

Area in Need of Redevelopment Investigation Report

Prepared for:

**The Township of Neptune
Monmouth County, New Jersey**

February 2021 DRAFT

Prepared By:



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to determine whether the Block 1106, Lots 1-17 Study Area in the Township of Neptune qualifies as an Area in Need of Redevelopment as defined by the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (NJSA 40:12A-1 et seq., herein referred to as LRHL), to realize a comprehensive program of redevelopment for the site along one of the Township's highway commercial corridors. Per the LRHL, an area must exhibit one or more certain characteristics to be deemed an Area in Need of Redevelopment. The Township Committee retained Leon S. Avakian, Inc. to investigate the conditions of the Block 1106, Lots 1-17 Study Area (hereinafter the Study Area) pursuant to the criteria for redevelopment designation.

In addition to the criteria for designating an Area in Need of Redevelopment, the process for investigation and designation is stipulated in the LRHL. A redevelopment study begins with a resolution from the municipal governing body that authorizes the Planning Board to investigate the conditions of the defined study area. The Planning Board then passes a resolution stating whether the Board recommends designation based on the results of the investigation. The Governing Body ultimately decides whether to designate an Area in Need of Redevelopment, and if so designated, can pursue the preparation of a Redevelopment Plan.

Designating an Area in Need of Redevelopment permits a municipality or redevelopment entity to use all the powers of redevelopment, including eminent domain. This designation also permits municipalities to grant thirty-year tax abatements and exemptions that may encourage private property owners to rehabilitate and reinvest in their properties. Designation may be used in concert with other redevelopment projects and initiatives as part of a comprehensive redevelopment strategy.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING AN AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5, an area may be designated in need of redevelopment if, after investigation, notice and hearing as provided in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6, the governing body of the municipality concludes that the study area contains any of the following conditions:

- a. The generality of buildings are substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent, or possess any of such characteristics, or are so lacking in light, air, or space, as to be conducive to unwholesome living or working conditions.
- b. The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable.
- c. Land that is owned by the municipality, the county, a local housing authority, redevelopment agency or redevelopment entity, or unimproved vacant land that has remained so for a period of ten years prior to adoption of the resolution, and that by reason of its location, remoteness, lack of means of access to developed sections or portions of the municipality, or topography, or nature of the soil, is not likely to be developed through the instrumentality of private capital.
- d. Areas with buildings or improvements which, by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or obsolete layout, or any combination of these or other factors, are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community.
- e. A growing lack or total lack of proper utilization of areas caused by the condition of the title, diverse ownership of the real properties therein or other similar conditions which impede land assemblage or discourage the undertaking of improvements, resulting in a stagnant and unproductive condition of land potentially useful and valuable for contributing to and serving the public health, safety and welfare, which condition is presumed to be having a negative social or economic impact or otherwise being detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the surrounding area or the community in general.
- f. Areas, in excess of five contiguous acres, whereon buildings or improvements have been destroyed, consumed by fire, demolished or altered by the action of storm, fire, cyclone, tornado, earthquake or other casualty in such a way that the aggregate assessed value of the area has been materially depreciated.

- g. In any municipality in which an enterprise zone has been designated pursuant to the "New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zones Act," P.L.1983, c.303 (C.52:27H-60 et seq.) the execution of the actions prescribed in that act for the adoption by the municipality and approval by the New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zone Authority of the zone development plan for the area of the enterprise zone shall be considered sufficient for the determination that the area is in need of redevelopment pursuant to sections 5 and 6 of P.L.1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-5 and 40A:12A-6) for the purpose of granting tax exemptions within the enterprise zone district pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1991, c.431 (C.40A:20-1 et seq.) or the adoption of a tax abatement and exemption ordinance pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1991, c.441 (C.40A:21-1 et seq.). The municipality shall not utilize any other redevelopment powers within the urban enterprise zone unless the municipal governing body and planning board have also taken the actions and fulfilled the requirements prescribed in P.L.1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-1 et al.) for determining that the area is in need of redevelopment or an area in need of rehabilitation and the municipal governing body has adopted a redevelopment plan ordinance including the area of the enterprise zone.
- h. The designation of the delineated area is consistent with smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to law or regulation.

