

Prepared For:

Borough of Rutherford

176 Park Avenue

Rutherford, New Jersey 07070

2018

2018 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT BOROUGH OF RUTHERFORD BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY



Prepared By:

Neglia Engineering Associates

34 Park Avenue, Lyndhurst NJ 07071

2018 Master Plan Reexamination Report

Borough of Rutherford, Bergen County, NJ

Prepared for:
Borough of Rutherford Planning Board

Adopted January 18, 2018

Prepared by
Neglia Engineering Associates
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The original of this report was signed and sealed in accordance with Chapter 41 of Title 13 of the State Board of Professional Planners



Anthony Kurus, P.E., P.P.
NJ Planning License No. 6145

RUTHERFORD PLANNING BOARD

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING RE-EXAMINATION
REPORT ON THE MASTER PLAN**

January 18, 2018

WHEREAS, the Planning Board has the statutory duty to re-examine the Master Plan pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law, specifically N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 and in furtherance thereof retained the services of Neglia Engineering Associates (“Neglia”) to assist in the re-examination; and

WHEREAS, Neglia presented a report dated December 21, 2017 containing the elements required by the Municipal Land Use Law, a copy of which report is attached as Exhibit A, (the “Reexamination Report”) ; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board reviewed the Reexamination Report and held a public discussion on the Reexamination Report on January 18, 2018 and utilized its own knowledge and experience in dealing with planning related issues within the Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board determines that the Reexamination Report satisfies the relevant statutory requirements.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

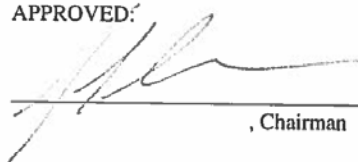
1. The Planning Board adopts the Re-examination Report as the Re-examination of the Rutherford Master Plan as required by N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89.
2. A copy of this resolution and attached Reexamination Report shall be forwarded to the Rutherford Mayor and Council, the Rutherford Zoning Board of Adjustment, the Bergen County Planning Board, the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority, and all adjacent municipalities including the Township of Lyndhurst, the Borough of East Rutherford, the City of Passaic and the Town of Secaucus.

ATTEST:



, Secretary

APPROVED:



, Chairman

City of Rutherford

Acknowledgements

Planning Board

Rick Doren, Chairperson

James Rizzo, Vice Chairperson

Dave Porter, Secretary

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of a Master Plan Reexamination Report is to review and evaluate the local master plan and development regulations on a periodic basis in order to determine the need for updates and revisions. The Borough of Rutherford adopted a new comprehensive Master Plan in 2007. The Borough has kept up to date with required planning initiatives, including the new Master Plan in 2007, continued work on a new Fair Share Housing Plan, and the designation of several areas in need of redevelopment throughout the Borough.

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires that municipalities conduct a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations and that the review be conducted by the Planning Board. **As per the MLUL, a reexamination shall be completed at least once every 10 years from the previous reexamination.**

The Reexamination Report must include the following five key elements as per N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 :

- a) The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last Reexamination Report.
- b) The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased since 2007.
- c) The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies, and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.
- d) The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.
- e) The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

This Master Plan Reexamination report has been prepared to meet the statutory requirements of the MLUL (N.J.S.A. 40-55D-89).

MAJOR PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES FROM THE 2007 BOROUGH OF RUTHERFOD MASTER PLAN UPDATE AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY HAVE INCREASED OR DECREASED

As required by the MLUL, this Master Plan Reexamination Report includes an evaluation of the major problems and objectives related to land development in the municipality at the time of adoption of the 2007 Master Plan Update. In addition, this section evaluates the extent to which these objectives and problems have increased or decreased.

Objectives

The 2007 Master Plan identifies following fifteen goals relating to land use and development in the Borough:

1. Provide a healthy balance of land uses that preserves the residential character of the neighborhoods while providing convenient commercial and retail opportunities to acquire goods, services and employment.
2. Capitalize on the downtown's growing role as a transportation hub and provide for an attractive, vibrant and easily accessible downtown that will support quality mixed-use and business enterprises that contribute to the Borough's economic base and quality of life.
3. Maintain a balanced stock of quality housing that provides housing options for all generations, serving both existing and new residents.
4. Maintain the Borough's diversity.
5. Ensure that community facilities and services are maintained at levels that will support the current and future populations of the Borough.
6. Ensure that infrastructure systems are maintained at levels that will support the current and future populations of the Borough by basing growth and development decisions on the existing and planned capacity of both natural and built systems.
7. Maximize circulation and mobility options for local and regional trips while ensuring that regional transportation projects will improve the overall quality of life in the Borough.
8. Promote aesthetically pleasing human scale development that recognizes the character of traditional New Jersey towns.
9. Preserve historically and architecturally significant structures.
10. Preserve the Borough's natural resources to protect water quality, manage stormwater, reduce the potential for flood damage, protect endangered habitats, and provide open space.

