

Borough of Somerville

Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Plan

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1 Introduction

HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Borough of Somerville operated a municipal landfill between 1954 and 1984 on a large parcel of land located just to the south of the NJ Transit station (See **Figure 1, Redevelopment Plan Area Location**). The Federal Government designated the former landfill parcels as a “superfund” site upon closure of the landfill in 1984. Soon thereafter, however, the site’s superfund status was revoked, and no immediate means of remediating the site’s contamination was available via public funding.

In 1986, the Borough entered into a developer’s agreement with a developer which called for the site to be capped and redeveloped with a shopping center. In 1994, after several years of inaction in which the site was neither remediated nor redeveloped, the Borough Council rescinded the developer’s agreement. This led to litigation with the developer, during which time a comprehensive study was undertaken by the Borough to designate the site as an area in need of redevelopment in accordance with New Jersey’s Local Housing and Redevelopment Law. In 1998, following such designation, the Borough Council adopted a formal Redevelopment Plan for the site. Litigation with the developer was settled in 2004, with the Borough regaining the redevelopment rights to the site.

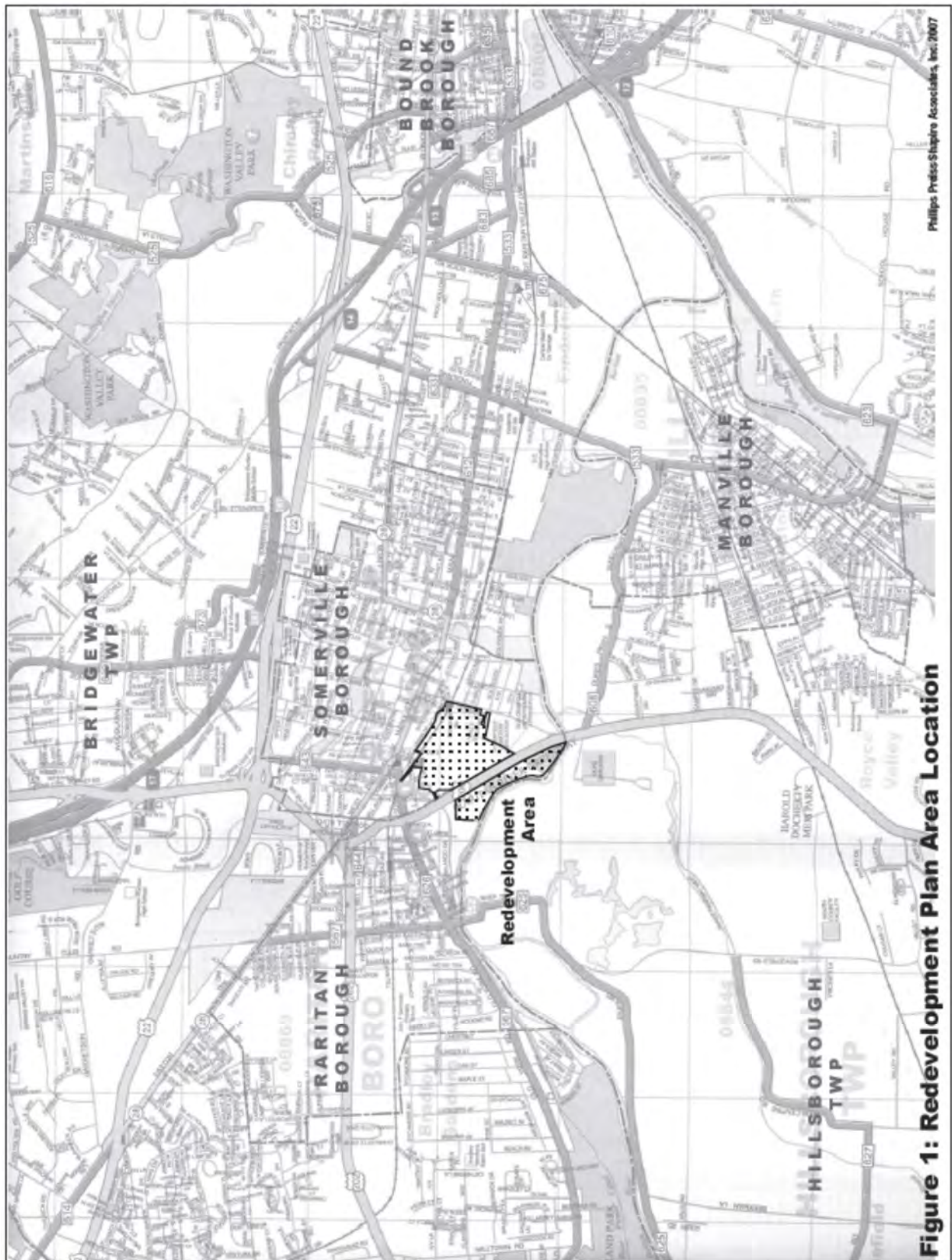
In 2005, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) along with Somerset County approved a grant for the preparation of a landfill visioning plan, essentially a plan that the Borough hoped would presage redevelopment of the site by a private entity. This effort was funded jointly by the Office of Smart Growth, NJ Transit (NJT) and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

The Regional Plan Association (RPA) was retained to lead a collaborative effort with a team of consultants in drafting the vision plan for the landfill site. The visioning process engaged stakeholders and Borough residents in a number of public workshops and meetings over a period in excess of a year. This effort resulted in the production of two documents which form the underpinning of this Redevelopment Plan: the “*Somerville Station Area & Landfill Vision Plan*” and the draft of the “*Somerville Landfill Design Guidelines*”.

The Borough of Somerville, upon adoption of this Redevelopment Plan, intends to issue a Request for Qualifications/Request for Proposals for undertaking redevelopment of the former Landfill site by a qualified and experience private developer. When the qualified candidate is selected, a redevelopment agreement will be negotiated, whereupon redevelopment of the area can commence.

Somerville Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Plan

Figure 1: Redevelopment Plan Area Location



DESCRIPTION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AND PROJECT AREA BOUNDARIES

The Mayor and Council of the Borough of Somerville approved the boundaries of the Redevelopment Area and charged the Planning Board with the responsibility of studying the area's appropriateness for Redevelopment Area designation. A report entitled "*Report on the Designation of a Redevelopment Area, Borough of Somerville, Somerset County, New Jersey*" was prepared by Robert Catlin & Associates in November 1997 to determine whether the area qualified as an "area in need of redevelopment" as provided under N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1. Based on the findings of this report, adoption of the delineated Redevelopment Area boundaries were recommended by the Borough Planning Board and effectuated by the Borough Council in 1997.

In February 1998, following designation of the Redevelopment Area, the Planning Board prepared a Redevelopment Plan report in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:12A-7 for the designated Redevelopment Area entitled "*Redevelopment Plan, Borough Landfill Redevelopment Area, Borough of Somerville, Somerset County, New Jersey*" assisted by Robert Catlin Associates.

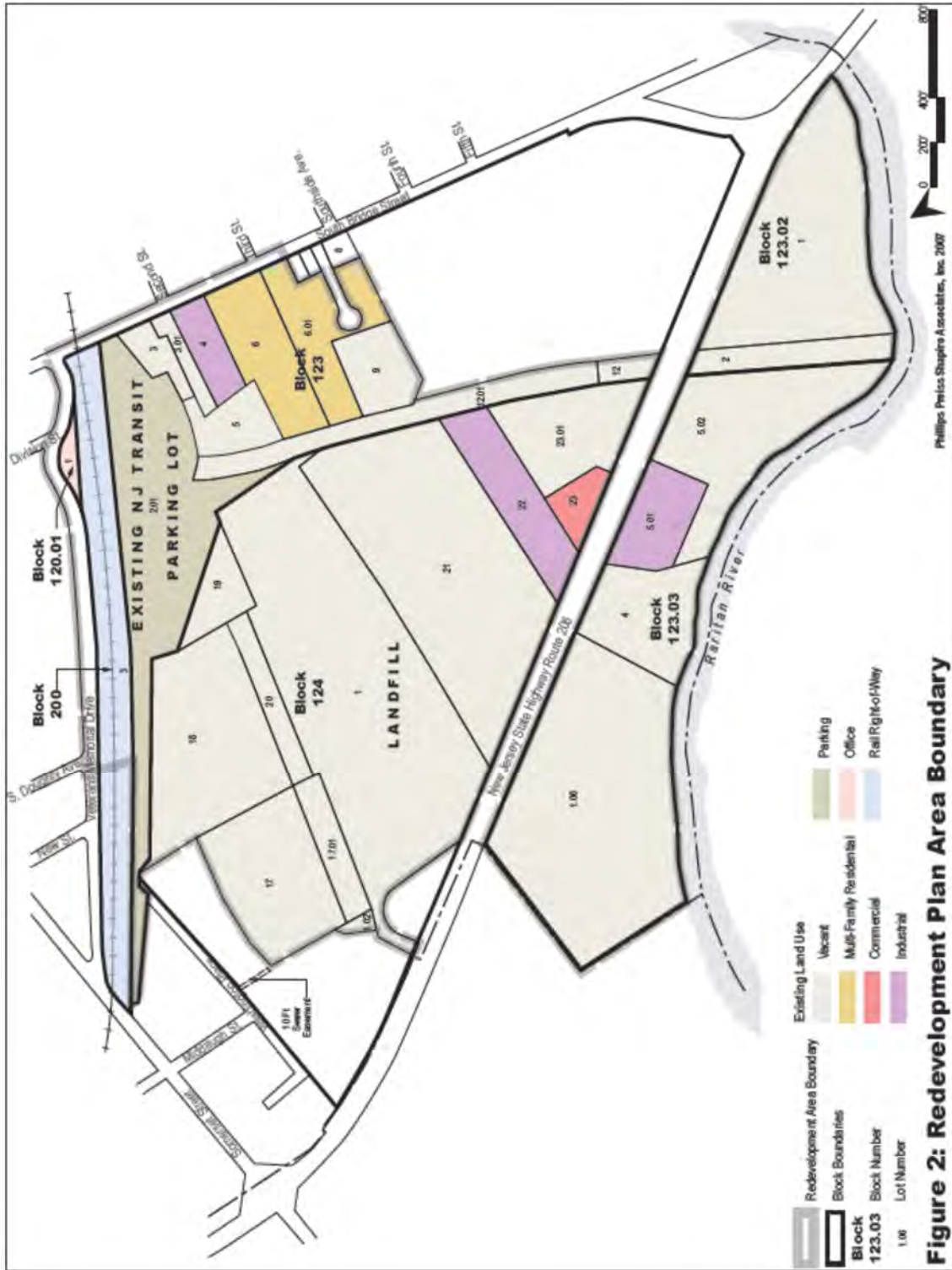
In April 2006, Remington & Vernick Engineers prepared a report entitled "*Borough Landfill Redevelopment Area Extension*", for the Planning Board that was adopted by resolution on May 24, 2006. The report set forth certain findings with respect to the eligibility of the site as an "area in need of redevelopment" in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5. The report concluded that the area remained an area in need of redevelopment, but resulted in a slight adjustment to the originally designated Redevelopment Area boundaries, such that certain properties were added, while others were removed.

On June 13, 2007, the Planning Board adopted a resolution which amended and superseded its resolution of May 24, 2006 and stated that the findings and recommendations included in the Planner's Report, the testimony presented, the discussions of the Planning Board and the findings of the Planning Board as to the Study Area concluded that no single family residential properties be included in the Redevelopment Area. Thus, for the purposes of this plan, the adopted redevelopment area boundaries (See **Figure 2, Redevelopment Plan Area Boundary**) designated by the Borough Council in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, consist of the following parcels:*

- **Block 120.01**, Lot 1
- **Block 123**, Lots 2.01, 3, 3.01, 4, 5, 6, 6.01, 9, 12, 12.01
- **Block 123.02** Lots 1, 2
- **Block 123.03** Lots 1.06, 4, 5.01, 5.02
- **Block 124** Lots 1, 1.02, 17, 17.01, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 23.01
- **Block 200** Lot 3

* For a map of the parcels owned within the Redevelopment Area by NJ TRANSIT, see the attached appendix. Also note that since NJ TRANSIT is a significant landowner within the Redevelopment Area, it is understood that NJ TRANSIT will negotiate all financial considerations related to development on its properties.

Figure 2: Redevelopment Plan Area Boundary



PURPOSE

This report, *The Somerville Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Plan (Redevelopment Plan or Plan)* sets forth the Redevelopment Plan, including land uses, bulk and area requirements and design standards for redevelopment within the area around the Somerville rail station and the former municipal landfill site within the Borough of Somerville, New Jersey.

PLAN STRUCTURE

The Plan requires new streets, parks, and other public spaces. It also includes guidelines for pedestrian-friendly, compact development around the existing train station and creates two new residential neighborhoods as well as a regional node of signature office development.

The Redevelopment Plan sets forth standards and guidelines for land use, circulation, open space, parking, and urban design. Some Plan elements are fixed, such as the location of certain new roads, an open space greenway, and the requirement to provide additional commuter parking spaces for NJ Transit. However, other standards are flexible, and are to be used as a guideline for creating development proposals that meet the Plan's goals and objectives.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN VISION

The Redevelopment Plan provides for a compact, walkable, moderate-density, and mixed-use station area neighborhood enlivened by new residents and transit riders, as well as two lower density residential neighborhoods consisting of townhouses and apartments. These areas will act as an extension of downtown Somerville and its surrounding neighborhoods. While the train station area serves as the gateway to the Redevelopment Area from downtown Somerville, two additional gateways are envisioned, one from the northwest (beginning at the Orlando Drive jug-handle), containing a signature office use, and the other, a green gateway from the southeast, leading into planned open space within the Redevelopment Area. This "Green Seam" as it is referred to, is an expansive open space, which follows a stream corridor, and ties together the three main planning areas within the Redevelopment Area.

PRIOR VISIONING PROCESS

REGIONAL PLAN ASSOCIATION

The municipal landfill which is the existing central feature of the Redevelopment Area, was open and operating between 1954 to 1984 by the Borough of Somerville. Upon closure in 1984, the landfill was designated by the Federal Government as a "superfund" site. However, the site was subsequently determined not to qualify for superfund status, and no further action or remediation was undertaken. Several redevelopment efforts were undertaken throughout the late 1980s and 1990s that never materialized, and the site has remained largely vacant.

Considering the size of the Redevelopment Area, and its location adjacent to downtown Somerville and its train station, the economic development potential of the site creates a prime opportunity for redevelopment within Somerville, and represents one of the premier redevelopment

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opportunities in the region. In order to fulfill this potential, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) approved a grant for the preparation of a landfill visioning plan, funded jointly by the Office of Smart Growth, NJ Transit (NJT) and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

Beginning in 2005, an ambitious community outreach effort and visioning process was undertaken by consultants to the Borough of Somerville. Led largely by the Regional Plan Association (RPA), the process involved a collaboration with Somerville residents and stakeholders in numerous community meetings, and allowed valuable input from the public to be gathered in a process that lasted over a year. This allowed RPA to provide two important documents which serve as the underpinnings for this Redevelopment Plan: the *Somerville Station Area & Landfill Vision Plan* (“*Vision Plan*”) and a draft of the *Somerville Landfill Design Guidelines* (“*Design Guidelines*”). These documents form the basis for the vision and design and land use concepts discussed and referred to in this Redevelopment Plan.

VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY AND COMMUNITY AMENITIES RANKING

Following the visioning process, Somerville residents completed a Visual Preference Survey and Community Amenities Ranking in May 2007. Building on the momentum of the visioning process, residents were asked to indicate their preference in regard to a series of images linked closely to building types. The results of the survey indicated that Somerville residents desire buildings of traditional materials and architectural design. Modern buildings with unique characteristics did not score well in the survey. However, those modern structures with physical attributes similar to the style and building massing present in Somerville and Somerset County were preferred. It is anticipated that this survey will provide insight to the ultimately designated developer as to what design style Somerville residents would prefer to see on the redeveloped landfill site.

The visioning process also uncovered a strong desire on the part of the community for a community facility, such as a library or new town hall within the Redevelopment Area. In regard to the Community Amenities Ranking, Somerville citizens ranked a new library as the most desired community facility within the Redevelopment area, followed by a community center/recreation center. The survey indicated a one-point separation between a police station and performing arts center, the third and fourth most desired amenities. An emergency services complex and new Borough Hall finished fifth and sixth, respectively.

RELATIONSHIP TO REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

A Redevelopment Plan, by statute, is required to contain certain mandatory elements, and also allows for certain optional elements. Because of this, the Redevelopment Plan is required to be more precise and prescriptive than a Vision Plan. Therefore, while RPA's Vision Plan and Design Guidelines form the basis for this Redevelopment Plan, the end result is not a Plan entirely identical to these previous studies. The Redevelopment Plan is written to incorporate the major goals, objectives and concepts of the Vision Plan and Design Guidelines, but it allows greater flexibility in terms of street and building layout. Developers designing projects in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan are encouraged to study the RPA plans carefully and follow their suggested design and building configurations where possible. In addition, redevelopers are encouraged to review the results of the community Visual Preference Survey and Community Amenities ranking in developing their proposals for redevelopment. However, creative solutions in developing the character of the Redevelopment Area and solving the problems of street layout, parking, and building massing, are also encouraged.

2 Relationship to Local Objectives

New Jersey redevelopment law requires that “all provisions of the Redevelopment Plan shall be either substantially consistent with the municipal master plan or designed to effectuate the master plan.” However, the law also allows that the “governing body may adopt a Redevelopment Plan which is inconsistent ... by vote of the majority, ... with the reasons for so acting set forth in the Redevelopment Plan.” Consistency of the Redevelopment Plan with the local planning framework is described below.

RELATIONSHIP TO INTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

This Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the Borough’s Master Plan, the last comprehensive version of which was completed in 1990, and amended through reexamination in 1998. “A Regional Center Master Plan” was drafted to address the importance of Somerville as part of Somerset County’s regional center in 2006. This Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the Regional Plan Element. In fact, the State of New Jersey has recognized Somerville and neighboring Bridgewater and Raritan as a regional center since 1996.

Neither, the 1990 Master Plan and 1998 reexamination provided detailed plans or a comprehensive vision for redevelopment, but both acknowledged that the area should depart from its industrial past and focus on mixed use, commercial development. In the 1990 Master Plan, redevelopment within the Redevelopment Area was originally conceived as a retail commercial complex, containing hotel, office, entertainment and retail uses. The 1998 reexamination affirmed that the former industrial zoning did not appear appropriate considering both the environmental issues present onsite and the redevelopment vision for commercial development. These land use recommendations were more refined within the 2006 Regional Center Master Plan, which indicated that the redevelopment of the landfill site should “encourage mixed-use transit oriented redevelopment consisting of commercial, residential, public, and park/open space uses”. The 2006 Plan also recommended that “strong linkages to the downtown and the greenway system” should be established as a result of redevelopment.

While the current refined and detailed mixed-use vision for redevelopment of the landfill only materialized within recent years, the Borough’s Master Plan and its amendments have continuously recognized two major elements: a focus on extending commercial development south of the downtown and the importance of improving the landfill site for the well-being of Somerville and the region. Furthermore, this Redevelopment Plan complies with the intent of the Master Plan 2006 Regional Center Master Plan with respect to the following goals and policies:

- Provide infill housing that strengthens commercial districts, protects environmentally sensitive natural features, accommodates community facilities and facilitates local/regional circulation systems.
- Encourage appropriate redevelopment in focus areas that will return underutilized land to productive use, improve quality of life, enhance community character, create new employment opportunities and strengthen the municipal tax base.

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- Provide increased parks, recreation and open space opportunities that will improve local quality of life, protect existing natural resources and contribute to sustainable development.
- Coordinate land use planning and decision-making with adjacent municipalities in the Somerset County Regional Center to improve quality of life, preserve community character, preserve remaining natural resources, promote sustainable development and improve local/regional mobility.
- Increase the Borough's economic competitive stance in the immediate region by emphasizing the benefits of a unique town center appropriately scaled to the pedestrian.
- Continue to provide for an interconnected greenway network.
- Coordinate land use and transportation planning.
- Review redevelopment opportunities for potential mixed use, transit oriented development.
- Promote and enhance all types of transportation infrastructure and services such as walking, cycling, and ride sharing.

