must employ sound planning strategies to provide a quality of life for all residents. By committing to follow through on this report, the Association and Lawrence Township are achieving the mission of preserving and enhancing the watershed and the communities within it. This report is the next step in creating that healthy, livable community.

Acknowledgements

We commend Lawrence Township's leaders and professionals for participating in this program and allowing the Association to evaluate current practices. It is difficult for anyone, whether an individual or a municipality, to have the courage to evaluate current work, to determine where and how to improve a current system, or to develop a new strategy. We want the readers of this report to look at not only what can be done, but what has already been accomplished in Lawrence Township.

We wish to thank the William Penn and Geraldine R. Dodge Foundations for their generosity in funding this project, and the members of the Town Council, Planning Board, Environmental Resources Committee and staff for their enthusiastic responses to our survey. We would also like to acknowledge the individual input of Councilwoman Pam Mount, Environmental Resources Committee Chair Ken Najjar, Township Planner Andy Link, Health Officer Carol Chamberlain, Township Manager Bill Guhl and all those who responded to the survey. Your time and dedication to this project was greatly appreciated.

Our hope is that Lawrence will learn from and expand on their own experiences, challenges, and successes, as well as those of surrounding municipalities, keeping in mind that zoning and policies should look regionally to provide comprehensive, sensible regional growth. We also look forward to partnering with the township in embracing new opportunities that protect and enhance the character and natural environment that makes Lawrence a special place to live.

Introduction

The elected and appointed officials in Lawrence Township have a challenging task: balance natural resource protection with economic prosperity, encourage business, provide residential services, and determine where best to site a variety of land uses in the township. Lawrence Township leaders strive to ensure that the needs of current residents are met and that there will be high quality of life for residents in the future. To carry out this daunting task, officials rely on their Master Plan to provide a vision for the future and use zoning, policies and ordinances as the tools to ensure the prosperity and health of their township.

By developing a Master Plan that guides both growth and conservation, clearly states goals and objectives, and highlights the vision for the future, Lawrence is planning for quality of life for current and future residents. The leaders recognize their current position and are actively working to ensure that their community retains its historic character, environmental health, sense of community and viable economy.

The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association (the Association) recognizes the magnitude of this task, especially in knowing that the protection and health of a watershed relies a great deal on the land use laws and policies that govern development. Over the years, the Association had received numerous requests from municipalities for guidance on various planning and environmental issues. Deciding that a comprehensive response to issues would be most effective, the Association created the Municipal Assessment Project. In partnering with municipalities we provide an outside evaluation of current practices and we support planning that protects the natural environment and ensures the vision in the Master Plan is achieved. Making the bold move to assess their own practices, Lawrence Township is advancing efforts to take on the challenge of protecting and enhancing these qualities.

The process began when the Township formally agreed through a resolution to participate in the Municipal Assessment process. The Association distributed surveys to boards and committees throughout the Township and received a 20% response rate. The survey responses, coupled with the Master Plan, served as the Township's vision—what they see for their community in 10 to 20 years. After completing a review of the land use ordinance, Best Management Practices, and policies, a list of recommendations to guide municipal projects was compiled. Each chapter of the report lists the *Goal* of that issue, the *Current Protection* on the books, the *Options* for addressing the issue, *Did You Know* facts about the issue, and finally, *Additional Resources* for further research. The recommendations in this report can be used at any time, by any committee to address issues in the Township.

Once the report is finalized, it will become a public document, located in the Township's municipal building, clerk's office, and public library. The Township will begin utilizing the document by prioritizing a few recommendations and consulting with the Association. Throughout the implementation process, the Association remains by the Township's side to assist with projects that will work toward achieving the Township's vision.

We were excited to partner with Lawrence Township on the Municipal Assessment Project, as it is a diverse community incorporating a variety of elements in one of the fastest growing municipalities in the watershed. The community has a defined historic village, including homes, shops, and churches, that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places; a farmland preservation program that has protected many farms; two major highway corridors that serve as thruways and as destination routes; and a well-informed and well-educated public that is active in events and issues throughout the township. This unique combination of elements presents an opportunity for the Township to share experiences with surrounding municipalities and with the Association.

How to Use This Report

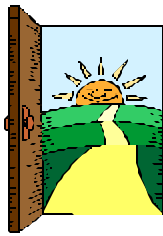


After evaluating the survey responses, we reviewed Lawrence Township's Master Plan and its land use ordinances, policies, best management practices using a background study developed by the Association. To guide our evaluation, we developed a checklist that covers areas important to land planning techniques, land conservation, how the municipality handles environmental issues and what watershed stewardship projects are underway. We also interviewed key personnel to complete the assessment.

Each "step" in the assessment document lists the Township's *Goal* for that step according to the Master Plan and survey responses and the *Current Protection* the Township has on the books. The heart of each step focuses on the *Options* for new opportunities, as suggested by the Association. Here the municipality is given a menu of choices for planning and conservation projects to develop now and in the future. In the *Did You Know* section you can read about information such as population change within the Township and what surrounding communities are doing. Finally, *Additional Resources* show where the Township can do further research about that particular area.

The assessment document serves as an excellent guide for future boards and committees to inspire work on new projects and to support those tasks before them. It also provides an opportunity for those municipal groups to support other community and local non-profit groups.

Next Steps



As Lawrence Township continues its work enhancing quality of life, this document can serve as guidance for future projects or provide ideas on where to begin. Once the Assessment document is adopted and a short list of priorities is determined, the Association will work with Township officials to develop more detailed information, models and guidance to help implement that list. This partnership will allow for the Association to support Lawrence Township and to also learn from your experiences. Funding is provided by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation to support implementation measures within the Township.

The Association will work by your side in your efforts to provide the citizens that reside in the Township with a sense of community, a healthy environment and a strong economy, all within a rural setting. We realize that the Township has already begun implementing some of the options listed in this report (such as developing a plan for redevelopment along the Business Rte. 1 corridor). We offer our assistance to the Township in their efforts to achieve comprehensive planning and ensure that the plans relate to the strategies of the surrounding communities. By committing ourselves to follow through on this report and its results, the Association is achieving its mission of protecting and preserving the watershed.

Highlights of Your Town



At the start of this assessment, members of the Lawrence Township Committee, Planning Board, Environmental Commission, and various staff and consultants articulated their goals and vision for the Township by responding to our survey. We feel it is important to note the proactive measures that have been implemented within the Township and that have created the unique experience that is Lawrence Township.

Good Things...

