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# Master Plan

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Borough of  
Little Ferry, NJ

1978

MASTER PLAN

BOROUGH OF LITTLE FERRY

NEW JERSEY

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Raymond, Parish, Pine & Weiner, Inc.

Princeton, New Jersey

Tarrytown, New York

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## Introduction

A Master Plan is a statement of the goals which a community sets for itself, and a framework within which to achieve the goals. It is a statement made in the light of present circumstances and should always admit the possibility of changed circumstances in the future. Therefore, the Plan should incorporate enough flexibility to allow a variety of things to occur without undermining its basic integrity.

Having a plan, the community is in a position to anticipate and shape the forces of change, rather than merely reacting to them. Thus, the plan is an important tool in the community's ongoing planning process.

Given the changing characteristics of population, the economic pressures on the remaining vacant land, and the need for public services, the Planning Board and Borough Council decided to revise the Borough's Master Plan. As adopted, this plan reflects the combined efforts of the Planning Board, the Mayor and Council, and the Citizens of Little Ferry in updating the 1964 Master Plan. Its adoption in July 1978 was the first step in the process of implementing the updated plan.

In arriving at this Plan, various options and their development implications have been considered and discussed in order to assure that the widest range of possibilities has been considered. Certain aspects of the Plan, particularly those relating to Route 46 and the space needs for public functions, require more detailed consideration.

## MASTER PLAN

### BOROUGH OF LITTLE FERRY, N.J.

#### I. Existing Conditions

##### A. Land Use

Since 1960 a great deal of change has occurred in Little Ferry. The 1964 Master Plan for the Borough indicated that 25% of the land area was vacant and privately owned. Today, less than 9% of the land area remains vacant and most of this has been earmarked for development in the near future. During these years the growth has affected all sectors of the local economy including residential, commercial and industrial development. About 45% of the land developed since 1964 has been for housing and the remaining 55% has been evenly divided between commercial and industrial development. Some of the major land use changes since 1964 include:

1. The vacant area northeast of the Route 46 traffic circle now contains the Valley Fair Shopping Center, North Village Apartments, a drive-in theater, and the Sportsplex Motel.
3. Light industrial development has occurred on Gates Road, Alsan Way, and along the border of the Borough of Teterboro, which includes the Monsieur Henri distribution facility.

3. Garden apartments have been established along Liberty Street including such developments as Ledgewood Terrace, Tara Gardens, Florence Apartments, Gilbert Apartments, Williamstown Apartments, and Liberty Bell Village.
4. Most of the new one and two-family developments are located west of Liberty Street and include such new streets as Millo Court, Garfield Street, Marianni Drive, LaRosa Drive, Baker Court, Elizabeth Court, and Robby Drive.

Most of the remaining vacant land is in public ownership and located in the southern portion of the Borough in the Meadowland area. Except for the lands held by the Borough and the Sewer Authority there is little available for future development and most of it consists of scattered sites. Existing land use in the Borough is shown on the map on the following page. At present, Little Ferry can be characterized as a mature, built-up community typical of the Northeastern New Jersey segment of the New York Metropolitan Area.

B. Population

Most of the Borough's population growth occurred between 1960 and 1970. During this period, population rose from 6,175 to 9,062, an increase of almost 50%.

In recent years, the growth rate has moderated

considerably. As of December 1976, the State of New Jersey estimates Little Ferry's population to be 9,625, an average increase of 1% per year since 1970. It is unlikely that a resumption of the 1960's growth rate will reoccur as buildable land for housing in the Borough is scarce.

Beginning in 1960, certain changes in Little Ferry's population profile have emerged: Although population has increased, family size has decreased, the number of school age children has declined, the birth rate has declined, the number of young adults has increased, and the number of elderly has increased. At present, it is estimated that 10% of the Borough's population is over 65 years of age.

C. Housing

Prior to 1960, Little Ferry's residential areas were characterized by one and two family homes. As suitable residential land diminished and the housing market changed, construction of apartments increased. Based on building permit data from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Industry, of the 1614 housing units authorized between 1960 and 1975, 1,052 units or 65% were for multi-family housing.

Today, multi-family housing, particularly the

garden apartment type, comprise about 30% of the Borough's housing stock.

