



Hillsborough Township
Somerset County, NJ

Sherman Tract Rehabilitation Investigation Report

May 21, 2018

Prepared by:

David K. Maski, PP, AICP, Director

Planning & Zoning Department
Peter J. Biondi Municipal Building
379 South Branch Road
Hillsborough, NJ 08844

NJ License No. 02354

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction

II. Description of the Study Area

III. Statutory Criteria

IV. Findings

Appendix:

Figure 1. Tax Map

Figure 2. Aerial View

I. INTRODUCTION

This investigation report has been prepared to determine whether the area referred to as the Sherman Tract (hereinafter referred to as the “study area”) meets the statutory criteria for designating an “area in need of rehabilitation” pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law P.L. 1992, Chapter 79 (the “LRHL”).

If the Township Committee agrees with the findings contained in this report, the Committee would designate the study area in need of rehabilitation by way of a resolution. Prior to adopting the resolution, the Committee must forward the proposed resolution to the Planning Board for its consideration and comment. The Board would have 45 days to submit its recommendations to the Committee including any modifications. Thereafter, the Committee may adopt the resolution with or without modifications.

Following the designation of the study area, a redevelopment plan would be prepared to govern future development of the rehabilitation area. The redevelopment plan would be adopted by the Township Committee by ordinance after consultation with the Planning Board.

Designating an area in need of rehabilitation permits the Township to use all the powers of the LRHL with the notable exception of eminent domain.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

The study area is comprised of two tax parcels – Lot 21 in Block 86, covering 62.25 acres; and Lot 6.01 in Block 90, covering 3.09 acres (see Figures 1 and 2 in the Appendix). This combined 65.34-acre tract is vacant and owned by the Township. The study area is located in the northeast corner of the Township and borders the Borough of Manville to the east and south. The study area is immediately bordered on all sides by residential properties. Although the Hillsborough properties are all in the sewer service area, many are still on well and septic systems.

Lot 21 is zoned I-1 Light Industrial. Despite its size, Lot 21 has minimal street frontage and in fact does not have frontage on any improved streets. There is about 200-feet of frontage on an unimproved section of Estelle Street, which up to that point is a narrow paved path. Access from Camplain Road is provided by several stub or dead-end streets.

Royce's Brook forms the southern border of the lot. Wetlands, floodplains and DRCC buffers associated with the Brook cover the southern one third of the lot.

Lot 6.01 is zoned R - Residential. It has frontage on both Estelle Street and South 20th Avenue. The centerline of South 20th Avenue is the Manville Border.

Development History

In 1926 the Hillsborough Township Committee approved a subdivision that created approximately 1,200 lots on the property ("Park Plaza"), which at that time was owned by Henry Gerber, Inc. The tract included the entire Camplain Road frontage from Boston Lane to Arizona Avenue (now South 20th Avenue), and stretched from Camplain Road to the banks of "Roice's" Brook. The subdivision created a traditional street grid with 30 distinct blocks. (It is interesting to note that the subdivision plat made no mention of flood plains or wetlands.) In 1955, Park Plaza was resubdivided into 101 lots with a new street grid that was eventually vacated by the Township in 1962. Over time, approximately 33 parcels were sold off and only 19 have been developed to date. By 1969, what remained of the original Park Plaza tract had been consolidated into the current two-lot configuration of Lots 21 and 6.01.

In 1990 the Township granted preliminary major subdivision approval for a 14-lot industrial park on Lot 21. That proposal was abandoned and subsequently replaced with a proposed residential project ("Plaza Grande") in 2006/2007 when a use variance and site plan approval were granted for the construction of 232 age-restricted units on the tract. The project was never started and the approval has since expired.

The study area remains vacant today with no extant approvals.

The history of the study area is contrary to the development history of the surrounding properties and neighborhoods where "Significant residential development of the area to the east and northeast (Manville Borough) occurred in the late 1940s to 1960s. Light industrial and commercial development occurred to the north and west of the site in the 1960s." (See Environmental Site Investigation Report, CME, May 2017.)

