

Burlington County Route 130 Corridor Municipal Questionnaire

October 29, 2021

**Please review these questions and fill in as much as you can
to paint a picture of your status and trends in planning:**

(We'd love to see additional planning documents if you have them, though we're primarily interested in you telling the story of your community in narrative form so that we get a feel for what makes it unique and what's important to you and your citizens.)

1. Visioning

Do you have a vision statement for your future? Please share it here: **See excerpt below, Delanco Township Master Plan Reexamination Report 2019 (Section III, pg 2 & 3)**

"The plan (2008) provides a vision for Delanco Township that embraces the quaint charm and the historic architectural character of the bedroom community. Pedestrianism is strong in this community where the train station and Delaware Avenue are the most popular destinations. The transit line provides a connection from Camden to Trenton and beyond via connecting transit nodes. Delaware Avenue provides a pleasant, quiet, promenade between stately historic homes and the scenic Delaware River and Pennsylvania beyond. It is possible due to the small commercial nodes located along Burlington Avenue to buy milk, dinner, and other necessities without getting into one's vehicle. The Rancocas Creek is more accessible because of an aggressive effort by the community and the county to obtain large parcels through purchase and dedication via clustering provisions, providing passive recreation to the residents of Delanco and Burlington County. The Rancocas Greenway is well connected to the existing developed portion of the community, providing access across the railroad to the open space. Generally, the community views their "dry town" status as a benefit to the quality of life of the residents."

If so, when was it last affirmed? **September 17, 2019, adopted October 1, 2019**

Through what process? **See excerpt below, Master Plan Reexamination Report 2019 (Section II, pg 2)**

"The preparation of this Reexamination Report has been a transparent and open process in which the issues were initially discussed at Joint Land Use Board Meetings. The Reexamination Report was discussed by the board on October 2, and November 2, 2018. The process proceeded as follows:

1. The Joint Land Use Board held a public hearing on the Reexamination Report on October 1, 2019; and adopted the report on November 6, 2019 by resolution.
2. Implementation of recommendations may require the preparation and adoption of ordinances by the governing body. All ordinances must be referred to the Joint Land Use Board for review in accordance with the Municipal Land Use Law."

Who participated? *JLUB process, public hearings (see above)*

What matters most to your community? *Management of development spawned by regional and local plans especially addressing vehicle traffic impacts caused by industrial sites. Providing safe pedestrian /bicycle pathways. Planning for climate change impacts. Improving our schools. Planning for Mt Laurel I & II / "fair share" affordable housing mandates. Continuing support for our community retailers.*

Have you thought about your sustainability? Your contributions to Green House Gases (GHG)? How to reduce your GHG contributions? **Yes;**

- *Community volunteer Environmental Advisory Board followed through on 2017 NJDEP "Stop The Soot" No Idling campaign – purchased & installed 38 "No Idling" signs throughout municipality.*
- *Delanco Shade Tree Commission active in management, education, & reforestation efforts.*
- *Supported completion of "one of the inaugural solar projects in New Jersey" by Solstage on Winzinger landfill site.*

2. Resiliency

Have you started planning for resiliency to climate change and sea level rise? **Yes.**

- *Revised FEMA FIRM Flood Maps issued December 2017 changed area of Zones AE, X within municipality. Detailed FEMA & NFIP information for residents & business on municipal website. Elected official certified as Floodplain Manager (CFM).*
- *Repair of tidal riverfront seawalls along Delaware River (2019).*
- *Ongoing project to rebuild 400ft+ seawall section to protect public NJ Green Acres parkland and municipal infrastructure (stormwater, roads, utilities).*
- *Revised municipal code, Flood Damage Prevention; Ch 65, to raise building elevations additional 2 feet above Base Flood Elevation (BFE).*

If so, please attach any planning documents. *2019 Hazard Mitigation Plan, Delanco Code Ch.65 Flood Damage Prevention (2017 rev, Ord 2017-15), Zurbrugg Park / TDG-ERI plan (seawall)*

Who has been engaged in the discussions? *Township Committee & Administration, professional consultants, Burlington County OEM, NJDEP, USACE, DVRPC, several non-profits.*

Have you identified your risks? (Flooding? Erosion? Heat island effect? Increased storms? Disease? Other? **See excerpt below, 2019 Hazard Mitigation Plan (pg 9.10-5)**

