

2019 Township of Verona New Jersey

For Property located at
Block 2205 Lot 6
Township of Verona

Determination of Area in Need of Redevelopment

PREPARED FOR
THE MAYOR & COUNCIL AND
THE PLANNING BOARD
OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF VERONA, NJ

PREPARED BY
KASLER ASSOCIATES, PA
34 Little Brook Road
SPRINGFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07081
January 20, 2019

The original document was signed and sealed on January 20, 2019 in accordance with Chapter 41 of Title 13 of the State Board of Professional Planners.

Jason L. Kasler, AICP, PP
Kasler Associates, PA
Professional Planner #5240

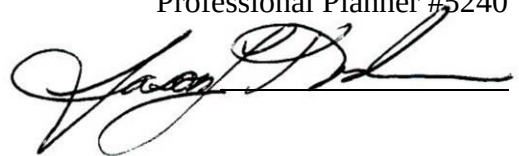
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason L. Kasler", written over a horizontal line.

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to determine whether all or parts of the subject area qualify as an Area in Need of Redevelopment as defined by the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (NJSA 40:12A-1 et seq., hereafter referred to as LRHL). This analysis has been conducted pursuant to the LRHL, which specifies the conditions that must be met within the delineated areas and the process to be undertaken by the Planning Board during the investigation.

This report is written pursuant to Section 6 of the LRHL that requires the following:

No area of a municipality shall be determined a redevelopment area unless the governing body of the municipality shall, by resolution, authorize the Planning Board to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether the proposed area is a redevelopment area according to the criteria set forth in Section 5 of the P.L. 1992 (C.40A:12A-5).

The governing body of a municipality shall assign the conduct of the investigation and hearing to the Planning Board of a municipality. After completing its hearing on this matter, the Planning Board shall recommend that the delineated area, or any part thereof, be determined, or not be determined, by the municipal governing body to be a redevelopment area. After receiving the recommendation of the Planning Board, the municipal governing body may adopt a resolution determining that the delineated area, or any part thereof, is a redevelopment area.

The applicable LRHL statute requires the Planning Board to hold a public hearing on this matter prior to recommending that the delineated area, or any part thereof, be determined or not determined a redevelopment area by the governing body. After obtaining the Planning Board's recommendation, the governing body may adopt a resolution determining that the delineated area, or any part thereof, is a redevelopment area. This report serves as the statement setting forth the basis for the investigation of an area in need of redevelopment, as required under the LRHL.

A redevelopment plan, which may supersede the zoning of an area or serve as an overlay thereto, specifies the following:

- Relationship of the project area to local objectives as to appropriate land uses, density of population, improved traffic and public transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities and other public improvements.
- Proposed land uses and building requirements in the project area.
- Adequate provision for the temporary and permanent relocation, as necessary, of residents in the project area, including an estimate of the extent to which decent, safe and sanitary dwelling units affordable to displaced residents will be available to them in the existing housing market.
- An identification of any property within the redevelopment area which is proposed to be acquired in accordance with the redevelopment plan. (Note: not every property in a redevelopment area must be acquired; the redevelopment plan can specify buildings or uses to remain in the redevelopment area and to be incorporated into the future design and development of the area).
- Any significant relationship of the redevelopment plan to the master plan of contiguous municipalities, the master plan of the county, and the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

This report and investigation are aimed only at determining whether the specified parcels in the subject area meet the statutory criteria to be identified as an Area in Need of Redevelopment and therefore does not contain any of the specific planning regulations contained in a redevelopment plan.

Criteria for Redevelopment Area Determination

Section 5 of the LRHL outlines the following criteria that are to be considered when evaluating the parcels in the study area. An area may be determined to be in Need of Redevelopment if, after investigation, notice and hearing, the governing body of the municipality concludes by resolution that any one of the following conditions exists:

- A. The generality of buildings are substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent, or possess any of such characteristics or are so lacking in light, air, or space as to be conducive to unwholesome living or working conditions.
- B. The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable.
- C. Land that is owned by the municipality, the county, a local housing authority, redevelopment agency or redevelopment entity, or unimproved vacant land that has remained so for a period of ten years prior to adoption of the resolution, and that by reason of its location, remoteness, lack of means of access to developed sections or developed thought the instrumentality of private capital.
- D. Areas with building or improvements which, but reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, over crowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or obsolete layout or any combination of these or other factors, are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community.
- E. A growing lack or total lack of proper utilization of areas caused by the condition of the title, diverse ownership of the real property therein or other conditions, resulting in a stagnant or not fully productive condition of land potentially useful and valuable for contributing to and serving the public health, safety and welfare.
- F. Areas, in excess of five contiguous acres, whereon buildings or improvements have been destroyed, consumed by fire, demolished or altered by the action of storm, fire, cyclone, tornado, earthquake or other casualty in such a way that the aggregate assessed value of the area has been materially depreciated.
- G. In any municipality in which an enterprise zone has been designated pursuant to the “New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zones Act,” P.L.1983, c.303 (C.52: 27H-60 et seq.) the execution of the actions prescribed in that act for the adoption by the municipality and approval by the New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zone Authority of the zone development plan for the area of the enterprise zone shall be considered sufficient for the determination that the area is in need of redevelopment pursuant to sections 5 and 6 of P..L.1992, c.79 (C.40A: 12A-5 and 40A: 12A-6) for the purpose of granting tax exemptions within the enterprise zone district to the provisions P.L.1991, c.431 (C.40A: 20-1 et seq.) or the adoption of a tax abatement and exemption ordinance pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1991, c.441 (C.40A: 21-1 et

seq.). The municipality shall not utilize any other redevelopment powers within the urban enterprise zone unless the municipal governing body and planning board have also taken the actions and fulfilled the requirements prescribed in P.L.1992, c.79 (C.40A: 12A-1 et al.) for determining that the area is in need of redevelopment or in need of rehabilitation and the municipal governing body has adopted a redevelopment plan ordinance including the area of the enterprise zone.