Based on census data, almost 40% of the total housing stock is over 40 years old. An exterior field survey of building conditions revealed that despite the age of the housing, most of it was maintained in good repair. Those showing signs of deterioration were generally found in scattered locations particularly on streets with heavy traffic or near business or industrial development which has a detrimental affect on adjoining residences. If a pocket of deteriorated housing could be delineated, it would be the dead-end streets on the south side of Washington Avenue which is adjacent to industrial uses. According to the Building Inspector many of these homes do not have adequate foundations or fail to meet other provisions of the Building Code.

D. Public School Facilities

Little Ferry provides educational facilities for students in kindergarten through 8th grade. High school students attend school in Ridgefield Park. The school facilities consist of two elementary schools (Wilson and Washington) and a middle school for grades 6 through 8 (Memorial). In 1969 total enrollment in the schools peaked at

994. Since then enrollment has continued to decline gradually. In the fall of 1976 an enrollment of 944 was recorded. Typical of the northeast, enrollment is expected to continue to decline for several years.

Based on a study conducted by Rutgers University, the existing schools have a combined functional capacity of 986. The oldest school, Wilson, was built in 1876 and has had several additions since then, the last in 1924. According to the study, the school is obsolete and should be phased out, as renovation to meet current standards is impractical. Washington School was constructed in 1917 and an addition was completed in 1957. The Rutgers study recommended extensive renovation and an addition to the school to increase its capacity from 331 to 525. The Board of Education is currently purchasing adjoining parcels to expand the school site. Memorial School was built in 1969 on an 8.1 acre site fronting Liberty Street. The study recommended an addition to increase its capacity from 379 to 475 or 500 and improvement of the outdoor facilities. This proposal is being implemented and work is near completion.

In summary, the Rutgers study recommended upgrading the two adjoining schools on Liberty Street and phasing out the third school (Wilson). Implementation

of Rutger's proposals would meet Little Ferry's educational needs for the foreseeable future.

E. Recreation Facilities

At present there are four municipal parks and playgrounds used for active recreation. The largest, Lakeview Park (also known as Indian Lake Park) contains 14.9 acres. Facilities include ballfields for Little League use and a pond which was once a clay pit.

Willow Lake, which has an area of about 14 acres, was also once a clay pit. Over the years the pit has been filled to a point where two thirds of the area consists of usable land and the remaining clay pit area forms a useful pond. Work has begun on constructing a Public Safety Building on the southeastern corner of the site (Main Street) which has necessitated the relocation of an existing playground. In addition, the Borough plans to develop two football fields on the site.

Mehrhof Road Park, although smaller than the other two parks, has a greater variety of recreation facilities including tennis courts, basketball courts and a ballfield. Recently, the Borough

dedicated an additional 21.7 acres adjoining the Borough Garage for recreation and open space purposes. This has been leased to the Meadowlands Commission which plans to establish a much larger recreation facility in the area.

The smallest recreation facility in the Borough is a playground located on Redneck Avenue. The 1.9 acre parcel is the only recreation facility serving the residential area west of Liberty Street.

Any inventory of recreation facilities in the Borough would not be complete without including the outdoor facilities at Memorial Middle School. The 8 acre site which is in the process of being consolidated and reorganized has a ballfield as well as playfields.

F. Streets and Traffic

Streets are classified as minor, collector or arterial based on the function that they do or should perform. Basically, minor streets serve abutting property and their design should discourage through traffic and excessive speeds. Collector streets function as carriers of traffic between minor and major (arterial) streets and their design should facilitate movement of moderate volumes

Although two family homes are a factor in determining the existing character of these neighborhoods, it would be inadvisable to permit two family homes on small lots throughout the residential areas. The resulting development would appreciably increase population and traffic in these areas thereby permanently altering the character of the Borough. The following is a description of these neighborhoods.

1. The largest one and two family area is located west of Liberty Street. It probably contains the highest proportion of new housing on 7,500 sq. ft. lots in the Borough. Except for a large parcel in the center of the area and small scattered sites, the potential for new development is limited.
2. The residential area north of Route 46 is characterized by single family, middle aged homes in good condition on relatively small lots. Vacant land is virtually non-existent in the area. Because of lot limitations, conversion of homes to two families should be discouraged. Numerous conversions would create congestion in the area and destroy its pleasant character.

