

REPORT OF PERIODIC REEXAMINATION
OF THE MASTER PLAN REPORTS AND
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS OF
THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST DEPTFORD,
GLOUCESTER COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

June, 1982

Draft for review by Planning Board at the July 22 meeting

This Report was prepared by the Township
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WEST DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP

MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT

A. INTRODUCTION

This Report has been prepared by the West Deptford Township Planning Board in compliance with the requirements of the Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 which requires a reexamination of the Master Plan Reports and the Township's development regulations, and the preparation of a report of findings thereon. Included in this review and reexamination are the following documents:

1. West Deptford Township Development Plan of 1969, as amended.
2. Land Use Plan Element of the West Deptford Township Master Plan as amended through February, 1980.
3. Natural Resources Inventory, 1979, as the basis for the Conservation Plan Element of the West Deptford Township Master Plan.
4. Zoning Ordinance as included in the West Deptford Township Code of Ordinances.
5. Subdivision of Land and Site Plan Review Ordinance as included in the West Deptford Township Code of Ordinances.
6. Land Use Procedures Ordinance, as included in the West Deptford Township Code of Ordinances.

B. MAJOR CHANGES RELATING TO LAND DEVELOPMENT
IN WEST DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP

In 1969, the General Development Plan of West Deptford was officially adopted by the Planning Board as the Master Plan of the Township. This Plan presented the Planning Board's recommendations for a long range policy with respect to future land uses, community facilities, and streets in the Township. It was based on background data, trends, and analyses, and on community objectives and aspirations for the future. In 1973, 1977, and 1980, the Land Use Plan component of the 1969 Master Plan was revised by the Planning Board to take account of major residential, industrial, and commercial development, to comply with provisions of the Municipal Land Use Law as enacted in 1975, and to reflect modifications in Township goals and objectives. Major developments during the past ten (10) years include the following:

1. Population Trends. Since the Township began its planning program in 1952, Township population, as reported by the Census, has increased as follows:

	<u>10 Year Increase</u>
1950 - 5,446	5,706 = 105%
1960 - 11,152	2,776 = 24%
1970 - 13, 928	4,074 = 29%

2. Housing Stock. Housing Units reported by the Census since 1960 is as follows:

	<u>10 Year Increase</u>
1960 - 3,267	592 = 18%
1970 - 3,859	2,765 = 72%
1980 - 6,624	

Much of the increase in population and housing units since 1970 is attributable to the addition of a Zoning District which permits multiple family dwellings. The 29% increase in population with a 72% increase in housing between 1970 and 1980 reflects the general trend toward smaller household size. Recent residential development has included a mix of single-family detached communities, multiple-family complexes, and infill of areas where utilities were accessible.

3. Commercial and Industrial Development. West Deptford has experienced a substantial amount of commercial development of three types: the integrated or self-contained shopping center; highway commercial development; and neighborhood retail facilities. The Southwood Shopping Center and the Jefferson Ward complex on Route 45 illustrate the first type. Strip Highway Commercial is thriving along Route 130, Old Crown Point Road, and portions of Route 45 and Kings Highway. Additional neighborhood convenience centers are anticipated as residential communities are developed.

Major industrial development has occurred in the Prudential-Mid Atlantic Industrial Park and in the Heavy Manufacturing area between the Delaware River and I-295. A major expansion of the Penwalt Chemical Company recently has been announced. All existing and anticipated major industrial developments are within the framework of the Plan and Zoning Ordinances. These developments all serve to strengthen both employment opportunity and tax base resources in the Township.

4. Municipal Facilities, Schools, Recreation and Open Spaces. West Deptford has kept pace with its growing population in providing a high level of governmental and educational services and facilities. Major new facilities are the "civic center" complex at Crown Point Road and Grove Avenue, which includes the Municipal Building, the Public Works garage and service facilities, fire station, the Township Library, and Township recreation areas and facilities; a firehouse in Colonial Manor; elevated water storage tanks; acquisition and development of the twenty (20) acre River Gate Park and the addition of facilities to many play areas distributed throughout the Township; construction of the West Deptford Middle School; major additions and improvements to the Township sewer and water distribution systems; and local road maintenance and improvements. Township Officials are now negotiating for the acquisition of approximately eighty (80) acres of land along the Municipal Building to the National Park boundary line. This action is in accordance with the Land Use Plan. The Township's Capital Program Budget calls for additional road construction and drainage projects, utility extensions, park and recreation area improvement, major equipment purchases, and construction of Police and Library facilities between 1982 and 1988.

