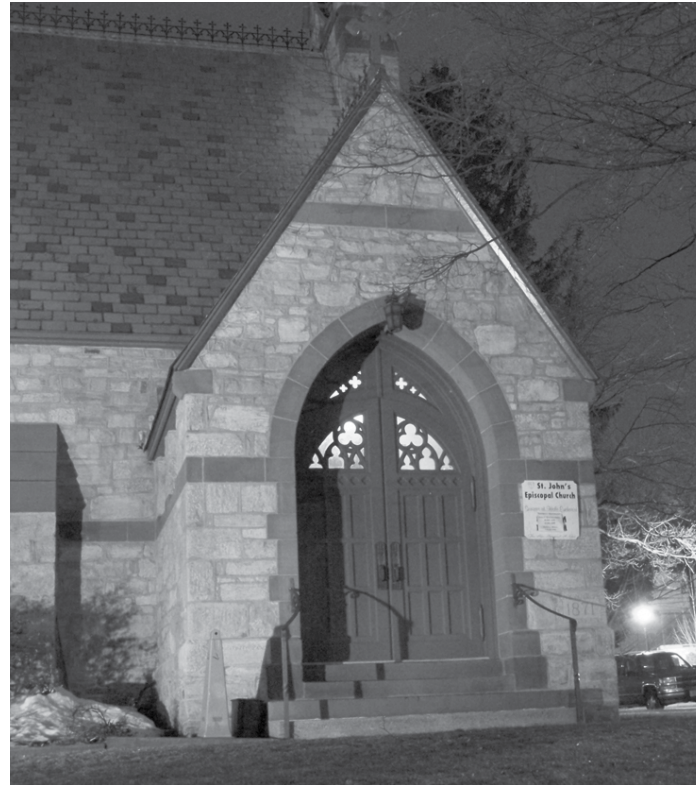




SECTION III



ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

| Section 3 |

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Zoning

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Land use & Site Descriptions

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Results of Public Input-Opportunities
& Constraints



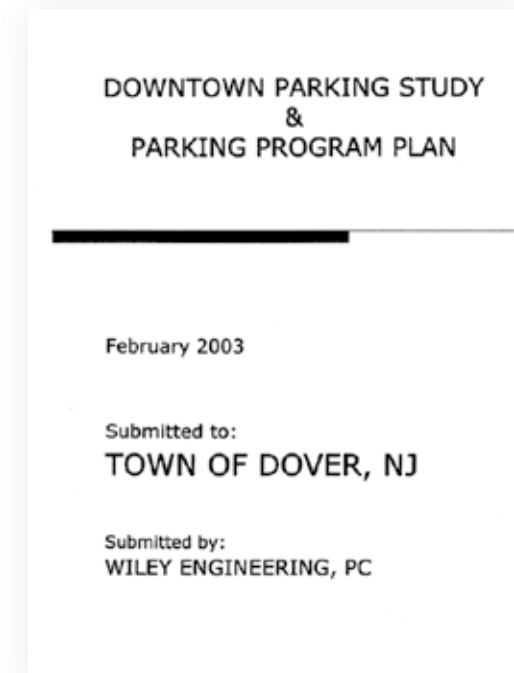
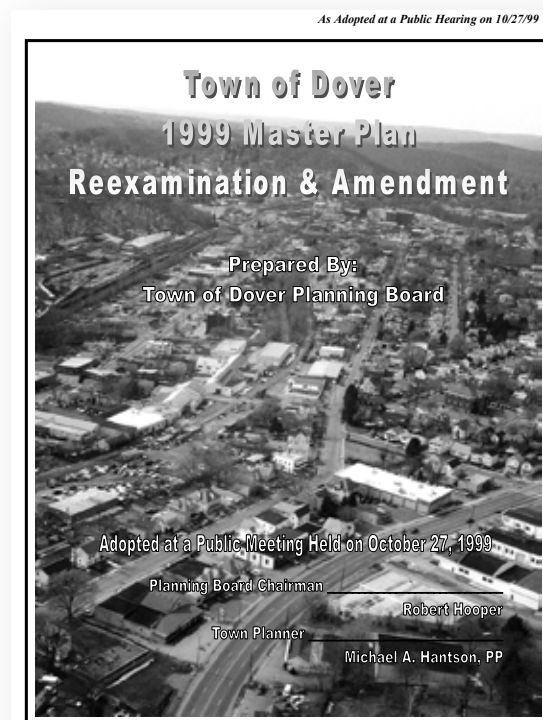


Night-time at Dover Station

Analysis of Existing Conditions

Background information collected for the analysis of existing conditions included the Town of Dover Master Plan Re-examination report completed in October of 1999, the Town of Dover Land Development ordinance revised in February 2004, the Wiley Parking Study, New Jersey Town of Dover Transit-Oriented Vision Plan and GIS (Geographic Information Systems) base map information provided by the Municipal Engineering Department. Field assessment was undertaken to determine the current status, use, and functionality of existing structures. Additionally, photographic images of Dover that reflect both positive and negative planning/design principles were taken to illustrate the advantages of proposed revitalization strategies.