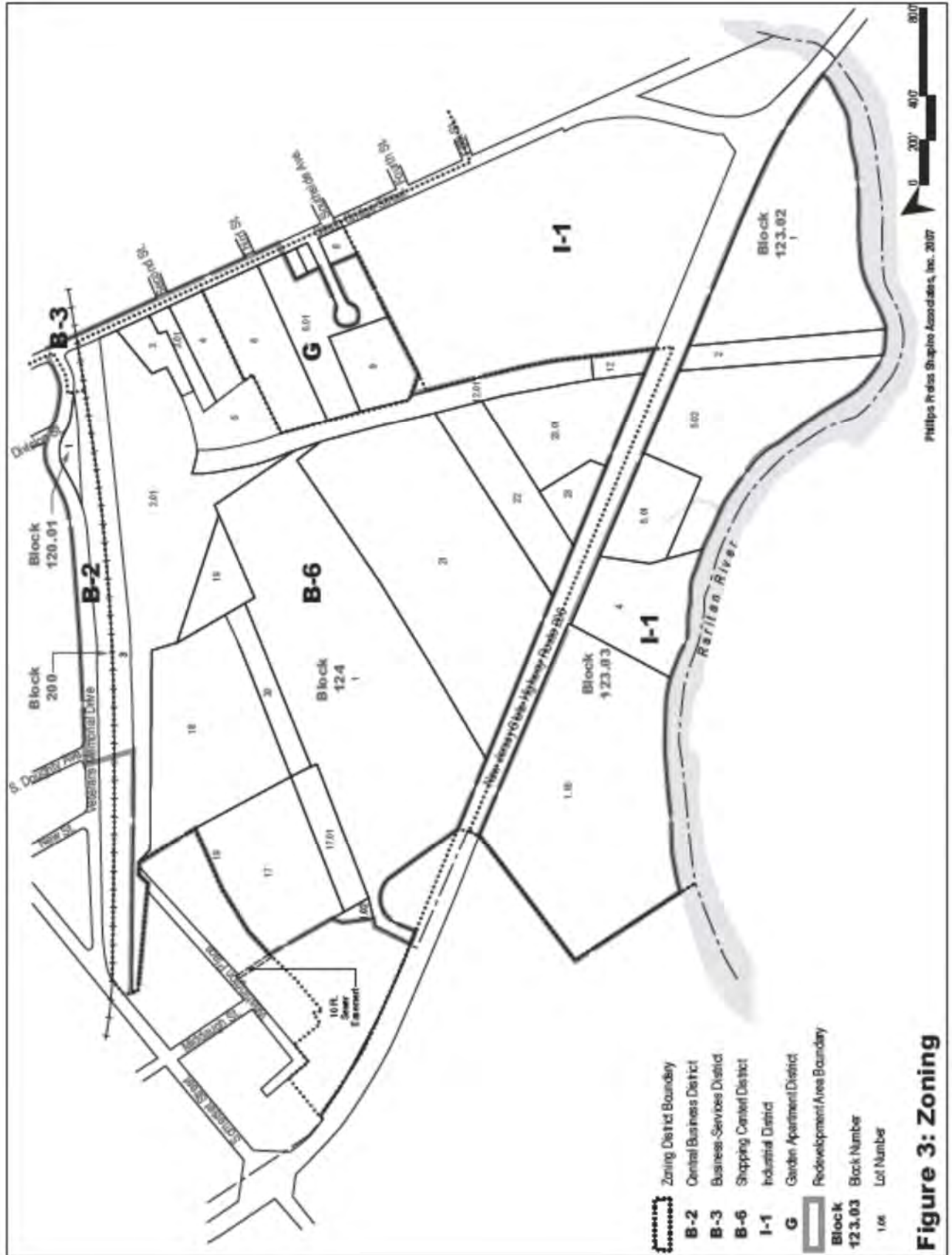
RELATIONSHIP TO INTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE

The existing zoning in the Redevelopment Area is reflective of the 1998 Redevelopment Plan, which envisioned a shopping center containing various retail, service and related uses. As indicated in **Figure 3, Zoning**, parcels within the Redevelopment Area located east of Route 206, are within the B-6 Shopping Center zone. The parcels located between Route 206 and the Raritan River, which were included in current redevelopment efforts as part of an amendment to the Redevelopment Area boundaries, are designated I-1 Industrial.

While the vision for a compact mixed-use center is more a recent land use policy in Somerville, the B-6 district permits apartment buildings with ground floor service or retail uses to complement the numerous permitted commercial uses in the zone. As such, the zoning is not inconsistent with the Redevelopment Plan, which provides for a similar mix of commercial uses and residential development.

In regard to the parcels within the Redevelopment Area which are zoned I-1 Industrial (i.e., between Route 206 and the Raritan River), it appears these areas have historically been designated as industrial due to their isolation from the rest of the Borough. The Master Plan has consistently recommended rezoning of these parcels to a conservation zone with a river greenway and/or strictly limiting the intensity of permitted industrial development because of the environmental constraints in this area. The rezoning was never implemented, however, and as such the I-1 Industrial designation remains.

Figure 3: Zoning



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Overall, a portion of the site's zoning, the B-6 zoned area, is somewhat consistent with the Redevelopment Plan, while another portion, the I-1 Industrial area, is inconsistent with the Redevelopment Plan. Since there is an inconsistency between Somerville's master plan (recommending conservation and limited industrial development) with the zoning (which permits industrial use), it is inevitable that the Redevelopment Plan would be consistent with one, but not the other. In this case, the Redevelopment Plan is more consistent with the Master Plan than the zoning. However, in order to proceed with Redevelopment and attain the Plan objectives, such inconsistency is inevitable, and not harmful to the overall purpose and intent of the land use regulations of the Borough.

This Redevelopment Plan supersedes all provisions of the Zoning Ordinance of the Borough of Somerville regulating development in the area addressed by this Redevelopment Plan. Adoption of this Plan by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Somerville shall be considered an amendment of the Borough Zoning Map.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Redevelopment Plan is intended to promote the following specific Goals and Objectives:

1. To remediate and close the municipal landfill in such a manner consistent with the intended uses of the Plan.
2. To provide for a variety of land uses that will enhance the Borough tax base, promote economic development and growth opportunities, and serve the needs of the community.
3. To provide for a mixed-use development pattern complimentary with the Borough that should also complement the existing historic character of Somerville.
4. To reinforce the regional significance of Somerville consistent with Somerville's designation as a Regional Center in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.
5. To develop a critical mass of new housing adjacent to the existing NJ Transit rail station, encouraging greater transit ridership and mode choice.
6. To embrace the NJ Transit rail station as an anchor and focal point, as well as a catalyst for redevelopment.
7. To enhance the market base and economic viability of downtown Somerville by placing a significant number of new households within a short walk of downtown commercial uses.
8. To create a compact, pedestrian-friendly extension of the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, through the use of Smart Growth planning and design techniques and to achieve the green site design and green building design requirements enumerated within the Redevelopment Plan. This will work to enhance the environmental integrity of the site and achieve a model for sustainability and smart growth
9. To create a vibrant gateway to downtown Somerville from Route 206.

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10. To create a new street network that will facilitate and enhance vehicular and pedestrian circulation in and around the Redevelopment Area, including downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.
11. To provide for a greater variety of housing opportunities and choices within the Borough.
12. To provide a network of open spaces for Somerville residents, connecting active and passive recreation areas between the Raritan River and the downtown core, including existing community resources such as the Peter's Brook Greenway and the Old Dutch Parsonage.

3 Background

EXISTING CONDITIONS IN THE PROJECT AREA

The former Borough landfill, for which the entire 168-acre Redevelopment Area is named, operated east of Route 206 from 1954 to 1984 within Block 124, Lots 1 and 21. As a result of this use, a portion of the area that encompasses the landfill requires capping in accordance with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) regulations.

As shown in **Figure 4, Aerial Photograph**, and earlier in **Figure 2, Redevelopment Plan Area Boundary**, the majority of the Redevelopment Area, approximately 114 acres, is bordered to the west by Route 206, to the north by NJT rail right-of-way, and to the east by Bridge Street. A large portion of the Redevelopment Area contains wetlands and is within a delineated flood plain. As a result, only approximately 75 of the 114 total acres east of Route 206 are buildable upland areas. New Jersey State Highway Route 206 traverses the Redevelopment Area northwest to southeast. As a result, a portion of the Redevelopment Area (approximately 54 acres) is located between the Raritan River and Route 206.

The Redevelopment Area encompasses the functioning NJT train station area, which includes the right-of-way within Block 200, Lot 3, and the commuter parking within Block 123, Lot 2.01 and Block 123, Lot 3. The historic train station building in Block 120.01, Lot 1, is privately owned and utilized as a professional office and is anticipated to remain so.

Aside from the train station area and these aforementioned developed parcels, the majority of parcels within the boundaries of the Redevelopment Area are either vacant and undeveloped, or underutilized. In total, sixteen of the twenty-seven parcels in the Redevelopment Area are currently vacant and unimproved. Although the northern portion of the site contains wetlands, the vacant parcels within the Redevelopment Area are largely covered with successive vegetation, mostly natural grasses and wooded areas.

The only other parcels considered fully developed are as follows: the Holly Glen Apartments (Block 123, Lot 6 and Lot 6.01) on Bridge Street; one industrial parcel (Block 123, Lot 4) also on Bridge Street; Sarah Jane's Restaurant (Block 124, Lot 23) on Route 206 North; and two industrial parcels (Block 124, Lot 22 and Block 123.03, Lot 5.01) on Route 206 North and South, respectively.

Government or quasi-government agencies, including the Borough of Somerville, the Borough of Raritan, Somerset County and NJ Transit control approximately 83 percent (139 acres) of overall land area. Of this total, Somerville owns approximately 33 percent (55 acres), including the former landfill, undeveloped land adjacent to the landfill (Block 124, Lot 17, 17.01), a section of former rail right-of-way (Block 123, Lot 12), the former Moye property (Block 124, Lot 22), the former Mastrianni property (Block 124, Lot 23.01) and one of the previously discussed industrial properties on Bridge Street (Block 123, Lot 3.01). The Borough of Raritan and Somerset County own the majority of parcels in the Redevelopment Area west of Route 206. NJ Transit controls a parcel (Block 124, Lot 18) and vacant rights-of-way running through the middle of the site

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(Block 123, Lot 12.01 and Block 124, Lot 20). Overall, NJT owns approximately 36 acres of land (21 percent) within the Redevelopment Area.

Figure 4: Aerial Photograph



NJT operates two surface parking lots south of the station platform with access from Bridge Street that contain a total of 423 parking spaces. The larger of the two parking areas, located within Block 123, Lot 2.01, contains 267 parking spaces. The additional parking area within Block 123, Lot 3, contains 156 parking spaces.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

Remington & Vernick Engineers (R&V) was retained by the Borough to complete environmental engineering and technical support services throughout the Vision Plan and Redevelopment Plan process. The technical environmental analysis and background environmental information for parcels within the Redevelopment Area is contained within the draft of the “Somerville Landfill Redevelopment Area Environmental Report” (Draft Environmental Report) submitted by R&V. Following are portions of the research completed by R&V. For a full technical analysis of environmental conditions onsite, the reports and materials completed by R&V should be referenced.

LANDFILL ISSUES

Land within Block 124, Lots 1 and 21 (roughly 45 acres) was utilized by the Borough of Somerville from 1954 to 1984 as a municipal solid waste landfill. The landfill is unlined and generally received municipal waste from residential and commercial sources, including construction debris. The Borough is responsible to facilitate capping and any necessary remediation per NJDEP regulations. Funding is expected to be provided by the designated redeveloper(s)*, although grants and other funding sources from the State of New Jersey and Federal Government for reimbursement or contribution towards landfill capping and cleanup costs are potentially possible. The redeveloper, however, is expected to assume the bulk of these expenses, because the costs involved in preparing the site for development are expected to be high.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FOR ADDITIONAL PARCELS

In addition to the former municipal landfill, the Redevelopment Area contains a mixture of active businesses and vacant properties, many of which contained former businesses. In the Draft Environmental Report, R&V provided a preliminary environmental assessment of these parcels for potential contamination issues. R&V’s preliminary analysis indicated that with the exception of the Richards Fuel site (Block 123, lot 4), “none of the non-landfill properties in question have any significant non-landfill related environmental areas of concern”. The Richards Fuel site may contain UFT’s and soil contamination. The remaining parcels may be subject to a Phase I.

WETLANDS ISSUES

In addition to the constraints resulting from the site’s prior use, wetland and flood plain areas limit the amount of developable acreage within the landfill site. **Figure 5, Environmental Constraints** indicates the locations within the Redevelopment Area in which wetlands and floodplain areas are present. It should be noted that the flood plain and wetland conditions indicated on Figure 5 represent current knowledge of the environmental conditions on site and may be subject to

* The term redeveloper or developer used in this document from hereinafter shall be assumed to include more than one redeveloper to the extent that more than one redeveloper is designated for the Redevelopment Plan.

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change based on continued analysis of the Redevelopment Area. As indicated in the Environmental Constraints map, wetlands conditions are concentrated within three areas:

- the northern portion of the site above a required road known as Wetlands Parkway;
- the southern tip of the Redevelopment Area proximate to another required road known as Station Road, and Route 206; and
- virtually all of the area between Route 206 and the Raritan River.

Much of the existing flood plain/wetland area is proposed to be preserved as part of the planned “Green Seam” open space network. Within the “Green Seam” roads, trails and boardwalks are permitted to cross wetlands to form this network. The wetlands are currently a low resource value due to the disturbed nature of the site, and it is envisioned that the quality of the wetlands will be enhanced through this development project.

FLOODPLAIN ISSUES

Portions of the Redevelopment Area are located within the 100-year flood plain (FEMA Zone AE) and will require permitting from NJDEP to allow construction. Since the regulations governing development in a flood plain are anticipated to change in Fall 2007, the available development footprint within the Redevelopment Area may be affected. It should also be noted that active recreation areas within a wetland area require individual or general permits, depending on the amount of wetland disturbance. It is anticipated that these areas will be rehabilitated for active recreation, where possible, and where environmentally appropriate.

STORMWATER ISSUES

As indicated within the R&V Draft Environmental Plan, stormwater within the Redevelopment Area is required to comply with current New Jersey State Stormwater regulations (N.J.A.C. 7:8), including, but not limited to stormwater detention per the New Jersey Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS) and 80% removal of Total Suspended Solids (TSS) per New Jersey Best Management Practices. A waiver from compliance with the two-year storm groundwater storm recharge requirement of the NJ Stormwater rules should be available to the developer. It should be noted, that while utilization of Best Management Practices treatment of stormwater, such as bioswales and rain gardens, is encouraged throughout the Redevelopment Area, the placement or use of these devices should be determined versus the environmental effects of landfill closure or other remediation issues.

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Figure 5: Environmental Constraints



Figure 5: Environmental Constraints

SUMMARY OF PLAN OBJECTIVES

This Redevelopment Plan aims to establish a mixed-use development with improvements to land use, circulation, open space and community character that will enhance a largely underutilized and vacant portion of Somerville. The Plan also hopes to increase ridership for NJ Transit at the existing train station, and to complement the existing businesses and character of downtown Somerville.

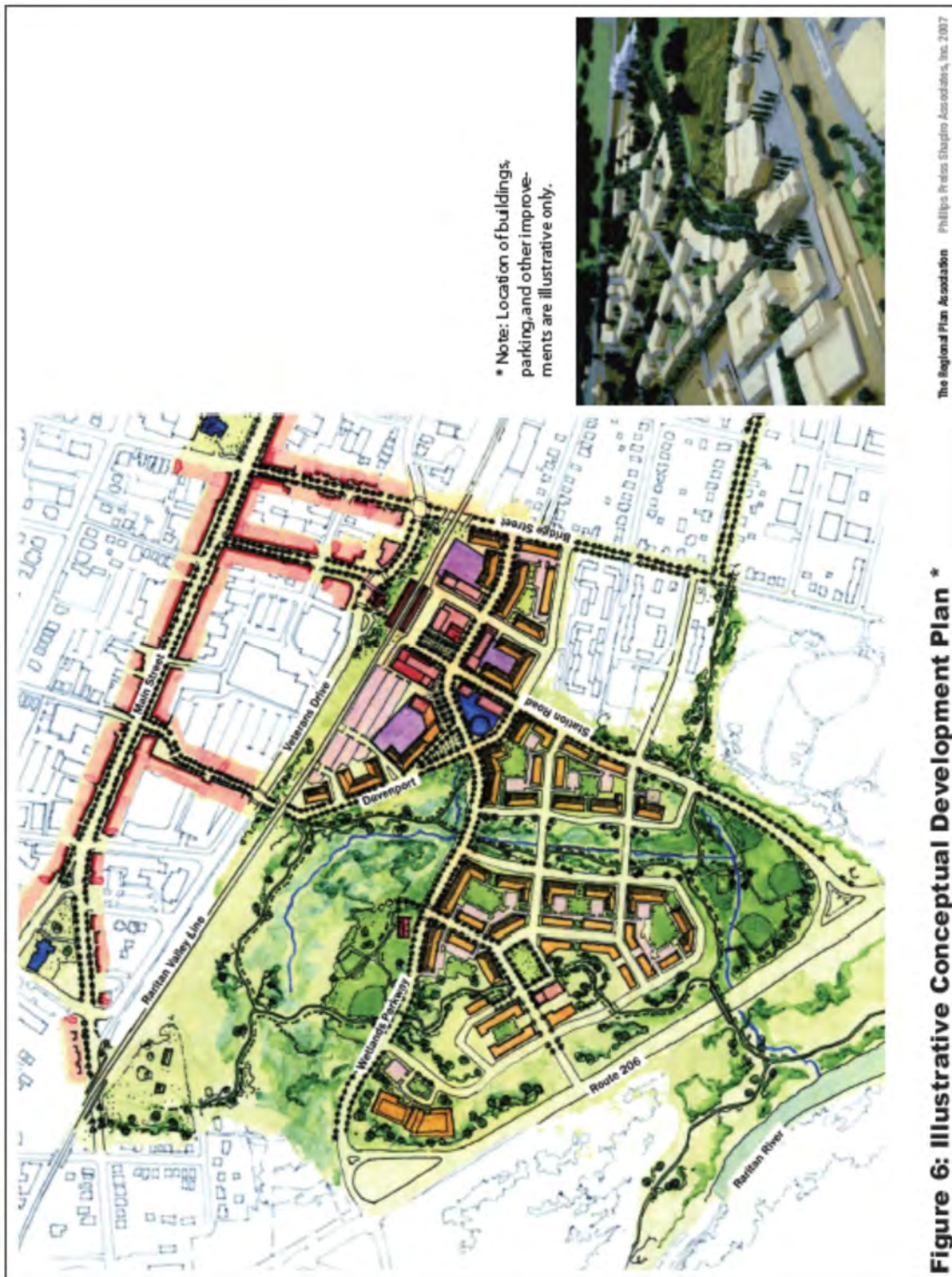
The physical framework of the Plan is a network of neighborhood public spaces and streets linked by four required roadways known in this Plan as the “Wetlands Parkway”, “Station Road”, the “Davenport Street” extension, and the “Green Seam Couplet”. The roadways provide a means of access to four new plan areas, known as the “Hub” (train station area), the “Heights” (landfill area), the “Downtown Gateway” (Route 206 and Orlando Drive area) and the “Green Seam” (open space corridor linking the Hub and the Heights).

The primary purpose of the four required roads within the Redevelopment Area is not to carry heavy traffic volumes traveling at high speeds, but rather to be multi-modal in character, so as to safely and efficiently balance the needs of pedestrians and cyclists in addition to those using motor vehicles. Each roadway will include on-street parking and will be planted with street trees at regular intervals. On roadways that are adjacent to open space, trees will be arranged in a double row alee or arranged in naturalistic groupings. The four roadways to be provided are:

- **Wetlands Parkway**, which travels in a southeasterly direction from the Downtown Gateway in the northwest corner of the site through the Green Seam before reaching the Hub.
- **Station Road**, which is an east-west connector between Route 206 and the Hub, terminating at the train station.
- **Davenport Street**, which is an extension of existing Davenport Street, and which runs under the existing NJ Transit railroad right-of-way from Downtown Somerville. The roadway borders the Green Seam before reaching the Hub.
- **Green Seam Couplet**, which traverses both edges of the Green Seam, traveling in tandem from the Wetlands Parkway to the armature of neighborhood streets south of the Wetlands Parkway within the Heights.