- Bogg's Run (aka, Bogg's Ditch) is a natural drainage originating in Edgewater Park. The outflow of Bogg's Run at the Delaware River was modified by the Corps of Engineers in the 1940's and 1950's when CDF's #13 & #13a were built (where the Riversedge residential development is now located). The Bogg's Run outflow is now restricted and easily clogged with river debris. This is the United States Army Corps of Engineers' responsibility. The upper section of Bogg's, east of Burlington Avenue, is within an easement to the Veterans Administration to ensure runoff from the Beverly National Cemetery (established during the Civil War). The Bogg's drainage passes under the NJT tracks through an undersized and easily clogged culvert. Impeded runoff floods residential property along Perkins Lane in Edgewater Park.

- The “canal” at Delanco’s West Avenue Trail Park extends east and north through Beverly. The canal was built by the Corps in the early 1960’s when ground water was blocked from the natural flow to the river after CDF’s 13A & 14 were built. The canal outflow at the Delaware River in Beverly is often blocked by debris and silting, resulting in restricted flow, higher water tables, and recurring basement flooding to the adjacent residential neighborhood.
- The drainage system in the Robbins Lane neighborhood (at Second Street) requires ongoing cleaning and maintenance to mitigate flooding in that area of Delanco.
- The Beverly Sewerage Treatment Plant provides water treatment services to Beverly and Delanco. This is a critical facility along the Delaware River.
- Delanco Township has experienced significant river shoreline erosion and loss of land along its Delaware River shore. Nearly 1000 feet of riverfront seawall has collapsed. An additional several hundred feet of seawall is threatened.
- Wildfire is unlikely, but if coupled with drought, this would generate a risk with large forested areas at both ends of Delanco (Hawk Island [120 acres] & West Ave. Park [50+ acres]) close to dense residential neighborhoods.
- FEMA flood scenarios (1.0% & 0.2%) would impact Burlington Avenue (at Rancocas Creek & at Bogg’s Ditch) and Cooper Street (Hickory Street to Pennsylvania Avenue / RR tracks), with significant effect on evacuation routes, emergency services (FD / EMS) and relief access. All three roads into Delanco would be covered by floodwaters.
- Delanco – Riverside Bridge would be affected by FEMA flooding scenarios (1.0% & 0.2%; aka 100yr & 500yr) as both bridge approaches would be inundated. Significant flooding or flood debris could damage the bridge or mechanical function (movable swing bridge), severing a vital transportation connection. Currently spring and storm flood tides inundate and block the bridge approach from Riverside.

Have you assessed vulnerable populations? **Yes.**

Do you have an inventory of community assets? (Schools, emergency buildings, senior care, churches, businesses, infrastructure, transportation, energy, communications, health & medical facilities, hazardous materials; food water & shelter; safety & security, natural areas, parks, other?) **Yes. See 2009 Master Plan, 2019 Hazard Mitigation Plan, Municipal GIS Mapping Overlay**

3. Equity

Do you have issues of Environmental Justice or other concerns about equity in your community? If so, list communities/neighborhoods that have borne an outsized burden of pollution, traffic and or other considerations that impact on quality of life. **Yes:**

- ***Past use of undeveloped land (portions of Blocks 200, 300, 500, 2300) along Delaware River by the state as dredge spoils disposal sites (CDF; Confined Disposal Facilities) destroyed pre-existing natural riverfront environment. Creation and use of CDFs depressed surrounding property values, damaged homes, and increased localized flooding and future risk. Long time efforts by municipality through litigation (at significant expense), and land acquisition have nearly eliminated this threat.***
- ***County & municipal planning created I-2 Industrial Zone w/Redevelopment overlay in 2002 (Block 1900, Lots 6, 7, 8). This is adjacent to R-1 Residential Zone in neighboring Edgewater Park Township. I-2 development has attracted warehousing & distribution businesses thru Long Term Tax Abatements (PILOTs). Truck traffic & noise have created adverse impacts on***

the Edgewater Park residents “next door”. Increased truck traffic from I-2 zone transits residential areas and school zone of Edgewater Park from Route 130, the major regional artery to interstate network of I-95/295, PA & NJ Turnpike.

What is the status of your affordable housing agreement? And, the status of implementation?

In compliance and currently exceeds known affordable housing obligation to 2025. See Res 2016-14, 2016-80 & 2017 court approval Banish ltrs 30AUG16 & 17APR17; documents previously submitted for Plan Pre-petition 21OCT19.