11. Preserve the Borough's community forest resource to improve air and water quality, reduce energy costs, increase property values, increase economic stability, improve citizen health and beautify the Borough.
12. Encourage and support policies and actions to reduce the introduction of harmful green house gasses by reducing sprawl and encouraging green buildings, promoting alternate means of transportation including walking, biking, and public transit, preserving open space and wetlands, and participating in the NJMC renewable energy district.
13. Preserve, maintain, and develop a comprehensive open space and recreation system that provides active and passive recreation opportunities for all age groups and ability levels while meeting or exceeding state and/or national safety standards.
14. Create land use districts and standards that are clear and concise and leave no doubt as to the intended location and intensity of the land use.
15. Ensure that all development regulations reflect and implement the goals and objectives of the master plan.

These goals are still valid.

The 2007 Master Plan further refines these goals through specific objectives into five major categories. These objectives are identified below and are followed by an analysis of the extent to which they have increased or decreased in ***bold, italic type***.

Land Use

- Maintain existing residential neighborhoods as attractive, high quality areas and ensure that renovations and new construction are compatible with existing neighborhood character. ***Objective still valid***
- Identify appropriate locations for multi-unit housing. ***Objective still valid***
- Encourage traditional neighborhood elements such as sidewalks, alleys, front porches, public spaces, green spaces, and street trees. ***Objective still valid***
- Encourage mixed uses in the downtown that support pedestrian activity, human interaction, public safety, mass transit, and easy access to goods and services. ***Objective still valid***
- Strengthen the harmony and appearance of the downtown streetscape by encouraging restoration of classic buildings that have been inappropriately altered and ensure that all new construction and alterations fit harmoniously within the framework established by the historic and classic architectural character of the downtown. ***Objective still valid***
- Encourage a mix of quality commercial uses, retail, entertainment, dining, and upper story residences in the downtown area to create vibrancy and to serve local and regional markets. ***Objective still valid***
- Identify appropriate boundaries, land uses and standards for the B-1, B-2 and B-3 districts particularly for transitional areas separating the business districts from adjoining residential neighborhoods. ***Objective still valid***

- Encourage commercial development and retrofitting that emphasizes quality architecture, shared access and parking, transit friendly facilities, pedestrian circulation, appropriate intensification of buildings, and extensive landscaping; and which avoids oversized parking areas, light pollution, and multiple and uncontrolled highway access points. **Objective still valid**

Circulation

- Provide opportunities for residents, business owners, employees and shoppers to access multiple modes of transportation including public transportation, bikeways and pedestrian ways. **Objective still valid**
- Improve the function of problem intersections and roadway segments through the implementation of creative engineering, land use and design techniques. **Objective still valid**
- Utilize traffic calming measures in areas of high pedestrian activity. **Objective still valid**
- Create a multi-use trail system that links neighborhoods, community facilities, parks and open space. **Objective still valid**
- Create a "bicycle friendly" environment in Rutherford that provides a safe and viable alternative to driving. **Objective still valid**
- Manage traffic and pedestrian issues and ensure adequate parking in the downtown and in adjoining residential neighborhoods. **Objective still valid**
- Provide green buffers along major highways. **Objective still valid**

Utilities

- Ensure that all development and redevelopment projects contribute their prorata share of the cost of providing reasonable and necessary off-tract water, sewerage and drainage facilities. **Objective still valid**

Community Facilities

- Provide necessary renovations to public buildings to maintain compliance with government and industry standards. **Objective still valid**
- Expand active recreational opportunities in the Borough through the creation of new park facilities either at existing Borough parks, park/school sites or through the creation of new parks and facilities. **Objective still valid**
- Create a network of after-school and weekend educational, recreational and social opportunities for teens and young adults. **Objective still valid**
- Coordinate planning efforts with the Board of Education to ensure the most efficient placement and use of all Borough and Educational facilities. **Objective still valid**
- Develop gateways to the Borough at strategic locations to foster community identification and establish a visual sense of the community's character. **Objective still valid**
- Utilize the LEED Green Building Rating System for new and renovated public buildings. **Objective still valid**