This report and investigation are aimed only at determining whether the Study Area meets the statutory criteria to be identified as an Area in Need of Redevelopment.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

Area Description

The Study Area, shown in Map A below, consists of Block 1106, Lots 1-17. The site is located on the southwest corner of NJ State Highway Route 33 and NJ State Highway Route 35. Route 35 forms the eastern boundary of the site, 10th Avenue borders the site to the south, Lafayette Avenue to the west, and Route 33 to the north. Route 33 is a heavily-trafficked highway commercial corridor on which Jersey Shore University Medical Center is located, leading to Route 18 and Garden State Parkway entrances to the west of the Study Area and terminating at Route 71/ Main Street to the east near Ocean Grove. In general, development along Route 33 and Route 35 maintains various types of service retail, fast-food, petrol filling stations, convenience stores, pharmacies and the like, as well as professional office space, mainly geared toward service and medical professionals. The area is currently developed with a variety of commercial and residential uses, as well as a few vacant lots. The study area is free of environmental constraints (see Map B).

As can be seen from the Existing Land Use map below (Map C), a variety of land uses surround the Study Area. The Study area includes four (4) commercial classified lots, four (4) lots that are classified as vacant, one (1) lot that is classified as public use, and the remainder of the study area is residential. Commercial uses are located to the north of the Study Area, across Route 33. Residential uses are located to the west and south of the Study Area, across Lafayette Avenue and 10th Avenue. The R-4 Residential Zone District is located to the south of the Study Area, across 10th Avenue, while the B-1 Business District is located to the south of the Study Area along Route 35. Wawa is located to the east of the Study Area, across Route 35.



