

Area in Need of Redevelopment Study
Block 81 Study Area
Borough of Raritan, New Jersey



PREPARED FOR THE BOROUGH OF RARITAN BY
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MAY 2016

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Adopted by the Raritan Planning Board
May 11, 2016

Prepared for:
The Borough of Raritan

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The original of this report was signed and
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following study has been prepared to determine whether an area located within the central section of the Borough of Raritan qualifies as an “area in need of redevelopment” in accordance with the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A. The study was authorized by the Raritan Borough Council, which is the municipality’s governing body, and was prepared exclusively for the Raritan Planning Board. The area under consideration is comprised of 14 tax lots on one tax block located between First Avenue, Third Street, Second Avenue and New Jersey Transit’s Raritan Valley Line railroad right-of-way (heretofore referred to as the “study area”).

As more fully described in the body of the report, we conclude that eight of the 14 tax lots in the study area meet one or more of the statutory criteria for designation as a redevelopment area. Our conclusion is based on the fact that the bulk of the acreage of these lots consists of buildings and/or improvements which are largely obsolete with faulty arrangements, so as to be detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the community. All lots within the study area are noncompliant with existing zoning in terms of use, lot area and/or lot width. The eight lots qualify for redevelopment status under criteria “c” and/or “d” of the LRHL. The remaining six lots are included in the area in order to effectuate its redevelopment, as authorized by Section 3 of the LRHL. As a result, the entire study area meets the statutory criteria for designation as “an area in need of redevelopment” in accordance with the LRHL.

II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this study is to determine whether an area located in the central section of the Borough of Raritan meets the requirements for designation as an “area in need of redevelopment” as established under Section 5 of the LRHL. The study area consists of 14 lots on one tax block located between First Avenue, Third Street, Second Avenue and New Jersey Transit’s Raritan Valley Line railroad right-of-way.

The scope of work for the study encompassed the following: surveys of land uses, building and property conditions, occupancy and ownership status within the study area; review of municipal tax maps; review of the existing zoning ordinance and zoning map for the Borough of Raritan; review of the Raritan Master Plan and the Somerset County Regional Center Strategic Plan; and review of various municipal records of the study area properties. In particular, information was requested from various municipal departments and governmental agencies regarding development approvals, zoning violations, and building, police, and health code violations within the past five years. Exterior site visits were conducted of each of the 14 tax lots in the study area. Records of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection were reviewed as well.

The following chapter briefly describes the locational context of the study area under consideration for redevelopment area status. Chapter IV discusses the existing zoning and its implications for the study area and further considers the Raritan Master Plan in relation to the study area. Chapter V sets forth the statutory criteria used to determine whether an area is in need of redevelopment and then applies those criteria to the study area to determine whether a redevelopment designation is warranted for any or all of the properties in question. Chapter VI presents the overall conclusions regarding the study area’s potential for redevelopment area status.

III. LOCATIONAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY AREA

The area under consideration for redevelopment area designation encompasses lands on the south side of New Jersey Transit's Raritan Valley Line railroad in the central portion of the Borough of Raritan. The study area's location within the Borough and its local context are shown on Figures 1 and 2. The study area includes 14 tax lots within Block 81 as identified on the official tax maps of the municipality. The specific parcels included in the study area are Block 81, Lots 1, 2, 3, 3.01, 4, 5, 6.01, 6.02, 6.03, 7, 8, 9, 9.01 and 10.

The study area occupies an area of approximately 3.69 acres and includes all lots within Block 81. Its boundaries are shown on Figure 3 and can generally be described as follows:

The study area boundary begins on the westerly side of Second Avenue at its intersection with Third Street and runs north-northwest for 271.57 feet to the southerly property line of Block 61, Lot 1 (the railroad). It continues west-southwest for 64.81 feet, 300.9 feet west and 106 feet west-southwest to the east side of First Avenue. At First Avenue, the study area boundary runs south for 31.0 feet, continues south with a slight change of direction for 177.4 feet, turns west for 5.0 feet, and turns south for 125.99 feet to the north side of Third Street. The boundary then runs east-northeast for 480.59 feet along Third Street to the starting point.

Land uses in the study area and vicinity are characterized by a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, office and institutional. More specifically, the largest property in the study area is developed with Somerset Spring & Alignment, which has garage structures in the eastern portion of the parcel and paved, as well as gravel and dirt, parking areas for trucks and other vehicles. A former auto body shop is located at the corner of First Avenue and Third Street and is adjacent to a vacant property fronting on First Avenue. A number of two-family dwellings are located along Third Street and Second Avenue.

Other uses in the vicinity of the study area include one- and two-family residences to the south of the study area across Third Street, LabCorp medical research/laboratories building to the west of the study area, and one- and two-family residences and St. Ann's Church and School to the east of the study area. New Jersey Transit's Raritan train station and associated surface parking lots are located one block east of the study area.

The following table provides 2015 tax and assessment information for the lots included in the study area:

Block	Lot	Owner	Area (acres)	Assessed Value			Taxes
				Land	Improvements	Total	
81	1	RICHARD, STEPHEN C.	0.477	\$183,000	\$2,385	\$185,385	\$4,167
81	2	SOMERSET SPRING & ALIGNMENT INC.	1.669	\$259,500	\$335,400	\$594,900	\$13,373
81	3	DE MARCHI, MARIE G.	0.138	\$145,500	\$146,800	\$292,300	\$6,571
81	3.01	D'ALESSIO, GEMI & CONCETTA	0.138	\$145,500	\$137,300	\$282,800	\$6,357
81	4	LOMBARDY, EDGAR FLINT & ROSE MARIE	0.138	\$145,500	\$136,500	\$282,000	\$6,089
81	5	ROGLIERI, JOHN, IRENE & MICHAEL J	0.138	\$145,500	\$135,500	\$281,000	\$6,317
81	6.01	ESTIGARRIBIA, N. & PEREZ, CLEMENCIA	0.065	\$139,500	\$80,200	\$219,700	\$4,939
81	6.02	BURYK, HARRY J & PATRICIA A	0.072	\$135,000	\$93,100	\$228,100	\$5,128
81	6.03	FISHER, JARRET IAN	0.065	\$125,300	\$99,600	\$224,900	\$5,056
81	7	CUEMAN, PETER	0.072	\$96,900	\$80,700	\$177,600	\$3,992
81	8	PUNTILLO, DANIEL J JR & WECKWORTH, L	0.138	\$145,500	\$131,300	\$276,800	\$6,222
81	9	JERSEY VENTURES LLC	0.138	\$145,500	\$142,600	\$288,100	\$6,476
81	9.01	WEEKS, GEORGE & CAROL	0.138	\$145,500	\$151,300	\$296,800	\$6,672
81	10	COLLEGE PLZ LLC	0.304	\$172,500	\$164,500	\$337,000	\$7,576

Source: Borough of Raritan Tax Assessor, via website of the New Jersey Association of County Tax Boards (<http://www.njactb.org/>)

More detailed descriptions and photos of the study area properties are provided in Chapter V.

