PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION: 1116 SOUTH MAIN STREET BLOCK 2806, LOTS 2, 3, 4, 5, & 7

Area in Need of Redevelopment

Prepared by:

Van Cleef Engineering Associates

Prepared for:

Town of Phillipsburg, Warren County

January 7, 2026

Digitally signed by Timothy M. O'Brien
Date: 2026.01.07 15:56:40 -05'00'

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NJPP # PP650900/NJPE#54425

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I. INTRODUCTION

The following study has been prepared to determine whether the properties located at Block 2806 Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 of the Town of Phillipsburg qualify as an "area in need of redevelopment" in accordance with the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL) found at N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5. The study was authorized by the Town of Phillipsburg Council and was prepared on behalf of the Town of Phillipsburg Land Use Board. The resolution authorized a study area comprising of Block 2806, Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, located along South Main Street adjacent to the Town's border with Pohatcong Township. Upon communication with the Town Council, it has been confirmed that Lot 6 was included in the authorizing resolution erroneously, and therefore Lot 6 has been excluded from analysis.

As is described in this report, it is our conclusion that Block 2806, Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 meet at least one of the statutory criteria for designation as "an area in need of redevelopment" under the LHRL.

II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This report concludes that the Block 2806, Lots 2, 3, 4, and 5 qualify for redevelopment under criteria "c," and "h," of the LRHL. Block 2806, Lot 7 qualifies separately for redevelopment under criteria "h," of the LRHL only. The separate analyses contained within this report will serve as the basis for the recommendation that Block 2806, Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 qualify as an Area in Need of Redevelopment.

III. BACKGROUND

A. Legal Authority

The LHRL empowers local governments to initiate a process by which designated properties that meet certain statutory criteria can be transformed to advance the public interest. Once an area is designated "in need of redevelopment" in accordance with statutory criteria, municipalities may adopt redevelopment plans and employ several planning and financial tools to make redevelopment projects more feasible to remove deleterious conditions. A redevelopment designation may also qualify projects in the redevelopment area for financial subsidies or other incentive programs offered by the State of New Jersey.

B. Redevelopment Procedure

The LRHL requires local governments to follow a process involving a series of steps before they may exercise powers under the LRHL. The process is designed to ensure that the public is given adequate notice and opportunity to participate in the public process. Further, the redevelopment process requires the Town Council and Planning Board to interact to ensure that all redevelopment actions consider the municipal Master Plan. The steps required are generally as follows pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A:

1. The Town Council must adopt a resolution directing the Planning Board to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether a specified area is in need of redevelopment according to the criteria set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 of the LRHL.

2. The resolution authorizing the Planning Board to undertake a preliminary investigation shall state whether the redevelopment area determination shall authorize the municipality to use all those power for use in a redevelopment area other than the use of eminent domain (non-condemnation

redevelopment area) or whether the redevelopment area determination shall authorize the municipality to use all those powers for use in a redevelopment area, including the power of eminent domain (otherwise known as a "Condemnation Redevelopment Area").

3. The Planning Board must prepare and make available a map delineating the boundaries of the proposed redevelopment area, specifying the parcels to be included to be investigated. A statement setting forth the basis of the investigation or the preliminary statement should accompany this map.

4. The Planning Board must conduct the investigation and produce a report presenting the findings. The Board must also hold a duly noticed hearing to present the results of the investigation and to allow interested parties to give testimony. The Planning Board then may adopt a resolution recommending a course of action to the Town Council.

5. The Town Council may accept, reject, or modify this recommendation by adopting a resolution designating lands recommended by the Planning Board as an "Area in Need of Redevelopment". The Town Council must make the final determination as to the Condemnation Redevelopment Area boundaries.

6. If the Town Council resolution assigning the investigation to the Planning Board states that the redevelopment determination shall establish a Condemnation Redevelopment Area, then the notice of the final determination shall indicate that: (i) the determination operates as a finding of public purpose and authorizes the municipality to exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire property in the redevelopment area, and (ii) legal action to challenge the final determination must be commenced within forty-five (45) days of receipt of notice and that failure to do so shall preclude an owner from later raising such challenge.

