

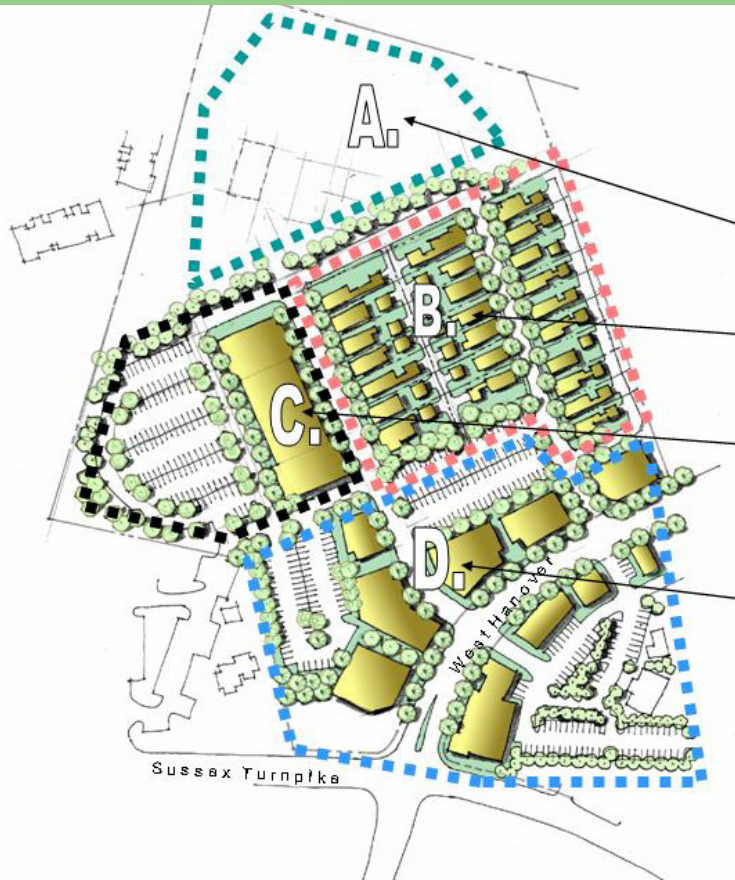


Township of

# RANDOLPH

Morris County, New Jersey

## MOUNT FREEDOM VILLAGE CENTER REPORT



### Mount Freedom, Randolph Township New Jersey

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WHERE LIFE IS WORTH LIVING





# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Purpose of the Study

This study of the Mount Freedom is part of the evolving planning efforts to upgrade and revitalize this important section of Randolph Township. The history of the area and past planning efforts are documented below. As they indicate, Mount Freedom has been extensively examined over the past thirty (30) years, and some progress has been made in reaching the Township's goals. Mount Freedom needs to be reexamined now for a number of reasons. First, the availability of sanitary sewers in the area south of Sussex Turnpike is anticipated to be implemented within the next decade. Also, improvements to Sussex Turnpike, planned for many years, are slated to occur within the next decade as well. Additionally, in the last five to ten years a number of projects have been constructed including the Acme Supermarket, Morris Bank and Trust, Woodmont and Heritage Plaza Shopping Center. The combination of these factors indicates that a new examination of Mount Freedom is warranted in order to ensure that future development meets the Township's goals and objectives.

A review of the studies and planning efforts documented below reveals that each had a slightly different definition of the Mount Freedom area. Some focused on an extremely limited area and not the entire district. Even the current village zoning districts that emanated from an earlier master plan do not encompass all of Mount Freedom.

Figure 1 below, graphically illustrates the Mount Freedom study area for this analysis. The intent of delineating the district as shown is to reflect the mixed-use nature of the area and its physical limits. Therefore, the land included in the study area encompasses the existing and approved multi-family residential developments such as Buckingham Townhouses, Woodmont, and Kensington Square. It also includes all of the current nonresidential zoning in Mount Freedom, as well as some single-family zoned and developed neighborhoods.

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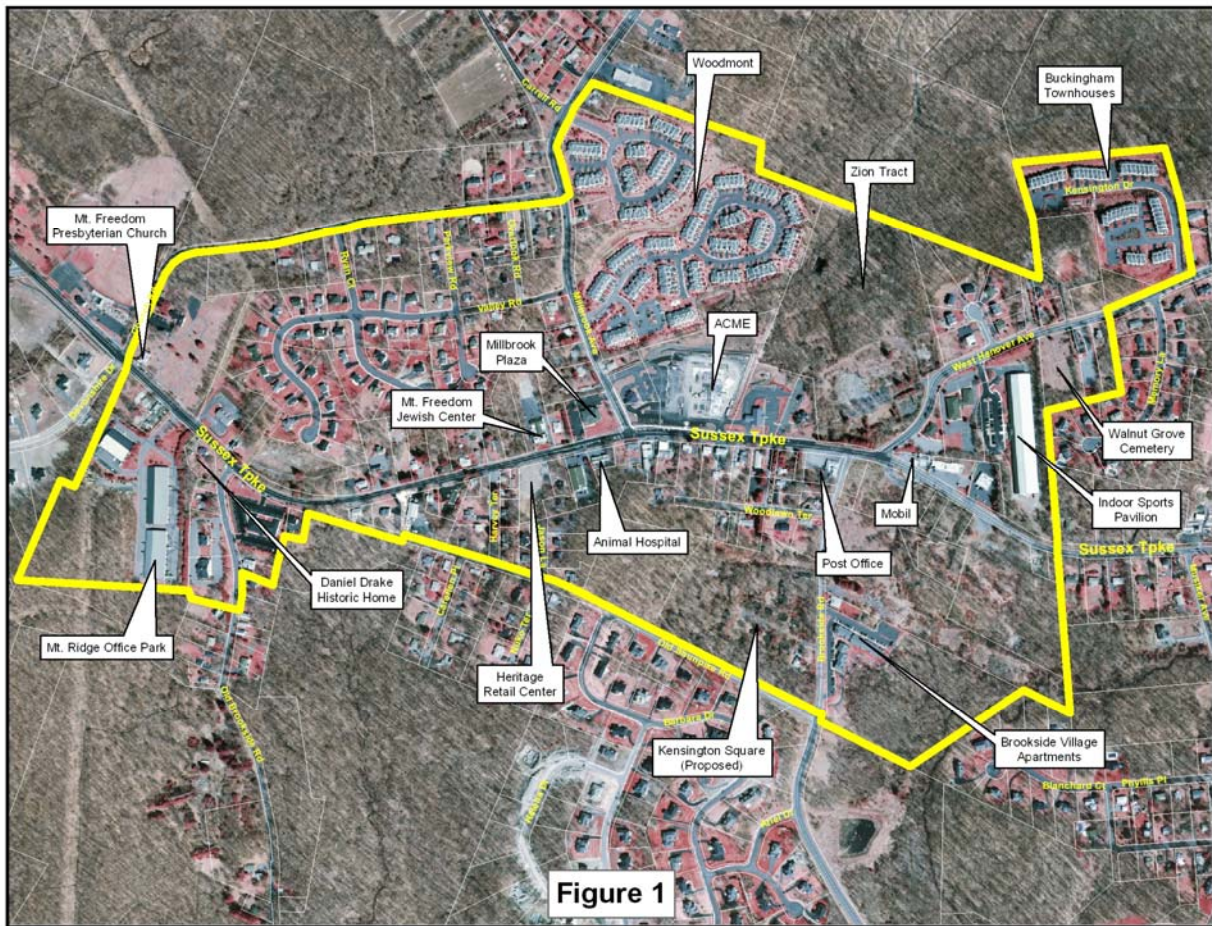


Figure 1

## B. Historical Background

The history of the Mount Freedom section of Randolph Township dates back to the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Abner family purchased land in the area in 1754, and a small town arose around the site shortly afterward. There is a story that has been passed down that when General Washington was in Morristown during the Revolutionary War and wanted to get away from the cares of war, he would ride over the hills to a quiet place where for a few hours he would be free from worry. He called this place Mount Freedom.<sup>1</sup>

The turnpike from Elizabethtown to Morristown was extended west from Morristown to Sussex County between 1801 and 1804. Unlike many of the farm roads in the area, the Sussex Turnpike was laid out in a straight line. Mount Freedom began to grow with this improved road connection. One of the first descriptions of the town was provided in the 1840's by Absalom Steelman. At that time it had two churches, one store, one tavern, a shingle factory, two distilleries and about forty (40) houses with a population of about two hundred (200) people.

<sup>1</sup> "Mount Freedom" by Alan Malakoff in A History of Randolph Township, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, edited by Richard T. Irwin, 2002, pp. 184-185.

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During this period Mount Freedom was known as a stopping point for coaches traveling to Pennsylvania. The Township's first hotel, Drake's was located in Mount Freedom. It was actually a tavern with some rooms upstairs.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the name of the area alternated between Mount Freedom and Walnut Grove. Near the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Walnut Grove described the eastern portion of the area, while Mount Freedom identified the western section. By the twentieth century the entire district was known as Mount Freedom once again.

In the early part of the twentieth century, Mount Freedom began developing as a summer resort area with dozens of hotels and numerous bungalow colonies. Many of these facilities were established by recent Jewish immigrants and catered to Jewish families primarily from New York City. The Saltz Hotel, established in about 1905 grew into one of the largest in the Township.<sup>2</sup> It was located at the intersection of West Hanover Avenue and Sussex Turnpike. The area flourished as a summer resort in the 1920's and 1930's for people wishing to escape the heat of the cities. The popularity of the resorts dropped after World War II, as the cost of travel declined. Other vacation destinations became more affordable to the middle class and the hotels and bungalows of Mount Freedom closed.

Some of the structures in Mount Freedom are remnants of the resort and bungalow days of the community. There are some bungalows that remain, that have been converted to year-round occupancy and in some instances expanded.

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<sup>2</sup> "Jewish Influence in Mount Freedom" by Harriet Berliner in A History of Randolph Township, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, edited by Richard T. Irwin, 2002, pp. 185-188.





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## II. PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

### A. Introduction

There have been a number of planning efforts focused on the Mount Freedom community over the years. Since 1992, the following studies have been undertaken:

1. In 1975 the Rutgers Urban Design Studio conducted a planning study that first identified Mount Freedom as a possible community center. That study resulted in zoning changes that were adopted to implement some of the recommendations of the report.
2. In 1988, the Planning Board adopted the Mount Freedom Center Plan. The purpose was to create a compact, comprehensively planned mixed-use center that avoided strip-mall type development.
3. “Technical Report #3, Randolph Township Master Plan Project, Community Design Standards – Activity Centers”, prepared by Moskowitz, Heyer, Gruel, P.A. & Madden/Kummer, Inc., June 1992. This report prepared as part of the comprehensive 1992 master plan effort identified the area as Town Center and Old Brookside – West. The Town Center, identified as located in Mount Freedom was noted as the traditional activity center in the south-central portion of the Township. It was identified as being centered where Millbrook Avenue, West Hanover Avenue and Brookside Road intersect with Sussex Turnpike. The Old Brookside-West area continues westward on Sussex Turnpike to Old Brookside Road and beyond down Calais Road to the municipal library. This study included a concept plan of the Town Center with a typical new town streetscape and recommendations addressing parking, circulation, architecture, signs, streetscape elements, implementation and utilities.
4. The Land Use Element of the 1992 Master Plan included a discussion of the Town Center Plan and noted that “the Mount Freedom area is still recognized as an appropriate place for a Town Center. The recommendations for the Town Center referred to the Technical Report #3 noted above in which the proposals for the area were addressed in detail.
5. A Master Plan Amendment was adopted on May 20, 1996 specifically regarding the Town Center. Many of the objectives of the original plan were determined to be still valid. Additional objectives were included that primarily intended that the scale of the Center should be more akin to a village center where services would be available for village and nearby residents. It also recommended that the core of the village be located on the north side of Sussex Turnpike and that the development of the village recognize the physical and psychological barriers created by Sussex Turnpike and West Hanover Avenue. Village Center Zoning districts were recommended in the amendment.

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6. The Township petitioned the State Planning Commission and the Office of State Planning in 1997 for designation of Mount Freedom and environs as a Village Center pursuant to the criteria in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). The area was never designated by the State as a center, and the State's process has now moved towards overall plan endorsement rather than center designation.
7. The November 1999 Master Plan Amendment prepared by Peter Steck, P.P., examined the Township's nonresidential land use policies. The Mount Freedom Area was specifically noted, including the zone designations of VCC, Village Center Commercial, LVC, Limited Village Commercial, VCR, Village Center Residential and SSVO, Specialty Shop/Village Office. The plan stated that over twenty-five years of planning efforts in the Mount Freedom area have produced only limited success in revitalization. The plan recommended that the Mount Freedom area be studied to determine whether it could be considered an area in "need of redevelopment" pursuant to the Local Housing and Redevelopment Law.
8. In February 2000 the Township retained Burgiss Associates, Inc. to prepare a study to determine whether the Mount Freedom area qualified as an area in need of redevelopment. An in-depth examination of individual properties was undertaken within the delineated study area. Their analysis revealed that there were areas within the study area that met the statutory criteria for designation as a redevelopment area.
9. The firm of Looney Ricks Kiss, Inc. produced the Mount Freedom Village Center Redevelopment Plan in January 2001. The focus of the study was on the area located north of Sussex Turnpike and west of West Hanover Road. The study was prepared in a format that was intended to meet the statutory requirements for a Redevelopment Plan. The study area was the 17.6-acre parcel commonly referred to the Zion tract, which was the former site of the Saltz Hotel. The plan detailed a mixed-use development on a village scale that included retail, offices, apartments and single-family residences.

## III. NATURAL RESOURCES

The Mount Freedom area and Randolph Township are fortunate to have a high quality of life born from the area's natural beauty and abundance of natural resources and features. Wooded areas, rolling hills, small ponds, streams, and various wildlife habitats can be found within the Township and give it a unique atmosphere and a sense of identity. Environmental constraints to development, however, will undoubtedly occur with such an abundance of natural resources throughout the Township. For this reason, natural resources that exist within the Mount Freedom area have been documented below and illustrated in Figure 2.

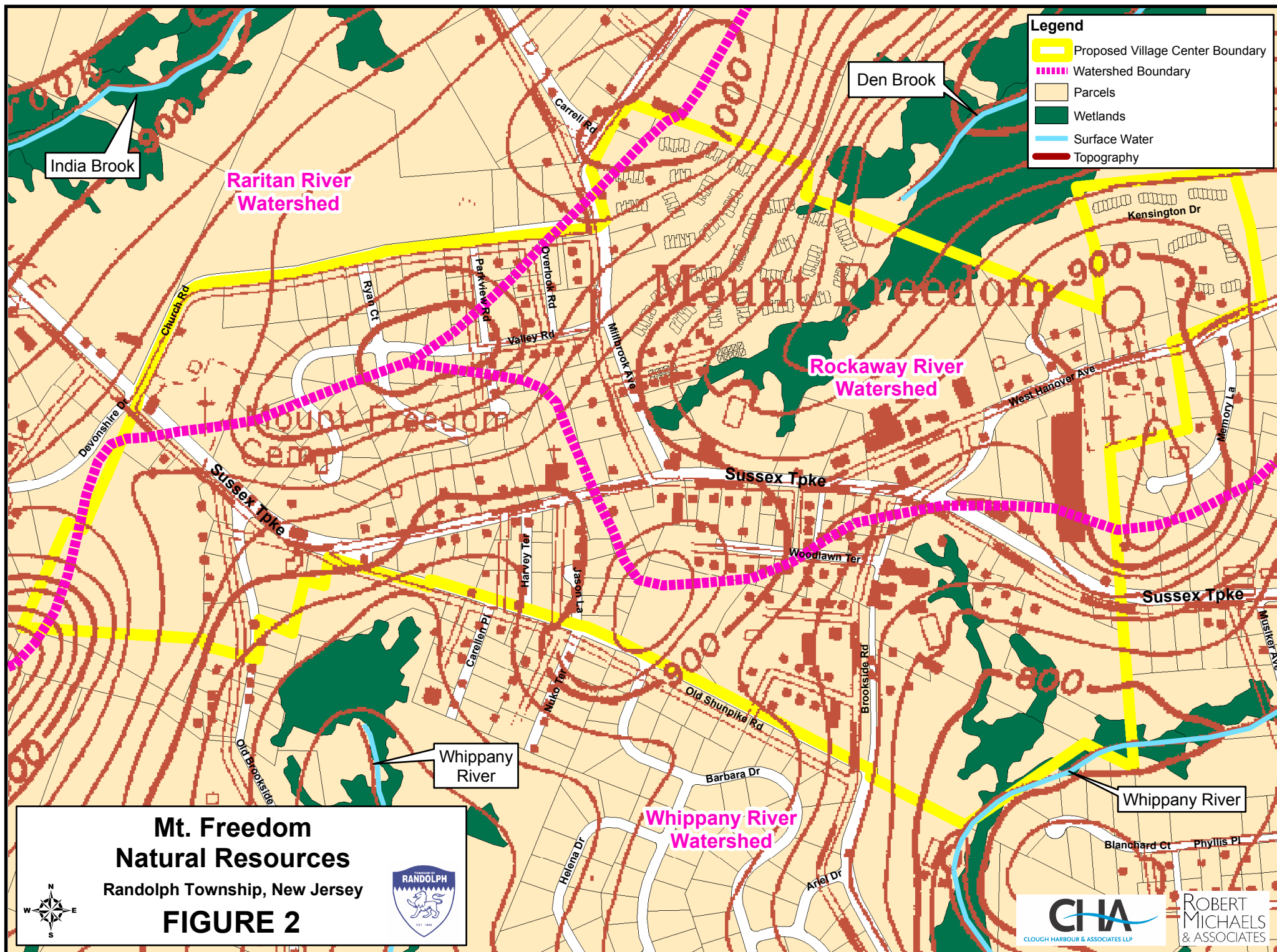
The topography varies within the area as rolling hills and stream channels are dispersed throughout the area. Land at the Valley Road/Millbrook intersection gradually slopes to the east and to the north just south of the Woodmont Townhouse neighborhood and the Zion Tract towards the public lands. The Zion Tract has between 1.5 and 8.9% slopes. Millbrook Avenue has some steeper sections (9.0 to 14.9% slopes) as one heads towards Sussex Turnpike. The elevation quickly drops towards Sussex Turnpike. This provides for a scenic vista as one enters the central area of Mount Freedom along Millbrook from the north, and also provides for a pleasant view towards the north from Sussex Turnpike. Land also slopes to the south and east from Brookside Road/Sussex Turnpike intersection. Here, land gradually slopes over a slope that is generally less than 5.0%.

