

**REDEVELOPMENT PLAN  
BAY STREET STATION SITE  
PHASE II**

**TOWNSHIP OF MONTCLAIR**

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## INTRODUCTION

In June 1999, the Township Council designated the land described in this Redevelopment Plan as "an area in need of redevelopment" under the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (P. L. 1992, C.79). Before construction can begin on land adjacent to the Montclair Connection rail link, the law requires that the Township Council adopt a Redevelopment Plan, which details a course of action for the physical development of the land.

Because of the phasing of the project, it was determined to complete the Plan in two parts. The Township Council adopted the Phase I Redevelopment Plan on January 18, 2000; it covers the northerly and southerly ends of the redevelopment area—the municipal fire headquarters at the corner of Bloomfield Avenue and Pine Street and a senior citizen housing development at the corner of Glenridge Avenue and Pine Street.

The Planning Board reviewed the site plan for the municipal fire headquarters on June 12, 2000. The Township began construction in Spring 2002 and completed the building within 18 months. The senior citizen housing development known as Pineridge of Montclair received Planning Board approval on April 10, 2000.

The United Methodist Homes of New Jersey, developer of the senior housing site began construction in Fall 2001 and completed the project in December 2002. It is currently fully occupied. This Phase II Plan focuses on the land area between the fire headquarters and the senior housing, approximately 3.3 acres in size with frontage on Pine Street, as well as the land to the east of the rail line owned by the Township.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The overall redevelopment area is bounded by Glenridge Avenue on the north, Bloomfield Avenue on the south, Pine Street on the west and the Matthew Carter Apartments and Montclair Ford auto dealership to the east. It encompasses tax lots 5, 6, 7, and a portion of 8.02 in Block 4201. (see attached tax map excerpt). Historically, the site was occupied as early as 1907 by several commercial and multi-family residential buildings and part of the Delaware Lackawanna and Western (later Erie Lackawanna) railroad system. John Blondel and Son, a coal and wood depository, replaced the DL&W Coal Company. A building supply company and automotive body repair shops were also established there. By 1986, the Montclair Redevelopment Agency had acquired

and cleared most of the land for future redevelopment. Toney\*s Brook was channeled along the northerly border of the site. Bay Street between Glenridge Avenue and Bloomfield Avenue was vacated, and Pine Street was rerouted to the original Bay Street/Bloomfield Ave intersection. A surface parking lot for 141 cars and Day Nurseries, Inc., a day care center, were established on the site.

In anticipation of redevelopment in 1999, the Township retained a consulting firm to conduct a Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessment of the property to determine whether contamination was present. Four areas of concern were identified (48 Bay Street, railroad spurs, freight depot and J. Blondel & Son Coal pockets), soil tests conducted and contamination discovered. Contaminated soil was remediated to levels which met NJDEP cleanup standards at the senior housing and fire house sites.

#### RELATIONSHIP TO LOCAL OBJECTIVES

##### **A. Appropriate land uses and density of population.**

The surrounding zoning designations (C1 Central Business Zone along Bloomfield Avenue and NC Neighborhood Commercial Zone

along Glenridge Avenue) permit a variety of residential, commercial and mixed uses. Surrounding land uses include multi-family residential, commercial and public school (see attached Land Use Map).

To formulate a plan for the vacant tract of land and the surrounding neighborhood, a Lackawanna Neighborhood Development Strategy was prepared in 1997 by the Schoor Depalma Group, engineers and design professionals. A team of planners worked with a citizen committee to formulate a strategy for the Pine Street neighborhood revitalization and create a vision for the vacant land, which is now known as the redevelopment area. That vision included the following elements, which have been incorporated into this Redevelopment Plan and the previously adopted Phase I Redevelopment Plan:

- Multi-modal transportation center
- Day Nurseries, Inc. day care center
- Fire station
- Parking to meet rail commuter needs
- Pedestrian connections between the residential and retail areas along Bloomfield Avenue, Glenridge Avenue and Pine Street

- Pedestrian-friendly transit station with bicycle racks

The 1998 Montclair Town Center Development Strategy for an Arts, Culture & Entertainment District prepared by Urban Partners, planners and architects, recommended expansion of Montclair's tax base through increased private investment in the Town Center in which this redevelopment area is located. It also recommended a municipal services center adjacent to the Bay Street train station, including fire and police offices.