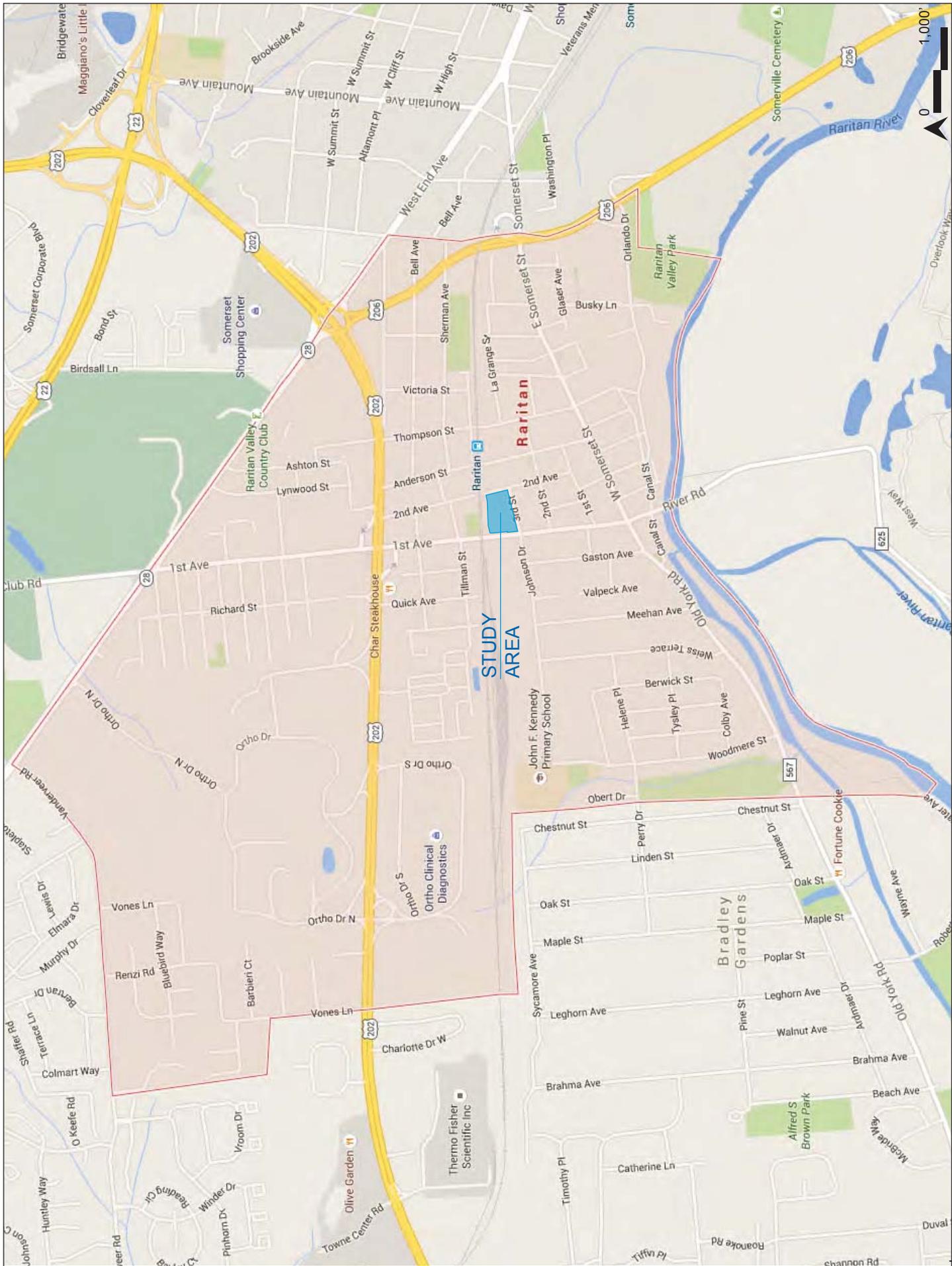


Figure 1: Study Area Location | Block 81 Redevelopment Study | Borough of Raritan, NJ | Phillips Preiss Grygiel LLC 2016 | Source: Google



Figure 2: Study Area Context | Block 81 Redevelopment Study | Borough of Raritan, NJ | Phillips Preiss Grygiel LLC 2016 | Source: Google; Tax Maps, Borough of Raritan, NJ



Figure 3: Study Area Boundaries | Block 81 Redevelopment Study | Borough of Raritan, NJ | Phillips Preiss Grygiel LLC 2016 | Source: Tax Maps, Borough of Raritan, NJ

IV. EXISTING ZONING AND MASTER PLAN DESIGNATIONS FOR THE STUDY AREA

A. Zoning

According to the Borough's Zoning Map, the study area is located in two zones: B-5 Transit Center Business zone and R-4 Medium-High-Density Residential zone. The existing zoning designations are shown on Figure 4.

The B-5 zone is described as follows in § 207-118 of the Raritan Zoning Ordinance: "The B-5 Zone is designed to take advantage of its location in close proximity to the railroad station, providing for the everyday needs of commuters and people living and working in the immediate neighborhood. Any development of the site shall be required to provide for its share of COAH-required affordable units through either the creation of off-site affordable units or a payment in lieu. Buildings shall be located directly abutting a sidewalk along First Avenue and shall generally present a continuous street facade on this street."