The majority of the land within Mount Freedom flows to the north and east and is located within the Rockaway River Watershed. Some land below Sussex Turnpike is located in the Whippany River Watershed, and a small northwest portion of Mount Freedom is located within the Raritan River Watershed. Rain runoff and stormwater runoff flows from these areas toward their respective watersheds into streams, ponds, and lakes. Two tributaries to the Whippany River are present to the south of Mount Freedom, India Brook exists to the north and west, and an open water stream is located to the north and east of the Zion Tract. Associated with these streams are a series of sensitive areas including wetlands and forested wetland habitats.

Wetlands are present in three primary locations around the Village Center area. A large freshwater wetland extends east from the Woodmont Townhouse development towards an open water stream. This wetland crosses the northern portion of the Zion Tract and also provides forested wetland habitat in this area. The second freshwater wetland is located east of Brookside Road. It flows south and east towards a tributary of the Whippany River. The third and final wetland area is located south of the Sussex Turnpike and east of Old Brookside Road. In this area, wetlands surround drainage courses that flow into another tributary of the Whippany River.

Soil within Mount Freedom primarily consists of Edneyville soils. Other soils include Calfon Variant and Cokesbury. Because the site largely consists of Edneyville soils the depth to the seasonal high water table is between 2.5 and 6 feet. The other soils in the area have a shallower water table of 0.5 to 1.5 feet. Likewise, the Edneyville soils are generally well drained and the other soils in the area are generally poorly drained. Mount Freedom also has some of the deepest bedrock depths in the Township, generally between 6.7 and 7.2 feet.









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## IV. CIRCULATION

It continues to be a goal of the Township to reinforce the Mount Freedom area as a village center and to provide for a pleasant village-scale and pedestrian-oriented trail, sidewalk, and vehicular circulation network to link existing and future development. The road network that exists within Mount Freedom is illustrated on Figure 3 and is described below.

Sussex Turnpike extends from Church Road to a point of approximately 500 feet of the West Hanover intersection towards Musiker Avenue. This section of Sussex Turnpike serves as the “traditional main street” for the setting of a village center. Other major roadways that intersect



with Sussex Turnpike include Millbrook Avenue, West Hanover Avenue, and Brookside Road. Local streets within the Village Center include Valley Road with Overlook Road, Parkview Road, and Ryan Court as cross streets. Kensington Drive, Woodlawn Terrace, Harvey Terrace, and Jason Lane also serve as local roads within the Mount Freedom area.

Sussex Turnpike serves as a minor arterial within Randolph that is delineated in a northwest to southeast direction across the Township. The heavily traveled Turnpike

connects with Route 10, the only major arterial in Randolph Township, and thus receives much of its traffic volume to and from this area during AM and PM peak periods. Eastbound traffic flow along Sussex Turnpike is heavy during the morning peak period.

Currently, Sussex Turnpike consists of a two-lane road that goes through the Mount Freedom area with a 35 mile-per-hour posted speed limit. An eastbound left turn slot is provided along Sussex Turnpike at the Millbrook Avenue signalized intersection. Millbrook Avenue serves as a north/south oriented major collector road and thus collects and distributes traffic to/from Route 10 and Sussex Turnpike. Generally, traffic volumes along Millbrook are less than those experienced along Sussex Turnpike, with a majority being Township origin or destination traffic.

West Hanover Avenue also intersects with Sussex Turnpike to the east of the Millbrook Avenue/Sussex Turnpike intersection. West Hanover Avenue serves as an east-west minor arterial road that provides access to residential neighborhoods in the southeastern part of the Township. It provides vehicular access for both local and through traffic. Generally, the posted speed limit along this roadway is 40 miles per hour. Traffic flows along this stretch of road begin to slow primarily during the PM peak periods as increased levels of traffic are experienced near the Sussex Turnpike intersection. During these times, traffic back-ups on West Hanover Avenue and Sussex Turnpike.

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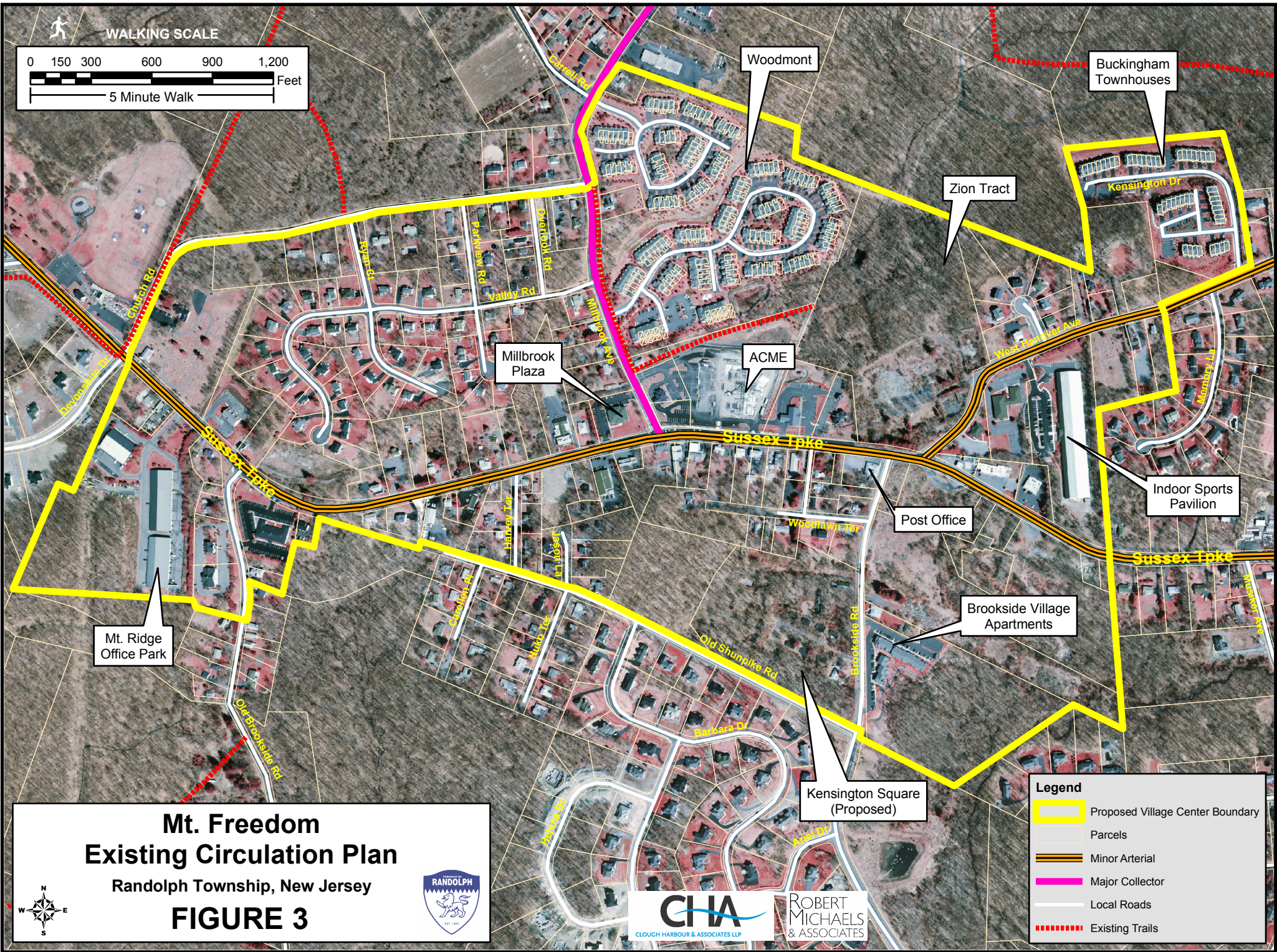
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Randolph Township has a bus route that is operated by Morris County Metro, which runs the MCM2 bus line under an agreement with New Jersey Transit. Four stops currently exist in Randolph. These include:

- County College of Morris
- Quaker Church Road and Dover-Chester Road intersection
- Center Grove and Quaker Church Road intersection
- South Salem Street and Route 10 intersection

No bus stops currently exist in Mount Freedom, but previous planning efforts by the Township have identified the corner of Sussex Turnpike and Millbrook Avenue as an ideal location for a future bus stop. Bus stops along the Sussex Turnpike corridor would also become more feasible as Mount Freedom continues to develop into a traditional village center. It should be noted that a park and ride program could be applied to the Village Center, which would help to increase bus ridership levels. Generally, bus service operates Monday through Friday during day and evening hours with buses running approximately every half hour.









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## V. STREETSCAPE CONDITIONS

Streetscape characteristics and amenities along Sussex Turnpike are varied and existing sidewalk connectivity is marginal. There is a great need to create and maintain a well-developed sidewalk network within the Mount Freedom area. Developing the Mount Freedom area has put emphasis on creating/enhancing this area's identity. As such, the Township has identified this area as an area to develop with pedestrian-friendly amenities and uses. As heavily traveled roadways, Sussex Turnpike and Church Road carry a significant quantity of vehicular traffic through Mount Freedom. For the most part, they have an undefined street edge that lacks consistent curbing, lacks a comprehensive sidewalk network, and lacks comprehensive access management objectives (i.e. defined curb cuts and defined curb cut placements). The lack of these infrastructure management amenities increases the likelihood of pedestrian/vehicular conflicts and decreases the area's overall aesthetics, thereby deterring a sense of Village Center identity. In addition to lacking consistent curbing, sidewalks, and access management objectives, the Sussex Turnpike "main street" corridor lacks pedestrian amenities and other streetscape features. Existing sidewalks and areas designated as sidewalk right-of-ways lack amenities such as consistent ornamental street lighting, benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, kiosks, and other features that enhance the pedestrian environment. When properly designed and implemented, these amenities create a sense of place and identity for both pedestrians and vehicle commuters. Pedestrian safety is enhanced and the overall area becomes better connected to a multi-modal transportation and pedestrian network. Community aesthetics are also greatly improved through the use of street trees and ornamental lighting fixtures.

Sussex Turnpike is slated for roadway improvements by the State of New Jersey Department of Transportation. These improvements include realigning and widening Sussex Turnpike from two lanes to four lanes through the Mount Freedom area. Associated road improvements include developing sidewalks along the southern section of Sussex Turnpike within the commercial core area of Mount Freedom as well as along portions of the northern section of the Turnpike from Harvey Terrace east to the end of the road improvements along West Hanover Avenue. In some areas, brick pavers will also be used. The plans also call for putting utility lines underground as well as the introduction of pedestrian lighting to the area. This will help to enhance the aesthetics of the area and create a sense of identity.



Sussex Turnpike at Millbrook Drive

An existing stone fence that runs along the northern half of Sussex Turnpike north and west of Old Brookside Road will also have to be removed and rebuilt outside of the Turnpike's new right-of-way. This will allow for roadway expansion and will help to preserve the character of that area. When completed, Sussex Turnpike will be on average, about 46' wide in the Village Center area.

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Another issue associated to the Turnpike redesign includes aligning West Hanover Avenue with the Brookside Road right-of way. This will allow for this area to be redesigned as a four-way intersection. This four-way intersection could become the central feature of Mount Freedom and serve as a traditional four-corner “village crossroad”. Sidewalks will be provided at all four corners of this intersection to allow for pedestrian access. Existing businesses will remain connected to a roadway using existing driveways

where possible and providing an access road where necessary. In a few cases, existing building connections will need to be realigned and/or a new driveway/cul-de-sac will have to be provided to gain access to these sites.

Parking lots exist around businesses throughout the Village Center area. Several lots along Sussex Turnpike have been developed between the front of the building and the roadway. Visual disruptions of the Sussex Turnpike corridor and streetscape occur in places where parking is provided in front of the buildings. The Township has expressed an interest in limiting the ability for front loaded parking to occur and to encourage the use of rear loaded parking and shared driveways. This would help to connect the area visually and aesthetically as well as provide opportunities to improve pedestrian flow.

Currently, pedestrian circulation routes throughout the Village Center area are not comprehensively linked. It is very important that sidewalk connectivity between all areas within Mount Freedom be maintained to ensure a walkable community. The Woodmont development, north of the Acme Store does have sidewalk infrastructure that was designed to connect the development internally with one point of connection to external areas through the Millbrook entranceway. A sidewalk exists along Millbrook Avenue connecting Woodmont to the commercial area located along Sussex Turnpike. However, there is little connection between other adjacent neighborhood areas, to the business district.

The potential also exists to connect trails that extend through the Township to the Village Center area. Future trail rights-of-way have been identified during previous planning efforts. Proposed trail rights-of-way include Valley Road to Old Brookside Road. This would connect to the existing trail along Millbrook Avenue via sidewalks along Sussex Turnpike. From there another proposed trail would connect to the Zion Tract in a north/south direction. This new segment would also connect to the Sussex Turnpike business district to the south and to existing trails to the north. These trails if and when developed, will link the Mount Freedom area with other surrounding residential areas. This will improve the pedestrian trail network and increase the connectedness of Mount Freedom both internally as well as with outer surrounding neighborhoods.



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## VI. AESTHETICS

The aesthetics of the Mount Freedom area is what one may consider “in need of improvement.” As stated in the report prepared by Burgiss Associates in 2000, this is due, in part, to a lack of coherent streetscape design, including street trees, lighting, sidewalks and other public amenities. Also, the view of Sussex Turnpike, consists of an undefined street edge, uncontrolled ingress and egress into individual properties, limited front yard setbacks, parking in front yards and inconsistent sidewalks or pedestrian amenities. Some of the properties are not maintained and have limited landscaping. Existing signage along Sussex Turnpike lacks a unified approach and further reduces the aesthetic appearance of the corridor.



The current Village Center design standards described below will help to improve the appearance of this area when new construction occurs. Also, the reconstruction of Sussex Turnpike includes improvements to the roadway that will also enhance the appearance of the area.



## **VII. UTILITIES**

Mount Freedom is split by several ridgelines and is served by two regional sewer service systems. The section of Mount Freedom generally flowing to the Rockaway River Basin is served by the Rockaway Valley Regional Sewer Authority (RVRSA). The large undeveloped tract referred to as the Zion property at the corner of Sussex Turnpike and West Hanover Avenue is served by the RVRSA and therefore enjoys immediate access to sewer service. The RVRSA has advised its member communities of capacity limitations that at some point in the future could lead to a connection moratorium.

The Butterworth sewer service area in Mount Freedom is divided into two drainage basins; the Whippany and the Raritan. The Township has been placed under a sewer moratorium by Morris Township (owner/operator of the Butterworth Treatment Plant) pending upgrades to the Butterworth sewer interceptor which carries Randolph's sewer flow through Morris Township to the Butterworth Treatment Plant. The two Townships have made significant progress in negotiating an agreement for the improvement of the Butterworth sewer interceptor. Given extensive environmental permitting issues and the need to acquire easements to accommodate the interceptor improvement, it is likely that reconstruction of the sewer line will occur within the next decade. The benefits of the planned enhancements will be limited to the Whippany Basin with the Raritan basin designated as a future sewer service area.

The commercial core of Mount Freedom along Sussex Turnpike from Brookside Road west to the ridge line for the Whippany and Raritan basins benefits from a plan to install sewers in concert with the reconstruction of Sussex Turnpike by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The town entered into an agreement with the state for the design and construction of the sewer line at such time that enhancements to Sussex Turnpike take place.

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## VIII. EXISTING LAND USES

The existing land uses are graphically displayed in Figure 4. Key land uses are indicated in Figure 5. As was noted above, Mount Freedom is home to a mix of commercial, office and residential land uses that reflect the zoning and historical development. The zoning intent for the area has been to concentrate commercial activity within the core of the district and locate multi-family residential around the edges. That intent has resulted in much of the development pattern existing today.

The 48-unit Buckingham Townhouse development is located on the north side of West Hanover Avenue at the eastern limit of the study area. These units were constructed about ten to fifteen years ago. The adjacent lands to the west are developed with single-family dwellings, and a portion of the Walnut Grove Cemetery. Westminster Drive, a short cul-de-sac intersects with



West Hanover Avenue west of the cemetery and provides access for seven (7) two-family dwellings. The 17.6 acre vacant parcel known as the Zion tract has frontage on both West Hanover Avenue and Sussex Turnpike. As was noted above, this parcel was home to the Saltz Hotel, the last resort hotel to close in the Township.

This portion of Mount Freedom has historically been referred to as Walnut Grove. The church located on the south side of West Hanover Avenue was built

as a Methodist Church in 1847. It is no longer used as a church and operates as a day care center. The adjacent dwelling and cemetery are also part of the Walnut Grove District noted in the Township's historic inventory. The Indoor Sports Pavilion is located east of the cemetery. This building was first erected as an indoor tennis facility and was converted for other indoor sports and recreation. Two red-brick office buildings that house a bank, nail salon, and professional offices are located on the last two lots before Sussex Turnpike.

### A. Eastern Sussex Turnpike

The land uses that front on the eastern portion of Sussex Turnpike between the limit of the study area and Brookside Road are characterized by commercial uses on the north and vacant land on the south. The lot that houses the Indoor Sports Pavilion also fronts on Sussex Turnpike although no access is possible from that direction due to the steep topography. There are two (2) small one-story, flat roofed, strip commercial buildings located on the north side of Sussex Turnpike. The easternmost building houses a pizza restaurant and a convenience store. The other contains a restaurant, cleaners, sandwich shop and video store. Almost the entire frontage of this lot has an open curb cut with no delineated driveway. A Mobil Oil service station is

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located on a triangular shaped property adjacent to the intersection of West Hanover Avenue and Sussex Turnpike. As is shown on the existing land use map, the land on the southeast corner of Sussex Turnpike and Brookside Road is vacant. There is one single-family dwelling located adjacent to the eastern study area boundary.

## **B. Brookside Road**

The vacant land noted above extends south of Sussex Turnpike approximately 700 feet along Brookside Road. A single-family dwelling is located between the vacant land and the Brookside Village Apartments. Brookside Village is a development on 10.9 acres that includes forty (40) multi-family units of which ten (10) are devoted to low and moderate income families.

On the west side of Brookside Road across from the Brookside Village Apartments is the site of the approved Kensington Square which is planned for townhouses and multi-family senior citizen housing. The site currently has the remnants of dilapidated bungalows which will be removed prior to the multi-family construction. The properties located along the west side of Brookside Road north of Kensington include an older two-family dwelling, a three family dwelling and a lot three individual dwellings, including two seasonal dwellings. These are all apparently vestiges of the areas bungalow past.



The building on the southwest corner of Sussex Turnpike and Brookside Road was developed with a mix of uses including the Mount Freedom Post Office, a restaurant and residential apartments. A portion of the parking lot has been improved with curbing and striping although there remains undefined parking along the front of the building. The building is outdated and parking insufficient, especially during the Post Office's peak hours of activity.

## **C. Sussex Turnpike between Brookside Road and Millbrook Avenue**

The north side of this section of Sussex Turnpike has seen some of the most dramatic changes since the 1992 Master Plan. Next to the Zion tract sits a restaurant in a building that was part of the Saltz Hotel. The restaurant's parking lot is interconnected with the adjacent bank to the west, which was developed since 1992. The Acme Supermarket and reconstructed Bank of New York anchor the northeast corner of the Millbrook Avenue / Sussex Turnpike intersection. These are also fairly recent additions to Mount Freedom.



