

Oakleaf Village Redevelopment Study:

A Preliminary Investigation to Determination an Area in Need of Redevelopment



Township of North Brunswick, NJ
August 14, 2012

Clarke Caton Hintz



Process to date:

- May 7, 2012:** Township Council authorized Planning Board to undertake a Preliminary Investigation to Determine an Area in Need of Redevelopment.
- May 8, 2012:** Planning Board authorized contract with Clarke Caton Hintz to prepare investigation
- July 2, 2012:** Preliminary investigation report completed.

What is the New Jersey Redevelopment statute?

**Law enabled to facilitate comprehensive
re-planning of blighted areas**

What is a Preliminary Investigation?

- Do the conditions of Oakleaf Village satisfy the statutory criteria for the designation of an “Area in Need of Redevelopment”?
- In other words: do deteriorated conditions exist that are detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare?



What are these tools?

- Redevelopment plan
- Township may negotiate and select redeveloper
- Allows for assembly of parcels
- Negotiation of public amenities and facilities
- Acquisition through eminent domain
- Long-term tax exemptions
- Redevelopment area bond financing

What are the criteria that determine an “Area in Need of Redevelopment”?

- a. Generality of buildings substandard, unsafe or obsolescent – unwholesome living conditions.
- b. Discontinuance of use of commercial, manufacturing or industrial buildings.
- c. Publicly owned land – or vacant unimproved for 10 years and it is not likely to be developed by private capital.
- d. Areas with buildings or improvements that are detrimental to safety, health, morals or welfare of community.

(NJSA 40A:12A-5)

What are the criteria that determine an “Area in Need of Redevelopment”?

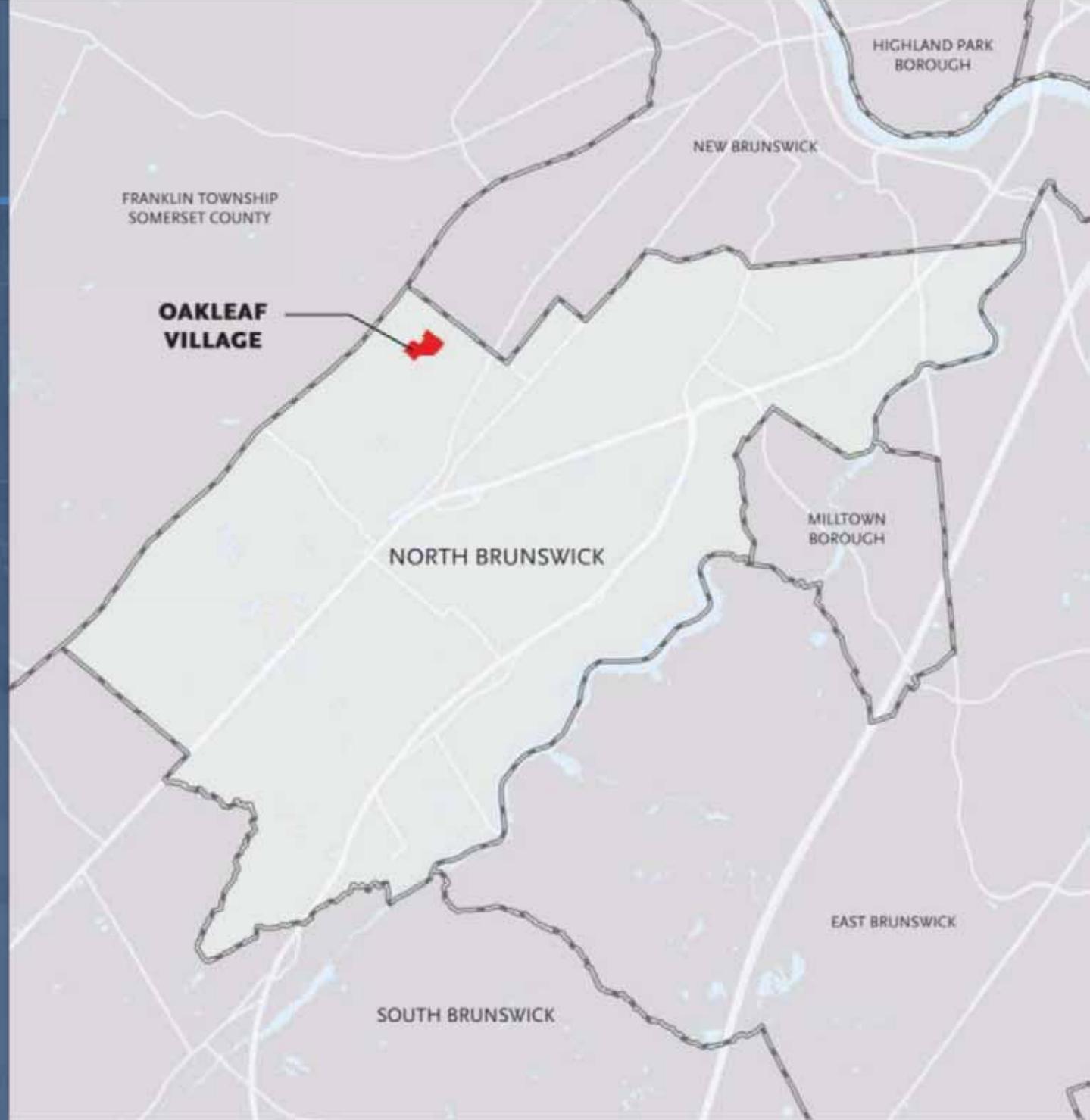
- e. Lack of proper utilization caused by title, diverse ownership or other conditions resulting in a stagnant or not fully productive condition potentially useful and valuable to serving the public health, safety and welfare.
- f. Aggregate assessed value of area – 5 acres or more – has materially depreciated due to natural disaster.
- g. Urban Enterprise Zone.
- h. Consistent with Smart Growth.

