

MEDFORD HAMLET COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK**

JANUARY, 1996

ZONING

The report Zoning Analysis and Recommendations suggests that a Heavy Commercial (HC) zoning district be created and the west side of NYS Route 112 between Granny and Horse Block Roads be rezoned. This district will provide better control of future development. The same report suggests alterations to all of the Town's industrial districts. It establishes permitted uses rather than prohibited ones. It establishes the L-1 zone primarily as a light manufacturing district and the L-2 zone as a heavy industrial district. As a result, it recommends that Peconic Avenue be zoned L-2 where the pattern of usage is of a heavy nature (junk yards, recycling, propane storage etc.) Further, it suggests an Agriculture Zone (AG) that would include all forms of agricultural use (nurseries, farming, vineyards, greenhouses, orchards and horse farms). It also establishes the L-3 zone as a true industrial park with strict height and bulk regulations and the formal subdivision of land if deemed necessary by the Town Board.

Problems and Opportunities

Viewing land use and zoning as interlocking aspects of community development, Medford has some problems and opportunities. The major areas of concern were highlighted in the aforementioned Zoning Analysis and Recommendations report.

Other areas of concern are located along the major roadways where the lands are zoned for business for narrow depths and abut residential A-1 (40,000 sq. ft.) or where surrounding uses and proximity to roadways will likely result in requests for higher density/intensity. There will be pressure to extend the depth back to the end of current development, to in-fill commercial uses and intrude into residential areas (particularly North Ocean Avenue). Plate 4 locates the problems and opportunities throughout the community. A description of each follows:

A. Parcel A is located between two gas stations (North Ocean and Medford) and contains a nursery and vacant/underused land. Several dwelling units are on the site. The frontage is zoned J-2 business for a 200 foot depth, the land behind vacant and zoned A-1. It is recommended that this area be rezoned to Residence B-1.

B. Parcel B, zoned J-2, is vacant except for a storage building and should also be rezoned to Residence B-1. Parcels A and B are deep enough for homes to back on Horse Block Road and be a continuation of the residential subdivisions to the north.

C. Parcel C is zoned Residence B-1 and should remain in this district. In this manner parcels A, B and C will be consistent.

D. Parcel D consists of all the land adjacent to the westerly side of NYS 112. Previously, it has been recommended that a new Heavy Commercial (HC) zone be established and these properties be rezoned HC. This is a recognition of the existing land uses while introducing appropriate controls to insure proper long range development. When Route 112 is improved by the State, consideration should be given to landscape treatment along the roadway.

E. Parcel E is all the land within the compatible growth area of the Pine Barrens SGPA. Most of the land east of Middle Island Road is vacant and will serve as a receiving area from the Pine Barrens "core". The existing commercial and industrial uses at the westerly edge lend this area to more intense development. Multi-family development would be suitable in the area of Town Hall, currently zoned for commercial use. This could extend southward to the fire station. North of Eagle Estates and east of Middle Island Road the lands are in large holdings. While originally subdivided into long narrow lots, many are in common ownership. It is recommended that this area be rezoned to Residence A-2 (80,000 sq. ft.).

F. Parcel F could be developed by extending existing roadways terminating in cul de sacs with lots backing onto Horse Block Road.

An alternate use would be a professional office building or nursing home.

G. Parcel G is an isolated triangle formed by the LIE and Horse Block Road. There are currently several dwelling units on the properties. Assemblage of parcels should be encouraged and the property developed for office space easterly to the storage facility.

H. Parcel H is adjacent to the LIE service road. The lots fronting on the service road should be developed as office space (J-4) while the lands fronting on Robinson Avenue should remain residential. There is currently a request to rezone some of this property for multi-family; this request should be denied. The noise levels created by the LIE, the service road and acceleration lane make it inappropriate for residential use.

J. Parcel J is probably the most controversial property in Medford. Two large vacant parcels remain, zoned L-3. However all the properties to the east could be considered "soft". These lands are occupied by heavy commercial uses, trucks and equipment, van line, auto auction, tires, used trucks and a storage facility. Sam's Warehouse Club establishes an intense commercial pattern. The vacant parcels, to the east, could develop commercially (currently under consideration) as an extension or could continue to be set aside for industrial development. However, the L-3 district provides "...premises may be used for any lawful business or industrial use...". Adoption of the proposed revisions to the L-3 District would result in industrial use of these properties. The determination of the use for the vacant parcel is likely to set a precedent, in the years ahead, for the remainder of Horse Block Road.