The redevelopment at the train station represents the first step in the revitalization of this historic neighborhood as outlined in the Lackawanna Strategy. Neighborhood revitalization should go much further. Upon completion of the rail connection, the Township should proceed with the remaining elements of the Lackawanna Neighborhood Development Strategy, including rehabilitation of the aging housing stock in the historic Pine Street District just north of Glenridge Avenue, and installation of public improvements such as decorative lighting, new sidewalks and curbs along its residential streets. In March, 2002, the Township declared a portion of the Pine Street District an "area in need of rehabilitation," and in July 2003, adopted a plan encouraging preservation and rehabilitation. It

also offered short-term tax abatements to affordable housing developers. The individual land use components of the redevelopment plan are described below.

- **HOUSING: MARKET RATE AND AFFORDABLE RENTAL**

Montclair has a diversity of housing that distinguishes it from neighboring communities not offering the range of housing types and prices found here. This diversity is reinforced in the Township\*s Master Plan which cites as a goal "the continued maintenance of Montclair as a desirable residential community accommodating a range of population and income groups." It was further reinforced by resolution dated January 14, 2003 when affordable housing was made a top priority and the Town Council stated its intent to take appropriate action to maintain and create affordable housing.

An opportunity exists in the redevelopment area to provide both market rate and affordable housing in conformance with the Township\*s housing objectives on one of the few remaining developable parcels in the Township. The Phase I Redevelopment Plan described one affordable housing component of the

redevelopment area--the HUD 202-funded 48-unit senior citizen apartment building located at the corner of Pine Street and Glenridge Avenue. This United Methodist Homes\* age- and income-restricted housing development addresses the housing needs of senior citizens on limited incomes. Additional affordable units should be constructed to accommodate those who cannot afford market rate housing. The affordability component should be a minimum of 10% of the total unit count.

The market for rental housing remains strong for young adults who cannot yet attain home-ownership. The trend towards smaller household size continues, with many singles living alone or sharing quarters with other singles or with their children. There have been few rental apartment buildings constructed in the last 15 to 20 years (although a rental development was constructed at the former Bellclaire Lanes site on Bloomfield Avenue), and the conversion of many garden apartment complexes to condominiums in the 1980s reduced the stock of rental units.

Commuters are attracted to Montclair for its convenient public transit access to New York City. New rental housing in the redevelopment area, immediately adjacent to the train station,



will be highly desirable to those who commute by rail. Housing is a smart land use choice in the Town Center; planning studies have concluded that housing in and near a downtown promotes economic vitality and stability, providing a built-in presence in the evening hours after offices have closed, as residents frequent restaurants and cultural events for entertainment. Housing also provides a substantial tax ratable to the Township. Furthermore, the redevelopment area abuts other residential uses, including the Montclair Mews townhouse development and several multi-family buildings at both subsidized and market rates.

Based upon existing density patterns of surrounding residential developments and recommendations for transit-oriented housing found in planning literature, the maximum residential density should be 48 units per acre. (see attached density map). This redevelopment area is surrounded by zones which permit multi-family uses at densities of 28 to 55 units per acre. The closest two-family residential zone is to the south of Bloomfield Avenue which, in fact, contains numerous non-conforming multi-family structures.

• **MUNICIPALLY CONTROLLED SPACE WITHIN THE REDEVELOPMENT AREA**

The redeveloper shall provide the Township with up to 14,000 square feet of floor space in the redevelopment area. The amount of such space and the financial terms shall be as agreed upon between the redeveloper and the Township. Such space located within the redevelopment area shall be utilized in any manner permitted by the redevelopment plan and approved by the Township. Permissible uses for the municipally controlled space may include, but are not limited to, day care facilities, community space and/or space designed to promote public safety.