Many public input meetings were held, with the public at large and identified stateholders.



Wiley Parking Study



Transit- Friendly Station Area Vision Plan

ZONING

The majority of the Core of Downtown Dover resides in the Retail- Commercial (C-1) zone with outlying areas in the northeast section in Light Industrial- Commercial (C-3) zone and Industrial (IND) zone (see Figure 1- Existing Zoning). Each of these zoning categories is discussed herein and include aspects that will be addressed in this plan. Some relevant portions of the Dover Code include;

- **C-1 Retail Commercial Zoning** District of the Downtown currently allows for a wide variety of land uses that is consistent with TOD retail uses however, the code breaks down and detracts from the “Traditional Downtown” that evolved over the history of the Town. The following are key aspects of the Zoning Code, as it affects the study area that will be addressed in the plan;

A. Principal uses.

- (4) Shopping centers containing the type of retail and service establishments permitted as principal uses.
- (5) Automobile parking lots and parking garages, provided that no more than two points of ingress/egress are placed along the same street within the limits of one block.

B. Accessory uses and buildings permitted. Accessory uses and buildings permitted shall be private garages for commercial vehicles associated with permitted principal uses.

C. [Amended 5-8-2001 by Ord. No. 9-2001] Conditional uses as stipulated in § 236-40 shall be as follows:

- (1) Same as R-1 and R-2 Districts.
- (2) Fraternal organizations, clubs, lodges and meeting rooms of nonprofit organizations.
- (3) Apartment units
- (4) Limousine service businesses.
- (5) Taxicab service business.

G. Off-street parking requirements.

- (1) All residential uses shall be required to provide on-site, off-street parking in accordance with § 236-43. [Amended 11-10-2003 by Ord. No. 39-2003]
- (2) For all other uses, the following requirements shall be met:
 - (a) For new development of a vacant lot, off-street parking shall be in accordance with § 236-43.
 - (b) For redevelopment of a lot which the cost of redevelopment exceeds 50% of the value of existing improvements, as determined by the Construction Official, and site plan review is required, off-street parking shall be in accordance with § 236-43.
 - (c) For all other permitted nonresidential uses, there shall be no off-street parking requirements.

- **C-3 Light Industrial- Commercial Zoning District** – This district allows for uses completely inconsistent and contradictory to the existing Downtown development as well as Transit-Oriented Development best practices. The Zone, in its entirety, should be replaced to C-1. The C-3 Zone may be more appropriate in areas located along East Blackwell (near the industrial area at the Rockaway Town border) or near Richboynton Road.
- **IND Industrial Zoning District-** This district lies directly south of the commuter rail line and east of Dover Station. The zone currently accommodates NJ Transit’s- Dover Rail Yard and several functioning industrial users. While this zoning is contrary to true Transit-Oriented development practices, it is positioned in such a way that it does not impede on the Town’s ability to attract development on parcels surrounding the Station in other directions. However, opportunity for redevelopment may arise in future markets on the site immediately adjacent to the Station itself and are therefore explored for long term possibility.

LEGEND

- C-1 - Retail Commercial
- C-2 - General Commercial
- C-3 - Light Industrial/Commercial
- IND - Industrial
- IND/OP - Industrial/Office Park
- R-1 - Single Family (7,500 S.F.)
- R-1S - Single Family/Steep Slope
- R-2 - Single Family (5,000 S.F.)
- R-3 - Double Family
- R-3A - Double Family/Rooming House
- R-4 - Multi-Family
- RAD - Redevelopment Area District

