

Lafayette Township

Wantage Township

**Township of Hardyston  
Sussex County**

**Master Plan Reexamination Report**

**July 2019**

**Adopted by the Planning Board on July 25, 2019**

Prepared by

**Heyer, Gruel & Associates  
Community Planning Consultants**

236 Broad Street  
Red Bank, NJ 07701

Sparta Township

Hamburg Borough

Franklin Borough

Vernon Township

Ogdensburg Borough

Sparta Township

Jefferson Township

West Milford Township

# Master Plan Reexamination Report

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Sussex County, New Jersey

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Prepared by Heyer Gruel & Associates  
Community Planning Consultants  
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The original of this report was signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:14A-12



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**CONTENTS**

**INTRODUCTION** ..... 4

**PERIODIC REEXAMINATION** ..... 4

**SECTION A** ..... 6

    2003 Master Plan ..... 6

        2003 General Goals..... 6

        2003 Objectives..... 6

        2014 Master Plan Reexamination Recommendations ..... 9

**SECTION B** ..... 11

    2014 Master Plan Reexamination Recommendations ..... 11

**SECTION C** ..... 13

    Changes at the Local Level..... 13

        Demographic Characteristics..... 13

        Existing Housing Conditions..... 15

        Employment Data ..... 16

        Affordable Housing ..... 17

        Land Use Plan Element Amendment (2016) ..... 18

        Additional Changes at the Local Level ..... 19

    County and Regional Level Planning Documents ..... 23

        Sussex County Open Space and Recreation Plan Update (2014) ..... 23

        Sussex County Strategic Growth Plan Update (2014) ..... 24

        Sussex County Transportation Planning ..... 25

        Sussex County Complete Streets Policy (2014) ..... 25

        Sussex County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2016) ..... 26

        New Jersey Highlands Council..... 27

    State Planning..... 30

        State Development and Redevelopment Plan (2001) ..... 30

        Draft State Strategic Plan (2011) ..... 34

        Sustainable Jersey ..... 34

        Street Smart NJ (2016)..... 35

        New Jersey Stormwater Regulations ..... 35

**SECTION D** ..... 36

    Land Use Recommendations ..... 36

    Circulation Recommendations ..... 39

    Hazard Mitigation/Resiliency Recommendations ..... 39

    Economic Development Recommendations ..... 40

    Open Space and Recreation/Conservation ..... 40

**SECTION E** ..... 42

## **INTRODUCTION**

This report constitutes a Master Plan Reexamination Report for the Township of Hardyston as defined by the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89). The purpose of the Reexamination Report is to review and evaluate the local Master Plan and Development Regulations on a periodic basis in order to determine the need for updates and revisions. The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires that this review be conducted at least every 10 years and requires it to be conducted by the Planning Board.

The Township of Hardyston adopted its last Comprehensive Master Plan in 2003 and adopted subsequent Master Plan Reexamination Reports in 2005 and 2014, with an amendment to the Land Use Element in January of 2016.

This report has been prepared in order to satisfy the review requirement of NJSA 40:55D-89. Section A of this report identifies the goals and objectives which were established in the 2003 Master Plan, and in the subsequent Reexamination Reports. Sections B and C describe changes that have occurred in the Township, County and State since the adoption of these Plans. Finally, Sections D and E discuss recommended actions to be addressed by the Township in the future.

## **PERIODIC REEXAMINATION**

New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89) requires the Reexamination Report to contain the following:

- A. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report,
- B. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date,
- C. The extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, County and Municipal policies and objectives,
- D. The specific changes recommended for the Master Plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared, and
- E. The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law,"

P.L.1992, c. 79 (C.40A: 12A-1 et seq.) into the land use plan element of the Municipal Master Plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

## SECTION A

The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the township at the time of the adoption of the last Reexamination Report.

The Township adopted its last Master Plan in 2003 and has adopted subsequent Reexamination Reports and Master Plan Amendments.

### **2003 Master Plan**

#### 2003 General Goals

1. To provide municipal services that serve the needs of the residents
2. To maintain harmonious land uses and circulation patterns
3. To retain water quality and environmental resources
4. To minimize the impact of development on wildlife
5. To retain the natural features and amenities that gives the Township its rural character
6. To provide open space and recreational opportunities close to all residents
7. To encourage economic development in the Route 94 corridor and in the regional center
8. To encourage the preservation of the Township's historic and cultural resources
9. To promote recreation and eco-tourism as a means of economic development

#### 2003 Objectives

- Land Use Objectives
  - Minimize the impact of large-scale medium density residential development on the surrounding natural environment.
  - Preserve and enhance the existing established rural residential and recreational character of Hardyston.
  - Promote "Smart Growth" principles.
  - Establish a design theme for the Township and its public buildings, consistent with the Township's rural character.
- Conservation Objectives
  - Protect areas constrained by steep slopes, poor drainage, flood prone lands and wetlands.
  - Minimize site disturbance.

- Minimize the visual impact of development on important natural environments.
- Use all available tools to protect and preserve environmentally sensitive natural resources in the Township.
- Protect the groundwater.
- Open Space & Recreation Objectives
  - Preserve as much open space as possible, especially lakes, streams, tributaries, and significant habitats.
  - Promote recreational opportunities for teenagers.
  - Enhance the recreation opportunities of the Township through better use of current facilities.
- Community Facilities Objectives
  - Maintain and enhance the level of community facilities consistent with the character and development of the Township.
  - Create a civic center with municipal services, recreational facilities near the center of the Township's population.
  - Concentrate community facilities in those areas with higher densities.
- Utility Objectives
  - Utilize utility plans as a growth management tool, extending infrastructure only in areas intended for growth.
  - Preserve and maintain the existing utility infrastructure, including public water, sanitary sewer and storm water facilities.
  - Preserve and protect the Township's public water supply, including storage areas, treatment facilities and the distribution system.
- Circulation Objectives
  - Provide safe vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation by improving traffic signals at key intersections, utilizing traffic calming measures, and providing adequate on and off-street parking and sidewalks in appropriate locations.
  - Encourage and support mass transit options, even those which are likely only in the long run.

- Create efficient circulation patterns and calm traffic on local, county, and state roads.
- Enhance potential gateway locations to improve the appearance of the Township's transportation corridors. Capitalize on the "gateway to Sussex County" theme.
- Improve way-finding signage on major roads and at gateway locations to facilitate circulation and identify the route to key activity centers and destinations in the Township.
- Take necessary measures to mitigate the effects of increased regional traffic.
- Economic Objectives
  - Promote economic development along established corridors and in the Stockholm area.
  - Strengthen existing commercial districts and corridors by encouraging a mix of uses that provide employment, retail opportunities, services, and entertainment.
  - Encourage the reuse of vacant non-residential buildings.
  - Develop economic development strategies focusing on recreation and eco-tourism.
  - Capitalize on the expanding purchasing power created by new residential development in the region.
- Housing Objectives
  - Provide adequate housing for all ages and demographics, especially senior citizens.
- Historic Preservation Objectives
  - Consider conducting a survey to identify additional properties for nomination to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.
  - Encourage awareness and protection of Hardyston's cultural, social, and historic heritage to provide a link to the past, to enhance the visual appearance of neighborhoods and to promote economic development.
- Recycling Objectives
  - Continue to be a leader in the use of recycled materials throughout the community, including at parks and in Township offices.
- Comparison to Other Planning Efforts
  - Consider land use policies in light of their impact on the region.
  - Promote the designation of Hardyston as a "Regional Center."

### 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Recommendations

Further, the Township recommended the following changes to development regulations in 2014:

- The Planning Board recommends that the specific changes, as detailed in the document titled "Hardyston Township Highlands Preservation Area Checklist Ordinance," approved by the Highlands Council as part of the Township's Petition for Plan Conformance (copy attached herewith) be adopted by the Governing Body to implement the objectives, policies and standards as outlined in the Highlands Preservation Element of the Master Plan.
- The Planning Board recommends that the specific changes, as detailed in the document titled "Hardyston Township Highlands Preservation Area Exemption Ordinance," (copy attached herewith) be adopted by the Governing Body to implement the procedural and substantive requirements by which the Township may issue Highlands Act Exemption Determinations.
- The Planning Board recommends that the specific changes, as detailed in the proposed amendment to the Commercial Recreation Village Center District (C-R(VC)) (copy attached herewith), be adopted by the Governing Body to allow for the creation of a long-term care residence option in a portion of the transitional housing sub-district of the C-R(VC) Form Based Code. The provisions to allow a long-term residence option will amend the C-R(VC) district to allow for assisted living facilities and related services, including nursing services in a portion of the transitional housing sub-district.

The long-term care residence option is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Hardyston Township Master Plan. Specifically, the Township has stated providing a mix of housing types for all income levels and demographics, especially seniors, as a desired objective. Furthermore, a long term residence option has the ability to generate additional affordable housing units, which can address any future affordable housing option. In addition, permitting the long-term care option in the transitional housing subzone is compatible with the surrounding uses and will create a transitional area between the proposed residential units and the existing commercial uses.