3. The area south of Washington Avenue contains a mixture of old and new housing with the older housing concentrated in the eastern portion of the area particularly near Mehrhof Road. Generally, the housing is in good condition except for a few scattered homes which could be improved through increased maintenance and rehabilitation.

Most of the residential area is within the jurisdiction of the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission which has zoned this area low density residential. Under the Meadowlands zoning one and two family homes are permitted on 5,000 square foot lots. Although the Borough requires 7,500 square foot lots, this provision is not likely to have a significant impact on the area since there is very little land that can be subdivided. The neighborhood could be detrimentally affected, however, by a Meadowlands zoning provision that permits multi-family housing on lots with 2,000 square feet per unit. On this basis, a single family house on a 6,000 square foot lot could be converted to three families, four families on an 8,000 square foot lot, and so on. On larger lots, older homes could be demolished and replaced by apartment houses at a density of 21.8 units per acre. If this provision is implemented to any degree, it could destroy

the stable character of the neighborhood. It is essential that the Borough meet with the Meadowlands Commission to discuss this potential adversity and reach a mutual understanding to protect the integrity of the area.

4. There is a small cluster of approximately 30 homes in a two block area southeast of Washington Avenue. The area is bordered on two sides by industrial and heavy commercial uses. The area includes some of the oldest, most deficient homes in the Borough. According to the Building Inspector, many of the homes lack foundations, thereby subjecting the frame structures to rotting and sagging. Correcting the substantial structural deficiencies will not remove the blighting influence of adjoining industry. Expansion of the industry to include this area may be desirable, however, the cost of acquiring, demolishing and assembling parcels would be prohibitively expensive to anyone without a significant subsidy or write-down on the total cost.

During this planning process, consideration was given to rezoning the area industrial to enable

private industry to expand. This would not achieve the desired effect and might create additional problems. With industrial zoning, property owners would probably stop improving their homes thereby accelerating the deterioration of the area. Rezoning may also raise the property values in anticipation of industrial development. Expansion would probably occur piecemeal thereby creating a poor mixture of housing and industry. Without assembling large parcels, the area would attract marginal uses, many of which would convert the existing buildings rather than invest in new construction. Unless the Borough can obtain the resources to redevelop the area, it should remain residential and rehabilitation efforts should be encouraged.

5. The central portion of the Little Ferry (East of Liberty Street, between Main Street and Washington Avenue) contains the oldest neighborhood in the Borough. In addition to one and two family homes there are a few multi-family homes and non-residential uses in the area. Despite its age, most of the housing is in good condition. There is evidence of some physical deterioration, however it was found to be quite scattered. Code enforcement or rehabilitation activities could eliminate most of the problems in the area.

6. There is a narrow band of housing located between Main Street and Route 46. Although the housing is generally in good condition, traffic on through streets could jeopardize the long term stability of the residential area. To safeguard the neighborhood, through traffic should be eliminated on Charles, Garden and Brandt Streets by creating loop streets or by whatever means is acceptable to the Borough and the State Department of Transportation which has jurisdiction over Route 46.

B. Residential-Multi-Family

Most of the existing multi-family housing in the Borough was built over the last 10 to 20 years and much of the housing is found along Liberty Street. In addition, there is a large development complex on River Street adjacent to the Valley Fair Shopping Center. All of these developments are of the garden apartment type with densities in the range of 20 to 25 units per acre.

As noted earlier, the housing needs of Borough residents are changing - single persons, young marrieds and the elderly are increasing in terms of the community's population profile. Apartments with one or two bedrooms

best meet the housing needs of this population. In order to expand this part of the housing supply without jeopardizing the character of low density, single family, owner occupied neighborhoods it is proposed that suitable parcels adjoining existing apartment developments on Liberty Street be designated for garden apartments. If all of these parcels are developed, the number of apartments in the Borough will increase by 100 to 125 units.

In addition, the drive-in theater, next to the Valley Fair Shopping Center, should be considered for apartments. In today's economy, this location is better suited for a more intensive economic use than a drive-in. The location, with poor visibility from the Bergen Turnpike, is not likely to attract prime commercial development such as a shopping center. Not only is there a demand for apartments, but the site's proximity to a shopping center and other apartments make it desirable for multi-family housing. Under a RC zoning classification the 15 acre site has a potential capacity for 375 units.