Source: Monmouth County GIS,
NJDEP, USGS, NJGIS, and ESRI
Date Saved: 1/28/2021

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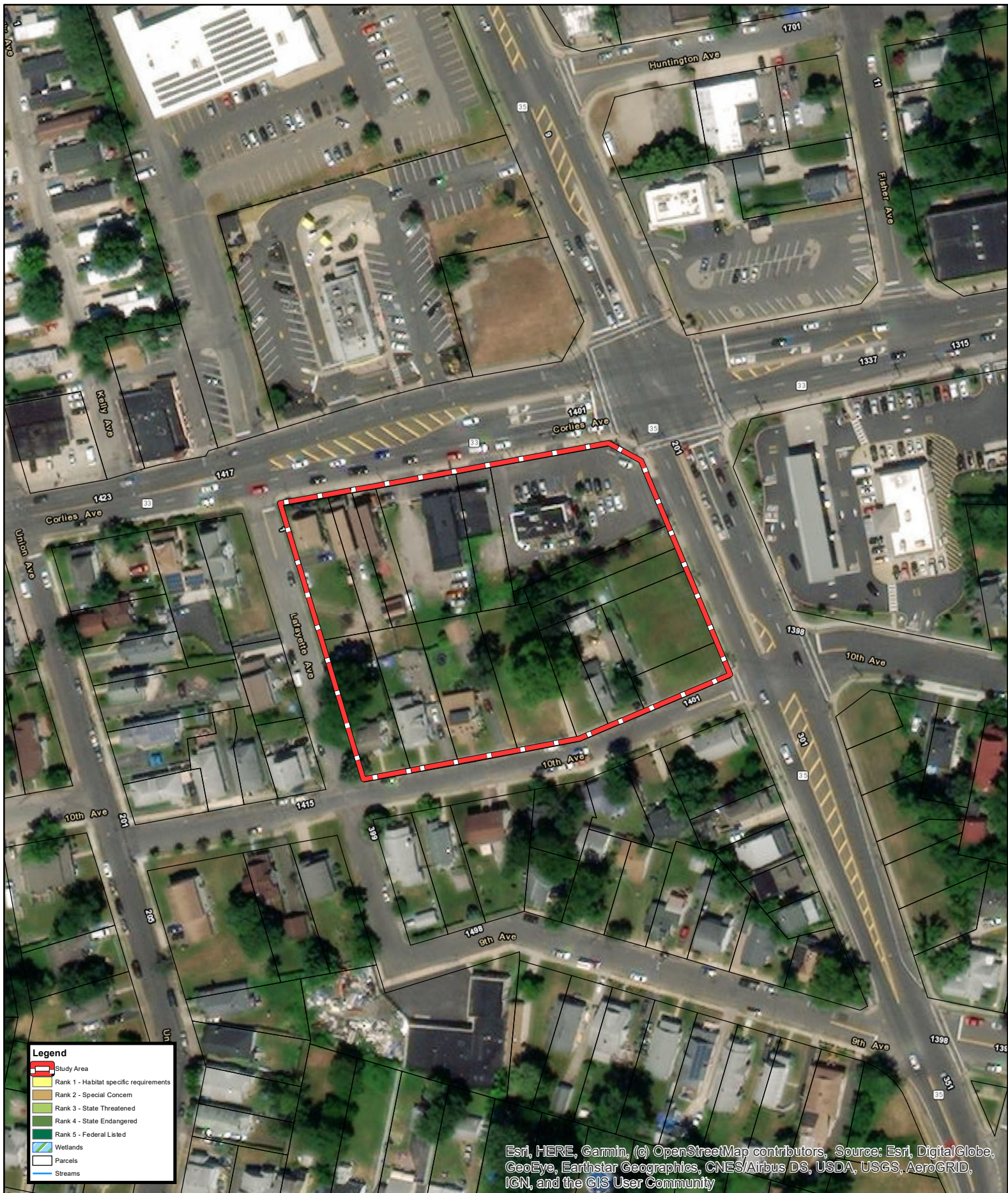
Map A

Block 1106, Lots 1-6 & 8-17

Neptune Township, New Jersey

LEON S. AVAKIAN, Inc.
Consulting Engineers

This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized or endorsed.



