



View of Mansfield Township, Warren County from Point Mountain Reservation,
Lebanon Township, Hunterdon County

Highlands Council Meeting

May 21, 2026



Chairman's Report



Executive Director's Report



NATIONAL

USTA unveils winners of the 2025 Umpire Awards

April 24, 2026

Nicholas E. Powel Award - Carl Richko (Eastern), Hewitt, N.J.

Awarded since 1990, the Nicholas E. Powel Award recognizes the importance of officiating at the local level. The honor is given to officials who work primarily at sectional and amateur events, have a supportive attitude toward grassroots programs and are positive role models.

With nearly 20 years of tennis officiating experience, Richko officiates junior, adult, high school and college tennis events throughout his state and section each year. He's been described as a "backbone" of officiating in New Jersey and the Eastern Section, and colleagues characterize him as "hardworking" and "sincere." Previously honored with USTA Eastern's Umpire Service Award, Richko has been instrumental in building opportunities for umpire training and shadowing throughout the section.

In their own words: "I think, when we talk about grassroots, grassroots means it's local, it's all about players of all ages and all abilities. We need to encourage tennis players who would like to move up [in officiating] and get them into officiating."



Budget and Finance Committee



Highlands Council Protection Fund Grant Awards

Climate Resiliency Component of Master Plan - \$15,000
Borough of Alpha, Warren County

Stormwater Management Planning - \$32,000
Byram Township, Sussex County



Plan Conformance Committee



Highlands Redevelopment Areas



Redevelopment in the Highlands Act and RMP

- **Highlands Act Sections 9b and 11-6(h)** Requires the Council to identify areas appropriate for redevelopment. An area identified for possible redevelopment shall be either a brownfield site designated by the Department of Environmental Protection or a site at which at least 70% of the area is covered with impervious surface.
- **Highlands Act Section 35b** Provides for a waiver of any provision of a Highlands permitting review on a case-by-base basis for redevelopment in certain previously developed areas in the Preservation Area identified by the Council.
- **RMP Policy 7G2** For both the Preservation Area and the Planning Area, a waiver may be issued by the Highlands Council on a case-by-case basis for redevelopment in certain previously developed areas as identified by the Highlands Council.
 - Highlands Redevelopment Area Designation Procedures adopted as RMP Amendment 2019



Highlands Act and RMP allow redevelopment.

Highlands Redevelopment Area Designations

What is it? A designation by the Highlands Council that an area meets all Highlands Act and RMP criteria for redevelopment.

Why: A waiver is needed from the NJDEP Highlands Rules and/or the RMP.

Council is reviewing for: Consistency with Act, RMP and Highlands Redevelopment Area Procedures.

Key factors: 70% existing impervious or designated brownfield.

Review Process: Requires 30-day public comment period, Council takes action at public hearing.



Council is *not* reviewing the development project itself; it is reviewing the designation of a Highlands Redevelopment Area.