Principal permitted uses in the B-5 zone are as follows:

- Commercial, general business and other retail stores
- Offices for professional or business uses, including executive, engineering, accounting, scientific, research and development, and statistical and financial purposes
- Personal service establishments
- Off-site affordable housing, in accordance with Article XIII
- Public parking lots and public parking garages
- Libraries and other governmental and quasi-governmental offices
- Public or private parks, playgrounds, recreation buildings and facilities

Permitted accessory use in the B-5 zone are any accessory use on the same lot with and customarily incidental to any use permitted in this district. Additional parking for commuters may be provided on a permit basis, and shared parking may be used to provide part or all of the commuter parking.

Permitted conditional uses in the B-5 zone are public utility facilities.

Bulk requirements of the B-5 zone include minimum lot area of 1.5 acres, maximum permitted building height of two stories/35 feet, maximum impervious lot coverage of 80 percent and minimum front, side and rear yards of 20 feet. There are also "special design requirements" for the B-5 zone. These include mandatory provision of off-site affordable housing as part of the development of the site, creation of pedestrian connections, including an overpass across First Avenue, landscaped screening to abutting residential uses and to the railroad, and utilization of noise-attenuation materials and construction techniques in new development adjacent to the railroad.

The Raritan Zoning Ordinance at § 207-108 provides the regulations for the R-4 zone. Principal permitted uses in the R-4 zone are all uses permitted in the R-1 Residential District, except alternative residential development option. The specific permitted principal uses are:

- Single-family residences
- Places of worship, parish houses and convents, and cemeteries
- Public parks, playgrounds and recreational areas owned or operated by the Borough
- Public and private schools, except nursery schools as defined in this chapter

Permitted accessory uses in the R-4 zone include all those uses permitted in the R-1 Residential District, which are:

- Private garages
- Private swimming pools for residential use in accordance with the Borough of Raritan Swimming Pool Ordinance and the Uniform Construction Code
- Fences, patios, sheds and other typical residential accessory structures and uses

Permitted conditional uses in the R-4 zone are professional offices, limited to properties with frontage on Somerset Street, and all conditional uses permitted in the R-1 Residential District, which are:

- Home occupation
- Public and private schools
- Public utility facilities
- Places of worship

Bulk requirements of the R-4 zone for single-family homes include minimum lot area of 7,500 square feet for interior lots (9,000 square feet for corner lots), maximum permitted building height of 2½ stories/30 feet, minimum front yard of 25 feet, minimum side yard of eight feet, minimum rear yard of 35 feet, and maximum impervious lot coverage of 30 percent.

The following table outlines each parcel in the study area's compliance with permitted uses and minimum lot area and lot width for the zone in which each parcel is located:

Block	Lot	Zone	Use	Lot Area	Lot Width
81	1	B-5	N/A*	NO	Yes
81	2	B-5	NO	Yes	Yes
81	3	R-4	NO	NO	NO
81	3.01	R-4	NO	NO	Yes
81	4	R-4	NO	NO	NO
81	5	R-4	NO	NO	NO
81	6.01	R-4	NO	NO	NO
81	6.02	R-4	NO	NO	NO
81	6.03	R-4	NO	NO	NO
81	7	R-4	NO	NO	NO
81	8	R-4	NO	NO	NO
81	9	R-4	NO	NO	NO
81	9.01	R-4	NO	NO	NO
81	10	B-5	NO	NO	NO

*property is vacant

There are no parcels in the study area that comply with all three of these criteria, and 11 of the 14 lots in the study area do not comply with any of the three criteria. Noteworthy is that none of these properties contains a conforming use.

B. Municipal Master Plan

The Borough of Raritan’s most recent Master Plan, which was adopted in 2003 and has been periodically updated since then, includes both general and specific planning recommendations. This report does not make any specific reference to the study area or the R-4 or B-5 zone as they relate to the study area. However, this report does note key issues facing the Borough, some of which, as described below, are relevant to the study area.

Land Use goals and objectives:

1. Provide a balanced land use pattern that preserves residential neighborhoods, strengthens the vitality of commercial districts, enhances remaining industrial areas, increases parks and open space, protects environmentally sensitive natural features, accommodates community facilities and facilitates local/regional circulation.
2. Preserve and enhance the residential character of the Borough by protecting established neighborhoods, maintaining a balance of housing choices, providing for compatible infill housing and planning for appropriate residential development in targeted redevelopment areas where land uses are in transition.

3. Encourage appropriate redevelopment in transitional focus areas that will return underutilized land to productive use, improve quality of life, enhance community character, create new employment opportunities and strengthen the municipal tax base.
4. Continue the revitalization of the Central Business District as a mixed-use destination and support other commercial districts through selective redevelopment, compatible infill development infrastructure improvements, updated zoning, public-private partnerships and increased regional cooperation.
5. Provide increased parks, recreation and open space opportunities that will improve local quality of life, preserve established suburban character, protect existing natural resources and contribute to sustainable development.
6. Encourage the retention of existing industrial uses wherever feasible with an emphasis on industrial clusters found in the region such as pharmaceuticals, bio-medical research and life sciences.
7. Coordinate land use planning and decision-making with adjacent municipalities in the Somerset County Regional Center to improve quality of life, preserve community character, preserve remaining natural resources, promote sustainable development and improve local/regional mobility.

Opportunities:

- Encourage transit-oriented smart growth in appropriate locations including the Somerset Street central business district, NJ Transit train station area, Route 202 corridor and targeted redevelopment sites.
- Increase the range of available planning, zoning and implementation tools available to the Borough including but not limited to redevelopment, zoning incentives, tax increment financing, special improvement districts and public-private partnerships.

“...it is anticipated that most new development in the Borough will occur through the redevelopment of transitional and underutilized sites that were previously used for industrial, commercial and residential purposes.” (pg. 5)

C. Regional Center Strategic Plan

In addition, Raritan is part of the Somerset County Regional Center, the first multi-jurisdictional region to receive “center designation” from the New Jersey State Planning Commission. The Regional Center encompasses the entire Borough of Raritan, the entire Borough of Somerville and a portion of the Township of Bridgewater located adjacent to Raritan and Somerville. The Somerset County Regional Center Strategic Plan from 2006 provides recommendations and implementation strategies for the center. One of the Key Recommendations of the Strategic Plan is as follows:

Train Station Areas: Promote increased ridership and reduced traffic congestion and parking impacts at train stations through the use of innovative redevelopment and transportation strategies.