- H. The designation of the delineated area is consistent with smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to law or regulation. In addition to the above criteria, Section 3 of the LRHL (NJSA 40A:12A-3) allows the inclusion of parcels necessary for the effective redevelopment of the area, by stating “a redevelopment area may include land, buildings, or improvements, which of themselves are not detrimental to the health, safety or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in their condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area in which they are a part.”

The Statutory Criteria – a more detailed narrative¹

This information has been provided to further explain the qualifying statutory criteria.

There are seven [now eight] statutory criteria that qualify an area as being in need of redevelopment. The seven [now eight] criteria are commonly identified by the letter corresponding to the paragraphs in Section 5 of the LRHL (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6). Generally, properties located within an area in need of redevelopment will meet more than one of the criteria. However, only one of the seven need be found for a delineated area to be determined in need of redevelopment.

The "a" Criteria – Deterioration

For an area to qualify as being in need of redevelopment pursuant to the "a" criteria, the planning board must find that the buildings in the area have deteriorated or fallen into such a state of disrepair that they constitute a threat to the people who live or work in them. Consequently, when analyzing the applicability of the "a" criteria, the planning board should focus on the physical conditions within the study area. This means that the professionals preparing the preliminary investigation report will need to visit the study area and assess the physical conditions of each of the properties in the area. If deterioration is severe, it often will be apparent from an exterior inspection of the building or buildings in the area. However, an interior examination of the building may sometimes be necessary. Photos should be used to document any evidence of deterioration and disrepair. Documentation of physical conditions also may be videotaped if it is appropriate and the expense warranted.

Buildings or properties that have been neglected for long periods of time are frequently subject to numerous local code enforcement actions. Consequently, an analysis of applicability of the "a"

¹ This narrative can be found on The New Jersey Smart Growth Gateway website (http://www.smartgrowthgateway.org/local_redev_criteria.shtml).

criteria should include a review of local building, housing, fire, health, and property-maintenance code records.

The "b" Criteria - Abandoned Commercial and Industrial Buildings

Vacant and abandoned commercial and industrial buildings constitute another example of the conditions historically associated with "blighted" areas or areas in need of redevelopment. The existence of these buildings within a study area will be readily apparent and can be easily documented during a site visit. As with the "a" criteria, the existence of vacant and abandoned commercial buildings will likely have triggered the investigation in the first place. When in doubt, historic records and photographs, interviews with property owners and local officials, and a review of local tax assessment records will help to document cases of abandonment. While it may be useful to know how long a building has remained unoccupied, no minimum time frame is required to qualify the building as abandoned under the "b" criteria.

Typically, buildings that meet the "b" criteria will exhibit sufficient deterioration to meet the "a" criteria as well. However, to meet the "b" criteria, the deterioration or disrepair must be so extensive that the building may be considered "untenable," as per the statutory criteria. It is important to remember that the "b" criteria is applicable only to commercial and industrial buildings and not to residential buildings. However, the nonresidential component of a mixed use building, which contains both residential and commercial uses, can meet the "b" criteria.

The "c" Criteria - Public and Vacant Land

Property owned by a municipality, county, housing authority, or redevelopment entity may be designated in need of redevelopment pursuant to the "c" criteria. However, care must be taken in establishing the planning reasons for the designation, particularly when only a publicly owned parcel or tract of land will be designated as an area in need of redevelopment. A recent court decision has determined that public ownership alone is not a sufficient reason for such a designation. The reasons why the development potential of a publicly owned property may be limited, such as its location, "remoteness," lack of access, topography, or soil conditions should be specified in findings of the preliminary investigation report.

The "c" criteria enables municipalities to use the redevelopment process to generate private development interest in surplus public lands and get them back on the tax rolls. Over time, municipalities may obtain ownership of various properties through tax foreclosure. By designating these publicly owned parcels in need of redevelopment, the municipality is able to convey the parcel to a redeveloper without having to go through the public bidding process. The redeveloper is then required by a redeveloper agreement to redevelop them in accordance with a redevelopment plan. In contrast, the public bidding process allows the transfer of publicly owned properties to a private entity at a public sale, but does not effectively result in their redevelopment consistent with municipal objectives.

Privately owned land that has remained unimproved and vacant for at least ten years also may be designated in need of redevelopment pursuant to the "c" criteria. As with publicly owned land, it also must be shown that a vacant parcel is not likely to be developed through private investment because of development constraints resulting from its location, remoteness from other developed areas of the community, lack of access, topography, or soil conditions.