C. Senior Citizens Housing

Because the housing needs of the elderly are in many respects unique, it cannot be assumed that the previous

proposals for one, two and multi-family housing will entirely satisfy these needs. Most of the elderly in the Borough will probably live in small single family homes, or in homes of relatives which have been converted to accommodate another unit or in garden apartments. Many elderly persons, however, desire housing with features that are designed for their specific needs of security, privacy, safety and convenience. To this extent, the Borough should encourage the development of housing specifically designed for the elderly with a minimum objective of 50 to 100 units. The lack of suitable vacant land is a major obstacle to achieving this objective and therefore it is recommended that a provision be added to the zoning regulations permitting senior citizen housing in any district subject to adequate standards to assure compatibility between the elderly residents and the surrounding neighborhood. Some of the controls that might be considered are:

1. Minimum Lot Size - 2 or 3 acres in any district.
2. Maximum Density - 16 or 18 bedrooms per acre in the RA & RB districts and 40 to 50 bedrooms per acre in all other districts.
3. Maximum Units - 100 to 150 units per development, depending on location.
4. Minimum Yards & Coverage - comparable to the most restrictive provisions of the residential districts.

5. Maximum Height - 2 stories in the RA & RB districts and 40 feet in all other districts.
6. Maximum Size of Building - 6 to 8 units per building in the RA & RB districts and no limit (other than 3. above) in all other districts.
7. Distance Between Buildings - should be proportional to the height of the adjoining buildings.
8. Buffer Strip - in non-residential districts, the senior citizens housing should be protected from adjoining incompatible uses by a landscaped buffer 40 feet wide.

These, together with other standards, would enable a senior citizens housing complex to fit within any area in the Borough without creating any undesirable affect upon the elderly residents or adjoining development.

All senior citizens housing should be subject to an intensive site plan review to assure a high standard of development.

D. Commercial Development

Commercial development in Little Ferry generally serves the needs of the residents and in some cases those of other communities. The Borough is not a regional shopping center. Major purchases are usually made in New York or at one of the outlying shopping centers such as Paramus. The lack of adequate land and the

degree of traffic congestion preclude the Borough from becoming a regional business center. In view of these constraints, the Borough should concentrate on assuring stable and attractive development that will provide the goods and services needed by residents on a daily or short term basis.

1. General Business

Valley Fair is the largest shopping facility in the Borough and is likely to remain so in the future. Rather than encouraging strip development (e.g., Route 46) along Liberty Street, two small shopping centers or clusters are proposed: one at Redneck Avenue and the other at Washington Avenue. These two areas were selected because they have an existing small nucleus of businesses and there are opportunities for new development. Hopefully, they will develop as small shopping centers with a cluster of uses on a single parcel of two or three acres rather than individual stores on 50 foot lots. The industrial site on the east side of Liberty Street is included in the business area because on a long term basis the industrial use is inappropriate next to a residential area. Furthermore, there is a need for a larger commercial site in the area.

2. Neighborhood Business

Portions of Main Street, Washington Avenue and Liberty Street are a mixture of a broad variety of businesses, offices and older housing. It is proposed that over an extended period of time these business uses become more oriented to the needs of the immediate neighborhood. Current zoning regulations do not encourage this kind of transition. It is proposed that the current B-1 zoning district be replaced by a new neighborhood business district that would encourage the establishment of small convenience shops such as a drug store, deli, newspaper stand, candy store, tobacco shop, etc; personal services such as a barber shop, beauty parlor, and shoe repairs; legal, medical, insurance, real estate and other professional offices as well as banking and financial services. Retail uses and drive-in facilities that are automobile-oriented should be prohibited. Limited parking, in character with the area and the traffic generated should be required. Residential uses, including small apartment buildings should not be discouraged. They are very much a part of the neighborhood character along these streets. To protect and enhance the character of these areas, multi-

family housing should be limited to low density and kept in scale with adjoining development. Some of the standards that could be applied to multi-family developments are:

1. Minimum lot area--20,000 square feet.
  2. Minimum lot width and depth--100 feet.
  3. Maximum density--16 dwelling units per acre.
  4. Maximum units--40 units per development.
  5. Yards and coverage--same as RC District.
  6. Maximum height--2 stories or 35 feet.
  7. Maximum size of building--8 units per building and no building shall exceed 120 feet in its greatest dimension.
  8. Distance between buildings--should be proportional to the height of adjoining buildings.
  9. Parking spaces--1.5 spaces per dwelling unit.
3. Highway Business