Located in the “heart of Mercer County”, Lawrence Township’s Main St. or Rte. 206, including the homes, churches, and shops is listed on the National and State Historic Register for Historic Places. The Main St. is a unique experience in and of itself and the Township has created specific committees and programs dedicated to protecting this character. Another significant roadway is the portion of Route 206 (a.k.a. “King’s Highway”) that is celebrating its 200th anniversary! These are just a few examples of the proactive measures taken in the Township to enhance the already charming character, while allowing for commercial and industrial development in the appropriate places. Some other examples of Lawrence’s work includes:

- ⊗ Being recognized as a Tree City 8 years ago, the Township takes pride in the old and new trees throughout the community. With a street tree ordinance in place and efforts to protect mature trees, the Township maintains money in their budget for maintenance and planting.
- ⊗ In the midst of all the surrounding growth and development, Lawrence Township continues to focus on the existing communities and their residents. A beautification project in the Eggert’s Crossing community will soon enhance the neighborhood park, connecting it with the abandoned (but soon to be revived) trolley greenway.
- ⊗ Environmental education and protection has been prominent in Lawrence Township. Projects like tree plantings and streambank restorations get residents involved and aware of their natural surroundings. More opportunities are soon to come as the Township renovates the Rinck House at Drexel Woods for environmental education programs.
- ⊗ The Township has also preserved many open lands, farmland, and historic properties not directly in the Historic District. Having a Conservation Plan Element and an Open Space language helps to protect and enhance these features. As a result, 30% of the land in the Township is preserved for parks, recreation, or natural habitat.
- ⊗ Planning for the Redevelopment of Business Rte. 1 and the adjacent residential areas. The Township received a \$80,000 grant to rezone and redevelop this corridor and has a Growth and Redevelopment Committee that will oversee this planning process.



Next Steps

STEP

1

Land Use and Development



GOAL: The Township’s Master Plan is articulate in stating goals and visions for redevelopment. Lawrence lists their first objective in the vision statement as “*Retaining and enhancing existing patterns of development rather than encouraging major change in landscape.*”

A majority of respondents stated their visions for redevelopment and creation of a more cohesive Town Center. While the Historic Main St. attracts visitors and residents, respondents felt that there needs to be more of a connection and flow between the historic area and the surrounding residential and commercial areas.

CURRENT PROTECTION: Objectives in the Master Plan state the need for directing new development and redevelopment to places in relation to transportation and environmental capacities.

Sections of the Land Use Ordinance contain language for Planned Village Developments (p. IV-68) and for Cluster Development (p.IV-149) for environmental protection.

OPTION: PROVIDE ORDINANCES THAT ALLOW FOR INFILL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WITH COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENTS THAT WILL ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE.

Specifically, the Township should consider:

- ⌘ Analyzing build out scenarios and current zoning and creating a plan to prepare for future development.
- ⌘ Planning and engineering checklists should reflect environmental protection, design elements, and amenities that will enhance quality of life.
- ⌘ Continuing to utilize Low Impact Development techniques in order to provide new development with the least amount of impact on existing environmental resources.
- ⌘ Continuing to require developers or planning consultants to create plans that will minimize impervious cover while maximizing on recreational open space.
- ⌘ Continuing to engage residents in a visioning process that will generate ideas for community design elements.
- ⌘ The Township should ensure that language set forth in the Land Development Ordinance, Master Plan, and any other ordinances or plans, shall be consistent with the State Plan.



Did You Know?

- ⌘ "Sustainable development" means development that maintains or enhances economic opportunity and community well-being while protecting and restoring the natural environment upon which people and economies depend. Sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.— *Minnesota Statutes, Section 4A.07(1)*
- ⌘ Sprawl drains resources away from existing communities, while imposing daunting new infrastructure and public service costs on suburban communities. Many see big-box stores as imposing hidden costs not present on the price tags of the products they sell: traffic congestion; loss of trees, open space and farmland; displaced small businesses; substitution of jobs that support families with low-paying jobs that don't; air and water pollution; dying downtowns with vacant buildings; abandoned shopping centers; a degraded sense of community; and sprawl. (*Smart Growth America*)
- ⌘ Infill and Community Redevelopment limits new construction by encouraging development in existing areas. Redevelopment of existing buildings and properties which may have been damaged or left in disrepair allows for development to occur while preserving rural areas.



Additional Resources

- ⌘ **Local Government Commission Center for Livable Communities.** A non-profit organization working "to create more livable communities". 1414 K Street, Suite 600 Sacramento, CA 95814-3966 tel (916) 448-1198 fax (916) 448-8246 web www.lgc.org
- ⌘ **New Jersey Future.** NJF is the "watchdog" of New Jersey's State Development and Redevelopment Plan: a blueprint for smart growth that would revitalize New Jersey's older suburbs, towns and urban areas while preserving its remaining open spaces www.njfuture.org.
- ⌘ **National Main Street Center.** Since 1980, the National Main Street Center has been working with communities across the nation to revitalize their historic or traditional commercial areas. National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20036, Phone: 202.588.6219, Fax: 202.588.6050. Email: mainstreet@nthp.org
- ⌘ **Low Impact Development Center.** The Low Impact Development Center was established to develop and provide information to individuals and organizations dedicated to protecting the environment and our water resources through proper site design techniques that replicate pre-existing hydrologic site conditions. 5010 Sunnyside Avenue, Suite 200; Beltsville, MD 20705 (tel) 301-982-5559; 301-982-1994 (fax) www.lowimpactdevelopment.org

STEP

2

Business Rte. 1 Redevelopment Area



GOAL: The Master Plan, Circulation Element states that “two processes in the Highway Access Management Code may be used to propose a reduction in the size of the cartway...”

Respondents to the survey suggested “redevelopment and regional planning” as well as mixed-use development for improving the Business Rte. 1 corridor.

Other goals for Business Rte. 1 include creating a boulevard that will enhance pedestrian and bicycle travel, as well as provide a treed median for a more inviting streetscape.

CURRENT PROTECTION: The majority of Business Rte. 1 is located in the Highway Commercial (HC) district which allows for a variety of commercial uses that differ from those of the Neighborhood Commercial district. The main distinction is the allowance for automobile dealerships in the HC district and is geared toward larger buildings and uses, in general.

OPTION: CREATE A REDEVELOPMENT PLAN THAT CONNECTS AND INTEGRATES THE SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL AREAS TO THE HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR.