K. Parcel K contains a LILCO right of way that severely restricts the property resulting in a long triangle parcel containing two lots. A single professional office would be the best use of the properties.

L. Parcel L contains a series of small lots resulting from the construction of the LIE. Therefore, there are small lots under common ownership on both sides of the expressway. The lots on the north present a problem; the service road would have to be constructed to provide access. The noise levels of the LIE would make these lots undesirable. Possibly, some assembly coupled with the long lots on Middle Island Avenue could result in an acceptable cluster approach away from the expressway.

M. Parcel M is the area west of Medford Avenue and backing to the United Parcel lot. These

lots are 440 feet by 88 feet. The lands north of the LIE to the LILCO power line should be rezoned from L-3 to Residence A-1 similar to the lands on the easterly side.

N. Parcel N is the area between Petty's Lane and the LIE. It should remain residential.

P. Parcel P are those sites along Long Island Avenue and the Railroad zoned industrial and commercial that could be rezoned to residential.

Q. Parcel Q extends for the entire easterly side of North Ocean Avenue. It is imperative that there be no commercial rezoning along this stretch of roadway. In view of the high occupancy vehicle lane on the LIE, the State should consider purchasing the vacant parcel north of the LIE to expand the park-n-ride facility as well as a strip behind the gas station to provide direct access to the LIE service road.

R. Parcel R is a interior site zoned for Nursing Home. There seems to be no reason why this exists and is clearly spot zoning.

S. Parcel S is all that land at the easterly end of Peconic Avenue. The land use along this roadway represents the worst of the industry. It is recommended that within the changed industrial zoning district regulations, the easterly property line of Gershow Recycling be the end of a L-2 zone that begins at Buffalo Avenue. On the south side, the L-2 zone should end at the westerly property line of Lot 11.1. The lands to the east, on both sides, should be zoned L-1 under the revised regulations. Every town has some undesirable industry and this area represents Brookhaven. Since it is unlikely to disappear, it is incumbent that special permits and other zoning regulations control the uses in the best possible legal manner.

T. Parcel T Woodside and NYS 112 is 3.1 acres. It should be developed residentially with lots fronting on an extended Syracuse Avenue.

U. Parcel U is an industrially zoned piece of land in the SGPA, surrounded by residential. It is recommended that this parcel be rezoned to A-1.

V. Parcel V is a large parcel utilized for sand and gravel. Over the long range, this will change. The parcel should be rezoned to the revised L-3 District to insure proper future development.

W. Parcel W represents the last opportunity to create a center in Medford around the fire station, Memorial Park and the railroad station. This area currently zoned L-1 and A-1 is recommended to be rezoned to J Business to permit a small retail complex.

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BROOKHAVEN, NEW YORK

NOTE: A - SEE TEXT FOR
RECOMMENDATION

PROBLEMS
AND
OPPORTUNITIES

PLATE 4



TRANSPORTATION

The Nassau Suffolk Transportation Coordinating Committee has recently adopted the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for 1994 through 1999. The Medford community is earmarked for considerable road improvements. The long awaited north service road between exits 64 and 65 is scheduled to begin in the program year 1994-95 at a cost of 3.08 million dollars. This project includes widening of the south service road between exits 63 and 64. The following projects (year construction begins) are also included in the TIP:

#22861	Resurface I-495	\$ 8.715M	1995-96
#22862	Service Rd. 63-64	\$ 8.518M	1996-97
#22865	East Service Rd. 65-67	\$ 9.976M	1996-97
#22881	4th Lane 61-64	\$44.207M	1995-96
#22868	Express Bus	*	1994-95
# 1620	NYS 112 Rehab.	\$56.548M	1998-99
#22888	Inform 61-64	\$ 2.536M	1995-96
#75654	Bike Rte. LI Ave. To 112	*	1994-95
#80445	Repair Park-n-Ride	*	1995-96
SC5513	CR83-LIE-Granny	\$ 1.000M	1994-95

* Part of larger project

In addition, engineering and right of way acquisition funds are included in the current TIP for the North Ocean Avenue Bridge over the LIE (\$1.891M) and widening of Horse block Road from CR 83 to CR 21 (\$3.859M). Construction on these projects will begin after 1999. Conversation with the New York State Department of Transportation revealed that design for these improvements has not begun. It will be one year before proposals are advanced to a point for public participation. It is anticipated that Route 112 will have two lanes in each direction, a center turning lane, shoulders and a sidewalk area within 108 foot right of way. There will be land acquisition that will delay the construction schedule. Exits 63 to 65 improvements are considered as one project and will include a south service road and a full diamond interchange at Horse Block Road.

