

**Amendment to the Land Use Plan Element of the
Township of Millburn Master Plan**

RE: Block 1211, Lots 1 and 7

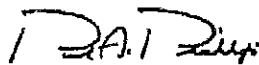
Prepared for:
Township of Millburn Planning Board

by:

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Adopted by the Township of Millburn Planning Board: 3/4/20

The original of this report was signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 13:41-1.2



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Township of Millburn Planning Board

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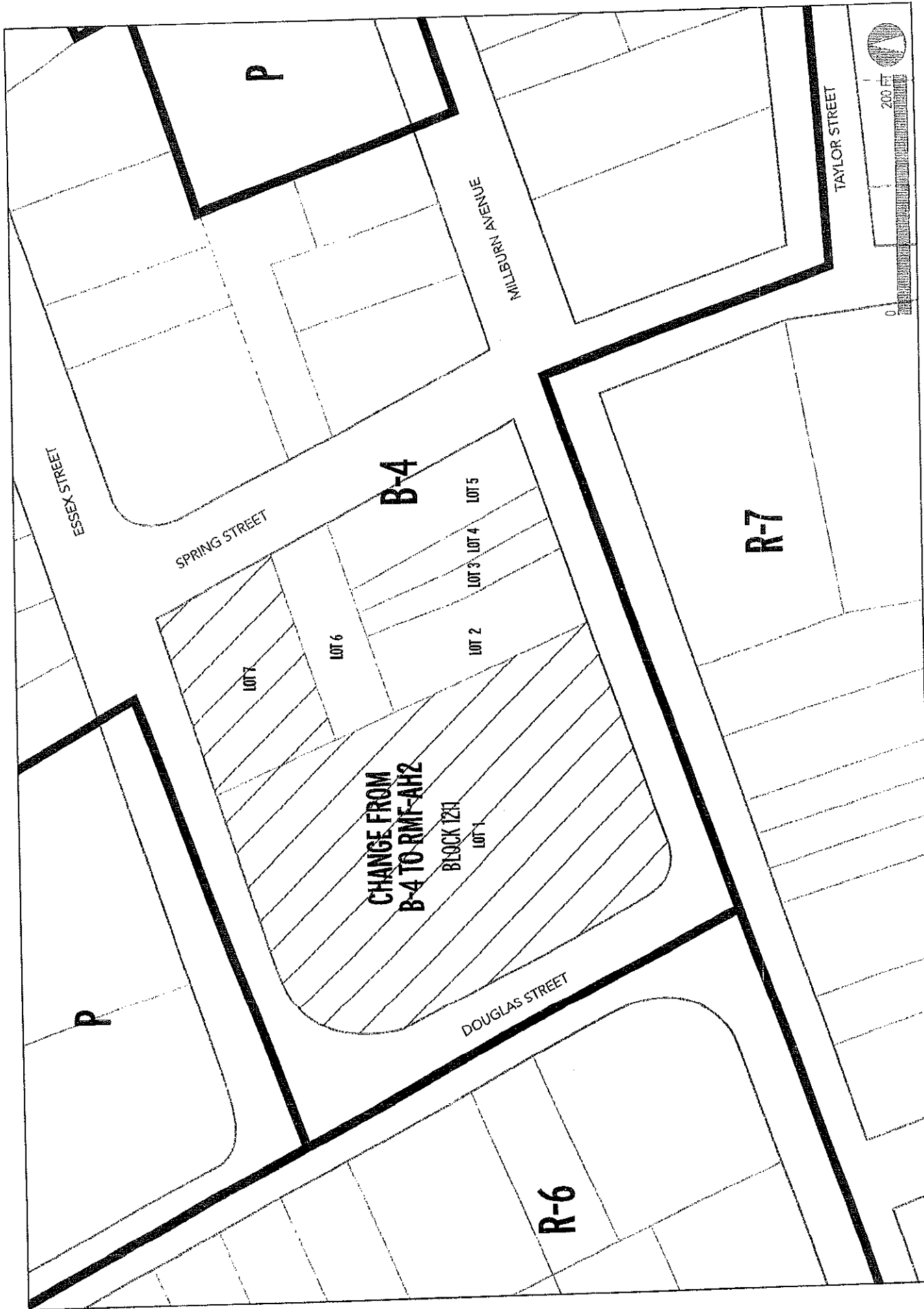