The "d" Criteria - Obsolete Layout and Design

While the "a" and "b" criteria focus on the condition of the buildings on a property, the "d" criteria focuses on site layout and design. In addition, the "d" criteria expands the analysis of the statutory criteria to include a review of the condition of other site improvements, such as accessory structures and parking lots. Some of the factors to be reviewed in analyzing a study area for the applicability of the "d" criteria include the location and relationship of buildings, accessory structures and other site improvements, onsite circulation and parking, land use conflicts, as well as lot and building coverages within the study area. In general, properties that meet the "d" criteria are being used in a manner not consistent with modern land use planning standards or practices. Given the flexible nature of the "d" criteria, it often is used (along with the "e" criteria) in suburban settings, where deterioration and abandonment are not issues.

The "e" Criteria: Underutilization

The "e" criteria is applicable in circumstances where there is a quantifiable economic "underutilization" or "lack of proper utilization" of properties in a study area. This may be the result of property ownership and title problems, property configuration, or "other factors" that limit the economic viability and marketability of the properties in a study area and depress property values. Properties that meet the "e" criteria may include obsolete commercial and industrial facilities that may no longer be marketable, properties exhibiting poor design and arrangement consistent with the "d" criteria, or areas not developed in a manner consistent with the objectives of a municipality's zoning and master plan.

One of the indicators used to measure the economic productivity of a property is the ratio of the assessed value of the improvements on the property to the value of the land. The assessed values of land and improvements for a particular property are found in local property tax records. Developed properties in areas that are economically viable typically have improvement-to-land ratios of 2:1 or greater. Ratios of less than 2:1 may offer evidence of underutilization. A low improvement-to-land ratio, in itself, is not absolute proof that a property is in need of redevelopment. Improvement-to-land ratios should also be analyzed in connection with other evidence - such as the physical condition of the property or site layout - to determine the applicability of the statutory criteria. It may be necessary to compare ratios within the study area to those in surrounding areas or in other parts of the community. For example, the property values and tax revenue generated from two comparable blocks, one within the study area and one within an area considered economically stable, should be

compared to determine the appropriate threshold in identifying underutilization.

It is important to note that a property may not be economically "underutilized," but may exhibit a lack of "proper utilization" in relation to a municipality's overall land use goals and objectives. Thus, the property would still meet the "e" criteria, but the analysis would focus on broader land use planning issues and concerns. This type of analysis is less empirical and involves a review of the local master plan and other planning documents to determine whether or not the area is developing in a manner consistent with a municipality's comprehensive plan.

The "f" Criteria - Fire and Natural Disasters

The "f" criteria is intended to permit the redevelopment of a large area in a community that has been destroyed or where the property values have been materially reduced by a sudden natural disaster. It was first added to the old urban renewal statutes after a catastrophic fire in Passaic destroyed several city blocks. When the state's redevelopment laws were updated in 1992, the "f" criteria was retained, but the minimum tract area that could qualify for designation was reduced from ten to five contiguous acres.

A recent example of the application of the "f" criteria occurred in two municipalities along the Raritan River in central New Jersey that experienced extensive flood damage during 1999's Hurricane Floyd. The municipalities of Manville and Bound Brook used emergency flood assistance funds to redevelop their flood-ravaged areas. Bound Brook has adopted a redevelopment plan, and Manville is considering redevelopment of several key properties along its downtown corridor.

The "g" Criteria - Urban Enterprise Zones

The Urban Enterprise Zone Act added criteria "g" to the redevelopment statute. Under the "g" criteria, urban enterprise zones (UEZs) designated by the New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zone Authority automatically qualify as areas in need of redevelopment for the purposes of granting long- and short-term tax abatements and exemptions. However, if a municipality wants to exercise any other redevelopment powers within the UEZ, including the power of eminent domain, it must prove that the area meets one or more of the other statutory criteria and formally designate the area in need of redevelopment pursuant to the procedures in the LRHL. A redevelopment plan for the area also must be adopted.

