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**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN PLANNING BOARD
PERIODIC RE-EXAMINATION REPORT FOR ITS
MASTER PLAN – SEPTEMBER, 2010.**

The Township of Blairstown Planning Board is under an obligation to perform a re-examination of its Master Plan during the year 2010 (N.J.S.A.40:55D-89). Pursuant to that statute, the Planning Board must analyze its current Master Plan taking into account the following analysis:

- A. Identify the major problems and objectives related to land development in the municipality at the adoption of the last re-examination report.
- B. Identify the extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have been increased subsequent to that date.
- C. Identify the extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in state, county and municipal policies and objectives.
- D. Indicate the specific changes recommended in the Master Plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulation should be prepared.
- E. Consider any recommendations concerning the incorporation of a redevelopment plan adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law" N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et.

seq., into the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan, and such recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plan of the municipality.

In making the above analysis, the Planning Board believes it is appropriate to take into account the Master Plan and Development regulations, Periodic Re-examination Report and the Land Use Plan Element amendment that was adopted on December 20, 2004, as well as the Land Use Plan Element adopted by the Planning Board on February 19, 2001. The former dealt with development regulations as it relates to non-residential development in the Township. The latter reviewed the residential zoning districts. Both of these documents effectively review all of the land development regulations for the Township of Blirstown for the last decade.

The 2001 Land Use Plan recommended that the R-2 and R-3 zones, which allowed for two and three-acre lots, be rezoned into a new R-5 zoning district providing for a minimum lot size of five acres for the construction of a single-family residence. In an effort to provide equity to pre-existing lots of two and three acres, a grandfather provision was authorized to allow for modified setback requirements more reflective of those pre-existing nonconforming lots.

As a result of the adoption of the 2001 Land Use Plan, amendments were recommended by the Planning Board to the Land Development Ordinance and adopted by the Governing Body to implement those recommendations.

Concerning non-residential development in Blirstown Township, the 2004 Master Plan and Development regulations, Periodic Re-examination report did an extensive review of all of the non-residential zones in the Township. As a result of that extensive review, the report acknowledged the goals and objectives of prior Master Plan Land Use Plan and reaffirmed and

incorporated them into the 2004 Periodic Re-examination Report. In particular, the 2004 document focused on the following goals and objectives.

A. Preventing suburban type development and maintaining the country and rural character of the Township in relation to non-residential development.

B. Preserving and protecting ground water.

C. Promoting a balance between residential and non-residential development, preventing strip mall development and encouraging cluster non-residential development.

As a result of that focus, it was recommended by the Re-examination Report that in light of the reduction in density for residential development in the 2001 Periodic Re-examination Report, the amount of lands zoned for non-residential development should also be decreased. Additionally, the 2004 Periodic Re-examination Report recommended modifications in the zones as it relates to the uses that were permitted, generally increased the lot sizes, changing setbacks, floor areas and minimum building sizes to more appropriately accommodate the zoning envisioned in the Township of Blairstown.

As a result of the recommendations contained the 2004 Period Re-examination Report, the Planning Board authorized its attorney, Roger W. Thomas, of Dolan and Dolan, P.A., to prepare amendments to the Land Development ordinance incorporating the recommendations of the periodic report into ordinance form. This ordinance was ultimately adopted by the Governing Body in 2005.

In addition to review by the 2001 and 2004 Periodic Re-examination Reports, the following significant changes in land use development have occurred since the last re-examination report in 2004.

A. Stormwater management regulations have been adopted by the State of New Jersey.

B. The Highlands Act has been adopted by the State of New Jersey. While this Act does not directly affect the Township of Blaiirstown, it has substantial impact on the northwestern part of the state.

C. The State of New Jersey and the country have experienced a financial crisis that has resulted, and will result in the future, in reduction of monies available for school aid infrastructure improvement.

D. The United States has conducted its 2010 Census. However, those numbers are not available in terms of accurately reflecting growth development patterns in the region generally and Blaiirstown specifically. Those numbers will be published after the effective date of this Periodic Re-examination Report.