Specifically, the Township should consider:

- ⌘ Continuing to revamp zoning ordinances to allow for mixed uses within the Highway Commercial zone. This will allow for the surrounding residential areas to be connected to the corridor and for those neighborhoods to have a greater sense of community.
- ⌘ Continuing to include design ideas into ordinance language. Not only can you determine what to build and where, you have the ability to also say how, including what designs are appropriate for the zone.
- ⌘ Continuing to partner with a planning firm that has innovative ideas for a Highway Corridor / Boulevard. Again, deciding on and planning for streetscapes and the human scale of everything from buildings to awnings and street lights will help enhance the feel and accessibility of the street.

Bus. Rte. 1 Redevelopment Area



Did You Know?

- ⌘ The Route 206 (King's Highway) Corridor is celebrating its 200th Anniversary this year!
- ⌘ Route 1 is on the priorities list for protection because it links seven (7) historic districts from Kingston to Lawrenceville.
- ⌘ The National Congress for Community Economic Development gives a list of questions a community should ask when starting a redevelopment project.
 1. What is your local community revitalization environment?
 2. What are your community revitalization activities?
 3. What are your construction and management policies and activities?
 4. What is your internal management system?
 5. How much competition for resources do you face?
 6. What is your impact on your community?



Additional Resources

- ⌘ **The National Congress for Community Economic Development (NCCED)** is the trade association and advocate for the community-based development industry.
<http://www.ncced.org/>
- ⌘ **Smart Growth America** is a coalition of nearly 100 advocacy organizations that have a stake in how metropolitan expansion affects our environment, quality of life and economic sustainability. Our diverse coalition partners include national, state and local groups working on behalf of the environment, historic preservation, social equity, land conservation, neighborhood redevelopment, farmland protection, labor, and town planning.
<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/>

STEP

3 Stormwater Management



GOAL: The Township's Master Plan states as a Conservation of Natural Features goal to create a regional stormwater management plan with adjacent municipalities.

Respondents to the survey also stated that they were aware of the Township's possible plans for stormwater management. The majority of comments referring to stormwater and water quality in general, related mostly to the amount of development in the Township.



CURRENT PROTECTION: Currently the Township does not have a comprehensive stormwater management plan. The Land Use Ordinance had language that allows for Best Available Technologies (BATs) to “minimize runoff, increase on-site infiltration, simulate natural drainage systems, and minimize off-site discharge of pollutants to ground and surface water...” (§522C).

OPTION: CREATE AND ADOPT A STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN THAT INCLUDES AN ORDINANCE, BMPs, IMPLEMENTATION, AND ENFORCEMENT.

Specifically, the Township might consider:

- ⊗ Requiring the use of BATs in new construction in order to prepare for the new Stormwater Rules including: retention basins in new development, application of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for monitoring and maintenance that include native vegetation, grassed areas, and removal of any concrete structures.
- ⊗ Partnering with surrounding municipalities in the Stony Brook subwatershed, where Lawrence Township is located, to create a regional stormwater management plan that will help protect water resources, connect communities, and help move implementation forward. This will also help in preserving longer stream lengths, not just segments of a stream.
- ⊗ Seeking financial assistance to educate the public about stormwater management which should include cleaning out or retrofitting catch basins with hoods, storm drain stenciling, and water conservation. Coordinating this program regionally will take the burden off of one community to fulfill requirements of the new rules and will also spread out costs.
- ⊗ Adopting an ordinance that requires reduction of Non Point Source Pollution in both new and existing developments. Include in the ordinance options for BMPs to achieve this goal such as steep slope restrictions, stream corridor buffers, low impact developments, limiting impervious cover, retrofitting detention and retention basins and ensuring sustainable site design. Also consider limiting lawn irrigation and promoting water conservation.



Stormwater Management



Did You Know?

Stormwater and nonpoint source pollution are major sources of pollutants entering our water, contributing up to 60% of our existing water pollution problems (NJDEP 2/28/02). Stormwater washes across parking lots, roads and lawns, carrying pollutants into storm drains that eventually dump into streams and lakes. Most of these pollutants do not evaporate and remain a permanent part of the hydrologic ecosystem. That is why it is critical to ensure that pollutants do not have the opportunity to enter the water cycle. By reducing the overall area of impervious surfaces and lawns, the total volume of stormwater runoff is reduced.

The effects of stormwater/nonpoint pollution can prohibit recreational activities (beach closings, fish advisories); impact the tourism economy (commercial fishing and shellfishing) and increase drinking water treatment costs. There are alternatives to the way we choose to plan our communities, commute to work, or treat our lawns that can aid in protecting water supplies.

The USEPA Clean Water Act Phase II rules (published in December 1999) mandate a Municipal Stormwater Regulation Program. The NJDEP Stormwater Program was proposed in January 2003 and addresses pollutants entering our waters from many storm drainage systems owned or operated by local, state, interstate, or federal government agencies. Tier B municipalities, like Lawrence Township, are required to implement best management practices and include public education and outreach. When the rules are put into play most of New Jersey's municipalities will be required to apply for the NJPDES permits 30 days after the rules take effect. The Program will allow phased-in approaches which will aid municipalities in implementing the new rules in a feasible manner.



Additional Resources

- ⌘ Clean Water Network. "Technology Fact Sheet for BMPs". (www.cwn.org)
- ⌘ Center for Watershed Protection (410-461-8323 or www.cwp.org). Also see their project, The Stormwater Manager's Resource Center, an extensive educational website that contains more than 3,000 pages of technical content (www.stormwatercenter.net).
- ⌘ NJ DEP Stormwater Website includes information on the State's stormwater permitting and management programs, including the municipal stormwater regulation program and more. (www.njstormwater.org).

STEP

4 Stream Corridor Protection



GOAL: Goals of the Master Plan include: “Protect natural features and resources such as... bodies of water worthy of protection for ecological balance and as a counterpoint to the built environment.”

“Preserve and enhance stream corridors through Greenways Network using bike and pedestrian paths.”

Respondents to the survey strongly suggested preserving, enhancing, and maintaining streams and water quality. In reference to a Greenways Network, respondents of the survey also strongly agree with maintaining open space and trails.

CURRENT PROTECTION: Language in the Land Use Ordinance specifies buffers as being “within 100 ft of the 100-yr flood plain” and the 100-ft buffer begins at the top of the bank if a flood plain line has not been established.

The Master Plan defines Stream Corridors as the “watercourse or body, flood plain and flood fringe area, and often include freshwater wetlands and in some cases, associated uplands.”



OPTION: CREATE AND ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE STREAM CORRIDOR ORDINANCE (SCO) WITH LANGUAGE PROTECTING WATER QUALITY AND RELATED ECOSYSTEMS.