The Strategic Plan also recommends that the municipalities in the Regional Center continue to identify any new areas that are “in need of redevelopment.”



Figure : Existing Zoning | Block 81 Redevelopment Study | Borough of Raritan, NJ | Phillips Preiss Gnygiel LLC 2016 | Source: Existing Districts Map, Borough of Raritan, NJ

V. CONSIDERATION OF THE STATUTORY CONDITIONS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT AS SPECIFICALLY APPLIED TO THE STUDY AREA

A. Introduction

Under the regulations of the LRHL at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5, a delineated area may be determined to be in need of redevelopment if, after investigation, notice and hearing as provided in Section 6 of P.L.1992, c.79 (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6), the governing body of the municipality by resolution concludes that within the delineated area any of the following conditions is found:

- a. The generality of buildings are substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent, or possess any of such characteristics, or are so lacking in light, air, or space, as to be conducive to unwholesome living or working conditions.
- b. The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable.
- c. Land that is owned by the municipality, the county, a local housing authority, redevelopment agency or redevelopment entity, or unimproved vacant land that has remained so for a period of ten years prior to adoption of the resolution, and that by reason of its location, remoteness, lack of means of access to developed sections or portions of the municipality, or topography, or nature of the soil, is not likely to be developed through the instrumentality of private capital.
- d. Areas with buildings or improvements which, by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or obsolete layout, or any combination of these or other factors, are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community.
- e. A growing lack or total lack of proper utilization of areas caused by the condition of the title, diverse ownership of the real property therein or other conditions, resulting in a stagnant or not fully productive condition of land potentially useful and valuable for contributing to and serving the public health, safety and welfare.
- f. Areas, in excess of five contiguous acres, whereon buildings or improvements have been destroyed, consumed by fire, demolished or altered by the action of storm, fire, cyclone, tornado, earthquake or other casualty in such a way that the aggregate assessed value of the areas has been materially depreciated.
- g. In any municipality in which an enterprise zone has been designated pursuant to the New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zones Act, P.L. 1983, c. 303 (C.52:27H-60 et seq.) the execution of the actions prescribed in that act for the adoption by the municipality and approval by the

New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zone Authority of the zone development plan for the area of the enterprise zone shall be considered sufficient for the determination that the area is in need of redevelopment pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 and 40A:12A-6 for the purpose of granting tax exemptions within the enterprise zone district pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:20-1 et seq. or the adoption of a tax abatement and exemption ordinance pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:21-1 et seq. The municipality shall not utilize any other redevelopment powers within the urban enterprise zone unless the municipal governing body and planning board have also taken the actions and fulfilled the requirements prescribed in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et al. for determining that the area is in need of redevelopment or an area in need of rehabilitation and the municipal governing body has adopted a redevelopment plan ordinance including the area of the enterprise zone.

- h. The designation of the delineated area is consistent with smart growth planning principles adopted pursuant to law or regulation.

It should be stressed that individual properties or blocks that do not meet any of the statutory conditions may still be included within an area in need of redevelopment provided that within the study area as a whole, one or more of the expressed conditions are prevalent. This provision is referred to as “Section 3” and is set forth under N.J.S.A. 40:12A-3, which states in part:

"A redevelopment area may include lands, buildings, or improvements which of themselves are not detrimental to public health, safety or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in this condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area of which they are a part."

It is actually telling that the LRHL places this provision under the definition of a “Redevelopment Area.” The statute clearly recognizes that there may be instances where individual properties (if excluded from a redevelopment area) would act as an impediment to redevelopment or would otherwise adversely impact a redevelopment scheme for adjoining lands that are “in need of redevelopment.” The statute further recognizes that any redevelopment area must consist of lands that are reasonable and rational—in terms of location, size, shape and access—to produce a redevelopment project that will alleviate “blight” and achieve the goals of community revitalization.

B. Overall Study Area Evaluation

The study area includes 3.69 acres in the central section of the Borough of Raritan. While the study area benefits from a convenient location, it has not experienced the type of development and improvements envisioned in the Borough’s Master Plan or other planning and zoning documents.

The study area consists of a combination of commercial, residential and vacant properties. The lands selected for inclusion in the study area comprise a rational assemblage given their location and character. The majority of the acreage in the study area is developed with nonresidential buildings and surface parking and loading areas, both paved, as well as dirt and gravel. In some cases these

buildings are vacant or obsolete and suffer from faulty layouts and designs. These improvements also detract from the streetscape along First Avenue, a heavily traveled corridor. While the study area benefits from a location proximate to transit, major highways, and easy access to Somerset County employment centers, it is hampered by existing property conditions which negatively impact the area and discourage investment in the surrounding area. If allowed to persist, such conditions would likely continue to hamper the redevelopment of the study area and its surroundings to the detriment of the welfare of the community at large.

C. Application of the Statutory Criteria to the Study Area Properties

The following evaluates the properties within the study area and considers whether these properties meet any of the statutory criteria for an “area in need of redevelopment” designation. For the purposes of this evaluation, some parcels were aggregated into logical assemblages based on common use and/or ownership. Each of these properties or assemblages was evaluated based on surveys of land usage, property conditions, occupancy and ownership status and other relevant data. The exterior conditions of all buildings were also considered. This analysis was then aggregated to reflect the entire study area. The property owners and lot areas are taken from the Borough’s tax block and lot ownership records as listed on the website of the New Jersey Association of County Tax Boards (<http://www.njactb.org/>). Photos of the study area properties are provided within.

Block 81, Lot 1 / 0.477 acres / FIRST AVENUE

Owner: RICHARD, STEPHEN C.