See excerpt below, Amended Third Round Housing Element & Fair Share Plan, Delanco Township August 2, 2016

“This Amended Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan has been prepared for Delanco Township, Burlington County in accordance with the NJ Fair Housing Act (“FHA”) N.J.S.A. 52:27D-310 and the rules of the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (“COAH”) at N.J.A.C. 5:93 et seq. This plan is an amendment to the prior Third Round plan adopted by the Joint Land Use Board and endorsed by the Township Committee on December 15, 2008 and submitted to the Courts on December 30, 2008 (subsequently amended on October 5, 2010 and submitted to the Superior Court on November 17, 2010). This amended plan will serve as the foundation for the Township’s submission to the Honorable Ronald E. Bookbinder, A.J.S.C., for a Judgment of Compliance and Repose. There are three components to a municipality’s affordable housing obligation: the Third Round rehabilitation share, the Prior Round obligation and the Third Round prospective need. As discussed in detail below the Township entered into a settlement agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center (“FSHC”) to establish the Township’s Third Round affordable housing obligations as follows:

- Third Round Rehabilitation Share: 23 units
- Prior Round Obligation: 61 units
- Third Round Prospective Need: 131 units

Regarding rehabilitation, the Township will continue its rehabilitation program participation with the County, institute a local rehabilitation program if necessary and will, if subsequently required by the Court, provide funding from the affordable housing trust fund necessary to supplement the cost to satisfy its rehabilitation obligation.

The Township has fully satisfied its Prior Round obligation through completed affordable housing units (COAH and Court - approved) including a mix of off-site sale and rental affordable units by the developer of Russ Farm, on-site affordable sale units at River’s Edge inclusionary housing development, the Creekside inclusionary development which includes affordable rental units, the 100% affordable housing development at Zurbrugg Mansion, a regional contribution agreement (“RCA”) with the Borough of Palmyra and Prior Round rental bonuses. The Third Round prospective need will be more than satisfied through the use of existing, completed affordable housing units including the remaining family and

senior rentals units not utilized for Prior Round credit (Zurbrugg Mansion and Creekside), 17 senior affordable rental units (senior cap) and 20 special needs rental units at the 100% affordable Abundant Life/Living Springs project and a Prior Round credit surplus. The Township has approved 63 affordable family rental units at the Rhawn/Cornerstone at Delanco development and may receive funding or off-site production of three (3) affordable units from the High Point development. Additionally, the Township is eligible for Third Round rental bonuses.”

4. Community Characterization

If not identified in the earlier questions, what are the key elements that define your community?

See excerpt below, Delanco Master Plan – December 2008

“Delanco Township is a small, almost fully built-out community located between the Delaware River and Rancocas Creek west of U.S. Route 130 in Burlington County, New Jersey. In the past, the residential portions of the Township were separated from the industrial uses by a rail line. Residential uses have been extending into the formerly industrial and agricultural sections of the Township, but the majority of residential uses in the Township are still located to the west of the rail line, between the Delaware River and the rail line. The rail line carries freight between midnight and 6:00 a.m. and transit passengers on the NJTransit RiverLINE during daylight hours. Much of the Township’s agricultural land has been developed for industrial and residential use in the recent past.

The Township’s Delaware River frontage is mostly held by private property owners. The only public access is provided along the public streets running along the River and the existing street ends that end at the River’s edge. North of River’s Edge there is municipally owned property known as the Dunes, which might provide access to the river in the future. It’s history as a dredge spoil site and leaf composting facility partially restrict its current and perhaps future use. The community seeks innovative solutions to capitalize on that waterfront access and provide public connections both visual and physical to the Delaware River. Similar connections are sought on the Township’s Rancocas Creek frontage. The Rancocas Creek is threatened by siltation on the Delanco side that will constrain public access to the water itself.”

5. Mapping

Please attach a file with your zoning map in GIS format (shape files). ***(to be added)***

If you have your community assets and vulnerabilities mapped, please include them as well.

- See item 2 above “Resiliency”

Who is your municipal contact for GIS mapping? (please include email and phone #)

Burlington County GIS: Merrilee Torres, GIS Supervisor mtorres@co.burlington.nj.us

(609) 702 7067

Municipal Planner: Michelle Taylor, Taylor Design Group mtaylor@tdgplanning.com

(856) 810-3443

6. State Plan Consistency

Please review the 8 goals of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (attached) and address how your master plan and vision for your community is (or is not) consistent with these goals, policies & indicators.