• **RETAIL: CONVENIENCE TYPE RETAIL, PERSONAL SERVICES, CONCESSIONS**

The redevelopment area abuts the central business district along the easterly end of Bloomfield Avenue and the Neighborhood Commercial Zone to the north, providing a variety of retail stores, restaurants, offices and personal services. Convenience type retail, personal services and/or concessions stands which do not compete with existing uses on Bloomfield Avenue and Glenridge Avenue are recommended for the redevelopment area serving residents and commuters. Examples might include a bagel/coffee shop, newspaper stand, ATM/bank and pharmacy.

Business office uses are not recommended so as not to detract from existing offices in adjacent areas, many of which occupy second floors over stores in the central business district.

- **PARKING DECK: SHARED PARKING FOR COMMUTERS/TENANTS**

The construction of a parking deck is mandated by NJ Transit to accommodate any expected increase in commuter parking resulting from the Montclair Connection rail link which has provided a one-seat ride to midtown Manhattan since Fall 2002. The parking deck shall provide a number of parking spaces for rail commuters and municipal use as agreed to, and consistent with, an executed settlement agreement with NJ Transit. The Township may offer these spaces for overnight parking by permit. The Township may build a larger capacity deck to serve other uses in the redevelopment area as well, and the Township may require that the deck to be constructed shall be built in a manner that allows subsequent construction of additional levels to provide increased parking in the future. Due to the limited land area, a multi-level deck is the most efficient use of space, since more parking can be created within a structure than on a surface of the same dimensions. Shared parking provides greater

efficiencies, too.

From a design standpoint, the Pine Street facade should be screened from public view, with the balance of the structure to be partially hidden or appropriately landscaped in order to make the structure aesthetically pleasing. The deck should be located at the rear portion of the site, away from Pine Street, so that it is not visually intrusive and is more accessible to the train tracks. Particular attention should be given to exposed walls of the deck, i.e., view from the east across tracks from Matthew Carter Apartments. Public art should be incorporated in the design of the parking deck.

- **TAX LOT 5**

The land owned by the Township, and designated as Tax Lot 5 which contains the unculverted section of Toney\*s Brook is overgrown with shrubbery, and the banks are unstable. The Township should clean and enhance the brook. Toney's Brook shall be used in a manner determined by the Township to be consistent with the Redevelopment Plan and which best meets the needs of the community, and the Township should give consideration to preserving this land as passive open space.

## **§ TRAIN STATION**

The construction of a new train station is a requirement of NJ Transit. It must meet minimum NJ Transit standards as to size and accommodations and must accommodate two original benches salvaged from the waiting area of the historic Lackawanna train station. The station should have a prominent architectural feature if it is part of another building so that it can be easily identified from the street. If it is a free-standing building, it should be highly visible from Pine Street. Pedestrian-friendly amenities such as bicycle racks should also be incorporated into the design. Publicly funded train stations are required by law to contain an art component.

### **B. Improved traffic, public transportation, public utilities recreation and community facilities**

The Montclair Connection joined the Boonton Line and the Montclair Branch, thereby providing more efficient train service to points east. Additional parking may be needed to accommodate any possible increase in ridership resulting from the Midtown Direct which became available in Fall 2002. A

multi-level parking structure accommodates more vehicles on the same footprint as surface parking. Since any increase in commuter ridership will bring more vehicles, shuttle service should be considered, if possible, as a non-automobile transportation alternative, picking up commuters along designated routes during the morning and evening rush. The NJ Transit bus line along Bloomfield Avenue should be routed to Pine Street, closer to the train station so that commuters can make an easy connection from bus to train.

Streetscape improvements including decorative streetlights, trees, sidewalks and trash receptacles should be installed along Pine Street between Glenridge Avenue and Bloomfield Avenue to draw pedestrians from the Pine Street neighborhood to Bloomfield Avenue.

#### **PROPOSED LAND USE AND BUILDING REQUIREMENTS**

##### **Bulk Requirements:**

In accordance with the Local Housing and Redevelopment Law, this Plan supercedes the current zoning regulations applicable to this site and establishes the following zoning requirements for the uses proposed for Phase II.

