



# Merchantville Redevelopment Public Workshop

May 28, 2015

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# Agenda

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- **WELCOME & INTRODUCTION**

- RDG and Redevelopment Committee
- Redevelopment Planning Process
- Existing Conditions

- **COMMITTEE WORK**

- SWOT Analysis
- Goals
- Preliminary Concepts

- **PUBLIC FEEDBACK**

- Preliminary Concepts
- Concept and Redevelopment Questions for Audience
- Redevelopment Questions from Audience

- **NEXT STEPS**



# MERCHANTVILLE DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Borough owns 1.62 acres, 10± contiguous parcels
- Borough owns vacant former PNC Bank Building; building appears to have some water damage
- Current mix of commercial and residential uses on the Block:
  - 7± businesses on E. Centre St, 1 business on E. Park Ave
  - 5 occupied dwelling units
- Bike Path Amenity on NJ Transit property (former railroad)
- Soil Contamination:
  - PAH near railroad track spurs (coal storage site)
  - chlorinated solvent near PNC Bank

## RELATED ISSUES

- Borough seeking Long Term Lease Agreement for Shared Parking Lot with Verizon and Grace Episcopal Church
- Borough preparing Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund Grant Application for Environmental Investigation Work
- Borough issued Demolition RFP for 3 potential sites in redevelopment area
- NJDOT Grant Application for Roundabout Design

# Committee Work

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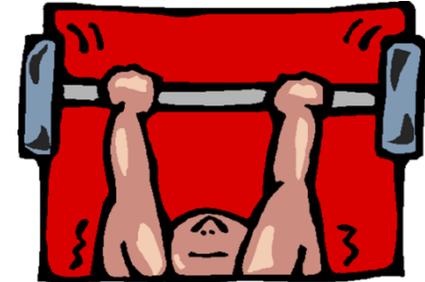
- SWOT ANALYSIS
- GOALS FOR REDEVELOPMENT AREA
- PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS



# REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 'SWOT ANALYSIS' OF REDEVELOPMENT AREA

## I. Strengths – What is good about the Redevelopment Area? Build on Strengths

- Land Assembly - Borough owns a lot of parcels in Redevelopment Area (so has control over what can do with it)
- Bike Path (nice feature and an amenity that can bring a density of users and is slated for expansion)
- Bus stops for NJ Transit on Centre and Chestnut
- It's a manageable project size
- There is a significant amount of road frontage



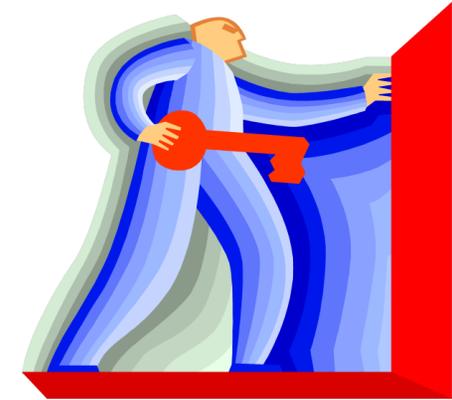
## II. Weakness- Where are challenges for the Redevelopment Area? Reduce Weaknesses

- Triangular Shape
- Awkward Intersection
- Lack of road visibility for outsiders
- Narrowness of Park Avenue –current on-street parking is undesirable to drivers
- Soil Contamination – will be more costly to develop, take more time, creates uncertainty for redeveloper
- Unavailability of Liquor license



### III. What are Opportunities in the Redevelopment Area? Embrace Opportunities

- More commercial uses will create a draw to downtown and create more retail synergy
- More residential uses will provide built-in consumers for convenience and services in downtown
- To create a unique space (like a piazza , courtyard, street art, destination) that will draw people into downtown from other communities
- Improve circulation and create more on-street parking
- Augment the tax base



### IV. Threats- What are Things that can Hinder Redevelopment's Success. Minimize Threats to Extent Feasible.

- Costs of clean-up of contamination (time and money)
- Amount of Energy that is needed to make the project come to fruition
- Suburban parking mentality
- Objections to any community contributions that would make project attractive to a developer
- Cummins property (potential cost to acquire or litigation)
- Competing areas that are trying to do same thing in the region who will be competing for the same developers and for the same 'buzz'
- Verizon and/or church not wanting to enter into lease agreement with Borough for parking lot
- Not having a shared vision - Committee, Council, and public not being on same page throughout life of redevelopment project
- Unpredictability for a Redeveloper – the Redeveloper needs to know what it can expect in terms of consensus of public opinion, challenges of site, anticipated costs, Borough's expectations, and anticipated incentives (if any)
- New development that doesn't fit in with the character of downtown



# REDEVELOPMENT AREA GOALS



## A. PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED

Pedestrians are critical part of downtown life. Inviting to pedestrians. Interesting things to look at. Human scale. Connectivity to bike path and to NJ transit buses.

