

2016
ALLOWAY MASTER PLAN RE-EXAMINATION
Adopted by resolution of the Alloway Township Planning Board
After Public Hearing on December 14, 2016

INTRODUCTION

Each municipality in New Jersey is required by the Municipal Land Use Law to re-examine its Master Plan and development regulations at least once every 10 years. Alloway Township last re-examined its Master Plan in September 2006.

The premise of the original 1975 Master Plan, as well as the ongoing goal for Alloway Township, has been to preserve the character embodied by the Township's agricultural base and its rural way of life. This has not changed over the past forty plus years. The distinction today is due, primarily, to the imminent approach of new and more concentrated development pressures which threaten the character of the Township. Confronted with the reality that the "suburbanization" of New Jersey is reaching into Salem County, Alloway is resolved to be pro-active in its approach to managing its future.

Although the 1975 Master Plan recommends three-acre zoning in agriculturally designated areas, this was previously reviewed, and at this time the Board and Township Committee see no need to increase the lot size beyond the present one-acre zoning.

This Re-examination functions as fulfillment of Section 40:55D-89 of the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) which requires that a Reexamination report shall state:

- The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
- The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- 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.
- 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.
- The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C.40A:12A-1 et al.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommend changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

The original 1975 Master Plan set twelve goals for Alloway Township based on historic development patterns. They are:

1. Preserve farming operations on prime agricultural land.
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2. Retain the Township's rural character and environment.
3. Sustain and improve the Township's tax base.
4. Identify and preserve the historic sites of Alloway.
5. Maintain/raise residential values by preventing the introduction of incompatible uses, requiring development standards, and preserving the natural beauty of the Township.
6. Provide for an adequate and diversified housing supply in attractive neighborhoods.
7. Revitalize and reinforce the identity of the Village.
8. Provide for adequate community facilities.
9. Encourage the location of light industry in the Township.
10. Develop a circulation system which is coordinated with land use, efficient, safe, convenient, and reduces traffic congestion in dense residential areas.
11. Provide adequate open space for the future population.
12. Encourage active and viable commercial areas.
13. Evaluate various land use techniques to preserve open space, critical habitat, and landscape special features.
14. Establish a comprehensive implementation strategy that incorporates state and county agencies.*

* Goals 13 and 14 were added in the 1996 Re-examination report

Figure #1 summarizes the responses of the most recent Reexamination as to whether the Township is meeting its goals and objectives.

COMPARISON OF 1975 MASTER PLAN GOALS AND REEXAMINATIONS

Figure #1

1975 MASTER PLAN GOALS	2006
1. Preserve farming operations on prime agricultural land	Success
2. Retain the Township's rural character and environment	Success
3. Sustain and improve the Township's tax base	Moderate Success
4. Identify and preserve the historic sites of Alloway	Moderate Success
5. Maintain/raise residential values by preventing the introduction of incompatible uses, requiring development standards, and preserving the natural beauty of the Township	Success
6. Provide for an adequate and diversified housing supply in attractive neighborhoods	Success
7. Revitalize and reinforce the identity of the Village	Moderate Success
8. Provide for adequate community facilities, particularly future water supply and sewerage.	Moderate Success

9. Encourage the location of light industry in the Township	Moderate Success
10. Develop a circulation system which is coordinated with land use, efficient, safe, convenient and reduces traffic congestion in dense residential areas.	Success
11. Provide adequate open space for the future population	Success
12. Encourage active and viable commercial areas.	Moderate Success
13. Evaluate various land use techniques to preserve open space, critical habitat, and landscape special features.	Success
14. Establish a comprehensive implementation strategy that incorporates state and county agencies.*	Success

*NOTE: Goals 13 and 14 were added in the 1996 Re-examination report

During the Board's preliminary review of the 1975 Goals, several redundancies were identified and the Goals were restated as follows:

1. Preserve farming operations on prime agricultural land
2. Retain the Township's rural character and environment
3. Sustain and improve the Township's tax base
4. Identify and preserve the historic sites of Alloway
5. Maintain/raise residential values by preventing the introduction of incompatible uses, requiring development standards, and preserving the natural beauty of the Township
6. Provide for an adequate and diversified housing supply in attractive neighborhoods
7. Revitalize and reinforce the identity of the Village
8. Provide for adequate community facilities, particularly future water supply and sewerage.
9. Maintain a road system.
10. Provide adequate open space for the future population
11. Encourage active and viable commercial areas.
12. Evaluate various land use techniques to preserve open space.