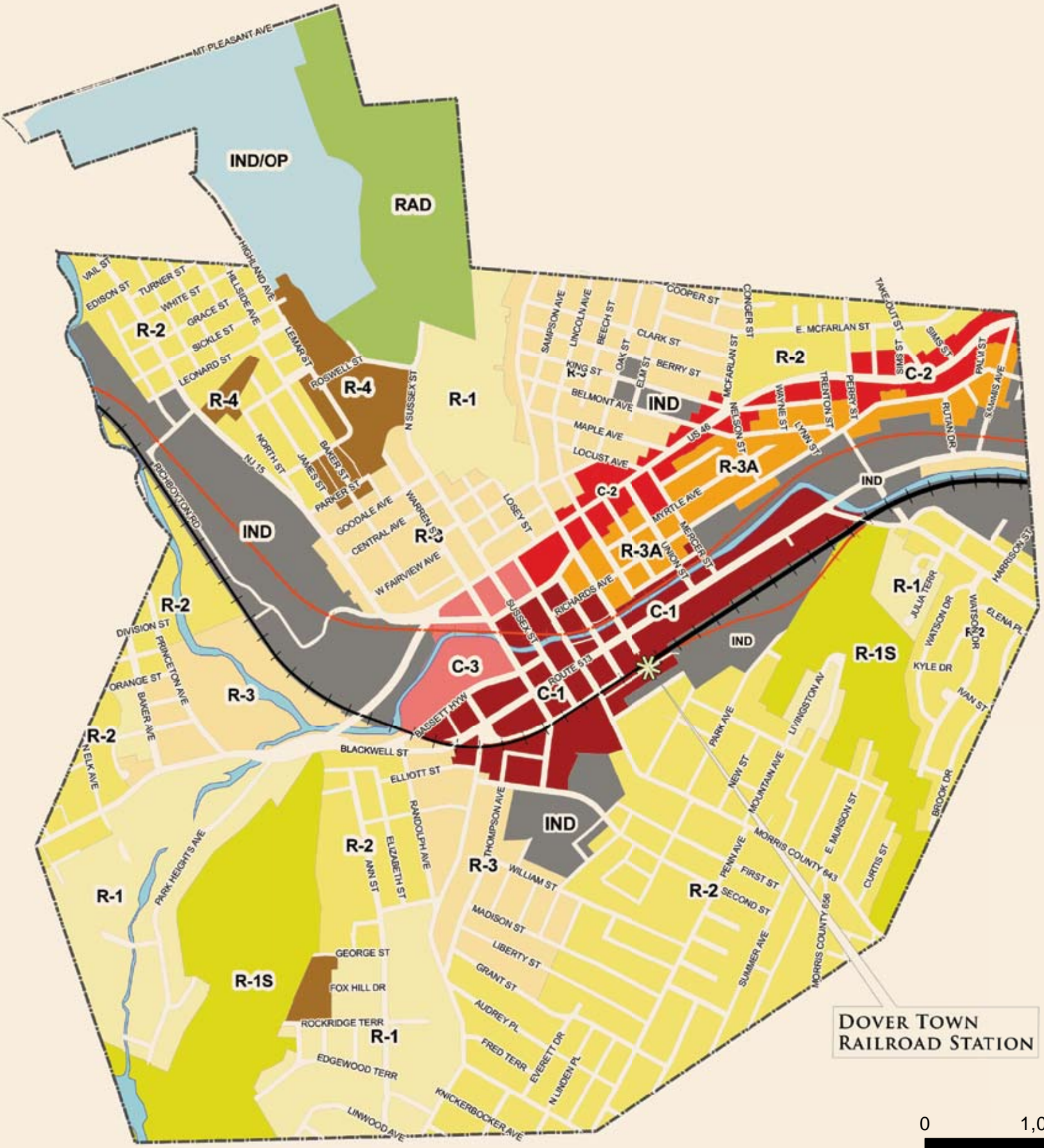
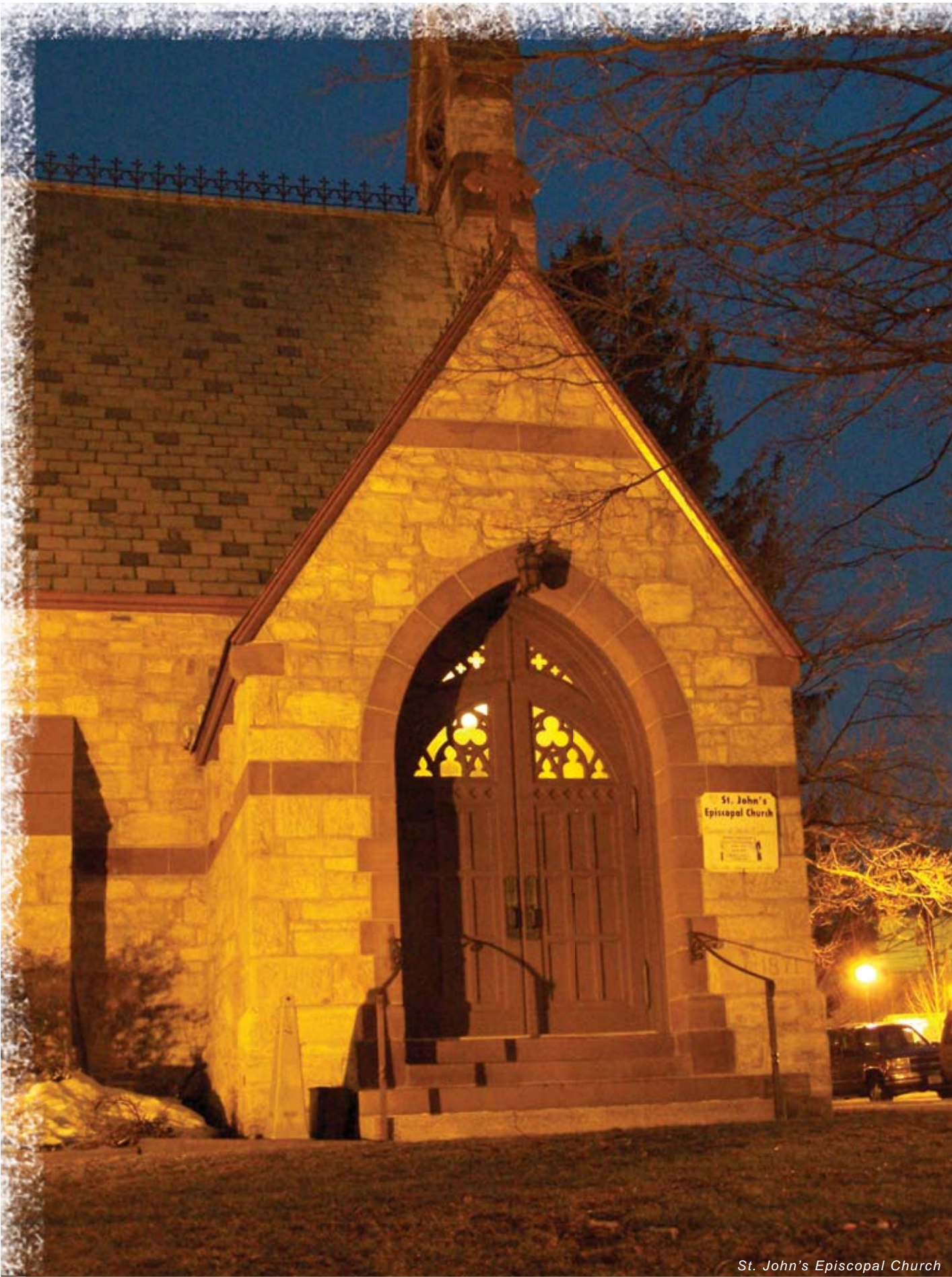