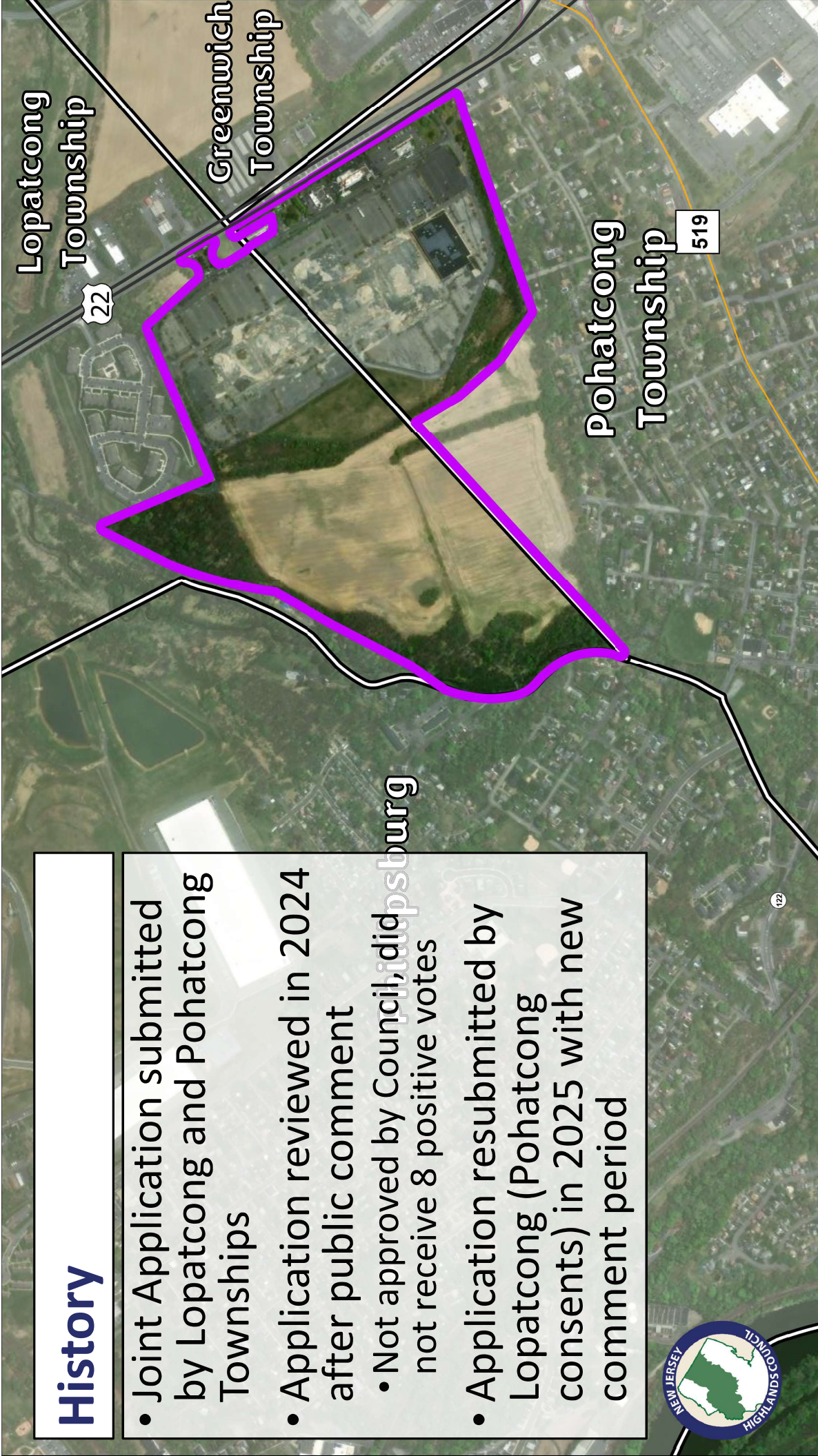
Highlands Redevelopment Area

Lopatcong and Pohatcong Townships



History

- Joint Application submitted by Lopatcong and Pohatcong Townships
- Application reviewed in 2024 after public comment
 - Not approved by Council, did not receive 8 positive votes
- Application resubmitted by Lopatcong (Pohatcong consents) in 2025 with new comment period



Project Overview

Entire Project within Conforming Planning Area. Must align with RMP.

- Proposed Redevelopment Area
- Site Boundary

Lopatcong Township

- 57 Acres, farmland
- 367,000 sq. ft. warehouse proposed
- Access will be through B102, L9.01.
- Redevelopment waiver required.

Pohatcong and Lopatcong Townships

- 75 Acres, developed. Former mall site.
- 833,000 sq. ft. warehouse being constructed.
- Identified as Area in Need of Redevelopment in 2022.
- Does not require redevelopment waiver.



Project Overview

(Continued)

