

Summarily, an overall theme of the "Traffic Circulation Plan Element", which was stated in the originally adopted 1986 version and which remains the same today, is that the residents of Montgomery Township are willing to endure a certain amount of inconvenience in the layout and design of the roads within the Township in order to prevent the creation of an interregional traffic pattern.

TRAFFIC GENERATION AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE RURAL RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP

As noted previously, a basic goal of the traffic circulation planning in Montgomery Township is to utilize, as much as possible, the existing roadways within the Township. As a result, small-scale "doable" improvements to the existing road system are preferred and generally have the greatest probability of being accomplished. Additionally, small-scale improvements to the road system will provide the greatest possibility of preserving the rural residential character which prevails throughout most of Montgomery Township.

Since all of the existing roadways in Montgomery Township, including State Route 206 (Van Horne Road), have an effect on the prevailing rural residential character of the Township, it is important that the "Land Use Plan Element" portion of the master plan and the implementing "Land Development Ordinance" provisions appropriately limit the amount of traffic that will be generated as a result of the permitted development.

Indeed, recognition of the potential adverse repercussions of increased traffic volumes within and through Montgomery Township has led to modifications and changes to the "Land Use Plan Element" and amendments to the "Land Development Ordinance" in an effort to lessen the amount of traffic to be added to the road system.

As an example, a major modification to the "Land Use Plan Element" was adopted during 1989 when the Township lessened the amount of acreage planned for nonresidential development and also lessened the intensity of the development permitted. More specifically, the permitted floor/area ratios (FAR) within the "REO" zoning districts were reduced, the "RD" zoning district was eliminated in its entirety, and the "LM" zoning district (i.e., the prior MFG" district) was reduced in size and its permitted FAR also was reduced.

More recently, the Township rezoned approximately 138.1 acres of land north of Route 518 into a new "ARH" Age-Restricted Housing district. Previously, almost the entirety of the subject land area was zoned within the "REO-3" zoning district, which could have resulted in the construction of approximately 451,979 square feet of office space on the subject lands. Under the adopted "ARH" ordinance provisions, the subject land can be developed with 218 age-restricted dwelling units, 30,000 square feet of office space and up to 120 beds in an "Assisted Living Facility".

As quoted hereinbelow from the May 2000 "Master Plan And Development Regulations Periodic Reexamination Report", which was adopted by the Planning Board on June 12, 2000, a threshold reason for the rezoning of the subject property was a consideration of traffic impacts:

"The major problem always associated with the development of the subject "REO-3" lands has been how to handle the traffic which would be generated, particularly the traffic impact along Route 518 and at its intersection with Route 206."
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"Clearly, the proposed rezoning for the age-restricted housing units, plus the relatively small amount of offices (i.e., 30,000 s.f.), will generate little automobile traffic relative to the traffic volume that would result from the approximately four hundred thousand (400,000) square feet of office space which theoretically could be development under the current "REO-3" zoning provisions."
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ROADWAY DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS

As noted above, one (1) of the principal goals and objectives of the planning for traffic circulation within Montgomery Township has been to design and construct roads with the "minimum improvements necessary to provide safe travel."

Since the adoption of the December 3, 1993 amended "Traffic Circulation Plan Element", both the Montgomery Township Committee and Planning Board have reviewed the proposed design specifications for new or reconstructed roadways within the Township on a case-by-case basis and, oftentimes, have approved roadway designs with less cartway and right-of-way widths than indicated in the "Traffic Circulation Plan Element".

Moreover, the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs promulgated the "New Jersey Residential Site Improvement Standards" (N.J.A.C. 5:21-1, et seq.) which were adopted as law and became operative on June 3, 1997.

As a result, it continues to be recommended that the "Roadway Design Specifications" included in the December 13, 1993 "Traffic Circulation Plan Element" be considered the *maximum* design specifications for existing and proposed roadways within Montgomery Township, and that the applicable "Land Development Ordinance" provisions be amended accordingly and in consideration of the "Residential Site Improvement Standards".