FIGURE 1
EXISTING ZONING MAP



St. John's Episcopal Church

LAND USES & SITE DESCRIPTIONS (Figure 2 Existing Land Use Map)

- Subarea 1-Dover Station Area**

In the recent past, NJ Transit has invested in the renovation of Dover Station through the Historic Tax Credit Program. This effort can be

easily distinguished by the presence of the new platforms, lighting, fencing and renovated Station building, however, the site remains pedestrian hazard. The area surrounding the Station itself can be described as an area where three (3) streets “disappear” into a parking lot - these streets are Dickerson, Bergen and Essex Streets. Rail passengers that are exiting the train in Dover are frequently at odds over where to walk. Often, one has to dodge a taxicab when traversing the area to get to the sidewalk of any of the surrounding streets. In addition, Dickerson North and Bergen Streets act as one road through the Station area, where vehicular traffic uses it as a parallel route to Blackwell Street.

In the immediate station area is some residential land uses in the form of the 69-unit Dover Plaza Condominiums on Blackwell and a finite number of apartments above commercial uses on Essex Street. While the design of the condominiums are acceptable, the pedestrian connections to the Station are mediocre and in need of substantial improvement.

{Delineation- Beginning at the southeast corner of the intersection of Blackwell and Essex Streets and heading easterly along Blackwell to the eastern property line of 96 Blackwell Street heading south to the Morris and Essex rail R.O.W. and westerly to Morris Street and north to the northerly property line at 12 South Morris Street and easterly to the Essex Street centerline and north to the beginning point defines the boundary of Subarea 1.}

The Station Environs



Land Used adjacent to Station



Dover Staion- A Multi-Model Transit Hub



Station Platform Area



Pedestrain Crossing at Morris Street



LEGEND

- Vacant
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Apartment
- Railroad Class I
- Public School Property
- Other School Property
- Public Property
- Church Charitable
- Cemeteries and Graveyards
- Other Tax Exempt