This vacant parcel has its primary frontage on First Avenue and has an appendage with 15 feet of frontage on Third Street. Although this lot has nearly 200 feet of frontage on First Avenue, vehicular access is only possible at its southern end due to the grade change on First Avenue, where it passes under the railroad tracks. Lot 1 is bounded on the north and east by Block 81, Lot 2, and based on site visits and review of aerial photography, it appears to be utilized by the business located on Lot 2. There is a sign at the driveway on First Avenue for the business on Lot 2.

The property is essentially entirely covered by dirt and gravel and is devoid of landscaping and buffering. The current use of the site appears to be parking for trucks, cars and trailers. Based on review of historic aerial photographs, the property appears to have been vacant since at least 1995, or for over 20 years.

This lot is located in the B-5 zone, which permits office, retail and service commercial uses. While public parking lots and parking garages are permitted, the existing usage of Lot 1 does not fall into this category. Therefore the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located. It also does not comply with the minimum lot area requirement in the B-5 zone of 1.5 acres.





The property meets the following criteria: **c, d**

Lot 1 is unimproved vacant land that has remained so for a period of at least 20 years, despite its location on a main road a short distance from the Raritan train station and multiple major highways. The existing conditions on this parcel can be considered a faulty arrangement given the location of its access points, either at a single location at the crest of a hill on First Avenue or adjacent to and across from residential uses on Third Street. The use of this property for outdoor parking and storage, whether for the adjacent use on Lot 2 or as a principal use, is not permitted in the B-5 zone. The lack of screening or buffering of the parcel from the street or nearby properties also has deleterious

effects. For all of these reasons, allowing this property to remain vacant and used for open storage and parking is detrimental to the overall welfare of the community.

Block 81, Lot 2 / 1.669 acres / SECOND AVENUE

Owner: SOMERSET SPRING & ALIGNMENT INC.

This parcel is a through lot with 122 feet of frontage on Second Avenue and 31 feet of frontage on First Avenue, although the latter does not provide direct vehicular or pedestrian access to First Avenue due to its lower elevation where it passes under the railroad. Instead, Lot 2 appears to have access from First Avenue through Block 81, Lot 1. The primary use of Lot 2 is a truck- and auto-oriented business, Somerset Spring & Alignment. According to its website (somersetspring.com), this business started as a blacksmith shop that built and installed springs. It now provides a range of vehicular suspension, alignment, straightening and brake services for trucks as well as cars.

There are two one-story buildings on this lot which are located at its eastern end. According to tax records, the buildings were constructed in 1940 and have a combined floor area of 3,468 square feet. These buildings are in fair condition, with facades that are showing their age and significant portions of which are in disrepair. They contain roll-up doors that face out to Second Avenue and are visible to residential uses to the south and across the street. There is a lattice tower that appears to be at least 50 feet tall located along the parcel's southern boundary (i.e., adjacent to a residential zone and uses). The site contains minimal landscaping, limited to a few deciduous trees on its perimeter, and does not provide buffers to adjacent residential uses.

This lot is located in the B-5 zone, which permits office, retail and service commercial uses. The existing usage of this property for motor vehicle repair and service is not permitted. Therefore, the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located.







The property meets the following criteria: **d**

The site suffers from a faulty arrangement that is detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of the surrounding community, including nearby residents, pedestrians and vehicular traffic. The parking area and ingress/egress on the lot itself are at the end of a street in a residential neighborhood with houses adjacent to and directly facing it. The site's only other vehicular access point is through adjacent Lot 1, which has a singular connection to First Avenue. Neither location is ideal for the type of commercial traffic that is generated by the current use. This layout is a faulty arrangement, which, combined with the age, limited size and condition of the buildings, speak to the functional obsolescence of the property. The lack of vegetation and buffers to adjacent residential uses are further indicators of the deleterious nature of the current use of this parcel. The existing use is also not permitted in the B-5 zone. As discussed below, this site's current use and condition are inconsistent with smart growth principles for a property located within walking distance of a commuter railroad station.

Block 81, Lot 3 / 0.138 acres / 2 THIRD STREET

Owner: DE MARCHI, MARIE G.

There is a two-family house located on this lot. It was built in 1940 and is 1,680 square feet in area, according to tax records. The property is located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Second Avenue and Third Street. This lot is located in the R-4 zone, which does not permit two-family residences. Therefore, the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located. It also does not comply with the minimum lot area requirement for a corner lot in the R-4 zone of 9,000 square feet, as the property is 6,000 square feet in area and does not have sufficient width per the R-4 zone bulk standards (i.e., 85 feet required for a corner lot where 80 feet provided). This parcel does not have a garage on it. There is a shed located to the north of the dwelling along the Second Avenue frontage.



The property meets the following criteria: **Section 3**

The property is currently occupied by a two-family dwelling and the building appears to be generally in good condition. However, this parcel and Lots 3.01, 4 and 5 are surrounded by properties that meet the statutory criteria for redevelopment. Moreover, the parcel's small size (0.138 acres or 6,000 square feet) provides disadvantages that may limit development of the site if not for inclusion within a larger development. Leaving one or more of these small parcels in their current use while

the remainder of the block is redeveloped would hamper the ability of the overall area to be redeveloped, while in turn a larger-scale redevelopment project would have detrimental impacts on smaller parcels left out of the redevelopment area. Thus, it is our opinion that the property is integral to the effective redevelopment of the overall redevelopment area and, therefore, meets the criteria of Section 3 of the LRHL.

Block 81, Lot 3.01 / 0.138 acres / 55-57 SECOND AVENUE

Owner: D'ALESSIO, GEMI & CONCETTA

There is a two-family house located on this lot. It was built in 1940 and is 1,960 square feet in area, according to tax records. This lot is located in the R-4 zone, which does not permit two-family residences. Therefore, the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located. It also does not comply with the minimum lot area requirement for an interior lot in the R-4 zone of 7,500 square feet, as the property is 6,000 square feet in area. There is no garage on this parcel.





The property meets the following criteria: **Section 3**

The property is currently occupied by a two-family dwelling and the building appears to be generally in good condition. However, this parcel and Lots 3, 4 and 5 are surrounded by properties that meet the statutory criteria for redevelopment, including one that borders Lot 3.01 on the north. Moreover, the parcel's small size (0.138 acres or 6,000 square feet) provides disadvantages that may limit development of the site if not for inclusion within a larger development. Leaving one or more of these small parcels in their current use while the remainder of the block is redeveloped would hamper the ability of the overall area to be redeveloped, while in turn a larger-scale redevelopment project would have detrimental impacts on smaller parcels left out of the redevelopment area. Thus, it is our opinion that the property is integral to the effective redevelopment of the overall redevelopment area and, therefore, meets the criteria of Section 3 of the LRHL.