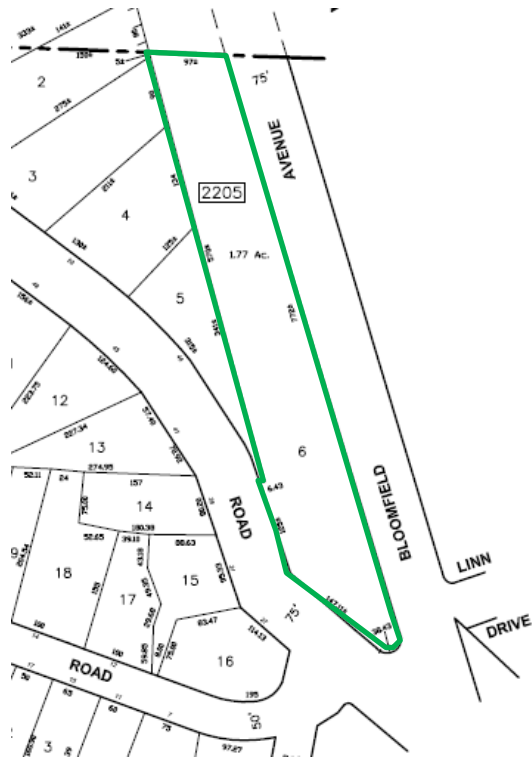
Description of the Study Area

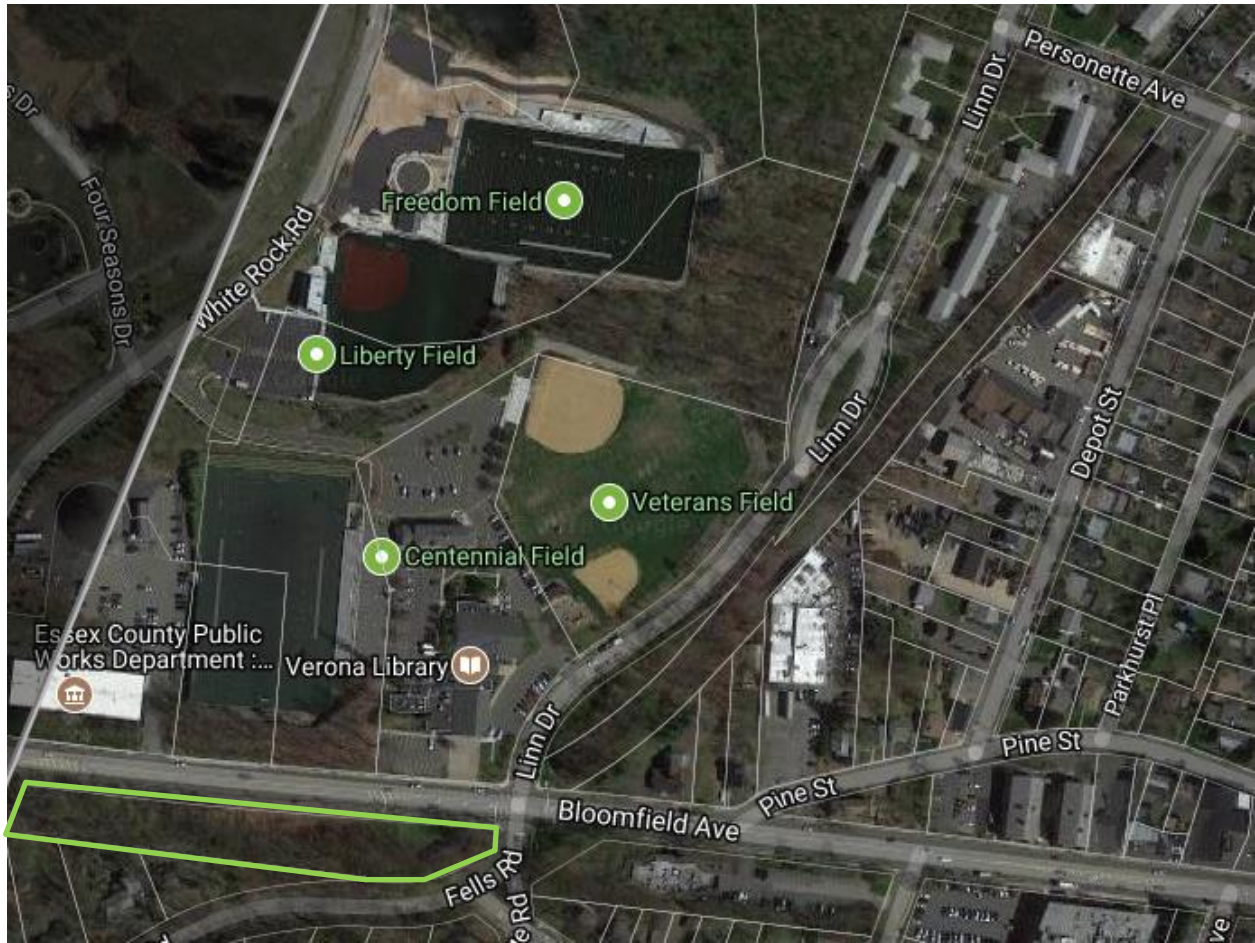
Overview

The Study Area is located in the central western section of Verona encompassing Lot 6 in Block 2205. It contains 1.77 acres of land. It is bounded by Fells Drive to the east, Bloomfield Avenue to the north, the municipal boundary to the east and the rear of the lots that front onto Fells Drive. The tax maps be found below.

Tax Map 22, Township of Verona.

 Subject Property





Master Plan Recommendation

The Township of Verona last adopted its master plan in June of 2009. The 2009 master plan has many goals and objectives, of which, the following are pertinent to the subject properties:

The goals and objectives serving Verona's Master Plan are indicated as follows:

1. To encourage municipal action to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in this Township, in a manner that will promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare.
2. To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and manmade disasters.
 - a. Maintain adequate water service to the Township.
 - b. Maintain and improve the storm drainage system serving the Township.
 - c. Maintain adequate sanitary sewer service for the Township.
3. To provide adequate light, air and open space:
 - a. Provide appropriate levels of recreational opportunities to efficiently and adequately serve the residents of the Township.
 - b. Promote the conservation of environmental resources and the natural appearance of the Township.
4. To ensure that the development of the Township does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, the County and the State as a whole;
 - a. To ensure that the relationship of the proposed development of the municipality, as developed in the master plan is not in conflict with the master plans of contiguous municipalities, the master plan of the county, the State Development and Redevelopment Plan adopted pursuant to the "State Planning Act," sections 1 through 12 of P.L.1985, c.398 (C.52:18A-196 et seq.) and district solid waste management plan required pursuant to the provisions of the "Solid Waste Management Act," P.L.1970, c.39 (C.13:1E-1 et seq.) of the county.
5. To promote the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of people, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment;
 - a. Preserve the environmental resources of the Township by locating conservation parklands and easements where necessary; by limiting