- Proposed Redevelopment Area
- Site Boundary

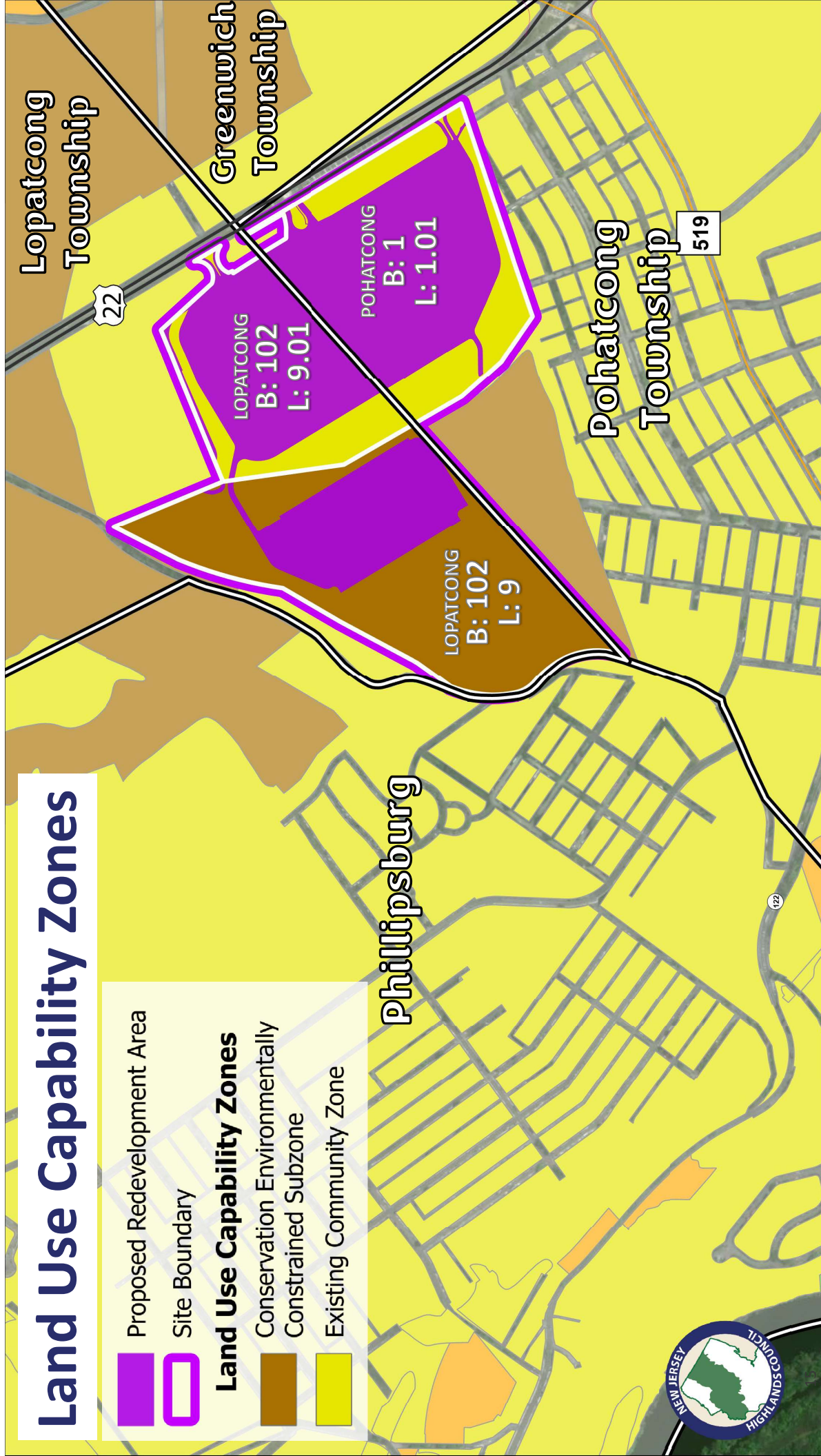
NEED FOR REDEVELOPMENT WAIVER

- Location in Conservation Zone, Environmentally Constrained Subzone
- Extension of water and wastewater prohibited except in certain cases (redevelopment)
- Waiver required to connect
- No other RMP or Highlands Act waivers are needed