## B. TO CREATE A DESTINATION (OR NETWORK OF DESTINATIONS) THAT WILL ATTRACT PEOPLE TO THE DOWNTOWN.

Create Destination - draw customers, residents, and visitors to Merchantville.

## C. CREATE SENSE OF PLACE WITH ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

A unique and special environment. Use interesting architectural design elements : variations in materials, setbacks, quality craftsmanship, use of ornamentation to define style and character of building; Enhance small town charm.

## D. FINANCIALLY FEASIBLE TO A REDEVELOPER

Financial Feasibility is critical. Balance the Borough's objectives with a Redeveloper's need to make a profit.

## E. ADEQUATE PARKING FOR THE DOWNTOWN

Parking lots create unattractive dead space in downtowns. Increase on-street parking opportunities; shared parking arrangements with existing underutilized parking lots.



CENTER STREET



Sheet 1

← ONE WAY CHESTNUT ST.

RENT  
ROCKY

TRAIN STATION  
17 years

RETAIL  
OR  
CONF. CENTER / REC. CTR.  
SATELLITE COLLEGE /  
RES. ABOVE

LARGE  
MONUMENT  
PLAZA

MED BLDG

R/A  
(new)

PNC

R/A  
(new)

NEWS NOOK

WATER ICE / A.

CAKES / A

McFARLANDS / A

Addo's

RETAIL / Apts above

PARK AVENUE

UP

PARKING @ VERIZON

46  
spaces

EXISTING BLDGS

PROPOSED BLDGS

2004-10-10 (2)

CENTER STREET

pedestrian way

cut path

cut path

road away



ONE WAY CHESTNUT ST.

40 SPACES

ROTAZY

green

CENTER STREET

TRAIN STA.

MED BLDG.

NEW P/A

PNC

POOD TRAIN GATEWAY

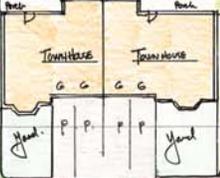
NEWS NOOK /A

WATER ICE /A

CAKES /A

MCFARLANDS /A

Adobo's



PARK AVENUE

DM

PARKING @ VERIZON

46+ spaces

-  EXISTING BLDGS.
-  PROPOSED BLDGS.

SCENARIO 3



CENTER STREET

40 PARKING SPACES



- EXISTING BLDGS
- PROPOSED BLDGS

SCHWARTZ

# VOTE WITH YOUR FEET

- AGREE
- DISAGREE
- SOMEWHAT AGREE
- SOMEWHAT DISAGREE



## VOTE: CONCEPTS

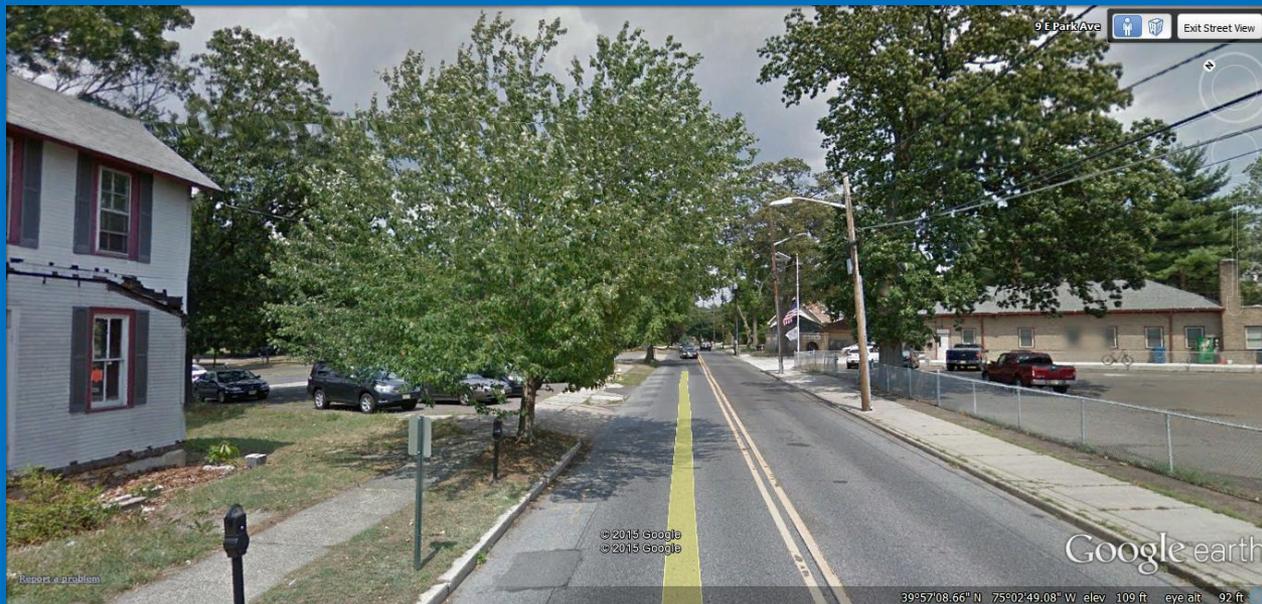
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1. I like one (or more) of the proposed concepts. Which ones do you like and why?
2. I do not like any of the proposed concepts. Why?
3. I do not want to see any changes in the Redevelopment Area. Why?