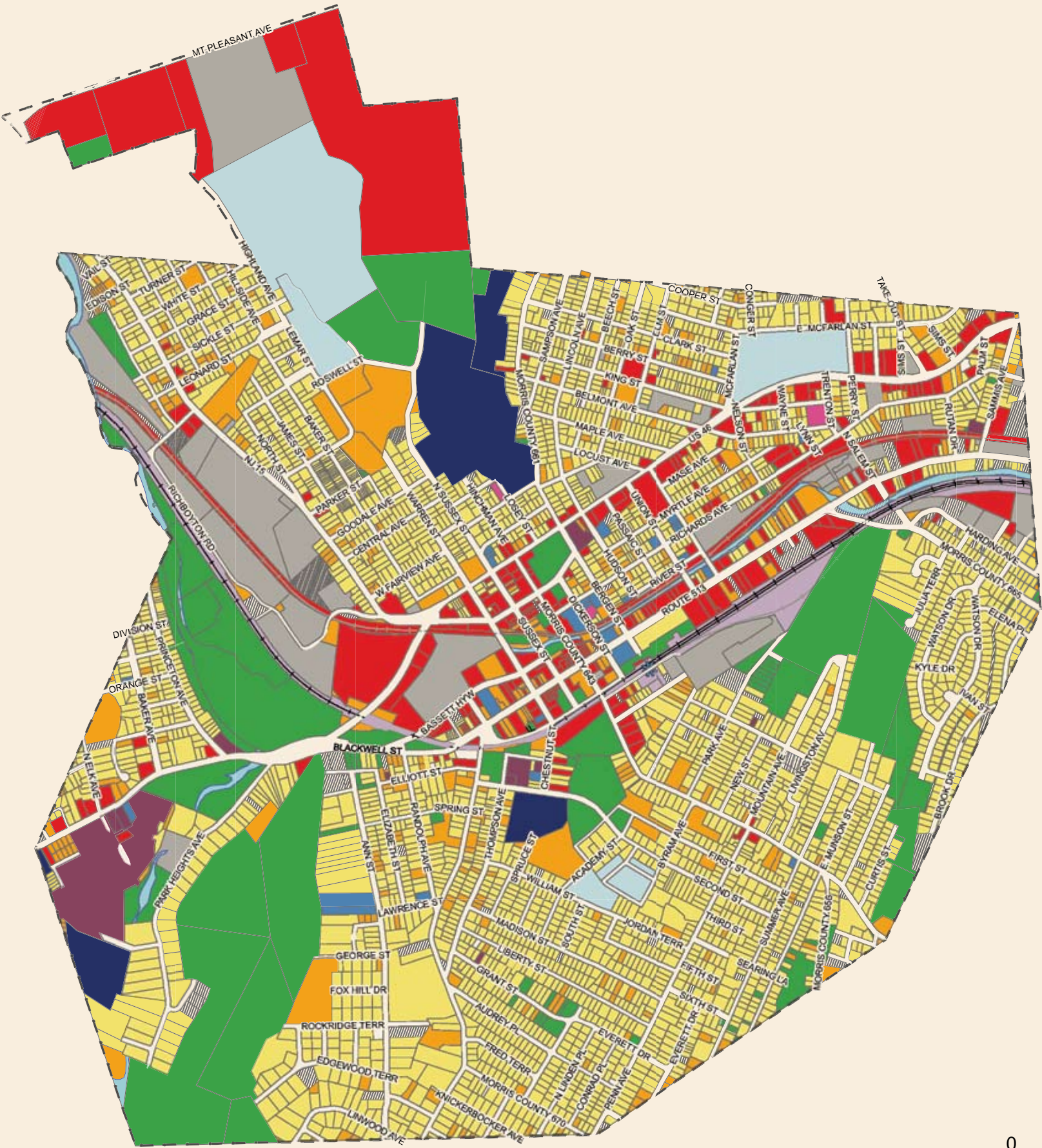
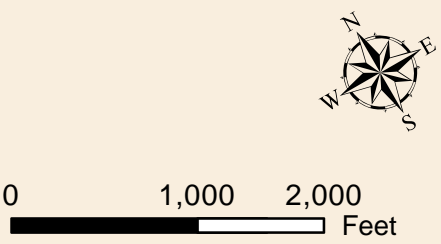


FIGURE 2
EXISTING LAND USE MAP



• **Subarea 2- Bassett Highway West**

Signs of the “Urban Renewal” movement are still evident in this section of the Downtown. The commercial properties north of Bassett are characterized by deeper setbacks with some front-yard surface parking facilities along Warren Street, and large single and two-story mundane structures. The majority of these structures were converted from a large box center into smaller commercial uses, some that are inappropriate for a downtown, within the wrong building type, and provide little to no pedestrian amenities. These sites are also characterized by large surface parking facilities that were paved right up to the banks of the Rockaway River.

{Delineation- Beginning at the centerline of the intersection of Sussex Street and Bassett Highway and north along this line of Sussex Street to the Rockaway River then following the River west and upstream to its intersection with the Morris and Essex Rail R.O.W. then south and east to Blackwell Street following its centerline to Warren Street then north toward the southwest corner of Bassett Highway then east along the centerline of Bassett Highway R.O.W. east to Sussex Street then north back to Warren Street along the Rockaway River delineates Subarea 2.}

Along the south side of Bassett Highway we see the backyards of some properties along Blackwell, particularly the larger users, like the Baker Theater and First Memorial Presbyterian Church. Other properties are a hodge podge of buildings that were assembled to become a furniture center and stretch toward Blackwell Street Extension where it meets the Dover Historic District in its eastern portion.



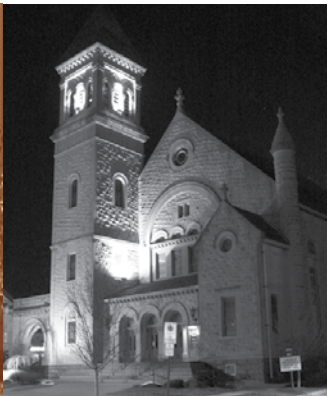
Bassett Highway facing west



Bassett Highway facing east



Baker Theater



First Presbyterian Church



Bassett Highway West

Bassett Highway on the north side between Warren and Sussex Streets also exhibit that unmistakable “Urban Renewal” design quality. When approved and constructed in 1950’s, this single-story structure was allowed space along its frontage for diagonal on-street parking while providing no room for appropriate streetscape amenities. To make a bad situation worse, the site was constructed with service entrances to the rear and directly abutting the walled bank of the Rockaway River. As designed, the site restricts public access to the Rockaway River.