Block 81, Lot 4 / 0.138 acres / 6 THIRD ST

Owner: LOMBARDY, EDGAR FLINT & ROSE MARIE

There is a two-family house located on this lot. It was built in 1860 and is 1,840 square feet in area, according to tax records. This lot is located in the R-4 zone, which does not permit two-family residences. Therefore, the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located. It also does not comply with the minimum lot area requirement for an interior lot in the R-4 zone of 7,500 square feet, as the property is 6,000 square feet in area and does not have sufficient width per the R-4 zone bulk standards (i.e., 75 feet required where 40 feet provided). There is no garage on this parcel.



The property meets the following criteria: **Section 3**

The property is currently occupied by a two-family dwelling and the building appears to be generally in good condition. However, this parcel and Lots 3, 3.01 and 5 are surrounded by properties that meet the statutory criteria for redevelopment, including one that borders Lot 3.01 on the north. Moreover, the parcel's small size (0.138 acres or 6,000 square feet) provides disadvantages that may limit development of the site if not for inclusion within a larger development. Leaving one or more of these small parcels in their current use while the remainder of the block is redeveloped would hamper the ability of the overall area to be redeveloped, while in turn a larger-scale redevelopment project would have detrimental impacts on smaller parcels left out of the redevelopment area. Thus, it is our opinion that the property is integral to the effective redevelopment of the overall redevelopment area and, therefore, meets the criteria of Section 3 of the LRHL.

Block 81, Lot 5 / 0.138 acres / 8 THIRD STREET

Owner: ROGLIERI, JOHN, IRENE & MICHAEL J

There is a two-family house located on this lot. It was built in 1940 and is 1,456 square feet in area, according to tax records. This lot is located in the R-4 zone, which does not permit two-family residences. Therefore, the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located. It also does not comply with the minimum lot area requirement for an interior lot in the R-4 zone of 7,500 square feet, as the property is 6,000 square feet in area and does not have sufficient width per the R-4 zone bulk standards (i.e., 75 feet required where 40 feet provided). The dwelling appears to be in good to fair condition, although it has some issues with upkeep such as areas that need to be repainted, including on shutters, roof leaders and railings.



The property meets the following criteria: **Section 3**

The property is currently occupied by a two-family dwelling and the building appears to be in good to fair condition. However, this parcel and Lots 3, 3.01 and 4 are surrounded by properties that meet the statutory criteria for redevelopment, including one that borders Lot 3.01 on the north. Moreover, the parcel's small size (0.138 acres or 6,000 square feet) provides disadvantages that may limit development of the site if not for inclusion within a larger development. Leaving one or more of these small parcels in their current use while the remainder of the block is redeveloped would hamper the ability of the overall area to be redeveloped, while in turn a larger-scale redevelopment project would have detrimental impacts on smaller parcels left out of the redevelopment area. Thus, it is our opinion that the property is integral to the effective redevelopment of the overall redevelopment area and, therefore, meets the criteria of Section 3 of the LRHL.

Block 81, Lot 6.02 / 0.072 acres / 10-B THIRD ST.

Owner: BURYK, HARRY J & PATRICIA A

Block 81, Lot 6.03 / 0.065 acres / 10A THIRD STREET

Owner: FISHER, JARRET IAN

These parcels contain a two-family dwelling that is bisected by the lot line between the two units. The building was constructed in 1940 and the portion on each lot is 1,376 square feet in area, according to tax records. These lots located in the R-4 zone, which does not permit two-family residences or attached single-family residences. Therefore, the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located. The parcels also do not comply with the minimum lot area requirement for an interior lot in the R-4 zone of 7,500 square feet and do not meet the minimum lot width standard of 75 feet. Even if these two parcels were merged, the combined property still would not meet the minimum requirements for lot area and width in the R-4 zone. There is a shared gravel driveway serving these two lots, as well as Lots 6.01 and 7, which provides access to a four car garage along the rear lot lines of the four parcels.



The property meets the following criteria: **d**

The present arrangement of two-family homes split between two lots, with a single driveway for two pairs of such units, is an obsolete arrangement, particularly given that the use is not permitted and the individual lots (or even two lots combined) do not meet the minimum lot area and width requirements for the R-4 zone. The shared driveway and garages for these two parcels and Lots 6.01 and 7 is a faulty arrangement and obsolete layout, which could be detrimental to safety. The driveway is located in a narrow passage between buildings with different owners, making for a hazardous condition for residents of these properties, as well as pedestrians and, potentially, for vehicles passing this driveway. These lots are also bordered to the north by a large property currently occupied by an intensive truck- and auto-oriented use that also qualifies as being in need of redevelopment.

Block 81, Lot 6.01 / 0.065 acres / 12 THIRD ST

Owner: ESTIGARRIBIA, N. & PEREZ, CLEMENCIA

Block 81, Lot 7 / 0.072 acres / 14 THIRD ST

Owner: CUEMAN, PETER

These parcels contain a two-family dwelling that is bisected by the lot line between the two units. The building was constructed in 1941 and the portion on each lot is 1,056 square feet in area, according to tax records. These lots located in the R-4 zone, which does not permit two-family residences or attached single-family residences. Therefore, the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located. The parcels also do not comply with the minimum lot area requirement for an interior lot in the R-4 zone of 7,500 square feet and do not meet the minimum lot width standard of 75 feet. Even if these two parcels were merged, the combined property still would not meet the minimum requirements for lot area and width in the R-4 zone. There is a shared gravel driveway serving these two lots, as well as Lots 6.02 and 6.03, which provides access to a four car garage along the rear lot lines of the four parcels.