Finally, due to the fact that Hardyston Township is not seeking Plan Conformance for the portions of the Township located in the Planning Area of the Highlands, the recommended changes are not in opposition to the Township's Petition for Plan Conformance and the Highlands Regional Master Plan.

- Forty-five properties been identified as split zone lots, meaning that the lots fall within more than one zoning district according to the current zoning map which was last updated in July 2007. It is the intention of this Reexamination Report to recommend that any property identified as being split zoned be reviewed and potentially rezoned to fall entirely within one zone district or have a clear setback line established for lots that should remain with split zones. The majority of the split zones are located along County Route 631 (North Church Road) and State Route 94. The remaining lots are either railroad lots or open space lots in the Newark Watershed and Hamburg Mountain Wildlife Refuge or lots on the perimeter of existing lake communities. A list of these properties was provided as part of the 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Report.

## SECTION B

The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.

The Goals and Objectives of the 2003 Master Plan continue to remain valid. The following description builds upon the recommendations of the 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Report.

### 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Recommendations

- The Planning Board recommends that the specific changes, as detailed in the document titled "Hardyston Township Highlands Preservation Area Checklist Ordinance," approved by the Highlands Council as part of the Township's Petition for Plan Conformance (copy attached herewith) be adopted by the Governing Body to implement the objectives, policies and standards as outlined in the Highlands Preservation Element of the Master Plan.

*The Township has yet to adopt the Checklist Ordinance as recommended in the 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Report. This recommendation continues to remain valid.*

- The Planning Board recommends that the specific changes, as detailed in the document titled "Hardyston Township Highlands Preservation Area Exemption Ordinance," (copy attached herewith) be adopted by the Governing Body to implement the procedural and substantive requirements by which the Township may issue Highlands Act Exemption Determinations.

*Since 2014, the Township adopted the Highlands Preservation Area Exemption Ordinance (Ordinance No. 2014-08) to implement the procedural and substantive requirements by which the Township may issue Highlands Act Exemption Determinations.*

- The Planning Board recommends that the specific changes, as detailed in the proposed amendment to the Commercial Recreation Village Center District (C-R(VC)) (copy attached herewith), be adopted by the Governing Body to allow for the creation of a long-term care residence option in a portion of the transitional housing sub-district of the C-R(VC) Form Based Code. The provisions to allow a long-term residence option will amend the C-R(VC) district to allow for assisted living facilities and related services, including nursing services in a portion of the transitional housing sub-district.

The long-term care residence option is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Hardyston Township Master Plan. Specifically, the Township has stated providing a mix of

housing types for all income levels and demographics, especially seniors, as a desired objective. Furthermore, a long term residence option has the ability to generate additional affordable housing units, which can address any future affordable housing option. In addition, permitting the long-term care option in the transitional housing subzone is compatible with the surrounding uses and will create a transitional area between the proposed residential units and the existing commercial uses.

Finally, due to the fact that Hardyston Township is not seeking Plan Conformance for the portions of the Township located in the Planning Area of the Highlands, the recommended changes are not in opposition to the Township's Petition for Plan Conformance and the Highlands Regional Master Plan.

*The Township further amended the Commercial Recreation Village Center (C-R(VC)) Zone to allow for assisted living facilities and related services, including nursing services, in a portion of the transitional housing sub-district of the Village Center (Ordinance No. 2014-09).*

- Forty-five properties been identified as split zone lots, meaning that the lots fall within more than one zoning district according to the current zoning map which was last updated in July 2007. It is the intention of this Reexamination Report to recommend that any property identified as being split zoned be reviewed and potentially rezoned to fall entirely within one zone district or have a clear setback line established for lots that should remain with split zones. The majority of the split zones are located along County Route 631 (North Church Road) and State Route 94. The remaining lots are either railroad lots or open space lots in the Newark Watershed and Hamburg Mountain Wildlife Refuge or lots on the perimeter of existing lake communities. A list of these properties was provided as part of the 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Report.

*Since the last zoning map update in 2007, those properties identified as split zoned have not been rectified. Any property identified as being split zoned should be reviewed and potentially rezoned to fall entirely within one zone district or have a clear setback line established for lots that should remain with split zones.*

## SECTION C

The extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, county and municipal policies and objectives.

### Changes at the Local Level

#### Demographic Characteristics

The population trends experienced in Hardyston, Sussex County and New Jersey from 1930 through 2010, as well as the 2017 estimates, are shown below from the U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census and the American Community Survey. There were 8,213 residents in Hardyston in 2010, which represents an increase of 2,042 people from 2000. The Township's population grew rapidly between 1950 and 1980, adding about 1,000 residents each decade. Between the 2010 Census and the 2017 American Community Survey Estimates, the population experienced a decline of 249 people (or -3.0%). The estimated 2017 population is 7,964, which represents 1,793 fewer residents than the Township initially had in 2000.

The Township's population somewhat mirrors trends at the County and State level. When drastic population increases occurred at the County and State level (specifically from 1950 to 1970), the population of the Township also experienced some of its highest rates of population growth. However, in 2010 when the populations of the County and State began tapering off (3.5% and 4.5% respectively), Hardyston experienced an increase of 33.1%. From 1990 to 2010, Hardyston Township saw the most significant population increase compared to other municipalities within Sussex County.

Population Trends									
Year	Hardyston			Sussex County			New Jersey		
	Population	Change		Population	Change		Population	Change	
		Number	Percent		Number	Percent		Number	Percent
1930	946	-	-	27,830	-	-	4,041,334	-	-
1940	1,034	88	9.3%	29,632	1,802	6.5%	4,160,165	118,831	2.9%
1950	1,279	245	23.7%	34,423	4,791	16.2%	4,835,329	675,164	16.2%
1960	2,206	927	72.5%	49,255	14,832	43.1%	6,066,782	1,231,453	25.5%
1970	3,499	1,293	58.6%	77,528	28,273	57.4%	7,171,112	1,104,330	18.2%
1980	4,553	1,054	30.1%	116,119	38,591	49.8%	7,365,011	193,899	2.7%
1990	5,275	722	15.9%	130,943	14,824	12.8%	7,730,188	365,177	5.0%
2000	6,171	896	17.0%	144,166	13,223	10.1%	8,414,350	684,162	8.9%
2010	8,213	2,042	33.1%	149,265	5,099	3.5%	8,791,894	377,544	4.5%
2017*	7,964	-249	-3.0%	143,570	-5,695	-3.8%	8,960,161	168,267	1.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

\*2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Population Estimates

The median age of the residents of Hardyston in 2010 was 43.4 years. Analysis of age group characteristics provides insight into the actual changes in population. This comparison is helpful in determining impacts these changes have on housing needs, community facilities and services for the Township. As detailed in the table below, Hardyston experienced notable shifts since 2000. The most significant increase was in the 65 and over age cohort, which saw an increase of 89.5%. All other cohorts in the Township also experienced an increase, with the 35 to 44 cohort experiencing a reduction of 26 people or 2.2% from 2000.

Population by Age 2000 and 2010, Hardyston Township						
Population	2000		2010		Change, 2000 to 2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percentage	Number	Percent
Total population	6,171	100.0%	8,213	100.0%	2,042	33.1%
Under 5 years	424	6.9%	487	5.9%	63	14.9%
5 to 14	913	14.8%	959	11.7%	46	5.0%
15 to 24	581	9.4%	839	10.2%	258	44.4%
25 to 34	768	12.4%	864	10.5%	96	12.5%
35 to 44	1,200	19.4%	1,174	14.3%	-26	-2.2%
45 to 54	996	16.1%	1,456	17.7%	460	46.2%
55 to 64	659	10.7%	1,240	15.1%	581	88.2%
65 and over	630	10.2%	1,194	14.5%	564	89.5%

Source: US Census Bureau

Existing Housing Conditions

In 2010, Hardyston had a total of 3,255 occupied housing units out of a total of 3,783 housing units. A majority of these units (2,725 or 83.7%) were owner-occupied while 530 units (16.3%) were renter-occupied. Of the total housing units in Hardyston Township, 14%, or 528 units, were considered vacant in 2010. A majority of the structures (349 units or 66.1%) are utilized for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. 8.1% or 43 units were for sale only, 16.7% or 88 units were categorized as “other vacant”, and 41 units were for rent.

<b>Housing Data Hardyston Township, 2010</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	3,783	100.0%
<b>Occupied Housing Units</b>	3,255	86.0%
Owner Occupied	2,725	83.7%
Renter Occupied	530	16.3%
<b>Vacant Housing Units</b>	528	14.0%
For Rent	41	7.8%
Rented, not occupied	2	0.4%
For Sale Only	43	8.1%
Sold, not occupied	5	0.9%
For Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use	349	66.1%
Other Vacant	88	16.7%

Source: 2010 Census, Table DP-1

The median year of construction for the housing stock in Hardyston is 1985. The housing stock consists of mostly older structures. As shown in the following table, approximately 21% of all existing houses in the Township were built prior to 1960.

