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Focus: Development/Redevelopment

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Plainsboro Township Committee helps transform a 156-acre former research campus into a medical arts campus for state-of-the-art healthcare and rehabilitation
Peter A. Cantu, Mayor, Plainsboro; NJLM Past President; and Lester Varga, AICP/PP, Director of Planning and Zoning

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State to launch statewide litter survey in 2018
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Chuck Chiarello, Mayor, Buena Vista; NJLM Past President

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Amy Spiezio

NJ Now
Taran B. Samhammer & Amy Spiezio

Member Op Ed
Gerry Scharfenberger, Mayor, Middletown Township

Gold Dome
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Finance Center
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Legal
Frank Marshall, Esq.

Legislative Update
Michael F. Cerra, Lori Buckelew, Frank Marshall, Esq., Jon R. Moran, Ciara Bradley

Business Card Directory

Around the State/Supporters
A monstrous fire destroyed seven apartment buildings and the North Carolina League of Municipalities’ offices in Raleigh, NC, on March 16. NCLM resumed work in borrowed space a week later.

Hurricane Harvey hit south Texas and Louisiana Aug 25 to 30. Houston had over 4 feet of rain. Oct. 3 through 6, the TML held its annual conference successfully in Houston at the George Brown Convention Center, which served as a hub of relief operations.

Hurricane Irma churned through Florida Sept. 9 to 11. Crews from across the country travelled to the Sunshine State to restore power to more than six million residents.

Hurricane Maria struck the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico Sept. 20, inspiring the efforts of mayors and citizens throughout the Garden State and the country to supply the severely damaged islands.

In rebuilding, after disaster we often talk about resiliency. Local officials know that means putting your neighbor ahead of yourself and then planning for the future. Resiliency starts with, and finishes through, the work of people. We see our local government colleagues in other states work through adversity, care for their neighbors, and then resiliently move ahead to realize their potential. We see that, and know we have been there and come through adversity, too. And we have reached out to help our colleagues and neighbors with our knowledge, our hands, and our financial resources.

Our neighbors to the south will have a long road of rebuilding. One way we can help them is to continue striving to realize our potential so we will be ready to help with current and future needs whether in our own communities or in communities a thousand miles away. This month take some time at the Annual League Conference to learn, plan, and take steps to realize your potential. The ideas you acquire and the skills you perfect will help you take those steps.

To help you plan we have posted a trove of information on the conference webpage njslom.org/2017conf/ and throughout this issue of New Jersey Municipalities. We have prepared tools for you such as the mobile app, online exhibit hall, and lists of experts ready to meet you at the Conference. This is your annual opportunity to take steps to realize your potential, and make ready for tomorrow when we will all surely need to continue helping our neighbors.

Realizing Your Potential to Help Others

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The Future of 457b Plans

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Rm 416 - 12 noon

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Redevelopment: A Catalyst for Economic Growth

Plainsboro Township Committee helps transform a 156-acre former research campus into a medical arts campus for state-of-the-art healthcare and rehabilitation

By Peter A. Cantu, Mayor, Plainsboro, NJLM Past President; and Lester Varga, AICP/PP, Director of Planning and Zoning

In 2006, the Plainsboro Township Committee recognized an opportunity to transform a 156-acre former research campus owned by the FMC Corporation that was underutilized and redevelop it into a medical arts campus for state-of-the-art healthcare and rehabilitation. Today, that opportunity has been largely realized as the healthcare campus has been transformed to create an economic hub for the Township of Plainsboro, the counties of Middlesex and Mercer, and the entire central New Jersey region.

The idea to create an integrated healthcare campus came from the leadership of the then University Medical Center in Princeton in cooperation with the Plainsboro Township Committee. Together the two bodies collaborated on the joint vision to find a new location where the hospital could be modernized and expanded to offer a wide array of healthcare services all within the existing 156-acre campus.