The property meets the following criteria: **d**

The present arrangement of two-family homes split between two lots, with a single driveway for two pairs of such units, is an obsolete arrangement, particularly given that the use is not permitted and the individual lots (or even two lots combined) do not meet the minimum lot area and width requirements for the R-4 zone. The shared driveway and garages for these two parcels and Lots 6.02 and 6.03 is a faulty arrangement and obsolete layout, which could be detrimental to safety. The driveway is located in a narrow passage between buildings with different owners, making for a hazardous condition for residents of these properties, as well as pedestrians and, potentially, for vehicles passing this driveway. These lots are also bordered to the north by a large property currently occupied by an intensive truck- and auto-oriented use that also qualifies as being in need of redevelopment.

Block 81, Lot 8 / 0.138 acres / 16 THIRD ST

Owner: PUNTILLO, DANIEL J JR & WECKWORTH, L

There is a two-family house located on this lot. It was built in 1940 and is 1,584 square feet in area, according to tax records. This lot is located in the R-4 zone, which does not permit two-family residences. Therefore, the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located. It also does not comply with the minimum lot area requirement for an interior lot in the R-4 zone of 7,500 square feet, as the property is 6,000 square feet in area, and does not have sufficient width per the R-4 zone bulk standards (i.e., 75 feet required where 40 feet provided).





The property meets the following criteria: **Section 3**

The property is currently occupied by a two-family dwelling and the building appears to be generally in good to fair condition. However, this parcel and Lot 9 are surrounded by properties that meet the statutory criteria for redevelopment, including directly to the north and east. Moreover, the parcel's small size (0.138 acres or 6,000 square feet) provides disadvantages that may limit development of the site if not for inclusion within a larger development. Leaving one or more of these small parcels in their current use while the remainder of the block is redeveloped would hamper the ability of the overall area to be redeveloped, while in turn a larger-scale redevelopment project would have detrimental impacts on smaller parcels left out of the redevelopment area. Thus, it is our opinion that the property is integral to the effective redevelopment of the overall redevelopment area and, therefore, meets the criteria of Section 3 of the LRHL.

Block 81, Lot 9 / 0.138 acres / 18 THIRD ST
Owner: JERSEY VENTURES LLC

There is a two-family house located on this lot. It was built in 1930 and is 1,804 square feet in area, according to tax records. This lot is located in the R-4 zone, which does not permit two-family resi-

dences. Therefore the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located. It also does not comply with the minimum lot area requirement for an interior lot in the R-4 zone of 7,500 square feet, as the property is 6,000 square feet in area and does not have sufficient width per the R-4 zone bulk standards (i.e., 75 feet required where 40 feet provided). There is no garage on this parcel.





The property meets the following criteria: **Section 3**

The property is currently occupied by a two-family dwelling and the building appears to be generally in fair condition. However, this parcel and Lot 8 are surrounded by properties that meet the statutory criteria for redevelopment, including directly to the north and west. Moreover, the parcel's small size (0.138 acres or 6,000 square feet) provides disadvantages that may limit development of the site if not for inclusion within a larger development. Leaving one or more of these small parcels in their current use while the remainder of the block is redeveloped would hamper the ability of the overall area to be redeveloped, while in turn a larger-scale redevelopment project would have detrimental impacts on smaller parcels left out of the redevelopment area. Thus, it is our opinion that the property is integral to the effective redevelopment of the overall redevelopment area and, therefore, meets the criteria of Section 3 of the LRHL.

Block 81, Lot 9.01 / 0.138 acres / 20 THIRD STREET

Owner: WEEKS, GEORGE & CAROL

There is a two-family house located on this lot. It was built in 1930 and is 2,310 square feet in area, according to tax records. This lot is located in the R-4 zone, which does not permit two-family residences. Therefore, the existing use is nonconforming with the use regulations for the zone in which it is located. It also does not comply with the minimum lot area requirement for an interior lot in the R-

4 zone of 7,500 square feet, as the property is 6,000 square feet in area and does not have sufficient width per the R-4 zone bulk standards (i.e., 75 feet required where 40 feet provided). There is a garage on the rear portion of this parcel, but it is in fair to poor condition. Much of the rear yard is covered with gravel and connects with the open parking areas on Lots 1 and 2. A boat is among the items stored in the rear yard of this parcel. The chain link fence on adjacent Lot 10 is falling into Lot 9.01 along a portion of its western property line.





The property meets the following criteria: **d**

This property is impacted by its location bounded on two sides by properties used for commercial purposes, and there is no buffering provided along the side property line adjoining Lot 1 and facing the vacant commercial building on Lot 10. Access to the garage to the rear of the dwelling is only possible by using the driveway on Lot 1, which represents a faulty arrangement and obsolete layout for a detached residential structure (i.e., vehicular access is only available through a commercial property). While the dwelling appears to be in fair to good condition, the garage is in worse shape than the dwelling and much of the rear yard is utilized as a driveway and storage area. The property is also bounded on the west and north by properties that qualify as in need of redevelopment, which impacts potential future use of this lot.

Block 81, Lot 10 / 0.304 acres / 68 FIRST AVE

Owner: COLLEGE PLZ LLC

This property is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of First Avenue and Third Street. It is developed with a one-story commercial building that is built up to the street lines of both First Avenue and Third Street. It was constructed in 1960 and is 4,800 square feet in area, according to tax records. This building was formerly used as an auto body shop, but it is currently vacant and is in fair condition with portions of the facade in disrepair. The building's Third Street façade does not have any windows on it, and there is minimal fenestration on its First Avenue façade. The building has two roll-up doors that face out to the residential use to the east, with no intervening buffering. Chain link fencing is provided along part of the site's Third Street frontage and its eastern property line, but the

fencing and some of the slats in it are damaged. Nearly all of the site is covered by the building or by dirt and gravel parking areas and driveways.

This lot does not comply with the B-5 zone minimum lot area requirement of 1.5 acres, nor with the minimum front yard requirement of 20 feet. The building's former use as an auto body shop is not permitted in the B-5 zone in which it is located, which inhibits its ability to be reoccupied.