1. Revitalize Cities & Towns - *Ongoing effort to revitalize community.*

2. Conserve NJ Natural Resources & Systems – *Use of Local Open Space fund (.02 mil) for parkland protection, maintenance & improvement, acquisition including Zurbrugg Park, Field of Dreams / Mueller Pavilion, Hawk Island parcels, West Avenue Nature Trails, Gateway Park & expansion, Vine Street Park, Babe Ruth Field, Walnut Street School track area.*

3. Promote Beneficial Growth & Development - *Economic growth: Stanker & Galetto – RLS & Misfits Market renewal of Dietz & Watson site (2013 fire). AC Power (now Soltage) solar energy partnership with RLS (Winzinger landfill remediation), phase 2 Sustainable Jersey Community Solar. Dolan Contractors pending warehouse construction.*

Support existing as well as recent “Main Street” home town business additions which include a deli/grocery, ice cream shop, bakery, insurance office, Dunkin’ Donuts franchise, yoga studio, jewelry store, small market, smoke/vape shop.

4. Protect the Environment, Clean up Pollution - *Environment*

- Open Space, naturalized stormwater basins in partnership with County along Rancocas Greenway.

- Remediation of former Winzinger landfill and conversion to Sustainable Jersey Community Solar project. See also #2.

- Township acquisition of “Canvas Shop” (200 Ash St.) waterfront property. Future use TBD; if maintained as open space, would provide low impact water access to lower Rancocas Creek.

5. Provide Adequate Public Facilities & Services at Reasonable Cost

- Delanco Public Library - Township & School District, 33 year partnership to continue 155 year old community institution.

- Delanco Municipal Building – Courtroom is utilized for meetings by local HOAs and special presentations by the History Board.

- Field of Dreams recreation facility (multiple regional users); pavilion shelter w/restrooms & concession, 4 soccer fields, softball field along with West Avenue and Babe Ruth t-ball and baseball fields. Trail access to county Pennington Park & Rancocas Greenway Trails. New county Greenway Trail connection will provide the south end of town including the Crossings and Newton’s Landing developments with safe access to the Field of Dreams and Pennington Park. The Recreation Commission is very active in town providing summer concerts, parades, organized sports, summer camp, winter horse-drawn carriage rides and other activities for residents.

- Efficient municipal operations, multiple shared services agreements with neighboring municipalities & county utilizing regional assets, expertise & resources. Services to residents include Public Works Department sponsored free Community Cleanup Days when residents can bring electronics, tires and

other items to the garage. Township sponsored free Shredding Events for residents are held several times a year.

- Dobbins Methodist Church/Zurbrugg Mansion – while not public facilities, these organizations have opened their facilities to the Delanco Senior Citizens, Boy Scouts, Summer Camp and other clubs and organizations.

6. Provide Adequate Housing at Reasonable Cost - Infill improvement / rehab

- Delanco has been at the forefront of meeting its affordable housing mandates. Delanco's Affordable Housing unit stock exceeds current the Affordable Housing requirements with Delanco's overall housing stock reflecting diverse community housing needs.

- NJ affordable housing (aka, COAH) mandate incurs significant burdens and adverse incentives (e.g., rental bonus – 2x credit, unbalances number of rental vs owned homes). The school age student population residing in the increasing share of rental units tends to be less permanent experiencing frequent relocation and interrupted academic progression due to social & economic factors. These students often require additional educational resources their new home District may not have, nor be able to provide for, resulting in out of District placement at significant expense.

7. Preserve & Enhance Areas With Historic, Cultural, Scenic, Open Space and Recreational Value -

- Delanco's outstanding record of open space preservation, preserving waterfront public access and view sheds. Delanco is also host for one of Burlington County's major parks along the Rancocas Creek and is a keystone segment along the Rancocas Greenway. Delanco continues to work to preserve and enhance the public's access to open space and waterfront parks.