Source: Monmouth County GIS,
NJDEP, USGS, NJGIS, and ESRI
Date Saved: 1/29/2021



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Feet

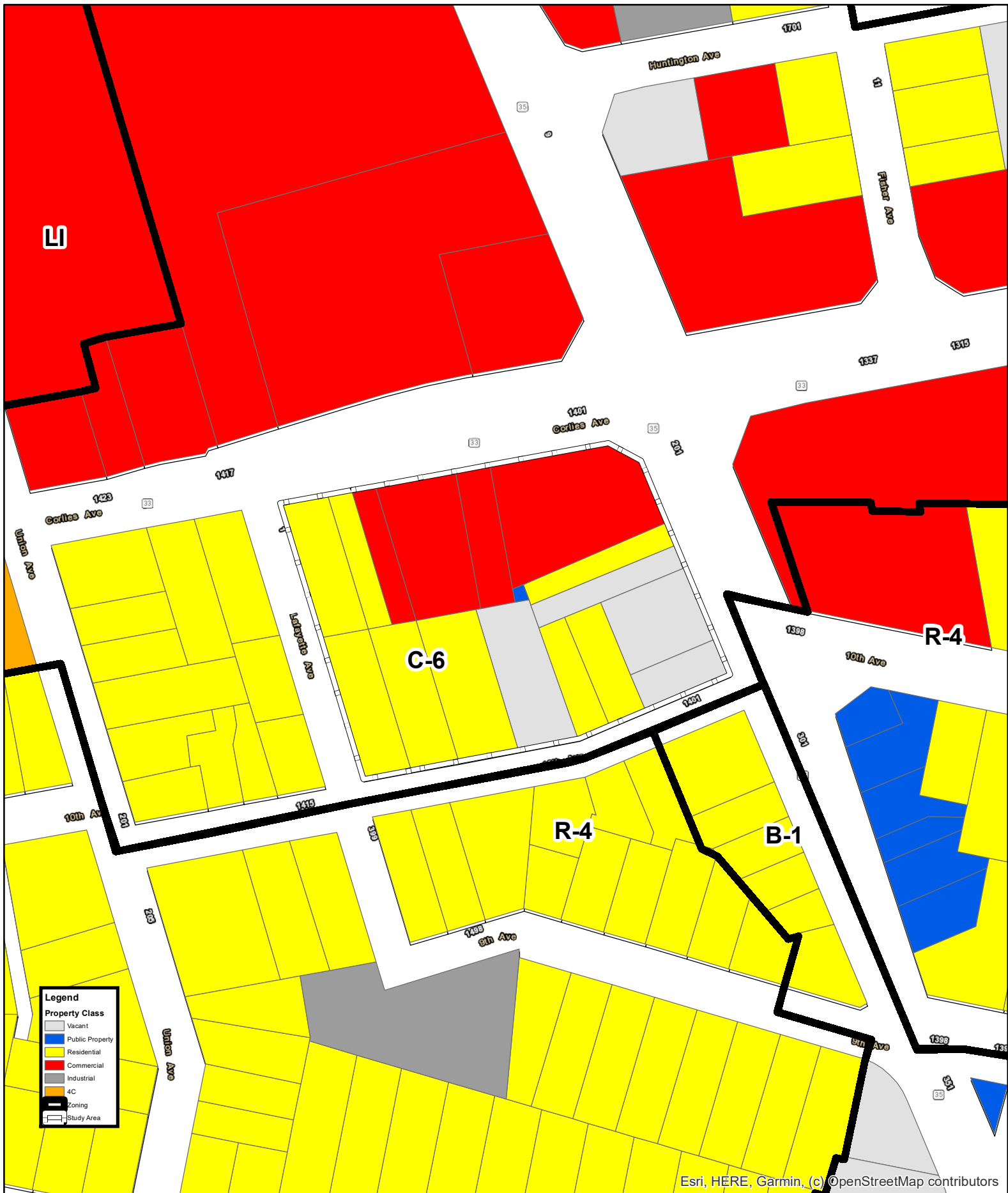
Map B

Study Area Environmental Constraints

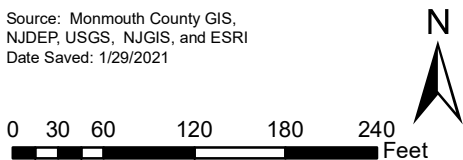
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Map C Existing Land Use Neptune Township, New Jersey

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Esri, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors

Current Zoning

The Study Area is situated in the C-6 Route 33 East Zoning District, the purpose of which is to provide “for business uses appropriate to the Route 33 highway corridor of Neptune Township situated east of Route 18.” It permits a number of commercial, professional services, and personal service types of uses, including the following:

Retail Sales

Radio, television, & other electronic stores, Computer & software stores, Musical instrument stores, Music stores (CDs, cassettes, videos, records), Convenience stores, Retail bakeries, Delicatessens, Butcher shops, Fish & Seafood Markets, Fruit & vegetable markets, Beer, wine & liquor stores, Pharmacies & drug stores, Cosmetics, beauty supplies & perfume stores, Food (health) supplement stores, Health & personal care stores, Family clothing & apparel stores, Lingerie and corset stores, Swimwear stores; Jewelry stores; Shoe stores, Hobby, toy & game stores, Shoe stores, Bicycle stores, Sporting good stores (excluding firearms), Arts & craft shops, Family book stores, Magazine/newspaper stands, Florists/flower shops, Gift shops, Greeting card stores, Office equipment, supplies & stationery stores, Pet food & pet supplies stores, Pet stores, Tobacco shops, Art dealers, Antique shops, video tape & disc rental, home health equipment rentals, and musical instrument rentals.