7. A Redevelopment Plan (the "Plan") may be prepared establishing the goals, objectives, and specific actions to be taken with regard to the "Area in Need of Redevelopment."

8. The Town Council may then act on the Plan by passing an ordinance adopting the Plan as an amendment to the municipal Zoning Ordinance.

Only after completion of this process is a municipality able to exercise the powers under the LRHL.

C. Progress

In satisfaction of #1 and #2 above, the Phillipsburg Town Council adopted Resolution R2025-245 on December 17, 2025, which authorized the Land Use Board to undertake this study (Appendix A). The purpose and scope statement of this study, as well as the provided map delineating the boundaries of the proposed redevelopment area (See Figure 1), satisfy #3. The body of this study constitutes the report of the Land Use Board's findings in satisfaction of #4.

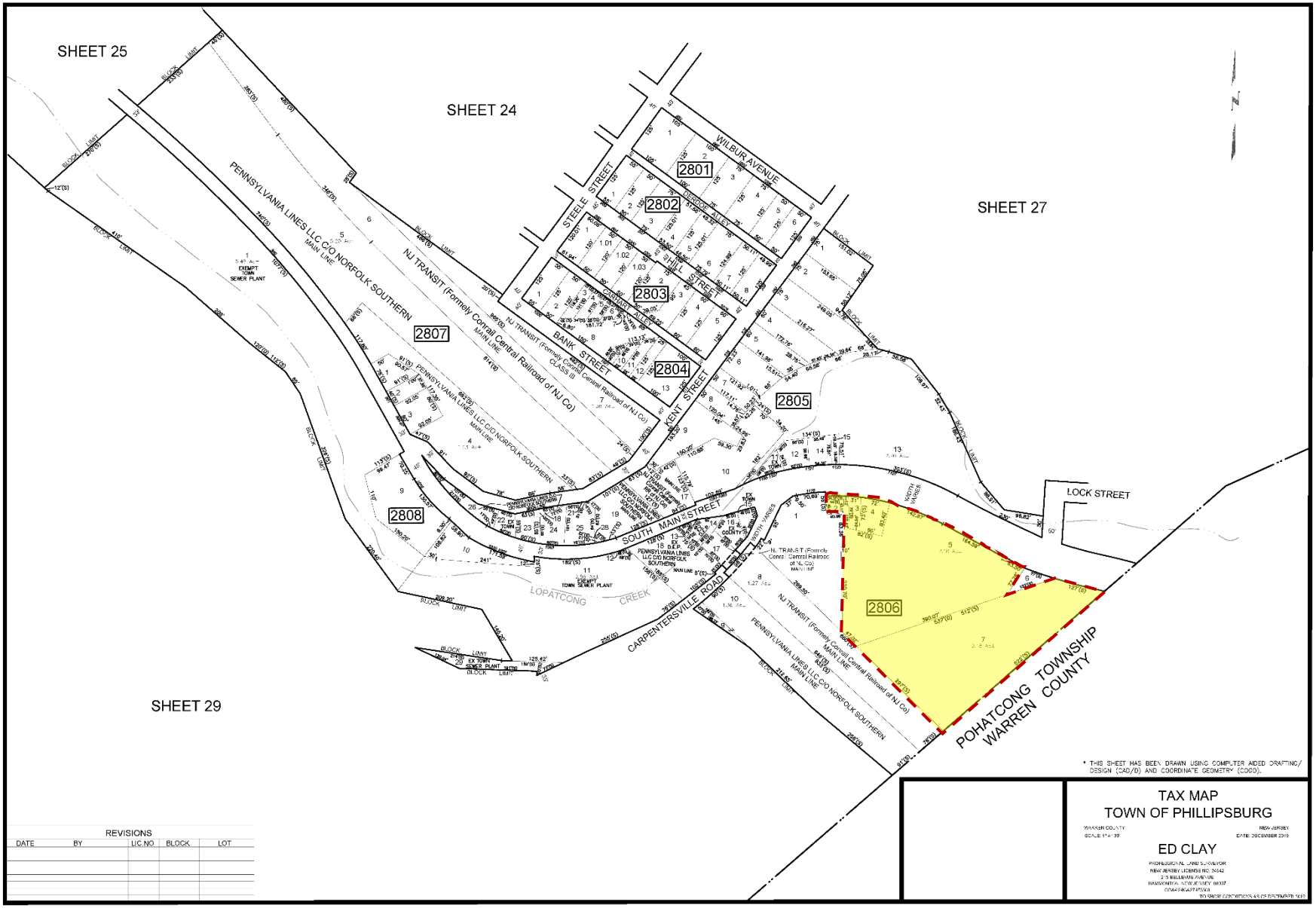

FIGURE 1: LOCATION OF STUDY AREA ON TAX MAP, SHEET 28

D. Purpose & Scope

In accordance with the process outlined above, this Preliminary Investigation Report will determine whether the properties (hereinafter referred to as the "Study Area") within the Town of Phillipsburg meet the statutory requirements under N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 of the LRHL for designation as a condemnation "area in need of redevelopment". This study was prepared at the request of the Town of Phillipsburg Land Use Board and was duly authorized by the Mayor and Town Council. The scope of work for the investigation encompassed the following: land use review; assessment of property conditions; occupancy and ownership status within the study area; review of tax maps and aerial photos; review of building records; review tax assessment data; review of environmental assessments and any subsequent documentation of remediation; review of the existing zoning ordinance and zoning map for the Town of Phillipsburg; and review of the Master Plan for the Town.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF STATUATORY CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING AN AREA IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT

A. Introduction

N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 of the LRHL sets forth the regulations for which an area may be designated an "area in need of redevelopment" if after investigation, notice, and public hearing, the governing body determines by resolution that the area meets any one of the following criteria:

a. The generality of buildings are substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent, or possess any of such characteristics, or are so lacking 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, retail, shopping malls or plazas, office parks, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; significant vacancies of such building or buildings for at least two consecutive years; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenantable.