<b>Year Structure Built Hardyston Township, 2017 Estimates</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Built 1939 or earlier	176	4.6%
Built 1940 to 1949	189	5.0%
Built 1950 to 1959	425	11.2%
Built 1960 to 1969	428	11.3%
Built 1970 to 1979	392	10.3%
Built 1980 to 1989	528	13.9%
Built 1990 to 1999	520	13.7%
Built 2000 to 2009	1,037	27.3%
Built 2010 to 2013	83	2.2%
Built 2014 or later	17	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,795</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Median Year Structure Built</b>	<b>1985</b>	
Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Tables B25034 and B25035		

### Employment Data

The 2013-2017 5-year American Community Survey estimates reveal that 70.3% of Hardyston's 16 and over population is in the labor force. The County's employment status is similar to that of Hardyston. About one-third of both the Township's and County's over 16 population are not in the labor force (29.7.7% and 31.4%, respectively).

<b>Employment Hardyston and Sussex County, 2017 Estimates</b>				
	<b>Hardyston</b>		<b>Sussex County</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Population 16 years and over	6,496	100.0%	117,479	100.0%
In labor force	4,568	70.3%	80,575	68.6%
Civilian Labor Force	4,568	70.3%	80,518	68.5%
Employed	4,294	66.1%	75,370	64.2%
Unemployed	274	4.2%	5,148	4.4%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%	57	0.0%
Not in labor force	1,928	29.7%	36,904	31.4%
Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03				

There is currently very limited information available on actual jobs within municipalities. The Department of Labor collects information on covered employment, which is employment and

wage data for private employees covered by unemployment insurance. The table below provides a snapshot of private employers located within Hardyston and reflects the number of jobs covered by private employment insurance from 2007 through 2017.

According to data from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the highest number of covered jobs in Hardyston was in 2013 when 1,068 jobs were covered by unemployment insurance. Though Hardyston's private employment is nearly the same in 2017 as it was in 2007, it has fluctuated over the past decade. The number of covered jobs rose each year from 2007 to 2010, but 2011 saw a decline of almost 12 percent. Covered employment rose again slightly between 2012 and 2013; however, since 2013, the number of covered jobs has begun to drop again, to a total of 948 in 2017.

<b>Private Wage Covered Employment 2007 – 2017*</b>			
<b>Hardyston Township</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Jobs</b>	<b># Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
2007	951	-	-
2008	1,061	110	11.6%
2009	1,114	53	5.0%
2010	1,120	6	0.5%
2011	987	-133	-11.9%
2012	1,061	75	7.6%
2013	1,068	6	0.6%
2014	1,054	-14	-1.3%
2015	1,056	2	0.2%
2016	1,027	-29	-2.7%
2017	948	-79	-7.7%
Source: NJ Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development Labor Force Estimates			
*There are some questions related to the accuracy of these statistics.			

Affordable Housing

The status of affordable housing is currently on the flux in New Jersey. The Council on Affordable Housing no longer has jurisdiction over the affordable housing obligations by New Jersey municipalities.

In the New Jersey Supreme Court Decision decided on March 10, 2015, In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96 & 5:97 by the N.J. Council on Affordable Housing, 221 N.J. 1 (2015) ("Mount Laurel IV"), the Supreme Court held that since COAH was no longer functioning, trial courts were to resume their role as the forum of first instance for evaluating municipal compliance with Mount Laurel

obligations, and also established a transitional process for municipalities to seek a Judgment of Compliance and Repose ("JOR") in lieu of Substantive Certification from COAH.

The New Jersey Supreme Court Decided on January 18, 2017 in In Re Declaratory Judgment Actions Filed by Various Municipalities, County of Ocean, pursuant To The Supreme Court's decision In re Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96, 221 N.J. 1 (2015), that for the sixteen year period between 1999 and 2015 (known as the "gap period") when the Council on Affordable Housing failed to implement rules creating fair share obligations for municipalities, the Mount Laurel constitutional obligation did not go away. Therefore, municipalities continue to be responsible for the need created during the gap period.

Hardyston Township adopted a Housing Element/Fair Share Plan under the new Round Three rules and regulations. The Plan addresses the following affordable housing obligations:

- Rehabilitation Share: 31 units
- Prior Round Obligation: 18 units
- Prior Round Bonus Credits: 5
- Third Round Obligation: 270 units
- Third Round Bonus Credits: 67

The Township executed a Settlement Agreement with Fair Share Housing Center and subsequently adopted the Housing Element/Fair Share Plan in September 2016. The Township further received a Court Order granting Substantive Certification and Judgement of Compliance and Repose on September 26, 2016.

#### Land Use Plan Element Amendment (2016)

The Township of Hardyston adopted an amendment to their Land Use Element in January of 2016. Prior to this amendment, Lot 2.01 and lot 2.08 of Block 67 were zoned as minimum impact development zone; however, the previous approvals, which are still valid, allowed for the development of medium density semi-attached and attached housing. The amendment makes these lots a new medium density residential zone permitting townhomes and quadraplex units, which is consistent with the current development patterns. Additionally, the amendment includes an obligation of affordable housing and is reflected in the Township's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, which assists the Township in its effort to meet their fair share obligation.

### Additional Changes at the Local Level

#### General Goals & Objectives

The General Goals & Objectives in the 2003 and 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Report continue to remain valid.

#### Land Use

Since 2014, the Township adopted Ordinance No. 2016-03 which created the R-5 Attached Single Family/Multi-Family Residential District, which permits quadraplex style apartment dwellings in areas which previously permitted townhouse development as part of the Ridgefield Commons project. The amendment creates use and bulk requirements as well as other conditions applicable to the new R-5 Zone.

In 2017, the Township adopted an amendment to their signage ordinance (Ordinance No. 2016-08). This amendment focused on the regulation of temporary and message board signage (including electronic message boards) as well as signage for specific uses, such as farming. The amendment also includes additional regulations applicable to the height of fences and walls.

In 2018, the Township adopted an amendment to their lighting ordinance (Ordinance No. 2018-10). This amendment focuses on outdoor lighting and adds new definitions related to lighting. It also sets design standards applicable to outdoor lighting and specifies prohibitions for public property and rights-of-way as well as enforcement procedures.

Additionally, The Township petitioned the Highlands Council for Plan Conformance in 2014. Since this time, the Township petition was approved by the Highlands Council. In addition to the 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Report, the Township subsequently adopted the Master Plan Element for the Highlands Preservation Area.

The Highlands Master Plan Element includes a set of comprehensive goals and objectives related to the Preservation Area, Housing Plan, Land Preservation and Land Stewardship Plan and Sustainable Economic Development Plan. The Amendment also addresses conformance to the Highlands Act, the MLUL, and State, regional and local plans.

In 2014, the Township amended the Land Use Ordinance to establish a process for municipal Highlands Act exemption determinations. The amendment adds new definitions related to land use planning, specifies the geographic extent of the Preservation Area within the Township, and creates a clear procedure for determining municipal exemptions. The Township continues to work to achieve Plan Conformance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan.

The Township has completed the first phase of the Highlands Water Use and Conservation Management Plan, the Net Water Availability Study. The Township continues to work with CDM Smith to prepare the Plan.

The Township amended their Land Use Element in January of 2019 to create new medium density residential zone permitting townhomes and quadraplex units. Lot 2.01 and lot 2.08 of Block 67 were previously zoned as part of the minimum impact development zone, but this new medium density residential zoning is more consistent with the current development patterns.

In 2019, the Township also adopted an amendment to their zoning ordinance to reduce the minimum lot size and set-back requirements for resort-oriented housing in connection with a golf course.

### Conservation

The Township will continue to comply with the Highlands Council land use regulations for the Preservation Area and comply with the NJDEP rules and regulations. The Township is committed to protecting the natural resources and features. As stated in the 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Report, "conformance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan will support this continued objective."

Additionally, the Township hosts a Clean Communities Program which aims to provide funding for volunteer group clean up events throughout the Township.

### Open Space & Recreation

Hardyston Township currently has approximately 39% of its total acreage zoned as OSGU: Open Space and Government Use, which includes properties that are preserved open space.

The Township continues to facilitate a number of sport and other recreational community programs through the Walkkill Valley Sports League, including cub scouts, running, soccer, softball, baseball, football, cheerleading and basketball, to name a few. The Sports and Recreation Complex located on Wheatsworth Road is used by various sports leagues and is open to the community year-round.

The Township continues to support the community garden, which was established in 2012, as part of their Sustainable Jersey initiative. The garden provides raised beds for community gardens as well as a charity garden that provides fresh produce to local food banks. The mission of the Hardyston Community and Charity Garden is to promote healthy lifestyles, foster community spirit, provide educational opportunities for school-aged children, and help address the need for fresh, healthy food in local food banks.

Hardyston continues to look for other opportunities to expand or enhance recreation opportunities.

### Community Facilities

The municipal complex on Wheatsworth Road has become a civic space for the community due to its proximity to the Sports and Recreation Complex, Hardyston Elementary School, Wallkill Valley High School, and Sussex County YMCA.

The Township continues to serve its senior citizens through the provision of various programs, services and activities as well as seminars and workshops. The Township also offers free, on-demand transportation services for elderly and disabled citizens through a partnership with the Sussex County Transit Program.

The Township continues to strive to maintain and enhance the Township's community facilities consistent with the needs of the community.