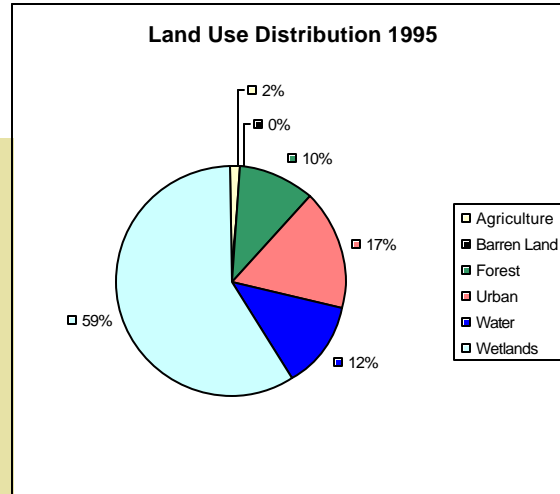
Specifically, the Township should consider:

- ☞ Utilizing the Watershed Association’s model Stream Corridor Ordinance, tailor it to your community to include: Protection of the stream corridor that includes the flood plain, plus 100 feet and adjacent wetlands, flood plains, steep slopes or critical habitats. Also include clear definitions for **flood plain**, **stream corridor**, and **impaired**.
- ☞ Working with neighboring municipalities to consider watershed management strategies. Ensuring healthy waters upstream will reduce impairment downstream.
- ☞ Encouraging homeowners in historic and developed areas to apply Best Management Practices to help restore impaired waters and to maintain streambanks. For example, use vegetation with native trees, shrubs and grasses and a enforce “no-mow” policy along streambanks.
- ☞ Collecting water quality information to ensure that the quality of local streams remains healthy and able to support designated uses and a diversity of biota. The Watershed Association and other experts are valuable resources for helping implement this strategy.
- ☞ Enforcing monitoring and penalty provisions in the stream corridor ordinance. Implement the rules then follow up with monitoring their effectiveness.
- ☞ Incorporate greenway trails where appropriate. Educating the public on the value of protecting water quality and surrounding ecosystems could be accomplished by nature walks and programs located on the streams.



Did You Know?

This pie chart displays land use information on lands within the 100-ft buffer of streams throughout the Township. For example, 59% of all lands within the 100-ft buffer of streams are designated as wetlands. 17% are urban land uses. This type of information can be very useful in supporting the need to develop a stream corridor ordinance. Wetland such as these could be protected and the impact of urban land uses on water quality can be measured.”



Major watercourses in Lawrence include the Stony Brook (north, running east-west), the Shipetaukin (north-south), the Shabakunk Creek (north-south), Assunpink Creek in the southeast corner of Township.

According to data from the DEP, the Shipetaukin and Shabakunk Creeks have a few sites where water quality is Moderately impaired. The Shipetaukin Creek at Van Kirk road went from Severely to Moderately impaired from 1992 to 1998. At the Princeton Pike site, the Creek went from Severely to Moderately impaired in the same time span. The Shabakunk Creek at the Route 206 site remained Moderately impaired in the 1992 to 1998 time span.



Additional Resources

- ⌘ Model Stream Corridor Protection Ordinance and Implementation Package prepared by the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association (609-737-3735).
- ⌘ ANJEC, “Protecting Our Streams” (P.O. Box 157, Mendham, NJ, 07945, 973-539-7547).
- ⌘ North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development, Technical Guidelines for Streambank Restorations (908-735-0733).
- ⌘ Society for Ecological Restoration (www.ser.org).
- ⌘ Seth Wenger and Lori Fowler, “Guidebook for Developing Local Riparian Buffer Ordinances” (Office of Public Service & Outreach, Institute of Ecology, University of Georgia, 706-542-3948) (1999).
- ⌘ Seth Wenger, “A Review of the Scientific Literature on Riparian Buffer Width, Extent and Vegetation” (Office of Public Service & Outreach, Institute of Ecology, University of Georgia, 706-542-3948) (1999).
- ⌘ United States Department of Agriculture, “Riparian Forest Buffers: Function and Design for Protection and Enhancement of Water Resources” (202-512-2250) (1991).

STEP

5 Groundwater Protection



GOAL: The Master Plan states the need for geological studies in determining the potential for groundwater recharge and therefore, protection of groundwater. The Lawrenceville area in particular relies heavily on groundwater supplies, but the geology of the area makes recharge difficult. Well drilling records maintained at the NJDEP from 1961 to 2000 represent the poor water capacity and recharge potential (p.25).

Respondents to the survey expressed a lack of awareness of this issue. Five people said they either were “not sure” or “don’t know” what is being done to protect groundwater. Other respondents listed actions such as open space acquisition and low density zoning. One respondent noted that “too much paving” was a concern for groundwater quality.

CURRENT PROTECTION: The Master Plan includes a map of Aquifer Recharge areas that are based on information from the Mercer County Soil Survey.

There is no public wellhead protection ordinance or an ordinance for source water protection.

OPTION: ADOPT ADDITIONAL ORDINANCES AND POLICIES TO PROTECT GROUNDWATER QUALITY

Specifically, the Township might consider:

- ⌘ Creating and adopting a Wellhead Protection ordinance that includes:
 - language regulating fertilizer and pesticide application for agriculture, commercial, and residential uses and
 - Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the Township’s Department of Public Works in the areas of fertilizer and pesticide application, road salt or sand application, use and storage of chemicals and the reduction thereof, and disposal of hazardous materials.

- ⌘ Assessing the feasibility and environmental benefit of Low Impact Development strategies for areas such as overflow parking lots, rural residential roads, and campus roadways.

- ⌘ Encouraging businesses, schools, and residents to participate in Stony Brook’s River Friendly program. Establishing goals to enhance their own practices, businesses, schools, and residents are able to achieve a level of environmental quality that could benefit the entire community. In the process, they can educate the surrounding community in partnering with organizations, companies, schools, or neighbors to further develop these good practices.



Did You Know?

- ⌘ Water is a finite resource that moves from the clouds to the land through precipitation and then back to the clouds through evapotranspiration. Rain catches airborne pollution and dust, carrying these particles down to the land and its surface waters.
- ⌘ A municipality that protects groundwater, protects the town's drinking water supply, as well as the quality of that water. In a more developed township, like Lawrence, applying Best Management Practices to control runoff will help maintain the quality of the water, while educating businesses, schools, and residents about water conservation will maintain supply.
- ⌘ Over two-thirds of the Township area is covered by soil types with slow or moderate permeability. Areas of rapid and moderately rapid permeability are located in the southeastern part of the municipality – east of the Princeton Pike. Applying Low Impact Development strategies in these areas will enhance infiltration. Concrete or asphalt paving hinders infiltration and, therefore, detracts from increasing groundwater recharge.