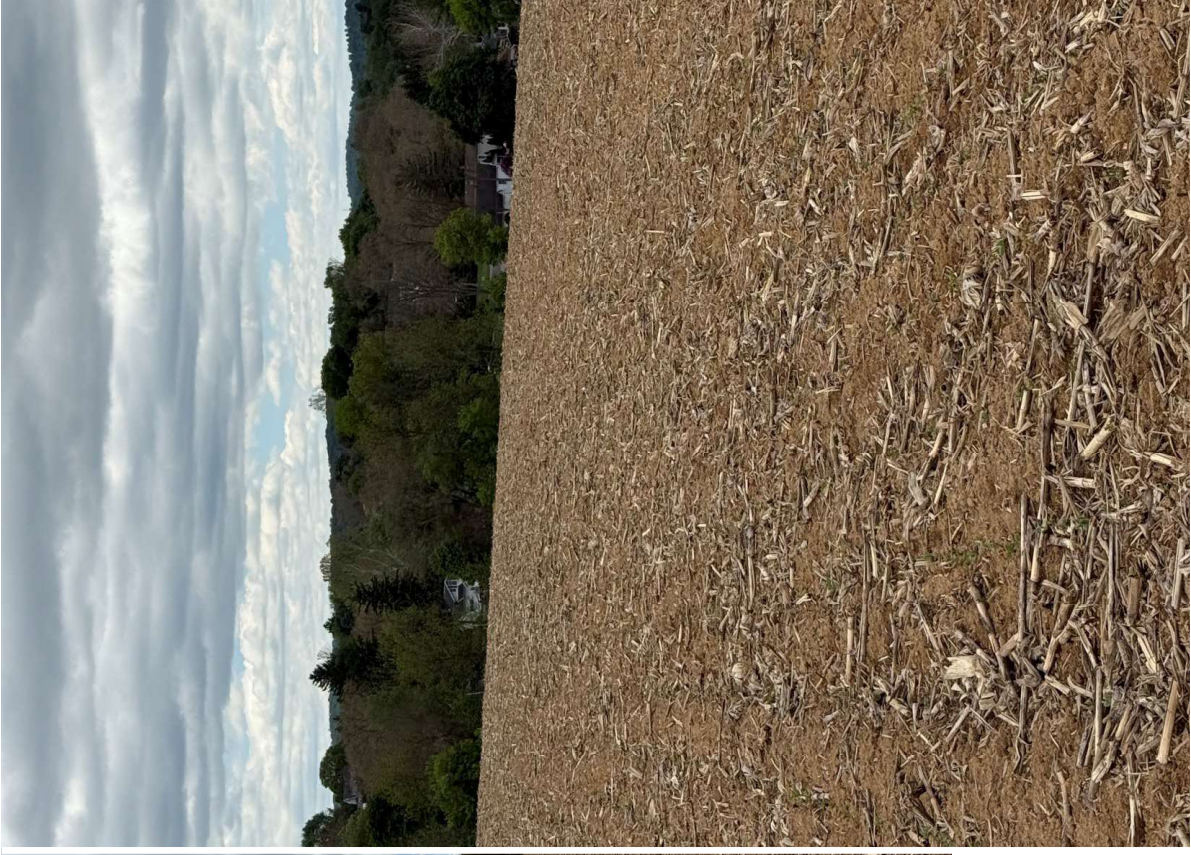
Land Use Capability Zones

-  Proposed Redevelopment Area
-  Site Boundary
- Land Use Capability Zones**
-  Conservation Environmentally Constrained Subzone
-  Existing Community Zone