# VOTE: REDEVELOPMENT ISSUES

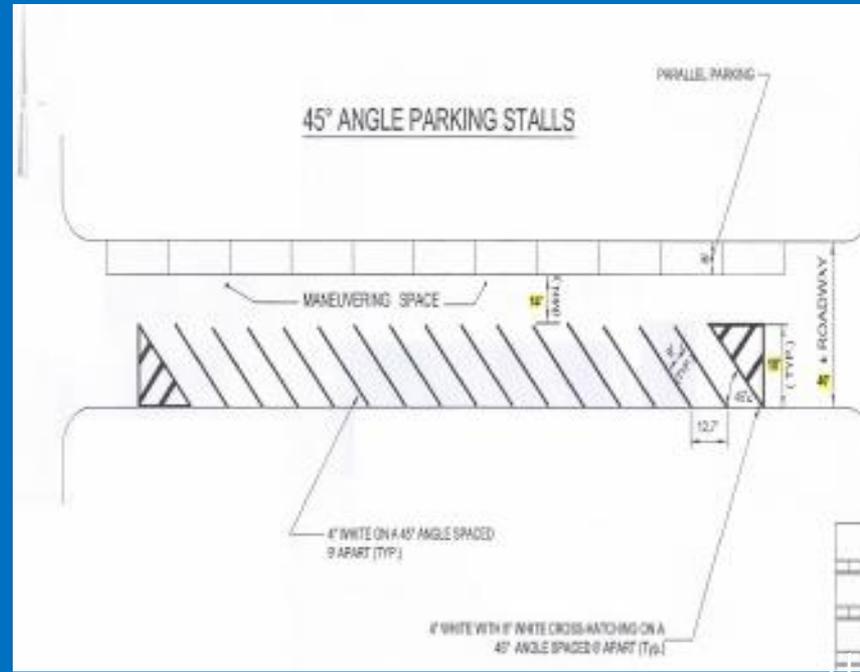
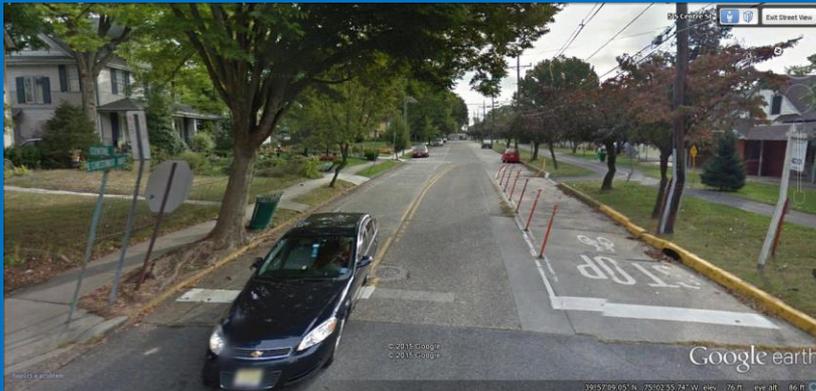
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1. I like the idea of widening E. Park Avenue to improve parallel parking on the street.



# VOTE: REDEVELOPMENT ISSUES

2. I like the idea of changing N. Chestnut Avenue to a one-way street to provide more parking spaces, if needed, for the downtown. (i.e., one row of parallel parking and one row of angled parking)



## VOTE: REDEVELOPMENT ISSUES

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3. I think the Borough should make all efforts to keep the former PNC Bank as part of future redevelopment.



4. I think the Borough should demolish the former PNC Bank building without attempting to reuse it for another use.

## VOTE: REDEVELOPMENT ISSUES

5. I think the N. Chestnut Avenue – E. Park Avenue Intersection should be converted to a modern Roundabout to improve circulation.



## ADDITIONAL REDEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

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- Do you have any suggestions for improving the concepts that the Committee should consider?
- Do you have any questions for us?

## NEXT STEPS

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### Committee Meetings

- Meeting to Discuss Public Workshop,
- Fine Tune Concept(s),
- Prepare Additional Concept(s) (if needed)

### RDG

- Draft Plan Amendment
- Presentation to Council

### Planning Board:

Public Hearing on Consistency with Master Plan

### Borough Council:

Public Hearing on Adoption prior to June 2016

# Funding

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- This Community Planning Project is made possible by a Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) grant made available through the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC).



# THE END

THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
PARTICIPATION!! 😊

Additional comments?  
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