Additional Resources

- ⌘ Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) University of Connecticut, Cooperative Extension System (www.nemo.uconn.edu).
- ⌘ Center for Watershed Protection (410-461-8323 or www.cwp.org). Also see their project, The Stormwater Manager's Resource Center, an extensive educational website that contains more than 3,000 pages of technical content (www.stormwatercenter.net).
- ⌘ Natural Resource Defense Council, "*Stormwater Strategies: Community Responses to Runoff Pollution*," May 1999
- ⌘ Sauer, Leslie J. *The Once and Future Forest: A Guide to Forest Restoration Strategies*. Island Press.
- ⌘ NJDEP, *Revised Manual for New Jersey: Best Management Practices for Control of Nonpoint Source Pollution from Stormwater*. (www.state.nj.us/dep/watershedmgt/bmpmanual.htm)

STEP

6

Woodlands Protection



GOAL: Lawrence's Master Plan suggest that individual trees and woodland masses be protected for retaining rural character and for maximizing aquifer recharge.

The Township also provides the following goals for woodlands protection:

- ☞ "Protect natural features and resources such as woodlands... for ecological balance and as a counterpoint to the built environment"
- ☞ "Protect existing mature trees."

Respondents to the survey felt that protecting trees and planting more street trees will protect the environment and improve streetscapes. They also felt that open space protection is well done, but could be enhanced.

CURRENT PROTECTION: §541 of the Land Use Ordinance states its purpose as controlling and regulating excessive removal, cutting, and destruction of trees. It also speaks to preventing conditions that may lead to decreased water quality, air quality, and aquifer recharge.

This section has very technical language for tree protection and removal, if necessary. The Township has a tree management plan, but mostly speaks to regulating tree removal, not woodlands protection.



OPTION: CREATE AND ADOPT A WOODLANDS PROTECTION PLAN AND ORDINANCE

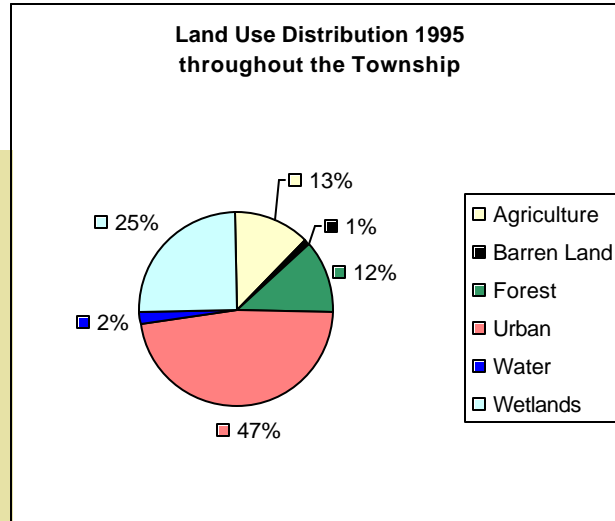
Specifically, the Township might consider:

- ☞ Taking an inventory of existing trees within the Township. The inventory should include everything from Native and Historic trees to Disturbed trees or Scrub-shrub.
- ☞ Creating and adopting a woodlands management plan that states the purpose of the plan, identifies woodland habitats throughout the township, identifies significant specimen trees to be protected, and states implementation efforts to protect these resources.
- ☞ Creating an ordinance that specifically allows for delineation of natural resources prior to the site design and application process for new construction.



Did You Know?

- ⌘ The information presented below can be used in the Township to educate residents, businesses, and developers about the value of woodlands to habitats and to instill a sense of value and importance for protecting them.
- ⌘ Lawrence Township data shows that there were 1,911.885 acres of forested land in 1995, 12% of total land. This number portrays a 3% (61 acres) loss since 1986. The majority of these lands are located in the northern triangle of the Township.
- ⌘ New Jersey woodlands have many species of trees (near 90), and differences in topography, soils, drainage and vegetation located in a relatively small area. Three of the five major forest regions in the U.S. are found in New Jersey. This makes our forests tremendously diverse, interesting and useful.
- ⌘ There are some 1,864,300 acres classified as timberland in New Jersey of which 75% is privately owned. Approximately 464,000 acres are in state forests, parks, and other public lands.



Additional Resources

- ⌘ **North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D).** Contact Donna Drewes. 54 Old Highway 22, Suite 201 Clinton, NJ 08809-1389 Phone: (908) 735-0733 website: www.northjerseyrcd.org.
- ⌘ **The New Jersey Forestry Association.** “Dedicated to the wise use and management of the States forest land resource in a manner which will provide many products and services for the benefit of all our citizens, now and for future generations. These include economic and environmental benefits such as wood products, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, watershed protection, air purification, soil stabilization, temperature amelioration, windbreaks, urban buffers and landscape beautification. These values are most important to New Jersey in the face of its continued rapid growth and urbanization.” P.O. Box 130 Milmay, N.J. 08340 Tel: 856-696-5300 Fax: 856-205-0009 website: www.njforestry.org

STEP

7

Conservation of Natural Resources and Critical Habitats



GOAL: One goal for Conservation of Natural Features states, “Protect natural features and resources such as...steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains...for ecological balance and as a counterpoint to the built environment.” Another goal: “Soil erosion and sediment control for steep slopes. Restrict development in these areas.”

The conservation element of the MP lists environmentally sensitive areas as: “...freshwater wetlands, flood plains, (and) soils with high water tables (within 1 foot of the surface)...”

Respondents to the survey were concerned that the Township is lacking a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI).

CURRENT PROTECTION: Although there is no formal NRI, the Township’s MP has excellent documentation of existing critical areas. This inventory will help protect them if need be. An Overlay Zone has been created for floodplains to ensure awareness and safety to those who purchase property in these areas.

For Wetlands there is language relating to buffers, but that may be for flooding precautions only—not for habitat or water quality protection.



OPTION: ADOPT ORDINANCES AND LAND USE POLICIES TO ENSURE FURTHER PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF WETLANDS AND CRITICAL HABITATS.