- Delanco has an active eleven-member History Board, established by resolution in 2005, comprised of volunteer Delanco residents who serve three-year appointed terms and meet monthly. They are tasked with creating an inventory of historic sites, recommending and prioritizing sites for acquisition and preservation, promoting the history of Delanco, and recommending other means of preservation. The board's public activities include special events, such as parades, Community Day and Babe Ruth Day. They maintain the town's historic photo archive and a small collection of artifacts, and curate public displays on-line and within the township building. They produce educational monographs on Delanco history, maintain the town's on-line Timeline, Key People, Educational Resources, and Delanco's Military Veterans Honor Roll, all free to the public. Their Heritage Site program designates historic homes and businesses, offers historic plaques and interpretive signage, and incorporates them in walking tours. Outreach partners include the Recreation Commission, neighboring history groups, and Burlington County Historians activities, including Roundtables, and the annual History Faires at the County Farm Fair.

8. Ensure Sound & Integrated Planning and Implementation Statewide - Integrated planning?

- Cost of infrastructure "catch up"; increased vehicular & pedestrian traffic requires upgraded roads, intersections & sidewalks. Local & regional utility capacity (water / sewer / electric) can limit development & growth. Shock impact to schools of new development on small district is detrimental, straining budget, staff resources, and ability of system to accommodate increased population without the funding to support the incoming students.

- Major roadways through Delanco are county roads and require long term planning and coordination to effect change, upgrades, and wait listing among county priorities. This difficulty is evidenced by “disconnects” between the county road network and local urban & tertiary streets and sidewalks.

7. State requests

Please list any ‘asks’ that you have of the state including OPA, DEP, DOT, DCA, BPU or any other state agencies. OPA is committed to bringing them to the table, though we can’t guarantee exactly the resolution that you’re looking for.

STATE REQUESTS/BURLINGTON COUNTY REQUESTS

- **TRAFFIC ISSUES (VEHICLE)**

There is an urgent and critical need for planning, design and construction of roadway improvements to keep up with the rapid industrial development that has occurred in the area in the last 10 years.

Delanco Township’s concerns are primarily with the Creek Road and Coopertown-Delanco Road corridors. The Township recognizes that these roadways/intersections are under the jurisdiction of Edgewater Park and Willingboro Townships, Burlington County and the State of New Jersey Department of Transportation so we ask the Burlington County Bridge Commission or the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission to take the lead in requesting the following improvements:

Creek Road/Bridgeboro Road – There is an immediate need to improve the Bridgeboro Road/US Route 130 jughandle at Wawa as part of a Route 130 corridor improvement involving Delanco Road, Mount Holly Road, Bridgeboro Road and Creek Road because of the increasing traffic resulting from new commercial activity in the corridor. Northbound traffic on US Route 130 turning into the Bridgeboro Road jughandle backs up into the active lanes of Route 130 on a daily basis. The reverse movement also has difficulties including at the intersection of Creek and Bridgeboro Roads. Various commercial businesses on Creek Road and Coopertown-Delanco Road utilizing tractor trailers and commercial car carriers contribute to the backups. The NJDOT Safety Voyager database shows that for the five-year period from 1/1/2016 – 1/1/2021 there were 136 crashes recorded (combined same direction/rear end and same direction/sideswipe) from the point where vehicles enter the Bridgeboro Road jughandle to approximately Lake Drive, where vehicles stack in the shoulder and right lane of Route 130 northbound. **That is an average of 27.2 same direction crashes per year indicating a major problem with the design, capacity and signal timing.** Possible solutions: (1) Widen the exit lane/shoulder area between the jughandle and the A-1 Limousine driveway to create a dedicated right turn lane feeding into the jughandle; (2) Construct a queue detector (can be in-ground or overhead) on Route 130 northbound at the beginning of the lane that leads into the jughandle to change the traffic signal timing for traffic conditions. This could also help the backup on the other side of the intersection; (3) Widen the road and create a dedicated right turn lane on Creek Road at the Bridgeboro Road intersection. This would help to ease traffic backups caused by vehicles waiting to go straight across the intersection to the Wawa which causes a backup of vehicles waiting to make a right turn onto Bridgeboro Road.