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The south side of this section of Sussex Turnpike is characterized by older structures housing a mix of uses. The corner lot that contains the Post Office was previously described above. A residence and law office is located west of the Post Office adjacent to Schuman Road. A dental office is located on the west side of Schuman Road in a single-story brick building. Off-street parking is provided in the rear with access to Schuman Road. Further west along Sussex Turnpike are a mix of residential and commercial uses with some lots that extend to Woodlawn Terrace that parallels Sussex Turnpike. Residential uses include one to three-family dwellings and apartments. The commercial uses include a jewelry store, cleaners, liquor store and a gasoline and automobile service station. The parking and access for the cleaners and liquor store are unmarked and uncontrolled. The service station's pumps are close to the roadway with uncontrolled ingress and egress to Sussex Turnpike. The property directly across from Millbrook Avenue is used as a single-family dwelling. It is noted in the Township's historic sites inventory, as a modified East Jersey Cottage type construction.



## D. Millbrook Avenue



The Woodmont development located on the east side of Millbrook Avenue at the northern boundary of the study area sits on 28.7 acres. This townhouse development of 201 units includes forty (40) units devoted to low and moderate income families. This project was noted as having development approval in 1992, but not yet constructed. There are three (3) other residential structures located on the east side of Millbrook Avenue adjacent to Woodmont, including one residence situated between the townhouse development and the Acme Supermarket site.

Residential uses front Millbrook Avenue from the intersection of Church Lane south towards Valley Road. There is currently a dwelling under construction at the corner of Valley Road and Millbrook. Other residential uses, including two three-family dwellings are located south of Valley Road and north of the Millbrook Plaza office building.



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## E. Sussex Turnpike West of Millbrook Avenue

The properties bordering the north side of Sussex Turnpike west of Millbrook Avenue represent a mix of land uses and structures. The Millbrook Plaza is a two-story brick office building with a surface parking lot with access to both Sussex Turnpike and Millbrook Avenue. A single-family dwelling is situated between the office building and the Mount Freedom Jewish Center. The lots immediately to the west of the Jewish Center are residences that are noted in the Township's historic site's inventory and date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There are also commercial uses located adjacent to the residences. There is Township owned property that contains a detention basin that serves the residential development on Ryan Court and Valley Road to the north. An office building with a Karate academy is under construction west of the Township property and another recently constructed two-story frame office building is located just east of the Presbyterian Church and cemetery. The Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church, located on the corner of Sussex Turnpike and Church Road is on the State and National Historic Registers. It was opened in 1824 and expanded in 1859. Although this is not the oldest house of worship in the Township it is the oldest continuously used house of worship in Randolph. The parsonage is also located on the same property and is estimated to have been constructed between the mid 1820's to circa 1850.



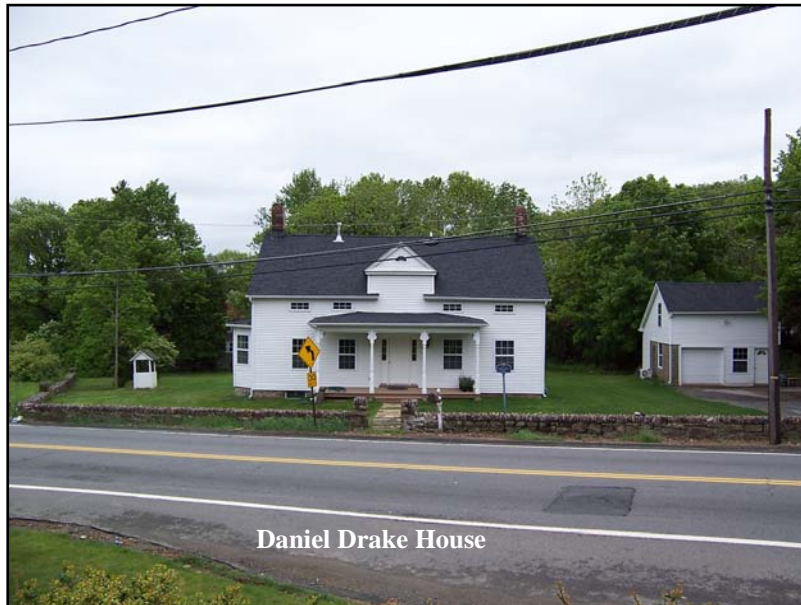
The American Animal Hospital, a veterinary clinic, is located on the south side of Sussex Turnpike, just west of the Millbrook Avenue intersection. This facility has a parking lot in the front yard and is connected to the parking lot of the adjacent commercial building to the west. That adjacent building is a one-story frame structure that houses a local pharmacy and a deli/specialty foods store. Parking for this facility is located in front, side and rear. There are also outdoor refrigeration units located at the back of the building. A new retail center of approximately 14,000 square feet is currently under construction on the combined lots immediately to the west. This property abuts the cul-de-sac of Jason Lane in the rear, although there is no access from that street. This L-shaped building is located against the southern and eastern site boundaries, with parking primarily on the west side. There are two (2) small lots, each slightly more than one-tenth of an acre situated between the retail building under construction and Harvey Terrace. The easternmost is used by a telephone utility and the lot on the corner is a carpet and floor covering store.

A single-family residence is located on the western side of Harvey Terrace, fronting on Sussex Turnpike. The adjacent lot to the west is also used as a residence. The 0.29 acre parcel situated immediately west of the two residential lots houses a private nursery school. A three-family dwelling sits immediately west of the nursery school and east of a two-story masonry building

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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used by a vending machine company. The vending machine company lot has frontage on both Sussex Turnpike and Old Shunpike Road to the rear. The property slopes away from Sussex Turnpike towards Old Shunpike Road. The parking and loading areas on the property are undefined. A new residential dwelling has been constructed on the quarter acre lot adjacent to the vending company's western border. A mixed residential/ commercial use is located adjacent to the new residence. The land adjacent to the intersection of the Old Shunpike Road right of way and Sussex Turnpike is vacant and part of the watershed protection area. It is adjacent to a residence and an office building on a large lot on the corner of Old Brookside Road and Sussex Turnpike. The office building has parking on three sides with driveways to both roads.



The Daniel Drake House is located to the west of the Old Brookside Road intersection. A portion of the current house was constructed about 1790 by Daniel Drake, a descendant of one of the early settlers of Mendham which included Randolph. Additions to the house were constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The house is included on the state and national historic registers. The Mountain Ridge office / industrial park, located to the west of the Drake House houses a number of light

industrial/commercial uses in three (3) buildings. The last two lots on the western boundary of the study area include mixed residential and commercial uses.

## **F. Old Brookside Road**

The northern end of Old Brookside Road, within the study area, includes two residences and a commercial building with a restaurant, offices and other service uses. That building includes parking both in the front and rear of the building and driveway access to Old Brookside Road. These properties were included in the study area because they coincide with the limits of commercial zoning.

## **G. Church Road**

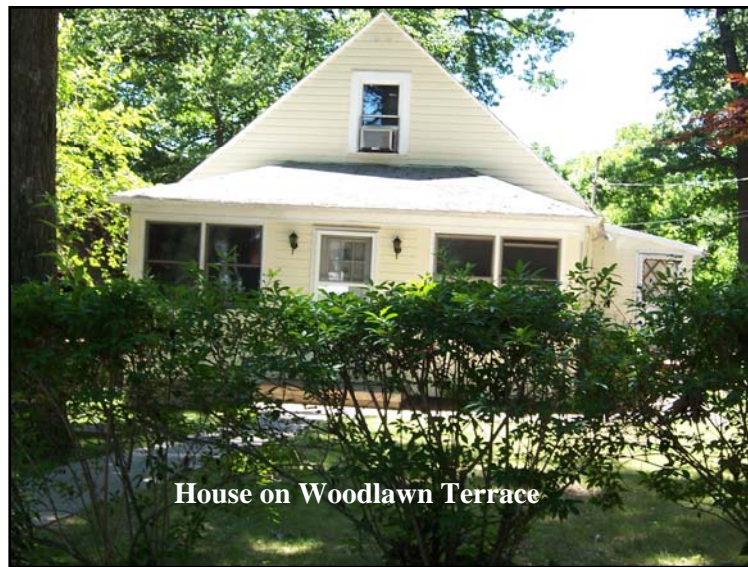
The residential neighborhood south of Church Road is also included in the study area. This neighborhood is almost entirely developed with single-family homes. There are a few vacant lots and two lots in the neighborhood, near Millbrook Avenue, identified above as three-family dwellings. Some of the homes in this neighborhood were constructed within the last ten to fifteen years.

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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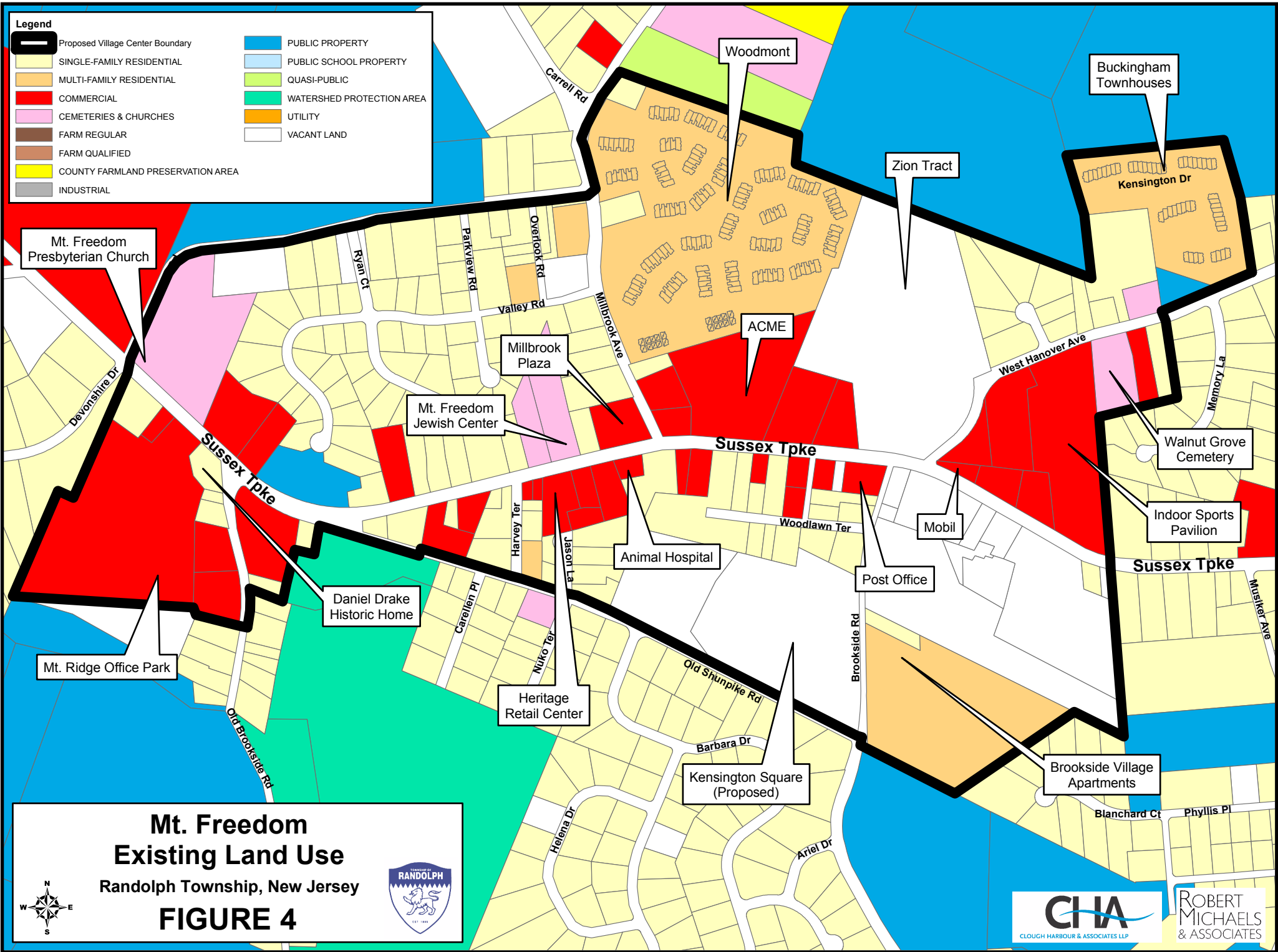
## H. Woodlawn Terrace, Jason Lane and Harvey Terrace

These three roads are located south of Sussex Turnpike are primarily residential streets. Woodlawn Terrace, which intersects with Brookside Road and is parallel to Sussex Turnpike, provides access to a number of residences. Harvey Terrace runs between Sussex Turnpike and Old Shunpike Road. Jason Lane is a cul-de-sac that intersects with Sussex Turnpike. These neighborhoods include upgraded bungalows, reconstructed dwellings, new dwellings and some seasonal homes on lots of varying sizes. Some of the structures are used for two to four family dwellings. There are some structures in need of substantial upgrading due to deterioration over the years. The previously noted Burgiss report describes many of these lots in detail.



















# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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## IX. EXISTING ZONING AND DESIGN STANDARDS

Zoning classifications for Mount Freedom are displayed in Figure 6 and are described in detail below.

### A. Core Zoning

The current zoning scheme of the Mount Freedom Study Area reflects the recommendations of the 1992 Master Plan and the amendments of 1996 and 1999 to varying degrees. The core of the Mount Freedom area include village zoning designations. These are included on Map as:

**VCC – Village Center Commercial**

**VCR – Village Center Residential**

**LVC - Limited Village Center**

**SS/VO – Specialty Shop/Village Office**

The **Village Center Commercial (VCC)** district is located on the north side of Sussex Turnpike between West Hanover Avenue and Millbrook Avenue. It includes the Bank of New York property, Acme Supermarket, Morris Trust Bank, Rosie's Tratoria and the Zion property. The purpose of this zone as described in the Township's Land Development Ordinance is as follows:

*The intent of this district is to allow for a concentration of certain commercial uses which are compatible with a pedestrian oriented village center. Uses within the district and the overall area should be interconnected with pathways and opportunities for vehicular interconnection and should incorporate prominent design features such as parklets and squares. An anchor use such as a supermarket is deemed consistent with the zone and other complementary uses having a diversity of sizes are encouraged to provide an appropriate mix to achieve desired design objectives for the district. Project development plans shall integrate all site elements including location and orientation of buildings, public open space areas, outdoor restaurant dining areas, roads and drives, walkways, utilities, parking, access to the existing road system, drainage basins, landscaping, buffers and environmentally sensitive areas. Each individual site shall be positively related to adjacent sites to achieve an integrated design.*

Principal permitted uses in this zone include retail sales uses such as boutiques, specialty shops, florist shops and gift stores provided that no single occupancy shall exceed 10,000 square feet of gross floor area. Retail services and personal services are also permitted as are general offices and restaurants. A single retail sales use is permitted as a conditional use if it is greater than 10,000 square feet provided it is not larger than 45,000 square feet in gross floor area.

The zoning code provides development standards specifically for this zone. The standards are aimed at avoiding the appearance of a strip center by screening parking areas and providing them in multiple locations. The regulations also encourage a variety of indoor and outdoor activity and include other measures to meet the district's goals. The maximum floor area ratio permitted is 0.25.

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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The **Limited Village Center** LVC District is located at the east side of the intersection of West Hanover Avenue and Sussex Turnpike. It contains small office buildings, a gas station, an indoor sports facility and two strip commercial buildings. The zone district is designed to encourage the reuse and redevelopment of existing uses on the fringe of the village center core area represented by the VCC district. Uses should complement the more intensive commercial core area and shall provide primarily a service function to support the core area. Permitted uses in this district include retail services and personal services with some exceptions and restaurants. The list of permitted uses appears to be restrictive in order to meet the purposes of the zone.

The purpose of the **Specialty Shop/Village Office** SS/VO district is designed to encourage residential conversions along Sussex Turnpike that reflect the village scale, density and form of the Village Center plan. This zone encompasses the south side Sussex Turnpike from Brookside Road to Harvey Terrace. This zone includes the Mount Freedom Post Office, Burrini's Olde World Market and the Heritage Plaza Shopping Center, currently under construction. It also includes the lots fronting on Woodlawn Terrace. The following are the permitted uses in the SS/VO zone:

1. *Single-family detached residential uses as permitted and regulated in the R-2 Single-Family Residential District.*
2. *Offices for professional services (e.g. physicians, lawyers or architects); commercial offices (e.g. realtors or travel agencies).*
3. *Stores and shops for the conduct of any retail business, excluding drive-in establishments.*
4. *Personal service establishments (e.g. a tailor, barber shop or beauty salon).*
5. *Repair and servicing, indoor only, of any article for sale which is permitted in this district.*
6. *Copy centers and newspaper offices.*
7. *Attended laundry and retail dry cleaning services, not including bulk processing on or from other premises.*
8. *Single-family uses, accessory apartments and specialty shops or office uses may be permitted, separately or in combination, in the same structure.*

The **Village Center Residential** (VCR) District is situated in two (2) locations in the Mount Freedom Study Area. The Buckingham Townhouses and the two-family homes on Westminster Drive, north of West Hanover Avenue are zoned VCR. Also the area south of Sussex Turnpike, centered on Brookside Road that includes the approved Kensington Square development, the existing Brookside Apartments and the vacant land southeast of the Sussex Turnpike Brookside Road intersection are in the VCR district. The purpose of this district is described as follows in the ordinance:

*The purpose of this district is to provide a variety of housing opportunities within the village center area. In addition, flexibility is provide through the creation of overlay zone districts where higher density housing and restricted non-residential uses are permitted if specific design criteria are met.*

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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Principal permitted uses in the district include townhouses, villas, or other housing compatible with village design. Also permitted are single-family, duplex, or triplex housing, accessory apartments and group homes. Garden apartments are specifically prohibited. The minimum tract area for development in the district is five (5) acres and the maximum density is three (3) dwelling units per acre.

An intent of the zone is to foster neighborhood and social interaction, therefore the use of front porches and stoops with minimum setbacks are encouraged. The ordinance also requires that all developments include a mini-park with a minimum size of 4,000 square feet and designed as a public space. This is to be located at the entry of the project or at some focal point within a cluster of dwelling units.

## **B. Village Overlay Zoning**

The Land Development Ordinance includes Village Center Overlay Districts whose intent is to provide flexibility to promote development that will enhance the identity of the village center area. The overlay districts for each of the village center zone districts include more generous development standards with larger tract area requirements and development standards that require superior design quality. Development is required to encourage a variety of indoor and outdoor activity that is attractive, vibrant and provides a unique sense of identity for the community.