Highway business or strip commercial areas are a significant development problem in many communities particularly in built-up areas such as Little Ferry. Route 46 is a garish commercial strip with used car lots, unrestrained lighting and an overabundance

of signs which are a blighting influence on the community. The highway itself is congested and dangerous. Improving this area is difficult and improvements will come slowly. In view of the overlapping jurisdictions with the area (property owners, the Borough and NJDOT), a joint study should be undertaken to identify solutions which can be implemented as a coordinated program. Areas of concern to be studied should include: traffic control, curb cuts, land use, property maintenance, capital improvements, parking, landscaping, lighting, signs, lot sizes, and zoning.

E. Industrial

The proposed industrial areas have been dictated by the existing development pattern. New industrial development will locate on undeveloped parcels in established industrial areas. No new industrial areas are proposed. In the future, industry should not be permitted to intrude on residential neighborhoods. Note that all existing industrial areas are on the periphery of the Borough. From the standpoint of impact, all industrial development bordering

residential areas should be restricted more than those areas further removed from residential neighborhoods. Heavier, more intensive industrial development should be limited to the area fronting on the Hackensack River which historically has been the location for these uses. All industrial areas to the west should be zoned Restricted Industrial. Where they adjoin residential areas they should be buffered by appropriate landscaping and screening. The plan also provides for limited industrial expansion adjacent to the Monsieur Henri facilities. Assuming the county builds the proposed Redneck Extension along the Borough line, the rear yards of a number of deep lots could be assembled to create an industrial parcel with frontage on this new road. At present this land is virtually landlocked.

F. Public Facilities

1. Recreation

Most of the Borough residents are fortunate to be within a quarter mile of a public recreation area. These areas have a variety of facilities including playgrounds, baseball fields, football fields and tennis courts. Compared to other areas of the

Borough, the neighborhood west of Liberty Street lacks adequate facilities except for a small playground on Redneck Avenue. A neighborhood park is proposed for other land owned by the Borough on Redneck Avenue. The purpose of the park should be to provide an attractive neighborhood setting or focal point and a place for passive recreation for people of all ages. Consideration should be given to provide the following amenities: trees for protection from the summer sun, an open lawn, tables and benches for quiet games, pathways for walking, an ornamental pool or fountain, a shelter and a multi-purpose paved area. If the Borough converts the existing playground to tennis courts, the play equipment should be placed in the neighborhood park together with a small tot lot. Not all of the Borough land need be used for the park. A parcel of three to five acres should be adequate. Because of the odd configuration of the property, it would be desirable to work out a partial land swap with the owner of adjoining vacant property. This would increase the potential utilization of both parcels.

The Hackensack Meadowlands Commission has proposed a major park and recreation area in the vicinity of

Losen Slote Creek. Most of the park will be in Little Ferry although some land will be included on the west side of the creek in the Borough of Moonachie. At present, most of the land is vacant and owned either by the Borough or the Bergen County Sewage Authority. As an indication of Little Ferry's endorsement of the project, the municipality has taken the first step in making the park a reality, by leasing over 20 acres of land adjacent to the Mehrhof Road Park to the Meadowlands Commission. The merits of this proposal are reaffirmed by including the park proposal in this, the Borough's Master Plan. Once the total site has been assembled, portions of it should be developed for active recreation. From the Borough's point of view the most needed facility is a swimming pool designed to accommodate both recreational and competitive swimming activities.

## 2. Schools

As noted earlier, an intensive study undertaken by Rutgers University in 1974, recommended that Memorial and Washington Schools be improved and expanded and that Wilson, the oldest school, be phased out. In recognition of this study, it is recommended that, as a minimum, all properties south of the Washington School (between the school and Union Avenue) be acquired for an addition to the school. To the north

of the school there is a mixed use area which includes a very large garage used for the storage and repairs of buses. The bus terminal, which is a nuisance in the area is available for purchase. Because of the building design, conversion of the facility to another commercial use is likely to increase rather than decrease the negative impact of this building. It is recommended that all properties north of Washington School be acquired to either expand the school site or to use for some other public purpose as discussed below.