Coopertown-Delanco Road – In addition to the current businesses that are located along Coopertown Road in Delanco Township the following facilities are in the process or are planned to be built: (1) Stanker & Galetto warehouse, 1000 Coopertown Road – phase 4 of a 425,000 s.f. warehouse/distribution facility was recently completed with one more phase plus a section of office space still to be completed. (2) Dolan Contractors has cleared land in preparation for the construction of a 127,535 s.f. warehouse at 780 Coopertown Road and a 98,115 s.f. warehouse at 790 Coopertown Road. (3) Bluewater Property Group has an application pending before the Joint Land Use Board for a 222,750 s.f. warehouse/distribution/office facility at 989 Coopertown Road (also encompassing the 921 & 931 Coopertown Road properties). These facilities, in addition to the 704,700 s.f. warehouse/distribution/office facility currently under construction on land fronting on US Route 130 South/Delanco Road/Mount Holly Road will certainly impact traffic in the area. A weight limit on Perkins Lane and a substandard intersection at Delanco Road and US Route 130 South where there is no alignment with Pennypacker Drive at US Route 130 North will likely add to the traffic burden at the Mt. Holly Road/US Route 130 intersection. There are also traffic delays at certain hours of the day at the four-way stop intersections at Coopertown-Delanco Road/Bridgeboro Road and Coopertown-Delanco Road/Mt. Holly Road.

In an effort to alleviate congestion on both Coopertown and Creek Roads, Delanco Township has been coordinating with Burlington County on the installation of “no parking/no stopping or standing” signage in certain areas where there have been issues with vehicles parking in the shoulders. Traffic problems on these roadways and at these intersections have been previously studied by the Burlington County Bridge Commission and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Delanco Township looks forward to working with those entities as well as with Burlington County and the NJDOT on moving forward with making additional roadway improvements.

- **TRAFFIC ISSUES (PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE SAFETY)**

Delanco is a walking community. Children and adults are walking and riding bicycles to the river, to recreational areas such as the West Avenue Nature Trails, Babe Ruth Field and Field of Dreams and to local shops along Burlington Avenue.

School Students - The school district is primarily a walking district. There is minimal busing and Delanco students even walk to Riverside High School. While the township is routinely utilizing local funds and grants to make improvements to local roads, there is a need to have sidewalks repaired and completed along County routes to make conditions safer for all pedestrians. Perhaps speed limits should be studied as well. The township would like assistance making conditions safer for students crossing Burlington Avenue commercial property driveways at the north end of town. Addressing pedestrian safety concerns now will assist residents if busing is eliminated due to the expense and/or lack of qualified bus drivers. Elimination of busing may lead to more personal vehicles on the road as parents transport students. This could be alleviated if there are better walking conditions for students from all areas of town.

Industrial Employees – Numerous employees of new and existing industrial businesses along Coopertown Road are walking along the shoulder to and from the Light Rail station. The Burlington County Bridge Commission encouraged development of these parcels and now improvements to the roadway infrastructure need to be addressed. Some areas of Coopertown Road do not have good optics for drivers to see pedestrians who are walking on the shoulder of the road, in particular at the Hickory Street curve and the Creek Road curve. There is a need to have sidewalks repaired and completed along County routes to make conditions safer for pedestrians. Resumption of the NJ Transit bus line to

Delanco and working with businesses to provide a bike share or van share program for their employees would provide alternative means of transportation.

- **RESILIENCY/ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Fast track DEP approvals – The township would like to see DEP approvals fast tracked for projects that would reduce and mitigate damage from storm and tidal flooding, i.e., long-term blanket approvals for recurring stream clearing maintenance. The township has several Delaware River drainage watersheds that were modified decades ago by the Army Corps of Engineers Delaware River channel dredging projects. These have been abandoned since the 1960's and are no longer in the Corps regional maintenance plans. These abandoned canals and watercourses are eroded and silted up, clogged by deadfalls and debris. Current NJDEP (NJAC 7:7A & 7:13) rules severely limit access, scope of allowable work (hand clearing vs. machinery/heavy equipment) and ignore practical common sense such a labor intensive job demands. Current permitting and rules restrictions have the township caught in a perpetual state of inaction while dozens of homes in our community and in neighboring communities face flood threats with every heavy rainfall, flood tide or significant storm event.

State and County Assistance with Storm Resiliency – The township experiences flooding on County roads that lead in and out of town. The Delanco-Riverside Bridge is impassable when the Rancocas Creek is high. We have experienced flooding on Burlington Avenue when Boggs Ditch is not draining properly. There is difficulty coordinating action to clean out the ditch since it runs through several jurisdictions and the Army Corps of Engineers (involved with the ditch since the 1860's because of the Beverly National Cemetery which was established during the Civil War) is responsible for cleaning it out. These maintenance issues need to be addressed because FEMA flood maps continue to show more areas of town will be susceptible to flooding.

- **AFFORDABLE HOUSING (COAH)**

While Delanco Township is in very good shape with respect to its affordable housing plan, we strongly believe an overhaul of affordable housing (COAH) definitions, rules and procedures is needed.