FIGURE 1: LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT AMENDMENT | TOWNSHIP OF MILLBURN, NEW JERSEY

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II. Land Use Plan Element Amendment

As noted, Block 1211, Lots 1 and 7 are currently situated within the Township's B-4 "Central Business" District and are being reclassified under a new RMF-AH2 designation as part of this Land Use Plan Element amendment. The referenced lots comprise just over 1.5 acres and were most recently used for a Wells Fargo banking facility. Wells Fargo has vacated the premises. In amending the Land Use Plan Element, the Planning Board recognizes that the Township has very little vacant land available and therefore must be pro-active regarding redevelopment of underutilized/unproductive properties for multi-family affordable housing and especially given the magnitude of its municipal fair share housing obligation.

The subject lots are located at the extreme westerly end of the existing B-4 Central Business District and are bounded by three streets: Millburn Avenue to the south; Douglas Street to the west; and Essex Street to the north. Importantly, at this location Millburn Avenue has already begun to transition from primarily retail commercial use to residential use (i.e., the properties directly across Millburn Avenue are developed for residential use consistent with the underlying R-7 district designation). Further, properties situated directly across Douglas Street are improved with a series of residences in keeping with the underlying R-6 district classification. Meanwhile, directly across Essex Street are the municipal police and fire department facilities, which are currently designated under the "P" Public Use zone. Only the contiguous lots to the east are presently used commercially consistent with the B-4 zoning. As such, the change in designation to allow inclusionary multi-family residential development at this location would not be inappropriate from a land use/zoning perspective.

In terms of removing the subject lots from the B-4 zone, it must be emphasized that they are somewhat off the beaten path relative to the balance of the B-4 Central Business District (i.e., nearly ¼ mile from the intersection of Millburn Avenue and Main Street), which renders it more challenging to attract retailers who rely in part on downtown foot traffic. This is exacerbated by the fact that along the same side of Millburn Avenue there is a break in the uniform street level retail frontage where the municipal building and its associated parking exist. Moreover, because the subject lots are essentially located on

the extreme fringe of the B-4 zone in close proximity to existing residential zones, the change in the Land Use designation of these lots, and in particular any removal of the requirement that the ground level of the building be used commercially, would not otherwise compromise the B-4 zoning in relation to the balance of properties within the district. In that regard, the Township's 2018 Master Plan Reexamination and Update expressly recommended that consideration be given to allowing multifamily residential uses on the first floor in locations in the B-4 zone that do not detract from the creation of an active streetscape.

The new RMF-AH2 designation should allow for multi-family residential development of up to 3 stories and 40 feet in height along Millburn Avenue (consistent with the B-4 zone), and up to 2 stories along Essex Street in recognition of the property's change in grade between the two streets. Furthermore, off-street parking should be accommodated within the building footprint so as to take advantage of said grade change. The maximum permitted density should be approximately 35 units per acre. The required low- and moderate-income set aside should be 15% for rental units and 20% for sales units. Some relaxation from RSIS parking standards should be considered in light of the fact that the property is within walking distance of the Millburn train station. Consideration should also be given to allowing, but not requiring ground floor commercial use along Millburn Avenue and Essex Street (but not Douglas Street). The parking level along Millburn Avenue should be screened by either commercial uses or ground level apartments (potentially with a front stoop to provide a transition from the public sidewalk) and where the parking level extends along Douglas Street it should be screened through the use of prominent stoops or porches. The RMF-AH2 zone designation should further include appropriate standards relating to building design and massing, including requirements for vertical and horizontal articulation, transparency, fenestration/glazing and materials treatment and application.

III. Conclusion

The foregoing sets forth the planning basis for an amendment to the Land Use Plan Element of the Township of Millburn Master Plan which establishes a new RMF-AH2 district classification for property referred to as Block 1211, Lots 1 and 7 on the official municipal tax maps. The lots were most recently used as part of a Wells Fargo bank operation which has since vacated the premises. The new RMF-AH2 designation replaces the current B-4 district classification for the subject lots and is intended to provide for multi-family inclusionary development (with or without ground floor commercial space) ranging from 2 to 3 stories in height at a maximum density of approximately 35 units per acre and with a required affordable housing unit set aside to assist the Township in satisfying its fair share housing obligation.