Specifically, the Township might consider:

- ⌘ Creating a Natural Resources Inventory to determine the need for special protection areas or zoning that protects critical habitats. Also, look at neighboring municipalities to ensure that open space and greenway zoning at the boundaries makes sense.
- ⌘ Specifically citing areas for protection and listing implementation strategies in the Master Plan to strengthen reasoning for protection.
- ⌘ Creating a critical areas map to be referred to prior to Township approval of a construction permit and to be used in the permitting review process.
- ⌘ Adopting an ordinance that requires commercial development to include landscaping for wildlife.
- ⌘ Initiating and promoting cooperation between the Township and adjacent municipalities to advance the consistent development of open space goals, policies and plans.



Did You Know?

- ⊗ Lawrence Township has 36 soil series and 77 soil types.
- ⊗ In the Township, the soils that present the greatest threat to soil erosion make up 22% of the area mostly in the northwestern part of the municipality and away from the flood plain zones in areas of slight slopes.
- ⊗ Wetlands are a critical resource that provide important wildlife habitat and play a key role in flood prevention, surface water management, groundwater recharge, and removal of sediment and pollutants.
- ⊗ Nearly all of the freshwater wetlands in Lawrence are Palustrine, one area is Riverine and there is also a minor Lacustrine area. Wetlands are concentrated along the Delaware and Raritan Canal, and the Shipetaukin and Assunpink Creeks.
- ⊗ The State Development and Redevelopment Plan has as a statewide policy for the protection of biological diversity, forests, wildlife habitat, critical slope areas, and water resources through preservation and protection of contiguous open spaces, connecting corridors, and public lands and management of the character and nature of development (SDRP, Statewide Policy #12).
- ⊗ According to the most conservative estimates, New Jersey has lost over 20 percent of our wetlands since 1900 and almost 50 percent since colonial times.



Additional Resources

- ⊗ **D&R Greenway, Inc.** protects and preserves central New Jersey's treasured open space. Contact them at: Delaware & Raritan Greenway 1327 Canal Road, Princeton, NJ 08540. Tel: (609) 924-4646. Fax: (609) 924-5577. Email: info@delrargreenway.org
Website: www.delrargreenway.org
- ⊗ **New Jersey Conservation Foundation's** mission is to preserve New Jersey's land and natural resources for the benefit of all. Contact them at: New Jersey Conservation Foundation Bamboo Brook, 170 Longview Road Far Hills, NJ 07931 Tel: 908-234-1225
Fax: 908-234-1189 Email: info@njconservation.org Website: www.njconservation.org
- ⊗ **New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.** The Landscape Project is a pro-active, ecosystem-level approach for the long-term protection of rare species and their important habitats in New Jersey.
Website: <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/ensp/landscape/about.htm>

STEP

8

Protecting Rural Quality



GOAL: The Township wishes to “Retain rural character and historic streetscapes” and “Establish design guidelines for preserving significant views from public rights-of-way” by using “Rural design techniques and standards for low intensity development in identified areas.” (2000 MP).

Respondents from the survey agreed that protecting the rural quality of the Township is a priority.

Respondents also stated that open space and farmland protection were accomplished through the township’s open space plan, land acquisitions and also in coordinating with Green Acres and other organizations.

CURRENT PROTECTION:

Cluster development. Open Space tax—\$345 million bond referendum. Redevelopment of commercial core of village through parking, streetscape, signage, lighting, etc to promote historic character. Lawrence Township also has a Right to Farm ordinance.



OPTION: ADOPT INDIVIDUAL ORDINANCES THAT ENSURE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OBJECTIVES SET FORTH IN MASTER PLAN AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT.

Specifically, the Township should consider:

- ⌘ Organizing a fun and interesting program, such as a Farm Tour, to educate residents and elected officials about the importance and value of protecting rural qualities of the Township, including viewsheds.
- ⌘ Continuing to provide assistance to farmers and adopting ordinances that allow for the expansion of permissible farm-based businesses and programs that sponsor equity protection, and farmland preservation.
- ⌘ Encourage local farmers to participate in programs that reduce nonpoint pollution coming from their farms, conserve water and buffer local waterways.

Protecting Rural Quality



Did You Know?

- ⊗ Maintaining a rural character within appropriate sections of the Township will provide for a community proud of its heritage— in this case, farming (American Farmland Trust)
- ⊗ Farms create an identifiable and unique community character and add to the quality of life. Perhaps this is why people are willing to pay to protect agricultural land from development.
- ⊗ Between 1986 and 1995 Lawrence Township lost 677 acres or 24% of its agricultural land.
- ⊗ According to the Township's Open Space Plan, there are currently 3,082 acres in open space, which represents 23% of the Township's 14,170 total acres. Some are privately owned lands, while other are preserved through Green Acres. A portion of this acreage is also preserved farmland.
- ⊗ Agriculture is the largest single provider of scenic vistas in the state.
- ⊗ Developing a visioning process and involving citizens in it creates a community where everyone's voices are heard and ideas are taken into consideration. A variety of voices and ideas will make for a diverse and energetic community. Finalizing the town's vision should include a vote by the townspeople regarding the recommendations on the table.



Additional Resources

American Farmland Trust helps win permanent protection for over a million acres of American farmland. Their hard work and sound strategies unite farmers, environmentalists and policymakers. Contact them at: American Farmland Trust. 1200 18th Street NW #800 Washington, D.C. 20036 tel: 202.331.7300 fax:202.659.8339 info@farmland.org

Preservation New Jersey's mission is to protect and promote the state's historic resources, communities and landscapes through education and advocacy. Contact them at: Preservation New Jersey 30 South Warren Street Trenton, NJ 08608 tel: 609.392.6409 fax: 609.392.6418 info@preservationnj.org www.preservationnj.org

The New Jersey Historic Trust is a non-profit historic preservation organization affiliated with the Department of State. Contact them at: New Jersey Historic Trust P.O. Box 404 Trenton, NJ 08625-0404 Tel: 609.984.6017 Fax: 609.984.7590 Email: njht@dep.state.nj.us Web site: www.njht.org

STEP

9

Enhancing Historic Character



GOAL: The Township wishes to “Retain rural character and historic streetscapes” and “Establish design guidelines for preserving significant views from public rights-of-way” by using “Rural design techniques and standards for low intensity development in identified areas.” (2000 MP).

All of the respondents felt that the Township has done well with creating the management plan and the regulations for sites, buildings, and vistas.

There was still concern for a more cohesive center that could be created around the Historic Main Street and the majority of respondents said they “did not know” what a viewshed is.

CURRENT PROTECTION: While the Township may have an adequate management plan for historic preservation, an ordinance stating regulations, enforcement, and responsibilities should be on file.