Figure 6, Illustrative Conceptual Development Plan, is an illustrative drawing of the recommended site design and configuration that emerged as a result of the visioning process. The Illustrative Plan shows only one way of meeting the goals and requirements of this Redevelopment Plan, but certainly is not the only possible solution. The designated redeveloper is permitted and encouraged to develop a plan which while meeting the required parameters of the Redevelopment Plan, is creative, innovative and attractive in a way that may not necessarily follow each and every aspect of the Illustrative Concept Plan.

Figure 6: Illustrative Conceptual Development Plan



Somerville Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Plan

In reference to the four new plan areas (the Hub, Heights, Downtown Gateway and Green Seam), each plan area differs in relation to the uses, densities and activities envisioned to occur within each such area. The four plan areas to be provided are as follows:

- **The Hub** – High-quality, higher-density housing in a downtown mixed-use environment is envisioned with the purpose of increasing activity and creating a sense of place at the station area. Active Uses, such as ground floor retail, home occupations community centers and other civic uses are required surrounding Station plaza (a portion of the Hub- see page 39, under “The Hub” for a detailed description of permitted uses surrounding the Station Plaza) to create pedestrian activity at the street level. A variety of apartments, mixed-use residential dwelling units or office space above the ground floor retail uses is envisioned. A civic center and an inn are also envisioned as an integral part of the land use mix within the Hub. A critical mass of new housing will provide a market for new retail development planned around the station area. The mix of residential, retail, and civic uses will complement, rather than compete with the existing downtown and engender the economic vitality of Main Street and the remainder of the Borough. The design of the Hub is intended to be human-scale and pedestrian-friendly (high visibility crosswalks in the station area, bump-outs at intersections to reduce crossings so the environment is not specifically tailored for motor vehicles). The architecture should be complementary with the historic character of the Borough.
- **The Heights** – Situated south and west of the train station area, the Heights is required to be a moderate-density neighborhood consisting largely of town homes and small apartment buildings, with a smaller component consisting of office space. The reduction in density is intended to create neighborhoods of walkable tree-lined streets, accessible and complementary to pedestrians and cyclists. Of the four plan areas within the Redevelopment Plan, the Heights will have the largest amount of Green Seam frontage and the most trail connections. This makes the Green Seam extremely accessible and important to the developed character of the Heights.
- **The Downtown Gateway** – A Downtown Gateway is envisioned around the intersection of Route 206 and Orlando Drive. In order to define and emphasize the downtown’s connection to Route 206, the Downtown Gateway is to be developed with a signature office development with the potential to tap into the regional economy. This area will function as the gateway connection to the Redevelopment Area.
- **The Green Seam** – The Hub and the Heights are to be knitted together and connected to both the downtown and surrounding areas by the Green Seam, which is essentially a corridor of open space. The Green Seam not only serves as a source of recreation and greenway connections throughout the Redevelopment Area, but is also an opportunity to follow best practices in stormwater management, habitat preservation and environmental sustainability.

4 Redevelopment Phasing

Due to the large size of the Redevelopment Area, considerations regarding environmental cleanup, and the fact that the existing road network does not reach interior areas of the site, it is anticipated that development will occur in phases. The Vision Plan assumes there will be three phases. As shown within **Figure 7, Redevelopment Phasing/Neighborhoods** those phases are as follows:

- **Phase 1** includes the Hub and a portion of the Heights known as the “Heights East,” located just south of the Hub bordering the Green Seam and Station Road.
-
- **Phase 2** consists of the remainder of the Heights, comprising “Heights Proper” and “Heights West.”
-
- **Phase 3**, the most long-term phase of the Redevelopment Area, includes the “Downtown Gateway.”

The required major streets in the roadway network will provide the armature for development and will be primarily built in Phase 1 and completed in Phase 2. This provides flexibility for varying development types as the market evolves and changes. Development of open space within the Green Seam will commence during Phase 1 for various uses within the Redevelopment Area and must be completed either in Phase 1 or by the latest, at the conclusion of Phase 2. A more detailed description of each of these phases follows. In all cases, the developer shall create a well-scaled street network in which streets are multi-modal and thought of as public spaces.

PHASE 1 (HUB, HEIGHTS EAST AND GREEN SEAM)

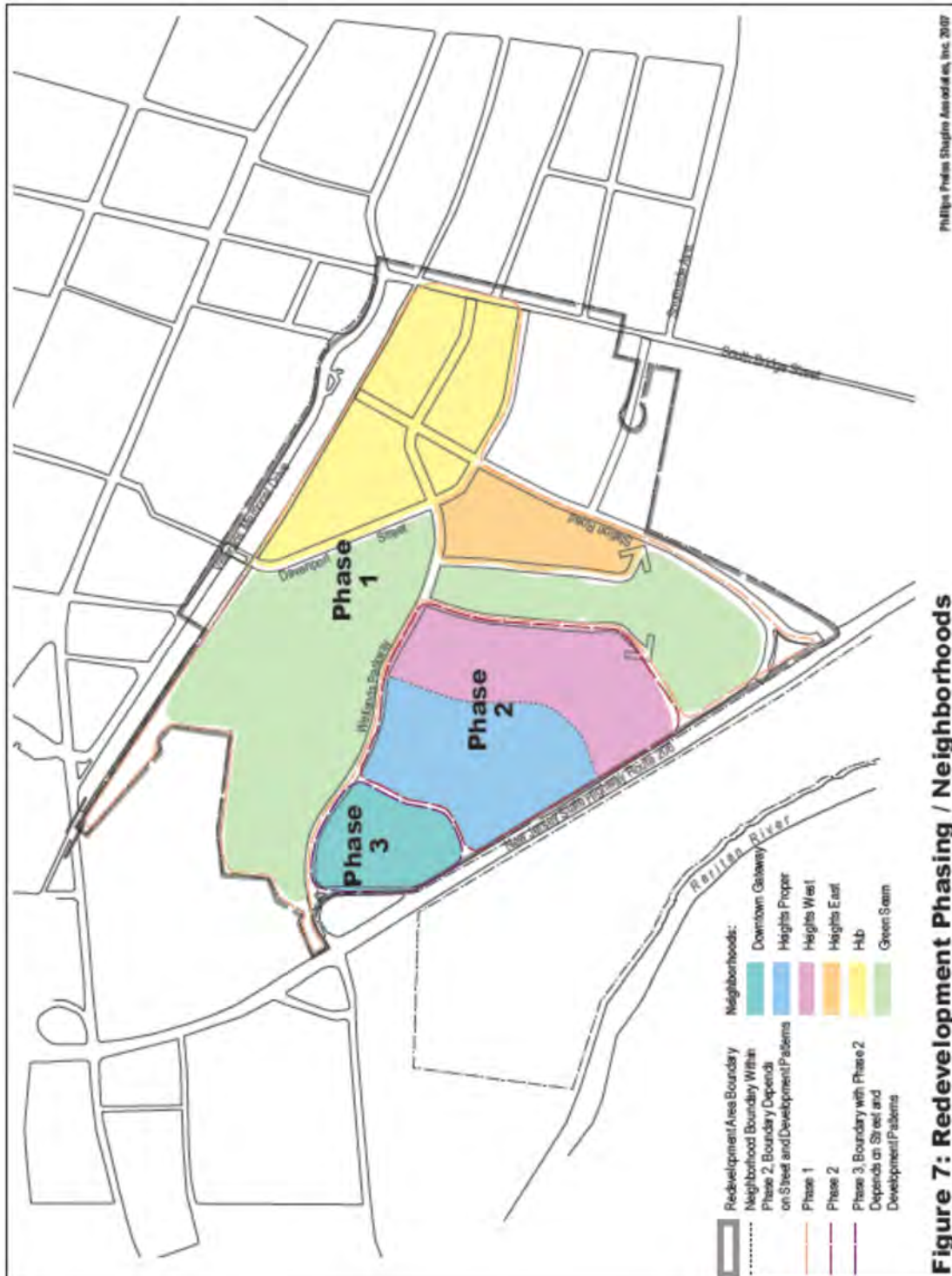
The Phase 1 Hub station area is the key to the success of the entire redevelopment effort and must be developed first. Further, while a balance of residential, commercial and office space is important, residential development is the “driver” of development within the Hub. The network of primary roads and major infrastructural improvements that must be completed in Phase 1 shall be as follows. Station Road, from the train station to Davenport Street, shall also be completed in Phase 1. Also in Phase 1, either Wetlands Parkway shall be extended from Davenport Street to Route 206, or to the extent that this extension is delayed or otherwise inhibited due to environmental or traffic permitting issues, then as an alternate, Station Road shall be extended from the Davenport Street extension to Route 206. The existing Holly Glen cul-de-sac shall be extended all the way from South Bridge Street to Station Road, at the time Station Road is extended to Route 206.

The Davenport extension including the underpass under NJ Transit rail road tracks is intended to be constructed as part of the redevelopment of the Landfill Redevelopment Area, however due to significant permitting requirements and cost for such construction, it will require the cooperation and assistance of both private developers and public agencies. Thus, the only requirement of this Plan is for the redeveloper of the New Jersey Transit property to construct as part of this project, the Davenport Street extension within the Landfill Redevelopment Area to terminate at the planned connection to the proposed underpass at the New Jersey Transit railroad tracks. Should the funding for the construction of the underpass become available during the redevelopment of

Somerville Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Plan

the New Jersey Transit property, the redeveloper of the New Jersey Transit property shall cooperate and assist the Borough and any other private developers and public agencies in the construction of the underpass.

Figure 7: Redevelopment Phasing/Neighborhoods



Somerville Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Plan

During Phase 1, a phased parking strategy must be employed in the Hub to create the required number of commuter parking spaces for NJ Transit and the redeveloper of Phase 2. Redeveloper must utilize a phase parking strategy that is acceptable to NJ Transit and the Borough. This may include the construction of both permanent and temporary parking lots and structures that will provide sufficient parking for NJ Transit's current needs, as well as those of new residents, workers and shoppers to the Hub.* The parking facilities should also provide an appropriate number of bicycle parking racks, within proximity to the structure. The bicycle parking racks shall include enclosed parking shelters.

Although the Heights East neighborhood is expected to take on the character of a moderate density residential neighborhood comprised of townhomes and apartments, much of this area is still within a short walk of the train station. As such it could be considered a southern extension of the Hub. Construction of the required roadway known as Station Road, (which is required to service the Hub), will open up Heights East for development. Development of the Heights East will also provide a connection to the Green Seam.

Development of open space areas within the Green Seam must begin during Phase 1. These include, at a minimum, the required active recreational facilities within the green gateway, and passive trails within the Green Seam.

The designated redeveloper of the New Jersey Transit property, as part of its project, shall construct the Davenport Street extension within the Landfill Redevelopment Area to terminate at the planned connection to the proposed underpass at the New Jersey Transit railroad tracks. Should the funding for the construction of the underpass become available during the redevelopment of the New Jersey Transit property, the redeveloper of the New Jersey Transit property shall cooperate and assist the Borough and any other private developers and public agencies in the construction of the underpass.

PHASE 2 (HEIGHTS PROPER, HEIGHTS WEST, GREEN SEAM AND ROUTE 206 INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS)

Due to environmental concerns, and the landfill closure measures necessary for allowing residential redevelopment and construction of required interior roadways, the Heights would logically be developed in Phase 2. Improvements to the Route 206 and Orlando Drive intersection, the Route 206 and Bridge Street intersection, and the remainder of the primary road network must also be completed in Phase 2.

In addition to the built environment, the remaining improvements to and within the open space areas within the Green Seam, must be completed during Phase 2. This includes the active "Wetlands Park" and the remainder of trails throughout the northern portion of the Green Seam.

* Note that the existing NJT lot contains 423 parking spaces. During the phasing and construction, the developer shall ensure that at least 423 parking spaces are available for NJ Transit in order for NJ Transit to properly maintain operations and parking needs.

Somerville Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Plan

Unlike the Hub, which is the central focus and first element of the Redevelopment Plan to be developed, fluctuations in the real estate market may require a change in the redevelopment program as it proceeds beyond Phase 1. Based on the strength of the market, the designated developer may wish to reduce the number of residential units in concert with an increase in the size of the office component so as to bolster the success of the Downtown Gateway, which is expected to be developed at a subsequent time, in Phase 3. While this may well change the character and feel of the Heights, the flexible nature of the road system will make it possible for these changes to be accommodated.

The construction of a second parking structure in the Hub must be undertaken during Phase 2. This includes the 400-space shared parking structure to be built over the surface parking lot created in Phase 1. This second parking structure will provide the additional parking necessary for sustaining the anticipated increased regional ridership at the train station, and to serve other uses within the Hub.

PHASE 3 (DOWNTOWN GATEWAY)

Phase 3, or the Downtown Gateway, is the only portion of the Redevelopment Area not envisioned to include a residential component. Instead, Phase 3 development will focus on the provision of signature office development that will promote Somerville's regional identity and will provide a gateway from Route 206 into the Redevelopment Area. Due to the current somewhat weak state of the market for office and research technology in the region, this portion of the Redevelopment Area is appropriate for the final phase of development when such a market may well be stronger and more viable.

5 The Public Realm: Streets, Circulation & Open Space

Streets, parks, and other public spaces constitute the “public realm”, the primary public spaces that form the character and identity of the Redevelopment Area. Beyond their strict utilitarian function, they have the potential to also create an inviting environment for residents, shoppers, workers and visitors. They also provide the physical framework within which private development will take place. In **Figure 8, Public Realm**, the framework of required new streets and open space in the Redevelopment Area is shown.

The Redevelopment Area is intended to include a connected grid of roadways that balance the mobility needs of vehicular traffic with the safety and comfort of pedestrians and cyclists (i.e. visible crosswalks, bump-outs and other traffic calming measures). Four streets are specifically required with fixed alignments. Additional secondary streets are required in order to create a fine-grained street network that provides travel choices and enhances walkability. In addition, roadway and pedestrian connections into the site should be designed to provide a seamless extension of downtown Somerville into the Redevelopment Area (primarily the Hub), and a means of integrating residential neighborhoods within the Redevelopment Plans with Somerville’s surrounding neighborhoods.

The Green Seam is the signature open space of the Plan, providing a major public recreational and environmental amenity. In addition to this large contiguous open space within the Plan, neighborhood pocket parks should be interspersed throughout the more built-up areas to provide smaller open space is proximate to every home in the Redevelopment Area. Connections to the trails within the Green Seam should also be provided from all parts of Redevelopment Area.

REQUIRED PRIMARY STREETS

All four of the required primary roadways, the Wetlands Parkway, Station Road, the Davenport Street extension, are two lane roadways (one lane of traffic in each direction). The Green Seam Couplet forms a north to south, one-way couplet traveling along the Green Seam. Each of the streets are bordered by on-street parking, sidewalks, and extensive street trees and landscaping. The required roadways must reflect the development context of the areas through which they travel. For example, extensive landscaping is envisioned on streets adjacent to open space areas along the Green Seam, while a more urban, “hardscape” appearance is envisioned within the Hub area. For convenience, these four street names will be used throughout this document; however, they are not meant to preclude renaming in the future. However, it is required that one of the primary streets be recognized as “Sternadori Road”.

Figure 8: Public Realm



Somerville Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Plan

The alignment of the four primary roadways, Wetlands Parkway, Station Road, Davenport Street and the Green Seam Couplet should be exactly or close to the alignment that is illustrated in Figure 8, “Public Realm”. The configuration of lanes, sidewalks, trees and bike lanes must be provided in accordance with the “Allowable Street Sections” illustrated in Figures 9a and 9b. During Phase 1, the designated developer shall complete, as part of its project the Davenport Street Extension within the Landfill Redevelopment Area to terminate at the planned connection to the proposed underpass at the New Jersey Transit railroad tracks. Wetlands Parkway, from South Bridge Street to the Davenport Street Extension shall be complete. Station Road from the train station to Davenport Street shall also be completed in Phase 1. Also in Phase 1, either Wetlands Parkway shall be extended from Davenport Street to Route 206, or to the extent that this extension is delayed or otherwise inhibited due to environmental or traffic permitting issues, then as an alternate, Station Road shall be extended from the Davenport Street extension to Route 206. The existing Holly Glen cul-de-sac shall be extended all the way from South Bridge Street to Station Road, at the time Station Road is extended to Route 206. Such improvements also include intersection enhancements at exterior entry/exit points.

The roadway specifications differ according to the changing nature of the area through which each roadway traverses. Thus, each roadway may have several different requirements as it passes through The Hub for example as opposed to the Green Seam. The required lane width and road configurations for all streets in the Redevelopment Area, including the primary required streets, are described in greater detail in the subsequent discussion on street section configurations, and are illustrated in Figures 9a, 9b and 9c, Allowable Street Sections.

Note that the Redevelopment Plan encourages bike travel to be provided, not only as a recreational pursuit within the Green Seam, but as a means of access to the train station and to facilitate bike travel within the Redevelopment Area. The required streets are designed to be multi-use with cyclists sharing the roadways with cars. Given the width of the travel lanes and the level of traffic anticipated, separate bike lanes are not considered to be necessary, neither are they prudent in light of the extent to which on-street parking will be provided along such streets.

Note also that a “knuckle” is created in the Hub where the Wetlands Parkway, Station Road and Davenport Street converge. With its prominent visibility, this block is a potential location for a civic building.

WETLANDS PARKWAY

Wetlands Parkway travels in a southeasterly direction from the Downtown Gateway area at Orlando Drive and Route 206. This roadway forms the boundary between the buildable portion of the Redevelopment Area to the south and the Green Seam (open space) to the north. The Wetlands Parkway continues into the Hub, and serves as the Hub’s main spine before terminating at Bridge Street. The Wetlands Parkway is required to adhere to different specifications, as it passes through different areas within the Redevelopment Plan. It should adhere to the Open Space Parkway configuration (referred to as the “Wetlands Parkway” within the RPA Reports) when traversing any open space portion of the Redevelopment Area. It should adhere to the Connector Street configuration (known as “Station Road/Davenport Street” within the RPA Reports) when traveling through the Hub.

STATION ROAD

Station Road begins at Route 206, travels in a northeasterly direction, terminating at Station Plaza within the Hub. The roadway will provide direct access to the train station area and train station commuter parking for commuters and shoppers. Similar to the Wetlands Parkway, Station Road should adhere to the Open Space Parkway configuration when adjacent to open space, and the Connector Street configuration when traversing the Hub.

DAVENPORT STREET

Davenport Street extends from Veterans Memorial Drive and Downtown Somerville underneath the NJT rail right-of-way (via a new below grade crossing), into the Hub. It provides secondary access to the Hub before terminating at Bridge Street. Since the required alignment of Davenport Street traverses both open space areas and the Hub, the road should include sections configured to the specifications of the Open Space Parkway and the Connector Street, respectively. The Open Space Parkway section may be modified to allow parallel parking on both sides of the street along Davenport Street, as a safety measure. Note that the Davenport Street Extension must be designed in a manner that matches the specifications of Somerset County for the underpass.

GREEN SEAM COUPLET

The **Green Seam Couplet** borders the required Green Seam open space as it passes in a north-south direction between the Heights East and the Heights West neighborhoods. These streets connect to the Wetlands Parkway at its northern end. To the south it blends into the local street network and Station Road within the Heights Area. The Green Seam Couplet is required to follow the Linear Park Street configuration (called the Green Seam Street in the RPA Reports). It forms a one-way couplet around a linear open space.

SECONDARY STREETS

Within the Redevelopment Area, secondary roadways are necessary to provide accessibility to development within smaller blocks created by a grid of streets. The resulting small block sizes provide short and convenient routes, and help distribute vehicular traffic so that no one street becomes overloaded. Overall, these streets provide the foundation on which a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood is to be built.

The street network for the Redevelopment Area should be developed such that the typical block size, as defined by primary and secondary streets (and excluding minor intersections, alleyways and driveways), varies from approximately 200 by 300 feet to approximately 300 by 450 feet, however, larger block sizes may be necessary and used where appropriate. Intersections must be spaced at least 200 feet apart, both for safety and to avoid conflicting turning movements. In addition, streets should be aligned in such a way that all streets are framed by the fronts or sides of buildings, or by open space. In no event is the rear of a building or blank wall to front on or face a street. Dead-ends or cul-de-sac streets should be limited within the Redevelopment Area. Where absolutely necessary, dead-ends must be connected by pedestrian cut-through pathways to adjacent streets or to the open space network, so as to provide for a continuous, connected pedestrian pathway system throughout.