In the VCC zone, the minimum tract size necessary to employ the overlay standards is ten (10) acres, rather than five (5) acres in the underlying zone. Additionally, the maximum FAR increases to 0.30 from 0.25 and the maximum impervious coverage increases from sixty (60) percent to seventy (70) percent.

There are three (3) overlay districts that are intended for the Village Center Residential (VCR) districts. These three sets of standards reflect distinct separate areas within the VCR zone. Besides permitting any use permitted in the underlying districts, senior citizen housing is permitted in the VCR-1 and VCR-2 overlay zones. Also, certain amenities and design features are required as part of the design pursuant to the overlay zoning.

## **C. Non-Core Commercial Zoning**

The Mount Freedom Study Area also includes two other commercial zones that are not part of the village zoning designations. These are the Professional Office and Residential District (PO/R) and the Neighborhood Business District (B-1).

The PO/R district includes all of the lots that front on the north side of Sussex Turnpike between Millbrook Avenue and Church Lane. It also encompasses some lots on the south side of Sussex Turnpike west of Harvey Terrace. This zone district is also found in various locations along Route 10. The ordinance identifies the following purpose of the zone:

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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*The purpose of the district is to permit conversions of residences located along key commercial arteries to office uses that are compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods and to encourage new development that is of a residential scale and character. The intent is to maintain the residential character of these neighborhoods and provide opportunities for office uses where adequate parking, lot size and buffering requirements are met.*

In order to meet the intent of the zone district the permitted uses include single-family detached dwellings as permitted and regulated in the adjacent residential district. Therefore the bulk requirements of the adjacent residential district shall apply if the land within the PO/R zone is used residentially. Banks and savings and loan associations are permitted as are office buildings. Additionally, commercial uses that were legally in existence in the B-1 and B-2 zones on July 31, 1992 are permitted to continue as a permitted use. The minimum lot area permitted is not less than 30,000 square feet and the maximum floor area ratio (FAR) is 0.13.

The B-1 zone is located in the western-most portion of the study area, south of Sussex Turnpike and along the northern portion of Old Brookside Road. The ordinance describes the purpose of the zone as for retail and service type businesses limited to the sale on the premises of commodities and/or services or the furnishings thereof to the ultimate consumer. The following are the principal permitted uses in the district:

1. *Retail and service businesses.*
2. *Business and professional offices.*
3. *Banks and fiduciary institutions.*
4. *Restaurants, taverns, grills and other eating establishments.*
5. *All uses as permitted and regulated in the R-3 Single Family Residential Zone District.*
6. *Single family dwellings with a permitted commercial use on the first floors.*
7. *Two family dwellings subject to the bulk requirements of the R-3 Zone District.*

In addition to the above automobile service stations, institutional uses and commercial greenhouses are permitted as conditional uses in the district. The minimum lot area required is 15,000 square feet and the maximum floor area ratio is 0.13, which is the same as the PO/R zone.

## **D. Non-Core Residential Zoning**

There are two residential districts other than the VCR district located within the study area. They are the R-2 Single Family Residential District and the R-5 Multi-Family Residential Zone.

The R-2 zone is found within the study area in the vicinity of Church Lane, north of the PO/R district and adjacent to Harvey Terrace and Jason Lane. Single-family dwellings on lots with a minimum size of 25,000 square feet are permitted uses. Conditional uses include institutional uses, government uses and public utility facilities, as well as home offices.



# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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The only R-5 zoning within the study area encompasses the Woodmont multi-family development. The intent of this zone district is to provide the opportunity for the construction of dwellings affordable to low and moderate income families and individuals. Therefore the permitted uses in the district are townhouses and multi-family dwellings on a minimum lot area of eight (8) acres and a maximum density of seven (7) dwelling units per acre. The ordinance requires that 221 dwelling units Township-wide, be affordable to low and moderate income families. The Woodmont development provides forty (40) affordable units.

## **E. Design Standards**

Randolph's Land Development Ordinance includes extensive design standards that are applicable to properties that were designated in the Village Center Plan and shown in Map II-5 in the 1992 Master Plan. The standards require a design approach with the submission of concept plans with architectural elevations, cross-sections, models and any special studies that may be appropriate. The ordinance identifies the following intent of the design standards:

*A. Village Center Design. Village Center design should address the attractive massing of buildings, creation of attractive spaces, vistas and focal points, appropriate spatial enclosures and harmony between buildings. The intent is not to rigidly regulate or control design, but to establish basic design criteria and direction which will permit and encourage creativity and innovation.*














*B. Area Character. A consistent development character shall be created and maintained throughout the VCDD through the use of compatible design elements such as massing, scale, proportion, style, roof pitches, materials, colors, signage, building details, lighting, fences and walls, shade trees and other landscaping, sidewalk and walkway materials, benches, trash receptacles and other street furniture.*

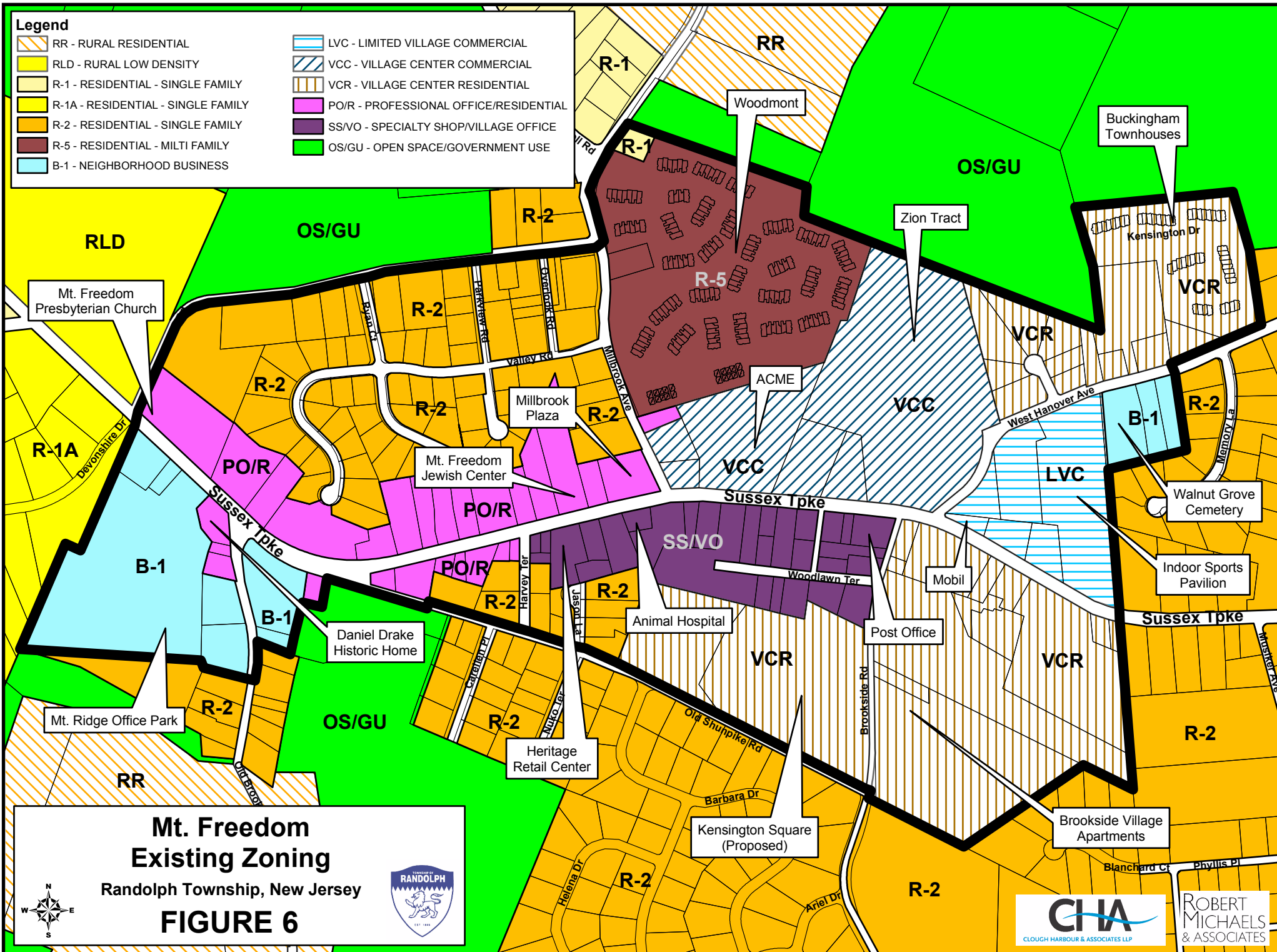
The design standards include the requirement for a consistent, compatible and complementary architectural theme or combination of architectural styles, elements and details throughout the district. The ordinance specifically identifies architectural themes that generally reflect period styles of bungalow, colonial, federal or other traditional styles of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The ordinance provides details that address all elements of design that relate not only to architectural treatment of buildings and their massing, scale, materials and colors, but also to site design as it relates to parking, circulation, lighting, landscaping, signage and streetscape features. The specific design standards are too detailed and extensive to duplicate here.

Currently, these design standards apply only to lands located within the designated areas noted above in the 1992 Master Plan. Those areas coincide with the Village Center Zoning Districts and do not encompass the other zones with the Mount Freedom Study Area. The Land Development Ordinance does include general site plan and subdivision design standards that are applicable Township-wide. They do not include the specific architectural themes and guidelines that are specific to the Village Center.



# Legend

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  RR - RURAL RESIDENTIAL             |  LVC - LIMITED VILLAGE COMMERCIAL       |
|  RLD - RURAL LOW DENSITY            |  VCC - VILLAGE CENTER COMMERCIAL        |
|  R-1 - RESIDENTIAL - SINGLE FAMILY  |  VCR - VILLAGE CENTER RESIDENTIAL       |
|  R-1A - RESIDENTIAL - SINGLE FAMILY |  PO/R - PROFESSIONAL OFFICE/RESIDENTIAL |
|  R-2 - RESIDENTIAL - SINGLE FAMILY  |  SS/VO - SPECIALTY SHOP/VILLAGE OFFICE  |
|  R-5 - RESIDENTIAL - MULTI FAMILY   |  OS/GU - OPEN SPACE/GOVERNMENT USE      |
|  B-1 - NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS        |  |







## **X. BUILDING CONDITIONS INVENTORY**

The buildings within Mount Freedom reflect several different styles. Newer single-family residences have been constructed along Valley Road and its associated cross-streets, which include Ryan Court, Parkway, Road, and Overlook Road. These are larger single family residences that have been built during the last decade or so. Across from this area, east of Millbrook contains a newer townhouse development. Kensington Drive also contains similar development and homes. The majority of the older houses in Mount Freedom can be described as bungalow units as well as single, two, and three family units. Some of the units are for seasonal use and many of the older homes range from fair to good condition.

Several of the residences along Millbrook Avenue consist of one to three family residential units. Generally, these properties are in fair to good condition. In addition, several of the properties along Sussex Turnpike have been converted from residential to commercial uses and/or commercial/residential uses. Other properties along the Turnpike have recently been built solely for commercial development purposes such as the Acme Store.

Ingress and egress from many of the sites along Sussex Turnpike and other main roadways is uncontrolled with some exhibiting undefined driveways, sporadic landscaping amenities, and no sidewalks or defined pedestrian way. The mixed-use property containing the Post Office exhibits some of these characteristics. In addition, many properties within this area consist of existing non-conforming uses with land coverage in excess of requirements of the district.

Seasonal properties as well as one, two, and three family properties also exist in the vicinity of Woodlawn Terrace and Brookside Road. These properties generally range from fair to good condition with several exhibiting obsolete or faulty site layouts, land use arrangements, or design.



## **XI. SUMMARY OF ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES**

Mount Freedom's rich history is exhibited in its present framework of streets, land uses and buildings. This historical background has provided a solid foundation for this area to evolve back to the Village Center it once was. Mount Freedom has been the source of many studies over the past 30 years. Each study has further defined its vision while providing a clear definition of the disposition of specific areas and the "look" to be achieved. A review of these past studies leads to the realization that the Mount Freedom area needs to be studied as a whole to determine the interrelationship of the various types of land uses to each other, their supporting infrastructure as well as current Village Center zoning and design standards.

The natural features of the Township define the picturesque setting of Mount Freedom with its rolling hills, streams, wetlands and small ponds. This area is also defined by its location on the major east/west route of Sussex Turnpike. This minor arterial carries a substantial amount of car and truck traffic through the area. The high levels of traffic have caused the New Jersey Department of Transportation to plan for the route's expansion from two to four lanes. This expansion will constrain pedestrians from getting from the north side of the street to the south. This situation could be improved with designated crosswalks and arranging the timing of lights to allow for safe crossing. Regardless, this expansion will not only improve traffic flow but also presents the opportunity to improve the area's aesthetics with the addition of new curbing, underground utilities, pedestrian streetlights and sidewalks throughout most of area. The Township has created an additional opportunity from this proposed expansion by entering into an agreement with the State for the extension of sewers to the commercial core of the area when the Sussex Turnpike improvements are made.

Mount Freedom land uses make up an appropriate mix of commercial, office and residential, post office, churches, synagogues to support the concept of a Village Center. This mix of uses and parcel sizes provides the opportunity for minor redevelopment of some areas, infill development of others and areas available for new development. The dense residential housing located along the edges of Mount Freedom and the proposed introduction of new housing supports the addition of more neighborhood commercial development to Mount Freedom.

Present zoning and design standards established by the Township that relate to Mount Freedom are thorough and complete, but perhaps overly complex in their ability to achieve desired land use and design objectives. Opportunities exist to simplify the project review and development process to benefit both Township officials, including the Planning Board in its project approval role, as well as the development community. It is imperative that the development community understand the intended results of local zoning regulations and design standards. Simplifying the language and illustrating the zoning and design standards will go along way to accomplishing this. Also, the zoning and design standards will need to be revised based on the revised proposed circulation and land use plan.





## XII. VISION AND GOALS FOR MOUNT FREEDOM

### A. Vision

The purpose of a vision statement is to provide a commonly held picture of the future that can serve as a context within which to plan for the future. It also allows the Township to evaluate the decisions they make over the years against its ultimate goal for the Mount Freedom area. The following vision statement has been communicated in past studies in one form or another and can be expressed as follows:

*The vision for Mount Freedom is that it becomes a village center with small scale Colonial type shops, stores and services provided in a pleasant, safe and relaxing environment with tree lined streets and beautiful civic spaces. Colonial style housing designed for all ages and income levels will be scattered throughout the area linked by a well defined walkway and open space system.*

### B. Goals

The following ten (10) goals reiterated from past planning documents, supports the vision for Mount Freedom as stated above. They are provided as guiding principles for the future development of the Mount Freedom area into a viable Village Center.

1. Provide a focal point and **sense of place and identity**.
2. Provide **diversity and a mix of uses** offering variety and choice as well as **flexibility to respond to market demand**.
3. Provide for village scale shops, stores and services within **walking distance** of local residents.
4. Coordinate and **link the area** with the rest of the Township through a well design vehicular and pedestrian system.
5. Create a **pleasant, safe, pedestrian environment** by providing commons, greens and walkways separate from vehicular circulation and parking areas.
6. Realign West Hanover Avenue at the Sussex Turnpike intersection with the existing Brookside Road intersection allowing for a **traditional four-way community crossroads intersection**.
7. Require **parking to be provided behind buildings** easily accessible by access roads.
8. Cluster higher-density residential uses around a commercial mixed use core. These residential uses should **provide housing for various lifestyles** and incomes. Housing should be provided for seniors, young professionals, low, middle, and upper-class households.

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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9. Village Center businesses should **draw on surrounding residences as a client base.**
10. **Create civic areas and spaces** such as a traditional village square/park near the crossroads of the Village Center. The village square should be surrounded by civic land uses as well as provide for an area of public recreation and enjoyment.

## XIII. PROPOSED CIRCULATION PLAN

As stated earlier in this document, portions of Mount Freedom have been studied in detail with the goal of developing a core area referred to as a Village Center. The goal of this report is to study and therefore, recommend how the entire Mount Freedom area should be developed, redeveloped and linked to fully support the vision and goals of a Village Center.

The future of each these areas will be discussed later in this section. First, it is important to discuss Mount Freedom's circulation system and proposed changes that further support the proposed uses, improve pedestrian circulation, and manage access from Sussex Turnpike and parking lots shared by multiple uses. Future improvements as discussed below are key to the function of the area as a true Village Center.

As illustrated in Figure 7: Proposed Circulation Plan, new vehicular and pedestrian linkages are recommended for the Mount Freedom area to: 1.) Improve vehicular access to new development areas and 2.) Make Mount Freedom more pedestrian friendly. Recommendations for new routes are described briefly below. The purpose of each of these new routes is discussed in more detail as they affect land use in the Proposed Land Use section below.

### A. Vehicular Access Recommendations

Figure 8 illustrates the locations of existing roads and trails that extend through Mount Freedom. They are indicated by a solid colored line. The location of proposed road extensions and new roads are defined by a dotted line symbol with each circulation element shown in a particular color. Recommendations for changes to or the introduction of new vehicular routes are described as follows:

#### 1. Minor Arterials

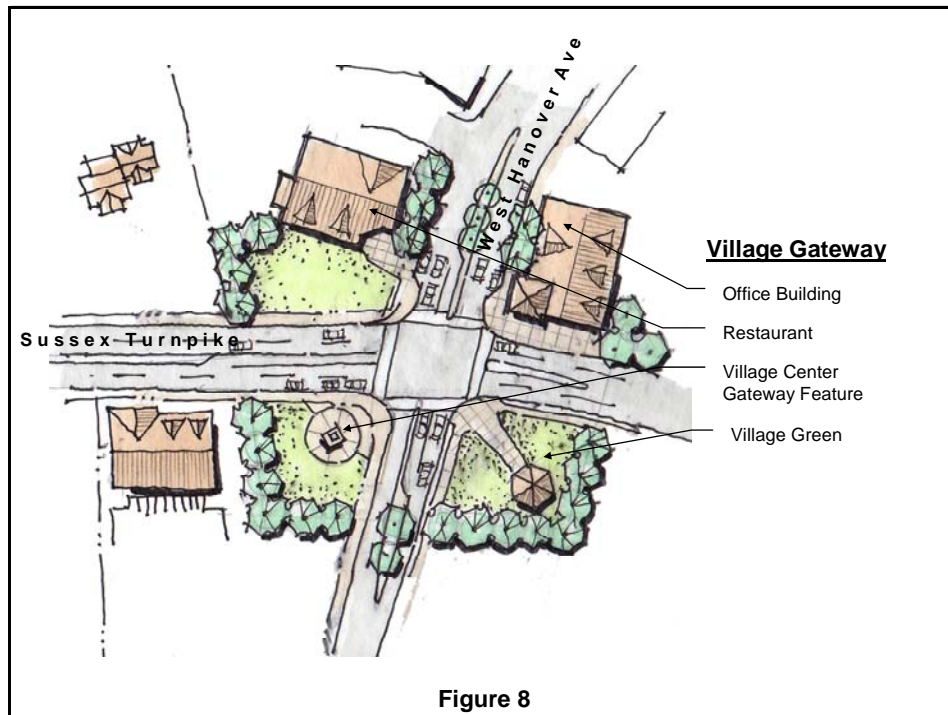
Sussex Turnpike and West Hanover Avenue are considered minor arterials. To support the proposed plan for the Zion Tract as discussed in the Proposed Land Use Plan below, it is recommended that West Hanover Avenue be rerouted to line up with the Brookside Road intersection. This will improve the safety of this section of Sussex Turnpike and West Hanover as well as create a Village crossroads discussed further below. This option is labeled with a "1" on Figure 7: Proposed Circulation Plan. Another option as labeled "2" in the same figure is to relocate Brookside Road to line up with the existing route of West Hanover Avenue. The concern with this option is the fact that wetlands exist where Brookside Road would be located.