### Utilities

The Township continues to work with Sussex County in the development of the Countywide Wastewater Management Plan. In 2013, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection approved the county-wide Sewer Service Area map, which determines future expansion/connections for public sewers. The wastewater management plan for the portion of the Township located in the Highlands's Preservation Area will be governed by the Highlands Regional Master Plan.

In their Highlands Preservation Area Master Plan Element, the Township lists goals to help guide the regulation and management of water and wastewater utilities as well as the use and maintenance of septic systems. The goals enumerated in the Element seek to ensure that future development within the Township is effective, efficient, and aligned with the capacity of water resources in terms of quantity and quality. As such, any future higher density development will be located in areas that have approved public water and sewer areas.

The Township adopted a Stormwater Management Plan in April 2005 and Stormwater Management Ordinance in April 2006 to help protect and improve the Township's stormwater facilities. These documents were analyzed and found to be compliant with NJDEP rules and regulations. The Township continues to enforce stormwater design and performance standards in order to address stormwater-related impacts and protect public safety.

In 2019, the Township adopted two ordinances related to the improvement of the North Church Technical Center's fire protection system using a special assessment tax.

### Circulation

Providing safe circulation for all modes of transit and encouraging mass transit options continues to be an objective of the Township.

The Township also continues to prioritize the improvement of traffic signals at key intersections, implementation of traffic calming measures, and provision of on- and off-street parking and sidewalks where appropriate.

The Township has a successful agreement with Sussex County to provide bus transportation services for senior citizens and individuals with limited mobility.

The Township has been working to improve the appearance of major transportation corridors and capitalize on the “gateway to Sussex County” theme through the use of signage at the municipal complex and main gateways to the Township, which are visually attractive and help to promote Hardyston. As part of this effort, it is important that the Township also continue to employ necessary measures to improve wayfinding and mitigate the effects of increased regional traffic.

### Economic Development

Hardyston continues to promote economic development along the Township's established corridors and within the Township's North Church Technical Center and other appropriate locations throughout the Township, such as the Stockholm area. Part of this effort includes encouraging a mix of uses that provide employment, retail opportunities, services, and entertainment.

The Hardyston Township Economic Development Commission routinely updates a “Welcome to Hardyston” press folder and the Hardyston Township website to encourage economic development within the Township. This effort is complemented by the Township's policies aimed at retaining existing businesses, encouraging expansion and attracting new ones.

Hardyston Township continues to promote the reuse of vacant non-residential buildings.

The Township continues to develop strategies that encourage recreation and eco-tourism. Additionally, a new tourism brochure has been created and the Township is currently exploring opportunities related to grants for signs located within industrial parks and shopping centers.

### Housing

The Housing goals & objectives continue to remain valid. The Township adopted a Housing Element/Fair Share Plan in September 2016, and further received a Court Order granting Substantive Certification and Judgement of Compliance and Repose on September 26, 2016. The

Township adopted an amendment to the Low and Moderate Income Housing section of the general ordinances. This amendment adds new definitions related to housing, specifies the requirements for affordable housing, and outlines the mechanisms to be used in order to satisfy their obligations. The amendment adds requirements for inclusionary zoning, new constructions, affirmative marketing requirements, occupancy standards, and control periods for restricted ownership and rental, as well as eligibility and enforcement procedures and other administrative requirements.

The Commercial Recreation Village Center (C-R (VC)) District was amended in 2014 to permit long-term residential care and establish an affordable housing obligation. Additionally, the 2016 Land Use Element amendment reaffirms a 24-unit affordable housing obligation, which has been reflected in the Township's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. However, the 2016 Land Use Element entails that these units meet the requirements of the Uniform Affordability Housing Controls (UHAC) with respect to bedroom and income distributions as well as to the phasing of units as mandated by the Fair Housing Act. To date, no affordable units have been constructed within the Commercial Recreation Village Center Zone.

#### Historic Preservation

Protection and awareness of the Township's cultural, social and historic heritage as means to enhance the Township and promote economic development is a continued objective supported by the Township's land use policies and regulations and conformance with Highlands Regional Master Plan.

#### Recycling

Hardyston Township continues to support effort recycling efforts both at the school and municipal facilities as well within the community as a whole.

### **County and Regional Level Planning Documents**

#### *Sussex County Open Space and Recreation Plan Update (2014)*

Hardyston Township contains 5,329 acres of preserved lands via federal parks and open space, state parks, municipally owned land, county managed open space, preserved farmlands, and non-profit lands. The Highlands Trail enters the Township of Hardyston through the Pequannock Watershed land and Sparta Mountain Wildlife Management Area & Sanctuary. Hardyston co-manages a 3,282-acre Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and a 349-acre wildlife sanctuary with Sparta Township. According to Sussex County's 2016 Open Space and Recreation Plan Update,

Hardyston is part of the proposed Sussex-Wantage Franklin-Hamburg-Hardyston-Ogdensburg Regional Center.

The 2016 Sussex County Open Space and Recreation Plan Update lists the following goals specifically related to Hardyston Township:

- Create walking path that connects to Hamburg Park
- Connect trail to Crystal Springs
- Park development and management

An Additional Action item listed in the Update related to Hardyston Township is to construct a footbridge across the Walkkill River and a parking area off of Scenic Lakes Drive.

Lastly, the Update contains the following recommendations regarding proposed trails or improvements to existing trails:

1. Walkkill Valley Heritage Trail
2. Zinc Mine/Hamburg Mountain Trail
3. Bicycle routes -- connect to trails, neighborhoods, open space, business centers
4. Rec trail linking Crystal Springs-Mountain Creek
5. Walking trail connecting rec complex with Hamburg Park
6. Iron Horse Rail Trail
7. Connect Wheatsworth Rec complex to Rail Trail

#### Sussex County Strategic Growth Plan Update (2014)

The 2005 Sussex County Strategic Growth Plan was updated in 2014 in an effort to “reduce or reverse the loss of population and economic base that the County has been experiencing in recent years”. The Sussex County Strategic Growth Plan Update makes general recommendations related to tourism, transportation, housing, economic development, reducing the regulatory burden, and agriculture.

The following are recommendations that are included in the Plan:

- Tourism:
  - Support and expand tourism marketing and the hospitality industry
- Transportation:
  - Improve roadways and transit to make the County more attractive for residents and businesses
- Housing:

- Encourage mixed-use development and housing options for people with developmental and physical disabilities, mental illness, and the elderly
- Economic Development:
  - Support economic development through education and awareness of current and potential business and industry needs such as workforce training and business retention efforts by the Sussex County Economic Development Partnership
- Reducing the Regulatory Burden:
  - Coordinate with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection in accommodating targeted growth through a partnership with municipalities
- Agriculture:
  - Support agriculture businesses through a partnership with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture

The Sussex County Strategic Growth Plan Update refers to Hardyston Township as an example of reducing costs through the use of shared service agreements. The Township currently participates in more than 35 shared service agreements.

#### Sussex County Transportation Planning

Hardyston and Sussex County are governed by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, a metropolitan planning organization charged with overseeing projects related to transportation improvement in the North Jersey region.

According to the Profile of Sussex County published by the NJTPA, Sussex County has a significantly lower population density than other New Jersey counties. The Sussex County Profile demonstrates that 55% of County residents were commuting outside of the County for work, and that approximately 70% of the County's residents are commuting alone.

The 2010/2011 Regional Household Travel Survey (RHTS) confirms this data and adds that residents are traveling similar distances for work compared to the regional average, but that residents are traveling further for non-work-related trips. Further, the RHTS indicates that fewer Sussex County residents opt for transit, walking or biking than residents of other New Jersey counties.

#### Sussex County Complete Streets Policy (2014)

The Sussex County Complete Streets Policy and Implementation Plan was adopted in July of 2014. The Complete Streets Plan lists key policy guide considerations aimed at improving safety and mobility for the residents of Sussex County. The key policy guide considerations include:

- Evaluate the need for transportation improvements to accommodate current or potential users during the planning of new or retrofit transportation facilities.
- Provide safe and accessible accommodations within the circulation system for existing and future pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation routes and networks throughout the County that connect to key destinations, such as employment, education, residential, recreational, public facilities, retail and public transportation centers.
- Establish procedures to evaluate transportation projects for context-sensitive Complete Streets improvements, and identify opportunities for improvements in retrofit projects, such as resurfacing, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.
- Foster collaboration between relevant agencies, including County Public Works, Engineering and Planning, in order to facilitate development of logical circulation systems that provide safe and convenient transportation options for all modes.
- Encourage any large new developments and redevelopment projects to incorporate Complete Streets concepts and to provide interconnected circulation networks.

The Plan creates a typology which identifies ten types of corridors and six overlays that can be used by communities with a mix of rural and suburban land uses, like Hardyston Township. As mentioned in the Plan, a statewide Complete Streets policy has been adopted by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) in 2009, which applies to all state roadway facilities.

The Sussex County Complete Streets Policy and Implementation Plan does not contain any recommendation specific to Hardyston.