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 area 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 the 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 sections 5 and 6 of P.L. 1992, c.79(C.40A:12A-5 and 40A:12A-6) for the purpose of granting tax exemptions within the enterprise zone district pursuant to the provisions of P.L. 1991, c.431 (C.40A:20-1 et seq.) or the adoption of a tax abatement and exemption ordinance pursuant to the provision of P.L. 1991, c.441 (C.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 P.L. 1992, C.79 (C.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 is noted that N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-3 of the LRHL ("Section 3") cites that a "redevelopment area may include lands, buildings, or improvements which of themselves are not detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, but the inclusion of which is found necessary, with or without change in their condition, for the effective redevelopment of the area of which they are a part." The redevelopment area must also include lands that are "reasonable and rational" given their location, size, shape and access to produce a redevelopment project that will achieve the goals of the community.

B. Zoning Description

The Study Area is located within the PAC Overlay of the B-5 Business – South Main District which has the following associated uses pursuant to §625, Article XIVA of the Town of Phillipsburg Land Use Ordinance:

Permitted Principal Uses:

- Retail shops and personal services.
- Restaurants
- Taverns
- Brewpubs
- Offices
- Cultural and educational facilities
- Studios
- Churches
- Public buildings
- Medical and dental clincs/labs
- Residential above business
- Business services
- Theater
- Planned adult community (PAC) overlay, restricted to Block 2806 bounded by Main Street, Carpentersville Road, the railroad rights of way and Pohatcong Township and including the following permitted uses and accessory uses:
    - An age-restricted adult/senior housing option in accordance with the definitions in § 625-3 and the Federal Fair Housing Act, which may be designed as single-family detached dwellings, zero lot line dwellings, townhouses or apartments. No public utility activity shall be conducted in such a fashion that it shall cause interference with radio or television beyond the limits of the property it occupies.
    - Recreation facilities for the exclusive use of the residents and their guests
    - Off-street parking, under-building parking and private garage structures for the exclusive use of the residents and their guests
    - Storage and maintenance facilities

- Customary accessory structures approved as part of the site plan for development, including fences, walls, light fixtures, sound barriers and other similar structures.
- Management office, not to exceed 1,000 square feet
- Convenience retail and service uses, for the primary use of the residents, located within either a residential building or community building, not to be freestanding and not to exceed 3,000 square feet.