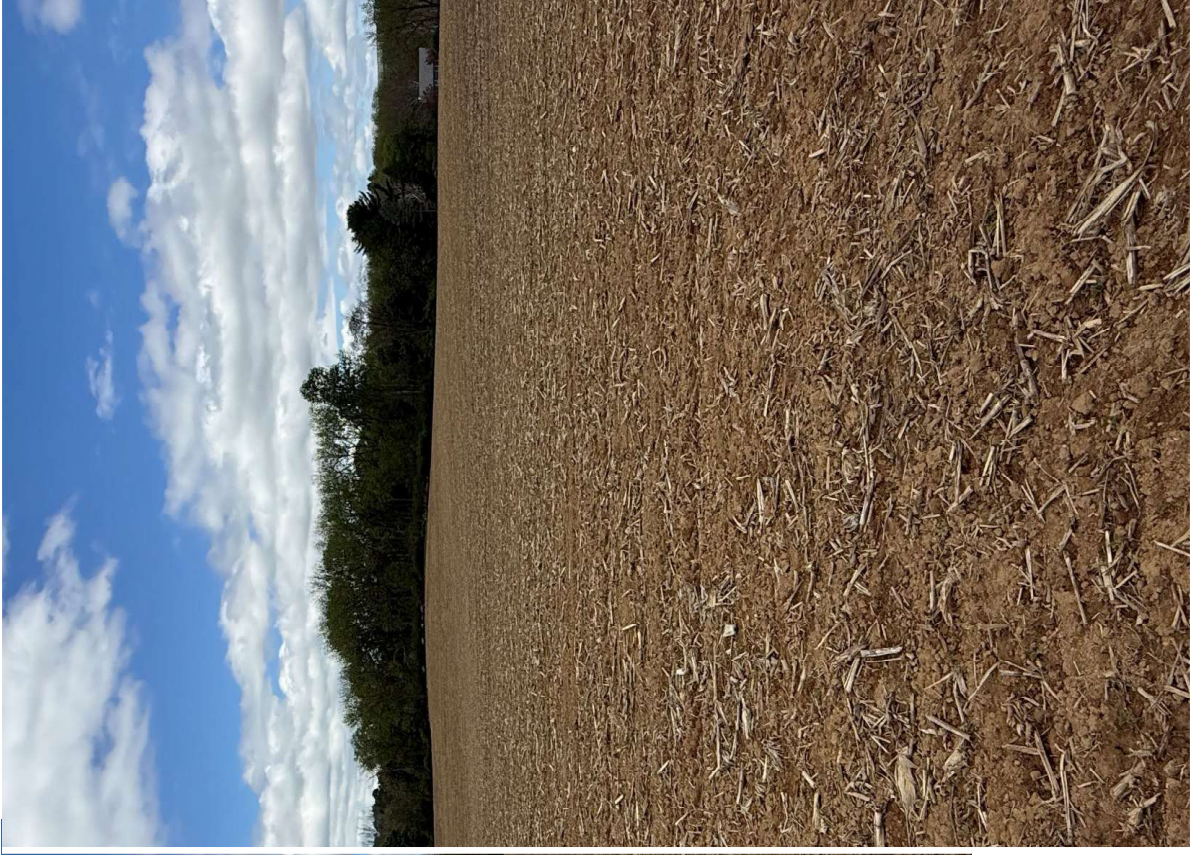




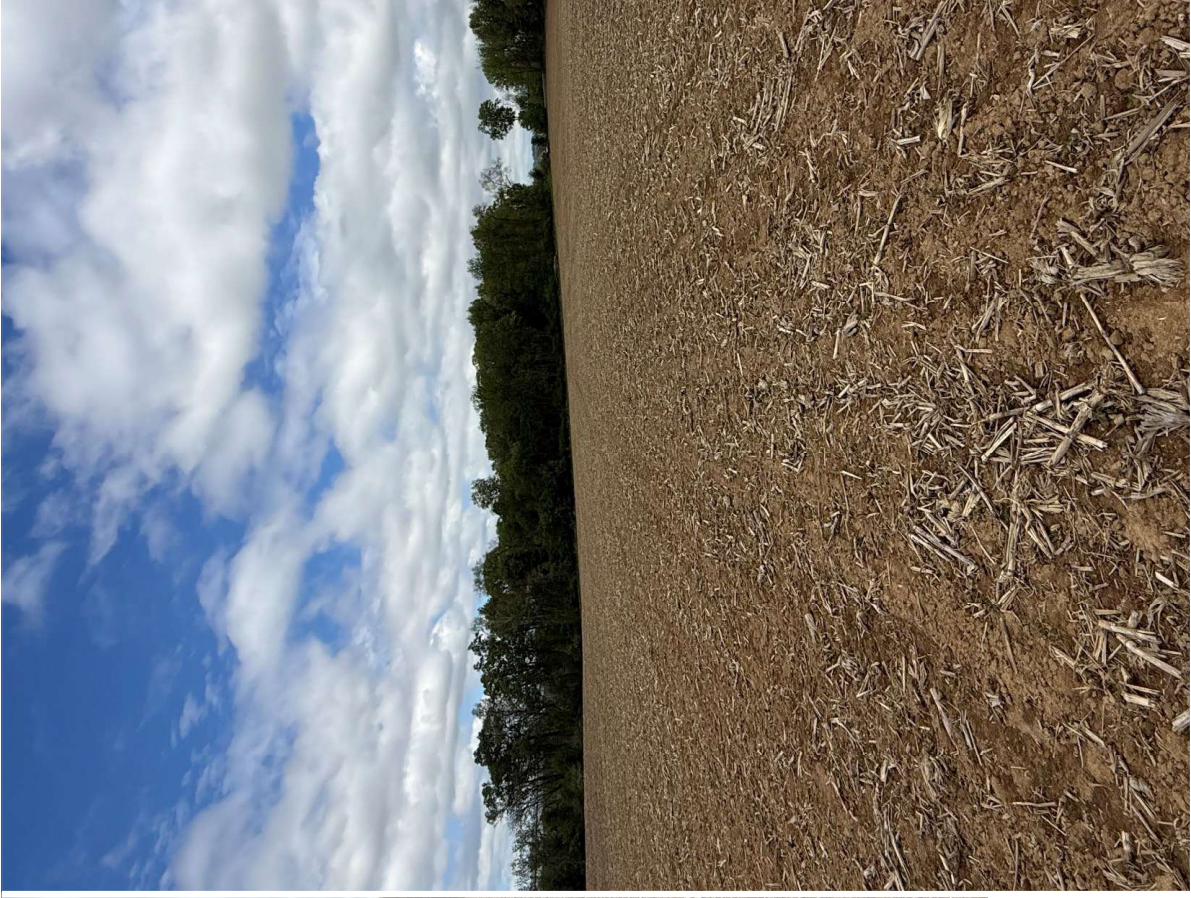
Block 102, Lot 9 – Looking EAST toward former mall property