*Sussex County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2016)*

In accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), Sussex County adopted the 2011 Sussex County New Jersey All-Hazards Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan. The DMA requires that hazard mitigation plans (HMPs) be updated every five years. Sussex County's HMP was updated in 2016 and it addresses the Township of Hardyston in Section 9.12. For communities to remain eligible for hazard mitigation assistance from the federal government, they must maintain an updated hazard mitigation plan. The purpose of the Sussex County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan is to identify potential natural disaster risks that threaten the County's communities and residents. The Plan evaluates the risks and identifies planned projects designed to prevent and mitigate the effects of future natural disasters.

Hardyston Township experienced three significant hazard events: Hurricane Irene (August 26 - September 5, 2011), which resulted in three days of power outages and road closures; a severe storm on October 29, 2011, which resulted in two days of road closures and three days with no

power and a sink hole; and Hurricane Sandy (October 26 – November 8, 2012), which caused up to 11 days of power outages. In the cases of both hurricanes, the County received assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for emergency protection measures, debris removal, road and bridge repair, and resource donations.

The Sussex County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan includes individual plans for each municipality within the County, including the Township of Hardyston. The Township identified the following vulnerabilities with regard to hazard problems:

- High wildfire risk zone
- Very High wildfire risk zone
- Carbonate Hazard Zone (sink holes)

The HMP recommends the Township of Hardyston implement the following initiatives in an effort to provide more effective hazard mitigation:

- Implement Fire Wise Program throughout Township
- Flood proofing of the Fire Company #1 and First Aid squad buildings located on Colson Terrace
- Storm-water management study to correct storm drainage system located on Colson Terrace
- Retrofit roof to meet current snow load standards at the Elementary School
- Retrofit Elementary School gymnasium windows with impact resistant glass and shutters
- Retrofit South West side of municipal building with impact resistant windows and shutters
- Conduct all-hazards public education and outreach program for hazard mitigation and preparedness

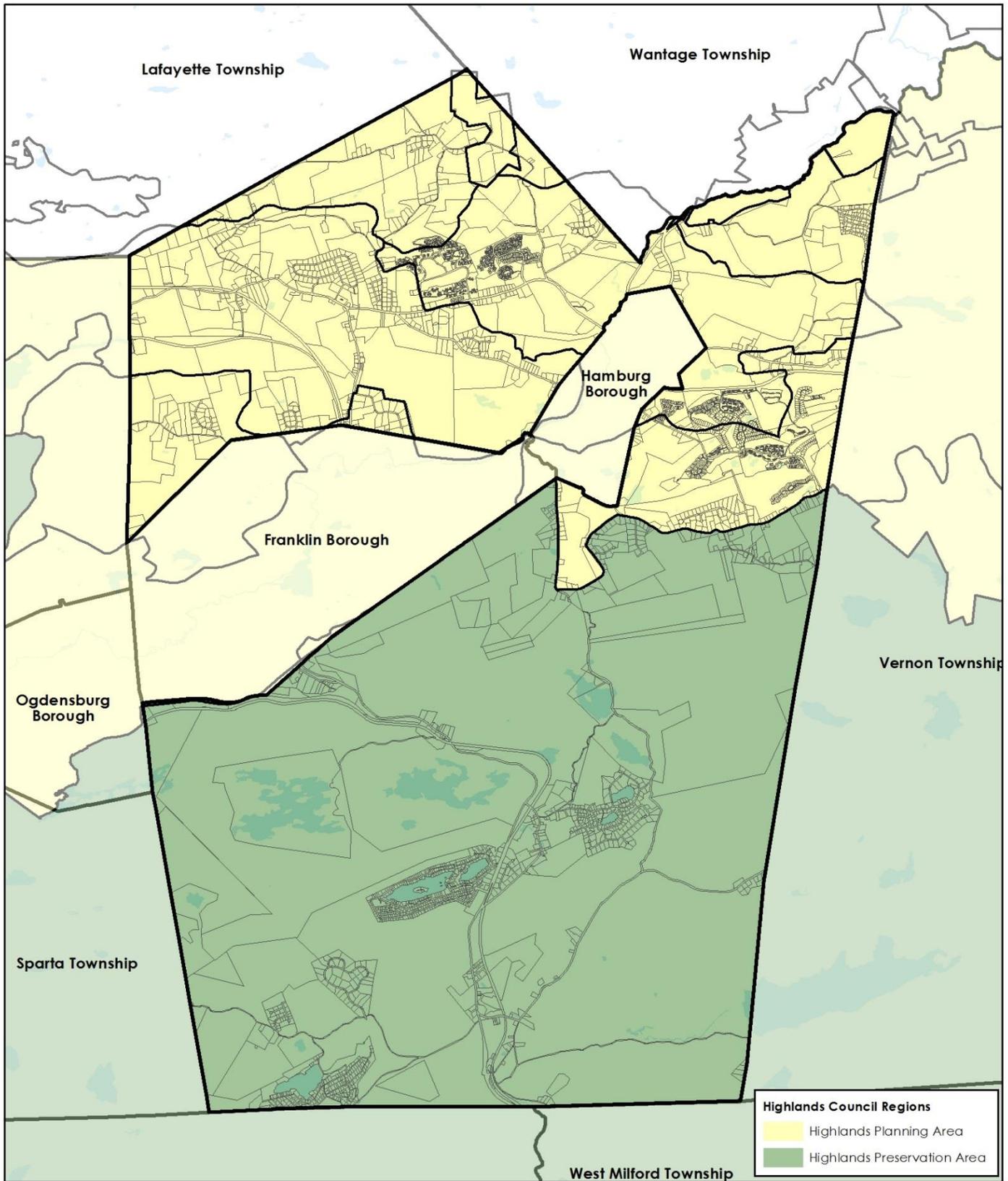
According to the 2016 HMP Update, none of the aforementioned initiatives have been completed due to budget and personnel constraints and a lack of funding.

#### New Jersey Highlands Council

As shown in the following map, majority of Hardyston Township, approximately 414,960 acres in its southern portion, lies within the Highlands Preservation Area, which is mandatory. The northern portion of the Township is within the Highlands Planning area, where participation is optional. Passage of the Highlands Act, adoption of the Regional Master Plan by the Highlands Council, and adoption by the Governing Body of its resolution to conform the municipal planning documents to the Regional Master Plan have significantly altered and increased the objectives that must be addressed in the Township Master Plan, including but not limited to incorporating a variety of Highlands Resource protections, providing an emphasis on infrastructure and

environmental carrying capacities, and initiating a substantial modification to the methodology to be used in determining permitted densities of development within the municipality.

The Township's Petition for Plan Conformance was approved by the Highlands Council on September 15, 2011. The Township has subsequently adopted the 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Report and the Exemption Determination Ordinance. The Township continues to work with the Highlands Council to achieve Plan Conformance.



0 0.5 1 Miles

Highlands Council Planning & Preservation Areas  
Hardyston Township, Sussex County, NJ



Source: NJOGIS, NJGIN, NJDEP, NJDOT

## State Planning

### State Development and Redevelopment Plan (2001)

The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) was adopted on March 1, 2001. The SDRP allocates land into different categories called Planning Areas which range from urban to environmentally sensitive along a transect. Hardyston Township falls within several Planning Areas including Planning Area 4: Rural (PA4), Planning Area 4B: Rural Environmentally Sensitive (PA4B), Planning Area 5: Environmentally Sensitive (PA5), and the Parks and Natural Areas (PA6, PA7 and PA8). Additionally, as previously discussed, much of the southern portion of the Township is governed by the Highlands Preservation Area.

### Planning Area 4: Rural Planning Area

According to the SDRP, the intention of the Rural Planning Area is to:

- Maintain the Environs as large as contiguous areas of farmland and other lands;
- Revitalize cities and towns;
- Accommodate growth in Centers;
- Promote viable agricultural industry;
- Protect the character of existing, stable communities; and
- Confine programmed sewers and public water services to Centers.

The State Plan recommends "protecting the rural character of the area by encouraging a pattern of development that promotes a stronger rural community in the future while meeting the immediate needs of rural residents, and by identifying and preserving farmland and other open lands. The Plan also promotes policies that can protect and enhance the rural economy and agricultural industry, thereby maintaining a rural environment."

As illustrated in map at the end of this subsection, the Township has four noncontiguous areas totaling approximately 62,903 acres designated as PA4.

### Planning Area 4B: Rural Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area

The Rural Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area has one of more environmentally sensitive features. The intentions of this planning area are the same as those mentioned previously in the Rural Planning Area, and that is to:

- Maintain the Environs as large as contiguous areas of farmland and other lands;
- Revitalize cities and towns;
- Accommodate growth in Centers;
- Promote viable agricultural industry;

- Protect the character of existing, stable communities; and
- Confine programmed sewers and public water services to Centers.

The objectives of the Rural Environmentally Sensitive Areas are those of the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area. The State Plan provides for “the protection of critical natural resources and for the maintenance of the balance between ecological systems and beneficial growth. The ecological systems of the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area should be protected by carefully linking the location, character and magnitude of the development of the capacity of the natural and built environment to support new growth and development on a long-term sustainable resource basis. Large contiguous areas of undisturbed habitat should be maintained to protect sensitive natural resources and systems. Any new development that takes place in the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area should capitalize on the inherent efficiencies of compact development patterns found in existing Centers.” Moreover, the SDRP states that, Rural Planning Areas need strong Centers and that Centers should attract private investment that otherwise might not occur.

