

Dear Resident:

Below, please find the most Frequently asked questions concerning the Allenhurst Redevelopment Zone. The Redevelopment Plan is now in the hands of the Allenhurst Planning Board. They will be holding a public hearing on the Plan at the Allenhurst Firehouse on Wednesday, July 12, 2006, at 7 PM. Once the Planning Board had held their public hearing, the Plan will move to the Board of Commissioners. They will also hold a public hearing before the Plan is finally adopted. This is the Plan that will be sent to potential developers. You are encouraged to attend and participate or learn about redevelopment.

Frequently Asked Questions about the Allenhurst Redevelopment Zone

1. *Why are we doing this?*

In 2004, the Borough became aware that the largest taxpayer in town (JCP&L) was moving their operations and selling a majority of their property. In anticipation of the detrimental impact of losing a large portion of the municipal ratable base as well as an important component of our struggling Main Street area, the Board of Commissioners and the Planning Board hired a planner utilizing a "Smart Growth Grant" from the State of New Jersey to explore whether the area that would be sold and the surrounding environs could be successfully redeveloped pursuant to an approved Plan. This was done so that the Borough, not a private developer or other third party, would have the final say as to what could occupy the southwestern portion of town.

2. *Wouldn't our zoning restrictions accomplish the same thing?*

While zoning helps guide development, it does not clearly establish what can be built in the same manner as a redevelopment plan. In addition, zoning does not provide the additional tools such as the potential for eminent domain, utilizing public property without having to individually bid for each parcel, finance and bonding tools, and the availability of additional state aid which allows for successful redevelopment of an area rather than the hope that properties may over time be constructed according to the zone.

What is a builders remedy lawsuit?

There is a requirement to satisfy the need for low income housing when towns have land to develop. In the past, Allenhurst has never had a parcel or parcels of land that fit that requirement. Nevertheless, as of the end of 2005, the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) found that the Borough had an obligation to provide 53 low and moderate income units in connection with its "Round I and II" obligation. Now that a large tract of land has, for the first time become available, if no economically viable land use were proposed for the property as is made possible through the redevelopment process, there is the possibility that a third party could petition the Court (ie. sue the Borough) in order to force it to provide "Mt. Laurel" COAH units. Under the Round I and II COAH rules, the affordable units only compromise 20% of any project. Accordingly, for every one affordable unit, a third party would be permitted to construct 4 market rate units. It is the Borough's position that location of affordable housing within any community should not be mandated by a State agency or a private party utilizing a "builders remedy" for its own economic gain. Rather, the location and extent of affordable housing, like redevelopment, should be determined by local action and inputs.

What is going to be built in the redevelopment zone?

Over the past 18 months, a subcommittee of the Planning Board and later the Planning Board itself discussed many options for the properties in the redevelopment zone. In order to achieve the principal goals and objectives of (a) maintaining and, if possible, enhancing the Borough's tax base while (b) maintaining the Borough's unique historic character, it was determined that the area could be developed with a mix of residential, retail and commercial uses that incorporate and utilize design standards consistent with the historic requirements of the Borough.

How many homes will be built?

Both the Planning Board and the Board of Commissioners are concerned about density. There is not a set number that has been proposed because both boards would like to see what various developers think might work. While encouraging creativity of design and yield within the historic standards of the Borough, the Redevelopment Plan does restrict density through minimum unit size, permitting only certain unit types such as single family houses in certain areas, providing setbacks and off street parking requirements, as well as mandating certain lot sizes and open space requirements in order to prevent anything too dense from being built.

6. *Why can't we just require high-end retail stores or commercial office space without any additional residential units?*

While some may want to restrict all new residential development for a variety of reasons, even if this were the opinion of all it would not result in a plan that meets one of the two goals of the Borough. Given the impact of JCP&L's moving out of the community, a principle goal of the plan was to enhance and/or maintain our current tax base. Over the past 18 months various private and public consultant, realtors, planners and developers have consistently emphasized at least one thing. Namely, requiring an area that only permits retail stores and commercial offices is not a viable economic use that would allow the area to successfully be developed. The experience of those who currently operate small stores and boutiques along Main Street indicate that they are currently experiencing vacancies and an inability to cover operational expenses. Adding additional retail stores without any additional residential base or other market incentive would not only result in additional competition for the existing merchants, but would unrealistically assume that the rents for these stores could cover the substantial costs and expenses necessary to redevelop an area.

7. *I saw some of the plans already and I hated all of them.*

The plans that were available to look at were submitted in an effort to help the people on the first subcommittee get an idea of what might work in the area. They were not and are not any of the plans that are being considered. They were merely a tool to help people not experienced with redevelopment get an idea of what development might look like so they could incorporate or prohibit various elements suggested in some of the plans.

8. *We cannot afford to add more people to a town without the added costs of education, sanitation, police and the beach club.*

The planner hired by the borough conducted a fiscal impact study. He found that in all circumstances the tax revenue generated by whatever is developed would offset the costs associated with education, police and sanitation. The Beach Club is closed to new memberships and has been for the past few years. The anticipation would be that by the time anything were to be developed, the Beach Club could accommodate these new residents.

9. *Who is going to pay for the infrastructure costs associated with redevelopment such as new utility lines such as sanitary or storm , gas, electric, cable and water, as well as improvements to Main Street?*

The selected re-developer would be responsible for all of these costs.

10. *I hear the land is polluted. What is there, and how harmful is it?*

There are apparently some areas that will need to be cleaned up. The exact number and nature is unknown by the Borough. However, by developing a plan which permits a mix of residential and retail uses, the responsible party and any redeveloper would have to clean all the property to the highest standards imposed by the regulatory agencies such as the NJDEP which has jurisdiction over this matter. Out of funds placed in escrow by the redeveloper, the Borough will hire environmental and other professionals to monitor this process in order to assure that cleanup pursuant to these standards takes place as a pre-condition of any redevelopment. In this manner, the redevelopment process becomes a tool to assure that clean up takes place at no additional cost to the Borough. The Borough itself, does not have the ability to require clean up at this time.

11. *Who is the redeveloper?*

The redeveloper has not been chosen yet. After the Planning Board holds their public meeting, incorporates any comments and adopts a Redevelopment Plan, the Plan still needs to go before the Board of Commissioners for their review and approval. Prior to the Commissioners adopting any Plan, a second public meeting must also be held. After this meeting and after any changes are made to the Plan, the Board of Commissioners will advertise for a request for qualifications (RFQ) and/or request for proposals (RFP) to develop the property within the redevelopment area pursuant to the approved Plan. After receiving proposals to determine consistency with the Plan and examining the qualifications of all the responding parties, the Commissioners will select a redeveloper. In order to insure as objective a selection process as possible, the Plan itself contains selection criteria which the Commissioners must follow. Even after the Plan is adopted and a Redeveloper is selected, that party must still execute a Redevelopment Agreement with the Borough which outlines its obligations and responsibilities, acquire the property within the redevelopment area and only then commence construction which will first include cleaning the site or otherwise insuring it is clean so as to permit the proposed use.

For more information about the Redevelopment Process and examples of where it has been utilized, please contact:



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