Figure 8 illustrates a conceptual design for this intersection that will define it as a gateway to Mount Freedom as well as signify it as a major crossroads in Randolph. It is recommended that the buildings north of the intersection and adjacent to West Hanover Avenue be specifically designed to reflect the Village Center character. The Village

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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Center Design Standards should be revised to reflect the preferred architecture of these buildings. Illustrations of prototypical buildings are provided below.



Two small Village greens/parks are proposed for the south side of the intersection on either side of Brookside Road. Unique features such as gazebos or large pieces of sculpture with seating areas should be introduced to these sites. A gazebo provided on the eastern park site could be provided to allow for visitors to look over the natural areas south of this corner. Plantings in both green areas should be seasonal and reflective of the plantings located in the center of the Brookside Road and West Hanover Street boulevards. Also, an area should be set aside in one or both of these small parks for featuring holiday displays or conducting small Village Center events.

## 2. Major Collectors

Millbrook Avenue is considered as a major collector. It is recommended that Millbrook Avenue be rerouted to line up with a new intersection of the proposed extension of Woodlawn Terrace and Sussex Turnpike. This would require Millbrook Avenue and Sussex Turnpike intersection to be relocated about 25' to the west to line up with the new intersection of Woodlawn Terrace and Sussex Turnpike. A short section of Millbrook would have to be relocated through the front yard of Millbrook Plaza. This newly located intersection would allow the house located south of Sussex Turnpike at this intersection to remain as a viable structure.

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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## 3. Local Roads

A number of new local roads are introduced to carry out the future vision of Mount Freedom. First, new local roads are recommended in the Zion Tract to support the new development proposed for this area north of the Sussex Turnpike and West Hanover Avenue intersection. Second, the plan for Kensington Square calls for an internal roadway to link the housing proposed for this new development. And third, it is recommended that Woodlawn Terrace be extended to intersect with Sussex Turnpike. As discussed in the Proposed Land Use Plan, this road extension allows for access to the properties along Sussex Turnpike from the back where parking would be located and shared by the businesses located along this route. This would eliminate the numerous driveways that front on to Sussex Turnpike presently causing congestion and vehicular conflicts.

## 4. Alleys and Lanes

The introduction of alleys and lanes to the road network within the Mount Freedom area allows for residents to access garages, located at the rear of the parcels or parking provided behind commercial buildings. For the purposes of this report, an alley can be defined as a type of road found in densely populated urban areas which usually run between or behind buildings to allow for delivery and collection or as a secondary means of access to abutting property or rear parking. A lane can be defined as a subsidiary thoroughfare providing access from within a lot, primarily from parking or loading spaces to a public street. Figure 10 illustrates the use of alleys in the Village Center Redevelopment Area and Figure 12 shows the use of this type of route in the Zion Tract.

## B. Pedestrian Circulation

One of the primary goals for the future of Mount Freedom is that it becomes as pedestrian friendly as possible. This can be accomplished by creating and maintaining a well-developed sidewalk network that connects all land areas within Mount Freedom. Additional housing is proposed for this area as discussed below. The plans for Sussex Turnpike indicate that sidewalks will be provided along both sides of Sussex Turnpike except for a short section on the north side near the intersection of Sussex and Old Brookside Road. Church Road should also be developed with sidewalks within the Mount Freedom area. Improved pedestrian circulation and connectivity within the Mount Freedom area especially along Sussex Turnpike will allow for local residents to access the business and commercial district, including shopping opportunities such as at the local Acme store.

The Township also maintains an extensive trail system that has existing and future trails proposed for this area. These trails are indicated Figure 7: Proposed Circulation. These sidewalks/trail extensions are proposed for Mount Freedom to more effectively link the residential areas to the commercial core area of Mount Freedom and to shorten the distance someone would have to walk between areas. A walking scale is provided on Figure 7 to illustrate the fact that a person will typically walk at least 1200' before needing a rest. Therefore, this



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becomes a measure of an area being pedestrian friendly. The recommended trail/sidewalk extensions are indicated in Figure 7 as a blue dotted line. They are also described below.

## **1. Zion Tract**

The existing trail that is located north of this area should be extended south through the Zion Tract to connect to the sidewalks proposed to run adjacent to West Hanover. This new trail would be incorporated into the design of the area.

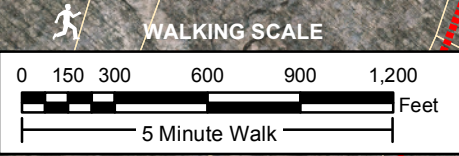
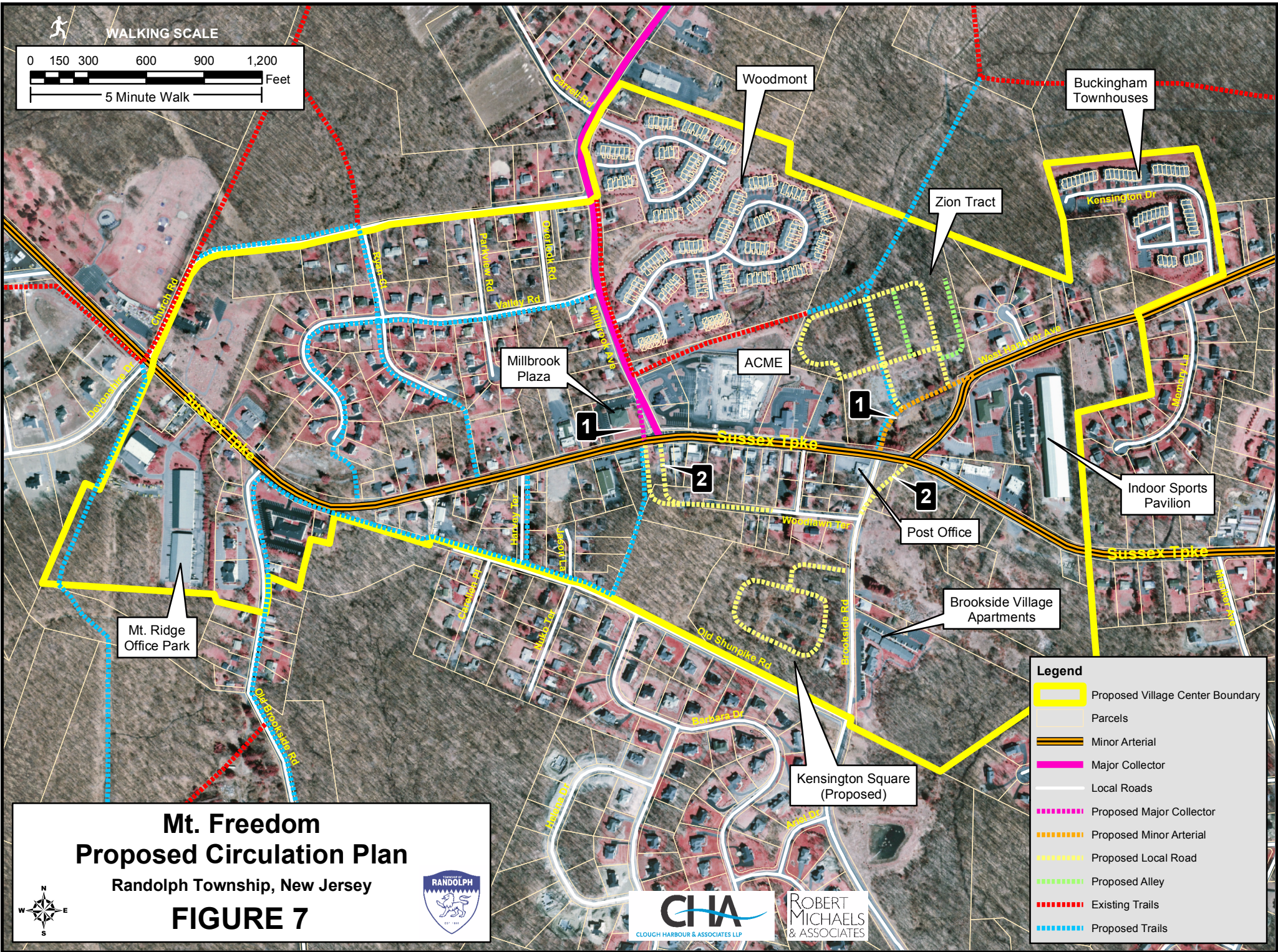
## **2. Area between Millbrook Avenue and Church Road**

Access from the existing trail system north of this area should be extended through this residential area along Ryan Court, Valley Road and Church Road to connect to the sidewalks proposed for Sussex Turnpike when reconstructed. Negotiations will be required with the property owners where the extensions are proposed on private land. It should be noted that it may be difficult to physically make these connections because of the steep slopes in this area.

## **3. Area South of Sussex Turnpike**

The existing trail that extends along Church Road should be extended for pedestrians to continue south to other areas of Randolph. Also, a trail should extend south of Sussex Turnpike along Old Brookside Road using either a designated bike lane and/or a sidewalk and should connect to an existing trail located south of Old Brookside Road. The same trail could extend along Sussex Turnpike as well as along Old Shunpike Road and Harvey Terrace. This new pedestrian connection should be provided along the Old Shunpike Road right-of-way, and Harvey Terrace to link the residential areas south and north of Old Shunpike Road to the central business core along Sussex Turnpike. Another pedestrian connection is proposed to extend along the proposed extension of Woodlawn Terrace and continue through Kensington Square, south to Old Shunpike Road. This connection is an important link to the businesses located along Sussex Turnpike. Where trails and pedestrian right-of-ways require crossing a roadway, visible crosswalks should be utilized to alert pedestrians and motorists as to where designated areas for pedestrians to cross the roadway exist.





**Mt. Freedom**  
**Proposed Circulation Plan**  
Randolph Township, New Jersey  
**FIGURE 7**



- Legend**
- Proposed Village Center Boundary
  - Parcels
  - Minor Arterial
  - Major Collector
  - Local Roads
  - Proposed Major Collector
  - Proposed Minor Arterial
  - Proposed Local Road
  - Proposed Alley
  - Existing Trails
  - Proposed Trails





## XIV. PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN

The vehicular and pedestrian circulation plan provided above, describes how the circulation patterns within the subareas of Mount Freedom could be enhanced to allow people to walk preferably, or drive with ease, to all parts of Mount Freedom. The Proposed Land Use Plan is described below in terms of strategic development areas where new land uses should be introduced, where some areas could be redeveloped or infill development be encouraged in others. Areas left as open space will be discussed and supporting residential areas will be highlighted. Figure 9, Strategic Development Areas Map has grouped these areas in terms of:

- A. Redevelopment
- B. New Development
- C. Infill Development
- D. Supporting Residential
- E. Open Space

### A. Redevelopment: South of Sussex Turnpike

The Mount Freedom area that is located south of Sussex Turnpike and west of Brookside Road has been reviewed to determine potential development patterns consistent with Mount Freedom vision and goals. The properties located along Sussex Turnpike play an important role in developing the Village Center as they are located along a heavily trafficked thoroughfare. Many of these properties consist of residences that in some cases, have converted to business uses. Maintaining an aesthetically pleasing corridor that is unique to the Village Center area is a goal of the Mount Freedom area. As a result, these properties were reviewed from an adaptive reuse and access management standpoint to determine improvements that may make this area more compatible with Village Center development objectives.

Figure 10 illustrates a concept design for the area south of Sussex Turnpike, between Millbrook Avenue and Brookside Road. The redevelopment of this area would create the character of a Village Center core area where one could walk freely between businesses located along a central parking lot. Linkages would be provided to the adjacent residential areas and a small neighborhood park is proposed at the southwestern corner of the area. Retail uses and second floor offices would be located in the buildings adjacent to Sussex Turnpike and cottage style homes would be located south of Woodlawn Terrace. Sidewalks would exist throughout the development from the front to the rear. Public amenities and spaces should be provided that could include sidewalks, public benches, ornamental lighting, pocket parks, as well as provide lawn and landscaping. Storage areas for trash and recycling receptacles should be kept separate from parking areas and should be properly screened from view using materials that are similar in character and style as the surrounding buildings and structures.

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study



There are two alternative options (See Figure 7: Proposed Circulation Plan) for achieving the realignment of Millbrook Avenue and Woodlawn Terrace. The first option would involve the scenario, which would require the taking of a building to allow Woodlawn Terrace to be designed as a perpendicular intersection with Sussex Turnpike opposite of Millbrook Avenue. The building that would need to be taken, however, has been identified as an historic structure by the Township. Thus, the official status of the building as a historic structure would need to be reviewed and any appropriate mitigation measures and scenarios (including not taking the building) would need to be followed as appropriate. The second option presented above in Figure 10 would be to move Millbrook Avenue so that it comes in at a different angle with Woodlawn Terrace, thus preserving the building.

Potential issues with these alternatives include the possibility that Millbrook Avenue and Woodlawn Terrace would be utilized by commuters as a “cut-through” street. This possibility, however, could be reduced given the proper design and engineering of this roadway to include traffic calming measures that discourage vehicular traffic and encourage pedestrian use and safety. Some examples of appropriate traffic calming measures include sharp 90 degree turns, on-street parking, bump-outs, and pedestrian crosswalks. Another issue with the former alternative would be the need to create a new terminus or focal point that would replace the lost house. The latter alternative would preserve the house and thus preserve the terminus.



# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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Issues with access management and traffic flow to and from existing properties along Sussex Turnpike will also change as Sussex Turnpike is widened from two to four lanes. These transportation improvements may influence the types of uses that may exist in this area. The properties located along Sussex Turnpike would benefit from having an access road with shared parking in the rear of the structure for both residents and customers. Access to this area could be achieved by using Woodlawn Terrace and by improving the access road from Sussex Turnpike that connects to Woodlawn Terrace. Millbrook Avenue should also be extended south to connect with Woodlawn. Mixed-uses and residential uses are envisioned to continue to redevelop in this area. The concept illustrated in Figure 10 has maintained the existing size parcels and building footprints. Properties between Kensington Square and Woodlawn Terrace that are proposed as detached cottage-style housing units, would make a positive transition from Kensington Square and the more commercial uses located along Sussex Turnpike. The Post Office and associated uses could relocate to the block to the west thereby allowing this area to become available for new development.

The character expressed by building architecture, streetscape amenities and signage should exhibit the accepted vision for Mount Freedom. The existing Village Center Design Standards should be reviewed to assure that when implemented, will achieve the preferred look for this area.

## **B. New Development**

There are two areas in Mount Freedom that are available for new development. Plans for these parcels have been presented to the Township. They include the Zion Tract and Kensington Square and can be located on Figure 9 labeled 2. “New Development.” The existing plan for each of these areas is described below with minor revisions recommended to insure connectivity to the rest of Mount Freedom. These areas are described as follows.

### **1. Zion Tract**

The Mount Freedom Village Center Redevelopment Plan developed in 2001 by Looney Ricks Kiss Inc. presented a concept plan for the Zion Tract that is located at the north east intersection of West Hanover Avenue and Sussex Turnpike. The 2001 plan illustrated in Figure 11, looked at developing the tract based on the realignment of West Hanover Avenue as a four-way intersection with Brookside Road and Sussex Turnpike. The plan included mixed-use development with larger buildings fronting West Hanover Avenue and smaller buildings developed behind these structures.

The plan developed a concept based on the presence of 8.1 acres of wetland and/or wetland buffer constraints. To achieve better circulation on the existing roadway network, a realignment of West Hanover Avenue is proposed. This realignment also would allow for approximately .4 acres of land to be reclaimed from the former road right-of-way. The .4 acres is proposed to be redeveloped for buildings that would be built fronting the new right-of-way. Creating a new four-way intersection with buildings that consist of similar architectural styles, colors, materials would help to create a sense

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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of place for Mount Freedom. Existing buildings that would now be located internally would be accessed by shared driveways and serviced by shared parking areas.

Pedestrian connectivity and circulation would also be enhanced within this area through the development of a comprehensive sidewalk network that links buildings and uses along the main corridors with buildings and uses located within the development. Other features include tree-lined pedestrian corridors and an internal park network. Vehicular circulation would be achieved through the realignment of West Hanover Avenue as well as the development of limited access roads leading into the site. Shared parking will be located along the interior of the site and on street parking will be located along West Hanover Avenue.



**Figure 11: Looney Ricks Kiss 2001 Plan**

Housing is envisioned in this plan, as both mixed-use units and single-family detached units. Larger retail buildings along West Hanover Avenue and within the Zion Tract contain the potential to have residential uses on upper floors. A residential court is also envisioned with detached residences. Access to these residences is via a local roadway from West Hanover Avenue and garage access can be achieved using a private or rear access road.

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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The northern part of the Zion Tract is envisioned as being left in its natural state. It could be used for passive recreational purposes as well as for connecting the envisioned development to the south with existing development to the north, east, and west. Additionally, new trail connections could be developed and connected with existing trails.