- Incorporate the forestry management plan into the master plan. **Objective still valid**
- Provide art in public places. **Objective still valid**
- Provide better access to the Meadowlands area and to waterfront properties generally. **Objective still valid**

Economic Development

- Identify opportunities for land assembly and redevelopment projects. **Objective still valid. The Borough has identified and designated lands at the Williams Center, Agnew Place, 106 Park Avenue, and Madison Hill/Meadow Road as meeting the “Area in Need of Redevelopment” criteria pursuant to the State of New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40:A:12A)**
- Identify and promote services and facilities that are necessary to support existing and future business enterprises. **Objective still valid**
- Provide transportation systems to efficiently move employees, customers and goods to and from business sites. **Objective still valid**
- Provide the necessary infrastructure to support business development in the downtown. **Objective still valid**
- Assess development and redevelopment potential of commercial and light industrial parcels on the eastern side of Route 17. **Objective still valid**
- Assess the redevelopment potential of the "west end" business district on Union Avenue. **Objective still valid**

Historic Preservation

- Encourage the continued use of historic resources and facilitate their appropriate reuse to stabilize and improve property values and discourage the unnecessary demolition of historic resources. **Objective still valid**
- Encourage an appropriate and harmonious setting for the historic and architecturally significant buildings, structures, sites, objects or districts within the Borough of Rutherford. **Objective still valid**
- Encourage private reinvestment in existing or new structures in a manner that preserves, restores, repairs or is compatible with the original architectural style or is compatible with the original architectural style characteristic of the designated historic districts in which the structure is located. **Objective still valid**

Recycling

- Maximize the amount of recycled materials collected from residential and non-residential properties. **Objective still valid**

Major Problems

The major problems relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the 2007 Master Plan update include the following:

1. Lack of Vacant Land - The 2007 Master Plan identifies that less than 1% of Rutherford's non-meadowlands acreage is vacant and that future growth in the remainder of the Borough will necessarily take the form of redevelopment and infill projects. The 2007 Master Plan outlines major land use initiatives and recommendations. ***By designating several sites as Redevelopment Areas and Areas in Need of Redevelopment the Borough has been working to address future growth in form of redevelopment and infill projects as recommended in the 2007 Master Plan.***
2. Downtown – The 2007 Master Plan identifies the need to reinforce the downtown as the recognizable center of town and the heart of the transit village through land use and circulation policies. ***The Borough continues to support the downtown district through improvements and maintenance of pedestrian circulation, management of parking supply, and zoning.***
3. Neighborhood Preservation and the Route 17 Corridor - The 2007 Master Plan indicates that the Route 17 corridor contains unconnected retail, big box, and office developments that can lead to congestion, inconvenience, inefficiency and a less than desirable visual image. In addition, a significant portion of the corridor – the west side of the highway from Route 3 to Highland Cross – is populated by single family homes. The 2007 Master Plan provides guidelines for non-residential properties located in the Route 17 corridor to encourage quality architecture, shared access and parking, transit friendly facilities, pedestrian circulation, appropriate building scale, and extensive landscaped areas to provide buffering to help minimize the impact of conflicting uses and protect in the integrity of residential neighborhoods. ***The Borough continues to address the Route 17 corridor through site plan review, zoning, and aggressive code enforcement.***
4. Meadowlands Economic Growth – The 2007 Master Plan identifies that the Borough should monitor and participate the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission 2007 Economic Growth Plan. ***Since the 2007 Master Plan, the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission has become the New Jersey Sports Exposition Authority. The Borough should continue to be cognizant of the NJSEA growth plans as it relates to the Borough.***

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES, AND OBJECTIVES

1. 2010 Census Data

Data from the 2000 Census was included in the Borough’s 2007 Master Plan. Data from the 2010 Census is summarized in this report to determine its impact on planning issues.

Population Trends

TABLE 1									
POPULATION TRENDS, 2000 TO 2010									
BOROUGH OF RUTHERFORD, BERGEN COUNTY, NJ									
YEAR	Borough of Rutherford			Bergen County			New Jersey		
	Change			Change			Change		
	Population	Number	Percent	Population	Number	Percent	Population	Number	Percent
2000	18,110			884,118			8414350		
2010	18,061	-49	-0.27%	905,116	20,998	2.38%	8791894	377,544	4.49%

The population of Rutherford generally remained the same from 2000 (18,110) to 2010 (18,061) with a minor decrease of 49 people. A 2.38 percent growth was noted in Bergen County and an approximate 4 percent growth was noted statewide in New Jersey.