Professional Service

Commercial banking, saving institutions, banks, credit unions, consumer lending, real estate credit, all other nondepository credit intermediation, financial clearinghouse and reserve activities, investment bank and securities dealing, securities brokerage, direct life insurance carriers, direct health and medical insurance carriers, insurance agencies and brokerages, claims adjusting, all other insurance related activities, offices of real estate agents, offices of real estate appraisers, other activities related to real estate, agents/managers for artists and other public entertainers, independent artists, writers, and performers, Offices of lawyers, Offices of certified public accountants, Other accounting services, Architectural services, Landscape architectural services, Professional planning services, Engineering services, Building inspection services, Testing laboratories, Custom computer programming services, Computer systems design services, Computer facilities management services, Other computer related services, Administration & general management consulting services, Other scientific & technical consulting services, Advertising agencies, Other services related to advertising, Photography studios & videography services, Corporate, subsidiary & regional managing office, Office administrative services, Private mail centers, Quick printing, All other business support services, Travel agencies, Investigation and security services, and Security systems services (except locksmiths).

Personal Service

Child care centers, Barber & beauty shops, beauty salons & parlors, hairdressers, Cosmetic salons & cosmetology services, Hotel beauty parlors and beauty shops, Manicure salon or nail services, Wig grooming service, Diet & weight reducing centers, Baths (steam, Turkish, vapor, mineral), Depilatory salons (hair removal), Ear piercing services, Body piercing services, Electrologist's studio, Electrolysis studio, Massage parlor, Scalp treatment, Hair replacement, Tanning salons, Musical instrument repair shop, Leather goods repair services, Shoe repair and shoeshine parlors, Bicycle repair shops, Locksmiths, Dry-cleaning & laundry services (excluding coin-op), Tailor and mending of garments, Film developing services, retail, Pet grooming services

Restaurants and Other Eating Places

Drinking places (alcoholic beverages), food service contractors/ catering, full-service restaurants, restaurants, take out restaurants,

Recreational Uses

Sports & recreation instruction, art, music, dance & martial arts instruction, health and fitness clubs, Marinas, indoor community swimming pools, Performing Arts, and (indoor) Motion Picture Theaters.

Education and Health Care

Private or Public Elementary, Middle, or High School; Early childhood education centers; Computer training facilities; Apprenticeship training; offices of physicians, including mental health, offices of dentists, offices of chiropractors, offices of optometrists, offices of physical, occupational and speech therapists, and audiologists, offices of podiatrists, all other outpatient care centers, diagnostic imaging centers, and Home health care services.

Manufacturing

Frozen specialty food manufacturing, Newspaper publishers, Book publishers, Software publishers, and Film & sound recording studios.

Public and Public Service

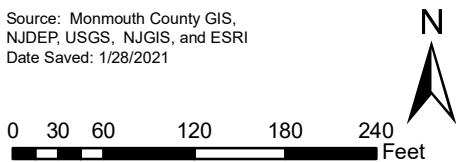
Public Community Centers; Public Parks and recreational facilities; Civic, Social, and Professional Organizations; and Labor Unions and similar labor organizations, Municipal facilities, Fire department facilities, Public safety facilities, First aid facilities, and Board of Education facilities.

Permitted Conditional Uses include drive through restaurants, public utility facilities, and electricity regulating substations. Accessory uses include those customary and incidental to principal uses, as well as outdoor displays and sales, educational support services, recreational

clubhouses and concession stands, outdoor dining facilities, parking for principal uses, telephone communication distribution, coaxial cable communication distribution, emergency services radio communication facilities, natural gas distribution, electric power transmission and distribution, public water supply purveyance and distribution, and sanitary sewer lines.