### 3. Other Public Facilities

In addition to expanding Washington School, there are other needs for public facilities. For example, Borough Hall, although a relatively new building, lacks space for all municipal functions. Consideration is being given to adding to the building, however, the site is very small and poorly located. Rather than being in the center of activity, the facility is on a quiet residential street. No provision is made for off-street parking for the public.

Local groups have also expressed a need for a multi-purpose community center. Most organizations lack space for meetings, programs, and social events. One possibility is to use the Wilson School which should be

phased out in the next few years. The location has the added advantage of being across the street from Willow Lake Park. A day care center, a summer crafts program or even an athletic-sports club could make good use of the combined park-school facilities. The school building, however, may be too large to be efficiently used as a community center. In addition, the cost of converting and maintaining the building may be prohibitive.

Although unquantified, additional space is needed for various public functions such as the Borough administrative offices, a community center, an existing elementary school and visitor parking. Furthermore, there may be additional public needs such as the Library which have not been investigated as part of this study.

It is recommended that the Borough undertake a study to determine the space needs of all public functions and to evaluate potential buildings and sites in terms of suitability and cost.

One alternative that deserves full consideration is the creation of a municipal center around the

existing Memorial and Washington Schools. It would provide a needed focal point or activity center for the Borough and could bring about an increased use of public facilities. The land north of the Washington School should be included in this center.

G. Relationship to Other Plans

In developing the Master Plan for Little Ferry, consideration was given to the plans of adjoining communities, Bergen County, and the State of New Jersey.

1. Adjoining Communities

As a matter of policy, Little Ferry sought input from adjoining communities by requesting copies of the most recent Master Plans and Zoning Ordinances from the municipalities of Ridgefield, Ridgefield Park, Hackensack, South Hackensack, Teterboro, and Moonachie. Some of the communities indicated they were also in the process of revising their plans, and requested the Borough to reciprocate upon completion of its Master Plan. Based on a composite of the information obtained, it can be stated that the planning between Little Ferry and its neighbors is generally consistent; that is, residential, commercial, and industrial areas abut similar areas in adjoining municipalities. The exceptions that exist are virtually unavoidable. Little Ferry and its neighbors are urban communities with little land that is not already built upon. It is impractical to formulate a plan that does not accept existing

development in good physical condition as a "given". In no instance was a deteriorated area located near a municipal boundary which would permit consideration of alternative uses.

2. Bergen County

While a comprehensive county plan does not exist as such, the Bergen County Planning Board prepared an "Areawide Development Guide" in 1973. The County Planning Board adopted recreation and open space concepts in July of 1973. Both of these documents are reflected in the Borough Plan.

Generally, the Development Guide reflects existing development patterns within the Borough. It suggests that all residential areas be considered "medium density" or 5 to 20 dwelling units per acre.

The Borough Master Plan incorporates residential densities of about five units to the acre in the single family areas and ten units to the acre in the two family areas of the Borough. Multi-family housing of up to twenty four units to the acre are proposed in key locations near Liberty Street and the Valley Fair Shopping Center.

Thus, in terms of overall residential density, the Little Ferry Plan is consistent with the County Areawide Development Guide. Similarly, the Master Plan is consistent with the "Regional Center" (commercial) and "Major Employment Area" (industrial) designations proposed in the Development Guide.

3. Hackensack Meadowlands

As discussed earlier, approximately one-third of the Borough is within the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission District. In terms of land use, the Borough Plan is generally consistent with the Commission's plan and zoning policies, including the creation of a major open space area along Losen Slote Creek. In an area of one and two family housing, the Meadowlands Commission proposes "Low Density Residential", which permits up to 22 dwelling units per acre. The Borough's "Low Density" zoning districts only permit one and two family dwellings. Currently, the Meadowlands Commission does not have a zone designation which limits areas to a density lower than 22 units per acre. The Meadowland's designation "low density" is totally out of character with existing conditions and new development at this density would be detrimental to the area.

4. State of New Jersey

In September 1977, the Department of Community Affairs released the State Development Guide Plan (Preliminary). Based on a review of the plan proposals, Little Ferry is within a larger area designated as a developed-urban area. Nothing within the Borough's Plan would be inconsistent with this State Plan designation.