Permitted Accessory Uses:

- Uses customarily associated with and incidental to a permitted principal use shall be permitted as an accessory use in the B-5 Business - South Main Zone.

Conditional Uses

- Nonprofit clubs and fraternal organizations.
- Residential infill subject to the standards in § 625-68B.
- Bowling alley.
- Skating rink.
- Light manufacturing.
- Wholesale trades.
- Construction/contracting business.

C. Existing Conditions

The Study Area is approximately 5.3 acres in size. Approximately 90 percent of the study area is comprised of Lots 5 (2.6 acres) and Lot 7 (2.4 acres), with the remaining lots The combined study area is approximately triangular in shape, with approximately 650 feet of frontage along South Main Street (interrupted partially by Block 2806, Lot 6) which tapers to approximately 350 feet wide at the rear lot line of Lots 5 and 7. Impervious coverage was estimated by NJDEP in 2015 at approximately 75 percent for Lot 2, 7 percent for Lot 3 and 7 percent for Lot 5, with no building coverage on any lot. All other lots have no impervious coverage.

Lots, 2, 3, and 4 are recorded in publicly available tax information as additional lots under lot 5. All lots are under common private ownership. Lot 5 contains a cell phone tower, which is the only freestanding structure in the study area. Access to the cell phone tower for maintenance is via paved driveway.

Lot 6 is recorded in publicly available tax information as a farm-assessed lot, possibly as part of a forestry management plan. Lot 6 has no structures and is entirely wooded.

V. APPLICATION OF STAUTORY CRITERIA TO STUDY AREA (LOTS 2-5)

The following analysis is provided of the portion of the study area listed above against the statutory criteria for declaring a property an area in need of redevelopment:

A. Criteria "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."

This criterion is not applicable: The study area is vacant apart for a cell phone tower in active use.

B. Criteria "b":

"The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, retail, shopping malls or plazas, office parks, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; significant vacancies of such building or buildings for at least two consecutive years; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenantable."

This criterion is not applicable: The study area is vacant apart for a cell phone tower in active use.

C. Criteria "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."

This criterion is applicable: There is no existing water or sewer service at the site, and outside a limited cell phone tower development the parcels have remained vacant for more than 10 years. The site is impacted by a 300' buffer for protection of C-1 trout streams, as well as constrained by steep slopes and rock outcroppings/embankments. It is unlikely that the site will develop through the instrumentality of private capital.

D. Criteria "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."

This criterion is not applicable: The study area is vacant apart for a cell phone tower in active use.

E. Criteria "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."

This criterion is not applicable: All lots are owned by a single private entity.

F. Criteria "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 area has been materially depreciated."

This criterion is not applicable: The study area is less than five contiguous acres in size

G. Criteria "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 the 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…"

This criterion is not applicable: While the study area is within the Phillipsburg UEZ, the Town does not yet have an approved 5-year UEZ plan from the respective State agencies.

H. Criteria "h":

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

This criterion is applicable: The study area is located in portions of Phillipsburg that are designated Planning Area 1 (Metro) by the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, in which the following planning and design principles are encouraged:

- Mixed land uses – The redevelopment of the study area can support mixed land uses in close proximity to other, complementary land uses.
- Compact, clustered community design – Due to the site configuration and challenges such as 300' foot buffer for C-1 Streams and topography, the suitable development footprint would better support cluster/ low/mid-rise building than detached, low density dwellings or structures.
- Range of housing choice and opportunity – The study area has the potential to support residential units that may help satisfy unmet housing demand in the community.
- Walkable communities – The study area has potential to connect to adjacent development in Pohatcong and would be adjacent to proposed rail trails and the Morris Canal Greenway.
- Distinctive, attractive communities offering a sense of place – Development of the study area could provide an attractive element to this region of the town has a had limited modern residential spaces. This study area is currently vacant except for a cell tower site.