- Minimum front yard setback: 0 feet
- Minimum rear yard setback from lease line: 0 feet
- Maximum building height is 60 feet above the average grade. Ornamental towers shall be exempt from the height requirement.
- Maximum residential density: 48 units per acre, provided however that solely for the purpose of satisfying this density requirement, the acreage upon which the public parking deck is constructed for NJ Transit commuters shall be deemed to be a part of the project site acreage for any project constructed in accordance with this Phase II Redevelopment Plan.
- Parking:

Required number of on-site parking spaces is as follows:

- a) (i) 1.2 spaces per dwelling unit which spaces shall be located within the apartment building parcel, (ie) exclusive of any shared parking arrangements in the public parking garage as referenced in a(ii) below. This ratio is the result of a showing by the redeveloper that the redevelopment area's urban location, proximity to mass transit, and available off-site parking resources will allow such a ratio to be sufficient to satisfy parking needs within the redevelopment area.

a) (ii) The permitted uses within the Redevelopment Area

(including, but not limited to the apartment building parcel, the municipally controlled space and the firehouse) shall seek to take advantage of and negotiate, as required, shared parking arrangements within the public parking garage facility. Any such arrangement shall be based upon the permitted uses within the Redevelopment Area and the parking demands generated therefrom, as well as the needs of commuter parkers in accordance with requirements imposed by New Jersey Transit Corporation. Such arrangements shall be negotiated with the applicable government entity, including among others, the Montclair Parking Authority and the New Jersey Transit Corporation.

- b) 1 space per 200 s.f. of retail/personal service gross floor area. No parking is required for concession stands.
- c) To the extent the parking provided in subsection (a)(ii) above does not meet the needs of the municipally controlled space, 30 parking spaces located beneath the proposed apartment building parcel shall be made available for use in conjunction with the municipally controlled space. The days and hours of operation, and other conditions for such use shall be pursuant to terms and conditions negotiated between



the Redeveloper and the Township and/or Montclair Parking Authority, as the case may be.

d) The 225 spaces in the parking deck shall have priority as commuter parking spaces during normal business hours, but as provided in a(ii) above, may also be used for parking for other permitted uses within the Redevelopment Area including the apartment building parcel, the municipally controlled space and the firehouse to the extent such spaces are available during business hours.

(e) Up to 30% of the parking spaces on the apartment building parcel may be sized for compact cars. Tandem parking shall also be permitted in the apartment building parcel.

A variance from any of these zoning standards may be requested through the procedure established by State law.

**Design Standards:**

- **Principal buildings should be built near the streetline.** The

height of building to street width ratio should not exceed 1:1. This is consistent with many principal buildings, including apartment buildings, on surrounding streets. The objective is to complement existing massing in the

neighborhood. Zero setback brings activity to the public street and insures that the uses will be part of the neighborhood. Pine Street has a 66 foot right-of-way width. A 1:1 building height-street width ratio is appropriate to create a sense of enclosure, but not to be so imposing (high-rise) or too small (low-rise).

- **Parking Deck should be located at the rear of the site.**

The location of the deck should be close to the rail line for easy access by commuters to the pedestrian overpass and platforms.

- **Site and buildings should be pedestrian-friendly and handicapped accessible.**

Clear pedestrian paths and entrances/exits are essential to facilitate smooth traffic flow within the site so as not to create a safety hazard. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic should be separate from vehicular traffic through the use of clearly identified (with signage and distinct materials) sidewalks and crossings. The site design must balance the need for auto as well as pedestrian safety.

- **Site Plan and buildings should incorporate public art.**

The redevelopment plan provides an excellent opportunity to showcase public art as a reflection of the community's heritage. The redeveloper should coordinate with the Township's designated representatives to include art either incorporated in the architecture of the buildings or elsewhere on the site. The NJ Transit-funded train station is mandated by the State to include a public art component.

- **The train station should be visible from Pine Street.**

Whether the train station is free-standing or incorporated into another principal structure, it must have a significant architectural entrance feature which identifies it from Pine Street.