Blackwell Street Extension, west of Prospect Street to its terminus, also remains a prime example of the type of streetwall exhibited along Blackwell as described in Subarea 3. Although some façades of the structures are in need of renovation and/or upgrade. Opportunity exists in this area of Subarea 3 as the ramp, which leads Blackwell over the railroad tracks, creates a unique area that the existing businesses, especially the restaurant, may be able to take advantage of the wall effect by allowing the Town public art and outdoor seating for restaurants. Prospect Street itself serves as a means of ingress/egress from Blackwell by connecting Route 10 with Route 15, and it may also serve a more important role in the redevelopment of Bassett north. The redevelopment of this area is critical to eliminating the mistakes of Urban renewal as well as Dover's long-term success as a destination and a place to live.



*Historic Residential Structures at
the end of Blackwell Street*

- **Subarea 3- Downtown Core**

Historically, the Town of Dover developed around the area that once was the Rail Station Depot at the intersection of Warren Street and Dickerson Street. Suffice to say, Dover was and always has been centered around a rail Station and developed the existing street-grid with the highest building concentration on Blackwell, Warren, Sussex and Essex Streets. Current

land use within the Downtown Core Area

is a mix of retail business along Blackwell Street. From the eastern edge of Balckwell in the vicinity of Mercer Street to the western edge toward Prospect Street. Although the mix of retail uses is economically healthy, and vacancies in the Downtown are few and far between, it was witnessed and depicted by Dover citizens, that the businesses primarily serve a marginal span of the population in Town. While not meant to be a negative depiction of the Downtown business community it merely states that opportunity exists for a more eclectic mix of businesses that could better serve the broader population and diverse demography that is Dover.

Historic significance is abound in this subarea with many great physical assets, both exposed and hidden, by poor façade treatments. The Downtown Core is anchored by the First Memorial Presbyterian Church and the Baker Theatre (recently renovated), in the West. Anchoring the Core in the north is the Post Office and Town Hall (Subarea 4) which are great assets for any town center. While the post office and Town Hall are in a suitable location, more could be done to make these important public spaces more of the centerpieces they deserve to be. These sites also lack a coherent streetscape and other basic pedestrian amenities that Blackwell Street itself affords.

{Delineation- Beginning at the southeasterly corner of Blackwell Street and Essex Street and running east to the southwest corner of 111 E. Blackwell Street. North along Union Street until the northern boundary of the Rockaway and Dover Rail R.O.W. at Union Street and west along the rail R.O.W. until its intersection with Morris Avenue then south until the southeastern corner of 22-24 North Sussex Street and west until the corner of Bassett Highway and Warren Street continuing south along Warren Street until the southeasterly corner of 11 North Warren Street then west again until 11 North Warren's southwesterly corner and north along the property boundary to Bassett Highway and west along the southern edge of Bassett Highway R.O.W. until the northeasterly corner of 58-60 Bassett Highway and south along the property and east along its southern edge until Prospect Street then south to Blackwell Street where the boundary heads south down Dickerson Street and east along the Dickerson R.O.W. until reaching the southeast corner of 36-42 W. Blackwell Street and the southwest corner of 29-31 Dickerson Street where it heads north then east between the properties that front Blackwell and those that front Dickerson Street. The boundary continues in this same manner across Warren, Sussex and Morris Streets until reaching the centerline of Essex Street where it heads north to Blackwell to its origin delineates Subarea 3.}

In the eastern section of the core, the clear edge and streetwall of the downtown begins breaking down in and around Mercer Street, where no identifiable anchor or gateway into the downtown exists. In fact, industrial and light industrial uses, really work against the Downtown beyond subarea 3 and into subarea 6. The southern portion of the core is anchored by its greatest asset, Dover Station (Subarea 1). Other uses in this Core area are a plethora of restaurants, the Dover Business College, children's museum and several churches amongst a variety of service-oriented businesses.



The Dover Church Spires Add Archetural Interest



Historic Church

This Recently Rehabilitated Building Strengthens the Downtown Core

Post Office

From a design perspective, three and four story buildings dominate the core of the Downtown landscape and create a strong streetwall that is a pleasant walking experience. This streetwall provides effective space for shops while streetscape amenities adds atmosphere to the pedestrian experience. The core itself primarily exists along West Blackwell Street, with some extension of this in varying degrees, along the intersecting streets of Warren, Essex and Sussex.

While a continuous streetwall is important it is equally important to note that a variety of lot widths, building height and architectural variety are equally important factors in creating the charm that the Dover Downtown exhibits along Blackwell in particular. These factors are a strong determining factor in whether towns can survive as a true pedestrian place and also important contributing design factors in the Dover Historic District.



The Morristown & Erie Rail Line Cuts Through the Downtown and Provides Unique Opportunities

• **Subarea 4- Bassett Highway East/ Downtown North**

Directly across the River from the strip center identified in Subarea 3, and up North Warren Street, is Town Hall, where access to the River is restricted in a similar fashion. Playing host to Town Administrative Offices, as well as the Police and Fire Department, the site is “constrained” by the River and the soon to be abandoned Morristown and Erie Railroad. Anchoring subarea 4, Town Hall along with the Post Office, great assets for any town center. While the post office and Town Hall are in a suitable location, more could be done to make these important public spaces more of the centerpieces they deserve to be. This also lacks the coherent streetscape and pedestrian amenities that Blackwell Street exhibits.