(NJSA 40A:12A-5)

Study Area

Oakleaf Village

Block 30, Lot 2.01



Study Area

Oakleaf Village

Block 30, Lot 2.01



Study Area

Oakleaf Village

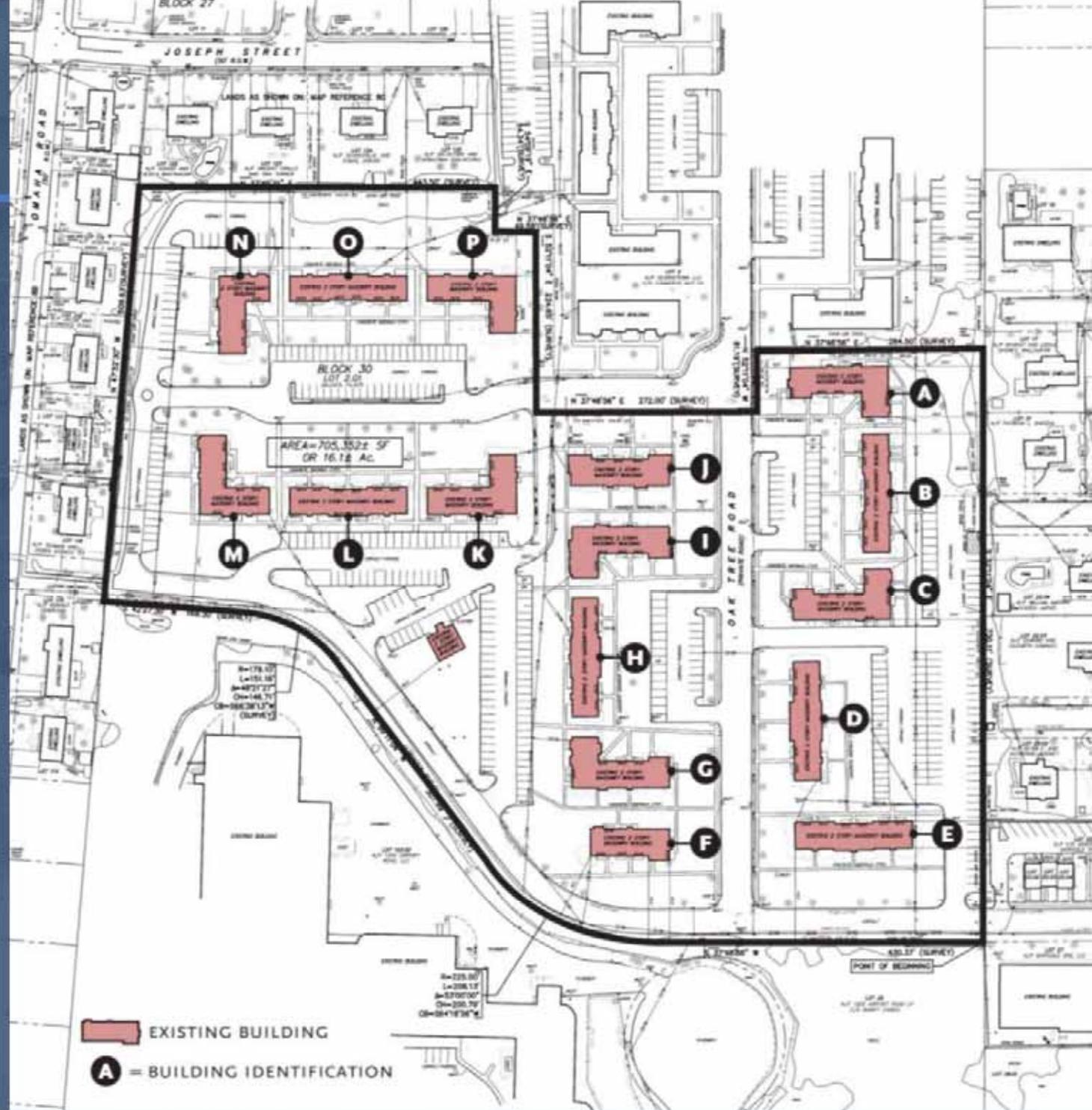
Block 30, Lot 2.01

16.1 Acres

16 Buildings

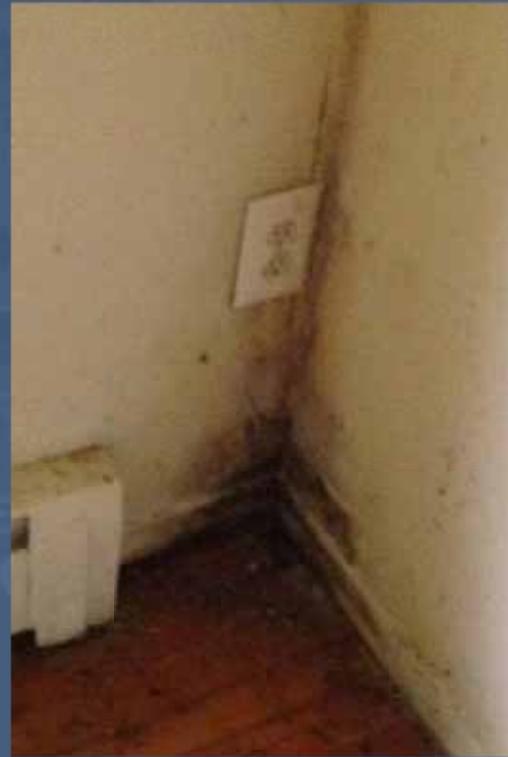
184 Apartment dwellings in a two-story garden apartment configuration

252 Off-street parking spaces



Physical Conditions

- Broken/missing doors
- Broken windows
- Broken/missing locks
- Rotting / missing trim
- Mold
- Sagging floors
- Masonry failures



Physical Conditions (cont'd)

- Exposed wiring
- Paint peeling/missing
- Wild cats
- Leaking boilers
- Excess Trash
- Stormwater inundation