As a result of those collaborative efforts, on June 13, 2007, the Township Committee determined the FMC site to potentially be an Area in Need of Redevelopment pursuant the New Jersey Local Housing and Redevelopment Law (N.J.S.A. 40:12A et seq.). A Redevelopment Plan was prepared and adopted on January 23, 2008. The Redevelopment Plan created the various land use categories and corresponding zoning regulations, and put in place the standards to permit the new University Medical Center of Princeton at Plainsboro.
The plan also showcased how a major healthcare provider along with partner developers could establish a comprehensive healthcare campus from the ground up, as well as spur significant complementary development, outside of the redevelopment area. This additional development has taken the form of new medical office buildings near the hospital and the conversion of portions of the Princeton Forrestal Village to medical offices and services. Life Time Fitness has also chosen a site in proximity to the health-focused redevelopment area to build a new high-end, state-of-the-art health and fitness center.

**The Healthcare Campus**

In addition to the new hospital, the campus itself was broken down into different related uses such as an Adult Retirement Community, Fitness and Wellness Center, Skilled Nursing Facility, Child and Adult Daycare, and parkland.

**PHASE ONE** The first phase of the hospital was planned for 636,000 square feet and 231 beds, with an additional 324,000 square feet in the second phase. The adjacent Medical Arts Pavilion was slated for a total of 120,000 square feet; about 95,000 square feet was completed in the initial phase. Structured parking is required if either the hospital or the medical arts pavilion build to full potential.
**THE CENTER** The Princeton Fitness and Wellness Center was also contemplated in the Redevelopment Plan. The Center was completed to its maximum size of 50,000 square feet and contains over 150 pieces of state-of-the-art strength and cardio equipment, as well as three pools—a lap pool, a therapeutic pool, and a spa pool. The Center is open to the general public.

**CHOP FACILITY** A pediatric medical office component was added during an amendment to the Redevelopment Plan. The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) facility now occupies that designated portion of the campus, with a 25,000 square foot specialty care center on 13 acres.

The site houses more than 16 medical and surgical specialties, including ear, nose and throat, ophthalmology, orthopedic surgery, neurology, and gastroenterology.

Two additional phases are approved and could add an additional 75,000 square feet of treatment and medical office space.

**MERWICK CARE & REHABILITATION CENTER**

The 6.5-acre site defined for a skilled nursing facility site now contains the Merwicke Care and Rehabilitation Center. The facility totals about 107,000 square feet and offers 200 beds for long-term care and sub-acute care. A dialysis facility has also been added.

**RIVERVIEW AT PRINCETON**

An exciting new complex is planned to break ground this year. The 305-unit adult retirement community called Riverview at Princeton will be situated on about 36 acres. This age-restricted development is planned as a four- and five-story main building containing 260 rental apartments, including 15 studio units, 145 one-bedroom units, and 100 two-bedroom unit. Of the one bedroom units, 39 will be affordable units, which will be dispersed throughout the building.

This building also includes an indoor parking garage and a full range of indoor and outdoor amenities. In addition, there will be 45 two-story townhouse units for sale ranging in size from 1,954 to 2,124 square feet that include one- and two-car garage units and driveway parking. The development contains a large open space area served by walking paths connected to Millstone River Park.

**MAPLEWOOD SENIOR LIVING** Another component of the Amended Redevelopment Plan encompasses an area designated as an Office and Residential Complex, which contains a variety of permitted uses. Currently, this area is slated for a 105-bed memory care facility—Maplewood Senior Living. This facility supports the underlying purpose of a complete healthcare campus that encourages the concept of aging in place. It is anticipated that Maplewood will break ground by the end of 2017 or early 2018.

Rounding out the designated uses are two day care centers, one for children and one for adults. Each is its own distinct facility in separate buildings of around 12,000 square feet each on a single parcel. Each will be open to the general public, but it is anticipated that each will initially serve the healthcare community.

**MILLSTONE PARK** Lastly, Millstone River Park lies between the hospital and the Millstone River. The 30-acre public park includes a paved circular scenic walking trail. The passive park is maintained in a natural state allowing wild flowers and native species to flourish. Access to the river is also provided via stone dust pathways.