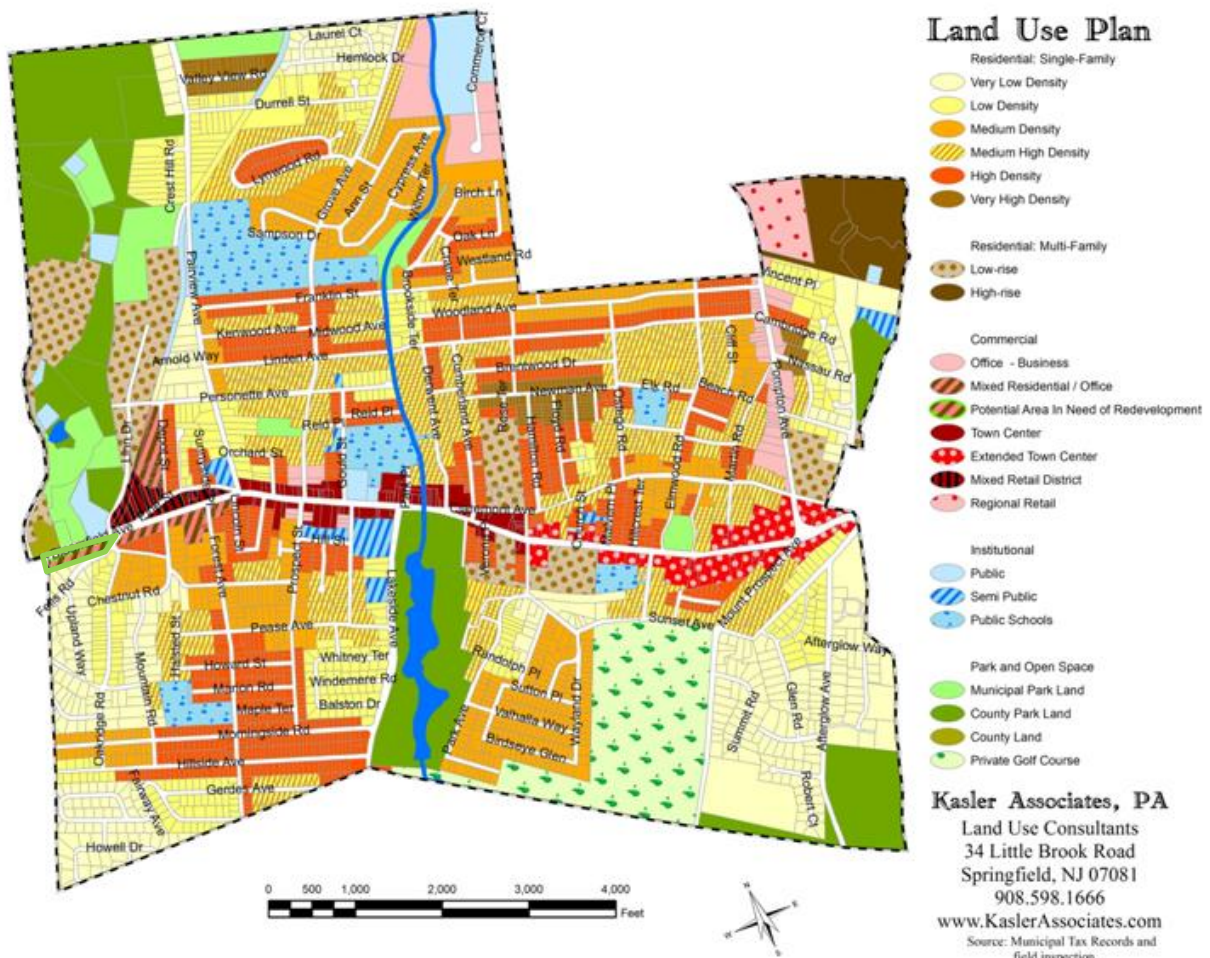
development in environmentally sensitive areas; by encouraging the preservation of specimen trees and general landscaping; and by preservation of the township's natural character.

- b. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands by identifying wetlands and preserving them according to the rules and regulations promulgated by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.
 - c. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands by identifying steep slopes and deterring development on said lands.
6. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies;
- a. Provide adequate community facilities in the Township by maintaining and improving necessary facilities such that the Township is efficiently and adequately served, and that all such facilities be barrier free.
7. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of residential, recreational, commercial and open space, both public and private, according to their respective environmental requirements in order to meet the needs of all the citizens of Verona;
- a. Preserve and promote a balanced variety of residential, commercial, public, recreation and conservation land uses.
 - b. Preserve and protect the established primarily residential character of the Township by maintaining and improving neighborhood quality in existing residential areas.
 - c. Encourage future housing construction that is compatible with the existing character of the Township without increasing housing density in established residential areas.
 - d. Maintain and improve the existing quality of housing.
 - e. Encourage modifications and/or additions to existing housing in light of current trends of completely razing the existing home and rebuilding anew.
 - f. Guide the future development and/or redevelopment of land within the Township so as to incorporate new construction without undue disruption to the established character of the Township.
8. Continue to recognize the central business district as the primary location for pedestrian-oriented business serving the community.
- a. Encourage the renovation and rehabilitation of existing buildings and storefronts.
 - b. Encourage general maintenance and upkeep of buildings, storefronts and public areas.

