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**To:** Township of Lawrence Planning Board

**From:** Elizabeth McManus, PP, AICP, LEED AP   
Brett Harris, PP, AICP 

**Re:** Trenton Block (Block 503 Lots 4-26) Zoning Map Amendment

**Date:** July 15, 2022

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Through Ordinance 2430-22, the Township of Lawrence aims to encourage improvement of Block 503, Lots 4-26, hereinafter referred to as the Trenton Block site, by rezoning the property from the Residential 4 (R-4) District to the Mixed Use (MX-3) District. The site is approximately 1.5 acres, and its current zoning is the R-4 District, which prohibits the existing contractor supply and wholesale retail use. The existing use contains about 90% of impervious coverage, with palletized existing storage areas near adjacent properties. Additionally outdoor storage areas exist near existing wetlands on the site and on adjacent Township owned property that are subject to the rezoning.

The Trenton Block site is proposed to be rezoned to the MX-3 District, the zone district in the Township which the current use of the property is most closely aligned. The MX-3 District permits a variety of uses that include light manufacturing and assembly with associated distribution of products, flex space, wholesale sales, distribution center and warehouses, offices including medical offices, recreational and leisure uses, and similar uses. The existing R-4 District is intended primarily for single family detached dwellings on lots of 7,500 square feet or larger; the existing contractor supply and wholesale retail use is not permitted district.

While not accomplished through the ordinance, the rezoning will facilitate a land sale of Block 503, Lots 15, 19-26 from the Township to the owner of the contractor use. Additionally, conceptual plans for improvement of the site were developed for discussion purposes. These concept plans depict expansion of the use toward the south of the east, including property currently owned by the Township. However, the concept plan also depicts removal of storage and impervious cover along adjacent residential uses at the northern and western property lines, as well as organized parking and storage bins, a pole barn for material storage, and stormwater management. The concept plan, which must be implemented via a site plan approval, would result in an increased buffer along property lines shared with residences, a more organized and appealing appearance, and improved stormwater management.

The following Goals and Objectives from the Township's 1995 Master Plan are relevant to the existing use of the Trenton Block and the proposed rezoning:



***“Guide the physical and economic development of the Township toward the goals in this Master Plan, thereby benefiting the public health, safety, and welfare.”***

The existing use commercial use contributes to the economic development of the Township.

***“Preserve environmentally sensitive lands from development or other potentially damaging influences.”***

The relocation of outdoor storage areas further away from the wetlands contributes to the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands from development.

***“Preserve and enhance the character of the built environment through promotion of good design.”***

The proposed rezoning will result in zoning standards that are more closely aligned with the existing use of the site. The proposed concept plan depicts improved site improvements and design that will reduce the impact of the site’s appearance and activities on the surrounding residences.

***“Foster a well-balanced, diverse community with a mix of residential housing types, institutional, commercial, and limited industrial uses along with ample open space and public facilities. The land use plan and development regulations are designed to minimize land use conflicts and reduce adverse impacts of development on other activities in the Township.”***

The proposed rezoning and concept plan will reduce land use conflicts through the continuation of an existing commercial use and proposed improved site conditions.

***“Reduce blighting influences through improved standards for development.”***

The proposed rezoning reduces blighting influences through the improved and more relevant standards found in the MX-3 Zoning District.

***“Promote the development of commercial areas that are attractive to public view through the use of building and site design standards reflective of the established character of development in Lawrence.”***

The proposed rezoning and concept plan would result in a more attractive site through organized on-site materials, organized parking, and increased buffering to adjacent residences