Secondary streets must utilize one of the five street section configurations discussed in the next section. There is greater flexibility with respect to which of the five is to be utilized, since this will differ according to the actual land uses to which they are adjacent in the redeveloper's Plan. The **Illustrative Conceptual Development Plan, Figure 6**, illustrates an example of secondary street concepts possible within the Redevelopment Area.

STREET SECTION CONFIGURATIONS

Figures 9a, 9b, and 9c, Allowable Street Sections, show the dimensions for all streets. These street sections must be used for all four required streets as well as for the secondary streets. The circumstances under which each street type and standard is dependent upon its purpose and the nature of the adjacent use are explained within each of the descriptions below. In the Hub, the developer must ensure that turning radii are sufficient for bus traffic.

OPEN SPACE PARKWAY

An Open Space Parkway is provided in situations where the roadway borders a park/open space on one side, and development on the other. The roadway is configured as a two-way street with one travel lane in each direction. A parking lane and sidewalks are provided along the building side of the roadway, and a double row of street trees are planted on the open space side framing a pedestrian path in between the two rows. The pedestrian path may be between 6-10 feet wide. An additional vehicle parking lane may also be provided along the park side of the roadway in the Hub area.

CONNECTOR STREET

A Connector Street is a two-way street with one travel lane in each direction and parking lanes and sidewalks on both sides. The sidewalks are planted with a regular row of street trees placed at regular intervals.

LINEAR PARK STREET

Linear park Streets provide a flexible concept for roadways which frame a "village green", a greenway or a pocket park element in which traffic flows one-way within a single travel lane around the park or green, or as part of a pair of one-way streets—referred to as a "couplet." Such streets must be one-way, and must be built as a couplet (in pairs). A parking lane and a sidewalk planted with a regular row of street trees are included on the building side of the street. Naturalistic groupings of trees and landscaping are to be planted on the open space side. This configuration is known as the "Park Street/One-way Park Street" within the RPA Reports.

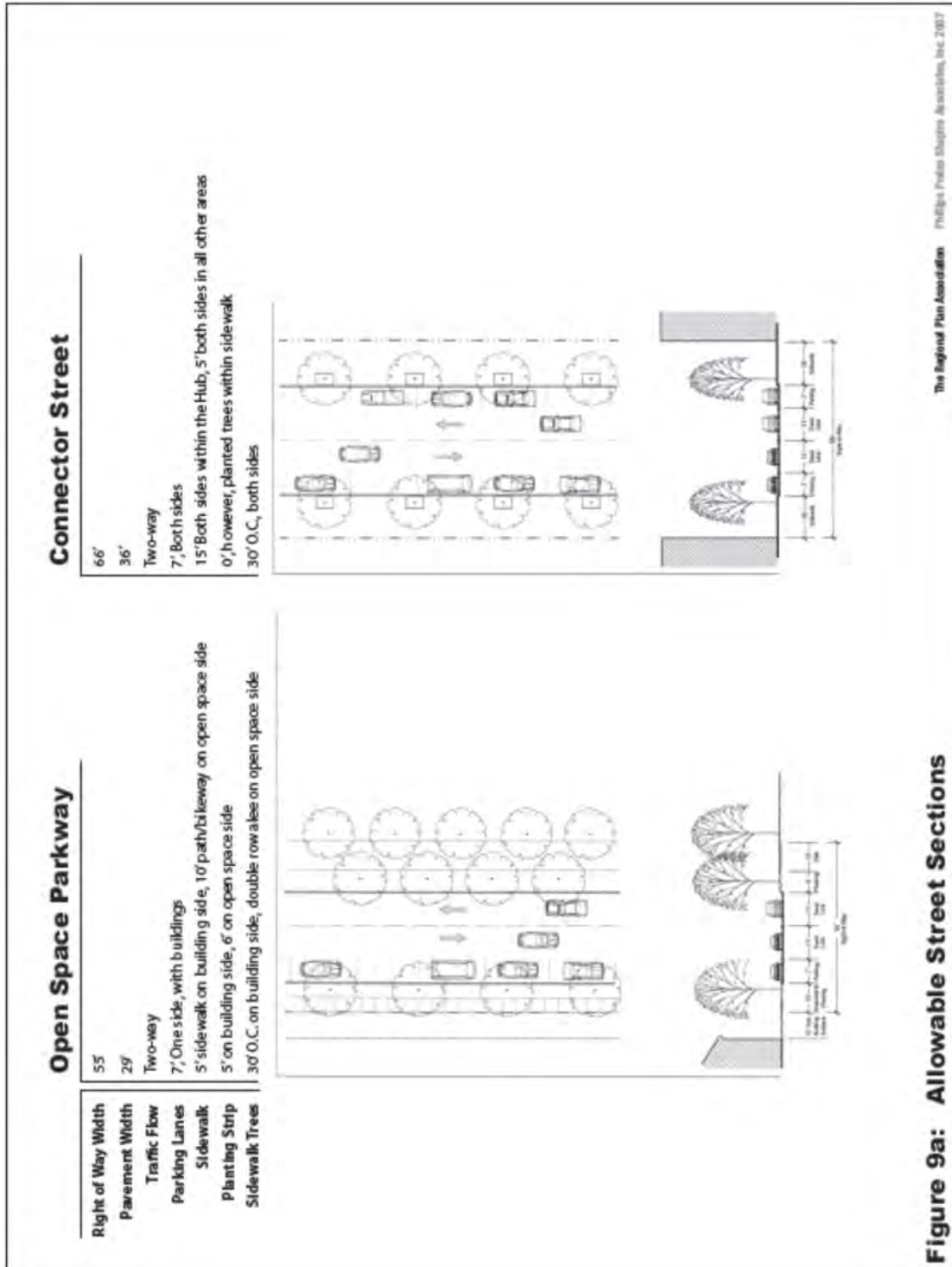
LOCAL STREET

The Local Street configuration (known as Neighborhood Street within the RPA Reports) is designed and functions much like a driveway in a townhouse development. It provides two-way travel within an ±18-20-foot-wide travel lane, framed by housing on each side of the street. An on-street parking lane is provided on each side of the roadway. The roadway does not have a painted divider line that is common in public streets, and relies upon the common sense of drivers to slow down and stay to one side of the roadway when oncoming traffic approaches. The width,

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absence of markings, and presence of on-street parking are common “traffic calming” devices that makes streets safer for pedestrians and drivers alike.

Figure 9a: Allowable Street Sections



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Figure 9a: Allowable Street Sections

Figure 9b: Allowable Street Sections

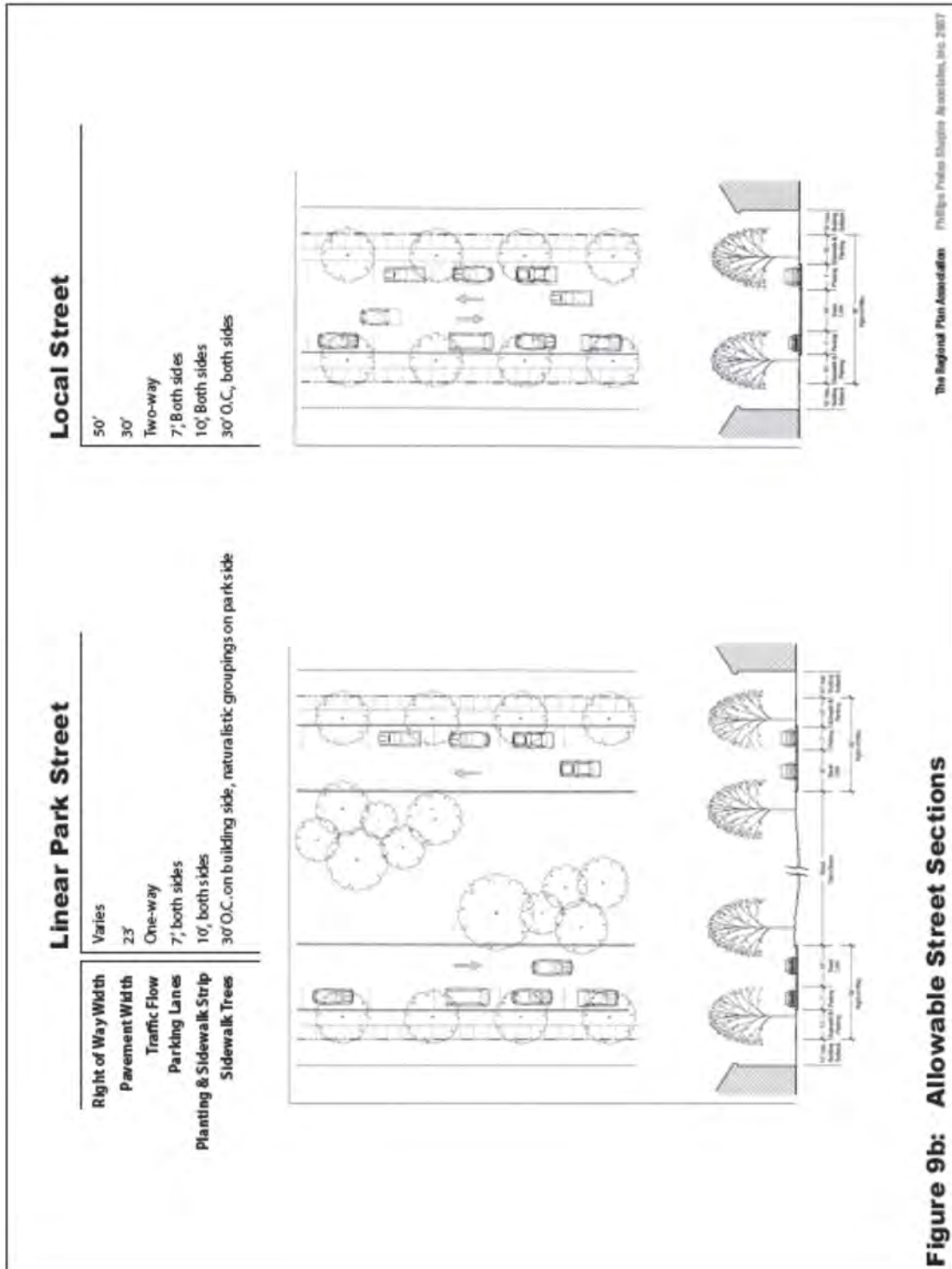
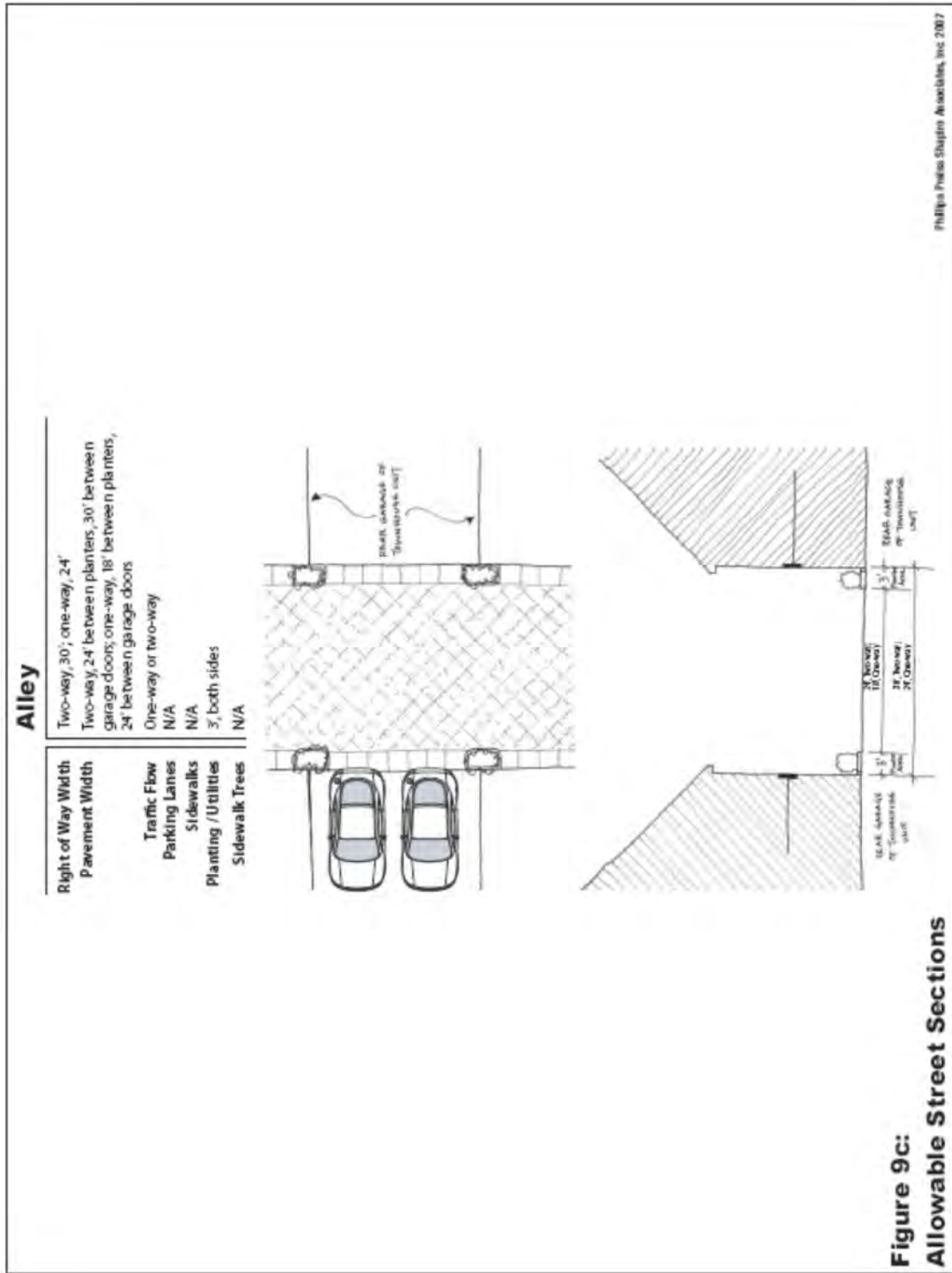


Figure 9c: Allowable Street Sections



ALLEYS

In order to access rear parking garages, alleys are encouraged. Such a design maintains pedestrian-friendly buildings oriented toward the street and greatly reduces the number of curb cuts along streets, as well as streets facing garages along public roadways. Alleys can be privately or publicly maintained and owned. They are designed with a narrow right-of-way, typically a 20-foot pavement width and 30 feet spacing between facing garages. Alleys work especially well with townhouse development.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE CONNECTIONS

In addition to creation of pedestrian friendly neighborhood streets, pedestrian and bicycle access from Redevelopment Area properties to open space, and pedestrian and bicycle access from downtown and surrounding neighborhoods to the Redevelopment Area are very important. The following pedestrian and bicycle connections shall be required:

CONNECTIONS TO SURROUNDING AREA

- A new pedestrian and bicycle bridge over Route 206 linking the Green Seam with the future potential Raritan River Greenway Park is envisioned.
- Trails and boardwalks within the northern portion of the Green Seam should be designated to allow connections between the Old Dutch Parsonage and the Davenport Street underpass to Downtown Somerville.
- The pedestrian and bicycle connection underneath the Bridge Street railroad bridge near the intersection of Bridge Street and Veterans Memorial Drive is required to be improved with sidewalks lighting and special paving.
- Pedestrian and bicycle connections to the neighborhood east of the Redevelopment Area, especially via Southside Avenue for access to the Peters Brook Greenway, must be provided. Accordingly, the street network within the Redevelopment Area should provide multiple connections to Bridge Street.
- Pedestrian and bicycle crossings at Veterans Memorial Drive and the inclusion of traffic-calming measures must be provided to enhance pedestrian safety.

CONNECTIONS WITHIN THE REDEVELOPMENT AREA

- The required active parks within both the northern and southern ends of the Green Seam must be connected by way of a pedestrian and bicycle path that forms a “green circuit” through the Green Seam linear space and the Heights neighborhoods. Connecting the green circuit to pocket parks and linear greenways is also encouraged. (See **Figure 6, Illustrative Conceptual Development Plan**).
- Pedestrian trails within the Green Seam must be built as elevated boardwalks where possible to avoid sensitive wetland areas, and must be constructed to the standards of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA). Bicycle usage, if appropriate, should also be considered.
- Green Seam trails and boardwalks wherever possible must be designed to include benches or other types of fixed seating, and appropriate pedestrian-scale lighting along their length, according to NJDEP regulations.

OPEN SPACE/PARKS

STATION PLAZA

The Station Plaza, at the east side of Station Road between the tracks and Wetlands Parkway, should be developed as an active, compact public space energized by the train station and the variety of retail and residential uses within surrounding blocks. The Station Plaza should be attractively landscaped with decorative pavers, street trees, planters, water features and seating areas. Seating should be convenient for people waiting for the train, waiting to be picked up, or for the simple purpose of “people-watching”. Outdoor dining, street vendor booths and farmers markets are some of the uses that are encouraged to animate and enliven outdoor spaces. The Station Plaza should be designed with a multi-use surface so that the area can be temporarily closed to vehicular traffic and area used for events.

THE GREEN SEAM

The linear park known as the Green Seam is intended to provide a public open space amenity within the Redevelopment Area that complements new development while also facilitating the detention and on-site filtration of stormwater. The wetland and floodplain areas should be taken advantage of for this progressive form of stormwater management. The Green Seam should be maintained at a width that meets or exceeds all required DEP stream encroachment, wetland and floodplain regulations.

As shown in **Figure 8**, the Green Seam must be framed by the Green Seam couplet streets and the Wetlands Parkway. Maximizing the Green Seam’s street frontage makes it visible, ensures that it feels like an open public park, and gives users a greater degree of safety. Similarly, buildings adjacent to the Green Seam must be sited so that their front façades or side elevations, rather than their rear elevations, face the open space.

An active “Green Gateway” park is required within the Green Seam at the south end of the Redevelopment Area near the intersection of Route 206 and Station Road if environmentally suitable. The presence of this park acts as a gateway to the remainder of the Green Seam. In addition, construction of the required pedestrian bridge across Route 206 is most appropriate near this Green Gateway, as the potential to connect to a number of converging pedestrian trails is available. Active parkland is to include open space devoted for active recreation uses, such as ballfields, skateboard parks, running/biking trails, tennis courts and basketball courts.

An additional active “Wetlands Park” is required on the northern edge of the Wetlands Parkway midway along the Parkway if environmentally suitable. The park must be connected to the trails in the Green Seam. Planned park activities should be similar to active uses within the Green Gateway Park. However, complementary active uses should be planned for each area of active open space so there is not an overabundance of acreage devoted to a single activity or group.

For specificity on programmed space or activities to occur within active park areas, the developer should refer to the soon to be completed Borough of Somerville recreation master plan. In addition, requirements concerning landscape design of these parks is provided in Chapter 8, Landscape Design Guidelines.

NEIGHBORHOOD POCKET PARKS

Where possible, neighborhood pocket parks should be created that provide a “village green” effect within the Heights. Not only would such an element create a neighborhood asset for future residents, but it could provide a link in the green circuit envisioned throughout the Redevelopment Area. Pocket parks should be bounded by public streets. Pocket parks should not be located behind or between buildings where they are hidden from view of streets. The open space should not feel like a “back yard,” or a private park hidden behind buildings.

6 Land Use, Bulk and Density

LAND USES

The following section defines permitted uses in the Redevelopment Area. These uses and their bulk or density requirements are defined within the four “districts” within the Redevelopment Area—the Hub the Heights, the Downtown Gateway and the Green Seam. **Figure 10, Land Use Plan** graphically displays the permitted land uses within the Redevelopment Area.

In regard to the development of any civic or institutional uses, the designated redeveloper should refer to the May 2007 Somerville Community Amenities Survey for guidance concerning desired community facilities. In the Community Amenities Survey, Borough residents indicated the following preferences: 1) library 2) community/recreation center 3) police station 4) performing arts center (police and performing arts center were separated by a single vote) 5) Emergency Services Complex and 6) Borough Hall. Further, community members and stakeholders expressed interest in the possibility of providing a mixed-use civic/residential use (i.e. ground-floor library/community center with upper floor residential).