- c. Encourage lot consolidation to enhance opportunities for infill development and redevelopment.
 - d. Promote pedestrian activity in the Central Business District with active retail ground floor uses.
 - e. Encourage mixed-use developments.
 - f. Discourage parking areas in the front yards.
 - g. Support developments that are pedestrian scaled and support retail activity in the Central Business District.
 - h. Promote the conversion of existing light industrial uses to uses that are more compatible to the land uses surrounding the existing light industrial use.
9. To encourage the location and design of transportation routes that will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging the location of such facilities and routes that result in congestion or blight;
- a. Maintain the efficiency of the Township's circulation system by continued upgrading of streets and intersections.
 - b. Develop a balanced circulation system incorporating the needs of pedestrians, bicycles, autos, trucks and buses.
 - c. Provide municipal parking areas in support of commercial enterprises in the central business district.
 - d. Encourage the use of alternative forms of mass transportation.
 - e. Encourage the protection of the residential character by discouraging cut through traffic.
10. To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangement;
- a. Reduce the cutting of trees on private property through tree preservation regulations.
 - b. Support the planting and maintain trees along public rights-of-way.
11. To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources in the Township and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land;
- a. Encourage the protection and preservation of historic sites and buildings.
12. To encourage planned unit developments that incorporate the best features of design and relate the type, design and layout of residential, commercial, and recreational development to the particular site;
13. To encourage senior citizen community housing construction;

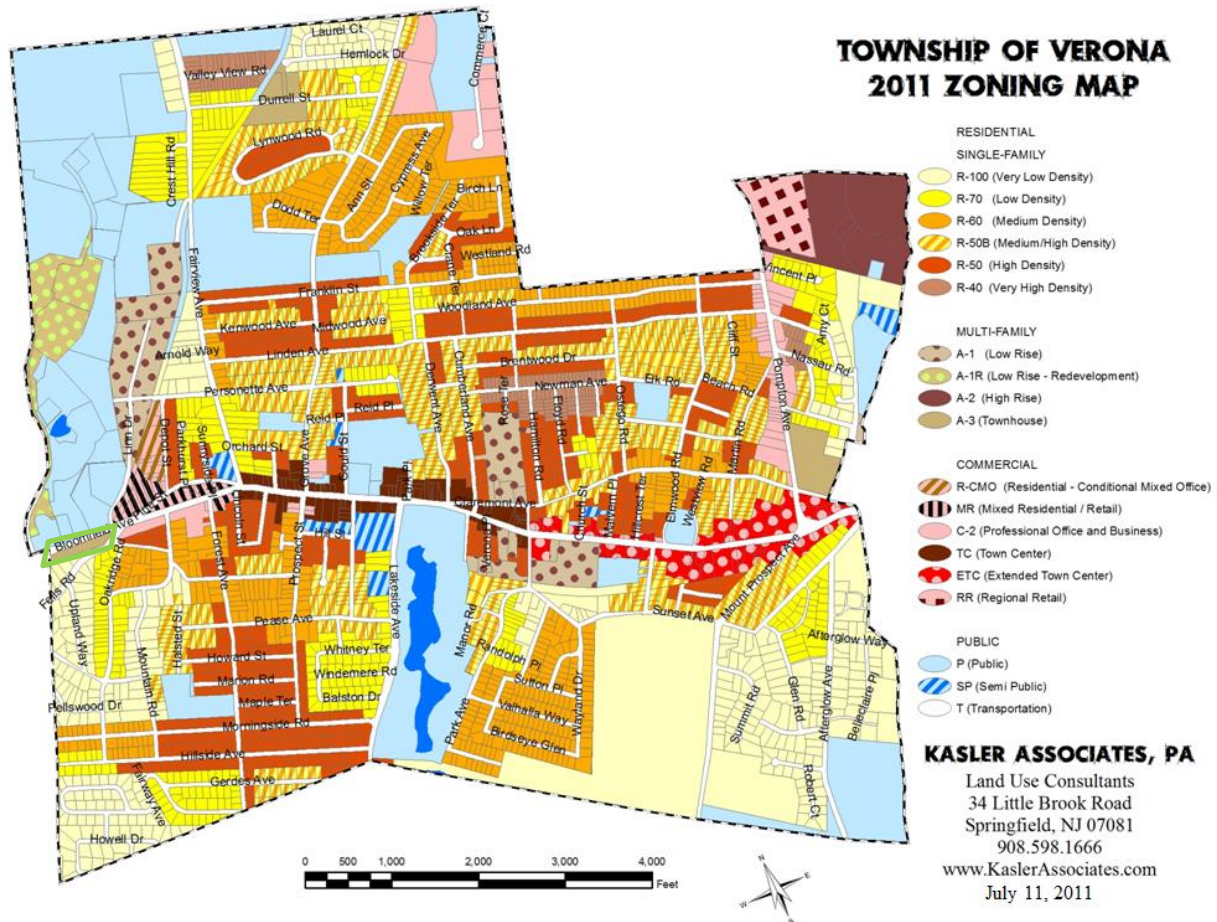
- a. Maintain the redevelopment of the Hilltop property with, in part, age-restricted housing.
- 14. To continue to meet the municipal obligation to provide the Township of Verona its fair share of affordable housing meeting the requirements set forth by the New Jersey Council On Affordable Housing
- 15. To encourage coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development.
 - a. Maximize leveraging of public and private funds.
 - b. Implement a downtown revitalization program.
 - c. Develop alternative parking and circulation configurations in the downtown that directs customers, employees, commuters and residents to designated parking areas or structured parking behind business.
 - d. Enhance and maintain attractive gateways to the Township.
 - e. Assess the redevelopment potential of properties in the central business district and on Pompton Avenue.
 - f. Provide the necessary infrastructure to support business development in all business districts.
- 16. To promote utilization of renewable energy resources.
 - a. Promote Leed (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) principals. that would promote construction of buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live and work.
 - b. Encourage the utilization of new solar technology and other clean fuels.
- 17. To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs.
 - a. Assure adequate collection, disposal and recycling of solid waste materials.