OPTION: ADOPT INDIVIDUAL ORDINANCES THAT ENSURE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OBJECTIVES SET FORTH IN MASTER PLAN AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT.

Specifically, the Township should consider:

- ⊗ Educating residents and elected officials about the importance and value of protecting rural and historic qualities of the Township, including viewsheds.
- ⊗ Creating a checklist for the Historic Preservation Committee that follows the regulations of the ordinance. Use this checklist for new development within the vicinity of the Historic Main St area.
- ⊗ Partner with an organization, such as the Heritage Partnership of NJ, to develop plans and goals for historic preservation in Lawrence Township. The Partnership’s goals include:
 - ⊗ Provide direct support for entities dealing with issues of natural and cultural resource protection,
 - ⊗ Improve resource identification and protection through implementation of GIS,
 - ⊗ Formalize and increase visibility and membership of the Heritage Partnership.
- ⊗ Apply for grant funding through the NJ Historic Trust for Historic Site Management. Lawrence Township is eligible for this funding as a result of its status on both the State and National Historic Registers.

Enhancing Historic Character



Did You Know?

- ⌘ Lawrence Township is home to several historic sites and buildings. One of those buildings is the Bready House that frequently gives tours and holds educational programs. Also, the stretch of Route 206 near the circle is celebrating its 200th Anniversary as the King's Highway.
- ⌘ Over 1,600 communities have adopted the Main Street approach in the past 21 years to look again at Main Street, their heart of the community, to save its historic buildings, to revive its commercial core, to strengthen business, to control community-eroding sprawl, and keep a sense of place and community life in America.
- ⌘ Lawrence Township's Main St. is one of these projects and has its own website—(www.lawrencevillemainstreet.com) as part of the National Main St. Center of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- ⌘ Partnering with groups such as Heritage Partnership of NJ can help the Township to enhance its own goals and education for protection of historic buildings, sites, and vistas. The Partnership addresses the growing concern over the fate of historic resources on protected open space and farmland.
- ⌘ Being listed on the New Jersey Register includes the following benefits:
 - ⌘ Public recognition of a property's historical, architectural, or archeological significance.
 - ⌘ Eligibility for rehabilitation or restoration grants or loans from the New Jersey Historic Trust (if the property is owned by county or local government or by a local non-profit organization).
 - ⌘ Protective review of state, county or municipal projects that might "encroach upon, damage, or destroy" a listed property.



Additional Resources

Preservation New Jersey's mission is to protect and promote the state's historic resources, communities and landscapes through education and advocacy. Contact them at: Preservation New Jersey 30 South Warren Street Trenton, NJ 08608
Tel: 609.392.6409 Fax: 609.392.6418
Email: info@preservationnj.org Web site: www.preservationnj.org

The New Jersey Historic Trust is a non-profit historic preservation organization affiliated with the Department of State. Contact them at: New Jersey Historic Trust P.O. Box 404 Trenton, NJ 08625-0404 Tel: 609.984.6017 Fax: 609.984.7590
Email: njht@dep.state.nj.us Web site: www.njht.org

STEP

10

Soil Erosion and Sediment Control



GOAL: The Master Plan states that about 22% of soils are subject to soil erosion. These soils are located mostly in the northwestern part of the municipality and away from the flood plain zones in areas of slight slopes. Because of these vulnerable areas, the Master Plan proposes that “special precautions should be taken to avoid excess removal or destruction of the vegetative area, as well as to control runoff.”

CURRENT PROTECTION:

§537 of the Land Use Ordinance states the purpose of Soil Erosion and Sediment Control as:

1. Control soil erosion and sedimentation damage from excavation, relocation, removal or disturbance of soil.
2. Prevent flooding
3. Preserve lands and existing environment
4. Protect exposed soils to protect people and property
5. Preserve public health, safety and welfare.



**Prior to approving a permit, the ERC is able to review the plan and make comments within 14 days of receiving the plan.*

**Application review should include soil erosion kept to minimum, natural vegetation retained stabilization measure use to protect critical areas, water runoff minimized and retained for recharge, sediment retained on-site, and compliance for soil erosion and sediment control in NJ.*

OPTION: DEVELOP CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES THAT ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

Specifically, the Township might consider:

- ⌘ Ensuring that Township checklists require the data necessary to make informed planning decisions (soils, hydrogeology, water quality, location of environmentally sensitive areas like wetlands areas, etc.). Requiring identification of wetlands with development applications prior to approvals.
- ⌘ Adopting an ordinance to ensure that the site receives limited clearing and grading of forests and native vegetation and minimize soil compaction for the minimum amount needed to build lots, allow access and provide fire protection and that necessary measure for monitoring and enforcement.
- ⌘ Apply Low Impact Development strategies and standards to the Township, as described by NJ DEP in their BMP Manual, to decrease runoff.
- ⌘ Update general development plan requirements to ensure appropriate and responsible construction practices that conform to any new cluster options.
- ⌘ Revisit the issue of minimal impervious cover allowed on a site.
- ⌘ Encouraging the use of pervious material, including porous pavement, green parking lots, gravel and other alternatives.



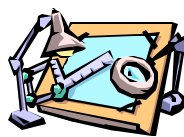
Did You Know?

- ⌘ In farming areas susceptible to soil erosion are best utilized for fruit crops that do not require annual soil turning. Farming areas should also be mindful, if not regulated, to decrease Non Point Source pollution.
- ⌘ When developing standards based on sustainability guidelines, remember to consider the following:
 - ⌘ Specify minimum disturbance
 - ⌘ Work with the natural contours; avoid excessive earthmoving
 - ⌘ Limit removal of natural vegetation
 - ⌘ Keep building and parking footprints as compact as possible
 - ⌘ Maintain natural hydrological cycle
 - ⌘ No net increase of volume of runoff
 - ⌘ Limit impervious cover, use pervious material
 - ⌘ Maintain recharge
 - ⌘ Maintain water quality
 - ⌘ Use native species and limit chemical site maintenance
 - ⌘ Avoid direct discharge to streams and lakes
 - ⌘ Avoid excessive earthwork during development



Additional Resources

- ⌘ Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association's River-Friendly Golf Course, Business and Resident Certification Programs (www.thewatershed.org).
- ⌘ Hance, B.J., J. Morris. *Reviewing Golf Course Proposals: Materials for Local Officials*. Cook College, Rutgers University. For copies call the USGA or the Center for Environmental Communication, Cook College 732-932-8795 (www.aesop.rutgers.edu/~cec)
- ⌘ National Park Service has developed "Guiding Principles of Sustainable Design" that includes specifics on site design (www.nps.gov/dsc/dsgncnstr/gpsd/toc.html).
- ⌘ Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum, Inc. 1998. *Sustainable Design Guide*. Washington DC: Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum, Inc.
- ⌘ American Planning Association, New Jersey Chapter (www.njapa.org/index.html).
- ⌘ The Low-Impact Development Center (www.lowimpactdevelopment.org).