The property meets the following criteria: **d**

The site suffers from a faulty arrangement that is detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of the surrounding community, including nearby residents, pedestrians and, potentially, for vehicular traffic passing the lot. The building is constructed up to the right-of-way lines of First Avenue and Third Street, which inhibits visibility for vehicles traveling westbound on the latter road. The building's facades detract from the streetscape due to their condition and lack of windows for most of their length. The open parking area without buffering is detrimental to nearby residential properties. These factors contribute to the faulty arrangement and obsolescence of the property.

D. Consideration of a Redevelopment Area Designation for the Study Area

The results of the redevelopment area investigation reveal that eight of the 14 lots in the study area meet one or more of the criteria for redevelopment area designation. More specifically, 78 percent of acreage within the study area meets criteria “c” and/or “d”; 13 percent meets both criteria “c” and “d” for redevelopment area designation; and 65 percent meets criteria “d” only. The redevelopment area designation criteria are depicted graphically in Figure 5. Thus, of the study area’s total land area of approximately 3.69 acres, roughly 2.86 acres meet the statutory conditions for designation as “an area in need of redevelopment.”

The designation of the entire area also is consistent with smart growth planning principles set forth in the Raritan Master Plan and the Somerset County Regional Center Strategic Plan, which would further criteria “h” of the LRHL due to its location within a quarter-mile of a commuter railroad station and its ability to be redeveloped in furtherance of smart growth planning principles. A significant portion of the study area is or was devoted to “heavy” commercial use (e.g., truck and auto body repair), which is not permitted in any part of the study area, as well as outdoor parking of vehicles in unpaved parking areas.

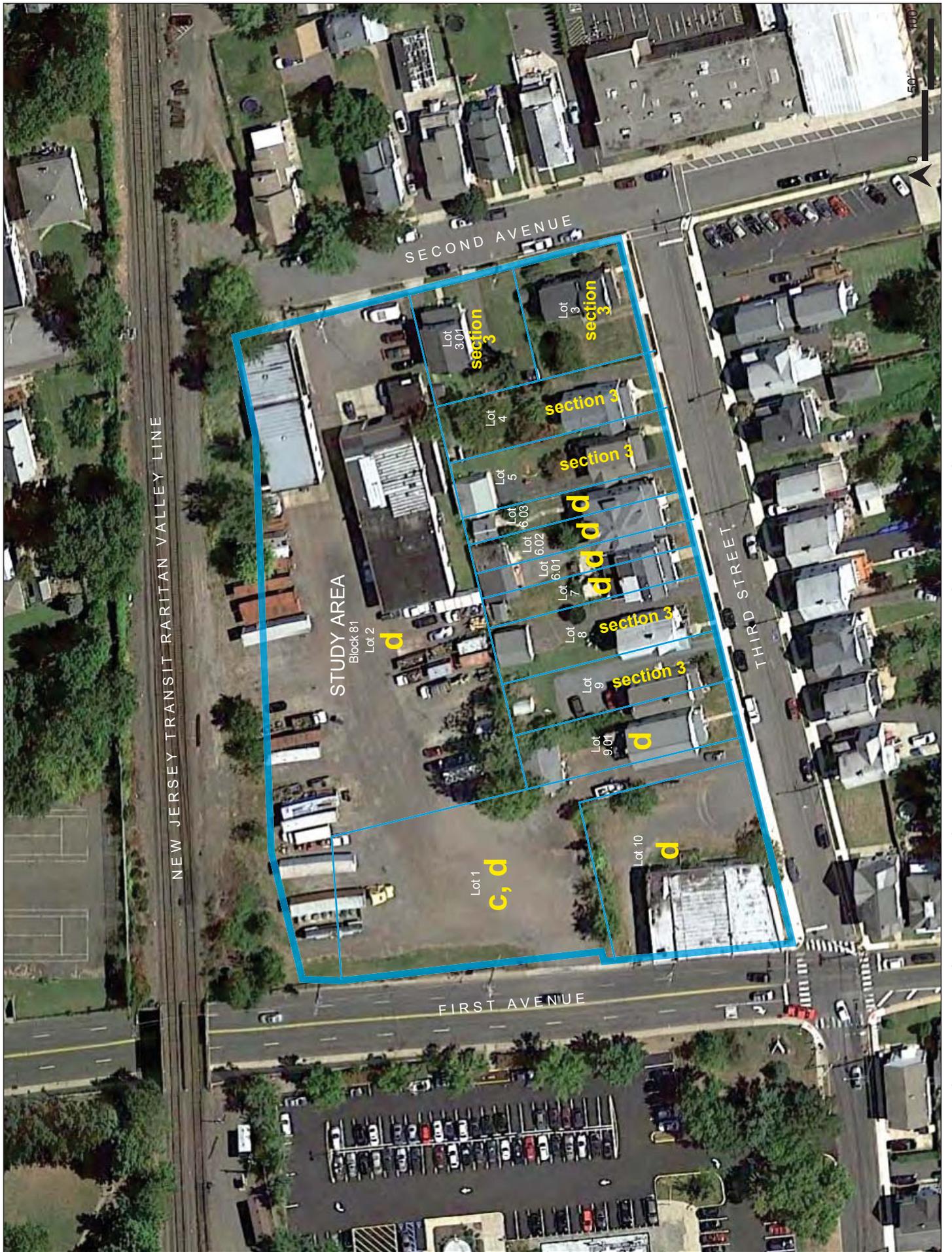


Figure 5: Application of Area in Need of Redevelopment Criteria | Block 81 Redevelopment Study | Borough of Raritan, NJ | Phillips Preiss Crygriel LLC 2016

VI. CONCLUSION

The foregoing study was prepared on behalf of the Borough of Raritan Planning Board to determine whether an area located within the Borough of Raritan (14 tax lots within Block 81) qualifies as “an area in need of redevelopment” in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:12A. It is the finding of this investigation that the prevalent condition within the area is clearly one of “an area in need of redevelopment,” with 78 percent of the acreage within the study area meeting criteria “c” and/or “d” and the remainder of the area being included pursuant to Section 3 of the LRHL in order to promote the effective redevelopment of the overall study area. The designation of the entire area also would further criteria “h” of the LRHL due to its location within a quarter-mile of a commuter railroad station and its ability to be redeveloped in furtherance of smart growth planning principles. As such, the entirety of Block 81 meets the statutory requirements for designation as a redevelopment area.