Any supermarket or retail store that offers a similar assortment of goods and services (meat, fish, dairy, produce, etc.) for off premises consumption to a supermarket that is located in the West Main Street Redevelopment Area is prohibited in any portion of the Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Area. However, such requirement shall not prohibit:

- a. a convenience store of not more than 4,000 square feet that offers limited food selection and in which no single food category occupies more than 15% of the sales area square footage; or
- b. a full-service retail establishment that sells prepared food for take-out, off-premises consumption as an incidental part of its business (pizzeria, restaurant, bagel store, etc.); or
- c. a non-food retail establishment that offers food items as an incidental accessory to its core business (i.e., a tanning salon that offers coffee and nutrition bars, etc.).

For Block 120.01, Lot 1, the permitted uses and bulk standards are as listed in the B-2 zone district of the Borough's Land Use and Development Ordinance (Schedules A, B & C). In addition, a drive thru bank shall be a conditional use for this property. The Planning Board may permit this conditional use, if the Board determines that the development proposal complies with the conditions and standards set forth herein for the location and operation of such use.

The conditional use shall comply with the following conditions, requirements and standards:

- a. The layout and orientation of the drive thru bank shall not cause vehicle queuing in the right of the way of Veterans Memorial Drive;
- b. The onsite queuing of motor vehicles shall not adversely interfere with pedestrians entering or exiting the adjacent NJ Transit train platforms;

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- c. The sight line distance for vehicles entering and leaving the site are in compliance with AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) guidelines/recommendations;
- d. Any application for a bank drive thru teller(s) shall require a traffic study be performed by a NJ licensed Professional Engineer specializing in traffic engineering that demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Planning Board, that the above stated conditions are met.

THE HUB

The Hub is the portion of the Redevelopment Area capable of providing for the greatest variety of overall uses, including a series of mixed uses at higher densities. The heart of the Hub is the Station Plaza, which works as an activity generator and as a gathering place for commuters, workers, shoppers and residents. While the identity of the Station Plaza is linked to the open space amenity it provides, the catalyst in creating such an active place is the spillover effect from a varied mix of land uses that serve users at different times of the day or evening. The Hub is required to include active uses, such as those that provide street-level pedestrian activity (retail, restaurants, performing arts theatre, community/recreation centers and building hall space that can be adapted to accommodate a wide range uses and/or activities), and activity that extends throughout the day or evening (residential uses, restaurants, and cafés) and should complement and not compete directly with existing Main Street businesses.

In order to create this mixed-use, active environment, the following uses are permitted within the Hub:

- Ground-floor retail uses that encourage pedestrian activity. Retail in the Hub is intended to include “destination” retailers that would not fit within the fine-grain character and small floor plates of traditional Main Street, and that would not compete with downtown businesses.
- Office uses.
- Live/work spaces, on the ground level of residential buildings. Live/work spaces shall be connected to their own residential units, typically with the living space above the live/work space and connected by an internal staircase.
- Inns or boutique hotels, not to exceed 200 rooms, and preferably in conjunction with ground floor restaurant, meeting rooms, and banquet space.
- Art house movie theaters.
- Performing Arts Center.
- Residential multifamily development, including rental and for sale condominiums.
- Residential use is permitted on the ground floor of multi-family residential development along the west side of South Bridge Street.
- Ground floor retail use is not a requirement for multi-family residential development along the west side of South Bridge Street.
- Townhomes (including rental and for-sale and condominiums).
- NJ Transit train station.

Figure 10: Land Use Plan



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- Station Plaza along the east side of Station Road, between the tracks and Wetlands Parkway. The design of the Station Plaza shall be compatible and harmonious with the design elements of the re-built NJ Transit train station.
- Institutional or civic uses. A municipal hall should be a standalone signature building, but a recreation/community center could work as a mixed-use structure complemented by upper floor residential uses.
- Parking garages and lots, including temporary parking lots, subject to the requirements later in this chapter and the Design Guidelines in Chapter 7.

RETAIL FOCUS AREAS

Ground-floor retail is strongly encouraged within the buildings surrounding the Station Plaza in order to create an active and visually interesting street presence. Active uses in these areas can include retail, multi-family leasing or amenity space including fitness and other active uses, community space that serves the neighborhood or entire Borough of Somerville, transit station access, secure bicycle storage, or flex residential units that allow accessible access for “brass plaque” live/work home occupations, that may be converted to retail use in the future. Home occupations can include any occupation allowed by New Jersey law, or as otherwise limited by the Borough of Somerville planning board. Live/work home occupations shall meet the building code requirements for “Live/Work Units”, including the limit to 5 or fewer employees, are restricted to ground floor units surrounding the Station Plaza and shall have a separate public entrance to the work space that is not internal to a building (i.e. entrance to the work space fronts on the Station Plaza or an adjoining street).

This area is shown in **Figure 10, Land Use Plan**. Typically, the ground-floor retail space should be located adjacent to sidewalks; however, at the station plaza, retail shall also be located in buildings fronting onto the plaza.

In areas of the Hub that do not have active retail, commercial uses are permitted on the ground floor. However, such businesses shall maintain large and transparent windows and shall not use blinds or similar fixtures. Live/work and residential uses, including accessory lobbies and amenities, are also permitted in such locations.

THE HEIGHTS

The Heights is to be a lower-density neighborhood consisting almost entirely of residential uses, but also suited for larger footprint commercial, office or institutional uses. In the northwestern portion of the Heights known as the “Heights Proper,” closest to the Downtown Gateway and to Route 206, commercial office and institutional uses are not permitted along the Green Seam. Strip commercial development that includes front yard parking along a street, and which serves individual stores or groups of stores of uniform design, are not permitted anywhere in the Heights.

The following are permitted uses:

- Townhouses
- Apartments

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- Live/work spaces, only within the ground level of residential buildings fronting on Wetlands Parkway or Station Road. Live/work spaces shall be connected to their own residential units, typically with the living space above the live/work space and connected by an internal staircase.
- Stacked flats
- Commercial, limited to the Heights Proper
- Office, limited to the Heights Proper
- Institutional or Civic, limited to the Heights Proper
- Neighborhood scale active and/or passive open space and recreational uses
- Parking garages and lots, subject to the requirements later in this chapter and the Design Guidelines in Chapter 7.

THE DOWNTOWN GATEWAY

The Downtown Gateway should be designed with a signature non-residential use reflective of Somerville's importance in the regional economy. Office, office research, biotechnology, other technological research or conference center buildings are permitted. Active and/or passive recreational space is permitted to complement these uses.

THE GREEN SEAM

The Green Seam is an open space amenity in which the following uses are permitted: natural and restored open space, landscaping, stormwater management facilities, and active (if permissible) and passive recreational uses. These uses should be designed collectively so as to form a cohesive whole serving the entire Redevelopment Area.

DENSITY, YIELD AND BUILDING HEIGHT

The following table indicates the required bulk, density, height and development yield standards for buildings within Phases I, II and III of the Redevelopment Area. The Redevelopment Plan Areas located outside the 3 phases will continue to be governed by existing zoning.

REDEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

<i>Location</i>	<i>Maximum Building Height</i>	<i>Maximum FAR/Density</i>	<i>Maximum Residential Yield in total</i>	<i>Maximum Non-Residential Yield</i>
Hub	4-6 stories/75 feet*	N/A	<u>NA</u> Density Controlled by Number of Parking Spaces	0
Heights East	<u>Townhouse</u>	N/A	≤ 350 du	<u>NA</u>
Heights West	≤ 3 stories/35 feet	N/A		0
Heights Proper	<u>Apartments</u> ≤ 4 stories/45 feet <u>Non-Residential</u> (where permitted) 3-4 stories/45 feet	N/A		0
Downtown Gateway	3-4 stories/50 feet	N/A	0	0
Green Seam		N/A	0	0

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	1 story/15 feet			
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*One signature building within the Hub may be a maximum of 10 stories or 120 feet, whichever is lesser. Notwithstanding anything in this redevelopment plan to the contrary with respect to “setbacks” and “build-to-lines,” in that portion of the Hub fronting on South Bridge Street, the maximum building height for any portion of any building within a 45’ foot setback of South Bridge Street shall be 4 stories/45 ft. For example, if a building extends so that the rear of the building is 45’ feet from the South Bridge Street right-of-way, then the portion of the building within the first 45’ feet from the right-of-way shall be no more than 4 stories or 45 ft. and the remainder of the building may “step-up” to the maximum building height permitted above. The setback of the building face up to 4 stories or 45’ from the curb along South Bridge Street shall be a minimum of 30’ from the existing curb.



Open Space Acreage

Open space (passive parks, trails, active ballfields, etc.) shall occupy at least forty (40) percent of the gross Redevelopment Area.

Measurement of Building Height

Although this Redevelopment Plan supersedes the underlying zoning for the Redevelopment Area, “Building Height” shall be measured per the requirements set forth for measuring building height within Chapter 102, Land Use and Development within the Code of the Borough of Somerville. Building height shall be determined as follows:

HEIGHT OF BUILDING OR STRUCTURE - In the case of buildings or other roofed structures, the vertical distance from the average normal grade adjacent to the exterior walls or other perimeter support structures, in the event there are no walls, to the top of the highest roof beams of a flat roof, gambrel roof or mansard roof; or to the mean level between the peak and eaves of the highest portion of a gable roof, hip roof or shed roof (i.e., a roof with one slope). Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event that the building or other roofed structure includes a parapet wall or other such facade element or other such vertical element on the roof, the building height shall be measured to the top of such parapet or element. In the case of non-building structures without a roof, the vertical distance from the average normal grade at the base of the structure to the highest point of the structure. For purposes of administering the above definition, "normal grade" shall be construed to be the newly established grade after construction, exclusive of any filling, berming, mounding, excavating, curbing or retaining wall which alters the grade at the base of the structure from the grade in the general vicinity of the structure. However, anything in this paragraph to the contrary notwithstanding, building height is not measured to exterior architectural embellishments including spires, minarets, belfries, turrets, etc.

Building Transitions Across the Redevelopment Area

Variation in Building Height and Densities within the Redevelopment Area

Within the Redevelopment Area, building heights and densities should generally step down in intensity from the most active and public area, the train station. The Hub should have the highest-density buildings, while the portions of the Heights closest to the Hub (i.e., the northern edges of the Heights East and the Heights Proper) should provide a transition to lower-scaled areas. It should be noted that while building height in the Hub shall be permitted to range from 4 to 6 stories, one signature building may be a maximum of 10 stories or 120 feet, whichever is lesser.

Variation in Building Heights and Densities in Relation to Open Space

Within the Heights, the taller buildings—such as apartment buildings—should be sited to frame public open spaces. Taller buildings have a scale that is in keeping with the greater width of the open spaces. The four required streets are also appropriate locations to receive taller, more dense buildings. Other streets, which typically have narrower rights-of-way, should be lined with shorter, smaller-scale buildings. Buildings on either side of a public open space—whether a pocket park or the Green Seam—should be of the same general height and massing, in order to create a coherent and balanced public space.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Any affordable housing requirements shall be addressed in any redevelopment agreement between the Borough and a redeveloper.

A redeveloper may be required to address an affordable housing obligation generated by any development if an obligation is imposed upon the Borough by the State or any State laws or regulations. The terms and specifics concerning how such obligation will be addressed shall be determined by the Borough Council and be set forth in a redevelopment agreement between the Borough and the redeveloper prior to commencement of the project.

PARKING AND LOADING

Considering the desire for higher densities within the Hub and the importance of quality design, parking requirements are applied on a district-wide basis, rather than under traditional zoning standards in which parking must be contained entirely off-street and onsite. Parking within the district may be met through parking garages, parking lots and on-street parking. Shared parking is strongly encouraged to make efficient use of land devoted to parking. The provision of adequate bicycle parking at appropriate locations is also encouraged.

TYPES OF PARKING LOCATIONS

NJ Transit Parking Requirements

In connection with the redevelopment of the Hub, parking must be provided, subject to the approval of NJ Transit and the Borough that will meet the long-term needs of NJ Transit. Considering that the peak residential parking demand for permanent residents occurs during off-hours for the train station, shared parking between residential and commuter parking is recommended to help use the parking supply efficiently. An appropriate number of bicycle rack spaces should also be provided. More than 50% of the bicycle racks spaces shall be enclosed.

The construction of the garages may occur within a phased parking scenario during Phase 1 and utilized in conjunction with one or more adjacent surface parking lots. The redeveloper shall ensure that sufficient parking is available during all phasing and construction of the development and parking garage. During Phase 2, sufficient parking shall be provided to meet the needs of NJ Transit, residents and visitors to the area.

On-street Parking

On-street parking should be provided on all streets of the Redevelopment Area, as shown in the street sections in chapter 5. On-street parking provides convenient short-term parking options for patrons of retail stores and other drivers, and creates a physical buffer between traffic and pedestrians, making streets safer. Furthermore, on-street parking should be permitted overnight on all streets throughout the Hub. If on-street parking is permitted overnight, it may be used to meet a portion of the residential parking demand.

Off-street Parking

All off-street parking spaces which are provided in structured garages shall be encouraged to be entirely or partially below grade; at the center of a building wrapped by residential, commercial or institutional uses; or located at the rear of a building away from view of streets, pedestrian paths, and open spaces. No parking is permitted anywhere within the front yard setback of any building, or between a building and a street. The only exception to these requirements is the temporary parking lot for NJT use in Phase 1.

Parking may be provided either onsite or offsite for a particular use, but should be located within 500 feet of the use it serves. The Planning Board may allow parking spaces at greater distances if the walkway is covered or if it finds that the pedestrian route to the parking space/lot/garage is acceptable.

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Additional regulations for parking screening and design are provided in the next Chapter, Design Guidelines.

LOADING

The number and location of loading spaces, if any, shall be determined during the site plan review process. Any loading spaces shall be located at the side, rear or interior of buildings, away from the street-facing frontages.

PARKING RATIOS

The number of parking spaces provided for the various uses is as stated in Schedule C of the Borough Land Use and Development Ordinance with the exception of residential parking which shall be 1.2 parking spaces per unit. This parking requirement does not include the parking demand for NJ Transit, and can be modified through the use of the ULI or other shared parking methodology.

SHARED PARKING

Shared parking facilities are encouraged in the Redevelopment Area. Shared parking occurs where a parking lot or facility is jointly utilized for more than one use.

The total amount of parking for one or more uses within the Redevelopment Area shall be the sum of the requirements of each individual use, except that the total number may be reduced by a maximum of 50 percent of the required number of spaces in the Hub, and by a maximum of 50% in all other portions of the Redevelopment Plan, if credible evidence to the satisfaction of the approving agency is provided which indicates that the peak parking demand of the two (2) or more uses sharing a parking lot or facility do not coincide, and that the accumulated parking demand at any one time of the two (2) or more uses sharing the facility do not exceed the total capacity of the facility. Such evidence shall indicate the use of the facility by residents, employees, customers and visitors on both weekdays and weekends, and both during the day and overnight. The Urban Land Institute shared parking methodology shall be employed when performing the shared parking analyses unless another methodology is specifically approved by the Board or the Board's professionals._

No shared parking facility shall be located more than five hundred (500) feet from the establishment which it serves, as measured between the nearest parking space on the premises to the entrance of the establishment which it serves unless a greater distance is determined by the Board to be acceptable given the actual layout and design of the proposed development

PARKING AND LOADING STALL DIMENSIONS

Parking spaces in open-air parking lots shall be a minimum of 9 feet wide by 18 feet in length. Parking spaces within parking garages or decks shall be a minimum of 8 ½ feet wide by 18 feet in

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length. All other parking, loading, driveway and driveway aisle dimensions shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS), or the Borough of Somerville ordinances as applicable.

7 Building Design Guidelines

INTENT

This section describes guidelines for the Redevelopment Area that will help create a series of walkable neighborhoods with pedestrian-scaled, visually-interesting buildings that orient to and complement the network of streets, parks, and other public spaces. Taken together, the guidelines will help shape a new and memorable community with a “sense of place,” similar to that of Main Street and the surrounding traditional neighborhoods of Somerville.

Specific requirements within the Building Design Guidelines that follow are subject to review by the Somerville Planning Board, which has the authority to grant exceptions to the dimensional requirements in the Board’s reasonable judgment.

The design guidelines are organized around the following four design approaches:

- Place buildings to frame streets, parks, the Green Seam, and the station plaza area, creating intimate, pedestrian-scaled public spaces, and emphasizing important visual corridors;
- Shape building massing to create a friendly, active relationship to public spaces;
- Encourage building styles compatible with traditional architecture found in Somerville, and high-quality choice and application of materials;
- Locate parking inside buildings and at the interior of blocks, away from view of streets, parks and other public spaces.

Figure 11, Urban Design Plan, shows two elements that contribute to creating pedestrian-friendly development that frames the public network of streets and open spaces: build-to lines and gateway treatments. Each of these items is discussed separately below.

BUILDING PLACEMENT AND ORIENTATION

BUILDING ENTRIES

Buildings throughout the Redevelopment Area shall be sited to face, frame, and open onto streets, parks, and other public spaces, rather than alleys, driveways, or parking lots. The rear elevations of buildings shall not be permitted to face onto or be located alongside streets, open space, and other public spaces. In addition:

- Buildings with multiple retail tenants should provide a separate street-level entrance for each retail tenant or business.
- Buildings adjacent to or across from the train station plaza shall have their primary entries facing the plaza or the street that falls between the building and the plaza.
- The front of townhouse or stacked flat buildings may face the front of other townhouse or stacked flat buildings (i.e., across a street). The rear of a townhouse or stacked flat building may face the side of another townhouse or stacked flat building. However, the rear of one unit may not face the front of another unit.
- For buildings bordering street(s) designated with “build-to lines” (described further below in this Section), the primary entry or entries shall face a street having a build-to line, rather than a street lacking a build-to line.

Figure 11: Urban Design Plan



PARKS FRAMED BY STREETS

All parks, whether small or large, shall be bordered on at least one side by streets. For the largest open spaces in the Redevelopment Area, the four required streets—Wetlands Parkway, Station Road, Davenport Street, and Green Seam Couplet—provide the majority of the open spaces’ street frontage. For smaller open spaces such as any pocket parks, greens, or linear parks that may be built, required streets and/or other streets should create the boundary between the open space and the adjacent development.

The only exception to this requirement is the Station Plaza open space, which is likely to be located on a block along with one or more buildings. In that case, retail businesses and/or civic uses shall be provided along the ground-floor of buildings facing the plaza, to ensure an active and pedestrian-friendly frontage on all sides of the plaza.

REQUIRED BUILD-TO LINES

Build-to lines are an urban design concept. They refer to virtual lines that designate where and to what degree it is required that buildings, rather than parking lots or other open areas, be sited in order to reinforce key pedestrian-friendly streets and public parks. In this regard, the “build-to” lines established by this Redevelopment Plan are in lieu of traditional “setbacks.” For purposes of development within the Redevelopment Area, the build-to line established for a particular street shall act as the “setback” for that development. The build-to line results in the placement of buildings at or close to street-facing or other public-facing property lines, where they create “streetwalls” that reinforce sidewalks, streets, and other public spaces as “public rooms.” The build-to line is a more proactive regulatory tool for pedestrian-friendly streetscapes than the typical zoning approach of minimum front setbacks because it actively encourages buildings to be located at the street.

Where a build-to line is indicated in **Figure 11**, a minimum percent of each block’s street frontage is required to have buildings set close to the sidewalk of the public right-of-way. For example, an 80 percent build-to requirement along a 400-foot long block means that 320 feet of the block length must include buildings built close to the sidewalk. To contribute to the build-to line requirement, the building or portion thereof must be located at or close to the public right-of-way. Open areas such as plazas, courtyards, and lawns and vehicular circulation elements such as driveways, alleys, parking lots, and parking structures do not count towards meeting the build-to requirement.

Within each block, buildings should be placed to frame intersections, with building mass located close to street corners. Any gaps within the streetwall, for example for driveways, are best located at the interior of the block.

Build-to lines requirements for the Redevelopment Area are shown in **Figure 11**. The accompanying descriptions of the specific build-to lines in the Redevelopment Area are provided next.

Eighty (80) Percent Build-to Requirement

Each block within the following build-to requirement locations is required to have buildings occupying at least 80 percent of the block length.

