

# Plans, Master Plans and Amendments

## Report to the Board November 25<sup>th</sup> 2014 through April 8<sup>th</sup> 2015

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Borough of Wharton</b>
<b>Document</b>	2015 Reexamination of the Master Plan
<b>Public Hearing</b>	3/20/15
<b>Summary</b>	This Reexamination Report constitutes the Master Plan Reexamination mandated by the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89.

- The current Wharton Borough Reexamination Report was adopted in 1995. Since then, the assumptions, policies and objectives have changed by virtue of enactment of the Highlands Act, the adoption of the Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP) and the requirement that the municipal master plan and development regulations be brought into alignment with the RMP. Wharton Borough is entirely within the Highlands Planning Area, but has decided to voluntarily conform its lands (2.2. square miles) to the Highlands Regional Master Plan. It is the intent of this Reexamination Report to identify the revisions needed to bring the Borough Master Plan and development regulations into conformance with the Highlands RMP. Wharton has also been designated a Highlands Center by the Highlands Council.
- The Report identifies major goals and objectives relating to land development in the Borough at the time of the last Reexamination Report and the extent to which these have been addressed. Major issues include:
  - Future Bypass Connector Road for North Main Street and Dewey Avenue. This area remains in need of redesign.
  - Central Business District Improvements. This area would benefit from greater coordination with cultural and historic resources. The Highlands Council has designated funding for development of a Sustainable Economic Development Plan for this area.
  - Redevelopment of the Former Air Products Site. Redevelopment of this eleven acre parcel remains a priority
  - Recognition of Environmental Constraints and their impact on redevelopment potential. NJDEP flood hazard regulations in combination with conformance to the RMP will reduce redevelopment potential outside the Highlands Designated Center; the Borough seeks to maximize the Center’s redevelopment potential.
- Significant changes to the assumptions policies and objectives relate to the identification of the Wharton Highlands Center, which requires specific planning to address development/redevelopment opportunities within the context of RMP conformance. The Land Use Board recommends adoption of a Highlands Planning Area Master Plan Element and associated Highlands development regulations, but not before development and adoption of a Highlands Center Plan. The Borough anticipates that some changes may be necessary to the Highlands Planning Area Master Plan model element and intends that the Center Plan guide the process of defining appropriate future ordinance changes.
- The Reexamination Report also identifies to two sites appropriate for consideration of incorporation of redevelopment plans pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law. These include the Meadow Avenue Industrial Area located east of North Main Street and adjoining Route 80 to the south and the Air Products Site located on the south side of East Dewey Avenue at the east entrance to the Borough from Route 15.