- Open space, farmland, and scenic resource preservation – Redeveloping the study area it would lessen development pressure on farmland or scenic resource elsewhere in Warren County. However, the study area is mostly wooded except for clearings for the cell tower and prior uses on the site.

- Future development strengthened and directed to existing communities using existing infrastructure – The study area could support development within an existing urban area community and could be supported by extension of public utilities from the existing community to the study area.

- Transportation options – The Town of Phillipsburg is serviced by NJ Transit Bus Route within a mile of the site and a mile of existing bus stops in Pohatcong Plaza. This route is supplemented by transportation busing services offered through Warren County.

- Predictable, fair and cost-effective development decisions – A redevelopment plan for the study area would enable more predictable/cost-effective process for this site.

- Community and stakeholder collaboration in development decision-making – due to state regulations, by designating a property an area in need of redevelopment provides for additional public input on the property over relying on existing zoning/master plan that may see limited updates over 10-year period. The process requires Town Council to announce the concept to the public that brings about the chance for public input, then the land use needs to undertake an investigation that opens the door for additional public input. The redevelopment process thus allows for additional public hearings, enabling the public to better shape what happens with the study area.

VI. APPLICATION OF STAUTORY CRITERIA TO STUDY AREA (LOT 7)

The following analysis is provided of the portion of the study area listed above against the statutory criteria for declaring a property an area in need of redevelopment:

I. Criteria "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."

This criterion is not applicable: No buildings exist on the site.

J. Criteria "b":

"The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, retail, shopping malls or plazas, office parks, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; significant vacancies of such building or buildings for at least two consecutive years; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenantable."

This criterion is not applicable: No buildings exist on the site.

K. Criteria "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."

This criterion is not applicable: The lot is currently farm assessed and may be considered under active agricultural use.

L. Criteria "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."

This criterion is not applicable: The study area is vacant apart for a cell phone tower in active use.

M. Criteria "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."

This criterion is not applicable: The subject area is a single parcel owned by a single private entity.

N. Criteria "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 area has been materially depreciated."

This criterion is not applicable: The study area is less than five acres in size.

O. Criteria "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 the 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…"

This criterion is not applicable: While the study area is within the Phillipsburg UEZ, the Town does not yet have an approved 5-year UEZ plan from the respective State agencies.

R2025-245

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG, COUNTY OF WARREN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY, DIRECTING THE TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG COMBINED PLANNING BOARD TO UNDERTAKE A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE PROPOSED STUDY AREA, BLOCK 2806 LOTS 2,3,4,5,6 &7 QUALIFIES AS AN AREA IN NEED OF NON-CONDEMNATION REDEVELOPMENT PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:12A ET SEQ.

WHEREAS, the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq. ("Redevelopment Law"), provides a mechanism to assist local governments in efforts to promote programs of redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Law sets forth the procedures for the Town to declare an area in need of redevelopment, along with the development and effectuation of a redevelopment plan; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the required redevelopment procedures, specifically set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6, no area of a municipality shall be deemed a redevelopment area unless the governing body of the municipality shall, by Resolution, authorize the Planning Board to undertake a preliminary investigation to determine whether a proposed area is a redevelopment area meeting the criteria set forth in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Legislature adopted, and the Governor signed, P.L. 2013, Chapter 159, which amended the Redevelopment Law, including the procedural requirements of N.J.S.A. 40A12A-5 and N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:-12A-6, "[t]he resolution authorizing the planning board to undertake a preliminary investigation shall state whether the redevelopment area determination shall authorize the municipality to use all those powers provided by the Legislature for use in a redevelopment area other than the use of eminent domain (hereinafter referred to as a "Non-Condemnation Redevelopment Area") or whether the redevelopment area determination shall authorize the municipality to use all those powers provided by the Legislature for use in a redevelopment area, including the power of eminent domain (hereinafter referred to as a "Condemnation Redevelopment Area")"; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council desires to commission a study to determine if the Block 2806, Lot 2,3,4,5,6 & 7 on the Town of Phillipsburg Tax Map satisfies the criteria of an Area in Need of Redevelopment (Non-Condemnation); and