Alloway Township's Planning Board and governing body have effectively managed many land development issues which have arisen over the last several decades. In response to threats to the agricultural industry, the Township has passed a Right to Farm ordinance and established agricultural buffers for development. An optional cluster ordinance was enacted in 2004 to preserve open space, guard the environment and increase recreational areas. The Township created an Environmental Commission which commissioned an Environmental Inventory and the Commission completed an Open Space Inventory in 2000. Currently, 3,803 acres of farmland have been preserved.

Changes in State, regional and county policies act as an impetus to Alloway to reconsider how it is implementing its Master Plan goals. The State Plan's ongoing emphasis on smart growth, including the placement of all of Alloway in the Rural Planning Area (PA4), underpins the Township's primary goals to preserve farmland and the rural environment.

Simultaneously, State policies which impede the development of public sewer make implementing the Township's goals more difficult. The State Plan description of Planning Area 4 calls for maintaining large contiguous areas of farmlands and other lands as well as accommodating growth in Centers. Alloway believes it can accommodate growth and meet the intentions of the State Plan for Planning Area 4.

- The State Plan's intention for Planning Area 4 – the Rural Planning Area are:
- Maintain the Environs as large contiguous areas of farmland and other lands;
 - Revitalize cities and towns;
 - Accommodate growth in Centers'
 - Protect the character of existing, stable communities; and
 - Confine programmed sewers and public water services to Centers.

The modified goals of 2016 of the Master Plan in their entirety can be implemented only with a strong Village Center with the facilities to accommodate a large portion of Township growth in order to maintain the large contiguous open areas in the environs.

<u>ALLOWAY TOWNSHIP POPULATION AND CHANGE</u>			
YEAR	POPULATION	CHANGE	% CHANGE
1980	2680	130	4.3
1990	2795	115	4.2
2000	2774	(21)	(-1)
2010	3467	693*	US Census estimate 8

http://factfinder.census.gov/legacy/aff_sunset.html

Over the past ten years, Alloway has moved toward consistency with the State Plan's goals and smart growth principles. The Township wants to manage the expected growth within the parameters of its long term goals and State Plan and County policies.

Alloway's Environmental Commission and Governing Body commissioned an Environmental Inventory in 2000. This document has been utilized, as intended, by the Environmental Commission as part of the development review process. The Environmental Inventory has had an impact on policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan and development regulations. It makes eight recommendations "to establish land use regulations that encourage smart growth by:

1. Discouraging development that impacts existing aquifers, open space, wetlands and equally sensitive environmental areas.
2. Discouraging sprawl development reflected in Alloway by leapfrog development of residential and commercial uses.
3. Discouraging development that infringes upon agricultural lands and functionally threatens the right to farm activities.
4. Encouraging cluster-housing concepts that are supported by existing or proposed infrastructure.
5. Encourage farmland preservation to enhance environmental assets, such as aquifer recharge areas, habitat preservation, wetlands preservation, etc.
6. Encourage the preservation of the Alloway Village built environment" in the form of its architecture and village/farm physical relationship.
7. Develop a public awareness program to identify the goals and objectives of the Environmental Commission.
8. Closely coordinate the Commission's activities with the Township's Governing Body and Planning and Zoning Boards to achieve smart growth consistent with the State Plan's objectives. This is to be carried out by using the Environmental Inventory prepared herein to comment upon land use proposals submitted to those bodies." (Environmental Inventory for the Township of Alloway, Peter P. Karabashian Associates, Inc., July, 2000, or latest revision.

The Environmental Inventory builds on the original Master Plan's background studies, utilizing updated mapping sources, to reinforce the goals of preserving open space, protecting natural resources and reserving prime agricultural lands for farming. The Environmental Inventory recommends utilizing tools such as Transfer of Development Rights, open space, buffers and cluster ordinances in order to achieve its recommendations.

In 2006, the Township Committee passed two Chapter 75 (Land Use) ordinances which complement and fulfill Master Plan goals. In January, an Agricultural Buffers ordinance was enacted, establishing design standards for a minimum 50' area between new residential development and active agricultural uses.

In April 2006, the Township Committee passed a Recreational Open Space Ordinance which mandates developers of 10 lots or more to provide (or compensate the Township Recreation Fund) open space for recreation.

The Township's policies have evolved over the years since the original Master Plan goals were set, but the goals and objectives have remained remarkably stable. Confronted with changing State policies on housing, the Township added a Housing and Fair Share Element to its Master Plan in 2005 (Housing & Fair Share Plan for Township of Alloway, Karabashian Eddington Planning Group, November 2005).