It is evident that improvements are required to accommodate increased volume as well as to serve changing land use patterns. The following table indicates the dramatic increase in traffic on two major roads.

Table 7
Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT)

	1987	1992	Percent
Route 112			
Granny to Horse Block	17,100	23,000	34.5
LIRR to Woodside	16,600	19,600	18.1
I495 (LIE)			
Exit 63 to 64	51,100	76,800	50.3
Exit 64 to 65	48,060	64,800	34.8

Mass Transportation

The Census reported the journey to work pattern by Medford residents. Seventy-nine percent reported that they worked in Suffolk County. As expected, the "drive alone" represented the most popular choice with 8447 trips. In addition, 1223 persons chose to car pool. The use of public transportation is very small, 71 reported using a bus, while 370 use the Long Island Rail Road. In 1991, the railroad reported 27 westbound Medford Station boardings. There is one westbound and eastbound peak hour trip serving the station and the City. It is likely that most residents avail themselves of the electrified service at the Ronkonkoma Station and to a lesser degree at Patchogue.

Bus service is provided along Route 112 between Port Jefferson and Patchogue between 7 AM and 8 PM, Monday through Saturday. Feeder bus service is provided between Patchogue and the Department of Motor Vehicles building from approximately 7 AM to 7 PM also serving Brookhaven Hospital. Headways are about one hour.

OTHER CONCERNS

Conversation with various local leaders have expressed a list of concerns for the Hamlet of Medford. Many of these have been expressed by civic leaders in other communities as well. An extremely small response to a questionnaire did reveal some unanimity among the respondents. They were satisfied with Medford as a place to live and very concerned with school taxes. Similarly most were dissatisfied with traffic, zoning patterns, the attention given to Medford by officials and very concerned about the garbage problem and the future of the community. A copy of the questionnaire with the number of respondents is in the Appendix.

The feel dis-enfranchised from the decision making process of the Town. They question why variances are granted for signs, commercial uses in industrial zones and why parcels of land are subdivided when the zoning is one acre. It must be remembered that land has value, that value is established by zoning and other regulations. Some "upzonings" can become confiscatory and eventually voided by courts. Certain land uses remain with non-conforming status and may never go away. It is sometimes better to recognize undesirable uses and control them through regulation, rather than a non-conforming status. Furthermore, they question the lack of enforcement of existing codes. They would like to see an identity for Medford, a "sense of place".

In 1990, the Department of Planning, Environment and Development prepared a Revitalization Study for the "traditional" business area of Medford. The study area encompassed one block either side of Route 112 between north of Robinson Avenue and south of Jamaica Avenue. While this study must be complemented for its sense of aesthetics and history, it is short on reality in that area is too small to become much more than a town square (Memorial Park), because it lacks an attraction. Although difficult, expansion to include all the land north of Peconic and west of Pennsylvania Avenues could evolve into a small center. This action would preclude any expansion of the station area for rail purposes. This is further complicated by the needs of the Fire Department. Currently the area zoned L-1 is in dispute over its future use.

There is ample land designated as open space within Medford. However there are limited active recreational facilities. The area west of Route 112 is lacking in both open space and recreation. Medford is a "young" community and should provide adequate recreation for its children, while not solving the recreation needs of the Town at large.

The Town should consider changing portions of the existing Building Zone Ordinance to reflect current development practices. This should include the elimination of "verticality", that is, permitting a less restrictive use in a more restrictive zone. (i.e. business in industrial zoning). The Town should adopt revised zoning districts as previously recommended in Zoning Analysis and Recommendations. Many issues raised by members of the community can be addressed through the enforcement of existing codes and ordinances. The creation of separate laws pertaining to junk yards, transfer stations, sand and gravel removal, noise and sign regulation can tend to remove them from the land use thought process. They become singular issues rather than being considered in the total context of land development and control. They may be deliberated by agencies and boards without benefit of the expertise of the Planning Department. Attention should be given to control of "flag lots".

Current practice allows one home to be constructed behind another. The addition of a minimum of fifteen (15) feet of street frontage while disallowing an access strip ten (10) or less from inclusion as lot area would reduce the number of "flag lots".

FUTURE LAND USE

Plate 5 reflects the land use plan for the Medford Hamlet. It must be reviewed in conjunction with Plate 6 Recommended Rezoning. This is a result of discussions with the community reviewing the specifics presented in Problems and Opportunities. This represents the long range interests of the Hamlet for the foreseeable future. These recommendations rely on the adoption of amended zoning district regulations as previously proposed. They include the creation of a Heavy Commercial District (HC), an Agricultural District (AG) and revisions to all the industrial districts.