- **The streetscape should reinforce public transit use and reinforce the township's commitment to mass transit.**

Streetscape improvements along Pine Street between Glenridge Avenue and Bloomfield Avenue should include decorative lights, patterned sidewalks, trees, and trash receptacles, creating an attractive entrance to the development. The 42 foot pavement

width of Pine Street is adequate for curb-side parking on both sides of the street, thereby increasing the parking capacity in the area.

- **The architectural style of the buildings must complement historic structures in surrounding neighborhoods, using similar materials, colors and styles found in historic buildings.**

#### PROVISION FOR RELOCATION OF EXISTING USES

##### **Commuter Parking Lot**

Alternative parking will be required for approximately two years for approximately 135 commuter and overnight parking permit holders at the Bay Street station surface parking lot to facilitate the construction of the new parking deck. The redeveloper shall provide interim parking on-site if alternative parking provisions cannot be made.

##### **Day Nurseries, Inc.**

The 7,000 s.f. modular structure currently owned and occupied by Day Nurseries, Inc., a day care center, has been vacated from the site. Day Nurseries has been moved to Our Lady of Mount

Carmel Church on Pine Street.

**IDENTIFICATION OF LAND TO BE ACQUIRED**

No land will be acquired by the Township to effectuate the plan since the redevelopment area land will be leased from NJ Transit pursuant to a land swap agreement entered into by the Township and NJ Transit. The land swap agreement shall provide the Township with access to the property which comprises the redevelopment area. The proposed municipal use(s) at Toney's Brook can be accessed through an easement with NJ Transit, or a land lease or purchase from the adjacent Matthew Carter Apartments.

**SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP TO MASTER PLAN**

A number of recommendations found in this Plan will meet goals set by the Township in its Master Plan Reports of 1992 and 1999. The Plan will further the goals of the Township by:

- Providing adequate commuter parking for rail station users.
- Encouraging bus operators to improve linkages of bus and rail service.
- Establishing shuttle services for rail commuters to reduce parking demand at stations.

- Maintaining the Township as a desirable residential community accommodating a range of population and income groups.
- Refocusing its efforts on improving the viability of its business community. Improvement of the Township's business districts should be continued through the creation of additional parking and supportive public facilities and amenities.

**SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP TO STATE DEVELOPMENT AND  
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

In preparation of this Plan, the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan was reviewed to incorporate State-wide policies for future growth and development recommended for communities such as Montclair. Montclair is classified as a Metropolitan Planning Area 1. The direction for older suburbs can be found in the following policy statements:

- Land Use: Promote redevelopment and development in cores and neighborhood of Centers and in Nodes that have been identified through cooperative regional planning efforts. **Promote Diversification of land uses**, including housing where

appropriate, in single-use developments and enhance their linkages to the rest of the community. Ensure efficient and beneficial utilization of scarce land resources throughout the planning area to strengthen its existing diversified and compact nature.

- **Housing: Provide a full range of housing choices** through redevelopment, new construction, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse of non-residential buildings, **and the introduction of new housing into appropriate non-residential** settings.
- **Economic Development: Promote economic development by encouraging strategic land assembly, site preparation and infill development, public/private partnerships and infrastructure improvements** that support an identified role for the community within the regional marketplace.
- **Transportation: Maintain and enhance a transportation system that capitalizes on high-density settlement patterns by encouraging the use of public transit** systems, walking, and alternative modes of transportation **to** reduce auto dependency, link Centers and Nodes, and create opportunities for transit oriented redevelopment.
- **Natural Resource Conservation: Reclaim environmentally damaged**

**sites** and mitigate future negative impacts, **particularly waterfronts**, scenic vistas, wildlife habitats and Critical Environmental Sites and Historical and Cultural Sites. **Use open space to reinforce neighborhood and community identity.**

- Recreation: **Provide maximum active and passive recreational opportunities** and facilities at the neighborhood, local and regional levels by concentrating on **the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing parks and open space while expanding and linking the system through redevelopment and reclamation projects.**
- Redevelopment: **Encourage redevelopment at intensities sufficient to support transit, a broad range of uses and efficient use of infrastructure. Promote design that enhances public safety, encourages pedestrian activity and reduces dependency on the automobile.**