STEP

11

Traffic and Transportation



Traffic and Transportation

GOAL: Circulation Section of the Master Plan gives an overview of the existing circulation plan for the Township. A study conducted of 45 key intersections in the Township analyzed their major traffic problems. Solutions for immediate actions included mostly restriping areas, while most future actions proposed include adding traffic signals. There is an element of coordination between locality, county and state proposed for future solutions.

An overwhelming majority of the respondents to the survey discussed the need for less traffic and “better (not wider)” roadways. Their suggestions included more pedestrian and bike-friendly streets. Connectivity was also a major concern. Another suggestion for larger highways is to review commercial development in coordination with traffic generation and aesthetics, in general.

CURRENT PROTECTION: No ordinances on file related directly to traffic concerns, however the Master Plan’s Circulation Element gives good overview of traffic patterns, problem areas, and solutions. The Township also has a Growth and Redevelopment Committee that looks specifically at these issues. Their goals parallel those of the Master Plan for this issue.

OPTION: CONTINUE STUDIES OF TRAFFIC GENERATED BY NEW DEVELOPMENT AND SOLUTIONS THAT MINIMIZE CONGESTION.

Specifically, the Township should continue to:

- ⊗ Encourage mass transportation options for employees of large commercial facilities, especially for those who commute along the major highway corridors, into development plans. Encourage the employers to come together to create a plan.
- ⊗ Create language in the Master Plan that identifies pedestrian and bicycle networks and where existing networks need improvement. Follow up with an ordinance that accommodates for pedestrians and bicycles in a safe manner and enhance connections throughout the Township. Use the visioning process from the Lawrence-Hopewell Trail project.
- ⊗ Incorporate strategies for bike lanes and mandatory pedestrian right-of-way into plans for new and existing residential developments. Collaborate with connecting trail networks on residential roads.
- ⊗ Encourage large commercial developments to coordinate commuter park-n-ride opportunities and other incentives such as, working from home or flexible hours.



Did You Know?

- ⊗ The bicycle, as a means of transportation and a form of recreation, offers many benefits for individuals, families and the community.
- ⊗ Roads and highways that are designed to accommodate bicycles provide greater mobility for an increasing number of road users at low capital and environmental cost.
- ⊗ Although everyone benefits from walking, walking isn't always safe and easy. Increase walking by fostering a pro-walking ethic in individuals, private sector organizations, and all levels of government.
- ⊗ Municipal officials can initiate change in their community in a number of ways. For example:
 - Speak at conferences on pedestrian safety, design and related issues systems.
 - Advance the inclusion of pedestrian friendly design elements in development and redevelopment plans.
 - Support government policies and funding initiatives that favor walking.
 - Develop education and outreach programs
 - Work towards increasing funding for pedestrian projects at every level of government including reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act.
 - Encourage land use patterns and walking environments that are safe and secure, and thereby reduce pedestrian deaths and injuries in the state.



Additional Resources

Tri-State Transportation Campaign The Tri-State Transportation Campaign is an alliance of public interest, transit advocacy, planning and environmental organizations working to reverse deepening automobile dependence and sprawl development in the New York/New Jersey/Connecticut metropolitan region. www.tstc.org

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission DVRPC works to foster regional cooperation in a nine-county, two state area. City, county and state representatives work together to address key issues, including transportation, land use, environmental protection and economic development. www.dvrpc.org.

NJ Pedestrian Task Force is a coalition of members from public, private and advocacy organizations that are concerned about the safety of the walking public in New Jersey. The group meets on a bi-monthly basis at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy (Rutgers University) to discuss topic related to pedestrian safety, mobility and access; and, serve as an advisory body to State, County and civic organizations. See the DVRPC website for this information.

Rails To Trails Conservancy. The purpose of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) is to enrich America's communities and countryside by creating a nationwide network of public trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors—www.railstrails.org

STEP

12 Resident Participation



GOAL: Lawrence’s Master Plan states the need to “Encourage and promote social interaction of groups and individuals to maintain strength of the community.”

Respondents felt that there needs to be more education on the value of protecting the environment so as to better protect it.

CURRENT PROTECTION:

The Township already has a well-informed and well-educated public, but more can always be done.

OPTION: CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Specifically, the Township might consider:

- ⊗ Expanding the information available on Lawrence Township’s website. Include links to discussions of issues of concern and various solutions. Also create a link to the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association for reports, programs, and other resources that may be helpful to finding answers.
- ⊗ Review and encourage recommendations made in the SBMWA’s Public Participation Fact Sheet and upcoming Citizen’s Guide to Public Participation.
- ⊗ In addition to posting minutes and meeting agendas, encourage Committee members to write a regular column in the local newspapers to keep residents informed on key programs and issues, including educational programs.
- ⊗ Hold programs educating residents about what they can do with their own properties—e.g. Septic System Education, Well Care and Protection, Lawn Care, and River Friendly programs through the Watershed Association.
- ⊗ Hold a neighborhood planning meeting to encourage public participation in the planning process.
- ⊗ Hold a photo contest to highlight areas that the community feels are important.

Resident Participation



STEP

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Education of Township Officials



GOAL: The Township's Master Plan states the need for more "efficient and economical governmental administration".

Many of the respondents agreed that there needs to be better communication within the government structure.

CURRENT PROTECTION: Officials should be encouraged to expand their expertise and knowledge in order to better educate residents, as well.

OPTION: ENCOURAGE TRAINING AND SITE WALKS FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

Specifically, the Township should consider:

- ⌘ Requiring members of their Township Committee, Planning Board, Environmental Resources Committee and Historic Preservation Committee to participate in continuing education. This could include hosting training in the Township and inviting neighboring municipalities to attend.
- ⌘ Encouraging the Planning Board and Environmental Resources Committee to continue conducting site walks.
- ⌘ Encouraging the Environmental Resources Committee to conduct more public education campaigns.
- ⌘ Encouraging other committees to speak out and hold educational programs regarding work they are conducting.
- ⌘ Keeping Township staff members, elected and appointed officials, aware of documents that are updated and those that need updating.