- Along the portions of **Wetlands Parkway** and **Station Road** that lie within the Hub, on both sides of the street. These blocks are important to frame the station area with buildings and retail uses that draw people into the development, and to make the transit plaza and surrounding streets into comfortable public spaces.
- - ⊖ For buildings that screen parking garages, pocket parks and courtyards lined with garden walls will be considered as contributory to the percentage of streetwall required, as long as parking is not visible from the court or the public way.
- The portion of **Wetlands Parkway** that lies outside the Hub area, between the Green Seam Couplet's eastern street and Davenport Street, on the southern side of the street.
- The blocks of **Davenport Street** that face the northern portion of the Green Seam, between the train tracks and Wetlands Parkway, on the east side of the street
- The block of **Davenport Street** between Wetlands Parkway and Station Road (i.e. the "Civic Knuckle"), on both sides.
- The blocks along the **Green Seam Couplet Street** facing the Green Seam, between Wetlands Parkway and where the Couplet streets blend back into the network of local streets, on the sides facing the open space.

Fifty (50) Percent Build-to Requirement

The following build-to requirement locations are required to have buildings occupying at least 50 percent of each location's *overall length*.

- Along the portion of **Wetlands Parkway** that lies outside of the Hub area, between Route 206 and the Green Seam Couplet's western street, the side of the street facing the open space. In this location, buildings will be located across the street from a major public open space, and therefore the build-to line is only located on the side facing the open space.
- Along the portions of **Station Road** that lie outside of the Hub area, between the Green Seam Couplet's eastern street and Davenport Street, the side of the street facing the open space. Again, in this location, buildings will be located across the street from open spaces (in this case, the cemetery and PSEG lands), and therefore the build-to line is only located on the side facing the open space.
- Although placement of buildings in these 50 percent build-to line areas is more flexible than in the 80 percent build-to line areas, it is recommended that most of the buildings contributing to the 50 percent build-to line requirement be located closer to the Hub, in order to reinforce the Redevelopment Area's transition in scale.

No Build-to Line Requirement

No specific build-to line requirement is imposed for other streets. However, buildings should have a clear and rational relationship to one another so that streets are always well-defined public spaces. Furthermore, given that parking is required to be located at the interior of buildings and/or

blocks, away from view of streets, it is anticipated that a pedestrian-friendly, though lower-scaled, environment will evolve.

BUILDING MASSING

HORIZONTAL DIFFERENTIATION

Building Length

Ideally, building identities, or “bays”, as defined below, should not exceed 150 feet along any and all street-facing frontages. The maximum length of a building shall be 250 feet along any and all street-facing frontages. Larger buildings may be broken into smaller building identities or “bays”, providing that each identity is perceived as a separate building with its own entrance and presence.

Bays

Historically, smaller traditional pedestrian-scaled buildings ranged from roughly 15 to 50 feet wide at the street. Larger traditional buildings were similarly divided into a series of similarly-scaled “building identities,” which are known as “bays” for purposes of this Redevelopment Plan. The new buildings within the Redevelopment Area shall continue this approach.

Accordingly, large façade areas shall be broken down in scale so as to appear as a series of different buildings or distinct bays, each within the traditional scale of bays in Somerville. The design and dimensions of bays along one building façade should create a varied articulation; a monotonous repetition of the same bay along a very wide façade should be avoided. Notwithstanding bay variation, the most prominent articulation of facades should be focused on corner elements, if any, and major pedestrian entryways.

Bays may be differentiated through variation in material, texture, masonry pattern, glazing pattern, and/or a change in façade plane of at least 1.5 feet.

VERTICAL DIFFERENTIATION

Unless the redeveloper proposes a specific use that requires a unique building, buildings should be designed utilizing base, middle and top forms.

Base

The base is the lowest one or two levels of the building.

- To define the base in mixed-use, civic, and commercial buildings, generous window glazing is required (see further below for additional discussion on Windows). Overhangs, light shelves or straight awnings are encouraged as well. The pattern of any storefronts and window openings within the base should relate to the building’s bay pattern.
- To define a base in all-residential buildings, unique materials and variations in window pattern and proportion are encouraged. A base or bulkhead area of contrasting material is encouraged in order to highlight the first level.

Middle

The middle of the building should be distinguished from the base and top by horizontal belt courses or trim cornices, a continuous shallow balcony; a shallow recess, changes in material, masonry, or fenestration pattern; and/or other appropriate means.

Top & Roof

Depending on the design of a building, the top of the building may be just the roofline or may include the top one or two floors.

On larger buildings, the roofline should follow the variation in bay massing so as to appear as a series of side-by-side buildings or of bays. Rooflines should be emphasized, for example with gabled or other pitched roof forms, parapets balustrades, and/or cornices. Flat roofs may be most appropriate within the Hub, while pitched roofs may be most appropriate elsewhere.

Pitched roofs shall have a slope within the range of 1:1 to 1:2 rise: run. Dormer windows and multifaceted roof shapes are encouraged for pitched roofs.

Flat roof areas should serve as terraces for adjacent units or as common landscaped roof decks for use of all building residents, or be designed as green roofs. (Refer to the section on **Green Building Design** later in this chapter.)

Rooftops should be designed to be attractive from any taller nearby buildings.

Upper-story Change in Massing

Buildings exceeding four stories in height should provide a stepback or other change in massing at upper floors in order to downplay their mass and visibility from public streets. This stepback or change in massing should occur at the top of the fourth floor for four-story or taller buildings throughout the Plan Area. The stepback or change in massing should serve to emphasize a four-story datum for all buildings, in keeping with the prevailing scale and height of existing downtown Somerville buildings.

Recommended techniques for upper-story change in massing include stepbacks of upper stories, for example of at least five to ten feet horizontally, possibly in combination with a roof terrace; and sloping rooflines above the fourth story, with dormer windows. Other options include varying heights of facades, cornices or parapet lines to emphasize the top of the fourth story; and arrangements of window lines, belt courses, and other horizontal elements in a pattern that reflects the same elements on neighboring buildings. Other techniques are possible, and use of more than one technique is encouraged.

The change in massing is with respect to the façade plane of the lower floors, not with respect to the property line. Stepbacks are not required on facades that do not face a public street. For example, stepbacks are not required on internal lot lines or on rear facades.

Rooftop Mechanical Equipment

Any rooftop mechanical equipment shall be set back at least 10 feet from upper-level building facades, and set far enough back that it cannot be seen from the street. All rooftop equipment shall be screened from view in a manner consistent with the architectural design and materials of the building.

MASSING TO CREATE GATEWAYS

Figure 11 also shows the location of required gateways within the Redevelopment Area. There are three gateways, each created through a different approach.

Hub Gateway

The gateway in the Hub is the heart of the Redevelopment Area and is formed by the train station plaza and nearby buildings. This gateway marks the point of arrival into the Redevelopment Area from the train station as well as from downtown Somerville. The gateway is distinct in that it includes the tallest buildings in the Redevelopment Area active ground-floor retail uses, and a mix of uses within most of the buildings. Building heights in the Hub are permitted at a height ranging from 4 to 6 stories. However, one signature building may be constructed to reach a height of 10 stories or 120 feet, whichever is lesser. A civic building(s) on the “civic knuckle” block could also help reinforce this northern gateway. Tower elements or penthouse levels and changes in building massing to create prominent corner bays are encouraged to mark important intersections and terminate critical views within the Hub area.

Downtown Gateway

The gateway at the northwestern portion of the Redevelopment Area is created by the buildings within Phase 3, the Downtown Gateway. This gateway marks the terminus of Wetlands Parkway at Route 206 as well as the entry point into the Redevelopment Area from Route 206 and the planned Raritan River greenway to the west. This gateway may be created by building massing, for example corner elements such as towers or cupolas, as well as by an iconic architectural treatment that will distinguish this area from the rest of the Redevelopment Area and mark it as a destination or major cluster with a unique identity.

Green Gateway

The Green Gateway at the southeastern portion of the Redevelopment Area is created by the active open space area along Station Road, just north of Route 206. This gateway marks the terminus of Station Road at Route 206 as well as the southern entry into the Redevelopment Area from Route 206. This gateway is a green, low-density gateway composed of attractive new parks and open space, complementing the existing open space to the east of the planned Station Road. Lush street tree plantings and landscaping should create a green appearance at this gateway. Further details on landscape and park design requirements are provided in **Chapter 8**.

GROUND-FLOOR ELEVATIONS

NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Ground-floor retail, commercial, and civic uses shall be built with a finished floor elevation that is at-grade.

RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Where all-residential buildings are concerned, it is important to balance the need to provide a sense of privacy and separation for first-floor units with the need to provide transparency and a relationship to the street and sidewalk. Therefore:

- If a building has units with individual unit entrances to the street, entryways shall be raised at least several steps above the sidewalk grade. This requirement may be waived if ground-floor units are specifically designed to be handicapped-accessible and ADA-compliant, , or for other reasons to comply with Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (the Fair Housing Act) or other applicable accessibility regulation.
- For apartment buildings, the common building entrance and lobby may be located either at grade or above grade, as needed.
- Unless required to meet applicable accessibility regulation, the finished floor elevation of first floor units should be located at least several steps above grade, so as to provide some privacy from the street. Similarly, the bottom sill of windows for the first-floor units should be set at or above the typical eye height of a pedestrian on the sidewalk.
- The finished floor elevation of first floor units shall not be more than four (4) feet above grade. This restriction is intended to maintain a relationship between the building and the sidewalk. However, this restriction does not apply where, due to a change in grade, the grade drops by one story or more along the length of a corridor building.

BUILDING TRANSPARENCY

ENTRIES, STOOPS, AND PORCHES

Principal entries shall be visible and easily identifiable, highlighted by prominent architectural features; they should not occur simply as voids between buildings. Secondary entrances allowing access to the same side of a building as the principal entrance should be clearly designed to be secondary in importance in the overall façade arrangement. Service entrances should face parking facilities or driveways, not streets or other public spaces.

Entries are permitted to be somewhat recessed within the building plane as long as the recession is part of a larger architectural statement that highlights the entryway.

Non-Residential Entries

Retail and office building entries should be located at grade.

Residential and Live/work Entries

Townhouses and stacked flats shall have porches or stoops as follows.

- Each townhouse unit shall have its own front porch or stoop.
- Entries to stacked flat units shall have a porch or stoop.
- Porches should be fully covered with flat, gabled, or shed roofs and supported by columns at the front. Porches shall be open on the front and sides; enclosed porches are prohibited. Porches should be generously proportioned and occupy the width of the building.
- Stoops are generally narrower than porches, occupying only the width of the entryway and steps. (An example of a stoop is on the common prewar brownstone townhouse.) Stoops may have cantilevered overhanging roofs.

Apartment buildings shall have a shared entry and lobby, highlighted by building massing, glazing, and/or an overhang. Individual unit entries are encouraged for any first-floor residential units within apartment buildings.

Live/work spaces shall each have entries from the sidewalk/street; these entries may also serve the residential space connected to each live/work space (i.e. a separate residential entrance is not required.)

WINDOWS

Blank walls are prohibited on facades facing or visible from streets, open space, walkways, or other public spaces. Specific requirements within the Window Guidelines that follow are subject to review by the Somerville Planning Board, which has the authority to grant exceptions to the dimensional requirements in the Board's judgment.

Window Placement & Operation

All windows, with the exception of storefront windows, should be operable. Windows should be recessed (typically at least four to six inches) in relation to the building facade in order to ensure an adequate shadow line.

Window Materials

Window glass shall be clear or lightly-tinted. Energy efficient coatings that tint glass are permitted as long as the coating that is closest to clear is chosen to meet the energy criteria. Colored or stained window glass is permitted only for retail clerestory or transom windows. Dark tinted, opaque, and mirrored glass is prohibited.

Ground-floor Windows

The ground floor facades of non-residential spaces that face streets, open space, or other public spaces shall include a generous proportion of windows in order to create a relationship between the private space of the building and the public space of the street or park.

Retail Windows

For buildings with ground-floor retail space along the public ways, at least sixty (60) percent of the ground-floor street frontage façade area of retail uses should be glazed with clear plate glass windows. Alternately, the ground floor of facades facing public ways should have glazed storefronts such that 70% of the façade, as measured linearly, parallel to the ground at 4'-8" high, shall be composed of retail storefront/entry glazing. Multi-paned glass is discouraged for retail space. Storefronts should be built of wood, painted material to approximate wood, custom metalwork, extruded aluminum, or hollow steel frame. Storefront colors should be used that are compatible with the neighborhood. Raw metal finishes should rarely be used. Storefront windows shall provide maximum exposure to interior ground floor uses. Design for ground level retail facades should reflect the rhythms and proportions of traditional architectural elements found within downtown Somerville, such as large display windows of clear glass, bulkheads, recessed entries, transom windows, storefront cornices and suitable locations for façade signs. Night security gates, grids, or any other security covering of windows are prohibited.

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Ground-floor windows for office buildings should be designed similarly to retail windows, so as to allow flexibility for future change in use to retail.

Live/Work or Flex Space Windows

At least sixty (60) percent of the ground-floor façade area of ground-floor live/work spaces should be glazed with clear plate glass windows. Alternately, the ground floor of facades facing public ways should have glazed storefronts such that 60% of the façade, as measured linearly, parallel to the ground at 4'-8" high, shall be composed of windows and entry glazing. Multi-paned glass is acceptable for live/work spaces. The street-facing façade of live/work spaces shall be designed as a hybrid public/private space that provides greater transparency and glazing than a private home, but may have less transparency than a full retail storefront.

Residential Ground Floor Windows

At least twenty-five (25) percent of the façade area of ground-floor residential facades should be glazed with windows. Multi-paned windows with mullions and muntins are encouraged for ground-floor residential windows facing onto streets, open space, and other public areas because they provide privacy by diffusing views. Alternately, the ground floor of facades facing public ways should have glazed storefronts such that 25% of the façade, as measured linearly parallel to the ground at 4'-8" high, shall be composed of windows and entry glazing. The windows at the ground plane should be taller than typical windows above on upper floors of the building.

Upper-Level Windows

Residential Windows

At least twenty-five (25) percent of the façade area of upper-level residential floors should be glazed with transparent windows. Alternately, the facade area of upper-level residential floors should have windows such that 25% of the façade, as measured linearly, parallel to the finished floor on each floor at 4'-8" high, are composed of windows and/or other clear glazing, unless limited by the building code. Residential windows should be vertically-proportioned. Clusters of vertical windows within structurally-separate frames may be provided to create large expanses of glazing. All residential windows shall be framed using sill and lintel; punched windows with no decorative edging are not allowed.

Non-Residential Windows

At least twenty-five (25) percent of the façade area of upper-level commercial/office or civic uses should be glazed with transparent windows. Alternately, the facade area of upper-level residential floors should have windows such that 25% of the façade, as measured linearly, parallel to the finished floor on each floor at 4'-8" high, are composed of windows and/or other clear glazing, unless limited by the building code. However, no glass curtain wall buildings shall be permitted.

AWNINGS

Awnings are encouraged on ground level windows for retail businesses and for live/work spaces. Awning panels should be composed of planes, straight edges, and open ends rather than pleated, curved, or scalloped shapes. Canopies and light shelves are permitted, but awnings are discouraged for all-residential buildings or at upper-story windows.

BALCONIES

Balconies are permitted on all upper-level residential facades, but should be used sparingly on street-facing facades. Balconies are preferred to be used as a single, continuous element at the upper or lower expression lines. Balconies may also be used singly as a periodic design element of the facade composition. Facing streets, balconies shall be fully recessed within the building plane. “Juliet” or French balconies (shallow balconies connected to French doors, typically of wrought iron) are permitted to project from building façades up to two (2) feet.

Bands, eaves, piers, pilasters, stringcourses, awnings, underground footings and other architectural embellishments are permitted to project up to 2 feet from the applicable build-to line. Cornices, vertical windows, and oriel bays may project more than two (2) feet, from the build-to-line upon approval from the Planning Board.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

VARIATION AND NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

Development in the Redevelopment Area should exhibit a level of complexity in building design common to urban areas constructed over a number of generations. Variety in architecture is purposely sought to avoid an appearance of the redevelopment being constructed at one time.

Accordingly, in each of the various neighborhoods of Redevelopment Area, buildings should be designed as an “ensemble,” by which the buildings collectively relate to each other and to the public spaces they frame, so as to create the sense of a cohesive neighborhood and differentiate each area from the others. Examples of areas appropriate for an ensemble treatment include the station area, the Heights East, and the frontage along Wetlands Parkway, and the frontage along the Green Seam Couplet. Buildings may create an ensemble effect by many different means, such as similar detailing, materials, massing, building heights, rooflines, materials, and awnings, or a similar repetition of architectural elements such as columns, piers, and prominent entryways. While buildings in these areas should not look identical, a “theme and variation” approach to create an ensemble is desirable.

Within each block or cluster of blocks, one building should visually dominate its neighbors, in order to serve as the focal point. Similarly, the purpose of the 10-story signature building envisioned in the Hub, is to draw attention to the Hub and the overall Redevelopment Area as a place of importance.

Buildings on either side of a street shall relate to each other in form, mass, and appearance so as to create a harmonious composition.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Local Vernacular Styles

Buildings throughout the Redevelopment Area are encouraged to make use of materials and forms that reflect the historic and vernacular building styles in Somerville and in Somerset County. In particular, Somerville residents exhibited a clear preference for traditional building

materials, architectural styles and building massing in the Visual Preference Survey. Any modern buildings chosen in the survey included traditional materials and architectural elements within design. None of the buildings selected were of unique modern design or building materials.

Material Application

Materials should be authentic and high quality. While the street-facing façade(s) should receive a larger proportion of the allocation of time and expense in the design and construction of a building, similar materials and detailing should be used on all facades of a building so as to be attractive from all vantage points.

Any changes in primary wall material from lower to upper levels should occur along a horizontal line, with the visually-heavier material below the visually-lighter material. Paneling materials applied to one façade only, such as brick paneling, should be extended around building corners to a logical break in plane, so as to look substantial rather than “pasted-on.” Facades should be designed so that any seams or expansion joints are rationalized by the logic of the composition.

Material Types

Primary permitted building materials shall include wood clapboard siding, vinyl, brick, cementitious siding and panels, and decorative concrete, as well as other natural materials such as marble, granite, and cedar shakes. Accent materials include metal, tile, stucco, stone, and cultured stone. Drainable Exterior Insulation Finishing Systems (EIFS) can be used to approximate the character of terracotta and other historic sculptural façade materials. EIFS should only be used in an articulated manner in conjunction with pilasters, cornices and stringcourses - and with minimal uninterrupted flat surfaces -to establish façade identities that augment the public realm. The use of EIFS is prohibited on ground floor facades.

Pitched roofs should use metal, slate, slate substitutes, clay tile or lightweight concrete tile. Pitched roofs for townhouse and stacked-flat dwellings may also use heavyweight asphalt shingles.

Chimneys, where visible, shall be brick, stone veneer, or stucco. Guttering materials may be made of copper and coated copper, cast iron, and factory finished aluminum. Waterspouts shall be made of stone, cast stone, terra-cotta or metal.

SIGNAGE

All signage shall comply with the Borough’s signage regulations in the zoning ordinance. In addition, the following signage requirements should be observed:

- All signage shall be subject to Site Plan review and approval by the Planning Board.
- NJ Transit wayfinding signage shall be exempt from the signage requirements of the Borough Code.
- Signs should be architecturally compatible with the style, composition, materials, colors and details of the building. Signs should not obscure the architectural details of a façade.
- No fluorescent or glowing paint is permitted for any signage within the Redevelopment Area.
- No signs or advertising devices that are rooftop mounted, intermittently illuminated, flashing, or moving are allowed.

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- Private businesses and residences are prohibited from installing signs that might be mistaken for traffic control devices.
- Freestanding signs are prohibited with the exception of way-finding identification installed with the approval of the Borough and monument signs as approved by the Planning Board for the development in Phase 1 and along Route 206 for the Downtown Gateway area.
- Insofar as the Redevelopment Plan is concerned, NJ TRANSIT's standard way-finding signage and NJ TRANSIT's identification and safety signs are exempt from this provision.

SUPPORT SERVICES

SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING

Each building shall be designed to provide adequate storage of solid waste disposal, including provisions for recycled materials, within buildings or parking facilities. Each multifamily or non-residential building shall have at least one trash and recycling pick-up location.