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LEGEND

- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
- PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC
- AGRICULTURE

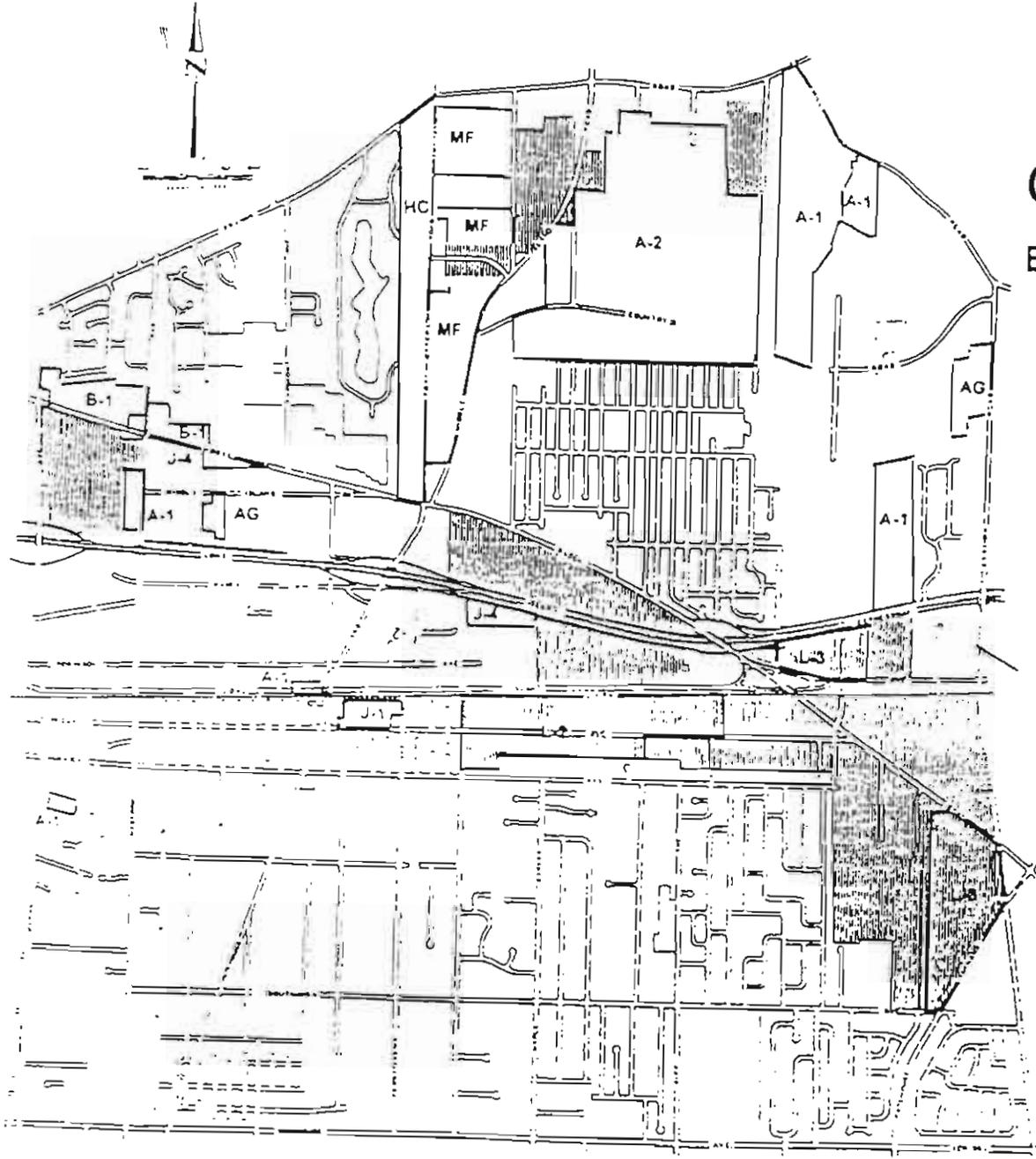


LAND USE PLAN

PLATE 5

MEDFORD HAMLET COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

BROOKHAVEN, NEW YORK



LEGEND

- AREA TO BE REZONED
- A-2 PROPOSED DISTRICT
- HC, AG NEW ZONING DISTRICT
- MF NEW DISTRICT REGULATIONS

NOTE. ALL BOUNDARIES ARE APPROXIMATE

RECOMMENDED REZONING