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Date Saved: 1/28/2021



Map D Current Zoning Neptune Township, New Jersey

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AREA EVALUATION FOR CONFORMITY WITH THE REDEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

Study Approach

An analysis of the Study Area's existing physical characteristics was conducted using tax records, aerial photography, physical inspection, and consultation of Township staff. A site visit was conducted in the early afternoon of February 3, 2021. The photographs collected during that site visit are provided for inspection in Appendix A of this report.

Study Findings

Block 1106, Lot 1

Block 1106, Lot 1 is located on the southeast corner of Route 33 and Lafayette Avenue and is owned by Matrixx 8, LLC and developed with a two-story single family dwelling fronting on Route 33.

Block 1106, Lot 2

Block 1106, Lot 2 consists of 0.0826 acres located on the south side of Route 33 is owned by Matrixx 8, LLC and developed with a two-story single-family dwelling.

Block 1106, Lot 3

Block 1106, Lot 3 consists of 0.826 acres located on the south side of Route 33 and is owned by Matrixx 8, LLC and developed with a two-story structure and rear garage structure. It is assessed for commercial purposes.

Block 1106, Lot 4

Block 1106, Lot 4 consists of 0.2496 acres located on the south side of Route 33 and is owned by Matrixx 8, LLC and developed with a one-story commercial building.

Block 1106, Lot 5

Block 1106, Lot 5 consists of 0.119 acres located on the south side of Route 33 and developed with a one-story commercial building. The building is currently vacant. The property has been owned by Matrixx 8, LLC since 2016.

Block 1106, Lot 6

Block 1106, Lot 6 is owned by Java Enterprises, LLC and consists of 0.1057 acres located at the corner of Route 33 and Route 35, developed with a Dunkin Donuts.

Block 1106, Lot 7

Block 1106, Lot 7 is a small, land-locked parcel owned by the Township of Neptune. It is bounded by the Lot 6 to the north, Lot 8 to the east, Lot 14 to the south and Lot 5 to the west.

Block 1106, Lot 8

Block 1106, Lot 8 is a vacant lot fronting on Route 35 owned by Java Enterprises, LLC since at least 2014. Prior to 2021, the property was classified as residential, although it appears to have been vacant as far back as 2016.

Block 1106, Lot 9

Block 1106, Lot 9 is a vacant lot fronting on Route 35 that has been owned by Matrixx LLC since at least 2014. The property has been assessed as vacant since at least 2014.

Block 1106, Lot 10

Block 1106, Lot 10 is a vacant lot fronting on Route 35 that has been owned by Matrixx 8, LLC since at least 2014. The property has been assessed as vacant since at least 2014.

Block 1106, Lot 11

Block 1106, Lot 11 is a vacant lot located on the northwest corner of Route 35 and 10th Avenue, and has been owned by Matrixx LLC since at least 2014. The property has been assessed as vacant since at least 2014.

Block 1106, Lot 12

Block 1106, Lot 12 has been owned by Matrixx LLC since at least 2014 and consists of two (2) two-story single-family dwellings fronting on 10th Avenue.

Block 1106, Lot 13

Block 1106, Lot 13 has been owned by Matrixx 8, LLC since 2016 and consists of a 1.5-story family dwelling fronting on 10th Avenue. In 2014 and 2015 the property was owned by Countrywide Home Loans Servicing, LP.

Block 1106, Lot 14

Block 1106, Lot 14 is a vacant lot fronting on 10th Avenue and has been owned by Matrixx LLC since at least 2014. The property has been assessed as vacant since at least 2014.

Block 1106, Lot 15

Block 1106, Lot 15 has been owned by Matrixx 8, LLC since at least 2014 and consists of a two-story single family dwelling and detached garage fronting on 10th Avenue.

Block 1106, Lot 16

Block 1106, Lot 15 has been owned by Matrixx 8, LLC since at least 2014 and consists of a 1.5-story single family dwelling and detached garage fronting on 10th Avenue.