All exterior trash and recycling locations shall be enclosed and located in a manner which is obscured from view from parking lots, streets, and adjacent buildings by a fence, wall, planting, or combination thereof.

MECHANICAL & UTILITIES

All machinery and the mechanical controls for same, including but not limited to transformers, junction boxes, lift stations, electrical meters, condensers, and signal boxes, shall be interior to the block, set back at least 20 feet from the public right-of-way, or masked by building elements in a manner consistent with the design of the building. A wall of venting for mechanical rooms shall not be permitted along facades facing streets, pathways, and open spaces.

Mechanical equipment at ground level is permitted only for townhouses, and shall be screened from ground level views by landscaping, fencing, or walls, or a combination of same.

Any mechanical equipment located within the 100-year flood plain (below the 100-year flood elevation) shall be housed in a flood-proof structure.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

With the exception of the antenna, all parts and components of personal communications antennas, satellite dishes, and television and radio antennas shall be screened from view regardless of elevation, or shall be disguised within an enclosed structure.

The screening shall be designed as part of the overall design theme of the building to which it is associated.

Satellite dishes or antenna are prohibited on any façade or building siding.

Antenna panels for personal communications services (PCS) maybe attached to the parapet of a building provided they are indistinguishable in color and texture from the building material and do not extend above the top of the parapet to which they are attached.

PARKING

As part of the goal of encouraging pedestrian-friendly design in the Redevelopment Area, the visibility of off-street parking areas from streets, sidewalks, parks and other public areas shall be minimized. Parking should be hidden from view by buildings located at the perimeter of each block, except as otherwise indicated below.

STRUCTURED PARKING

Screening of Off-Street Parking

The following guidelines apply to the location and screening of structured parking:

- **Structured parking on the first level and/or upper levels of buildings** is the preferred solution, provided that parking is hidden from view of streets, open space, and other public areas by being located behind ground-floor retail, office, or residential spaces.
- **Within the interior of a block**, where not visible to streets, open space, or other public areas, structured parking may be visible and does not need to be screened.
- **Structured parking fully below grade** in buildings, while ideal from a design standpoint, is unlikely to be feasible in this location due to the high water table and flood plain issues.
- **Structured parking one-half level below grade** is an appropriate technique to minimize the view of parking from the street, particularly for all-residential buildings, but may not be feasible in this location due to the high water table. When the first habitable floor of a residential building is one-half level above street level, the residences gain some privacy while still retaining a relationship to the street. If a parking level is built one-half level below grade, the above-grade portion of the parking level shall be screened from streets, open space, and other public areas with landscaping, trellises, staircases leading to building entries, and other elements. Unadorned, plain openings to parking garages are prohibited. The finished floor of the first floor of residential space built over any parking shall be no more than four (4) feet above grade.
- Where it is unavoidable that parking garages be visible from streets and other public spaces, the garage should be **architecturally screened** to harmonize with the building. Specifically, the garage spandrels and columns should be designed with a similar void-to-solid ratio as adjacent and nearby buildings. The materials, texture and color of the parking garage façade should clearly identify itself with the architectural elements that make up adjacent and nearby buildings.

Design and Access to Structured Parking

Integration with Buildings

To the extent feasible, parking garages should be integrated with the buildings that they are designed to serve so that access is available on multiple levels. Buildings may be cantilevered over the upper deck level or supported on columns through the parking garage where necessary.

Movement between Levels

Parking garages shall be designed with internal ramps for vehicular movement. In no event shall helical ramps be permitted.

Access to Streets

The closest edge of a parking garage driveway to a street intersection (not including curb radii) shall be at least 60 feet, measured from the intersecting rights-of-way, and shall not otherwise be a hazard to pedestrians.

Pedestrian pathways leading between buildings or within/through buildings to rear parking garages shall be a minimum width of 10 feet. Special paving materials and lighting shall be used to highlight these pathways.

Ventilation

Shafts or chimneys for parking garage ventilation shall be located to prevent exhausting into nearby windows or air intake ducts in the surrounding buildings.

Lighting

Every parking facility shall be adequately lighted in accordance with the standards of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, as they may be amended or superseded. Lighting fixtures should not be mounted higher than between 16 and 25 feet. All fixtures shall be shielded to prevent glare beyond the parking area.

SURFACE PARKING LOTS

The following guidelines apply to permanent surface parking lots:

- Surface parking lots should be sited at the interiors of blocks, behind buildings, and away from view of streets, open space, and other public areas.
- Minor portions of surface parking lots and driveways, up to 42 feet in width per block face, may be located adjacent to streets. This dimension is sufficient to accommodate a two-way drive aisle and one row of perpendicular parking spaces. In this case, the row of parking spaces shall be screened from the street with low walls and/or landscaping.
- Driveways to interior parking lots within each block should be consolidated so as to reduce the number of curb cuts on streets.
- Large areas of surface parking are discouraged; however, if they cannot be avoided, they should be subdivided into smaller lots with pedestrian pathways and landscaping. Further details on parking lot planting are provided in the next Chapter, in the discussion on Landscaping of Parking Lot and Loading Areas.
- Textured paving should be provided at driveway/curb cut entrances to parking areas to help highlight pedestrian pathways that cross the vehicular path.
- Pedestrian pathways leading between buildings or within/through buildings to rear parking lots shall be a minimum width of 10 feet. Special paving materials and lighting shall be used to highlight these pathways.
- Temporary parking lots are permitted in connection with the phased redevelopment of the redevelopment area. It is intended that the requirements above that apply to permanent surface parking lots will not apply to temporary parking lots, with the exception of streetscape improvements, which are required. Temporary parking lots must provide paving, lighting, and drainage improvements that are consistent with and appropriate for the temporary nature of these structures. The duration of any temporary parking lots will be subject to the terms of the appropriate redevelopment agreement. Temporary parking lots are subject to the approval of the Somerville Planning Board.

DRIVEWAY AND CURB CUTS

In order to maintain a safe walking environment and an attractive streetscape that frames key public spaces, driveways and curb cuts are not allowed along block fronts facing the Green Seam open spaces nor facing the train station plaza.

The width of parking driveway and curb cuts is also restricted. Driveways providing one-way ingress or egress must have a minimum width of twelve (12) feet. Driveways providing two-way ingress and egress must have a minimum width of 20 feet. Exceptions to these requirements may be permitted for driveways serving delivery trucks with wide turning radii.

BICYCLE PARKING

To encourage bicycling as an alternative means of transit, all multi-family, civic, and office buildings are required to provide secure, conveniently-accessible indoor bicycle parking and storage rooms. In retail areas, centrally-located sidewalk bicycle racks should be provided in clear view of storefronts. Finally, bicycle racks and/or lockers should be provided in proximity of the NJ Transit station, parking garage and lot.

GREEN BUILDING DESIGN

LEED CERTIFICATION

The Borough of Somerville is committed to the use of environmentally sensitive design and green building design to improve community and environmental health and to enhance the environmental and economic performance of buildings. Broadly speaking, green building design goals include reduced energy and water use; use of sustainable, renewable, non-toxic, and locally-produced materials; improved indoor air quality; and environmentally-conscious site planning.

This Redevelopment plan provides the following elements to foster environmental sustainability within a neighborhood design context. The sustainable features of the project generally fall into two categories:

1. Smart Location:

- i. Building on previously-developed sites and infill locations uses land efficiently and preserves open space and ecological areas like the green seam. It also utilizes existing infrastructure and clusters housing, jobs, stores, and public spaces together. By putting these conveniences within easy reach, public transit, biking, and walking are more feasible and the length of car trips are reduced; and
- ii. The project is located in a way that is sensitive to its natural setting and protects, and improves, local environmental quality, converting formerly disregarded land into a community asset.

2. Neighborhood Pattern and Design:

- i. Streets designed for walkability include buildings that face the sidewalk and have architectural diversity along their path. Continuous sidewalks, low-speed traffic,

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and on-street parking provides a buffer between the sidewalk and the street to increase pedestrian comfort and safety. Walking has cross-cutting benefits for public health, environmental sustainability, and neighborhood vitality, and further unlocks the advantages of neighborhoods with smart locations, a mix of uses, and compact development;

- ii. Street trees make pedestrians more comfortable by providing shade and contact with nature. Native and drought-resistant species should be favored. Monocultures are to be avoided in order to provide ecological diversity and resistance to diseases;
- iii. The proposed mix of residential and commercial land uses has many benefits. The sustainable and diverse uses of a blended neighborhood tend to support each other and reinforce a sense of neighborhood character, while decreasing the need to travel long distances for goods, services, or work. This reduces car trips and facilitates walking, which contributes to health and fitness;
- iv. Connections for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles – both within the neighborhood and to surrounding areas – are essential. Bike parking near transit stops is encouraged. Connections to existing public transportation are safe and pedestrian friendly; and
- v. Local housing near public transit increases the likelihood that people will take transit or walk rather than drive. It offers an alternative to automobile use and captures many of the other benefits of infill development. The US Green Building Council (USGBC) has developed a series of standards for evaluating green building design in several categories, including new and existing office construction, homes, neighborhood configuration, commercial interiors, and educational and other institutional buildings. Their LEED certification process ensures a high level of “green” building design and site planning. Development and all shall meet the minimum certification requirements-of the USGBC’s LEED V4, however, the development/buildings do not have to be certified.

GREEN ROOFS

Green roofs are encouraged on all buildings and can help meet the above LEED certification requirements. Green roofs reduce costs for cooling and heating, increase building insulation, reduce the rate of runoff and stormwater loading, reduce the urban heat island effect, and enhance urban apartment living. Green roofs may be intensive (light shrubbery not to be walked on) or extensive (landscaping that can be walked and played on).

8 Landscape Design Guidelines

OVERALL LANDSCAPE DESIGN STRATEGIES

The overall site design of the Redevelopment Area shall seek to minimize environmental damage, strain on municipal utilities, and impact on adjacent uses. This Chapter deals with the landscape design of the Redevelopment Plan Area. The landscape design is intended to reinforce:

- The design and definition of the public open space system, including the edges and significant locations in the trail network and the edges of the active recreation areas (play grounds, picnic areas, etc.);
- The architectural character and programmatic functions of the civic open spaces, and
- The character of the street network.

Specific requirements within the Landscape Design Guidelines that follow are subject to review by the Somerville Planning Board, which has the authority to grant exceptions to the dimensional requirements in the Board's judgment.

Figure 12 is the **Conceptual Landscape Plan**; like Figure 6, it is illustrative in nature. It depicts a suggested design for landscape features, but it not meant to restrict the development of other creative solutions.

PLANT SELECTION

- Native, non-invasive plant species shall be used to the greatest extent possible.
- An inventory of existing trees shall be conducted. Existing trees shall be retained and incorporated into the site plan where appropriate to maintain a mature-looking landscape.
- Those portions of the landscape that are within the flood plain shall be tolerant to periodic inundation.

PLANTING MEDIUM

Park areas shall have a prepared planting medium installed to a minimum depth of one (1) foot over the entire unpaved area. Where plantings occur, the appropriate planting soil volume and depth shall be achieved. Trees within park spaces and medians shall be placed in prepared planting medium with a minimum depth of four (4) feet. Prepared planting media, other than for sidewalk tree plantings, shall be a loam, according to the USDA texture classification system.

STREET TREE PLANTINGS

Street tree plantings within sidewalk areas shall be placed in continuous trenches with a minimum depth of 4 feet. A prepared planting medium shall be utilized that is capable of permitting the percolation of water and air, while also supporting the sidewalk above. Ad-mixtures, such as expanded slate, shall be used to achieve this performance. Aeration and drainage measures should be included.

RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE & STRUCTURES

All new supporting built infrastructure shall be located to blend into the overall landscape design and shall, to the greatest extent possible, not be visible. Any visible structures shall use materials sympathetic to the overall design.

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New infrastructure shall be located so that it does not interfere with the pedestrian network.

Figure 12: Conceptual Landscape Plan



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The overall objective for the stormwater management strategy is to take advantage of and showcase the “green infrastructure” potential of the site to respond to the existing drainage characteristics and other natural features of the site. Notwithstanding anything in this Redevelopment Plan to the contrary, it is envisioned that stormwater management for the Redevelopment Area be developed as a comprehensive solution across all areas and sub-areas of the Redevelopment Area. For example, while on-site stormwater management is encouraged, it is not required, such as where opportunities exist for off-site stormwater management incorporating other areas of the Redevelopment Area.

Development shall provide features to reduce stormwater runoff rates, such as by detaining stormwater on-site, allowing for groundwater infiltration, or, as noted above, by utilizing a holistic approach to stormwater management throughout the Redevelopment Area (for instance, by allowing stormwater discharge from the more heavily developed areas of the Redevelopment Area into those less-heavily developed, or undeveloped, areas, such as the Green Seam, to the extent permitted by the NJDEP). The stormwater management strategy shall take advantage of the most innovative techniques for passive storm water management including (but not limited to): bio swales and bio retention basins; porous pavement in lesser-traveled areas; shallow marsh, pond/wetland, and extended detention wetlands; pocket wetlands; curbside parking areas; street-side micro-basins; parking lot islands; and rain gardens.

While individual sites/blocks should retain and recharge as much water as possible, storm water management should be an integrated and comprehensive strategy for the entire site. The storm water management strategy should be integrated into the overall open space design and integrated with existing stream corridors.

Downspouts that run towards a public sidewalk shall recharge storm water runoff under the sidewalk in order to maximize recharge of storm water and irrigation of street trees.

TRAILS AND BOARDWALKS

The objectives of the following trail and boardwalk landscape requirements are to create a continuous network of trails and boardwalks as an integral part of the overall landscape design and to create linkages between destinations on the site. Accordingly, the development in the Redevelopment Plan shall:

- Provide seating periodically along the trail and boardwalk network. Provide approximately eight (8) linear feet of seating for every 200 linear feet of trail, with 400 feet maximum between seating areas. Locate seating at important points along the network including entry points, intersections of trails, and places that offer strategic vistas, if approved by NJDEP.
- Construct trails of asphalt and at least six (6) feet wide.
- Provide boardwalks as required at wetlands.
- Give special design consideration to locations where the network connects to pedestrian routes outside of the Redevelopment Area.
- Ensure that components of the trail system within the flood plain are tolerant to periodic inundation.

ACTIVE RECREATION AREAS

The following are additional standards for the two required active recreation areas within the Re-development Area, the Wetlands Park and the Green Gateway Park. Specific standards for each Park follow.

- Park designs shall conform to applicable municipal or County design standards, whichever are more stringent.
- Planting standards shall be consistent with general guidelines provided at the beginning of this Chapter.
- The landscape design shall support the overall disposition of the parks program, which shall be determined in consultation with municipal stakeholders.

WETLANDS PARK

The active recreation area located midway along the Wetland Parkway (as introduced in Chapter 5) shall provide the following features:

- Connection and continuation of the trail network through the park.
- A regulation Little League baseball field.
- One universally-accessible play structure for children ages 2 to 5, with a variety of activities.
- One universally-accessible play structure for children ages 6 to 12, with a variety of activities.
- A minimum of 50 linear feet of seating for each play structure.
- At least one drinking water fountain.

GREEN GATEWAY PARK

The active recreation area located at the southeastern edge of the site (as introduced in Chapter 5) shall provide the following features:

- A combination of other facilities including two ball fields or one ball field and a number of other facilities such as tennis courts or basketball courts.
- At least two drinking fountains in different parts of the park.
- A restroom structure with separate facilities for men and women.
- Some combination of plantings and attractive architectural elements to screen Route 206 completely from view of the Park.

LANDSCAPING OF PARKING LOT AND LOADING AREAS

The objectives of the landscape treatment of all parking lot and loading areas are to provide for safe and convenient movement of vehicles, to limit pedestrian/vehicular conflicts, to provide safe and attractive areas for pedestrian movement, to limit paved areas, to provide for screening of parking areas from public rights-of-way and buildings, to reduce the overall visual impact of parking lots, and to provide shade and reduce heat island effects.

All surface parking lots in excess of five (5) spaces shall conform to the following requirements:

- The minimum width of landscape islands shall be six (6) feet on the side of parking spaces and between parking rows. Every four rows of parking shall be separated by a landscaped island. If sidewalks are incorporated through the long axis of the landscape islands, their width shall be added to these requirements. Where the parking lot design

will result in pedestrians cutting perpendicularly through landscape islands, sidewalks shall be installed at regular intervals through its short axis.

- Landscape islands shall be planted with a combination of deciduous trees, evergreen and deciduous shrubs, and ground cover at the rate of six (6) large or medium trees, four (4) small or ornamental trees and 60 shrubs per 100 lineal feet along the long axis of the island. Each end island shall have a minimum of two trees.

In addition, all parking lot and exterior loading areas shall be screened by a combination of hedges, fences and/or walls. The minimum screening height at planting shall be three (3) feet and shall have a height of at least four (4) feet within three years of installation. Loading dock areas visible from a public right-of-way shall be screened with a minimum height of eight (8) feet at planting and shall achieve a height of at least 12 feet five years after installation when feasible. Lower planting heights are permitted if necessary to alleviate security and visibility concerns.

OUTDOOR LIGHTING

The degree to which streets and places are illuminated shall be reflective of their hierarchy within the plan. The different street classifications are presented in Chapter 5. Each type of street (e.g., collector street) shall have a different treatment with respect to the size, design and luminance value of lighting. The required luminance values for each street shall be developed in accordance with the minimum standards of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) and shall balance the need for safety with the need for reduction in unnecessary light and glare.

All outdoor lighting, including street lamps and accent lighting, shall comply with “dark sky” standards. Dark sky standards are intended to reduce nighttime light pollution. They require that lighting is downcast, illuminates only the intended areas, and does not cause disabling glare that affects driver safety and reduces the visibility of night skies. Additional information on dark sky goals and regulations may be found at the International Dark-Sky Association’s web site, www.darksky.org. In keeping with dark sky standards, bright, stadium-style lighting is prohibited, including for active recreation areas. The maximum light trespass is 0.5-foot candles, regardless of the requirements of dark sky standards and the uniformity ratio shall be 4 or less.

STATION PLAZA LIGHTING

The station area shall be lighted to complement the overall urban design of the station area as follows:

- The facades of the buildings around the station plaza shall be illuminated. Lights should be mounted within the same height range as pole-mounted fixtures.
- During evenings or overnight when businesses are closed, storefronts that open out onto the Station Plaza shall maintain lighted display as part of the overall illumination of the Plaza.

SUPPLEMENTAL STATION PLAZA LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Provide supplemental irrigation for landscaping in the station plaza.
- Along the western edge of the plaza, create an allee of trees to create a narrow pedestrian space from the Wetlands Parkway to the road in front of the station. Provide wooden benches at regular intervals on both sides of the walkway/allee. Trees shall be planted at 20 feet on center in this location.

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- Provide an architecturally interesting information kiosk, the design of which is coordinated with other architectural elements in the space.
- Ground surface materials in the station area shall create visual interest by using a variety of scales, textures and colors. Unit pavers shall be used in a planting strip along the curbside edge of the sidewalks. Curbs shall be granite or other suitable stone material.
- A public address/sound system shall be provided for the station area.

9 Redevelopment Actions

PROPERTIES TO BE ACQUIRED

The following list indicates which properties are subject to acquisition by the Borough of Somerville as part of the redevelopment effort. This includes acquisition of temporary and permanent easements, licenses and less than fee interests within and outside the redevelopment area for remediation, access and infrastructure to support the project. Somerville encourages redeveloper acquisition through arms-length transactions or between a willing seller and buyer.