5. Regulations Affecting Development. West Deptford has had a Building Code, Zoning Ordinance, and Land Subdivision Regulation in effect for twenty-five or more years. Recent additional regulations adopted by the Township include the addition of Site Plan Review requirements as part of its Land Subdivision Ordinance, the adoption of an Official Map to preserve essential highway and drainage rights-of-way, a Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance to retain National Flood Insurance eligibility for Township residents, plus other general Ordinances relating to such subjects as mobile homes, swimming pools, and nuisances. These regulations have been kept up to date, and are now part of the Code of the Township of West Deptford. A review of major developments which are proposed in environmentally sensitive areas by the Environmental Commission also provides additional assurances of sound development.

C. REVIEW OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

An examination of the development assumptions, policies, and objectives contained in the 1980 Land Use Plan Element indicates that they continue to remain essentially valid but that there may be a need to rephrase several goals and objectives to emphasize the importance of considering environmental constraints and limiting intensive development. The extensive areas of the Township which are classified as "Areas of Special Flood Hazard" on the 1982 Flood Hazard Boundary Maps as prepared by the Federal Insurance Administration, together with the areas classified as Wetlands by the State, merit special attention. Recomputation of maximum population potential for the Township with these additional constraints may result in a reduction of 31,000 - 33,000 maximum population as now projected in the Master Plan.

Development Goals and Objectives included in the West Deptford Plan are consistent with the Goal Statements included in the Gloucester County Development Management Plan of February, 1982.

D. REVIEW OF OTHER MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS.

In addition to the Goals and Objectives Element, the Municipal Land Use Law at the time of adoption included seven additional elements: land use; housing; circulation; utility service; community facilities; recreation; and natural resources conservation. In 1981, energy conservation and storm water management elements were added to the list of required elements. The West Deptford Master Plan Reports, together with the Natural Resources Inventory as prepared by the Township's Environmental Commission, covers the requirements of the eight basic elements, although the organization of the West Deptford Plan differs somewhat. The Conservation Element currently is being prepared as a separate Element, based on the Natural Resources Inventory. A map showing the location of environmentally sensitive areas is now in preparation by the Environmental Commission which will become a significant part of the Natural Resources Inventory and the Conservation Plan Element.

Preliminary work has also begun on the Energy conservation Element, and will be completed as a separate Element late in 1982 or early 1983. No timetable has been established for completion of the Storm Water Management Plan for the entire Township, pending funding or provision of required topographic data by the State or County. Drainage plans for many parts of the Township have been completed by the Township Engineer.

As detailed Housing and Population data from the 1980 Census become available, supplemental analyses will be made to point up trends in housing quality, housing types which are available in the Township, and details of the Township's population by age, sex, race, and other characteristics.

The Gloucester County Development Plan Map and the West Deptford Land Use Plan, although differing in detail of Land Use categories, are consistent. Both emphasize the need for careful control over future development in environmentally sensitive areas.

E. REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

A review of the Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, Official Map, and the Subdivision of Land and Site Plan Review Ordinance indicate that these regulations have been revised and amended to be consistent with the Master Plan and with Municipal Land Use Law requirements. Zoning use and area regulations within established Zoning Districts, and modifications of District boundaries have been made, and will continue to be made, as circumstances warrant. No changes are contemplated which will affect consistency with the Land Use Plan, however. Procedures for administration of the recently enacted Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance are being developed by Inspections Office Officials in collaboration with the Township Administrator.

In summary, this Reexamination indicates that except as noted, West Deptford has kept its Master Plan current and its Development Regulations and Procedures amended to reflect changes in the Municipal Land Use Law. This is due in large measure to an active on-going program by the Planning Board and related advisory Boards and Commissions, Township Administrator and other Township Officials, support by the Township Committee, and continuing interest and participation by West Deptford citizens in matters affecting Township Development.

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Boroughs of National Park, Paulsboro and Westville
County of Gloucester