**Successful collaboration**

The redevelopment plan option afforded the Township the opportunity to comprehensively plan for every facet of the project site including bulk standards, road layout, parking, pedestrian amenities, infrastructure location, floor-to-area ratios, setbacks, preservation areas, and subdivision and site plan standards.

In the end, over the 10-plus years after the vision, the plan has been implemented, becoming a reality. A few components of the plan have not been built yet, but approvals are in place for all but one of the designated uses. The planned collaborative approach using the redevelopment statute along with the Township’s Master Plan has resulted in economic growth, jobs, a sound ratable base, and high-quality medical service to the Central Jersey region.
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Whether it’s for economic growth or to ensure the population of a community remains happily in place, development and redevelopment are critical factors in planning for tomorrow. This month’s focus topic is one that impacts communities of all sizes and all areas throughout the Garden State.

In the 1980s, communities were focusing on keeping towns safe for kids by regulating arcades and creating environmentally sound development for the future, leading by example with projects including municipal facilities.

Today, transforming unused or underutilized spaces creates improved environments and better quality of life. In Plainsboro, a 156-acre former research campus found new life as a state-of-the-art healthcare and rehabilitation campus. In Pleasantville, the opportunities derived from the UEZ program allowed the community to develop new relationships with companies that transferred their operations into town. There is work that remains to be done, and hopes for ongoing improvements with a renewed UEZ and more creative interaction with businesses and residents.

This issue also touches on topics ranging from cyber security to online budget submissions. And the world beyond the computer also gets some attention as features from New Jersey Clean Communities and Sustainable Jersey each consider factors that are current and ongoing challenges to the environmental stability of the State.

Throughout this issue, we have again noted the features and departments that tie in with the League’s 102nd Annual Conference, slated for Nov. 14-16 in Atlantic City. In addition, our expanded Conference section provides planning details that will help you in your ongoing efforts Realizing Tomorrow’s Potential. Don’t forget to hit the exhibit floor at the event and visit the NJ Municipalities booth as well as the magazine’s 100th Anniversary Exhibit, we look forward to meeting you!

Planning for Tomorrow

Amy Spiezio
Managing Editor

Time Capsule: 1980-1990

April 1984
Sending a message that a bike is not a toy and roads are not a playground, in 1983, Cranford transferred juvenile traffic offenses from juvenile court to municipal court. This involved sending young bicyclists to a special session of traffic court for bicycle violations on Fridays at 3:30 p.m. where the police traffic safety officer showed a safety film and explained each violation.

February 1982
Video arcades were the must-go stop for a generation of youngsters who wouldn’t have handheld devices until they had children of their own. In NJ Municipalities, then Delaware Township Planning Board Attorney Frederick H. Allen, III, Esq., explained that while municipalities couldn’t run these centers out of town, “they could through its zoning ordinance, regulate dwelling and commercial ventures according to their nature and type of use.” Or they could wait 15 years when the problem generally took care of itself.

May 1981
The League announced the addition of a new staff member, “Perdicaris” the cat. Discovered by then League Executive Director Jack Trafford, the lucky feline was hired after a brief interview on Perdicaris Place, the side street near the League’s previous home. Trafford noted, “Perdicaris brings a refreshing, youthful vigor to League activities and moves from assignment to assignment with a certain cat-like grace.”
Recognizing the ever-increasing challenges that our local government entities face as the result of extreme climate forces affecting public health, safety and the environment, Maraziti Falcon, LLP has developed a practice area devoted to assisting our clients to increase resiliency and strategically plan for a changing climate.

Extreme weather conditions and excessive regional, local and coastal flooding and storm surges threaten infrastructure, transportation and our clients’ ability to protect assets, resulting in a need to adapt governance to meet these challenges and revise existing policies and ordinances to better protect against the adverse effects of these life-altering events.

This practice area complements Maraziti Falcon’s existing practice devoted to the counseling of public and private entities regarding environmental, redevelopment, land use law, government, construction law and litigation.
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