III. STATUTORY CRITERIA

Pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (40A:12A-14) an area may be determined to be in need of rehabilitation if the governing body determines by resolution that a program of rehabilitation as defined in 40A:12A-3 may be expected to prevent further deterioration and promote the overall development of the community; and that there exist in that area any of the following conditions:

- (1) A significant portion of structures therein are in a deteriorated or substandard condition;
- (2) More than half of the housing stock in the delineated area is at least 50 years old;
- (3) There is a pattern of vacancy, abandonment or underutilization of properties in the area;
- (4) There is a persistent arrearage of property tax payments on properties in the area;
- (5) Environmental contamination is discouraging improvements and investment in properties in the area; or
- (6) A majority of the water and sewer infrastructure in the delineated area is at least 50 years old and is in need of repair or substantial maintenance.

40A:12A-3. "Rehabilitation" means an undertaking, by means of extensive repair, reconstruction or renovation of existing structures, with or without the introduction of new construction or the enlargement of existing structures, in any area that has been determined to be in need of rehabilitation or redevelopment, to eliminate substandard structural or housing conditions and arrest the deterioration of that area. (Emphasis added)

IV. FINDINGS

As noted in Section II, there is a long history of proposals – and Township approvals – for both residential and industrial development in the study area dating back over 90 years. None of those development proposals have come to fruition and the study area remains vacant. This condition continues in spite of the relatively robust development that has taken place in the surrounding neighborhoods over the years and that the study area is located in the sewer service area. This report thus concludes that the study area meets the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law criteria for the designation of a rehabilitation area due to the fact that “There is a pattern of vacancy, abandonment or underutilization of properties in the area” (Criterion #3).

It should be noted that the sewer infrastructure in the study area is 44 years old and is in need of repair or substantial maintenance (per the Hillsborough Municipal Utility Authority), just shy of the 50 years old requirement in Criterion #6.

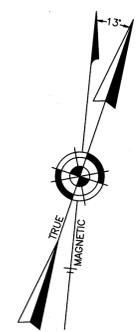
This report also finds that a program of rehabilitation as defined in the LRHL – in this case the construction of new affordable housing – may be expected to prevent any further deterioration and promote the overall development of the community while helping to address the Township’s affordable housing obligation. Construction of new housing on this site will solidify and support the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods and upgrade the water and sewer infrastructure in and around the study area.