Table 2						
Population by Age, Year 2000 and 2010 - Borough of Rutherford						
	2000		2010		Change, 2000 to 2010	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percent
Under 5	946	5.2%	921	5.10%	-25	-2.64%
Under 18	3,761	20.8%	3,790	21.0%	29	0.77%
18 to 65	11,712	64.7%	11,635	64.4%	-77	-0.66%
65 & Over	2,637	14.6%	2,441	13.5%	-196	-7.43%
total population	18,110		18,061		-49	-0.27%

The Borough of Rutherford saw the largest change in in the 65 and over population from 2000 to 2010 with an decrease of approximately 7 percent. The under 18 population and 18 to 65 population remained generally the same. A minor decrease in the under 5 population was noted.

Table 3						
Population by Age, Year 2000 and 2010 -Bergen County						
Population	2000		2010		Change, 2000 to 2010	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percent
Under 5	55,363	6.3%	50,281	5.6%	-5,082	-9.18%
Under 18	203,054	23.0%	204,405	22.6%	1,351	0.67%
18 to 65	546,244	61.8%	563,608	62.3%	17,364	3.18%
65 & Over	134,820	15.2%	137,103	15.1%	2,283	1.69%
total population	884,118		905,116		20,998	2.38%

Bergen County experienced the largest increase in the 18 to 65 year old population with an increase of approximately 3 percent. The largest decrease in population was noted amongst the under 5 population at approximately 9 percent.

Household Characteristics

Table 4				
Household Size - Persons Per Household - Rutherford and Bergen County				
	2000		2010	
	Borough	County	Borough	County
Average Household Size (persons per household)	2.52	2.64	2.56	2.66

The average household size increased from 2.52 persons per household to 2.64 persons per household in the Borough and from 2.56 persons per household to 2.66 persons per household in the County as per Table 3 and represent a slight increase.

Household Unit Data

Table 5				
Housing Data- Rutherford				
	2000		2010	
	total	Percent	total	Percent
Owner Occupied	4,623	64.1%	4,621	66.5%
Renter Occupied	2,432	33.7%	2,328	33.5%
Total Occupied Housing Units	7,055	97.8%	6,949	95.5%
Vacant Housing Units	159	2.2%	329	4.5%
Total Housing Units	7,214		7,278	

According to the 2010 Census, Rutherford had a total of 7,278 housing units, which is a slight increase from the 7,214 units reported in the 2000 Census. Approximately 66.5 percent were owner occupied while approximately 33.5 percent were renter occupied which is generally the same as the 2000 data.

Employment Data

Table 6		
Employment and Labor Force, 2009-2016 -Rutherford		
Year	Resident Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
2009	14305	4.6%
2010	14649	5.8%
2011	14594	7.0%
2012	14855	7.8%
2013	14653	7.5%
2014	14855	7.3%
2015	15149	6.6%
2016	15168	6.1%

Table 6 shows the changes in employment data from 2009 to 2016 for the Borough of Rutherford. Unemployment rates began to spike in between 2009-2012 due to a nation-wide recession. Analysis of data from 2012-2016 shows the unemployment rate on a steady decline.

2. Housing Element and Fair Share Plan

The Borough is currently working on updates to the Housing Element of the Master Plan and a Fair Share Plan as it relates to the Borough's Affordable Housing Ordinance and Affordable Housing Obligations that are currently being negotiated. A revised Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (HEFSP) and a revised Affordable Housing Ordinance will be required once the Borough reaches a settlement with Fair Share Housing.

STATUTORY PROVISIONS REGARDING THE LOCAL REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING LAW

A reexamination report is required to consider whether any areas of the municipality are suitable for incorporation as redevelopment areas under the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL). Since the adoption of the 2007 Master Plan there have been four (4) areas designated as an "Area in Need of Redevelopment."

- Williams Center
- Agnew Place
- 106 Park Avenue
- Madison Hill/Meadow Road

This latest Master Plan Reexamination Report recommends that the Borough consider to evaluate existing properties within the Borough for the potential for redevelopment in accordance with the 2007 Master Plan.

CONCLUSIONS

As per our review and evaluation, it is our opinion that there are no significant or substantial changes in the assumptions, policies, and objectives forming the basis of the 2007 Master Plan for the Borough of Rutherford, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives. It is our recommendation that the Master Plan be left unchanged at this time.