The master plan recommends the subject property as a potential Area in Need of Redevelopment. (the subject property has been outlined in green).



Zoning Characteristics in the Study Area

The zoning for the Township of Verona was completely rewritten and adopted by the Mayor and Council in 2011. The zoning map (with the subject property highlighted in green) is displayed below.



The Master Plan land use plan recommends the subject property to be included in the A-3 zone.

ARTICLE XVII
SCHEDULE OF DISTRICT REGULATIONS

150 - 17.10 A-3 (RESIDENTIAL - TOWNHOUSE) ZONE DISTRICT

A. Principal Permitted Uses

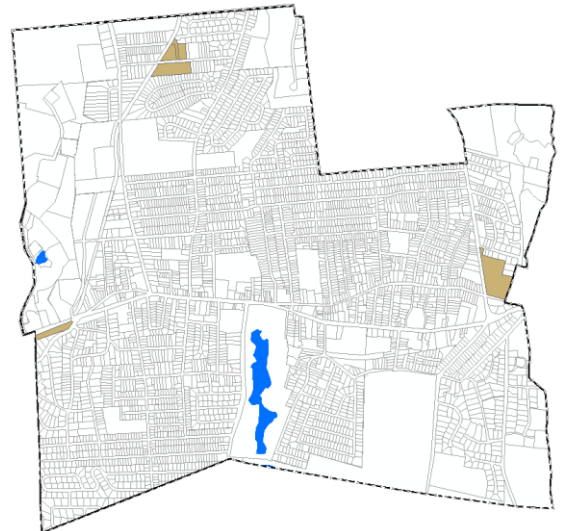
No building or premises shall be erected, altered or used except for uses designated for each district as follows:

1. Single family dwellings.

B. Permitted Accessory Uses

Any of the following accessory uses may be permitted in conjunction with a permitted principal use:

1. Detached garage.
2. Family day-care center.
3. Swimming pool, hot tub and related facilities.
4. Basketball Court, unlit.
5. Tennis Court, unlit.
6. Deck, either attached or unattached.
7. Greenhouse.
8. A single shed up to 150 square feet in floor area.



C. Area, Yard and Bulk Regulations for Principal & Accessory Structures & Uses
(Single Family)

1. Minimum Lot Size (Square Feet)	8,400
2. Minimum Lot Width (Feet)	70
3. Maximum Lot Coverage (Percent)	20
4. Maximum Improved Lot Coverage (Percent)	35

D. Area, Yard and Bulk Regulations for Principal Structures & Uses
(Single Family)

1. Minimum Front Yard Setback (Feet)	30
2. Minimum Side Yard Setback-One (Feet)	8
3. Minimum Side Yard Setbacks-Both (Feet)	18
4. Minimum Side Yard Setbacks-Both (Percentage of lot width)	25
5. Minimum Rear Yard Setback (Feet)	30
6. Maximum Height (Stories / Feet)	2.5 / 30

E. Area, Yard and Bulk Regulations for Accessory Structures & Uses
(Single Family)

1.	Minimum Side Yard Setback-One (Feet)	8
2.	Minimum Rear Yard Setback (Feet)	10
3.	Minimum Distance between accessory and principal structures (feet)	10
4.	Maximum aggregate area covered by accessory structures in the yard it is located in. (percent)	15
5.	Maximum Height (Stories / Feet)	1 ½ / 15

F. Conditional Uses

The following conditional uses are permitted within the residential townhouse district (A-3) subject to area, yard and bulk regulations and other controls identified in the conditional use regulations of this ordinance.