Bureau of Housing Inspections/ NJDCA: January 6, 2011 Report

469 Code violations spread among all 16 buildings

- Evidence of dilapidation and conditions detrimental to public health, safety and welfare:
- Missing smoke detectors, handrails, carbon monoxide alarms
- Violations related to electrical and plumbing
- Infestations of bedbugs or rodents



Structural Problems

Leonard Busch Associates (LBA) building condition report:
October 25, 2011

Evidence of dilapidation and conditions detrimental to public health, safety and welfare:

- All wood balconies will need to be reconstructed (some in danger of imminent failure)
- Termite damage, presumed extensive



Structural Problems

Leonard Busch Associates (LBA) building condition report: October 25, 2011

- Rotting structural wood members, presumed extensive
- Basement access stairs and retaining wall are badly deteriorated
- Storm water enters the basement and crawlspaces uncontrolled.
- The rear masonry retaining wall is slowly falling down



Stormwater and Drainage Problems

Maser Consulting, PA (Maser) report: October 25, 2011.

Evidence of dilapidation and conditions detrimental to public health, safety and welfare:

- poor drainage
- storm water ponds on-site
- storm water flows into buildings
- drainage problems leading to the deterioration of pavement



Stormwater and Drainage Problems



Occupancy Problems

CBRE Valuation and Advisory Services
(CBRE) appraisal report: Jan. 31, 2012

Some units untenable due to the
level of dilapidation

- Oakleaf Village occupancy (91.3%)
lags behind similar neighborhoods:
- Georgetown Apartments: 98.7%
- Kendall Court : 97.0%
- Livingston Terrace: 98.4%
- North Brunswick Gardens: 97.7%



Crime Problems

North Brunswick Police Dept. memo: September 21, 2011

In 18 months Police have responded to 728 calls:

- 112 disturbance complaints
- 1 homicide
- 71 suspicious condition calls
- 25 burglary / theft
- Numerous drug arrests
- alarming increase of gang members

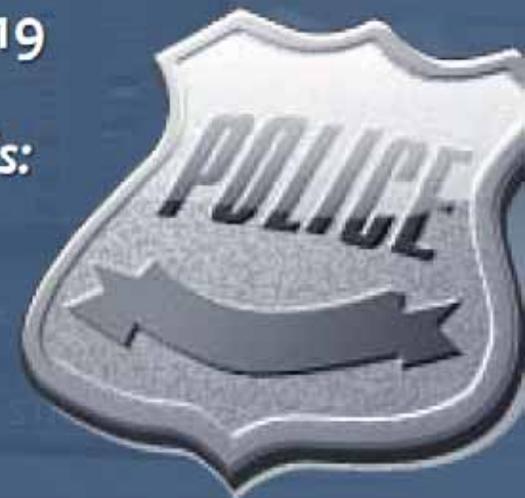
North Brunswick Police Department letter: June 5, 2012

June 2011 through May 31, 2012, there was double the number of police calls to Oakleaf Village than there were at Georgetown Apartments

- Oakleaf - 438
- Georgetown - 219

“Directed” patrols:

- Oakleaf - 588
- Georgetown - 1



Application of the Statutory Criteria

Applicable to Oakleaf Village:

- a. The generality of buildings are substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated, or obsolescent, or possess any of such characteristics, or are so lacking in light air, or space, as to be conducive to unwholesome living or working conditions.
- b. Areas with buildings or improvements which, by reason of dilapidation, obsolescence, overcrowding, faulty arrangement or design, lack of ventilation, light and sanitary facilities, excessive land coverage, deleterious land use or obsolete layout, or any combination of these or other factors, are detrimental to the safety, health, morals, or welfare of the community.

NJSA 40A:12A-5

Subsequent Steps

- **Planning Board recommendation to the Township Council**
- **The Township Council holds public hearing**
- **Redevelopment Area is designated**
- **Notice determination sent to objectors**
- **Redevelopment Plan**