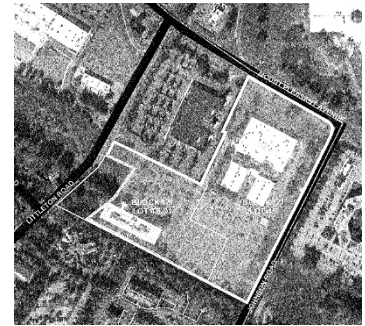


Plans, Master Plans and Amendments

Report to the Board May 5, 2022 through July 12, 2022

Municipality	Borough of Morris Plains
Documents	Amendment to the Land Use Plan Element of the Borough of Morris Plains Master Plan Regarding Block 171, Lot 45 and a portion of Block 171, Lot 45.01
Public Hearing	July 18, 2022
Summary	Redesignation of Block 171, Lot 45 and a portion of 45.01 to a new Mixed-Use Commercial Overlay zone.

- The Borough of Morris Plains is amending the Land Use Element of the Morris Plains Master Plan to recommend that the existing “Hotel and Specified Use Option Overlay” designation (Hotel Overlay) currently applied to Block 171, Lot 45 be removed and a new “L-2 Mixed-Use Commercial Use Overlay” be applied to both Block 171, Lot 45 and a portion of adjacent Block 171, Lot 45.01. The properties are developed as a unified corporate office park with three office buildings (Weichert Realtors corporate offices) and located in the northeast corner of the Borough adjacent to Route 10 and Johnson Rd. The total size of the combined lots is approximately 22 acres, primarily designated in the Research-Laboratory-2 category with the Hotel Overlay designation superimposed as a development option. A small portion of Lot 45.01 abutting Route 202 is designated R-2 Residential; this is not included in the recommended redesignation.



- The amendment notes that Weichert, like many other corporations, has decentralized its workforce, reducing the number of employees located at this site. The number of physical employees on site has also contracted as remote work has become much more prevalent following the COVID-19 pandemic. The amendment identifies this as a trend applicable to many corporations, which find themselves in need of down-sizing their office space.
- With less need for office space, Weichert suggested that the Borough investigate potential land use alternatives that would permit the company to consolidate its workforce into an updated office building on site and allow for a variety of non-residential uses on the remainder of the property. Upon review, the Planning Board determined that the Land Use Plan designation and ensuing zoning of the subject property should be amended to allow for mixed-use development that includes corporate office use, as well as retail and other commercial uses which would serve the office uses both on site and in the vicinity, as well as existing and anticipated multifamily developments in the area. The Board finds that amending the designation of the site will allow it to be transformed into a modern, viable, high quality mixed-use commercial development that will help maintain and bolster the Borough’s non-residential tax base and that the proposed overlay designation would promote a comprehensively planned non-residential development at a gateway to the Borough.