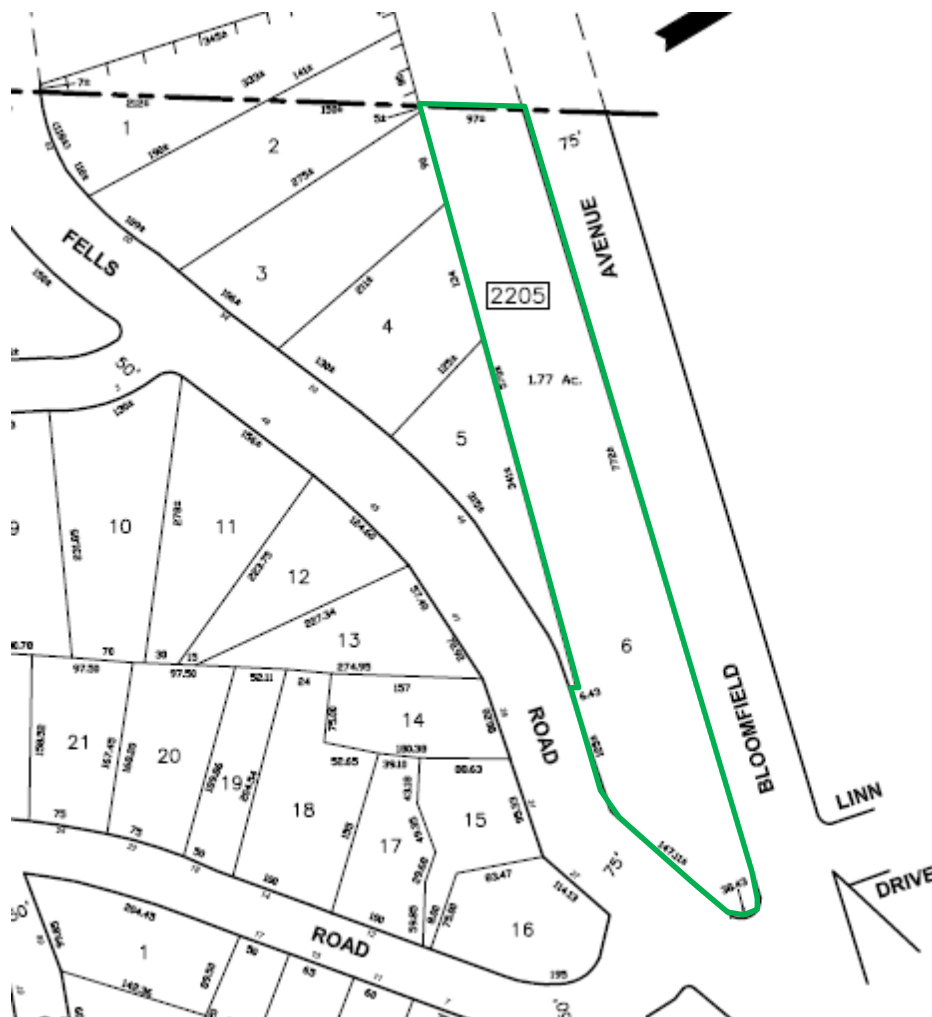
1. A satellite or dish antenna, as an accessory use, installed in the side or rear yard, subject to the conditions set forth in section 150-7.11 of this chapter.
2. Townhouses subject to the following density and bulk regulations:
(du = dwelling units)
 - a. Over 8 acres in size 8 du / acre
 - b. Between 6.0 and 7.99 acres in lot size 9 du / acre
 - c. Between 4.1 and 5.99 acres in lot size 11 du / acre
 - d. Under 4 acres in lot size 12 du / acre
 - e. Minimum Acreage (Combined) 1.5 Acres
 - f. Minimum Front Yard Setback 50 Ft
 - g. Minimum Side Yard Setback 25 Ft
 - h. Minimum Rear Yard Setback 50 Ft
 - i. Minimum Rear Yard Setback-Bloomfield Frontage 30 Ft
 - j. Minimum Front Yard Setback-Bloomfield Frontage 25 Ft
 - k. Minimum Buffer between townhouses and
off site residential uses 25 ft.
 - l. Maximum Height (Stories / Feet) 2.5 / 35
 - m. Maximum Lot Coverage 40 %
 - n. Maximum Improved Lot Coverage 55%

Subject property Evaluation for Compliance with Redevelopment Criteria

An analysis of the subject property existing land uses, site layout and physical characteristics was conducted utilizing tax maps / records, physical inspection of the area, review of aerial photography, Master Plan studies and maps. Photos were taken and a property survey form completed for each property.

Site #1 Block 2205, Lot 6

Description: Lot 6 in Block 2205 is located on the south side of Bloomfield Avenue and also has frontage along Fells Road. It contains 1.77 acres of land and was once a part of the railroad right-of-way. . The site contains 772 feet of frontage along Bloomfield Avenue and 273 feet of frontage along Fells Road. The site is currently vacant but contains billboards.



Aerial Photograph (Viewing to the Southwest)



Evaluation:

The subject property is substandard for the following reasons:

- 1) It contains a non-conforming use (billboards).
- 2) The size and shape of this lot make it difficult to develop without the need for variances.

Evaluation of Criteria The property exhibits conditions consistent with Statutory Criteria “C” as well as Criteria “E”. This is due in part to the following:

- The site is vacant, and has been vacant for more than 10 years.
- The site contains a non-conforming billboards.
- The land to improvement ratio is less than the 1:2, and is therefore underutilized.
- It was identified as a potential rea in need of redevelopment in the 2009 Master Plan.

Land to Improvement Ratio Analysis

Block	Lot	Land Value	Improvements	Total	Ratio
2205	6	\$242,600.00		\$242,600.00	0

Conclusion

This preliminary investigation reveals several key findings that indicate and verify that the site in this redevelopment area meets the statutory criteria found in N.J.R.A. 40A:12A-5 of the Local Redevelopment Housing Law.

The lot meet the statutory “C” criteria. The “C” criteria includes a private and publicly owned lands that are vacant and are unlikely to develop without redevelopment options afforded to them.

The lot also meets the statutory “E” criteria. The “E” criteria includes a total lack of or, a growing lack, of property utilization of the parcels due to diverse ownerships or other conditions that retard the proper utilization of the land.

The proposed designation of this area would benefit from redevelopment area designation and initiate a public planning process that would allow for the creation of a redevelopment plan for the area that can allow for creative design of the subject properties land uses that would be compatible with the surrounding development.

<u>Block</u>	<u>Lot</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
2205	6	C & E

Recommendation

Based on the findings of this preliminary investigation, the recommendation to the Verona Planning Board is to forward these findings and recommendations to the Municipal Council. The property clearly meet the statutory criteria needed to establish a redevelopment area. If the area is formally designated, the Council should authorize a process by which the Planning Board, the public and professionals establish a redevelopment plan for the area. A resolution will be needed authorizing the Verona Planning Board to develop such a plan.