E. The Planning Board acknowledges that no redevelopment plans are presently proposed by the Township of Blaiirstown.

F. The Township Recycling Center has been eliminated due to failure of the County of Warren to provide for sufficient subsidies in order to maintain that facility locally.

Taking into account all of the foregoing, the Planning Board does make the following analysis regarding the present status of land use regulations in Blaiirstown.

A. Regarding the major problems and objectives related to land development in the municipality, the Board finds that preserving the rural character of Blaiirstown and protecting the environment are the major objectives of Blaiirstown during the last decade. As noted in 2004 Re-examination Report, protecting ground water, promoting balance between residential and non-residential developments and preventing suburban type development are important qualities for

future development within Blirstown.

B. Regarding the extent to which such major problems and objectives have been reduced or increased since that date, the Board finds that the Land Use Plan Element of 2001 and the subsequent zoning ordinance amendments reduced the concern in regard to preserving the rural character of the Township, protecting ground water and further the re-examination report of 2004 reduced the concern with regard to promoting a balance between residential and non-residential development, preventing strip mall development and encouraging cluster non-residential development.

C. With regard to changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan and Redevelopment regulations since it has last been revised, the Board finds that the significant changes are as follows:

1. Storm Water Management plans have been recognized by the Township of Blirstown and as a result, have authorized its Engineer, Rodman Associates, to prepare a municipal Storm Water Management Plan. Said Plan was prepared by Rodman Associates and dated April 2005. The Planning Board of Blirstown Township ultimately adopted the Municipal Storm Water Management Plan on April 19, 2005 which action was memorialized on November 1, 2005.

2. The Planning Board acknowledges the Highlands Act. It finds that, while this had a significant impact on development in the northern part of the State of New Jersey, it does not materially impact residential and non-residential development in the Township of Blirstown given the changes that have occurred as recommended by the 2001 and 2004 Periodic Re-examination reports and the ordinance amendments implementing those changes.

3. The Planning Board also acknowledges the financial crises that exists in the State of New Jersey. The result of this financial crises is a reduction in the amount of state and federal funds that will be available for school aid and infrastructural improvements. Therefore, the Board finds that a more conservative approach is necessary in the near term in regard to development projects and recommends that no significant spending projects be undertaken by the Township of Blirstown.

4. The year 2010 has resulted in a census throughout the entire United States and in particular, the Township of Blirstown. However, a detailed analysis provided in the 2010 census to analyze growth within the municipality is not yet available. The Board finds, however, that because of the economic crises in the State of New Jersey and the country at large that growth in the Township has been limited. Therefore, it finds that no significant problems and objectives have arisen since the prior re-examination report of 2004 that would require any further recommendations with regard to the land development ordinances of the Township of Blirstown. Any further modifications should be deferred until the census numbers can be reviewed and it is determined that growth has changed the assumptions on which this re-examination report is based.

5. The Planning Board acknowledges that the Township is not now planning any redevelopment projects.

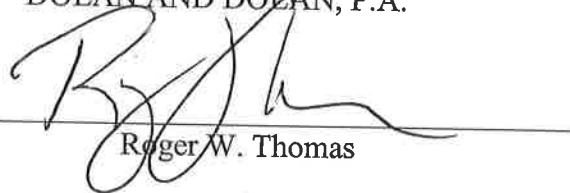
6. The Re-Examination Report and the Planning Board acknowledge that the Recycling Center has been eliminated due to the fiscal constraints of the Township and the removal of subsidies that have been provided to the Township by the County of Warren. The Planning Board also acknowledges that curbside pickup of recyclables continues to be available

to Township residents. This option continues to foster recycling within the Township of Blirstown.

As a result of the above analysis, the Planning Board finds that the Re-examination Report should acknowledge the modifications that took place in 2001 and 2004 and that no additional modifications to the land development regulations of the Township of Blirstown should be recommended.

Respectfully Submitted,
DOLAN AND DOLAN, P.A.

By:



Roger W. Thomas