In conclusion, Little Ferry, in developing its Master Plan, has carefully sought to meet its own needs and yet consider and respect its neighbors and the larger region.

#### IV Implementation of the Plan

Establishing community objectives and preparation of a Master Plan are only the initial steps in the planning process. Implementation of the plan requires a combination of community concern and involvement, regulation of how land and buildings can be used, and a combination of public and private efforts to make improvements and carry out programs.

Little Ferry's ability to achieve the objectives set out in the Plan requires involvement of all elements of the community. Thus a first step, and an on-going part of the implementation process, is for citizens and business people to be involved in the planning effort; to participate in development of regulations and improvement programs, and to actively participate in Borough efforts to implement the Plan.

Implementation will require a variety of specific actions over a period of time within the framework of an overall strategy based on the revised Master Plan.

Among the initial steps are:

##### A. Adoption of the Master Plan

This most important step in the planning process has already been accomplished. After considerable review and evaluation, the Planning Board presented the proposed plan at a public hearing in early Spring. Thereafter, it was

referred to the Mayor and Council, who also held a public hearing, and subsequently recommended adoption of the plan. On July 24, 1978, the Planning Board formally adopted the Master Plan.

B. Revision of Zoning Ordinance

The Borough should adopt revised zoning regulations which are flexible and which meet and reflect modern land use criteria and techniques.

Zoning regulates what land can or cannot be used for and how intensively it can be used. Primary objectives of the zoning ordinance are to encourage development to occur where the land and roads and services can accommodate it; to protect areas that may be environmentally fragile or important to the area's economy; and to protect property owners and residents from potentially negative influences.

One of the first implementing steps in the revision of the Borough zoning ordinance is to make it consistent with the updated plan; indeed, the Municipal Land Use Law makes it mandatory.

To this end, the Borough should adopt the following specific proposals:

1. Create a new zoning district to encourage appropriate business and low density multi-family development along portions of Main Street, Washington Avenue, and Liberty Street which is in keeping with the existing neighborhood character.
2. Create a new zoning district to protect public parks and open space from potential indiscriminate development.
3. Revise the zoning map to conform to the land use proposals delineated in the Master Plan.
4. Revise or draft new regulations to encourage housing that will meet the needs of the Borough's senior citizens and protect the integrity of the Borough's low density neighborhoods.

To further comply with the municipal Land Use Law, existing procedures, particularly those relating to site plan review and approval, should be revised.

Notwithstanding implementation of the above proposals, the zoning ordinance is in need of a complete overhaul to reflect modern zoning regulation. The lack of adequate development standards is one of the principal weaknesses of the current

ordinance. Furthermore, the numerous amendments since adoption have created a confusing and inconsistent ordinance, which inhibits administration.

C. Other Programs

In addition to adopting the Plan and revising the zoning ordinance, there are other implementation actions which require public and private cooperation and commitment. Prior to implementation, the following areas should be investigated more fully and alternative actions considered. In many respects they should be approached as feasibility studies:

1. The space needs of all public functions should be determined and measured against the availability and suitability of existing public buildings. In evaluating various alternatives, capital and operating costs should be considered.
2. Route 46 is recognized by most residents as a problem area. Traffic movements on it are hazardous and adjoining commercial development is an eyesore which contributes very little to the municipal tax base. If meaningful progress is to be made in improving the area, public and private interest groups will have to cooperate and arrive at common goals before

embarking upon any implementation program.

Improvements will require both public and private contribution of funds.

3. The small residential area south of Willow Lake Park is in need of major improvement. Prior to undertaking any rehabilitation it will be necessary to determine what must be done and how much it will cost to bring these homes up to local standards. Presently, the most promising program is rehabilitation utilizing Federal Community Development funds. Locally, these funds are administered through the Bergen County Community Development Program. Once the feasibility of the project has been determined, the Borough, through its two representatives, should request the County to include the project in its program for the coming fiscal year. Depending on the priority given the project by the County, and assuming eligibility, the project could be implemented with Federal funds. Ascertaining the projects feasibility and local need is a prime requisite for proceeding with implementation.

Obviously, all of these suggested actions cannot be achieved simultaneously. However, their priority

should be discussed locally so that a strategy can be established and then pursued in a deliberate manner through local, regional, state, and federal agencies to achieve Little Ferry's objectives.