Block 102, Lot 9 – Looking SOUTH



Block 102, Lot 9 – Looking WEST



Block 102, Lot 9 – Looking NORTH

Criteria for Highlands Redevelopment Area

- ✓ Minimum of 70% existing impervious surface or a NJDEP designated Brownfield
- ✓ Will not result in impairment of any Highlands Resource located on or adjacent to the Highlands Redevelopment Area (avoid, minimize, mitigate)
 - Conditions address impacts
 - Mitigation for loss of farmland/important farmland soils (ineligible for SADC)
- ✓ Sufficient water and sewer capacity
 - Total water and wastewater usage will be reduced vs. prior use
- ✓ Compatible with existing municipal zoning
 - Identified as Area in Need of Redevelopment in 2022



All met. Project also complies with Highlands Warehousing Guidance.

Public Comment

30-Day Public Comment period, 10/7 to 11/7, 2025 8 comments received

- Primary concerns regarding additional warehouse development
 - Traffic and Truck Routing;
 - Noise; Safety; Trash;
 - Impacts to surrounding neighborhoods
- Loss of farmland
 - Mitigation required
- Wellhead Protection Area
 - Require BMPs for any Potential Contaminant Sources that may occupy the building in compliance with RMP requirements.



Staff Recommendation Approve with Conditions

1. Stormwater management enhanced mitigation:
 - 90% Recharge mitigation
 - 90% TSS Removal either on site or within same watershed
2. Conservation Restriction for Lopatcong Creek corridor.
3. Mitigation for loss of agricultural land, value based on SADC farmland preservation data. Removal and reuse of important farmland soils.



Staff Recommendation



Approve with Conditions *continued*

4. Screening of surrounding properties: Residential properties will be screened with landscaping and sound wall.
5. Applicant has agreed to dedication of 30-ft wide easement for Morris Canal Greenway.
6. Project must comply with RMP resource requirements during site plan review, including BMPs for any potential contaminant sources.
7. Development limited to footprint presented



Highlands Redevelopment Area

Lopatcong and Pohatcong Townships

-  Proposed Redevelopment Area
-  Site Boundary



Highlands Open Space Partnership Program



Highlands Open Space Partnership Program

- Provides up to 50% funding match for conservation, farmland preservation or passive recreation projects.
- Current funding is provided by the federal Highlands Conservation Act.
- Requires Highlands Council approval under the Open Space Partnership Program Rule N.J.A.C. 7:70
- Two projects approved for Highlands Conservation Act Grant funding by USFWS.
- Fiscal Year 2023. Total grant award \$187,800.00
- Fiscal Year 2024. Total grant award \$250,000



Mount Olive Township B402/L1 & B403/L2

- Acreage: 37.5 acres
- Preservation Area
- Total Amount: \$187,800
- HC Cost Share via HCA: 38.5%

Allamuchy Mountain
State Park

Morris Canal

B:403, L:2

B:402, L:1

Old Main Delaware,
Lackawanna and
Western Railroad
Historic District



Mendham Township

Block 141 /Lot 43

- Acreage: 11.72 acres
- Planning Area
- Total Amount: \$250,000
- HC Cost Share via HCA: 24.3%

Lewis Morris
County Park

B:141, L:43





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Lebanon Township, Hunterdon County

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