{Delineation- Beginning at the intersection of the centerlines of Sussex Street and Bassett Highway and east along the southern property line of 22-24 N. Sussex Street until the centerline of Morris Street then north to the northern boundary of the Rockaway and Dover Rail R.O.W. then east to the eastern edge of the Bergen Street R.O.W. and then north to Route 46. Traveling west along the southern edge of the Route 46 R.O.W. to southern edge of the Rockaway and Dover Rail R.O.W. at #10 US Route 46 then heading south and east to Warren Street and south to the Rockaway River and following the River east back to the intersection of Sussex Street and Bassett Highway delineates Subarea 4.}

The southern side of Bassett Highway consists of two (2) corner anchors, a restaurant on the eastern edge and an antique store on the opposite, it is more typical of the streetwall necessary for a strong downtown fabric. The parcels could be better utilized and integrated into the Downtown with façade upgrades in accordance with this plan’s Design Standards. The parcels in-between these anchors could also be redesigned to fit better within the streetwall.

The commercial spine of the Core, and its superb streetwall, begins to break down and a block and a half (1-1/2) to two (2) blocks north of Blackwell and disperses into more “auto-driven” land uses toward Route 46. These commercial land uses start to exhibit some of the more “suburban-driven” code in the Land Development Ordinance before you reach the purely residential neighborhoods that surround the Downtown to the north. This breakdown occurs on several different fronts; streetscape, building setback, surface parking facilities, height and other general pedestrian amenities.



Town Hall

This plan's analysis indicates that the current zoning facilitates this breakdown and works against the Town's positive historic attributes. The breakdown of the Downtown continuity is especially evident at the intersections of Richards Avenue where it intersects with Essex and Morris Streets. Both of these streets, but especially Morris, are dominated by surface parking facilities and are completely unfriendly to pedestrian travelers.

- **Subarea 5- Station Area West**

{Delineation- Beginning at the intersection of Blackwell Street and the Morris and Essex Rail R.O.W heading easterly along Blackwell Street to the easterly edge of the Dickerson R.O.W. and south along said R.O.W to the westerly property line of 29 W. Dickerson Street and north along said property line to the northerly edge of said property line and east between the properties that front Blackwell Street and Dickerson Street until the center line of Morris Street and south to 65 S. Morris Street and west along Block 1803, Lot 11 (Town-owned parking facility) along its southerly boundary to Orchard Street and west along Legion Place to Thompson Street south along Thompson to 2nd Street and north and west along 2nd Street to 36 Prospect Street where the boundary heads north along 36 Prospect Street's eastern property line and west along said property's northerly boundary to Prospect Street north to southern property line of 23 Prospect Street and west along said property's line back to Blackwell Street defines Subarea 5.)



NJ Transit Freight House



Dover Station has Circulation Issues



Lot B-Public Parking



Lot G-Dickerson Street Parking Lot in a Prime Development Spot

Dover Station West exhibits tremendous opportunity in the paved parking areas owned by New Jersey Transit and Town of Dover. Three (3) lots, identified in the parking section of this plan, as Lots B, C and D (Map 2- Dover Parking Map,) have great potential if development is designed in a manner that connects it to the Station, Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. These sites, in conjunction with the 6.87 Crescent Field Recreational Facility account for 14.52 acres, all but 1.88 acres is publically-owned by the Town of Dover.

Lot B exhibits the greatest opportunity however. The site contains two parcels and acts as both New Jersey Transit's- Dover Freight House and Town-owned commuter parking lot. These sites are also adjacent to Crescent Field and while the topography leading toward South Morris Avenue becomes elevated and more difficult to develop, it provides a unique opportunity for innovate design that can tie the downtown, station, park and the street together with surrounding neighborhoods. Therefore, it is key to the transition between the residential community to the south and the higher densities of the Downtown.

As you travel west along Subarea 5, the surface parking facilities reduce in size. While Lot C, adjacent to Orchard Street may be developable, it may make sense to allow Lot D to remain surface parking where opportunities to share parking with the neighborhood exists during off-peak hours. Surrounding the lots are a daycare center, American Legion Hall and Free Mason Hall where parking is needed and currently shared within the existing surface lots.

The Gateway at Blackwell and Prospect is a fine example of a "singature" entrance into Town.



• **Subarea 6- East Blackwell Street**

{Delineation- Beginning at the southwesterly boundary of 112 E. Blackwell Street at the Morris and Essex Rail R.O.W. heading east along said R.O.W. to its intersection with the Rockaway River near Salem Street the north and upstream to the Rockaway and Dover Rail R.O.W. where it follows the northerly boundary of said R.O.W. west to its intersection with Union Street then south back to the southwesterly boundary and including 112 E. Blackwell Street delineates Subarea 6.}

This subarea is in an important gateway leading to the Downtown from the east. The primary access to the Downtown is from South Salem and Rockaway Township to the east. Leading up to the edge of Subarea 3 (the Downtown Core), this section is really a prime example of the challenge that great towns like Dover have experienced over the years in battling good design versus automotive need. Land use along East Blackwell can be classified as intense in some areas with automotive sales, repair centers and various other light industrial land uses. There are several uses with environmental concerns, especially those adjacent to the Rockaway River. Some single-family homes are scattered throughout present as well.