Count Existing Housing Stock – Existing housing stock should be counted, not cut off and limited to a post 1940 or shifting >50 year old demarcation of construction date. Criteria for counting housing rated “deficient”, having “inadequate kitchens” and “overcrowded” (>1.01 per room) should be revised and based on common sense, accurate measurement and census information.

Economic Costs to Municipalities/Renters – We note that in many instances rents for newly built affordable developments are higher than existing local market rate rents. The imposition of affordable housing projects to meet artificial calculations imposes costly approval/certification costs on municipalities. The threat of litigation is disruptive to local planning. The current affordable housing mechanism adversely incentivizes rental units (2x bonus) towards satisfying “fair share” obligation number. This unbalances the community in having a greater, and increasing through subsequent “rounds”, percentage of rentals vs. owned residential units. In addition, affordable units pay a discounted cost for municipal services. This leaves non-affordable property owners paying a larger portion of property taxes.

Negative Impacts on Applicants – Current third party affordable housing entities have restrictive income and credit history application criteria that limit the pool of “qualified” residents. Experience has seen this result in unoccupied affordable housing units and subsequent requests for owner/management entities to modify municipal planning ordinances to expand the pool of applicants.

Negative Impacts on School Districts – The affordable housing obligations and planning calculation (2x rental bonus) result in a less stable student population with an adverse impact on local school districts. Disrupted educational continuity for these students due to social and economic factors puts them at a disadvantage and academically behind the original school population. This requires additional teaching resources a local district may not be able to support. Educational needs (state and federal mandates, e.g., IEPs, 504 Plans, ADA accommodations) for all students should be “portable” with financial support available at the point of delivery when needed, i.e., pay for DOE mandated services/accommodations before Day 1, not the next academic year as is the current funding mechanism.

- **LONG TERM TAX ABATEMENTS (PILOT AGREEMENTS)**

Overhaul Long Term Tax abatements (NJSA 40A:20-1 et seq.) to encourage new “start up” business, new technologies and business “diversity”, i.e., a range of business, industry types and sectors instead of “mono” businesses, e.g., warehousing/distribution that are prevalent along the Burlington County Route 130 Corridor. This situation leaves municipalities susceptible to economic sector downturns or technology shifts. As the township has experienced, financially beneficial PILOTs are given to well established and profitable businesses that play one Burlington County town (or out of state or county municipality) against the other leveraging for the best deal.

- **EDUCATION**

In addition to the need to improve pedestrian routes to schools noted under Traffic Issues, the method for providing educational system services for special needs students should be revamped so the financial burden is not entirely borne by municipalities.

- **HISTORIC, CULTURAL, SCENIC, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL PRESERVATION/ENHANCEMENT**

Access to Rancocas Creek – We would like to explore the possibility of partnering with Burlington County to provide Rancocas Creek access at Ash Street. There is a concrete ramp at 200 Ash Street that would be a very good launch site but neighbors’ concerns with traffic, parking, trash, etc. would need to be addressed.

Access to Hawk Island – The township has acquired two parcels on Hawk Island. The two largest parcels on the peninsula are owned by the State. The township needs assistance with providing public access and with enforcement issues with boaters using the beach area for parties and leaving trash behind.

Rancocas Creek Designation as National Water Trail – The township would like to see full endorsement by the State, the Burlington County Board of County Commissioners and the Burlington County Parks Department of the five-year-old effort to designate the Rancocas Creek as a National Water Trail by the Department of the Interior. We believe the designation would help municipalities seeking grants for the establishment and maintenance of creek access points and cleanup efforts as well as increase recreational, eco-, cultural- and historic-tourism and boost business opportunities in Delanco, as it already has for Mount Holly.

Improved Access to Online Records – Access to more accurate and complete records via NJ ACTB Property Tax Records is needed by the Delanco History Board for accurate build dates and chain of ownership. This also applies to records from the NJ State Historic Preservation Office which has been closed to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic. Delanco has 12 sites on the Federal and/or State Registries of Historic Places and those records cannot be accessed online.

Access to Grant Funds – In 2026 the United States will be celebrating its 250th birthday and Delanco Township will be celebrating its 100th. We would like to see grants made available to assist with local cultural and historical projects and events.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests.

Compiled primarily by Mayor ML Templeton with additional comments by Planning Board Secretary Katherine Martin and Subcommittee members