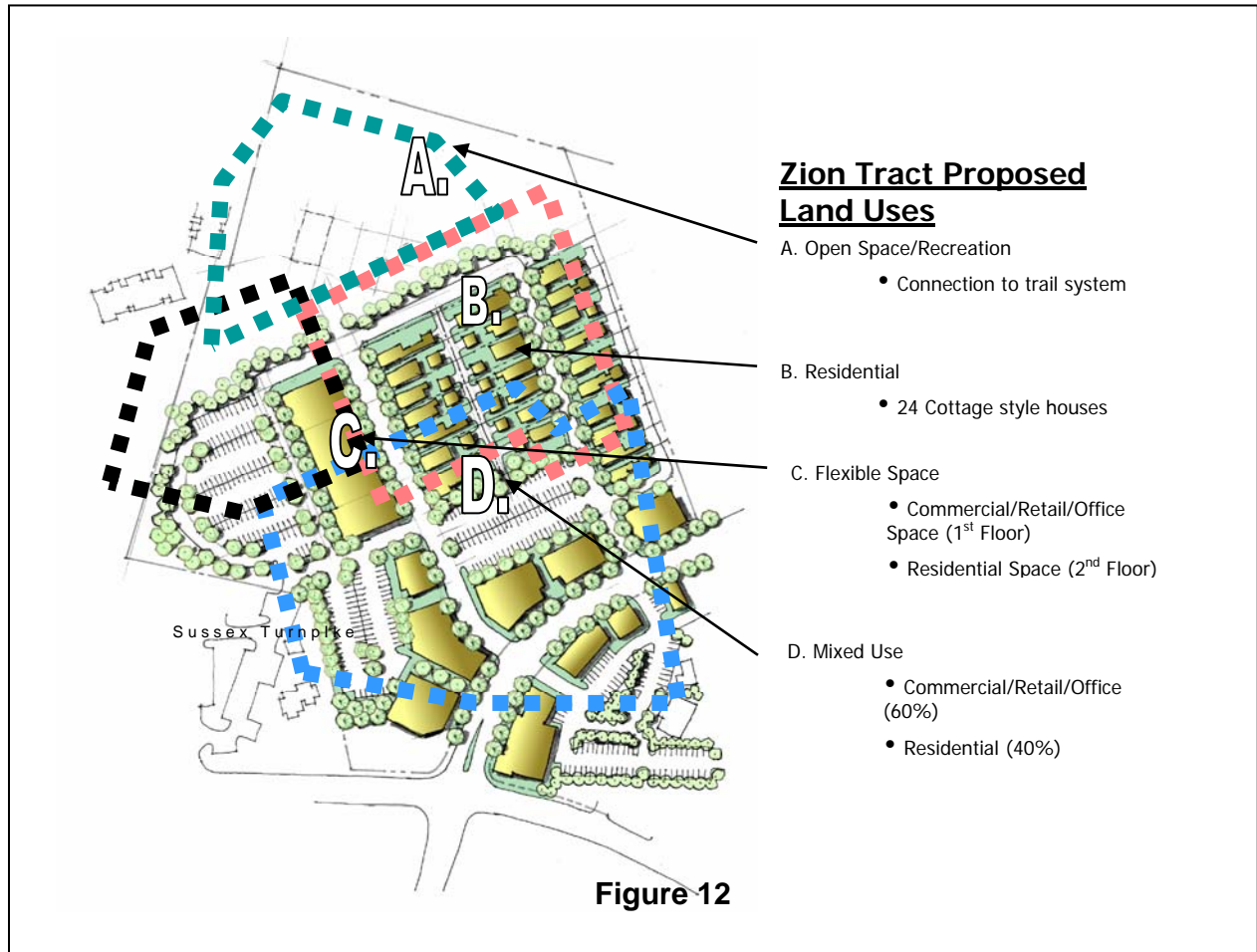
The Looney Ricks Kiss Inc. 2001 plan for the Zion Tract was reviewed to see if it achieves the current vision and goals set for in this report for all of Mount Freedom. Building sizes and footprints were reviewed to determine if there was enough flexibility to meet current market conditions. As it turns out, some of the concepts displayed in the 2001 Plan were reconsidered in order to incorporate current goals for redevelopment and Village Center enhancement.

## **2. Proposed Revisions to Looney Kiss 2001 Plan**

One of the goals in reviewing the 2001 proposal for development of the Zion Tract involves ensuring that there is enough development flexibility to meet current and future market needs. Building concepts as envisioned in the 2001 Plan may not be large enough to meet the needs of their intended use. For instance, in the 2001 Plan, buildings that front onto the access road off of West Hanover Avenue have been designated as future sites for small restaurants. It is anticipated that these buildings may be too small for a restaurant as per current market conditions. A viable size for a building to house a restaurant is typically 60'x 90'. Therefore, as indicated in Figure 12 below, in the area labeled as "D," a larger building is proposed in place of three smaller buildings at the northwestern side of the West Hanover Avenue and Sussex Turnpike intersection. In addition, it is anticipated that the buildings that surround the central area as illustrated in the 2001 Plan may not provide enough flex space to allow for desired retail uses such as restaurants and boutique shops. As a result, some of the buildings proposed in the 2001 Plan were consolidated into a larger building that would allow for such uses. This can be seen in Figure 12 as the area labeled as C.

The Township also wishes to ensure the provision of housing for a variety of lifestyles and incomes. To this effect, additional cottage style housing was incorporated into the concept behind the buildings that front West Hanover Avenue and are labeled as "B": in Figure 12. Parking for all of these uses could be shared by both the residents and the customers utilizing surface lots.

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study



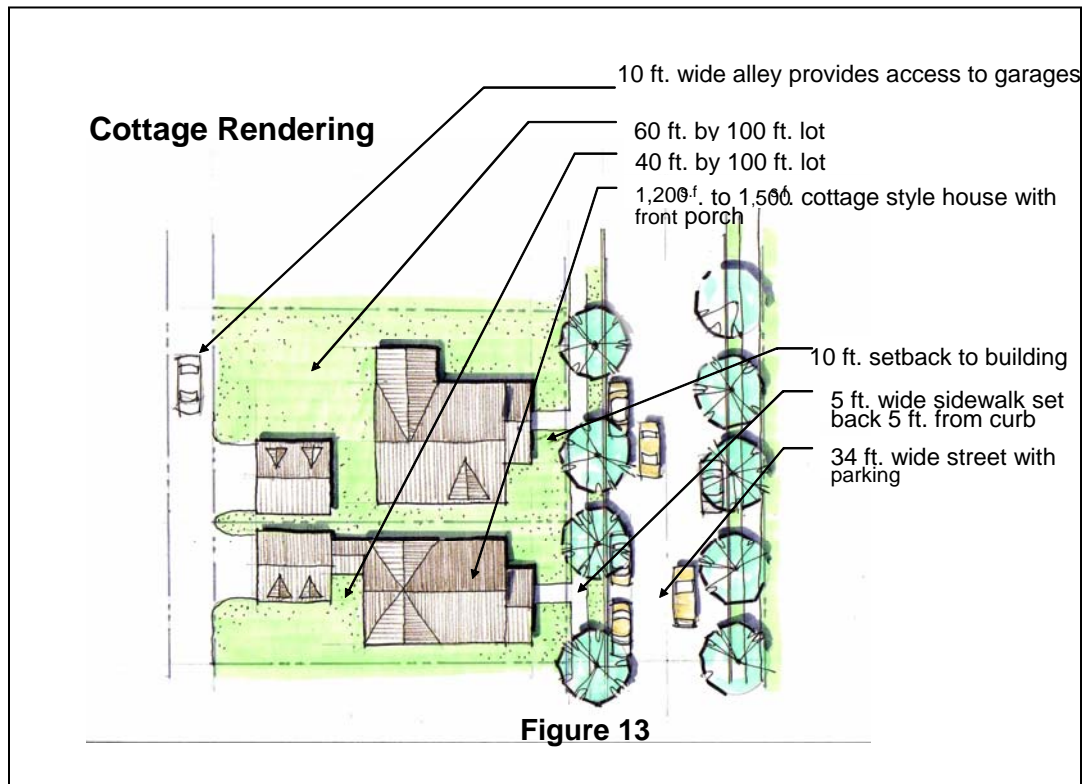
These homes would be designed to mirror the bungalow style house that once existed in Mount Freedom years ago. Figure 13, illustrates a typical site plan for this type of housing. As illustrated, 1,200-1,500 square foot homes could be located on 60'x100' lots. Sidewalks and street trees would line the street and garages would be accessed from the alley at the rear. Additional units would allow for flexibility in housing choice in Randolph and would help to meet increasing housing demands. Mixed-use buildings containing both retail uses below and residential uses above are still proposed for this area and shared surface parking lots should be encouraged.

Another goal for the Zion Tract is to move the internal road network further north of the intersection to prevent negative traffic flow issues. West Hanover Avenue and Brookside Road could be divided by a median and appropriately landscaped to create a sense of place for the Village Center. Access to internal roads could be located further north from the intersection. Internal roads would primarily service the interior retail properties, while alleys and driveways

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

would service residences. The cottage rendering below shows how alleyways, sidewalks, and roadways could be developed within the residential section of the concept plan.

Open space and recreational areas are envisioned for the northern section of the Zion Tract. Preservation of this area will ensure that the integrity of the area's associated wetland habitat is protected. This area could be used for passive recreational activities and could also connect via a trail network to other trail systems within the Township.



The envisioned concept plan for the Zion Tract also encourages the development of buildings with similar architectural features. The buildings at the intersection of Sussex Turnpike and West Hanover Avenue will be located at a prime gateway to Mount Freedom. These buildings should be architectural significant with unique features, colors, and dimensions but, consistent with the Colonial style proposed for the Mount Freedom area. The photos below show possible examples of housing that may be appropriate for this area.



# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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Photos Courtesy of Dan Burden [www.pedbikeimages.com](http://www.pedbikeimages.com).

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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## 3. Kensington Square

This is the second area labeled in Figure 9 as “New Development.” The undeveloped land adjacent to Old Shunpike Road is envisioned to be developed as housing. Currently, a site plan has been approved for this project that proposes to develop a boulevard from Brookside Road into this area. The internal road network would be looped and would be surrounded with 66 attached townhouses. Just west of this area, two senior housing complexes with 50 senior units are proposed with an alternative vehicular access point from Old Shunpike Road. This proposal is consistent with the Township’s goal to increase affordable and senior housing options within this area. No changes are recommended to the plan for Kensington Square at this time.

The proposed road network for Kensington Square is not easily connected to the redevelopment area adjacent to Sussex Turnpike as discussed below. However, consideration should be given to extend pedestrian connections between these areas to encourage pedestrian accessibility from Kensington Square to the commercial core located along Sussex Turnpike. A pedestrian linkage between these areas is consistent with the goals and objective of the Township in creating a pedestrian-friendly Village Center environment. Linkages could be from Woodlawn Terrace and Millbrook Avenue to Kensington Square. Pedestrian connectivity in this area would reduce dependence on the automobile to access desired services, which is another design objective for the Village Center area.

## C. Infill Development Areas

Two areas are recommended for infill development to the pattern that presently exists. This includes existing parcel size, site layout with parking in the front. The two areas where this is proposed to occur are described below.

### 1. Area South of Sussex Turnpike (Mt. Ridge Office Park)

The portion of this area located south of Sussex Turnpike between Devonshire and Old Brookside Road should continue as it is with additional development as the market demands. Village Center Design Standards should be adhered to as new development occurs to insure that it supports the look and function of Mount Freedom as a Village Center. This area offers opportunities for larger scale development not readily available in the commercial core.

### 2. North Edge of Sussex Turnpike; Church Rd - Millbrook Avenue

The natural features of this area dictate to a large part, the development of the parcels located within this area. The parcels are large and the buildings set back away from the road. Similar type uses should be allowed to develop in this section of Mount Freedom. The large lots allow for larger scale development than envisioned for the area south of Sussex Turnpike, in particular, between Millbrook Drive and West Hanover Avenue. Once again, the design standards should be adhered to when new or redeveloped of these parcels occur to support the function and look of Mount Freedom as a Village Center.

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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## **3. Area Between West Hanover Avenue and Sussex Turnpike**

This area is going to be the area most affected by the expansion of Sussex Turnpike and the realignment of West Hanover Avenue. Future vehicular access to these properties should be studied closely during the next phase of design of this reconstruction project. In particular, parking in the front of parcels directly adjacent to the north side of Sussex Turnpike will be limited by the proposed road expansion and the addition of curbs. This may compromise the viability of the existing businesses.

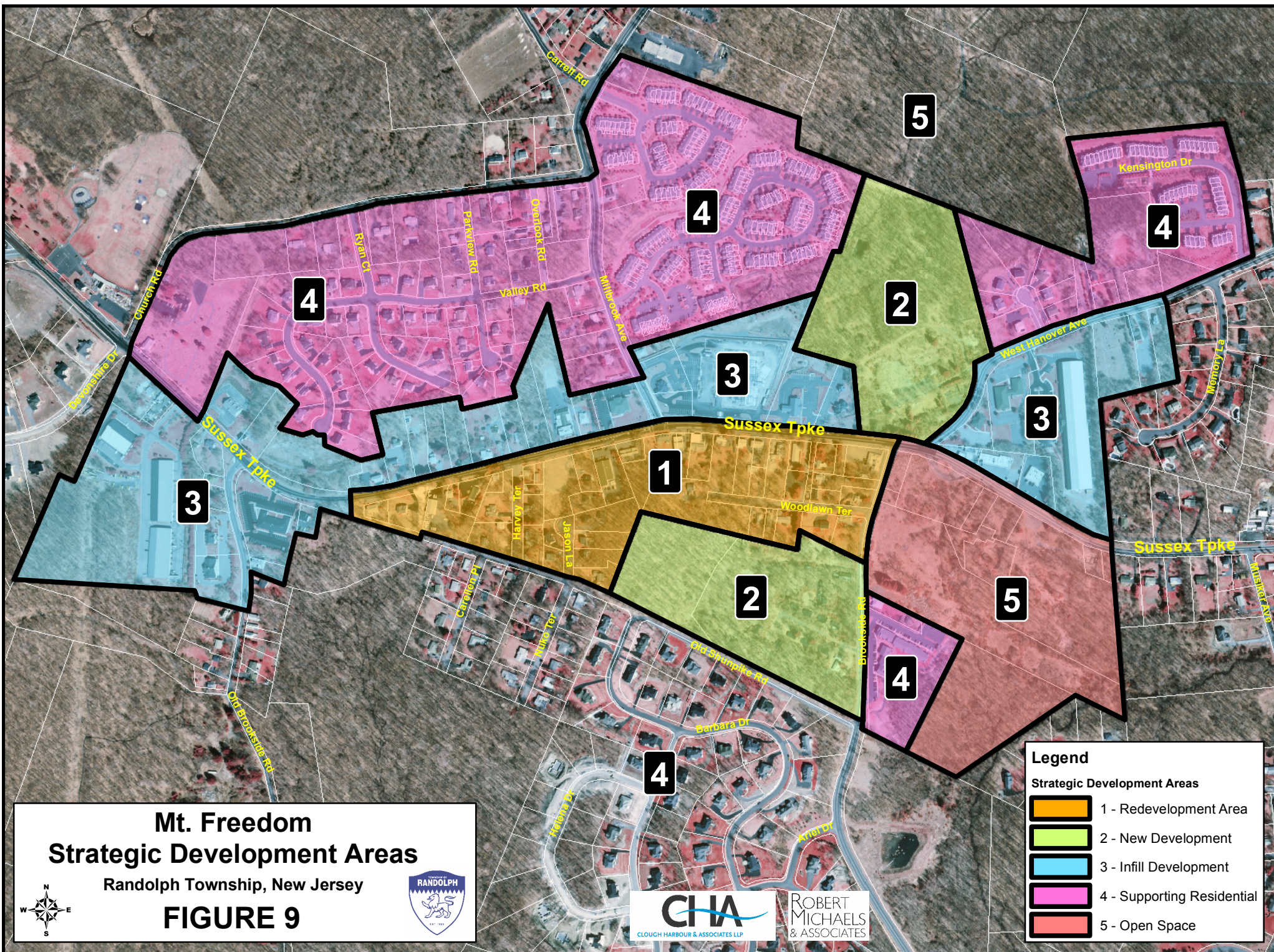
## **D. Supporting Residential Areas**

The residential areas labeled as such in Figure 9 support the concept of a Village Center by offering a variety of housing that meets the needs of different types of people and income levels. Each area is described under the Existing Land Use section of this report. These areas should continue as they are with the addition of new pedestrian connection described in the Proposed Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation Plan.

## **E. Open Space**

The area located south of the Sussex Turnpike/Brookside Road intersection is predominately encumbered by wetlands and would be difficult to develop. Therefore, it is recommended that it remain as open space and that the corner of the intersection should be developed as a small park as described above as part of the Proposed Circulation Plan.

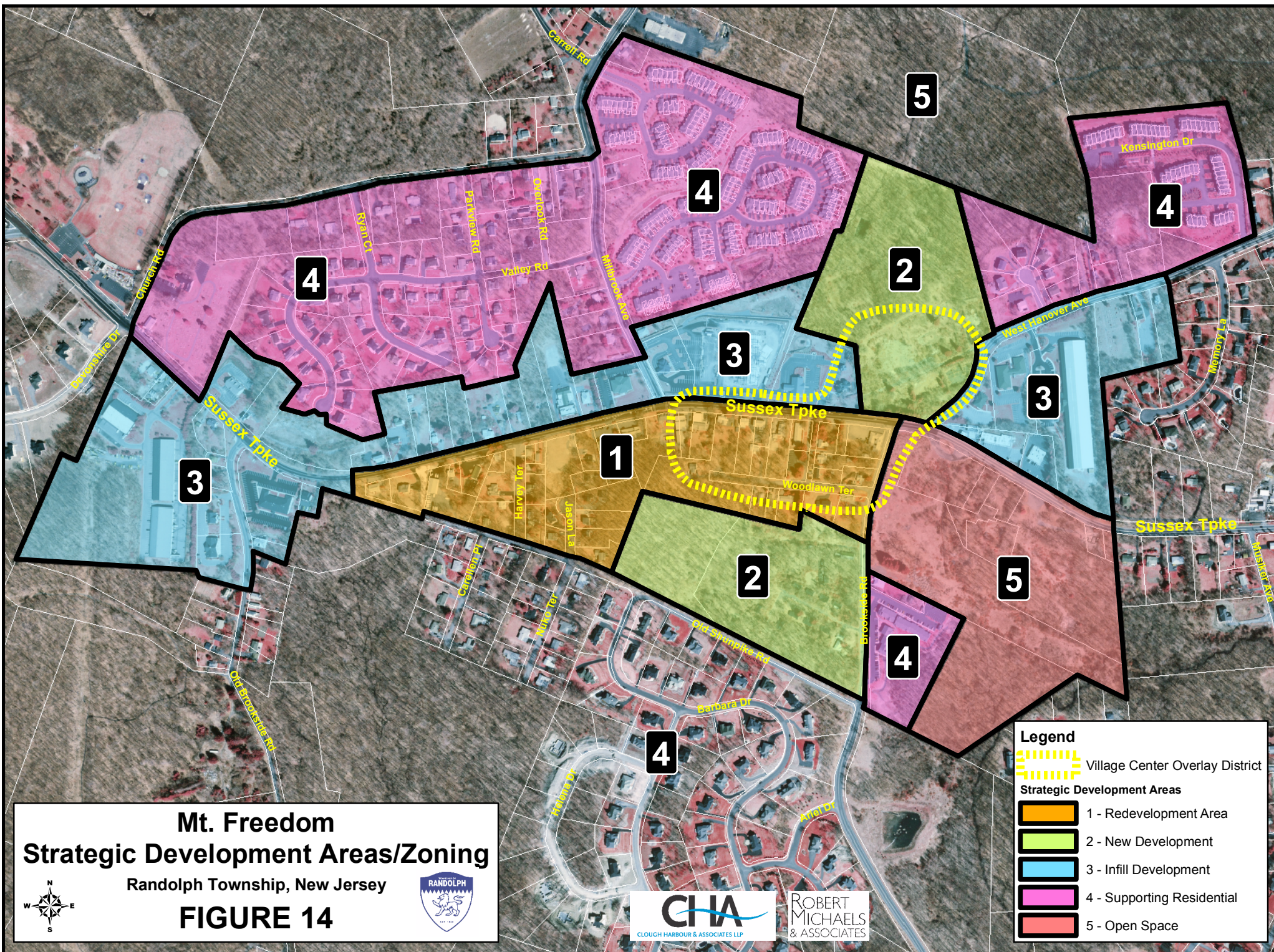
















## XV. PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

In order to implement the recommendations of this study, certain zoning changes should be adopted. Those changes need to be coordinated with the Strategic Development Areas identified above. The Redevelopment Area (#1) and the New Development Area (#2) should have their use and bulk standards modified to permit the range of uses and development parameters envisioned in this plan. Zoning changes adopted, including changes to the zoning map should be reflective of the strategic development areas proposed.