WHEREAS, the Town Council finds it to be in the best interest of the Town and its residents to authorize the Town's Planning Board pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-4 and N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-6 to undertake such preliminary investigation of the study area which includes properties Block 2806, Lot 2,3,4,5,6 & 7 (the "Study Area");

WHEREAS, the Town Council desires that the Planning Board undertake a preliminary investigation and to prepare the preliminary investigation to determine whether the proposed Study Areas qualifies as an area in need of Non-Condemnation Redevelopment pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Council of the Town of Phillipsburg, in the County of Warren, and State of New Jersey, that the Planning Board is hereby authorized and directed to undertake a preliminary investigation and to prepare the preliminary investigation, pursuant to the notice, conduct a hearing and comply with other requirements of the Redevelopment Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq., as amended, in order to recommend to the Town Council whether the area comprising the study area is an area in need of **Non-Condemnation Redevelopment** according to the criteria set forth in N.J.S.A. 4A:12A-5.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Town Council in the form of a Resolution with supporting documentation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this Resolution is to be forwarded to the Planning Board of the Town of Phillipsburg.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect pursuant to law.

CERTIFICATION

I, Susan Turner, Acting Municipal Clerk for the Town of Phillipsburg, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Town Council at their December 17, 2025 meeting.

_____

Susan Turner
Acting Municipal Clerk.

P. Criteria "h":

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

This criterion is applicable: The Study Area is located in portions of Phillipsburg that are designated Planning Area 1 (Metro) by the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, in which the following planning and design principles are encouraged:

- Mixed land uses – The redevelopment of the study area can support mixed land uses in close proximity to other, complementary land uses.
- Compact, clustered community design – Due to the site configuration and challenges such as 300' foot buffer for C-1 Streams and topography, the suitable development footprint would better support cluster/ low/mid-rise building than detached, low density dwellings or structures.
- Range of housing choice and opportunity – The study area has the potential to support residential units that may help satisfy unmet housing demand in the community.
- Walkable communities – The study area has potential to connect to adjacent development in Pohatcong and would be adjacent to proposed rail trails and the Morris Canal Greenway.
- Distinctive, attractive communities offering a sense of place – Development of the study area could provide an attractive element to this region of the town has a had limited modern residential spaces.
- Future development strengthened and directed to existing communities using existing infrastructure – The study area could support development within an existing urban area community and could be supported by extension of public utilities from the existing community to the study area.
- Transportation options – The Town of Phillipsburg is serviced by NJ Transit Bus Route within a mile of the site and a mile of existing bus stops in Pohatcong Plaza. This route is supplemented by transportation busing services offered through Warren County.
- Predictable, fair and cost-effective development decisions – A redevelopment plan for the study area would enable more predictable/cost-effective process for this site.
- Community and stakeholder collaboration in development decision-making – due to state regulations, by designating a property an area in need of redevelopment provides for additional public input on the property over relying on existing zoning/master plan that may see limited updates over 10-year period. The process requires Town Council to announce the concept to the public that brings about the chance for public input, then the land use needs to undertake an investigation that opens the door for additional public input. The redevelopment process thus allows for additional public hearings, enabling the public to better shape what happens with the study area.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

This Preliminary Investigation Report was prepared on behalf of the Town of Phillipsburg Land Use Board to determine whether the Study Area qualifies as "an area in need of redevelopment" in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-5 of the LRHL. It is the finding of this investigation that the Study Area meets the redevelopment criteria "c," and "h," of the LRHL with respect to Lots 2-5, and with respect to criteria "h," only with regards to Lot 7. In its current state, the study area fails to promote the neighborhood character of the community, as identified in the Town Master Plan. The designation of the Study Area as a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment is the first step to achieving the community character the Town desires.