The Township has one 10,194-acre area classified as PA4B.

#### Planning Area 5: Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area

According to the SDRP, the Environmentally Sensitive Area contains large contiguous land areas with valuable ecosystems, geological features and wildlife habitats and that future environmental and economic integrity of the State rests in the protection of these irreplaceable resources.

This planning area is vulnerable to damage of many sorts from new development in the Environs, including fragmentation of landscapes, degradation of aquifers and potable water, habitat destruction, extinction of plant and animal species and destruction of other irreplaceable resources, which are vital for the preservation of the ecological integrity of New Jersey’s natural resources.

Perhaps most important, because the environs in the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area are more sensitive to disturbance than the Environs in other Planning Areas, new development has the potential to destroy the very characteristics that define the area.

According to the SDRP, the intention of the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area is to:

- Protect environmental resources through the protection of large contiguous areas of land
- Accommodate growth Centers
- Protect the character of existing communities
- Confine programmed sewers and public water services to Centers

- Revitalize cities and towns

The State Plan indicates that large contiguous areas of undisturbed habitat should be maintained to protect sensitive natural resources and systems. Moreover, new development in this area should capitalize on the inherent efficiencies of compact development patterns found in existing Centers. Benefits associated with center focused development include the preservation of open space, farmland and natural resources and to preserve or improve community character, increase opportunities for reasonably priced housing and strengths beneficial economic development opportunities.

The SDRP is very specific in its intention for the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area; "new development should be guided into Centers to preserve open space, farmland and natural resources and to preserve or improve community character, increase opportunities for reasonably priced housing and strengthen beneficial economic development opportunities."

As shown in the map at the end of this subsection, the Township contains two areas designated as PA5, which make up approximately 161,764 acres.

#### Parks and Natural Areas

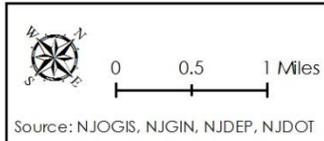
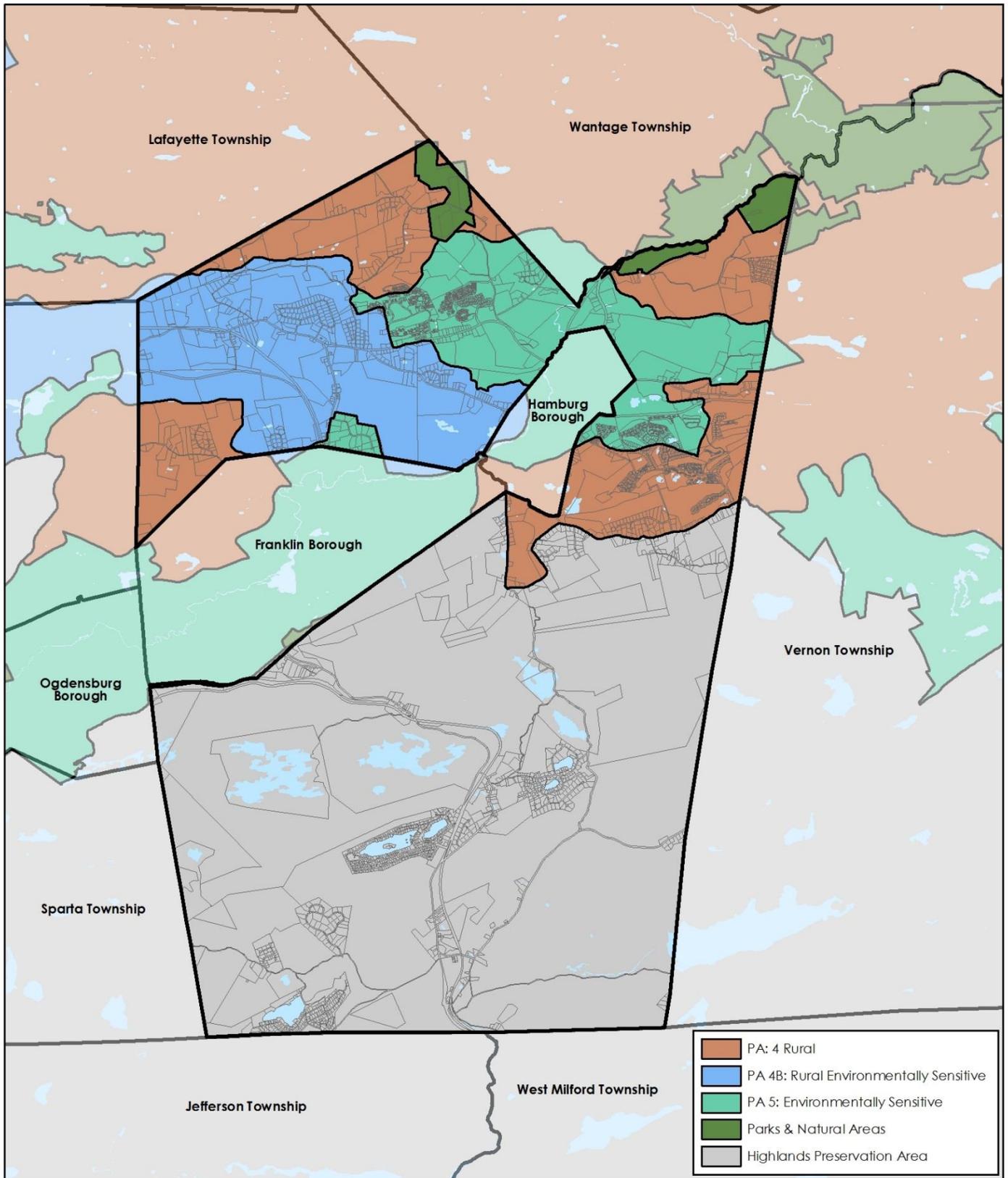
Lastly, portion of Hardyston are classified as Parks and Natural Areas, which encompass local, County, State and Federal lands and other protected natural areas. The basis of this designation represents areas of public investment for resource preservation and recreational opportunities, including federal, state and county-owned tracts of land.

According to the SDRP, the intent of the Parks and Natural Areas designation is to:

- Provide for the protection of critical natural resources
- Provide public recreational and educational opportunities;
- Ensure the maintenance of associated facilities
- Ensure the connection of these areas into a system of open lands

The overarching goal for the areas delineated as Parks and Natural Areas is "to guide management and acquisition to accomplish the intents mentioned above: the protection of critical habitats and resources, the provision of recreational opportunities, and the creation of a connected system of open lands for posterity."

The Township has approximately 721 acres of land within the Township is delineated as Park and Natural Areas according to the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.



State Development & Redevelopment Plan  
Hardyston Township, Sussex County, NJ



Draft State Strategic Plan (2011)

Since Hardyston's last Reexamination in 2014, the State released the final draft of the State Strategic Plan in 2011, meant as an update to the 2001 SDRP. While the State Strategic Plan has not been officially adopted, and the SDRP is still the official State Plan, it is still prudent to plan with updated State goals and objectives in mind so as to be prepared for its eventual implementation, or the implementation of a State Plan with similar goals.

The 2011 State Strategic Plan contains four over-arching goals that "incorporate[s] administrative actions, legislative and regulatory forms, and public investment prioritization." These goals are as follows:

- Goal 1: Targeted Economic Growth
- Goal 2: Effective Planning for Vibrant Regions
- Goal 3: Preservation and Enhancement of Critical State Resources
- Goal 4: Tactical Alignment of Government

The Strategic Plan further states "these goals must work in tandem as their interrelationship represents a critical piece of the State's blue print for success."

Additionally, the 2011 State Strategic Plan articulates a number of goals as Garden State Values, stated as follows:

- Garden State Value #1: Concentrate development and mix uses.
- Garden State Value #2: Prioritize Redevelopment, infill, and existing infrastructure.
- Garden State Value #3: Increase job and business opportunities in priority growth investment areas.
- Garden State Value #4: Create High-Quality, Livable Places.
- Garden State Value #5: Provide Transportation Choice & Efficient Mobility of Goods.
- Garden State Value #6: Advance Equity.
- Garden State Value #7: Diversify Housing Options.
- Garden State Value #8: Provide for Healthy Communities through Environmental Protection and Enhancement.
- Garden State Value #9: Protect, Restore and Enhance Agricultural, Recreational and Heritage Lands.
- Garden State Value #10: Make Decisions within a Regional Framework

Sustainable Jersey

Municipalities in New Jersey are following national and global trends towards planning for enhanced environmental sustainability and community resiliency. Land use planning and land

development policies play a key role in advancing resiliency and sustainability initiatives, because land development policies mediate the natural and built environments.

Sustainability is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Hardyston is actively participating in Sustainable Jersey, the statewide program to implement sustainable practices across many community development dimensions. The Township's Environmental Committee serves as the liaison to Program for the Township.

Hardyston Township is currently registered with Sustainable Jersey, a program that provides incentives and support to communities working to reduce waste and greenhouse gas emissions and improve environmental equity. In 2010, the Township Council passed a resolution (Resolution #72-10) supporting participation in the Sustainable Jersey Program. This resolution aims to obtain Sustainable Jersey Municipal Certification and authorizes the Township Planner to serve as the agent and complete Municipal Registration on behalf of the Township.