APPENDIX

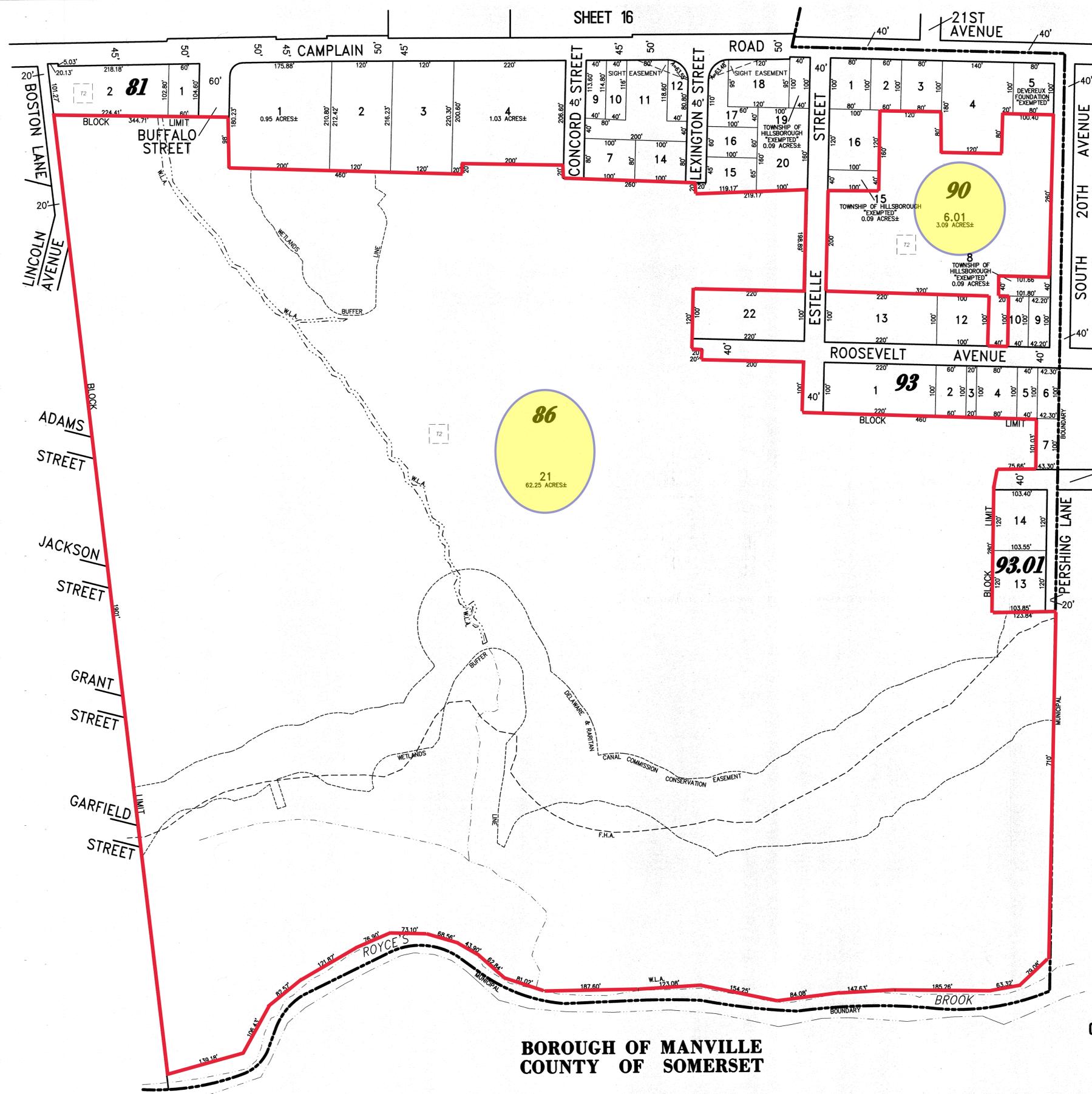
Figure 1 – Tax Map

Figure 2 – Aerial Map

REVISIONS	



SHEET 18



NOTE:
 THIS SHEET HAS BEEN DRAWN USING COMPUTER AIDED DRAFTING/DESIGN (CAD/D) AND COORDINATE GEOMETRY (GOCO).

**BOROUGH OF MANVILLE
 COUNTY OF SOMERSET**

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
 DIVISION OF TAXATION
 PROPERTY ASSIGNMENT
 APPROVED AS A TAX MAP PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF
 N.J.S.A. 9:1-10 & 9:6-1
 FOR THE REGISTERED CHAIRMAN OF TAXATION
[Signature] C.T.A.
 REGISTERED LOCAL PROPERTY FIELD ASSISTANCE
[Signature] C.T.A.
 DATE: JUL 14 2010 SERIAL NO. 955

**TAX MAP
 TOWNSHIP OF HILLSBOROUGH**
 SOMERSET COUNTY NEW JERSEY
 SCALE: 1" = 100' DATE: 8-14-2006

CHARLES E. ADAMSON NJ PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR LIC. NO. 42627
REMINGTON, VERNICK & VENA ENGINEERS
 3 JOCAMA BOULEVARD-SUITE 2, OLD BRIDGE, NJ 08857
 (732) 965-8000, FAX (732) 594-2895
 WEB SITE ADDRESS: WWW.RVVE.COM

PART OF OLD PLATES 28 & 30