South Salem Street gateway today

Land use in Area 6

Gateway opportunity in Area 6

• **Subarea 7- Dover Station Area South**

This subarea is characterized by underutilized commercial uses on its western edge, single-family at its southern, and industrial uses of Subarea 8 along its eastern edge. The area is environmentally constrained by soils and presence of steep slopes.

{Delineation- Beginning at the intersection of South Morris Street and Morris and East Dickerson Street heading east along the northerly boundary of the East Dickerson R.O.W. to the north easterly boundary of 90-100 East Dickerson Street then south along and said R.O.W. to South Morris Street and north back to East Dickerson Street defines Subarea 7.}

Accessing Dover Station from this area is difficult, as there is only a single point of access to this area from South Morris Avenue. Access to the Station from here depends on utilizing South Morris Avenue at the at-grade rail crossing. Immediately adjacent to the Station is an access drive to NJ Transit's – Dover Rail Yard and industrial uses further east. Monmouth Street, further south of the Station Area also runs parallel to the Station and dead ends into a steep slope, as does Park Avenue. There is also presence of water utilities further down Park Avenue into the woods and down slope in this area.



Area 7

South Dickerson Street

Unique topography offers future development consideration

Although great potential exists for these sites, the constraints of steep slopes and geologic substrata must be dealt with in order to fully capitalize on its location. This plan will discuss this issue in greater depth, but recognizes these constraints may also present an opportunity for innovative design. As such, the area may be best suited to taking advantage of future markets that may be created through the prioritization, and implementation of redevelopment in other subareas.

• **Subarea 8- Dover Station East**

{Delineation- This area is defined as the entire property boundaries of 126 and 110 East Dickerson Street.}

The section closest to the station in this subarea is characterized by several light industrial uses. These businesses are viable, and have maintained fairly good condition given their intensive use. The sites are accessed through an easement located on the south side of Dover Station via South Morris Avenue. The NJ Transit rail maintenance and storage yard, referred to as Dover Yard, also utilizes this easement for access. Furthermore, this area, including the Dover Rail Yard, is fairly indiscrete because of the surrounding topography, layout of streets, steep slopes to the south and backyards of the properties along Blackwell with the rail line separating it from the North side of town. Given these factors, the area is screened from neighboring uses and is well suited to remain in its present industrial use. Notwithstanding, there is an opportunity for future inclusion into Subarea 7 should future market condition allow. While these sites are indiscrete from within in the Town, these sites are in-fact the first visible sites when coming to town by train.



Evening at Dover Yard

RESULTS OF PUBLIC INPUT- OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

OPPORTUNITIES

There are many positive attributes associated with the Downtown that could support the revitalization of the area. This list was derived by site visits and extensive public participation through Planning Board meetings, stakeholder interviews, and meetings with public officials.

- **Mid-town Direct- NJ Transit’s New York City rail service (Morris and Essex Line & Montclair/ Boonton Line);**
- **Established center;**
- **Established fine grain mix of residential and commercial uses;**
- **Multi-modal transportation options exist;**
- **Proximity to, and pedestrian access from, adjoining residential development;**
- **High degree of street interconnectivity and strong street grid;**
- **Generally well defined nature of the Downtown;**
- **Existence of underutilized parcels ripe for revitalization.**
- **Governmental commitment to revitalization effort and rail station upgrades.**
- **Ability for revitalization to benefit the central business district by providing complimentary commercial and residential development and increase socio-economic trends.**
- **Proximity of the St. Clair’s Hospital**
- **Proximity of the Joseph Kubert International School of Cartooning**
- **Cultural Diversity.**
- **Number and diversity of restaurant establishments.**
- **Arts and historical resources.**
- **Dover Business School.**

CONSTRAINTS

The public thought that opportunities outweighed the constraints with regard to this planning effort. Many of the negative aspects that the plan was asked to look can be remedied. The following list was utilized to make recommendations for the plan.

- **Lack of public parking and the ability for new applicants to meet the parking requirements in the Downtown.**
- **Lack of public open space**
- **No central focal point**
- **Presence of poor or outdated building facades, signs and awnings**
- **Costs of public improvements**
- **Lack of Business liaison in Town Hall; Economic and Community Development Director**
- **Gaps in building rhythm and streetwall of some arterial streets in Downtown**
- **Lack of streetscape continuity for all downtown streets.**
- **No incentives for market/private parties**
- **Town’s current Land Development Ordinance**
- **Poor perception of the Town and its diversity by local and regional community.**
- **Lack of access to Rockaway River**
- **Education of entrepreneurs.**
- **Topography and geography near station**