Currently the SS/VO zone permits single-family residential development pursuant to the standards in the R-2 Zone. In order to provide cottage-style housing, new residential standards will have to be adopted that conform to the type of housing proposed. This will likely include smaller lot sizes with lesser setbacks and even perhaps zero lot line homes and other development standards that ensure privacy while fostering a sense of neighborhood. Also, the VCC zone, in which the Zion Tract is located, does not permit residential uses. An ordinance should be established to permit the variety of housing included in this plan along with development standards addressing density, coverage and setbacks.

Not all of the current zoning designations within the Mount Freedom Study Area need to be amended or abolished. Some of them can work within the recommendations illustrated in this study. The specific changes recommended are as follows:

1. The entirety of the Mount Freedom Presbyterian Church and Cemetery property should be included in the R-2 zone. The frontage along Sussex Turnpike is currently in the PO/R zone and the maintenance of the church and cemetery use is desired. The conforming status of those uses will not change with the R-2 zoning, and office use will not be permitted.
2. The R-2 zoning that currently exists along Harvey Terrace and Jason Lane should be changed as discussed above to coordinate with Development Area #1. The existing dwellings in those areas should not be made nonconforming, but new development should be permitted that could provide the cottage / bungalow type housing promoted in this plan. A new zone referred to as Cottage Village Residential (CVR) should be established for this area. The same type of housing should be permitted in the SS/VO zone within the parameters identified in #4 below.
3. Areas within the plan in which cottage style housing is permitted would have parameters similar to the following:
  - Minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet.
  - Minimum lot width of forty (40) feet.
  - Minimum front yard setback of ten (10) feet provided there is a rear alley vehicular access.
  - One side yard may be zero (0) feet.
  - Maximum building height is 1 ½ stories.
  - Incentives should be established to encourage such site features as front porches and detached rear garages.

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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- The Township should consider adopting a maximum lot size as another measure to encourage cottage style housing.
- 5. The current village commercial zones (VCC and LVC) do not permit drive through restaurants, auto dealerships or auto service stations. The B-1 zone does not include the same prohibitions. Therefore, the ordinance should be amended in some manner to prohibit those uses within the Mount Freedom Study Area.
- 6. As was noted above, the VCC zone, which encompasses the Zion tract, does not permit residential uses. This plan recommends mixed residential and commercial use in that zone. Therefore an amendment is needed to permit both apartments above commercial uses and cottage style residential dwellings in that zone. These uses could be permitted when an overlay option is used and the site is comprehensively planned and developed.
- 7. It should be clearly established that new high density residential uses are not intended for the Mount Freedom Village Center. The residential densities of new development would be generally reflected in single-family cottage housing on 4,000 to 6,000 square foot lots and apartments above commercial uses. Therefore the cottage housing would be approximately eight (8) units per acre.
- 8. With the current three (3) story height limitation, the top two floors of a mixed use building could be devoted to residential use. The VCC Overlay zone allows a FAR of 0.30. Within those parameters an apartment density of eight (8) to ten (10) units per acre could be achieved. No other types of attached housing other than those above commercial uses are proposed for the Mount Freedom Village.
- 9. Although there are currently overlay zones that apply to the Mount Freedom Village Study Area, there should be modifications to those standards that would encourage the consolidation of properties in order to implement some of the goals and proposals of this report. Such incentives could be increased floor area ratios (FAR), increased building coverage and impervious coverage. The design standards that are currently part of the overlay zones and any that may be adopted as a result of this study would also be integral to development utilizing the overlay zoning option.
- 10. Currently the VCC has a limitation for a single commercial occupancy of 10,000 square feet although larger commercial entities are possible as a conditional use or pursuant to the overlay district regulations. There is no such limitation in the SS/VO and LVC zones. Therefore, this study recommends that limitations be placed on the size of commercial uses in order to avoid big box and major retail uses and to encourage boutique and smaller specialty shops that are more in keeping with the intent of the Mount Freedom Village.
- 11. Currently the parcels south of Sussex Turnpike and east of Brookside Road is zoned VCR. Wetlands are present throughout the majority of this land making it better suited for a designation of OS/GU or Open Space/Government Use.

## **XVI. CHANGES TO VILLAGE DESIGN STANDARDS**

It is important to consider the Mount Freedom area in its entire context as identified within the boundaries established for this study. The Mount Freedom area should be considered from the perspective of two unique sub-areas, each with its own design goals and objectives. The first, the Village Center area, as indicated in Figure 14, is intended to become a true village-type center of activity, completely “walkable” in nature that provides civic opportunities and services that residents and visitors can avail themselves of on a daily basis. This boundary of this area includes the Zion Tract and the parcels south of Sussex Turnpike between Millbrook Avenue and Brookside Road. This is an area of increased land use density for housing and commercial activity interspersed with civic uses and green spaces. This is an area where the use of “build-to lines”, parking to the rear of buildings and similar techniques are used to establish a village-type of identity.

The second sub-area is the remainder of the Mt. Freedom area outside the boundaries of the Village Center area that is centered on the Sussex Turnpike corridor. This sub-area exhibits more suburban types of development with greater building setbacks, larger landscaped buffer areas, and somewhat less pedestrian in nature due to the accommodation of greater vehicular activity. Sussex Turnpike is Mt. Freedom’s “Main Street”. The Turnpike links the two sub-areas to each other and to outside areas, both in appearance through design objectives and functionally by a consistent streetscape that interconnects pedestrian and vehicular networks.

The current use of overlay districts should be redefined and expanded to entirely encompass both sub-areas so that design standards would now apply to the entire Mt. Freedom area, and common elements of which would aesthetically link the two sub-areas. Each overlay district could be renamed to clarify its intended area of affect, such as the Village Center Overlay District and the Sussex Turnpike Corridor Overlay District. The overlay districts should address design aspects of the specific subarea. All new development and redevelopment projects would fall within the boundaries of one of these two overlays subject to underlying zoning requirements and the overlay’s design standard provisions which should differ for each sub-area.

### **A. Design Pattern Book**

In reviewing projects, it would also be beneficial for the Township to be able to provide board members and developers with illustrative examples of what is intended to be achieved in each sub-area/overlay from a land use and design standpoint. This would present the Township’s “vision” for the Mt. Freedom area in graphic form. This can be accomplished by developing a “pattern book” containing detailed illustrations (photos, sketches, drawings) of architectural styles, building materials, landscaping elements and streetscaping features. The pattern book will reflect in graphic form and photographs, the details provided in text form in the Township’s design standards. The pattern book would provide details on enhancing the appearance of both sub-areas/overlays, but does not address the dimensional objectives (density, bulk and setbacks) provided by present zoning regulations. The design principles and guidelines described within this pattern book should follow the existing Village Center Design Guidelines. They include:



# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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- Site Design and Building Orientation
- Building Design and Architectural Features
- Vehicular Access and Management
- Pedestrian and Non-motorized Circulation
- Street Trees, Furnishings and Pedestrian Amenities
- Lighting
- Signage
- Landscape Design

Below is a series of images that are accompanied by a description of some of the design principles listed above that fit into the Village Center theme. Additional images that express more of the design principles are provided in Appendix A of this report. This appendix includes a copy of a powerpoint presentation given to the Master Plan Committee to illustrate these design principles. These images should be reviewed by the Planning Board during site plan review of new construction or the renovation of existing buildings in the Mount Freedom Area.



**Example of a Mixed-Use Building**

The picture above is taken of a mixed-use building. This particular building illustrates several key concepts that may be achieved in creating a Village Center identity. The building has a very shallow setback, the sidewalk in front features ornamental lighting and public benches. Street trees also have been included in this design to maintain the character of the area for both pedestrians and motorists.

Another key concept regarding this building is that it serves more than one use. The building contains mixed uses; in this particular case the building uses the upper floors for a hotel and the ground floor for retail space. For the Village Center, the upper floors could contain residential uses and/or office space. A nice feature about this particular building is that the third floor has a balcony that provides another sense of pedestrian friendliness within this area. Although Randolph may want to consider different building materials and alternative architectural designs,

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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the key concepts discussed above could easily be incorporated along Sussex Turnpike in the Village Center area.



**Pedestrian Friendly Streetscape**

This image<sup>3</sup> provides a “traditional” example of a pedestrian-friendly streetscape that reflects the Township’s desire to maintain a walkable business district, which provides uses and services for local residents. Awnings could be incorporated into the architectural design as well as flower boxes and appropriate signage.



**Rear Courtyards used for bike storage and parking**

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<sup>3</sup> Photo courtesy of Dan Burden; ([www.pedbikeimages.com](http://www.pedbikeimages.com))

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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This image<sup>4</sup> shows how rear courtyards could be used for bike racks and resident and customer parking. This image also illustrates that, although this may be a rear of a building, the façade is still attractive, signage is still managed, and entryways are still maintained as if it were the front of a building. Sidewalks are also provided as is landscaping features including street trees and ornamental lighting.



**Outdoor Public Spaces**

This image<sup>5</sup> shows a more contemporary streetscape theme using the Village Center design concept. The pedestrian is still prioritized over the automobile, but technology is incorporated into the design of the buildings; please note the television screens built into the building in the background.



**Village-style Housing**

Residential neighborhoods within the Village Center should also be pedestrian-friendly and should incorporate similar architectural design features. Some examples of architectural features

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<sup>4</sup> Photo courtesy of Dan Burden, ([www.pedbikeimages.com](http://www.pedbikeimages.com))

<sup>5</sup> Photo courtesy of Dan Burden; ([www.pedbikeimages.com](http://www.pedbikeimages.com))



# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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include building aspects such as style, roof type and pitch, proportions, materials, architectural elements as well as shallow setbacks, sidewalks, street trees, rear loaded parking, ornamental lighting fixtures, front porches, peaked roofs, and ornamental façade treatments.

The photographs provided below feature many of the characteristics the Township should be looking for in new construction and renovation of existing structure. Once again, the text is taken from the existing Township design standards.

## 1. Architectural Theme

Building designs should be consistent, compatible and complement the existing structures in the area. They should relate to an established theme of colonial, bungalow and federal style.



Illustrates consistency and compatibility in architectural theme



Illustrates two buildings that complement each other



# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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## General Considerations

Some general considerations to make when reviewing the proposed architecture of a building in the Village Center are illustrated with examples below.

### *1. Style*

New construction or renovations should be of similar architectural style to the established theme and compatible with that of existing properties.



Newly constructed buildings that are compatible with the colonial theme.

### *2. Roof Type and Pitch*

Buildings in the Village Center should have similarities in roof style, pitch and materials.



Roof styles can vary; should be similar in style

## **XVII.MOUNT FREEDOM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

A variety of tasks should be undertaken to implement the recommendations included in this study. These tasks involve the Township through the Township Council and the Planning Board, Morris County and the State with the proposed improvements to Sussex Turnpike. They include the zoning changes, which were detailed in Section XV and other actions described below.

### **A. Zoning Changes Needed for Implementation**

The zoning changes needed to implement this plan's recommendations will involve some amendments to the district boundaries and some use classification changes and bulk requirement amendments. They are summarized as follows:

- A map change to include all of the Mt. Freedom Presbyterian Church in the R-2 zone.
- A map change to remove the R-2 zone from the Village area on the south side of Sussex Turnpike and replace it with a Cottage Village Residential zone.
- Amend the SS/VO regulations to permit cottage style housing on smaller lots.
- Amend the VCC zoning or create a new zone for the Zion tract to permit mixed residential and commercial uses at the desired density and intensity. Examine the development parameters in the district to ensure that they continue to reflect the community's goals for development.

### **B. Other Township Actions**

The Township Council in concert with the Planning Board should undertake the following actions to achieve the recommendations of this plan:

- Establish a special improvement district (SID) that encompasses at least Strategic Development Area 1. The timing of establishing this district should be coordinated with the extension of sanitary sewers into the area. The SID will assess properties for public improvements that will increase the value of the properties. These improvements will include sidewalks, street trees, benches, lighting, etc.
- Establish interior mid-block locations for public parking, also coordinated with the sanitary sewer extensions in Strategic Development Area 1. Negotiate with property owners to obtain land for public parking and alleys to connect to public roads as illustrated on Figure 7 Proposed Circulation Plan. The public right of way should be reserved on an Official Map or the Master Plan in the event development applications are submitted for the properties.

# Mount Freedom Village Center Study

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- Identify and reserve areas that will be needed for stormwater management facilities and public open space. The stormwater management locations should be established in locations that will meet engineering and regulatory criteria.
- Amend the Open Space plan to include areas within the Mount Freedom Study Area to be dedicated for open space and the extension of the path system into Mount Freedom.
- Establish a pattern book that will be used in conjunction with the ordinance's design standards to create consistent and compatible architectural treatment for new and renovated buildings within the district. This pattern book will identify architectural features, styles and details that should be emulated within Mount Freedom.
- Continue to work with the U.S. Postal service and private developers to find a better location for the Mount Freedom Post Office. Such a location should have improved access attributes and sufficient parking.

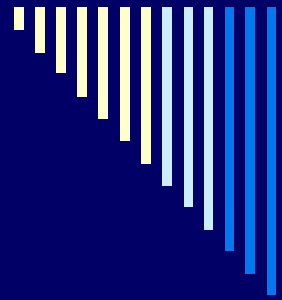
## **1. State and County Actions**

The long awaited improvements to Sussex Turnpike are integral to the future of the Mount Freedom Area. These improvements are planned by the New Jersey Department of Transportation in conjunction with Morris County. The plans currently include burying the overhead utilities and the realignment of the intersection with West Hanover Avenue. The plans also include improvements at the intersection with Millbrook Avenue. All private development applications should be coordinated with these future plans, especially as they relate to the right of way and curb locations.