Block 1106, Lot 17

Block 1106, Lot 17 has been owned by Matrixx 8, LLC since 2018 and consists of a 1-story single family dwelling on the southwest corner of 10th Avenue and Lafayette Avenue. Prior to 2018 the property was owned by Matrixx, LLC from at least 2014.

The study area is identified in the Neptune Township Master Plan as an area for Economic Development, known as the “Township Crossroads.” The Master Plan describes the Township Crossroads as being “located at the intersection of State Highway 33 and State Highway 35. This area represents the traditional commercial “cove” of Neptune and is a key focal point of the Township’s revitalization efforts. This area contains mobility and convenience for local and regional traffic. Fast food restaurants and shopping areas are present within this location. Typically, large parking lots can be found within the vicinity of this area. These parking lots create a sense of isolation and can be unfriendly to pedestrians.”

The Township’s long range objective for this area is to attract downtown anchor uses with buildings that are located close to the street. More specifically, the [2004 Revitalization] Plan recommends the provision of a mix of restaurant, service, retail and office uses that serve the needs of local residents and the traveling public. Windows and entrances are important elements for an aesthetically pleasing pedestrian environment. The Plan recommended designating the majority of the area in need of redevelopment and preparing a redevelopment plan with standards to incorporate the vision of this area as a downtown and designate the remaining properties in need of rehabilitation and encourage and support private revitalization and redevelopment efforts consistent with the Township’s vision.

Based on this designation by the Township as an area for Economic Development and the Township’s long rang objective for this area, the entirety of the Study Area consisting of Block 1106, Lots 1-17 meets criteria h, the designation of the delineated area is consistent with smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to law or regulation.

The designation of this area is consistent with the smart growth principle to foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place. Currently, the Study Area consists of a mix of residential, commercial, and vacant lots. However, the Township’s long range objective for this area is to attract downtown anchors uses that serve the needs of local residents and the traveling public. Encouraging development within the study Area will foster an aesthetically pleasing pedestrian environment and a sense of place as the “Township Crossroads.”

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Planning Board of the Township of Neptune adopt a Resolution recommending that the Township Committee designate the Block 1106, Lots 1-17 Study Area as an Area in Need of Redevelopment based on findings consistent with criterion “h” set forth in NJSA 40:12A-12A-5, whereby designation is appropriate for areas of the delineated area consistent with smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to law or regulation.

The Area’s designation in the Township’s Master Plan as an area for Economic Development with the long-term objective to attract a mix of restaurant, service, retail and office uses that serve the needs of local residents and the traveling public and provide for an aesthetically pleasing pedestrian environment furthers smart growth planning principles. Establishing uses on the site more aligned with the Township’s long-term objectives for the area can be achieved through the Redevelopment process.

APPENDIX A:
IMAGES OF THE STUDY AREA
Taken



Picture of Block 1106, Lot 1 facing east from Lafayette Avenue.



Picture of Block 1106, Lot 1 facing west as seen from Route 33



Residential Dwelling located at Block 1106, Lot 2



Block 1106, Lot 3 structure and yard area





Commercial one-story building located at Block 1106, Lot 4



View of commercial one-story buildings located at Block 1106, Lots 4 & 5



Vacant commercial building located at Block 1106, Lot 5 (above and below)





Dunkin Donuts located at Block 1106, Lot 6 (above and below)





Block 1106, Lots 8-11 viewed from Route 35





Block 1106, Lots 8-11 viewed from Route 35





Block 1106, Lots 8-11 viewed from Route 35





Block 1106, Lot 12 viewed from 10th Avenue



Block 1106, Lot 13 looking north from 10th Avenue



Block 1106, Lot 14 looking north from 10th Avenue



Block 1106, Lot 15 looking north from 10th Avenue



Block 1106, Lot 16 viewed from 10th Avenue



Block 1106, Lot 17 looking north from 10th Avenue