#### Street Smart NJ (2016)

The NJTPA provides funding for Street Smart NJ, a statewide campaign geared towards enhancing public education, awareness and behavioral change regarding transportation. According to the 2016 Pedestrian Safety Education and Enforcement Campaign Report & Campaign Results, The Township of Hardyston has not participated as a pilot community or as an additional campaign partner. The Township should consider future participation in the Street Smart NJ campaign as a way to enhance pedestrian and motorist safety.

#### New Jersey Stormwater Regulations

In 2004 the State of New Jersey adopted new Stormwater Management Rules as required by the New Jersey Water Quality Planning Act (N.J.S.A. 58:11A) and the New Jersey Water Pollution Control Act (N.J.S.A. 58:10A). The rules require municipalities to adopt a Stormwater Management Plan and a Stormwater Management Ordinance. Hardyston adopted its Stormwater Management Plan in April 2005 and adopted an implementing Stormwater Management Ordinance in April 2006. The existing 2005 Stormwater Management Plan and 2006 Stormwater Management Ordinance have been reviewed and found to continue to be valid. No amendments are necessary at this time as the Township works with the Highlands Council to achieve Full Plan Conformance.

## SECTION D

The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.

### Land Use Recommendations

The 2014 Master Plan Reexamination Report recommends the Township analyze the split zone lots located within the Township be potentially rezoned to fall entirely within one zone district or have a clear setback line established for lots that should remain with split zones. The majority of the split zones are located along County Route 631 (North Church Road) and State Route 94. The remaining lots are either railroad lots or open space lots in the Newark Watershed and Hamburg Mountain Wildlife Refuge or lots on the perimeter of existing lake communities. This recommendation continues to be valid.

As part of this Master Plan Reexamination, it is necessary to consider a zone change to better align the industrial zones with existing properties being used for industrial and quarrying purposes. It is recommended a new zone, the I-3 Industrial Zone, be created to permit quarrying as a conditional use.

The I-3 Zone encompasses the existing quarrying operation currently located in the northernmost corner of the Township, located in the vicinity of Route 23 and Scenic Lake Drive. Block 14, Lots 6.01, 7, 11 and 15 are recommended to be rezoned to the newly created I-3 Zone.

In addition to these properties, Lot 22.01 in Block 14, which is currently zoned as Commercial Recreation (C-R), is proposed to be subdivided as shown on the following map. The southern portion of the parcel (approximately 190 acres) is recommended to be rezoned into the OSGU: Open Space/Government Use Zone, while the northern portion (approximately 60 acres) is recommended to be rezoned to the newly created I-3 Industrial Zone.

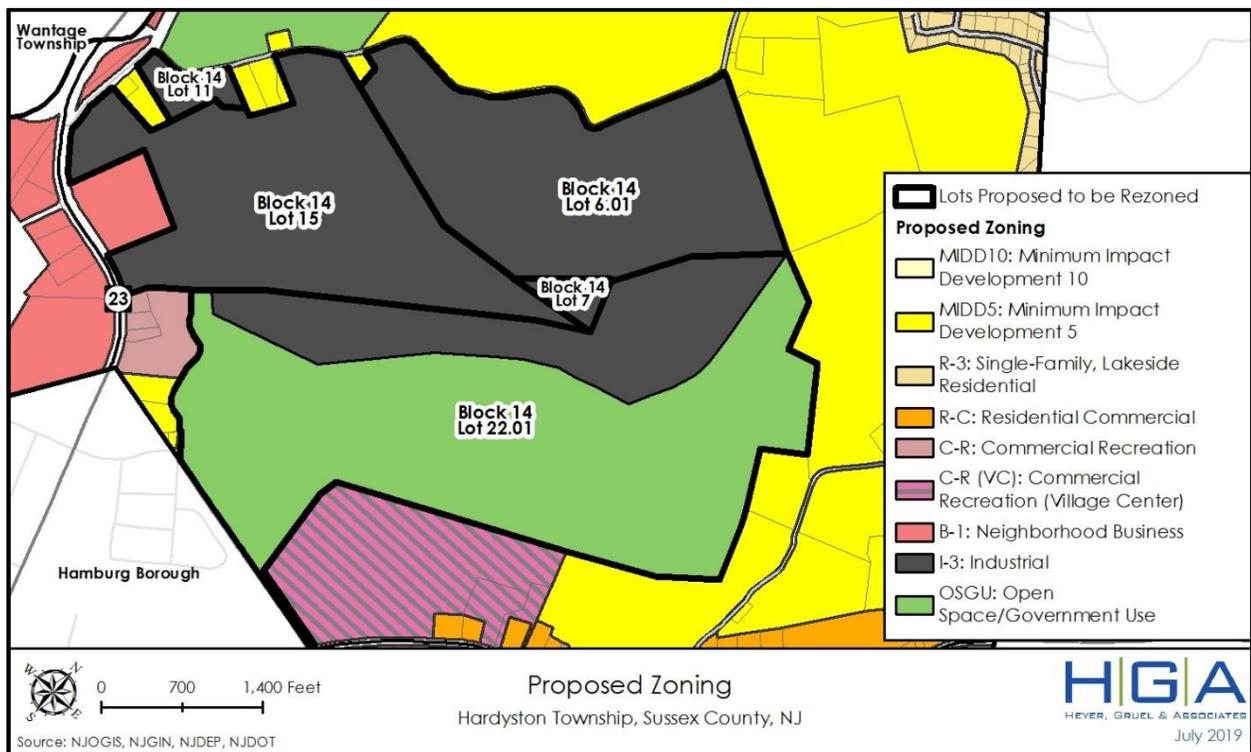
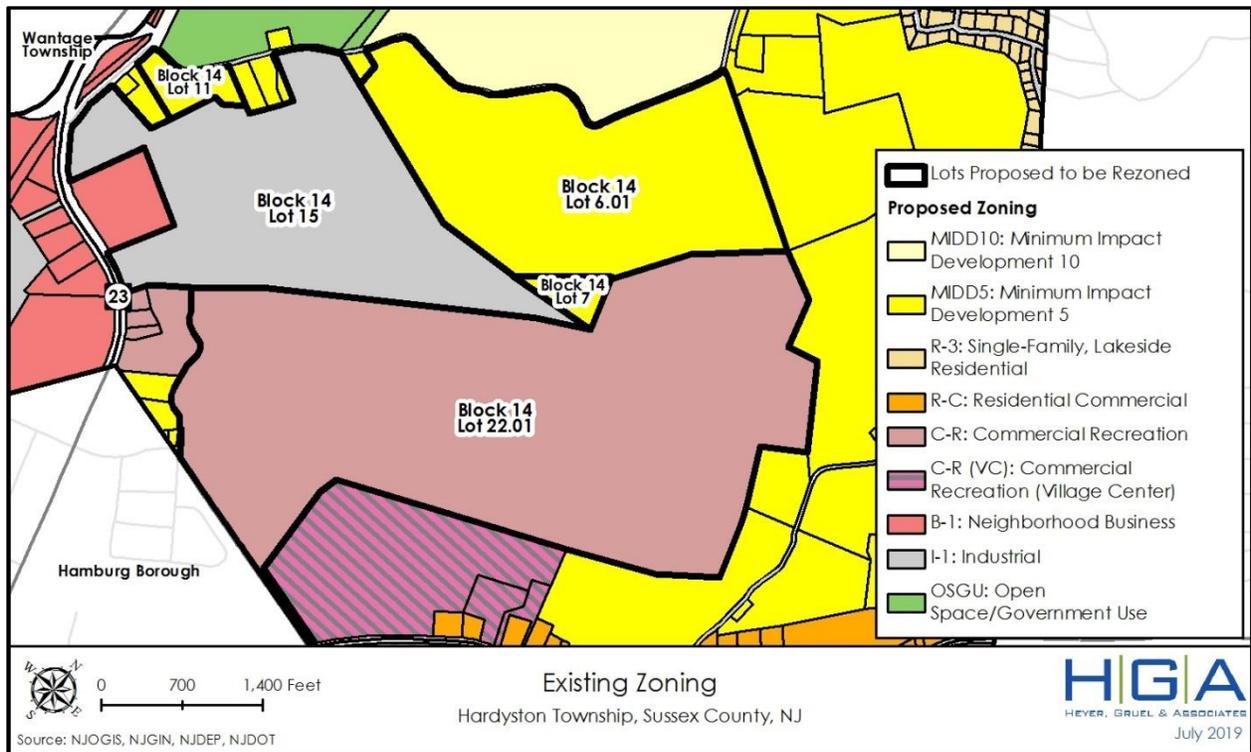
It is further recommended that the proposed I-3 Industrial Zone permit the many of the uses currently permitted in the existing I-1 and I-2 Industrial Zones, which include executive and administrative offices for industrial, manufacturing, professional or governmental uses, research laboratories, industrial plants, moving/storage buildings, warehouses, trucking and distribution terminals, farming, business uses as part of an industrial park, and golf courses to name a few. It is further recommended that the Township also permit quarry operations, which allow for stone, slate, shale or other consolidated materials to be excavated, crushed, washed or graded and sold as part of a business as a conditional use subject to the following standards:

- Minimum of 50 feet between any quarrying operation and the exterior property line
- No operation of the processing facilities shall be carried out within 100 feet of a residence

- A full buffering and landscape plan between the operation and the minimum exterior property line shall be required
- The maximum height of any structure, machinery or stockpile shall not exceed 40 feet
- All processing facilities shall operate only between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- The maximum noise level measured at the property line shall be as follows:

<b>Frequency Band (cycles per second)</b>	<b>Sound-Pressure Level Decibels re 0.0002 dyne/cm<sup>2</sup></b>
20 to 75	75
75 to 150	60
150 to 300	54
300 to 600	48
600 to 1,200	45
1,200 to 2,400	42
2,400 to 4,800	39
Above 4,800	36

- Expansion of existing quarrying operations shall be conditioned on the creation of public or private open space equal to 2.5 times the additional quarry acreage
- An application for a conditional use shall include a plan for the rehabilitation and reuse of the site that demonstrates that the site has a viable and realistic reuse of the quarry after the site is exhausted of material



### **Circulation Recommendations**

The Sussex County Complete Streets Plan (2014) lists a number of key policy considerations for municipalities to use in their efforts to enhance public safety and mobility. Though the Plan does not make any recommendations specific to Hardyston, the Township may benefit from a consideration to adopt some of the corridor and overlay types listed in the Plan. In terms of highways and other priority roads, County Routes 515, 517, 631, 657, 661 and 673 and State Route 23 run through the Township. At the points where they intersect with the Township, County Routes 661, 515 and 517 are classified as County Connectors, County Route 631 is Rural Highway C, County Routes 657 and 673 and State Route 23 are Rural Highway B. The Township may benefit from enacting regulations on these roadways which are aligned with the overlays provided by the County.

### **Hazard Mitigation/Resiliency Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Township consider utilizing some of the aforementioned strategies in order to better address hazard mitigation in the Township. These strategies include:

- Implement Fire Wise Program throughout Township
- Flood proofing of the Fire Company #1 and First Aid squad buildings located on Colson Terrace
- Storm-water management study to correct storm drainage system located on Colson Terrace
- Retrofit roof to meet current snow load standards at the Elementary School
- Retrofit Elementary School gymnasium windows with impact resistant glass and shutters
- Retrofit South West side of municipal building with impact resistant windows and shutters
- Conduct all-hazards public education and outreach program for hazard mitigation and preparedness

The Township may also benefit from participating in the Community Rating System (CRS) and possibly the National Incident Management System (NIMS) in the future. These two systems provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) enable communities to more effectively manage threats and hazards. The CRS is a tool used by municipalities to manage floodplain development in ways that enhance public safety and protect the environment. The NIMS is another tool which municipalities can use that helps to standardize procedures related to preparedness, communication and information management, resource management, incident command and long-term management and maintenance.

## **Economic Development Recommendations**

In terms of economic development, there are a plethora of tools available to the Township that can aide in their effort to retain, expand and attract businesses. In addition to the on-going economic development efforts undertaken by the Township, the following strategies may assist the Township in improving its economic development:

- Landbanking, or land aggregation, is a form of locality development that refers to the acquisition of contiguous parcels of land to be used for amenity and business improvement, such as land trusts. The Township of Hardyston may benefit from utilizing this tool in the Commercial Recreation Village Center Zone and other areas where future growth is intended.
- Townscaping is another form of locality development that aides in business improvement and image building. Townscaping refers to the effort to build a cohesive visual theme for based off of the Township's identity in order to guide future development and redevelopment. Main Street revitalization projects are an embodiment of this method. A Townscaping approach can help Hardyston to enhance the attractiveness of the commercially zoned areas, and as a result, improve retail opportunities and tourism. This mechanism can help the Township in their continued effort to attract tourism.
- Shopsteading is a newer approach to neighborhood revitalization that targets vacant commercial properties for adaptive reuse with the goal of economic revitalization. This practice provides incentives for businesspeople interested in renovating vacant commercial properties. The Township should explore the potential for utilizing shopsteading programs in order to help retain and attract businesses.
- Regulation streamlining refers to the practice of simplifying regulations in order to encourage activity. Many municipalities are establishing interdepartmental panels, one-stop permit offices, and committees whose goal is to improve the efficiency of the permitting process. This is a tactic that could serve Hardyston in their efforts to attract new businesses.

## **Open Space and Recreation/Conservation**

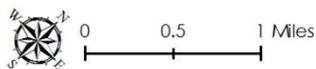
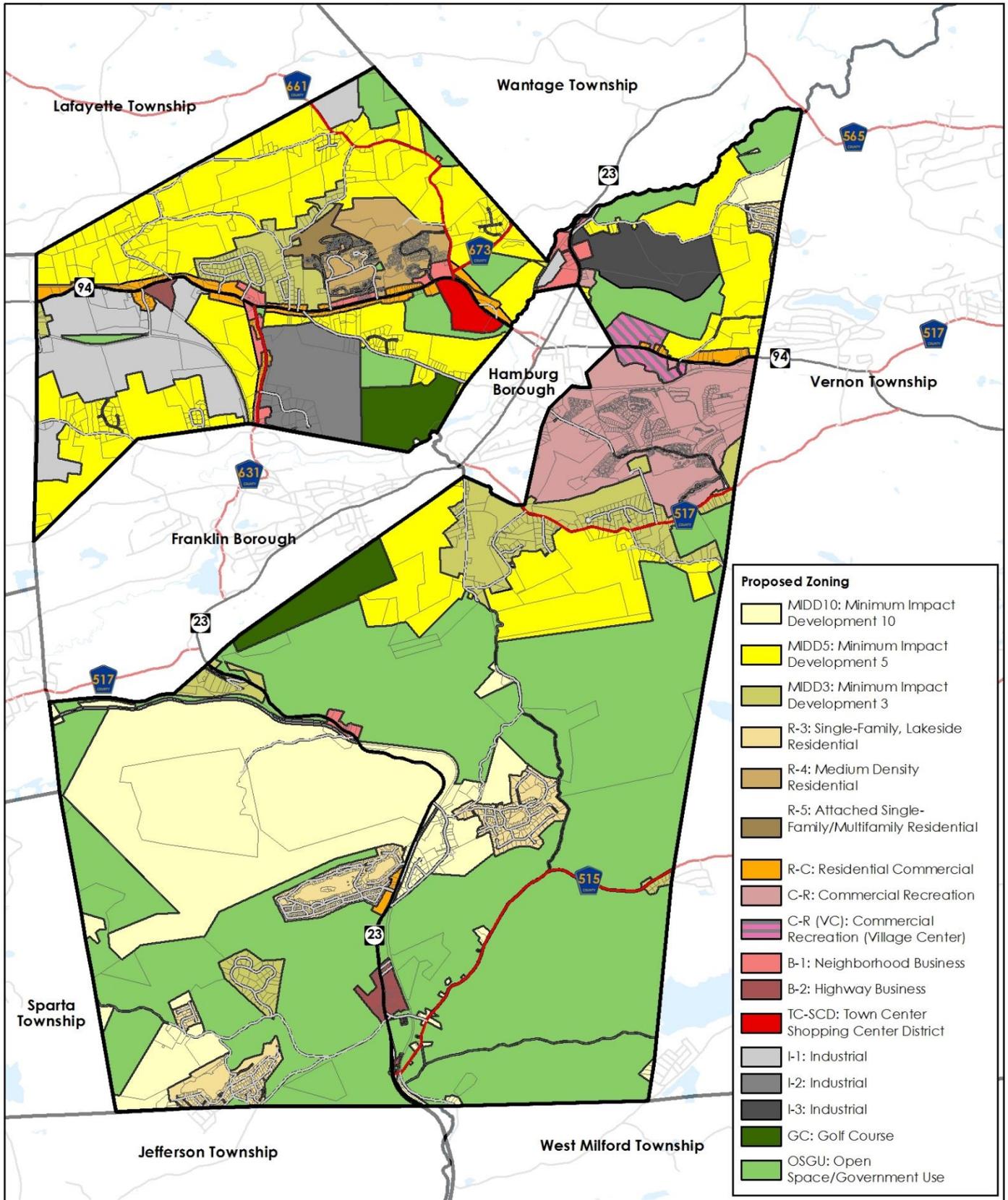
It is recommended the Township continue to explore land acquisitions for land preservation and conservation throughout the Township. It is further recommended that the Township update its Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI) with the NJDEP to be eligible for grants pertaining to land acquisition, park development, and stewardship activities.

It is further recommended the Township continue to participate in the Sustainable Jersey program and pursue certification.

## **SECTION E**

The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L.1992, c. 79 (C.40A: 12A-1 et seq.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

There are no existing Redevelopment/Rehabilitation Areas or Plans within the Township. However, it is recommended that Township pursue potential opportunities for redevelopment in appropriate locations throughout the Township and within the Stockholm area.



Source: NJOGIS, NJGIN, NJDEP, NJDOT

Proposed Zoning Map  
Hardyston Township, Sussex County, NJ