<i>Block and Lot</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>To be acquired</i>	<i>Not to be acquired</i>
Block 120.01, Lot 1	Urban Drive Associates		X
Block 123, Lot 2.01	NJ Transit		X
Block 123, Lot 3	NJ Transit		X
Block 123, Lot 3.01	Borough of Somerville		X
Block 123, Lot 4	Richards Fuel Oil	X	
Block 123, Lot 5	NJ Transit		X
Block 123, Lot 6	Lauren Associates		X
Block 123, Lot 6.01	Rosko Phil Real Estate		X
Block 123, Lot 9	Richards Fuel Oil	X	
Block 123, Lot 12	Borough of Somerville		X
Block 123, Lot 12.01	NJ Transit		X
Block 123.02, Lot 1	Somerset County		X
Block 123.02, Lot 2	Duke Farm Estate		X
Block 123.03, Lot 1.06	Borough of Raritan		X
Block 123.03, Lot 4	Somerset County		X
Block 123.03, Lot 5.01	Edward Bernhardt (Denson's)	X	
Block 123.03, Lot 5.02	Somerset County		X
Block 124, Lot 1	Borough of Somerville		X
Block 124, Lot 1.02 <i>ROW & Easement Only</i>	Marcella Moorehouse		X
Block 124, Lot 17	Borough of Somerville		X
Block 124, Lot 17.01	Borough of Somerville		X
Block 124, Lot 18	NJ Transit		X
Block 124, Lot 19	NJ Transit		X
Block 124, Lot 20	NJ Transit		X
Block 124, Lot 21	Borough of Somerville		X
Block 124, Lot 22	Borough of Somerville		X
Block 124, Lot 23	Lamperti Holdings (Sarah Jane's Restaurant)	X	
Block 124, Lot 23.01	Borough of Somerville		X
Block 200, Lot 3	NJ Transit Rail Right-of-Way*		

* Portions of rail right-of-way may be utilized during redevelopment to complete necessary road infrastructure or other improvements.

OTHER ACTIONS

In addition to the acquisitions indicated above, other actions may be undertaken to further the goals of the Redevelopment Plan. These may include, but shall not be limited to:

- Clearance of dilapidated, deteriorated, obsolete, or underutilized structures or uses where necessary
- Construction of new structures or other improvements
- Provisions for public infrastructure necessary to service and support new development, including new roads
- Environmental remediation
- Vacation of railroad or public utility easements as may be necessary for redevelopment

RELOCATION

Implementation of the Redevelopment Plan does not require the displacement or relocation of any residents within the Redevelopment Area. However, displacement and relocation of active businesses located within the Redevelopment Area may be required as a result of redevelopment. At the time of property acquisition, the actual extent of displacement will be confirmed, and if it is necessary, a Workable Relocation Assistance Plan (WRAP) will be prepared and submitted to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for approval. The Borough will comply with the requirements of the New Jersey State relocation statutes and regulations as applicable, and will provide all benefits and assistance required under the statute.

LINKAGES

The Redevelopment Plan recognizes that Redevelopment Area offers an opportunity to bolster and link the downtown area with a new residential neighborhood and an enhanced NJ Transit station. The Plan therefore takes a holistic approach to enlarging and enhancing the public realm, providing pedestrian linkages, and concentrating density adjacent to the rail station. The Plan directly links with the Borough's past and current revitalization efforts onsite and with neighborhoods surrounding the site, and with NJ Transit's plans to improve both ridership and land utilization at its rail stations.

10 Plan Consistency Review

RELATIONSHIP TO PLANS OF ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES

Somerville shares borders with three municipalities: Bridgewater Township to the North and East; Raritan Borough to the West; and Hillsborough Township to the South. The Redevelopment Area borders Raritan Borough and Hillsborough Township, but does not share a boundary with Bridgewater. As a result, the plan recommendations do have the potential to impact the master plans and zoning regulations in Raritan and Hillsborough.

RARITAN BOROUGH

Raritan Borough adopted a Master Plan Update and endorsed the Somerset County Regional Center Strategic Master Plan in June 2003. The Land Use Plan within the 2003 Master Plan indicates that parcels adjoining the Redevelopment Area are designated as B-2 Shopping Center, B-3 Highway Business and G-1 Governmental Uses. The B-2 and B-3 districts adjacent to the Redevelopment Area contain commercial uses extending along Route 206 from Orlando Drive to Somerset Street. The G-1 zone is a flexible zoning district that permits schools, parks and municipal buildings. The portion of the G-1 district adjacent to the Redevelopment Area in large part contains vacant land intended for development of the proposed Raritan River Greenway.

The non-residential Phase 3 portion of the Redevelopment Plan is located across Route 206 from areas in Raritan Borough zoned B-2 and G-1, and does not conflict with the types of uses permitted in these zones. More importantly, however, the Redevelopment Area parcels located between Route 206 and the Raritan River directly border Raritan Borough's G-1 zone and are intended for inclusion in the Raritan River Greenway. Not only will the Redevelopment Area ensure connection of the Greenway between the municipalities, but it will also provide numerous connections between Raritan Borough and Somerville, allowing access from Raritan to the amenities in the Redevelopment Area and in downtown Somerville.

HILLSBOROUGH TOWNSHIP

Hillsborough Township's most recently adopted Master Plan documents are a Master Plan Amendment for the Agricultural and Mountain Districts, adopted in October 2002, and a Master Plan amendment adopted in 1996.

Hillsborough Township is separated from the Borough of Somerville by the Raritan River. Land located along the Raritan River adjacent to the Redevelopment Area is vacant and environmentally sensitive. In fact, the 1995 Land Use/Land Cover map within the Hillsborough 2002 Master Plan amendment indicates that all lands adjacent to the Redevelopment Area are wooded wetlands, with the exception of a small portion of land devoted to agricultural activities. The Surface Waters and Wetlands map further identifies these areas as a mixture of Deciduous Wooded Wetlands and Agricultural Wetlands.

Due to the environmentally sensitive nature of these areas, the current zoning is AG-Rural Agricultural. Although single-family dwellings, public parks and farm-based businesses are permitted within the zone, the purpose of the district is to preserve and retain farmland areas. Considering that parcels within the Redevelopment Area bordering Hillsborough are planned for inclusion

within the Raritan River Greenway, the Redevelopment Plan will not produce any land uses in conflict with Hillsborough's AG zone. The preservation of these parcels is not only consistent with the existing land uses on the other side of the Raritan River in Hillsborough, but is also consistent with the efforts of the Township to preserve its rural landscape.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE SOMERSET COUNTY PLAN

SOMERSET COUNTY MASTER PLAN AND REEXAMINATION REPORT (1998)

The County Master Plan is intended as a means to refine the overall vision of Somerset County and build consensus on "regional planning priorities" and "smart growth strategies." Somerville has long been considered the center of Somerset County. As a way to preserve centers and combat sprawling development, a number of plan recommendations identified in the 1998 County Reexamination Report concerned the type of development contemplated within the Redevelopment Plan. These recommendations include:

- Encourage and support the development of comprehensive or "Vision" plans for all centers. Comprehensive center plans should identify areas ripe for infill and redevelopment. Such plans should address quality of life and other community revitalization concerns.
- The County Planning Board should continue to support the Regional Center Planning process.
- County capital and infrastructure improvements should be directed to municipalities that promote brownfields redevelopment.
- A greater residential component should be included within the core areas of the County's existing centers. Vertical mixed-use development and redevelopment should be encouraged.
- The application of traditional town planning concepts to new development as well as suburban retrofit areas should be strongly encouraged.
- The regional land use framework should be strengthened to encourage appropriate distribution of growth amongst centers.
- "Sense of place" livability, community and other qualities of village and town life need to be emphasized.
- The use of high design standards and quality construction should be emphasized for all residential development and redevelopment.
- A greater recognition of the needs of pedestrians and cyclists is needed in land use planning, and in roadway and site design.
- The County should work to integrate land-use and transportation planning, as well as increase multi-modal transit options.

This Redevelopment Plan clearly embraces the vision articulated for centers in the County Plan, utilizes many of the same design concepts, places the same high priority on smart growth principles, and incorporates the same overall types of development envisioned in the County Master Plan. The Plan promotes the vitality of Somerville as an important center within the County and provides a high quality, mixed-use, pedestrian—and bicycle—friendly environment with a "sense of place."

SOMERSET COUNTY REGIONAL CENTER STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN (2006)

The County Strategic Master Plan identifies Somerville as part of the “Bridgewater Core” within the Regional Center of Somerset County. The key recommendations of the plan indicate that municipalities undertaking redevelopment:

... should encourage economic development and desirable reuse of former brownfield sites; ensure that redevelopment areas, whenever possible, are tied closely to the fabric of existing downtowns and Main Street areas; provide public access through each redevelopment area and connections to all greenways and open space; and ensure that redevelopment planning takes into account the community context of each site and provides connections to the surrounding neighborhood.

The plan recommends that train station area redevelopment promote increased ridership that also works to decrease traffic congestion and parking impacts through innovative parking and transportation strategies. These principles are clearly upheld by the Redevelopment Plan.

SOMERSET COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN—GREENWAY TO THE FUTURE (1994)

In 1994 the County adopted the Somerset County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan—Greenway to the Future. The Redevelopment Plan not only provides substantial regional open space and recreational opportunities, but is also consistent with the County Open Space Plan’s goals and objectives. For example, the Green Seam within the Redevelopment Area will not only increase active and passive recreational resources for County residents to enjoy, but will also work to preserve and enhance sensitive environmental lands within the Redevelopment Area. Furthermore, connection of the Green Seam to the proposed Raritan River Greenway will provide a significant regional linkage to recreational resources.

The features of the Redevelopment Plan that are consistent with and conform to the following goals and objectives of the County Open Space Plan are as follows:

- Create an open-space system preserving lands of county-wide significance.
- Preserve open space to protect critical environmental resources.
- Provide open space for a diverse mix of quality recreational experiences.
- Provide County parks where they will most easily serve the greatest population concentrations in Somerset County.
- Provide open space which enhances the quality of life in Somerset County.

RELATIONSHIP TO STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (2001)

The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) is intended to provide a planning framework for development and redevelopment so that it occurs in a sustainable manner. In other words, it intends to shape growth in New Jersey so that land use, energy, technology, environmental and design considerations are all taken into account in development decisions, and so that future development enhances the quality of life. The Somerville Landfill Redevelopment Plan is fully consistent with the goals and policies of the SDRP, and represents a model plan for implementing the Smart Growth framework set forth therein.

Somerville Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Plan

The SDRP contains a set of Statewide Planning Goals, which derive from the State Planning Act. The relationship of the Redevelopment Area Plan to several of these goals is described below:

Goal 1: Revitalize the State's Cities and Towns

The Redevelopment Plan encourages significant new private investment in the center of Somerville that will complement the existing downtown and connect neighborhoods to cultural and recreational amenities. By increasing both the amount of commercial space in Somerville's core and the number of households available to support retail and commercial services, the Redevelopment Plan will have positive impact on Somerville's growth.

Goal 2: Conserve the State's Natural Resources and Systems

The Redevelopment Plan provides for closure and redevelopment of a municipal landfill in the form of mixed-use compact development that takes advantage of existing infrastructure, and protects undeveloped "Greenfield" areas from costly new development. Furthermore, the Green Seam will preserve sensitive environmental lands and enhance open space resources in the region.

Goal 3: Promote Beneficial Economic Growth, Development and Renewal for All Residents of New Jersey.

The Redevelopment Plan allows for over 1,000 households to be accommodated on land adjacent to a commuter rail station, and within walking distance of retail, commercial and civic uses. Efficient development patterns such as this are essential to accommodating the State's future population growth in a manner that avoids rapid consumption of the State's remaining open spaces, and allows for alternatives to automobile use. It therefore represents the essence of environmentally-friendly development.

Goal 4: Protect the Environment, Prevent and Clean Up Pollution

Similar to Goal 2, the Redevelopment Plan promotes efficient use of land, remediates a contaminated property, and preserves open space.

Goal 6: Provide Adequate Housing at a Reasonable Cost

The Redevelopment Plan provides for a variety of housing types, including townhouses and multifamily buildings. The Redevelopment Plan further requires that an inclusionary development satisfy the full obligation induced by the development under COAH.

Goal 7: Preserve and enhance areas with historic, cultural, scenic, open space and recreational value.

The Redevelopment Plan aims to complement Somerville's historic downtown. It is also in harmony with the scale and character of downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods. In addition, the development of the Green Seam provides recreational value to residents living and working locally and within the region.

STATE PLANNING AREAS

The State Plan Policy Map is the centerpiece of the State Planning framework. It divides New Jersey into five planning areas ranging from PA-1 Metropolitan Planning Area to PA-5 Environmentally Sensitive Area. With the exception of the parcels between Route 206 and the Raritan River, which are designated PA-5; the Redevelopment Area is located wholly within PA-1.

Somerville Station Area and Landfill Redevelopment Plan

In the SDRP, the intent of the PA-1 Metropolitan Planning Area is to:

- Provide for much of the state's future development;
- Revitalize cities and towns;
- Promote growth in compact forms;
- Stabilize older suburbs;
- Redesign areas of sprawl;
- Protect the character of existing stable communities.

In the SDRP, the intent of the PA-5 Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area is to:

- Protect environmental resources through the protection of large contiguous areas of land;
- Accommodate growth in centers;
- Protect the character of existing stable communities;
- Confine programmed sewers and public water services to centers;
- Revitalize cities and towns.

Comparing these objectives to the character of redevelopment on the landfill site, it is clear that the Redevelopment Plan fulfills the intent and policies of the State Plan. As discussed above, the Redevelopment Plan provides the compact infill development of a brownfield site within an existing community adjacent to a train station. Open space will be created and critical environmental areas will be preserved for the benefit of the environment and New Jersey residents.

CENTERS AND ENVIRONS

The State Planning Commission designated Raritan Borough, Bridgewater Township and the Borough of Somerville as a Regional Center in 1996, which further reinforces the appropriateness of accommodating a significant new growth in the Redevelopment Area. The State Plan defines Regional Centers as a “compact mix of residential, commercial, and public uses, serving a large surrounding area and developed at an intensity that makes public transportation feasible.”

The higher intensities and mix of uses envisioned within the Redevelopment Area will take advantage of the central location and valuable transportation infrastructure already present within and adjacent to the Redevelopment Area. The majority of residential units to be constructed within the Redevelopment Area are within short walking distance of the train station. In addition, the recreational opportunities presented by the Green Seam and its connection to the future Raritan River Greenway will provide an important pedestrian and bicyclist link to Somerville for citizens living in Somerville and within the wider region within Somerset County.

11 General Provisions

EASEMENTS

No building shall be constructed over a public easement in the Redevelopment Area without prior written approval of the Engineer of the Borough of Somerville.

NJ TRANSIT RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY

No building or appurtenance shall be constructed within NJ Transit's railroad right-of-way within the Redevelopment Area without prior written approval of NJ Transit.

SITE PLAN AND SUBDIVISION REVIEW

Prior to commencement of construction, site plans for the construction and/or rehabilitation of improvements within the Redevelopment Area, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq.), shall be submitted by the applicants for review and approval by the Planning Board of the Borough of Somerville so that compliance with the Redevelopment Plan can be determined.

Any subdivision of lots and parcels of land within the Redevelopment Area shall be in accordance with the requirements of this Redevelopment Plan and the subdivision ordinance of the Borough of Somerville.

No construction or alteration to existing or proposed construction shall take place until a site plan reflecting such additional or revised construction has been submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Board. This pertains to revisions or additions prior to, during and after completion of the improvements.

The Planning Board shall be permitted to refer to the Architectural Review Board development plans submitted by the designated redeveloper as part of the development review process. The role of the Architectural Review Board shall be advisory only and the Planning Board shall not be bound by any comments that may be submitted to it by the Architectural Review Board. Any referral from the Planning Board shall include a requirement that any comments from the Architectural Review Board shall be provided in a timely manner such that there is no conflict with the statutory timeframes for the Planning Board to act on the development application. Failure by the Architectural Review Board to submit comments within the timeframe required shall not effect the Planning Board's ability to act on the development application in accordance with applicable law.

ADVERSE INFLUENCES

No use or reuse shall be permitted which, when conducted under proper and adequate conditions and safeguards, will produce corrosive, toxic or noxious fumes, glare, electromagnetic disturbance, radiation, smoke, cinders, odors, dust or waste, undue noise or vibration, or other objectionable features so as to be detrimental to the public health, safety or general welfare.

NON-DISCRIMINATION PROVISIONS

No covenant, lease, conveyance or other instrument shall be affected or executed by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Somerville or by a developer or any of his successors or assignees, whereby land within the Redevelopment Area is restricted by the Borough Council of the Borough of Somerville, or the developer, upon the basis of race, creed, color, sexual orientation, or national origin in the sale, lease, use or occupancy thereof. Appropriate covenants, running with the land forever, will prohibit such restrictions and shall be included in the disposition instruments. There shall be no restrictions of occupancy or use of any part of the Redevelopment Area on the basis of race, creed, color or national origin.

DURATION OF THE PLAN

The provisions of this Plan specifying the redevelopment of the Redevelopment Area and the requirements and restrictions with respect thereto shall be in effect for a period of forty (40) years from the date of approval of this plan by the Borough Council of the Borough of Somerville.

DEVIATION REQUESTS

The Planning Board may grant deviations from the regulations contained within this Redevelopment Plan where, by reason for exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property, or by reason of exceptional topographic conditions, preexisting structures or physical features uniquely affecting a specific piece of property, the strict application of any area, yard, bulk or design objective or regulation adopted pursuant to this Redevelopment Plan, would result in peculiar practical difficulties to, or exceptional and undue hardship upon, the developer of such property. The Planning Board may also grant such relief in an application relating to a specific piece of property where the purposes of this Redevelopment Plan would be advanced by a deviation from the strict requirements of this Plan and the benefits of the deviation would outweigh any detriments. Any deviation from use, height or a “d” variance under Municipal Land Use Law N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq. shall require an amendment to the Plan by the Borough Council. No relief may be granted under the terms of this section unless such deviation or relief can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and without substantial impairment of the intent and purpose of the Redevelopment Plan. An application for a deviation from the requirements of this Redevelopment Plan shall provide public notice of such application in accord with the requirements of public notice as set forth in NJSA 40:55D-12.a. and b.

UTILITIES

Somerville has sufficient sewer capacity and water supply for the proposed development in the Redevelopment Area.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Planning Board shall require submission of an Emergency Management Plan. The Planning Board will make the final determination as to the adequacy of the Emergency Management Plan based upon input from the Borough Office of Emergency Management.

12 Other Provisions

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq., known as The Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, the following statements are made:

- The Redevelopment Plan herein has delineated a definite relationship to local objectives as to appropriate land uses, density of population, and improved traffic and public transportation, public utilities, recreation and community facilities and other public improvements. The Plan has laid out various programs and strategies that need to be implemented in order to carry out the objectives of this Plan.
- The Redevelopment Plan lays out the land uses and building requirements for the Redevelopment Area.
- In the event that residents in the Redevelopment Area must be displaced by the condemnation and/or acquisition of property by the Borough of Somerville, adequate provision for the temporary and permanent relocation of such residents, as necessary, shall be made in accordance with all applicable state and federal regulations. Should such displacement occur, it is anticipated that there are decent, safe and sanitary dwelling units affordable to affected resident within the local housing market, and that such replacement housing shall be offered to such residents along with relocation assistance as required by law.
- All privately-owned lots, except Block 123, Lots 6 and 6.01 and Block 120.01, Lot 1, within the designated Redevelopment Area are subject to acquisition by the Borough of Somerville as part of the redevelopment effort.
- As indicated in Section II.A, this Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the Master Plan for the Borough of Somerville. The Plan also complies with the goals and objectives of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan.
- This Redevelopment Plan shall supersede all provisions of the Zoning Ordinance of the Borough of Somerville regulating development in the area addressed by this Redevelopment Plan. No variance from the requirements herein shall be cognizable by the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Planning Board alone shall have the authority to grant deviations from the requirements of this Plan, as provided herein. Final adoption of this Plan by the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Somerville shall be considered an amendment of the Borough Zoning Map.
- If any section, paragraph, division, subdivision, clause or provision of this Redevelopment Plan shall be adjudged by the courts to be invalid, such adjudication shall only apply to the section, paragraph, division, subdivision, clause or provision so judged, and the remainder of this Redevelopment Plan shall be deemed valid and effective.

13 Procedure for Amending the Approved Plan

This Redevelopment Plan may be amended from time to time upon compliance with the requirements of law. Any party requesting an amendment is required to submit such request to the Borough Council. A fee of \$500 shall be paid by the party requesting such amendment, unless the request is issued from an agency of the Borough. The Borough Council, at its sole discretion, may require the party requesting the amendments to prepare a study of the impact of such amendments, which study must be prepared by a Professional Planner, licensed in the State of New Jersey. In addition, the Borough Council, at its sole discretion, may require the party requesting the amendments establish an escrow account with the municipality adequate to allow the Borough to retain a Professional Planner, licensed in the State of New Jersey, to review any proposed amendments to confirm that the intent of the Plan will not be compromised.