# APPENDIX A







# Village Center Design Standards

**Mount Freedom**

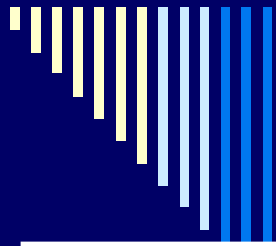
# Existing



# Existing







# Existing



# Existing



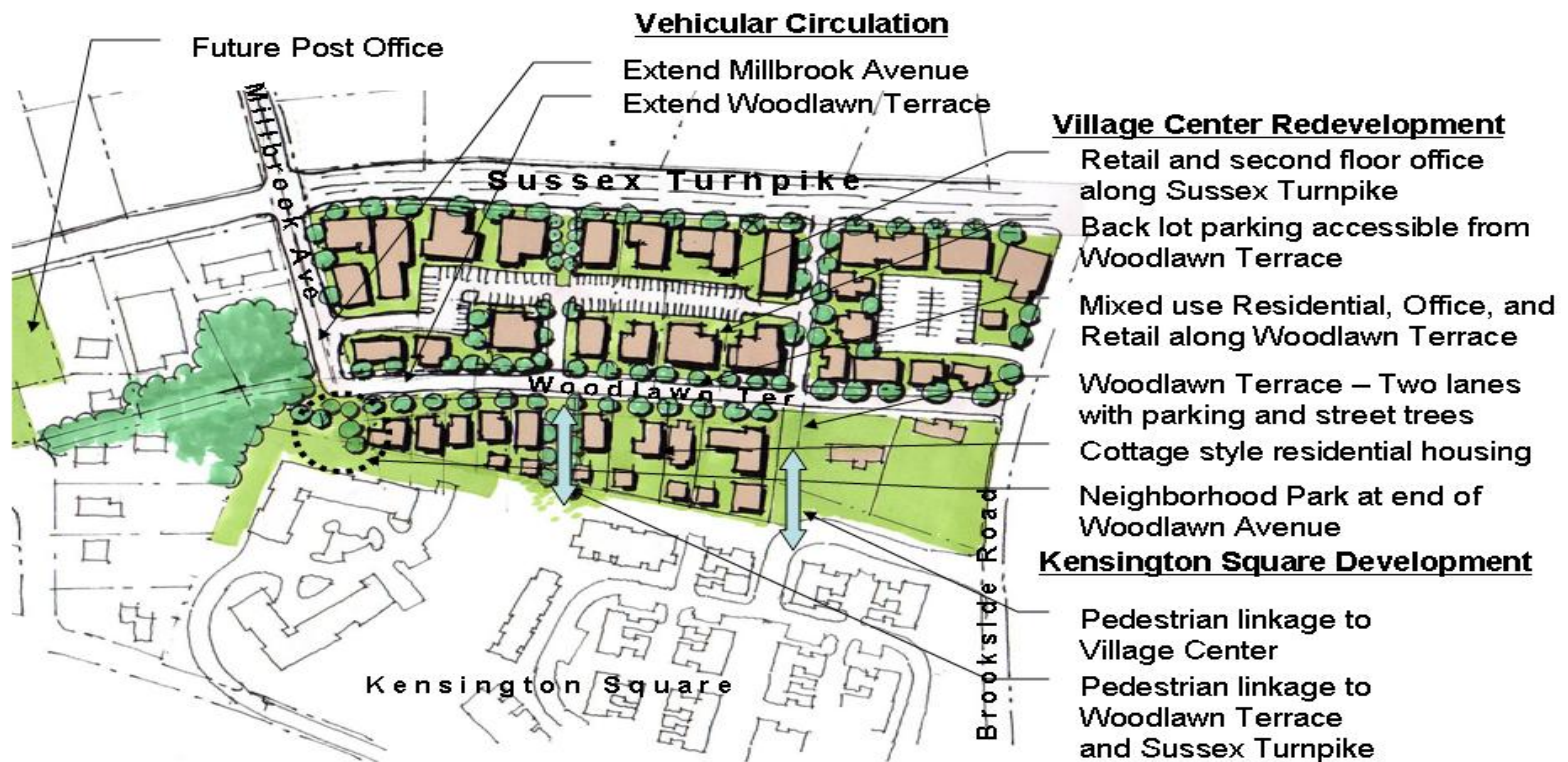


# Existing



# Proposed

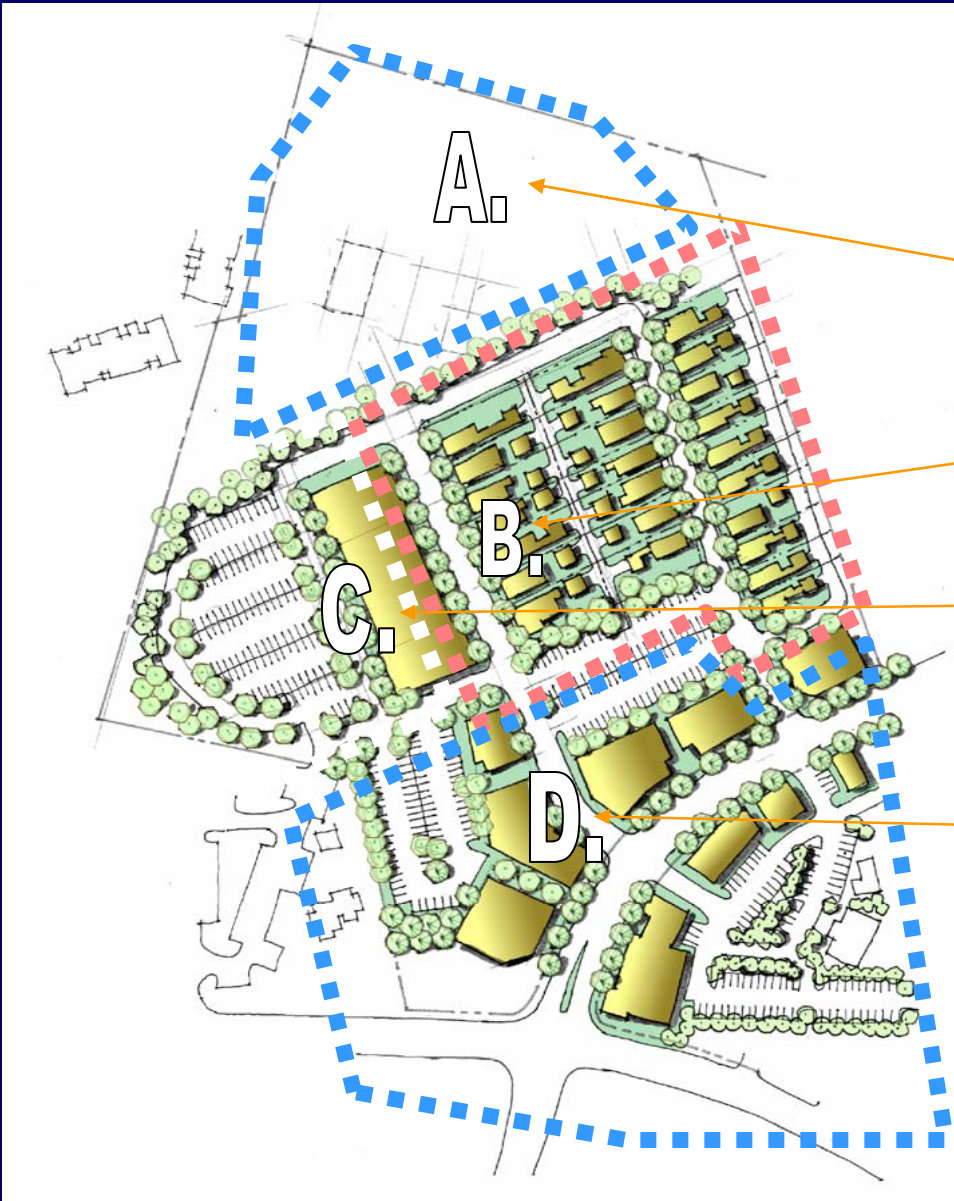
## Proposed Mount Freedom Village Center Core (Between Millbrook Avenue and Brookside Road)

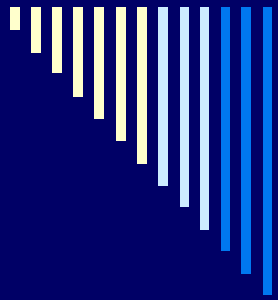




## Zion Tract Proposed Land Uses

- A. Open Space/Recreation
  - Connection to trail system
- B. High Density Residential
  - 24 Cottage style houses
- C. Flexible Space
  - Commercial/Retail/Office Space (1<sup>st</sup> Floor)
  - Residential Space (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)
- D. Mixed Use
  - Commercial/Retail/Office (60%)
  - Residential (40%)

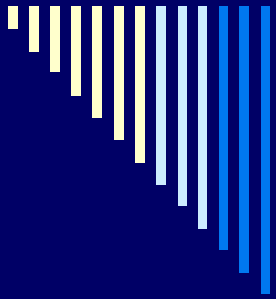




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# Architectural Theme

- Consistent
  - Compatible
  - Complimentary
-



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# Architectural Theme

Reflect Period Styles of:

- Bungalow
- Colonial
- Federal

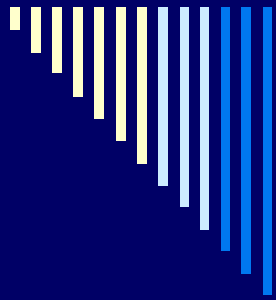
# Architectural Theme





# Architectural Theme

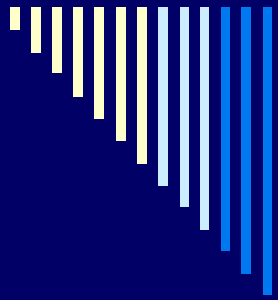




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# General Considerations

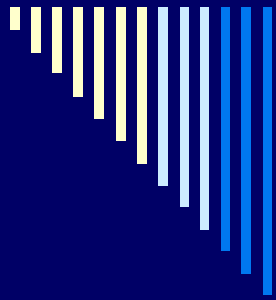
1. Style
  2. Roof Type and Pitch
  3. Proportion
  4. Windows and Door Proportions
  5. Solid to Void Proportions
-



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# General Considerations

- 6. Materials, Texture and Color
  - 7. Architectural Elements and Features
  - 8. Continuity of Architectural and Site Details
  - 9. Building Height and Siting
-



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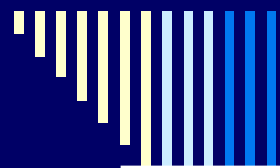
# General Considerations

- 10. Building Additions
  - 11. Building Line
  - 12. Mechanical Equipment and Roof Projections
  - 13. Building, Massing, Scale, Non-Residential
-



# Style





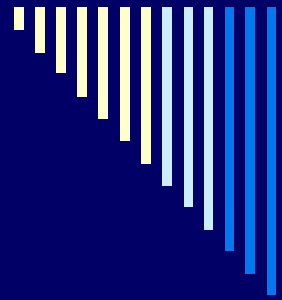
# Roof Type and Pitch





# Proportion





# Window and Door Proportions





# Solid to Void Proportions





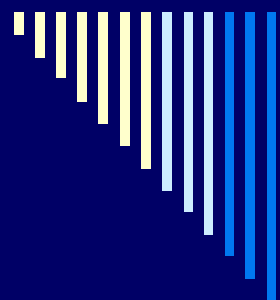
# Materials, Texture and Color





# Architectural Elements & Features





# Architectural Elements & Features





# Continuity of Architectural & Site Details



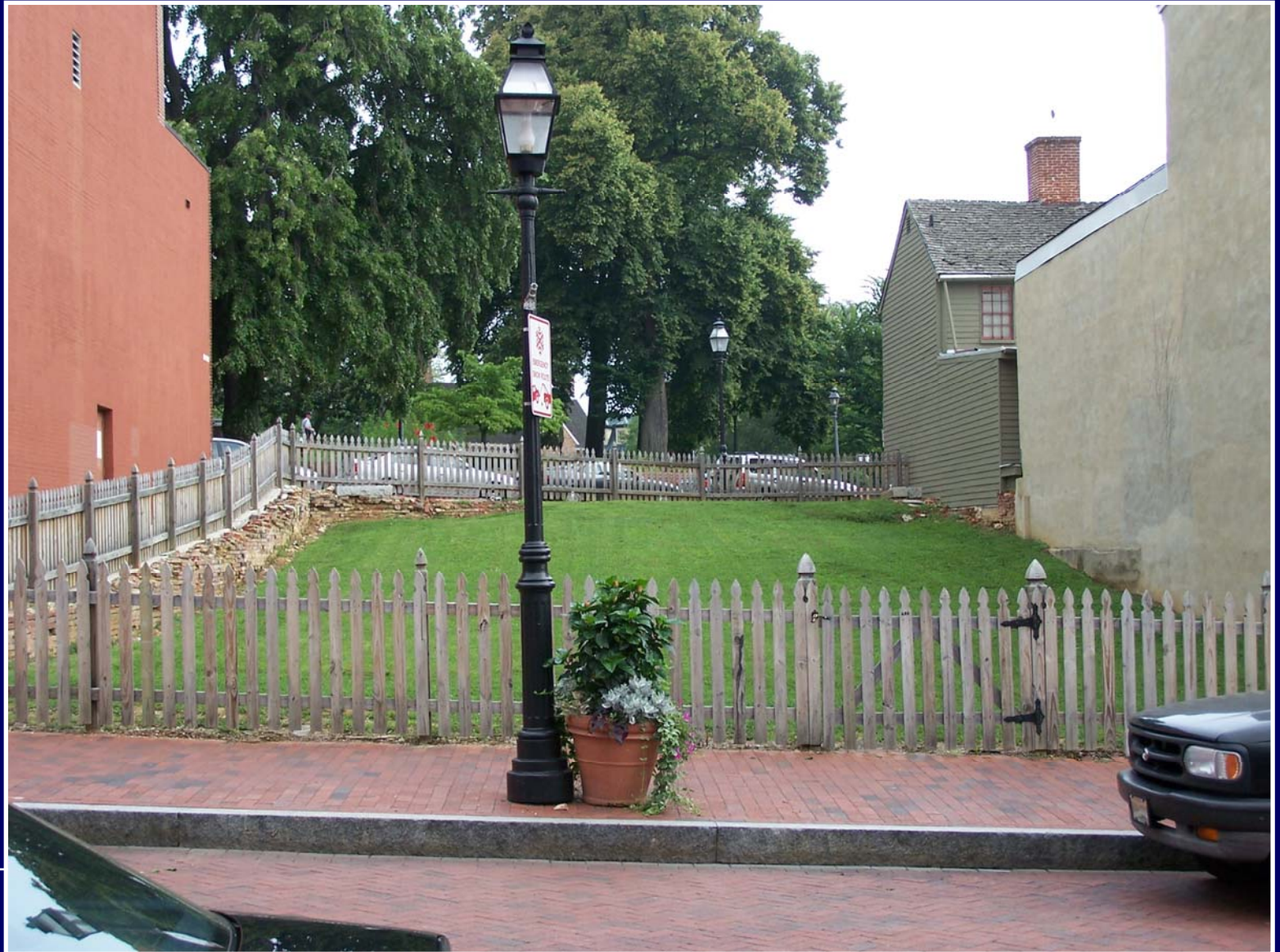


# Building Height and Siting





# Building Line





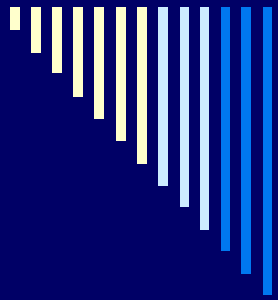
## Building Massing & Scale, Non-residential





## Building Massing & Scale, Non-residential





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# Architectural Elements

1. Porches
  2. Roofs
  3. Colors
  4. Awnings
  5. Windows and Doors
-



# Porches





# Roofs





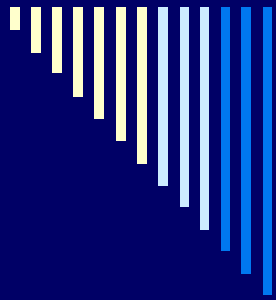
# Colors



# Awnings



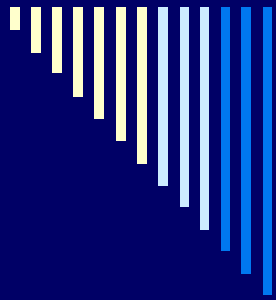




# Windows and Doors



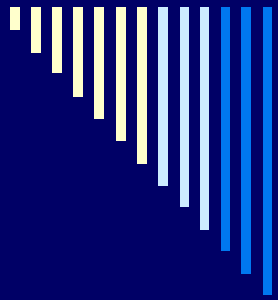




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# Streetscape Elements

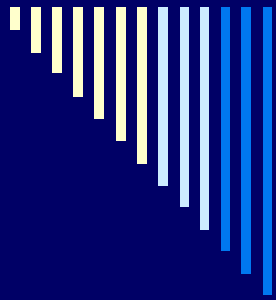
1. Sidewalks
  2. Lighting
  3. Landscaping
  4. Landscape/Site Treatment
  5. Benches
  6. Walls & Landscape Screening
  7. Kiosks
-



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# Streetscape Elements

- 8. Tree Grates
  - 9. Bus Stops
  - 10. Planters
  - 11. Road Crossings
  - 12. Traffic Signs
  - 13. Hanging Clocks
  - 14. Catch Basins
-



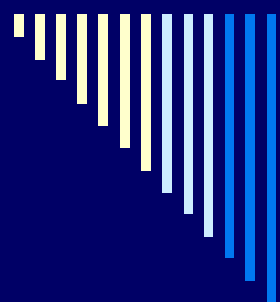
# Lighting





# Landscape/Site Treatment

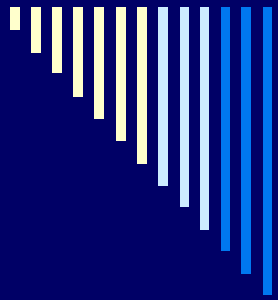




# Seasonal Flowers in Planters



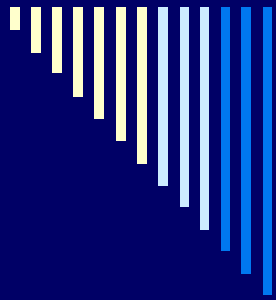




# Benches







# Signs and Graphics

1. Building Façade Signs
2. Hanging Signs
3. Canopy Signs
4. Etched on Windows
5. Located at Place of Business
6. Not Conflict with Architectural Detail
7. Indirect Lighting
8. Banners

# Building Sign



# Hanging Sign





# Canopy Sign

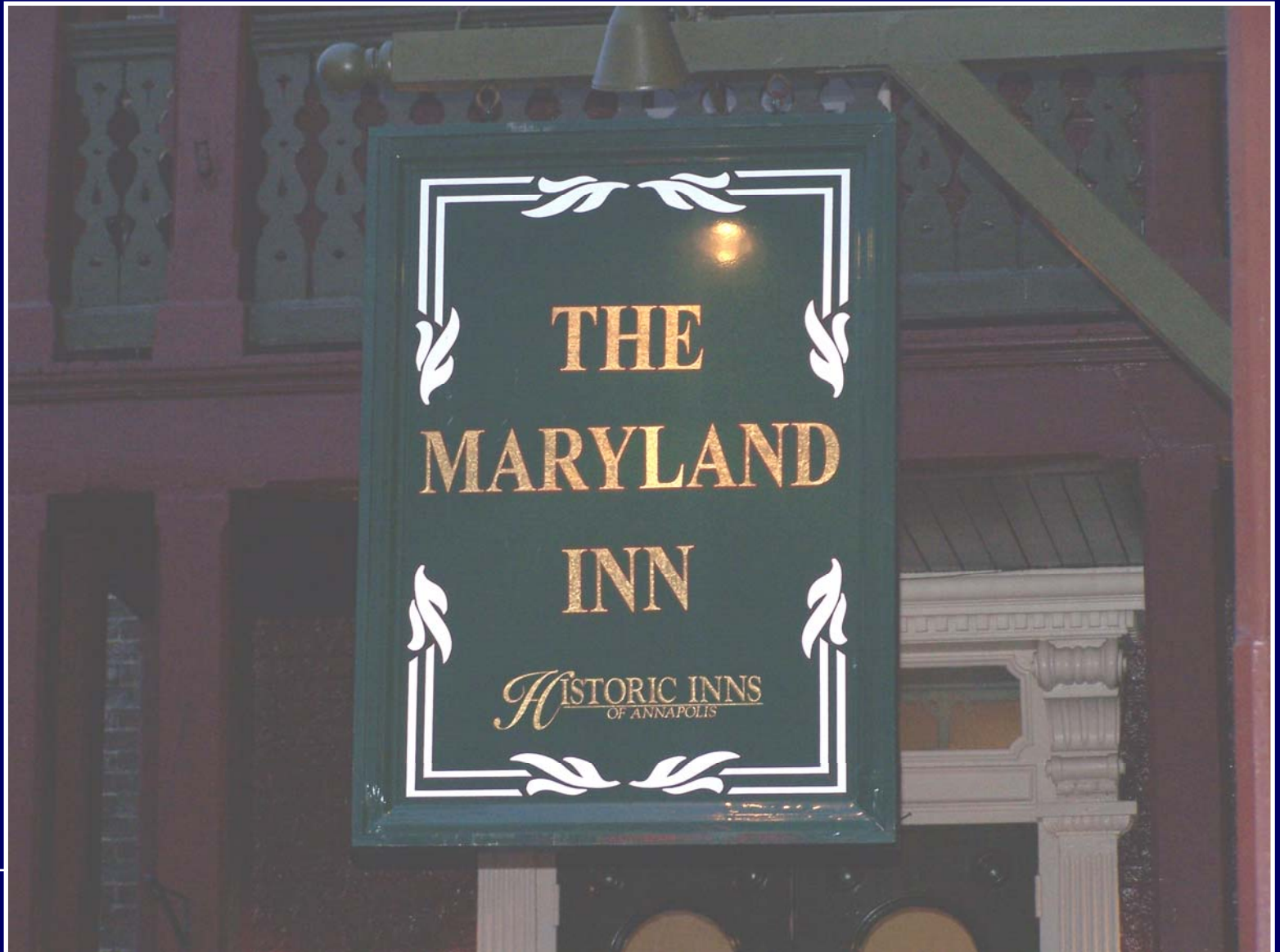


# Etched Sign

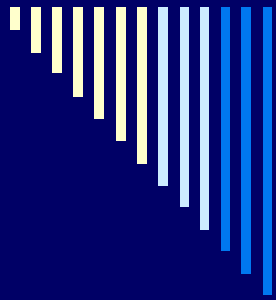




# Indirect lighting







# Banners



